

Leisure and education: integration problems under modern Russian conditions

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Abstract:

On a background of the current transformations undergoing in a modern Russian society, an increase in importance of the education (a major factor of development and realization of potential of the person) is obvious; orientation to individuality becomes important; education acquires the form of the continuous social ability to live including variety of forms of educational communication. In conditions of formation of "society of knowledge" it is necessary to consider prospects of development of leisure spheres alongside with its educational resources in the context of modernization of educational sector, activation of the training potential and development of perspective educational models. In modern Russia the relevance of such developments is caused by occurring structural reorganization of economy and by active attraction of many citizens to a social political life. Some of the primary goals of the modern Russian society are the ability to continuous education throughout their lives, as well as the acquirement of a professional and leisure competence for individual life planning, in order to achieve a successful adaptation in a society going through dynamically developing changes. Such an optimal realization of leisure offers is achieved with a scientific approach, in which segments of education and leisure are studied and combined.

Keywords: Leisure, continuous education, self-creation, individualization, motivation, institutionalization, space.

Introduction

A necessity for a sociological analysis of the individual needs in the field of leisure offers and in the general space of leisure is caused by tendencies of social development in modern Russia, such as an increasing degree of differentiation and an individualization, necessity of assistance to social identity of individuals, national and language integration.

Nowadays, the Russian society faces problems of human resources development, and life-term education. This brings us to the problem of the present research, which consists in defining directions of use of the educational opportunities available in space of leisure, and in the development of different approaches to activate an educational component of leisure in a context of realization of the concept of continuous education. The fact that there are not enough Russian research programs considering opportunities and aspects of including educational practices (experience) in leisure sphere, leads to a inefficient use of leisure space, and it limits individual educational opportunities of leisure participants, interfering with social integration and promoting a social inequality.

These circumstances lead to an actualization of the scientific developments focusing on developing of training structures with long-term values in the leisure sector. A discussion of this problem will allow us to open potential educational opportunities of leisure spheres and to offer ways of their realization in everyday practices (experience). A scientific consideration of leisure

opportunities (use for education) will contribute to the development and transformation of leisure and leisure-didactic concepts considering leisure as one of the additional education models, as an opportunity of innovations, and as a part of unity of life manifestations. Thus, research to integrate education and leisure in an institutional perspective under modern conditions of the social changes occurring in Russia, is seen as relevant and necessary.

Leisure as a strategy of social development and personal adaptation.

The necessity to accentuate the organization of leisure is appreciably defined by the needs of the modern society, a raising level of cultural development, and a certain degree of activity of leisure participants. A variety of leisure forms promote a need for development of culture values in the system of life priorities; increase in the leisure activity, interest in complex forms of human mutual relations promote restoration (or an establishment) of local and external social and ethnic contacts. Recently experts note that practically all Russian people even under conditions of leisure minimization have shown more interest in revival of national crafts, national folklore, a historical cultural heritage and at the same time an expansion of language and in space borders through development of other cultural norms and values (Kubishkina, 2000, Boyarinova I. 2005). Maintenance and development of this cultural consumption model is influenced in a stable way by the following factors: First, the fact that people frequently prefer " a cognitive position "; Second, that they have their own knowledge existing apart from declared purpose of cultural-leisure institutions, knowledge generated by own social and ethnic environment inside of which the subject can take not only a cognitive position. The process of development of gained experience, formation of own points of view, tenets and beliefs. Such processes of development of own attitude to separate cultural elements and blocks demands a high communicative activity, the initiative, an expression and the formulation of the point of view, an information exchange. And this means people to talk to, supporters, opponents, which demands a special atmosphere of trust and openness, mutual understanding, social and ethno social environment. As a whole, alongside with an activation of "a cognitive position " there is a need for an increase in opportunities for more creative activity. A deep relationship of these two needs is realized and the evidence of this are those forms which have been found and are offered to visitors of national cultures centers, Russian-national centers, clubs on interests, amateur associations, language courses and Sunday schools, consulting centers and other associations.

