

Development of modern sociological education in Ukraine: problems, prospects

Desarrollo de la educación sociológica moderna en Ucrania: problemas, perspectivas

Iryna Mykytiuk

sobko.iryinka@gmail.com

<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-2573-2174>

Postgraduate, department of sociology Ivan Franko National University of Lviv, Lviv, Ukraine.

Gulbarshyn Chepurko

gichepurko@ukr.net

<https://orcid.org/0000-0001-7540-5174>

Doctor of Sociological Sciences, Senior Research Department of Social Expertise Director Fellow Institute of Sociology of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine, Department of Social Expertise, Kyiv, Ukraine.

Natalia Sobolieva

soboleva_ni@ukr.net

<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-5503-203X>

Doctor of Sociological Sciences, Senior Research Fellow Leading Research Fellow, Department of Social Psychology Institute of Sociology of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine, Department of Social Psychology, Kyiv, Ukraine.

Myroslava Kukhta

miroslavakukhta@gmail.com

<https://orcid.org/0000-0003-4663-9670>

Professor Department of Philosophy, Sociology and Political Science Doctor of Sociological Sciences, Kyiv National University of Trade and Economics, Ukraine.

Inna Shevel

01601shevelinna@ukr.net

<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-6387-2506>

Candidate of Sociological Sciences Associate Professor Kyiv National University of Culture and Arts, Faculty of PR, Journalism and Cybersecurity, Department of International Relations, Kyiv, Ukraine.

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Abstract

The aim of the article: The article is devoted to the characteristic features, problems, and prospects of sociological education in Ukraine. Research methods and techniques: Theoretical and sociological level used the method of generalization own experience of teaching sociology in institutions of higher, in general sociological education in Ukraine, its characteristic features, problems and prospects of development. Results: Moreover, the functional components of sociological education are analyzed. Conclusions: An important aspect of the development of the Ukrainian professional educational sector “Sociology” is the search for optimal ways of selecting qualified teaching staff.

Keywords: sociological education, quality of education, specialists in sociology, educational process, Ukraine.

Resumen

El objetivo del artículo: El artículo está dedicado a los rasgos característicos, los problemas y las perspectivas de la educación sociológica en Ucrania. Métodos y técnicas de investigación: El nivel teórico y sociológico utilizó el método de generalización propia experiencia de enseñanza de la sociología en instituciones de educación sociológica superior, en general en Ucrania, sus rasgos característicos, problemas y perspectivas de desarrollo. Resultados: Además, se analizan los componentes funcionales de la educación sociológica. Conclusiones: Un aspecto importante del desarrollo del sector de la educación profesional ucraniana “Sociología” es la búsqueda de formas óptimas de selección de personal docente cualificado.

Palabras clave: educación sociológica, calidad de la educación, especialistas en sociología, proceso educativo, Ucrania.

1. Introduction

Profound social changes in Ukrainian higher education contributed to the development of the educational process in the country according to new principles, which include: a profound respect for the individual, his needs, and cognitive abilities. Also, social education gives impetus to the development of the Ukrainian society, people, and state as a whole. Sociological education in Ukraine is an important area of formation of a new generation based on the latest educational methods. However, many unresolved dilemmas require comprehensive scientific research in the framework of the following article. The debates on the development of sociological education concern many aspects, in particular, its content, structure, and the prospects of scientific developments in this sphere.

Ukrainian sociological education is a new social institution in society, the purpose of which is to receive, accumulate and transmit scientific developments in the field of sociology, as well as to train future practicing sociologists.

The social essence of education consists in revealing theoretical and practical aspects of humanitarian impact on personality, society, and state. Consequently, it is important to investigate, on a scientific level, the functional component of the educational process in sociology.

The purpose of the article is the analysis, scientific study of the essence and problem aspects of the emergence, existence, and subsequent prospects for the development of sociological education in Ukraine.

2. Literature Analysis

In the scientific literature, the first understanding of the concept of education was described in the writings of (Durkheim, 1956). He proposed the term “education” and described it as a separate social institution and mechanism of influence on society and social activity, which is connected with their different spheres: political, religious, socio-economic, ideological (this connection is two-way) (Durkheim, 1956, p. 112).

In the understanding of Parsons (1967) education as a social institution is closely related to its scientific development “quadra” (the unity of the four imperatives: integrative adaptive, purposive, and latent components).

