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*M.S. Kossidi¹**¹Kazakh National Academy of Choreography
(Astana, Kazakhstan)***THE CONCEPT OF LIFELONG LEARNING:
DIRECTIONS OF UNDERSTANDING****Annotation**

Globalization and the growth of the fast-changing economy require people to upgrade their skills and knowledge throughout their lives to cope with modern life. The concept of lifelong learning is globally recognized by researchers, educational institutions, students, adults and practitioners, but still there are diverse vectors of understanding of this concept and why we need to focus on lifelong learning. This article also makes an attempt to observe the concept of lifelong learning and its directions of understanding in the educational context of the Kazakh national academy of choreography.

Keywords: *lifelong learning, formal, non-formal and informal learning.*

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БАҒЫТТАРЫ****Аннотация**

Жаһандану мен өзгермелі экономиканың өсуі адамдардан өмір бойы біліктері мен білімдерін толықтырып отыруды талап етеді, бұл заманауи өмірге төтеп беруге көмектеседі. Әлем бойынша зерттеушілер, білім мекемелері, студенттер, кәсіпқой мамандар өмір бойы оқу концепциясын мойындады, алайда бұл концепцияны түсінудің бірнеше бағыттары мен неліктен өмір бойы оқу керек екенінің түрлі себептері бар. Бұл мақалада Қазақ ұлттық хореография академиясында білім беру саласында өмір бойы оқу концепциясымен және оны түсіну бағыттарымен танысуға қадам жасалған.

Тірек сөздер: *өмір бойы оқу, ресми, ресми емес оқу.*

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(Астана, Казахстан)***КОНЦЕПЦИЯ НЕПРЕРЫВНОГО ОБУЧЕНИЯ:
НАПРАВЛЕНИЯ ПОНИМАНИЯ****Аннотация**

Глобализация и рост быстро меняющейся экономики требуют от людей развития навыков и знаний на протяжении всей жизни. Исследователи, образовательные учреждения, студенты, взрослые и практикующие специалисты по всему миру признают концепцию обучения на протяжении всей жизни, но все же существуют различные направления понимания концепции и

почему мы должны сосредоточиться на обучении на протяжении всей жизни. В этой статье также делается попытка ознакомиться с концепцией непрерывного обучения и ее направлениями понимания в образовательной среде Казахской национальной академии хореографии.

Ключевые слова: непрерывное обучение, формальное, неформальное обучение.

Introduction

According to the definition of the European Commission, lifelong education includes any activity throughout the life of a person undertaken to improve knowledge, skills and competencies, within the framework of personal, civil, social and professional activities. Modern society, based on knowledge, requires the availability of comprehensive systems of education and learning opportunities. At the same time, the specificity of modern development brings to the forefront the concept of lifelong learning thereby emphasizing the role and responsibility of citizens for their own development. The development of the Bologna Process led to the development of the European qualification framework and the creation of national qualification frameworks. Recognition of the results of previous formal, informal and informative learning facilitates the implementation of lifelong learning culture.

Diverse vectors concept of lifelong learning

Many discussions have been raised by researchers about lifelong education and its implication in the development of human capital. The concept of lifelong learning was viewed from different perspectives and approaches. Some authors advocate that lifelong education should be interpreted as an education for personal needs of an individual and that include more practical-based approach. Thomas E. [1, p. 4] suggested that the aim of lifelong learning, whether in the formal, non-formal or informal mode, is to enrich knowledge, skills and competences of a person in order to be successful in society. The concept is focused on the development of human capital where already proposed opportunities by society should be widened.

At the same time other opponents argue that lifelong education should be conceived as learning which is directed towards enhancing community development and serve for public goods [2], [3]. Learning is seen as a product of living of individuals who make contribution to increase economic competitiveness and public welfare. The researchers emphasized that lifelong learning should be intended and planned, and hence carefully viewed in terms of time, space and organization. They suggested pragmatic approach to conceptualize lifelong learning as an applicable option to achieve learning for all. Considering two-faceted dimensions of lifelong learning, Bagnall [4] pointed out that this approach tends to limit access to education for disadvantaged mass of community, and thus social gap will significantly increase. Theoretical approach versus pragmatic one still boils down to a common problem of

handling the issue at the philosophical level. From this perspective there are debates and discussions that researchers should make shift towards the process of implementation of lifelong learning which would care both the needs of an individual and be relevant to the communities across social, cultural and economic constituencies.

Despite the fact that special policies exist promoting lifelong learning in educational institutions however there is still misunderstanding in its concept and most important in delivering process to the grassroots. For most educational institutions lifelong learning is to organize business for non-traditional students who after completion short-time courses receive special certifications or in other words granted professional qualifications. These professional qualifications grants the right to be fully employed in a market-driven area which has economic impact. Yet the relationship between continuing education, distance education and lifelong education is not transparently clarified and hence uncertain.