Freedom of self-determination, self-sensation in free activity gives an opportunity for the realization of a personal and creative potential in leisure, but also generates difficulties in self-determination, search of oneself in this "vacuum" space of leisure, in development and acceptance of the certain valuable orientations and systems. It also has an influence on the formation of personal dominants, providing its individualization and intellectualization. As the purpose of a free time use is not exclusively a regeneration of productive ability, we assume that there is a necessity for development of corresponding alternatives. And these alternatives should naturally guarantee not only the recreational function of leisure, but also creativity and knowledge as opportunities of self-expression of the person.

Change of ways of spending free time has certain things in common with the formation of new valuable reference points in registration of leisure. Recent developments observable in the last years have been made in a direction of self-development, enjoyment, and individualism that lead to a variety of individual valuable combinations. A shift of leisure interests towards developments, self-improvement, aspiration to getting information, development of additional skills is obvious. This valuable pluralism on a background of economic and technological public changes, leads to

different life styles. Traditional models of segmentation, such as strata or classes and such variants laying in their basis as trade, income, age and the form of housekeeping are already not enough to have an opportunity to explain availability of modern life styles. The complex approach needs to consider subjective factors, for example, kinds of leisure and consumer attitudes are required.

The sphere of leisure, thus, cannot be considered separately from other life spheres of a person. Each individual defines personal priorities, and therefore, classifies values of leisure in their own way. Ideal opinions on leisure are connected as a rule with activity, experiences, not connected with the routine life. Spiritual interests stimulate the cognitive activity of the person, consisting in regular reading of the serious literature, visiting of museums, exhibitions and so on. If entertainment serves mainly to an emotional discharge, the knowledge broadens cultural outlook, educates feelings and develops intellectual activity. At a social level, additional leisure functions can appear as a result of motivateless actions or unanticipated relations with other sub systems:

First, the function of socialization in the sense of preparation for requirements of other life spheres;

Second, goal achievement aspect, which refers to regenerative functions of leisure sphere;

Third, the aspect is described by means of concepts of integration, stabilization and solidarity.

The sphere of leisure is constantly dynamically changing, the space of leisure caused by cultural and individual values, is becoming a space of interaction for individual projects and sociocultural opportunities. In modern realities the substantial leisure centers are shifted to a space of education and self-education. The "serious leisure" and training processes in the framework of informal communication are becoming more relevant. Various scientific approaches to the leisure problem consider assistance of a leisure institution to social identity of the person (Urry J., 1994) and national integration, "... which due to explosive force of a social question is constantly under threat " (Garhammer M., 1999). Qualitative change of the leisure institution consists in universalization of the basic value: everyone has the right for development in his or her free time. However it is important for us to emphasize that in Russia the said tendencies are still not very popular with the most part of the population as the level of the income of the majority of Russians do not allow to speak about general availability of leisure options.

The mass leisure forms are becoming rather accessible to everybody by means of television. Democratization of leisure consumption is being coordinated with abolition of specific strata values. However, in our opinion, it is impossible to disagree with D. Brock's opinion that if social integration of the nation occurs with the help of leisure institution its success is doubtful as today the unemployed and the poor are deprived of socially legitimate leisure and means to participate in it (Brock D., 1994).

Modern educational tendencies and informal education as important element of socialization

Informal education - not directed (not realized) training in the process of any informational or communicative action, and also in the process of daily routines (Dohmen G., 1998), focused on reception of personal experience, self-organizable and self-adjustable beyond formal educational structures, with conscious or unconscious acquisition of the competence. Informal education is also the important component of the individual socialization, helps them to master new social roles, promotes spiritual growth, but in relation to the formal education system in a modern society it plays an additional role. Besides, informal education is the most flexible, various in

forms and a multidimensional part of system of continuous education. It can mostly satisfy educational needs of different groups of the population not always directly connected with their professional growth. Its main feature is a non-conventional approach to the organization of educational-cognitive activity, close communication with industrial and sociocultural environment, all-round stimulation of self-education and self-development of the person, irrespective of their trade, age, a residence, but it is obligatory in view of their educational needs and interests. The importance of informal education and functions of formal and informal education should be demonstrated in a greater degree than before, it is necessary to keep a dialogue between actors in the given sphere, social partners, and researchers to promote informal education. We think the dialogue should include development of the quality standards of education, educational monitoring, and assessment systems. One way of reforming the educational system is the process of diversification of education, which includes individualization, variety, and continuity of educational programmes (Ananjeva T., Stroganova T., 2005). K. Antipev believes that it requires not only solid financial support, but also a socio-cultural environment stimulating the activity of the person in order to acquire and effectively use knowledge; to strengthen innovative activity in all educational system and providing its continuous nature; to revise traditional forms and methods of training; and to refer to fundamental values and progressive traditions of people (Antipev K., 2005).

