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## INTRODUCTION

The educational boom in European countries in the 1960s–1970s has caused the restoration of active research in the sphere of education sociology. Papers of the western sociologists P. Bourdieu, P. Coombs, M. Trow are dedicated to the development of this direction. Formation and predominance of the sociocultural approach as a methodological foundation of education sociology constitute their characteristic feature.

Modern development of foreign education sociology is described in papers by M. Archer, J. Beaulieu, R. Boudon, J. Coleman, N. Luhmann, J. Meyer, J. Passeron. The authors mentioned consider the education system within the context of its socio-typological, morphogenetic, functional-systemic specific features, as an instrument of establishing distinctions (discernings), communication, gabitualization. All the processes mentioned are inherent in the system of education of both institutionalized and non-institutionalized forms. Institutionalization of the education system is accompanied by its establishment as a completely autonomous system able to develop following on from the limited interference of other social subsystems with its operation.

The attention of the Ukrainian sociological community is constantly drawn to education as a social institution and social aspects of higher education. Special attention is to be paid to the achievements of the USSR sociologists of the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century including A. Astakhova, O. Dikova-Favorska, V. Dobrenkov, V. Nechaiev, S. Oksamytna, A. Osypov, Y. Podolska, M. Rutkevych, L. Rubin, L. Sokurianska, M. Titma, V. Turchenko, F. Filippov, A. Shereha, S. Shchudlo, O. Yakuba and other scholars. These authors studied issues regarding the role of education in the development of the society, in social mobility, life plans of youth and social characteristics of lecturers and teachers. Thorough examination of sociocultural portrait and educational level of youth, labor activity and upbringing of students has been started already in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. Studying opportunities for the use of student activity potential, behavior patterns in student groups, professional orientations of school graduates,

influence of higher education on the structure of society (M. Rutkevych, L. Rubin, V. Shubkin) was flourishing in the 1960s. The researchers were examining social aspects of the education system and interrelations between the social institute of education and other institutes of society. An important contribution resulted from research on socialization due to the education and relationships of teachers with pupils and students (E. Astakhova, V. Dobrenkov, V. Nechaiev, A. Osypov; M. Rutkevych, F. Filippov, A. Shereha, O. Yakuba).

Today sociological aspects of education, problems of the institutional transformation in Ukraine are studied by I. Havrylenko, V. Horodianenko, D. Dzvinchuk, P. Kudelia, V. Luhovyi, M. Lukashevych, O. Navrotskyi, V. Pylypenko, L. Sidniev, Y. Siryi, O. Skidin, A. Furman, V. Chepak, Y. Chernetskyi and others. Modern education sociology deals fruitfully with studying the structure of the social institute of education, its systems and subsystems (V. Luhovyi); social organizations, objects (E. Astakhova, P. Kudelia); subjects of its activity, functions of education in the sociocultural reproduction of society (M. Lukashevych, O. Navrotskyi); structures and essences of the educational process contents (I. Havrylenko, V. Pylypenko); education management (D. Dzvinchuk, Y. Zoska, O. Skidin, D. Sweets); the whole set of sociological research methods is used (V. Horodianenko, A. Shereha). These examinations analyzed dependence of the state of education on the development level of economy, political and social institutes, since there is a dependence between social development and education – a developed education system is essential for the development of society, and at the same time development of education is influenced by the dynamics of social processes.

Impact of works by representatives of pedagogic and psychological sciences of the past and the present time, enabling specification of sociological notions, subject field, issues of education sociology research is obvious. Here the papers by L. Vygotskii, B. Hershunskaa, V. Zenkovskii, Y. Komenskii, V. Kraievskii, K. Ushynskii, other scholars are of great significance.