The basis for the scientific understanding of sociology was laid by the famous sociologists Durkheim (1956) and Weber (1994). In their circle of scientific interest were the functions of education, their impact on the educational process, and the relationship of sociology with economics and politics. Education is an important factor in structural changes in society and global transformations (Hrabovets et al., 2020). Also, scientific reflection on the essence and content of sociological education was carried out by sociologists Serikawa and Moura (2019), who defined education as a set of social transformations in recent times and attempts to find new answers to current social problems (p. 2205-2221).

A reflection on the sociology of education was carried out in research papers by Moraes and Leiro (2016). The authors noted that the social education of young people will qualitatively affect all spheres of life and is important and necessary for the harmonious development of society as a whole (p. 1626-1644).

The position of Lobanova et al. (2021), who analyzed education as a social institution. They identified the following functions of this social institution: professional growth of young people, training of qualified specialists, socialization of people, and development of spiritual life in society.

In the modern realities of development in Ukraine, sociological education has formed as a social institution and a basic component in the system of higher education. In this regard, the task of sociological education is the accumulation of theoretical and practical knowledge in sociology, as well as the effective training of future specialists in sociology. Sociology as a direction of professional training in the system of higher education is relatively young (Sysoieva, 2018). The beginning of the formation of the first sprouts in the professional field of “Sociological education” a number of authors allocate to the mid-80s of the XX century when sociology departments appear in universities (Klimova, 2016, p. 34-43).

It is assumed that sociological training was not carried out in institutions of higher education in accordance with the dominant action of ideological propaganda in society. There are reasons to put forward the hypothesis that sociological education lacks a tradition of training young specialists, a small number of theoretical and practical developments, as do a number of related humanities specialties, such as: law, history, journalism, philosophy, etc. Consequently, it can be argued that this has led to the formation of numerous new approaches to the study of sociological issues directly in the process of learning and teaching subjects in the specialty of “Sociology”. However, this does not mean that sociological education is less valuable to society. Sociology as a science, as an academic discipline, fulfills an invaluable function in our opinion: to form in people a value, a worldview, and a culture of adequate social relations in general and between individuals separately.

In addition, it provides a concept of society, scientific and practical skills of tolerant behavior in it, explains the formation of public opinion, and justification of the action of social laws in society. The great scientific and applied potential of sociological education explain its considerable prevalence in developed foreign countries, such as the USA, Canada, Sweden, Germany, Norway, and a number of others.

As for the creation of quality educational programs in educational institutions where sociology is not a major, it should be noted that sociology is now included in students' educational programs along with other humanities disciplines, namely: political science, logic, religious studies, history, and others. The connection between sociology and the above disciplines is mediated by the fact that sociology is singled out as a key component for the study of the surrounding world and its society studied within these academic subjects (Durkheim, 1982, p. 209-210). Through mastering the discipline of Sociology young people have the opportunity to join the systematic analysis of the concepts of “society”, “social relations”, “crisis in society”, “social values”, and on this basis to develop methods of effective impact on society and the formation of civil society and prospects for further development (Khyzhniak et al., 2021).

In this connection, first of all, the qualitative training of future specialists in sociology is urgent. The obstacle to this goal is, first of all, organizational and methodological dilemmas. According to the prescriptions of the state normative standards in the sphere

of education in higher educational institutions of non-core direction, a small amount of academic hours for studying the subject "Sociology" in the range of up to fifty-four hours (Bartosh, 2022) is provided.

However, even this small amount of academic hours in training sociology specialists is not fully provided (it is reduced by necessity to fit into the total volume of the curriculum for the specialty). In addition, an important problem of the quality of education in non-core institutions of higher education is that the teachers there are those for whom sociology is a second specialty (not a major) and received it, as a rule, based on their first education. Therefore, the quality of teaching differs considerably from institutions of higher education, which employ qualified sociologists who received this specialty as their major. The situation with teaching sociology in non-core educational institutions could be remedied by professional development courses, as well as the participation of scientific-pedagogical employees in scientific-practical events: conferences, seminars, webinars, etc. (Klimova, 2016, p. 34-43). Therefore, the level of academic development of "Sociology" science and the quality of its teaching for future sociology students do not coincide. This increases the need for quality training of the teaching staff of non-profiled institutions of Ukraine in sociology direction.

