

Textbook: Focus on Students' National Identity

The Subjects of Education in the Age of Neo-globalization

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Abstract

The topicality of the research is determined by the need for conceptualizing neo-globalization challenges faced by educational systems, namely the global transition to online learning due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The analysis of the interaction between main subjects of education – pedagogical and parenting communities – is the purpose of the paper. The research strategy is based on phenomenological and axiological approaches enabling pedagogical reflection of diverse patterns of parent-school interaction in digital learning environment. The results of the study include the representation of unique experiences in cooperation of subjects of education contributing to the development of pedagogical knowledge of modern educational concepts – distant/online learning, digital toolkit. The paper expands scientific vision of parental support oriented towards co-scolarization and organization of family leisure, mutual activities of the subjects of education, problematizes inequality in digital learning environment. The authors reveal a topical value of cooperative actions of school and parenting communities, concretizing the pedagogical essence of the competent parenting phenomenon. It promotes the understanding of the pedagogical meaning of the interaction scenario between the subjects of education and its limits determined by possibilities and contexts. The practical significance of the results. In today's crisis of education, the authors consider the existing experience of parent-school interaction in digital learning environment to be a unique impetus for reflection about the future of education. Concrete actions proposed by the authors illustrate the possibility of parental engagement in mutual activities with school for responsible Coexistence of people of different generations in the age of neo-globalization.

Keywords: digital learning environment; age of neo-globalization.

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Published by Moscow City University and peer-reviewed under responsibility of TSNI-2021 (Textbook: Focus on Students' National Identity)

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Introduction

The age of neo-globalization, a qualitatively new stage of global processes, determines the reality in all the spheres of human activity and certain contradictions for both vertical and horizontal axes of societal development, creates risks and brings benefits (Rodrik, 2014; Burns, Köster, 2016; Bauman, 2000). The challenges of neo-globalization exert considerable influence not only on societies and economies but also on educational systems (Morley, Marginson & Blackmore, 2014; Mense, Lemoine, Garretson & Richardson, 2018; Davdand, Cuervo, 2019) and primarily place under pressure their subjects who have already been experiencing anxiety and mounting concern due to economic, social and cultural problems. Today's challenges of neo-globalization cause uncertainty and ongoing changes, demand transformations, modifications, reforms in education, on the one hand gradually simplifying, eroding authentic cultural patterns (knowledge, beliefs, world-views) which might be gone forever, and on the other – exploring new benchmarks, models, motivation and norms for the future of education. Within educational systems, shaping the future promotes actions in the present where the subjects of education need a unified pedagogical vision in order to competently and responsibly take a leadership role in the face of challenges we live and will live with in the age of neo-globalization.

In this age, COVID-19 pandemic has spread across the world and caused a global crisis in education with its negative consequences “affecting nearly 1.6 billion learners in more than 190 countries” (Distance learning solutions, 2020); “over 850 million children and youth – roughly half of the world's student population – had to stay away from schools and universities” (COVID-19, 2020). Having found themselves in realities requiring social distancing, the main subjects of education – pedagogical community, students, parental community – were forced to gain experience of consolidation in search of ways of interaction, as well as experience of competent and responsible actions. The manifestation of mutual actions of the modern subjects of education, albeit not in manifold forms, reflects a unified pedagogical vision and understanding of commonality and responsibility they together take for education and its future.

The present study is inspired by global social consolidation in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. The disruption of education promoted the development of an open processual scenario in national educational systems and in the world as a whole, helping their subjects to arrange contextualized actions in space and time. Through the lens of the existing experience of interaction of the main subjects in the international educational space, pedagogical science has the chance to rethink their missions, roles, opportunities in the present and future of education, the landscape of which is already significantly influenced by the age of neo-globalization.

Being a part of the authorial study aimed at the investigation of competent parenting as a pedagogical phenomenon of the modern discourse and pedagogical environment, the present paper is seen as one of the stages of our scientific search within the range of problems mentioned above. It is oriented towards the assessment of the existing experience of school-parent interaction in the situation of the pandemic. Pedagogical conceptualization of this experience of mutual actions of the subjects of education in its discursive and co-existential sense enables us descriptively, analytically and axiologically to define both their different and dissimilar characteristics, and those that bring them together in the interests of future education as a common good.