Single aspects of higher education reformation in the Western European countries are covered in the works of foreign scientists including P. Maassen, F. Maiworm, N. McGinn, H. Neve, S. Sarason, W. Stoob, H. Tedesco, T. Welsh, M. Fiske and others. Changes and development of

vocational and pedagogical elements of education systems in separate European countries at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup>-21<sup>st</sup> centuries are studied in the works of the Ukrainian scientists including N. Abashkina, A. Vasyliuk, V. Kremen, K. Korsak, P. Kriazhev, A. Sbruiev.

Major functional aspects of education should be considered within the framework of the systemic approach. Education is a sophisticated multifunctional system, and its operating efficiency can be estimated through analyzing the complex of objective connections of education as a society subsystem with other subsystems and taking into account their interinfluence.

Indeed, the main function of education in the sphere of economy is as follows:

- setting new consumption standards;
- creating a vocationally trained and qualified part of the society in both quantitative and qualitative directions;
- Engaging economic resources necessary for meeting educational goals;
- distributing own internal resources.

Functions of education primarily in social sphere are as follows:

- constant reproduction and formation of educational community diversity;
- constant reproduction of social layers and groups, affiliation with which is confirmed by corresponding educational certificates;
- society homogenization through well-ordered socialization of its members;
- stimulation and activation of social movements;
- social selection;
- social substitution of the role of parents;
- social protection and support of students.

In the sphere of culture, functions of education include the following:

- reproducing and creating social intellect;
- reproducing and creating different culture social types;
- introducing innovations to culture.

In socio-political sphere, functions of education are as follows:

- reproducing and creating a social-state ideology;

- setting standards of political activity and the ways in which individuals can participate in the socio-political life;
- reproducing and establishing political and legal norms and values;
- teaching patriotism and respect for law.

Reproduction of the single education system in the Soviet period consisted of all the above mentioned functions of education regarding societal subsystems, and that was additionally intensified due to the education management system developed by the state. All these factors were responsible for the development and integrity of the society and its subsystems, and at the same time they contributed to the process of education reproduction.

Modern theories consider the level of development and efficiency of the education system to be one of the most important factors of the social-economical development of society; at the same time, it is noted that in developing countries high level of educational development does not guarantee the proportional socioeconomic growth. Hence, the emphasis is given for reproduction of the following efficiency conditions:

- Rational structure of education agreed to the needs of society;
- efficient use of the present educational potential;
- high level and adequate structure of investments in education;
- high quality of education;
- correctly chosen education strategy.

After defining the main functional features of education, one has to perform a more thorough analysis of the very notion of ‘education’. Regardless of a certain disputable nature of the issues concerning education characteristics, in sociology there is a set of its specific features. Indeed, in her research O. Smyrnova singled out several meanings of the term ‘education’:

- a social institution;
- educational activity and its results marked with the notion of ‘erudition’;
- education system as a hierarchical aggregate of educational organizations connected with administrative infrastructure;
- a kind of social process.

‘Paradigm’ sociologist club introduced another classification of approaches to education development. The first approach is based on

education, goal-setting as a normative ideal of an educated human in society. This factor is especially significant since education is not only present in all spheres of human life activity, but it is also always integrated into a corresponding historical epoch. The second approach suggests that the basis of education development contains the culture types defined by the American anthropologist M. Mead. Relying upon the culturological role of education, followers of this approach think that the development of a civilization is a change of priority culturological types and corresponding changes of education as a cultural translator. M. Mead singles out three types of culture:

- a postfigurative type with a dominating culture of traditions, customs, everyday practice. An education subject is represented by natural social environment. The human learns in the process of everyday labor activity;

- a figurative type with a culture of traditions yielding to the culture of rational knowledge, norms, values, laws. Education obtains a mass character and becomes isolated from the source of knowledge. The main task is to create a knowing human;

- prefigurative culture – a postindustrial one. Knowledge production technologies become leading. This culture type is being only predicted for now. The normative idea constitutes a human generating knowledge and being able to take his/her bearings in the information flows independently.

The third approach – institutional – views education as a social institution. A normative, state-determined character of education is dominating; it produces a goal-oriented influence on youth aiming at their adaptation to the need of society and state.