3. Methodology

Theoretical and sociological level used the method of generalization own experience of teaching sociology in institutions of higher, in general sociological education in Ukraine, its characteristic features, problems and prospects of development. A detailed analysis of the peculiarities of using the methodology of teaching sociology as an academic discipline was carried out. The following general theoretical methods of research, such as methods of comparison and abstraction analysis and synthesis, were used in this exploration. As a result of using the method of comparison it was possible to analyze the functional components of sociological education in Ukraine, to reveal sociological education as a social institution and its interrelation with the formation of the market of professional sociologists in Ukraine. It is correct to note the use of the method of abstraction in this work, because the latter implies the transition from generalization to conclusions and recommendations. The critical analysis of curricula and programs promoted formation with the purpose of increase of interest of students in results of their training, promoted formation of clear recommendations of introduction in the higher school in a direction "Sociology" of a principle of electivity of educational courses. After all, the information era is characterized by a wide integration of previously incompatible areas of human knowledge, such processes are also characteristic of the modern education system. It should be noted that the methodological basis of the article was the works of coryphaei and modern leading sociologists and educators. Primer analysis of theoretical views on the development of higher sociological education has shown that at present there is a widespread lack of sociological study of this problem in a comprehensive form, taking into account the impact of globalization processes, modernization of education and the influence of modern information society on higher education. The latter, namely the social relations arising in the process of providing

sociological education, its development and improvement of pedagogical processes became the object of our study.

4. Results

At present, the educational process in institutions of higher education in Ukraine in the sphere of training sociologists creates an urgent need to solve two basic problems. The first educational problem in the sociological field is the creation of high-quality educational programs in educational institutions where sociology is not a major field. The next is the creation of a competitive sociological education that would enable our specialists to get a high professional level and work both at the Ukrainian labor market and the possibility of internships abroad.

Thus, let us analyze the above-mentioned educational dilemmas.

The teaching of sociology also overlaps with global dangers. In particular, Professor Michael Burawoy of UC Berkeley (USA) believed that the phenomenon of inequality is an important sociological problem. From such positions the scholar repeatedly spoke at ISA World Congresses of Sociology "Finding Inequality in a World: Challenges for Global Sociology". In particular, based on the study of the main trends in the development of university education, the issues of its commercialization and the process of formation of the "precariat" in the educational and training environment are noticeable. It is inequality, according to the scientist, that plays a key role in modern social-transformation processes and forces people (especially young people) to actively participate in the space of political life. It is important that this theme was noted not only by sociologists. In particular, according to M. Burawoy, Pope Francis I also repeatedly touched on inequality in his sermons. The American sociologist also drew on the works of prominent economists, in particular Tom Piketty, who considered inequality an indispensable attribute of economic growth. At the same time, inequality does not disappear with development, but only worsens. This also affects possible access to university education. As M. Burawoy has identified, there are two strategies of survival for institutions. The first is to obtain external financial support (voluntary donations from alumni or charitable organizations, funds from research, tuition increases, etc.). The second is to maximize savings in the educational process, particularly at the expense of faculty members. At the same time, humanities disciplines (including sociology), in both cases find themselves in a risky position, because the modern market is set to support other specialties.

Note that there are other views on the culture of sociology and its importance. Accordingly, the task of sociology is to investigate these complex processes, so the importance of this science will not disappear over time. If we turn to the second problem of sociological education in Ukraine, it is worth noting that we are now only on the way to high-quality training of future specialists in sociology. In this case, there are many unresolved educational dilemmas and questions. To date, higher educational institutions

have trained scientific and pedagogical workers in the field of sociology (Koniuchenko, 2019).

It is appropriate to emphasize that the need for professional sociologists in Ukraine is increasing. Therefore, the search for optimal ways of developing quality education for future sociologists-practitioners is especially relevant now (Kalashnikova; Chorna, 2021, p. 1-11).

As we noted above in our work, there is a layer of unresolved tasks and questions. At the first stage of training to become a sociologist, students complete four years of training and, as a result of final examinations and qualifying papers, receive an educational document - a bachelor's degree, which certifies the basic higher education in the field of sociology. Then the graduate can get the next degree of qualification, to study for a master's degree in sociology, receiving the corresponding state diploma. As for the observance of methodological and organizational aspects in the educational process of sociologists, everything is carried out in compliance with all norms of the current legislation in the field of education.

There is reason to reproach the inaccuracy of the content of the curriculum and the quality of students' assimilation of the provisions of the latter, namely the lack of additional methods and forms of conveying to future professionals the best scientific and practical recommendations that they can use in their practical activities.