Purpose and objectives of the study

The purpose of the study is to actualize from an axiological point of view the experience of the subjects of education existing in international educational environment in the age of neo-globalization due to the COVID-19 pandemic, to substantiate value-oriented essence inherent to social-pedagogical aspect of competent mutual actions of school and parental community in mass (school) education system.

Our scientific search reflected in **the objectives of the study** is aimed at achieving clarity in correlating the various aspects of the interaction of educational subjects – school and parenting in the interests of the students – for an axiologically accurate understanding of their pedagogical essence in a processual scenario limited by the possibilities and contexts of education in the situation of a crisis.

Phenomenological and axiological approaches were chosen as leading in defining the strategy of the author's cognition: through comprehension of the experience of interaction between the subjects of education – school and parenting – we made an attempt to understand the topical significance of their mutual actions in the situation of forced social distancing due to the pandemic, to concretize in this process the pedagogical essence of the competent parenting phenomenon.

Literature review

The pedagogy of the 21st century faces an acute need to comprehend the existing experience of interaction of the subjects in educational systems, the role and mission of every subject involved, in order to solve pedagogical problems caused by globalization processes which result in transformations of today's educational systems. Some visible effects of neo-globalization in educational systems of different regions of the world has already become research objects in social sciences and subjects of topical investigations. We consider the following works as the most relevant to the age of neo-globalization and significant for education and its subjects as these studies reveal concepts of modern educational environment, such as

global competitiveness and inequality between social classes and educational systems (Dewey, 2011; Lewis, 2016; Labaree, 2017; Edmonstone, Lawless & Pedler, 2019; Danilova, Orekhova & Shaidenko, 2019; Sharp, 2020; Faircloth, 2020). Pedagogical science has already begun to accumulate the fund of scientific knowledge of experience in educational systems of different regions and at different stages of education during the coronavirus pandemic seen as one of the challenges of neo-globalization. Within this discourse the studies devoted to the systems of mass (school) education are of special interest for our work (Darling-Hammond, Schachner, Edgerton et al., 2020; Adedoyin & Soykan, 2020).

Methodology

The analytical method is focused on identifying and systematizing the basic concepts of research, generalizing scientific concepts and data, their qualitative interpretation, which is necessary for revealing the problems and prospects of interaction of the subjects involved in educational environment.

Traditional for pedagogical science methods of collecting research information include the study of scientific sources, pedagogical observation, interviews, surveys, our own pedagogical experience.

Implicit comparison as a research method contributed to the identification of similar and dissimilar factors in the socio-pedagogical context of interaction between school and competent parents as the subjects of school and family cultures, whose educational vision strengthened their motivation for co-actions in caring for children's education and well-being during the period of school closures due to the pandemic.

Results

In the age of neo-globalization, the pandemic has become a phenomenon of the modern international educational environment of 2020. Globally, the scale and speed of school closures due to the COVID-19 pandemic have posed unprecedented challenges for all categories of families with children, for educational systems in different countries. In the current social context, the problems of providing universal access to education and eliminating social inequality among families with children have become really acute, requiring immediate solutions, multi-level mutual support and interaction of the subjects involved in education.

The school as a subject of mass education can be criticized in different aspects and on different grounds, however, it remains the dominant subject to such an extent that it is difficult to imagine that it can be replaced forever and irrevocably. We can find this kind of attempts in the historical context of the development of education in different countries. Nevertheless, the existence of school (mass) education

demonstrates how closely the school as a social institution is integrated into the individual life of every person and into the collective life of the community, and we do not think that it is possible to replace it. This dominance of school deserves special attention. School, despite endless criticism against it, remains that stable institution that provides access to mass education. This fact determines its value-significant mission in society and for society.

“Schools, however imperfect they may be, play a vital role in equalizing the socio-economic status of various levels of society. And when they close, inequality increases” (COVID-19, 2020). Realizing this fact, many countries around the world guaranteed schools, students and parents government support, providing them with free access to national educational online platforms which contain interactive lessons, methodological and didactic resources for educational programs developed for children of different age groups. Today we can say that in different regions of the world the governments have undertaken the activities, primarily aimed at maintaining the viability of mass (school) education in digital learning environment, in which education had found itself so suddenly and unexpectedly.

