

PEDAGOGICAL SCIENCES

CONTINUING EDUCATION CULTURE: MENTAL BARRIERS IN THE KAZAKHSTANI CONTEXT

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Abstract

This article examines the characteristics of the formation of a continuing education culture in Kazakhstani society and analyzes the mental barriers related to returning to education in adulthood from a socio-psychological perspective. The study considers the influence of traditional value systems, age-related stereotypes, social expectations, perceptions of professional stability, and the phenomenon of "social shame." The purpose of the article is to identify internal (psychological) and external (social) factors that hinder the lifelong learning process in Kazakhstan and to model their interrelationships. The results of the study demonstrate the importance of mental transformation in shaping a culture of continuing education and justify the necessity of considering national and cultural characteristics in the development of adult retraining programs.

Keywords: continuing education, lifelong learning, mental barriers, social stereotypes, professional identity, Kazakhstani society.

Introduction. The twenty-first century has become a period of profound transformation in the field of education. The rapid development of science and technology, globalization processes, the instability of the labor market, and constantly changing professional requirements have made continuing education (lifelong learning) not merely an advantage but a fundamental necessity for members of modern society.

International experience demonstrates that lifelong learning not only enhances professional competencies but also positively influences personal development, social adaptation, and psychological well-being.

In Kazakhstan, the education system has undergone significant changes in recent decades. The state pays special attention to improving the professional training of both youth and adults, mastering new technologies, and fostering a culture of lifelong learning. Within the framework of educational reforms, various national programs and initiatives have been introduced, such as "Knowledgeable Kazakhstan" and "Digital Kazakhstan," as well as professional retraining courses.

However, despite these measures, mental barriers related to adult re-education remain a pressing issue.

The relevance of this problem is associated with the influence of psychological, social, and cultural factors on the development and implementation of lifelong learning in Kazakhstan. Many adults face stereotypes such as "*learning is difficult at an older age*" or "*changing one's profession is socially inap-*

propriate." In addition, the conflict between labor market demands and traditional professional culture may negatively affect individuals' motivation to pursue further education.

From this perspective, the formation of a lifelong learning culture in Kazakhstan is not only an economic necessity but also a complex issue that requires consideration of socio-psychological and cultural factors.

The main purpose of this article is to identify the mental factors that hinder the development of a continuing education culture in Kazakhstan and to analyze their mechanisms of interaction from a socio-psychological perspective.

The objectives of the study are:

1. To systematize social stereotypes and national mental factors influencing adult re-education in the Kazakhstani context;
2. To analyze internal psychological barriers (fear, lack of self-confidence, motivation levels);
3. To develop an integrative model of internal and external factors that hinder long-term professional retraining and lifelong learning processes;
4. To formulate practical recommendations for the development of a continuing education culture in Kazakhstan.

Thus, the article considers lifelong learning in Kazakhstan not only as an educational or economic issue but also as a socio-psychological phenomenon. The study aims to understand psychological barriers that

prevent adults from pursuing education and to identify ways to overcome them.

Main Part. The concept of lifelong learning has been recognized as one of the key strategic directions in education in the twenty-first century. This concept emphasizes the necessity of continuously updating knowledge and skills throughout an individual's life. According to studies conducted by UNESCO and OECD, lifelong learning is not only a tool for improving professional competence but also an important factor in social adaptation, psychological stability, and overall quality of life.

International experience shows that individuals actively engaged in lifelong learning are more competitive in the labor market and adapt more quickly to new technological requirements.

From a socio-psychological perspective, the study of lifelong learning takes into account motivational, cognitive, and emotional aspects of human development. The theory of self-actualization proposed by V. I. Maslov explains the motivational basis of continuing education. According to Maslov, individuals can fully realize their professional and social potential only when they experience the need for self-development and the acquisition of new knowledge.

In this regard, lifelong learning can be considered a complex socio-psychological phenomenon encompassing processes of self-knowledge, identification of personal abilities, and understanding of the surrounding world.