In addition to the basic subjects for the course, the educational program includes additional special disciplines designed to provide answers to specific issues in the work of sociologists. The study of the 20% of disciplines will ensure the future emergence of highly qualified specialists in sociology. However, there is now a significant dilemma as to where to find teachers who will be well prepared not only theoretically, but also practically.

The curriculum for future specialists in sociology should include, in addition to the basic subjects, also special disciplines that help to root a set of necessary skills and knowledge for further work in this field.

We have summarized that the structure of the curriculum for sociologists includes a complex of almost a hundred disciplines, among which 80 percent are basic, and 20 are special courses of free choice. These are common features of sociological education, but certain Ukrainian institutions of higher education are described as characterized by their individual specificity and a certain proven pedagogical approach. The material to be studied is subject to structuring; accordingly, the basic subjects and special courses are divided into five main parts, each distributed over three hundred academic hours. These include the theory and history of sociology, the methodology of sociological research, branch sociology, and special courses. The amount of time for studying branch sociologies and undergraduate special courses is recommended in a shortened version. However, many practical classes are organized.

The quality of teaching and students' learning is directly dependent on the skills of the teacher, his desire to convey the essence and promote sustainable interest in the subject. The question of the correctness of the choice of one or another method of teaching in the context of the theme of the lesson and the individual qualities of students, because it has a significant impact on the quality of Ukrainian sociological education as a whole, requires a careful attitude of researchers lately (Bartosh, 2022; Kalashnikova; Chorna, 2021, P. 1-11).

The end of the twentieth century was marked by the search for active methods in the training of future sociologists. These, in turn, led to new pedagogical approaches that stimulated motivation and sustained motivation for student learning. This had a significant effect and high pedagogical achievement in the sociological field (Blackledge & Hunt, 2019, 1-4).

The quality of higher education and the level of students' assimilation of sociological knowledge determines a set of scientific and practical pedagogical techniques, which the teacher chooses depending on the topic of the class and the audience. Here the interactive approach comes to the rescue, which involves a combination of classical pedagogical approaches and active methods of pedagogical interaction between the teacher and students (Pak, 2018, p. 103-112).

The content of the interactive approach is a combination of several components, namely: ready-made information blocks plus qualitative connection between them, as well as a variety of text and multimedia files that form in the student's mind a whole picture of educational material on the selected topic (Kalashnikova & Chorna, 2021, p. 1-11). Consequently, the quality of higher education can be assessed by three key parameters. The first parameter is objectivist, and it proposes assessing the quality of higher education in two areas: the faculty, their education and professionalism, and the corresponding educational outcomes of higher education graduates and their success in learning and employment. Relativism refers to the next parameter, which determines the goals of the educational process. And, finally, the last parameter is the competence of the participants of the educational process, both teachers and students, their motivation, ability to create a search, and desire for self-improvement (Klimova, 2016, p. 34-43).

One of the key indicators of the quality of higher sociological education at the present stage is the formation of academic culture. Therefore, the sociological reflection of higher education for sociologists is extremely relevant for modern sociological science. Academic culture in the system of higher education quality assessment is the object of scientific research of scholars in the field of humanities disciplines (Pak, 2018, p. 323-326).

An important aspect of the analysis of sociological education in Ukraine is its functional component, which can include the following components.

First of all, here belongs the function of social reflection of the structure of society, which depending on the needs can give a schematic answer and detailed (Pak, 2018, 323-326).

Next, the function of mapping the configuration of social needs of different groups of society. It gives an answer, which social statuses of individuals are now prestigious or not. In this case, education is a social elevator that can change the position of the individual in the structure of society.

Third, quality sociological education creates the preconditions for the formation of a new social picture of reality.

Fourth, the function of social selection provides an answer as to the changing status of members of society at different levels of education.

Fifth, the function of socialization provides guidelines for the formation of a person's personal properties through the prism of social values.

The latter can become a reality through consistent steps of education, as well as the situational formation of values in people through learning and the accumulation of new information (Koniuchenko, 2019).

And sixth, to the communicative function can be attributed such a function of sociological education, which increases the quality of interaction in the educational process and depends on the level of culture of the teacher, his knowledge and methods of impact on the student community and the ability to transfer the cultural achievements of different generations.

Seventh, the humanistic function of the sociological world reveals itself through cultural patterns of behavior, stimulating students' moral growth (Bartosh, 2022).