The potential students have an access to courses and programs that are modelled for professionals towards upgrading their skills in order to meet increased global competition and the requirements needed for capacity work. In addition, these non-traditional students have an opportunity to enlarge their communicative skills and can socialize within community. Thus, non-traditional students are charged to fulfil their potential, modify their behavior and personally invest in their future. This initiative is highly supported by higher educational institutions which express willingness to diversify the notion of “education for all”. Nowadays there is a steady trend of decreasing students willing to be enrolled into traditional study at the universities. It can be explained by different factors like increasing tuition, university courses and disciplines which are not practical-oriented, limited number of invited professors abroad, etc. Consequently, universities made their shift focus towards lifelong learning including aged students. Most universities also consider lifelong learning as an education for adults including individuals who seek to get additional qualification and it makes sense. For example, adult education plays an important role in the rise of Swedish nation, its industrial and economic development and its political culture. In 1923, adult education was legislated and received state allowances. It became an instrument and precondition for both the political and social development of the modern Swedish democratic nation [5].

Modern concept of lifelong learning

Currently being part of global educational community Kazakhstan has made educational shift towards lifelong learning as well. It could be founded in documents related to higher education which includes the concept of lifelong learning. The Bologna process implementation report 2015 showed that the concept of lifelong learning

had been implemented in most European higher educational institutions. Various policy measures were designed to enable higher education programmes to be delivered flexibly. The cross-country analysis shows that the definition of lifelong learning is broad. For instance, in Bosnia and Herzegovina “lifelong learning means integration of formal, non-formal and informal learning in order to acquire abilities for continuous improvement of quality of life” whereas in Kazakhstan “lifelong learning starts from early childhood and lasts until post-pensionable age, including a variety of formal and informal forms of education, and inclusive education”.

In Romania “lifelong learning represents all learning activities undertaken during the life of every person in formal, non-formal and informal training or skills development for a multiple perspective: personal, civic, social or occupational. Lifelong learning includes early education, school education, higher education, continuing education and training of adults”. In Bulgaria “the national strategy for lifelong learning sets the strategic framework of the government policy on education and training in the period of 2014-2020 and aims to achieve the European goal of smart, sustainable and inclusive growth [7, p. 148].

The concept of lifelong learning of these countries focuses on the development of an individual’s competences whereas Estonia, Serbia and Bulgaria’s definition of this concept emphasized “the individual’s skills which would meet the demands of the labour market and economy. It provides opportunities for jobs, free education and interest in and for young people, as well as participation in the activities of civil society organizations” [7, p. 148]. This report showed that in Kazakhstan non-formal programmes, including activities such as language learning and courses for updating professional skills are widely spread and open to all learners regardless of gender, age, religion, nationality or educational background. However, formal programmes provided under flexible arrangements are introduced to some degree which is still in the process of acceptance. Most Kazakhstani educational institutions recognize lifelong learning as a mission to reach all targeted students and all involved stakeholders.

Hence the educational institutions follow the elaborated educational policy about lifelong learning, its certain measures and mechanisms. In particular, the lifelong learning strategy for 2015-2020 has been developed and implemented. The aim of this concept is to support the development of Kazakhstani education, to stimulate professional and personal growth of citizens with the aim of increasing the competitiveness of the national economy. The educational policy emphasizes introduction of a culture of education throughout life at all levels of a three-tiered education system including secondary education, technical and vocational education and higher education as well as education for adults.

Analyzing the current situation in which the implementation of lifelong learning in Kazakhstan is carried out, the following prerequisites for the development of lifelong learning should be pointed out:

- accessibility and continuity of all levels of education;
- access to quality education through virtual platforms such as e-learning, MOOC, etc.;
- establishing the national qualification system based on updated competence approaches;
- the development of a multidisciplinary and multifunctional network of educational institutions of technical and vocational education, higher and postgraduate education;
- creation of the system of independent assessment of the quality of professional preparedness, confirmation and assignment of professional qualifications.

Case of the Kazakh national academy of choreography

In case of the Kazakh national academy of choreography, which is the first educational institution in Central Asia with a complete cycle of multilevel professional choreographic education, the concept of lifelong learning can be observed. Multilevel form of education consists of primary, technical and vocational education, as well as undergraduate (bachelor's degree) and postgraduate (master's degree, PhD) education. The educational process at the Kazakh National Academy of Choreography involves ballet artists receiving professional education on the basis of principal general or secondary general education that allows free change of major or transfer to other educational institutions. Students have also the opportunity to perform at small and large venues to gain unique experience in ballet art. Thus students master their skills and knowledge from primary education to postgraduate one at the same educational institution which is fully equipped with all the necessary infrastructure as well as technical and information resources.

Besides that, currently there is a department for additional education which is committed to provide an access for students and teachers to high-quality education services that meet specific learning needs. Some students, teachers may require additional support to help them to achieve their educational and professional goals. The department for additional education organizes short-time master-classes or seminars lectured by outstanding and recognized practitioners in the sphere of art and culture. At the end of these short-time courses the attendees usually receive professional certificates confirming passing the courses. From this point there can be also observed a concept of lifelong learning. Being a young educational institution with specific types and methods of learning for Kazakh national academy of choreography there is an endeavor towards nationally and internationally recognition.

Conclusion

Undoubtedly that lifelong learning has its advantages like smooth adaptation to change; for instance, a lifelong learner stays aware of changes in technology, education, finance, economy, etc. and to be competitive on a labour market as well as for community. It has positive benefits on economical issues. New jobs and positions are created all the time. New career options are opened up all the time.

Especially lifelong learning benefits aged students who look forward to be active, positive, happy and be useful for society. Thus educational institutions find advantages in lifelong learning and provide support to all stakeholders.

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