Due to the pandemic the crisis in education involved each subject of the school sector in distance learning, in the contexts of collective and individual learning, created conditions in which the subjects involved in education were able to evaluate the advantages and disadvantages of different forms of education. This is extremely relevant for the international pedagogical discourse, in which researchers share the existing experience of both mass (collective) and individual education, discussing their prospects in the age of neo-globalization (Sharp, 2020; De Ketele, 2020).

In a broad pedagogical sense, the value-significant experience is seen as the experience of the recent past, within which school and competent parenting community became the actors who carried out collective and individual teaching in the interests of children’s well-being during the pandemic. From the standpoint of pedagogical discourse, we are talking about competent parenting as a personal quality of a parent who possesses competencies in the field of education and upbringing of children, about the ability and intention to play the role of a parent (Danilova, Shaidenko, Orekhova, 2019). Now we cannot talk yet about plenty of successful practices of such experience, but even a small number of them look convincing and give rise to hope for general prospects in the field of education and upbringing.

In the context of the global crisis families with children turned out to be the most vulnerable social group, and therefore parents more than ever before needed help and support in interaction with many subjects of education and social welfare system (Richardson, Cebotari, Carraro & Damoah, 2020). Due to the school closures and the transfer of learning to a remote format, parents were forced to coordinate their time and

family life with school in many ways. Parents have had to cope with an incredibly onerous burden, which has led to the diversification of the role of parents and their parental competencies in various spheres of children's life: health maintenance, education and development, leisure, i.e. well-being in general, which, it would seem, is the primary concern of parents since the birth of a child.

This situation is not new for families with children. Their way of life changes to a great extent from the child's first day at school. The role and mission of parenting change simultaneously with the process of child's scolarization. This is a reality of modern educational environment, in which competent parents, relying on the strength of the unified movement of school and students, seek to strategically manage scolarization and co-upbringing of their children. Parenting community as a subject of education has been criticized for decades, and in the age of neo-globalization, criticism of parents continues since they are seen as active consumers in the field of education who make every effort to find access to the best products and services in school education for their children: parents seek and choose the best school, educational program, additional education services, tutoring, etc.

Parents' own pedagogical vision motivates them to become more and more informed, and most importantly, competent consumers who are able to determine the educational abilities and strengths of their child and take appropriate actions. In the situation of the crisis in education due to the pandemic, competent parenting manifested itself as intensive parenting. So far, this term remains incompletely specified in sociology of education, psychological and pedagogical works, and is not fully conceptualized in the international pedagogical discourse. However, in a broad social discourse, its essence is interpreted through the following concepts: from individualism associated with a person or a family, to collectivism seen as massively dominant, for which, in a social context, the market model and competition are the driving forces of freedom and self-realization. From this point of view, in co-scolarization and co-upbringing of children, competent parenting community, along with school, is involved in an intense and endless 'race' for the best benefits for the child, starting with the preschool education market, later on in school (mass) education, etc., covering its different levels. Intensive actions of competent parenting community penetrate all social spheres in search of the best for child's well-being, from the best courses to the degrees from the most prestigious educational institutions. Pedagogical science has yet to concretize and reveal to what extent this intensive competent parenting brings benefits to the scolarization of children and education in general, and what are the risks of this parenting in educational environment.

Today, in the age of neo-globalization, characterized by rapidly occurring transformations in education, caused by competition and inequality within and outside educational systems, by growing migration and demographic processes, competent parenting community, as a subject of modern educational environment,

has not yet exerted a significant impact on eliminating or mitigating both the segregation and the homogenization of school cohort caused by social criteria as the results and effects of globalization processes.

