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HIGHER EDUCATION AS SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT FACTOR

Problem statement. The importance of the topic proposed for research is stipulated by the necessity to adapt higher education of the modern society to social production needs and demands for ensuring a competitive ability of an individual in the labor market.

Recent research and publications analysis. Research of the problems related to the current state of higher education and public administration of the educational industry development is represented by the works of V. Andrushchenko, L. Bielova, S. Dombrovskya, M. Holovaty, S. Klepko, V. Korzhchenko, V. Kremen, M. Kultaeve, V. Luhovy, V. Maiboroda, I. Medviedev, V. Oharenko, N. Radionova, M. Zubrytska and many other scholars.

Despite numerous scientific works devoted to general educational issues and higher education in particular, the problems of interrelation of the ‘education – science – practice – production’ system have not been researched in full.

The paper objective is revealing and analysis of the interconnection between a person’s education, the country’s state of science, and its people’s growing welfare in the course of social development.

The paper main body. Professional and social education of man came into sharp focus in the social concepts of the French Enlightenment of the 1860s as effective factors of social progress, social modernization, and a potent source of desired and anticipated positive social transformations.

In the second half of the 19th century, political economy, which explored specific features of the then market relations and claimed science to be a direct productive force of society, imposed a great responsibility on man as a source of social development. Thus, with the advent of the market society, there appears a
The major effectual practical function of science i.e. participation of science in the transformational activity of man and society.

The 20th century exemplifies vividly the fact that social progress is not merely related to, but rather is characterized by ‘the narrowest’ limited part of social existence – its intellectual potential, a ‘social intellect’.

Since the Modern Times, the socio-historical process has proved that separate countries can possess fantastically rich natural resources; yet, without an appropriate advancement in the educational field, ‘social intellect’ and application thereof in the national production sphere, those countries are likely to have no future. They are doomed to remain raw-material appendages in the global economy due to their inability to efficiently process raw materials into knowledge-intensive products that are highly valued in the world market.

Some scientists emphasize the existence of a relationship between the ‘social intellect’ and ascent of certain countries’ economy onto the highest level of labor productivity. It appears that a growth in labor productivity correlates with development of education and science not indirectly, but rather in a direct way, both the processes exerting an accelerational impact on each other, and evolving simultaneously. In addition, the closest correlation is observed in case of a rapidly developing higher education. As it turns out, a traditional orientation to secondary general education as an important benchmark of social accomplishments has become obsolete from the historical point of view, losing its significance of a standard to be strained after in the civilized countries. They perceive this educational level not as an achievement, but as a mandatory mass starting point, a ‘social point of reference’. In general, young people tend to obtain an optionally-general higher education. The optionality of the general higher education means not its compulsoriness, but accessibility to all who are interested, have the required abilities, will, and physical condition.

**Conclusions of the research.** In summation of our brief analysis of the role and place of the institution of higher education as an effective factor of social transformations, it should be noted that, *firstly*, from the Modern Times to about
the start of the 21st century, the European social thought and social practices focused on quantitative indices (adult literacy rate, youth intellectual development rate, human capital) of their people’s education i.e. attainment of the level of the ‘critical mass’ necessary for carrying out social modernizations. At the same time, the “university in ruins” calls for new qualitative changes (Bill Readings). Secondly, the system of managing education is also in need of qualitative transformations towards a higher democratization, decentralization, liberalization, regionalization, responsibility, and accessibility to all citizens, the continuity and consistency of educational training. Furthermore, there is a need for a rational implementation of an effective and transparent system of public and civil evaluation of educational institutions’ activities, assessment of the quality of general-education and specialized training. Thirdly, the modern European social thought, on the one hand, surpasses gradually the boundaries of Bologna agreements, encompassing the sphere of practical application within the national education systems (V. Andrushchenko). On the other hand, it considers specific territories in terms of their uniqueness (city, agglomeration, metropolis, etc.), as sustainable development centers, and as a basic element of the governance system of the 21st century (Pierre Calame). The above-mentioned processes require a deep scientific conceptualization.