5. Discussion

However, the variability of the functional components of the educational process is not limited to this. The emergence of the phenomenon of social determination, due to the stratification of social roles at different levels of higher education and social groups becomes important.

In addition, an essential guarantee of the effectiveness of the educational process in higher education in the direction of "Sociology" and Euro-integration in the educational sphere is the principle of electivity of academic disciplines. This changes the number of compulsory elective subjects in the course structure. The list of compulsory disciplines is accordingly considerably narrowed to basic subjects only. Such changes, in turn, increase students' loyalty to the study of the program and their responsibility for the effective assimilation of the material since the subjects they chose on their own.

For the principle of electivity to become one of the fundamental prerequisites of the structure of sociological education in Ukraine it is necessary to overcome a number of objective obstacles on this way. First of all, this requires additional funding, in particular, to pay for more hours of teachers who have increased their workload and to compensate the teachers whose workload has been reduced and they have not reached the minimum. Additional funds are also needed for additional classrooms and their equipment. It is also important to establish a transparent and clear system for monitoring and evaluating the knowledge of students. At the same time, it should be noted that in this system the central place belongs to the student himself, who chooses the direction of training, the number of subjects, and the time required to master them both in the classroom and independently.

It is common knowledge that after receiving a bachelor's degree, students who wish to pursue a full higher education enroll in a master's program to obtain a master's degree in sociology. To gain knowledge and not just a diploma, it is important to master the program, become familiar with various scientific approaches, form your own opinion on many problematic aspects of sociology, and be able to conduct scientific discussions independently, analyze and synthesize the information obtained, and be able to process it creatively. So that the graduate could freely use information from different sources, it is recommended to increase the number of hours for studying foreign languages (Hrabovets, Kalashnikova, Chernous, 2020).

Thus, from a global perspective, sociology has every chance to play a key role among the humanities disciplines. This is explained by the fact that "Sociology" is a science of applied nature and substantiates a number of social phenomena, moreover, it is capable of envisaging future dilemmas and forming scientific and practical recommendations for their solution. Consequently, society is now becoming loyal to the science that studies its regularities, predicts its development, and promotes self-improvement.

6. Conclusions

The research conducted within the framework of this scientific article allows us to draw the following conclusions:

1. Sociological education in Ukraine is described by certain trends and directions of development, namely:
 - sociological education is currently in the process of transformation and the search for new forms and approaches. New pedagogical methods are being actively introduced and new achievements are being used;
 - further development of sociological education requires the training of qualified personnel-teachers who can get a decent academic salary;

7. Suggestions

1. To enable sociological education in Ukraine to compete with foreign education, it is important to raise the prestige of sociological education and the work of a sociologist by increasing government spending in this area
2. To increase students' interest, it is recommended to introduce the principle of elective courses in higher education in the field of sociology. The student himself chooses most of the subjects, except for compulsory ones, and is responsible for the quality of their assimilation. This requires additional funding for educational programs as a whole, classroom hours and extracurricular hours of study material, and compensation for teachers (both those who have an increased workload and those who have a decreased workload).
3. It is necessary to create conditions for opening scientific laboratories for social scientists, which can be a base for training future specialists in social sciences and a component of the educational process.
4. At the legislative level it is necessary to resolve the creation of decent conditions and increase the prestige of sociological education as a condition for the formation of civil society in Ukraine.
5. Also, an important condition for the further development of sociological education is the creation of new jobs as a guarantee of successful employment of trained specialists.
6. To improve the quality of sociological education it is important to form the academic culture of Ukrainian institutions of higher education of sociological direction, as well as non-core educational institutions where sociology is taught.

Academic culture is a certain level of development of higher education, combining scientific and practical skills and sociocultural practices. Academic culture determines the behavior of participants in the educational process, their patterns of behavior, interrelations, and reactions to the external and internal educational environment. It is a criterion of the existing pedagogical relations between the teaching staff and the student community based on values, moral norms, and principles, a guarantee of a significant level of the educational sector in general, and sociological education in particular.

7. It is important to establish international educational ties to provide internships for sociology students and young professionals abroad as a pledge of motivation for professional growth and career advancement.

As a result, let us note that the search for ways to improve sociological education in Ukraine is now a priority task. Solving the latter will contribute to the search for new ways and approaches to improve the general level of education in Ukraine and the levels of sociological knowledge, in particular. High-quality sociological education will create favorable conditions for young people to improve the quality of life in general.

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