N. M. Amosov and S. G. Vershlovsky emphasize that continuing education plays an important role at all stages of an individual's life. They consider this process not only within the framework of formal education systems but also as a broader structure that includes non-formal and digital forms of education.

From this perspective, the social environment, family, workplace, and professional communities serve as important institutions supporting lifelong learning. The role of the family is particularly significant, as the educational interests and motivation of one family member often influence others, thereby creating social support for learning.

Cognitive psychology also plays an important role in studying long-term professional retraining and lifelong learning processes. A person's ability to acquire knowledge, process new information, and apply it in practice is directly related to cognitive development and experience.

The theories of Jean Piaget and L. Vygotsky demonstrate that learning processes are strengthened through social interaction and contribute to the development of thinking, decision-making, and problem-solving abilities. These theories allow lifelong learning to be viewed as a long-term process that supports cognitive development.

The motivational aspects of lifelong learning are also significant. The relationship between intrinsic motivation (self-development, acquisition of new skills, aspiration for professional growth) and extrinsic motivation (job requirements, economic conditions, social recognition) determines the effectiveness of the learning process.

Socio-psychological studies show that adult learning motivation often relies on internal factors, although external factors also play a significant role in encouraging individuals to pursue education. For example, changing labor market requirements, professional competition, and the need to master new technologies motivate adults to engage in retraining.

The issue of mental barriers is particularly relevant in the Kazakhstani context. Research indicates that adults often encounter stereotypes such as "*learning becomes difficult with age*" or "*changing one's profession is socially inappropriate*." These factors reduce learning motivation and hinder the development of a lifelong learning culture.

Furthermore, conflicts between traditional professional culture and modern labor market demands intensify psychological barriers. For instance, experienced professionals may hesitate to master new technologies or change their professional direction due to a lack of confidence in their abilities.

Modern pedagogical and economic theories suggest adopting an integrative approach to lifelong learning. From this perspective, lifelong learning includes not only formal education programs but also professional training, online courses, webinars, seminars, and other forms of non-formal education.

Such an approach enables adults to effectively plan their professional and personal development.

International experience shows that one of the most effective ways to develop a culture of lifelong learning is through learner-centered educational strategies. These strategies offer educational pathways aligned with individuals' interests and professional goals.

In addition, social support, labor market flexibility, and government initiatives—such as retraining programs and online learning platforms—significantly increase the effectiveness of lifelong learning.

Based on these theoretical foundations, several important conclusions can be drawn regarding the study of lifelong learning in Kazakhstan:

1. Lifelong learning is not only an economic necessity but also a socio-psychological phenomenon.
2. Psychological barriers (fear, lack of confidence, stereotypes) significantly influence adult participation in education.
3. Lifelong learning should be considered a long-term process that supports cognitive, emotional, and social development.
4. Government policy, social support, and individual motivation must be integrated into a comprehensive model.

Thus, the formation of a lifelong learning culture in Kazakhstan should be viewed not solely as a responsibility of the education system but as a complex process that requires consideration of socio-psychological and cultural factors.

Conclusion

The development of a lifelong learning culture in Kazakhstan represents an important social, psychological, and economic necessity of contemporary society.

The study shows that adult learning motivation is influenced by psychological barriers such as fear, lack

of self-confidence, and stereotypes, as well as by social factors including family support, professional environment, and labor market demands.

In addition, educational institutions and government programs play a crucial role in supporting lifelong learning initiatives.

Within the Kazakhstani context, the development of lifelong learning culture should be considered not only an economic requirement but also a socio-psychological phenomenon that contributes to individuals' cognitive, emotional, and social development.

As demonstrated in the integrative model, effective management of internal and external barriers can significantly improve the effectiveness of lifelong learning processes.

In conclusion, lifelong learning contributes to the development of professional competence, social adaptation, and the improvement of quality of life in Kazakhstan. This process should be implemented through the integration of government policy, social support, and individual motivation.

Moreover, the implementation of specialized programs and strategies aimed at reducing psychological barriers among adults is essential for fostering a sustainable culture of lifelong learning.

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