New educational technologies mean an opportunity of training with use of modern systems like telecommunications, electronic educational materials and virtual electronic libraries, application of new methodology of training. Teaching an independent acquisition of knowledge, methods of independent individual work is becoming more important. In this connection, a formation of new educational concepts caused by global tendencies for an information society, and also special features of the Russian transforming society is happening, in which the educational aspect in a context of adaptation of citizens to vary conditions is being considered. Much attention is being paid to independent educational actions and insufficiently of traditional passive forms of education. Alongside with the process of establishment of an information society and increase in need for knowledge, the control over the distribution of knowledge and its availability is decreasing. In our opinion, the said aspects change preconditions for educational practices. With rapid changes in the spheres connected with knowledge acquisition, change in educational content is needed more often. Speed of obsolescence of knowledge leads to creation of new training models. This fundamental direction offers space expansion for training.

The acquisition of educational competence depends on the following factors: socialization, the social environment and the opportunities connected with it, an available educational level, and an individual ability (readiness) for education. The basic public initiatives in the educational sector are defined as the development of open educational forms, and self-regulated educational competence. Therefore, education should get complex nature, cover a wide range of knowledge with application of the multidimensional programs directed on harmonious development of the person, creation of equal starting opportunities and open space for realization of mental abilities. The concept of "educational space" includes social -integrative function as well. This space is capable of transformation and the organization, assumes acquisition of a cultural material and ways of its development defining dynamics, orientation, nature, degree and depth of socialization and individualization processes of an individual.

Theoretical foundation of leisure and education integration

Socio-cultural institutions give the population an opportunity to acquire knowledge, values, norms and samples, but they can only regulate the certain kinds of activity and need of the population through creation of a choice situation in a society which assumes sociocultural information. In the process of cultural values acquisition accents are shifted on self-regulation that means an individual chooses knowledge, norms, samples of behavior and activity themselves. "Influence of a spiritual life on the routine, its interaction with everyday life assumes relationship between a spiritual and ordinary life structures, channels for exchange realization, communication. Therefore the sociological analysis of a spiritual life of a society assumes studying specific features of its reproduction both in groups - ethnic, generational, gender-specific, and in strata - authority, wealth, prestige of education, - forming channels of social mobility - education, a politics, economics". Thus, communicative-cognitive and educational activity should be considered as an inter-subject dialogue in the framework of both a one and different historical time periods, one or several cultures, "focus of research has shifted from conceptional-instrumental to communicative rationality" (Habermas J., 1993).

The connection of leisure and education has already been defined in terminology. In Ancient Greece the word "leisure " meant serious activity without pressure of necessity ". The English word SCHOOL (school) comes from the Greek word SCHOLE (leisure) that assumes an interrelation of leisure and education. Thus, the educational space is a space of free creative communication, covering all fields of activity both across and on a vertical.

Education is not a training activity, educational institutions under specially organized conditions any more, and becomes the process of lifetime activity (Ilyin G., 2005). Therefore, such kind of education is a form of continuous education of an individual. Leisure does not casually serve as the form of realization of vital and social preferences (including educational), allowing all variety the expert to choose what most correspond to feeling, and promote self-affirmation of the individual. The motivation of leisure behaviour is more often connected with a relaxation, however, at present everyone is more actively using those leisure forms which to a certain extent intensify life space, bring " a fresh jet " in routine life, updating, reviving, bringing the new tendencies connected with an active public position and creative activity, consumption of values of spiritual culture, intellectual, and physical development of the person. Today, on the one hand, objective conditions for a choice of the form and rational use of leisure are created, on the other hand, low solvency of the population and aspiration to provide tolerable existence considerably reduce quantity of contacts in sphere of leisure.