From the standpoint of education and pedagogy of the 21st century in the age of neo-globalization, competent parenting is aimed at reducing the distance between family and school, which is slowly but diversified. First of all, it is done in the interests of the modern generation of students, for whom digital tools and technologies, rich and diverse, constantly updated, are an integral part of their lives. However, children actively use them, to a greater extent, for entertainment and leisure. Obviously, it is no longer possible today, neither for school with its centuries-old traditions in teaching, nor for family, to resist that exciting technological force and the giant ICT companies so persistently penetrating the family context and education, promoting digital services and products with improved functionality. Today, competent parents and school wonder whether it is possible to “disconnect” the modern generation of learners from digital tools, move them away from screens and force them to focus on complex objects of knowledge that require their efforts, concentration and deep reflection. In interaction, while looking for an appropriate answer they alternate between suggesting to completely reject digital technologies at school and accepting unconditionally their implementation in school educational environment (Hennessy & Warwick, 2017; Reyna, Hanham & Meier, 2018). The fact that online learning has become one of the methods of distance education during the pandemic and finally proved the inconsistency of the proposals to refuse digitalization in school (mass) education, convinces that digital transformations have already infiltrated today’s school. School of the future will need them too. They should become even more useful for learning process, and for maintaining and supporting social contacts of the subjects of education– schools, students and parents.

Today we can say that the crisis of education, which created many risks for the entire system, became the phenomenon that resulted in a significant enrichment of the experience of interaction between schools and competent parents in the international educational environment precisely in the context of forced social distancing and online learning. In this situation, for school and parents, the task aimed at qualitative transformation of the learning and upbringing process, meeting the need for an active partnership between family and school, stimulating parental engagement in the discourse of parental competence, its formation and development became even more obvious. To solve it, they needed to identify ways to ‘overcome’ social distancing in digital educational environment.

The existing experience shows that broadband technologies and digital media have become an essential element of online education, have significantly expanded its capabilities in mass (school) education, in which its subjects had already partially used various non-platform tools, including e-mail, social networks,

Skype, messengers. Their combined use helped to reach the maximum number of students in the world. At the same time, the broadening context of inequality has significantly problematized the topical socio-pedagogical points, among which we single out: unequal Internet access and / or its absence in different geographical territories; a diversified level of technological equipment of schools in different regions of the world; digital divide among the subjects of education; differentiation of motivation and readiness of teachers and students for online learning; pluralism on the issue of online learning at school in the communities of the subjects involved in this format of education; significant differentiation of families with children in terms of economic level, and respectively, unequal opportunities for providing online education for children studying at home.

We have summarized, from a pedagogical point of view, digital tools the most demanded by the subjects of education in Russia, European countries (France, Spain, Italy, Belgium), the USA, Canada. It is no coincidence that these countries were included in this list: as our earlier study showed, they have developed national strategies of parental support and gained some experience in educational practices for the development of competent parenting. This toolkit enabled implementing the pedagogical functions of parental support in co-scolarization and organization of family leisure in digital learning environment. We defined these functions as information-educative and educational-developmental in accordance with their target orientation in mutual actions of the subjects of education. Let us briefly characterize them.

1. The information-educative function was carried out through the school's website, e-mail, messengers. Parents received information from the school about the current schedule of classes and its changes, including the postponement or cancellation of classes, about different ways of contacting teachers of each subject in school program, about the various procedures and opportunities of online learning. The school published a weekly schedule for each grade, informed about digital resources on the risks and prevention of COVID-19. Some schools posted instructions on how to use national online platforms for school education, as well as technical guidelines for the access to the required equipment and peripherals. Parents were more likely to propose initiatives on the organization of learning or virtual events via messengers.

2. The educational-developmental function was fulfilled through video conferencing services Zoom, Skype, Discord, GoToMeeting, Proficonf, Google Hangouts, Whereby, ooVoo. Educators used the capabilities of these digital tools to involve parents in the existing digital environment of student education, as well as for the continuous parental education in order to expand the contexts of parental competencies development. Being, in fact, a new phenomenon in school (mass) education, online learning required the relevant knowledge and competencies of all its participants, therefore the problematic aspects of this kind of learning were the subject of discussions for collective decision-making. The large number of parents'

questions and requests were not always related to the competence of subject teachers; to provide feed-back, they had to appeal to experts for help. On the videoconferencing platforms, schools organized for interested parents educational lectures delivered by professionals from various fields, including IT specialists, child psychologists. The variety of questions demonstrated both the existing problematic field of online education in a particular school and class, and the degree of parental involvement and parental competences in co-scolarization and co-upbringing of children. On the base of our own pedagogical experience and the experience of our colleagues from different regions of Russia and abroad, we identified the most relevant range of questions from parents: from the access to a reliable Internet connection, devices or software; the need for academic and specialized support for children; the quality of learning materials available to learners online; the impact of online learning on children's health and the required learning regime; to the requirement of providing support structures and programs for all students, parents and teachers who experience increased difficulties with online learning. During the videoconferences organized by the school administration, in accordance with the principles of collegial management, the school officials together with the parents made decisions regarding the schedule of standard and extra classes, the changes in it or the temporary continuation of distance learning.

Discussions

Distance, online learning has become a reality of today's education, despite the contradictory attitude towards it. This must be consciously and responsibly accepted by the pedagogical and parenting communities. Discussions about education and the interaction of its subjects are gaining momentum, crossing international borders, actualizing international pedagogical discourse on the future prospects for productive and intensive interaction between schools and competent parenting communities. The uniqueness of the presented experience of interaction between the subjects of education in digital educational environment has become a pedagogical benchmark in the authors' reflection on the ways of competent parents' action that can promote the engagement of more parents in the model of this parenting and mutual actions with school. Globally, for the future in education in the age of neo-globalization, this will expand the boundaries of a competent and responsible COexistence of people of different generations. Let us concretize these ways of action.

The first way of action is determined by the strategic task to learn COexistence of people of different generations in education and oriented towards the maintenance of relationship quality based on common values. This promotes parental responsibility to the others – first of all, to the child– and to themselves embodied in parental actions which demonstrate the parent's competences. This interpretation allows deeper understanding of the essence of competent parenting as a pedagogical phenomenon and reflects its origi-

nality among other models of parenting. In this context we define competent parenting as a type of parenting determined by relationship quality. The quality of relationship between school and families with children is specified through values and principles which build the base for the ways of understanding and action in their COexistence. It will promote horizontal interaction between the individuals involved, extend sustained involvement of parents in co-upbringing and co-scholarization, facilitate mutual attachment between children and parents.

The second way of action is determined through a specific manifestation of knowledge and relationship of people of different generations in their activity that promotes productive COexistence in education. The fact that parents learn through the cooperation with people around them support our idea about mutual activity as a source of knowledge which form the attitude of the community towards parents and increase their self-confidence. This attitude influences the quality of parenting supported by parents' competent actions in their parental role. We believe that action, interaction and engagement should be considered the key ways of displaying and implementing parental competences. This means that each parent as a subject develops his / her ability to run joint projects, accept collective responsibility and establish the common ground for peaceful COexistence of parents, educators and childrens.

Conclusion

The age of neo-globalization brings humanity new challenges, accompanied by crises in various areas, and education is no exception. Today we can already say that the global crisis in education, which led to school closures and the implementation of distance learning in school (mass) education in different regions of the world, has actualized the social consolidation of the subjects of the communities of educators, students and their parents. Thus, under the conditions of forced social distancing, a unique experience of interaction between the subjects involved in education has developed.

The value-oriented significance of this experience of social and educational cooperation opened up opportunities for softening negative effects and preventing risks in the field of mass (school) education, exacerbated the social aspect of the problems in education, visualized the pedagogical aspect of their topical character in school (mass) education sector and showed the need for their solution in digital learning environment. The pedagogical comprehension of the value-oriented significance of the existing experience of interaction between the subjects of education in the international educational space led the authors to the conviction that there is no crisis in people's desire for education, despite its digital transformations. The new components of education – online platforms, services, resources, possessing high functionality, are potentially important for knowledge exchange, learning, and social contacts. The toolkit that pedagogical and competent parenting communities have chosen for interaction in digital learning environment opened

up opportunities and contributed to supporting the process of co-scolarization and co-upbringing, as well as informing, educating, and developing the subjects involved in education. Competent parents are open to new experience in education and have broad prospects for transforming school education as well as for performing their value-significant mission at school – to help mass school to remain a stable social institution in the coming decades and successfully fulfil its essential function in a complex, uncertain and unstable world. The authors express hope that the methods of action of competent parenting community proposed in this study and their implementation in education of the present will allow all its subjects to adequately resist the challenges of the age of neo-globalization, and in education of the future, they will manifest themselves in the competent and responsible COexistences.

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