Change of ways of carrying out of leisure has the certain things in common with formation of new valuable reference points in registration of leisure. Development observable in last years in valuable system points towards a direction of self-development, reception of pleasure, individualism and conducts to variety of individual valuable combinations. Displacement of leisure interests aside developments, self-improvement, aspiration to reception of the information, development of additional skills is distinctly observed.

A necessity for new educational forms and institutions are dictated by universal tendencies of social development. In this connection we are considering the problem of continuous education. Training is realized both in traditional educational forms, and in the framework of the informal communication. An individual process of transformation of the information into knowledge, including self-education, is becoming a leading kind of activity in an information epoch. Special features of educational integration and other public spheres reflect convergent dynamics of

functioning of corresponding social institutions. That is connected with global transformation of socially structural public attitudes, necessity for development of continuous life-term education, uniting both formal, and informal (semi-formal) educational processes and providing an optimal balance between training, entertainment and consumption.

5. Methods

As the central hypothesis of the research is the assumption that integration of education and leisure is experiencing a stage of initial institutionalization and is realized both in institutionalized form (most brightly presented in activity of the organization of corresponding type), and in the individualized form (representing effective strategy for adaptation of the person in conditions of public changes). The purpose of the research is the sociological analysis of integration processes of education and leisure in the context of transformational processes of a modern Russian society. Results of the sociological survey of the German Culture Center (GCC) in Engels from 1992 until 2006 (among the visitors) prove the necessity of education and leisure integration and activation of an educational component of leisure space in view of educational needs of individuals. A case-study method helps to present this leisure institution as one, which combines leisure and educational options. The GCC does an important work on restoration of national-cultural originality, preservation and development of Russian Germans culture, and also gives an opportunity to each person interested in German language and culture, irrespective of age, job and nationality, to take part in its work. The centers of German culture propagandize values of German culture among local population and are a place of interethnic dialogue (Archive 1.09.1994).

As specificity of a life context of the given organization we consider: its location, structure and special features of the leisure activity organization, history of development, structure of participants and personnel in dynamics, frequency of their removability. In the structure of leisure spaces in the GCC semi-formal (a language course, computer courses, children's language-aesthetic school) and informal (visiting a library, realization of cultural projects, intercultural communication, organizing different events) kinds of educational activity.

To analyze a problem in a more expanded way we have also applied quantitative methods. The poll of 200 respondents provided the quantitative data connected with leisure interests of the GCC visitors. We've defined the category of leisure concepts, and found out the mechanism of formation of the leisure options choice by respondents, and also motives and prospects of the given choice. The structure of the questionnaire is made in view of socio-cultural attributes, valuable orientations and leisure behaviour. It also contained questions connected with educational practices in spare time (learning foreign language); that has allowed finding out what position is taken by educational activity in the context of leisure.

As the factors influencing leisure demand, we have defined social-economical and demographic factors, changes in valuable system, changes of structure in labour sphere and the time (short-term) budget, the social environment and mentality, subjective factors, such as personal affirmations and motivations, we've specified two effective leisure components: the rational appeal and the experience-connected- appeal.

The generalization of the research results has allowed a three-level classification of educational leisure activities according to communicative needs of leisure activity participants and realization space, referring to the similar three-level classification offered by scientists of the Austrian Research Institute of leisure and tourism by L. Boltsman.

Typology of leisure educational activities

Leisure type	Communicative attributes
1. Individual educational activity	The Activity which is mainly carried out individually, and has receptive nature and does not occur in public place
2. Public educational activity	The Activity which takes place in public places and is carried out individually or in cooperation with a constant partner irrespective of contacts to strangers.
3. Communicative educational activity	The Activity executed in cooperation with other people with communication playing the basic role.

All respondents have been conditionally divided into five age groups:

Group 1 (until 18 years old); group 2 (18-24 years) - the respondents who are in a preparatory (initial) phase of professional work, as a rule, with the advanced valuable affirmations; group 3 (25- 44 years) - a phase of a pressure in professional work, and in a context of valuable installations - a phase of transition from traditional to modern values; group 4 (45- 59 years) - stable professional work (or its end), dominant valuable affirmations - conservative traditionalism; group 5 (60 and more) - more often the final phase of professional work (mainly pension-aged people, mostly reflects the conservative and traditional approach.

Based on the assumption of the dominating influence of the age factor on leisure options choice in the framework of the developed typology, educational leisure practices can be distributed as follows among the said five age groups:

	1 group	2 group	3 group	4 group	5 group
Typ 1	47 %	42 %	53 %	37%	43 %
Typ 2	30 %	30 %	27 %	35 %	30 %
Typ 3	23 %	28 %	20 %	28 %	27 %

Comparative leisure typology in five age groups (in %)

Results

Results of the research show that age influences changes in motivation of educational activity: the desire to save up "luggage" of knowledge for the future, to communicate more and to travel worldwide more changes into desire to gain the status of well educated person and accordingly a positive opinion of other people. Old aged people having plenty of free time because due to retirement, children growing up aspire to develop their intellectual activity, to spend their free time in an interesting and useful way, to communicate more with other people.

It is noted that the place of spending free time doesn't directly depend on age criterion, the majority of respondents of all age groups state, that they spend their leisure both at home and outside of it.

Research shows that as people get older, they express dissatisfaction with the realization of their ability to spend leisure time, and that is connected, in opinion of the respondents, mainly with lack of time.

The inequality of resources and various positions in social space exert decisive influence on an inequality of approaches to various cultural and leisure activities. The age factor is often coordinated with other family and professional circumstances, which reflect various life phases. These factors influencing leisure should be considered in interpretation. Registration of leisure reflects in this sense both unequal social practices and differentiating strategies of various age levels.

The qualitative analysis of the GCC activity within 14 years of its operation proves efficient of the offered model of the leisure organization that is caused by relative stability of workers and leadership of the GCC; dynamics of development, proved by institutional foundations of educational leisure activity specifying semi-formal (language courses, computer courses, children's language-aesthetic school) and informal (attending a library, realization of cultural projects and actions, intercultural dialogue, organizing different events on holidays) forms and an optimal parity of training, entertainment and consumption.

Opposition of leisure typologies demonstrates that the respondents of all age groups prefer the educational activities of the first type that shows the desire to distract from requirements of mass multi-optional society and to spend leisure in personal space.

During the research, scientific interest was also focused on parameters of frequency, a place, and also a degree of respondents' satisfaction with the leisure. It is proved, that unessential negative estimation of had time for leisure concerns satisfaction with activities, which take place at this time. Besides, it is noted that lack of time is frequently caused by a disability to manage the time. Despite of this, most respondents have chosen individual leisure connected with a relaxation. 58 % of them expressed a desire to study a foreign language, and/or to get education (self-education) in their free time. Cognitive, creative, heuristic functions of leisure are insufficiently realized by visitors of the GCC .

The research work proved the necessity of use of educational opportunities of leisure, and also its socially-spatial educational designing, reason for integration of educational options into leisure space structure, activation of an educational component of leisure in a context of realization of the concept of continuous education. Besides it has been found out that the GCC visitors are satisfactory assessed on the organization of leisure sphere in Engels. However this assessment is worse in relation to respondents' areas of residing and that indicates the limited number of offers in general and the extremely limited - the offers by the available leisure institutions connected with education and self-education, insufficient number of establishments that is connected, first of all, not with absence of demand, but with insufficiency in subsidizing.

Typically, the object of this kind of research consists in the fact that it is included into the general leisure structure of the town, and is considered as the organization known not only in Russia but also abroad. In this connection, we emphasize the importance of integrating education and leisure as one of mechanisms of realization of process of continuous education, which allows not only to adapt more successfully to modern realities, but also to prepare for changing social and economic conditions. These conclusions are the powerful precondition of including educational practice into the context of leisure in the establishment of similar types.

Analyzing the results of the research, it is necessary to pay attention that in order to simplify participation in educational processes, it is necessary to offer more space for self-education, a variety of forms and ways of spending free time, combining entertainment, a lot of information, and an opportunity for creativity and getting new knowledge. The planned prospects of the research of an educational component in leisure space promote a choice of right strategy in the process of social integration of the person, sensation of the social participation. The basic problem, thus, consists in activation of leisure experience space for continuous education and further qualification of strategies and approaches to integrate education into social leisure space.

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