

CHAPTER 1

GENERAL PEDAGOGY AND HISTORY OF PEDAGOGY

CONCEPTUAL BACKGROUND FOR THE DESIGN OF GENERAL AND HIGHER EDUCATION IN UKRAINE: HISTORICAL CONTEXT AND PARADIGM CHANGE

Dennis Soltys¹

¹Ph.D. (Comparative Politics), KIMEP University, Kazakhstan, University of Toronto, Canada, e-mail: dsoltys@kimep.kz

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Abstract. This article presents a discussion of historical context and paradigm change in Ukraine’s educational systems design and functioning. The purpose of this article is simply to alert the reader to foundational issues in education that tend to be under-examined in the post-Soviet space. The hope is that the article will stimulate further discussion by the Ukrainian audience, as this audience may consider relevant to specific conditions in Ukraine. These themes follow from Ukraine’s transformation away from colonial status to national independence and to general processes of social modernization. The intention is to stimulate thought about themes that may have been under-examined concerning secondary and tertiary education in independent Ukraine. The article highlights the cultural, sociological, and organizational complexity of educational reform. The paper emphasizes that educational institutions need to be recognized as quintessentially human organizations, that are not easily amenable to elitist or market management methods. A prominent, though not exclusive, role should be accorded to teachers and faculty, as the main “custodians” of education. Ultimately, educational reform requires corresponding changes to the basic culture and values of any given country.

Keywords: educational reform, educational ownership, distributed leadership, dignified profession.

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Introduction. This article for discussion starts with the assumption that educational systems are quintessentially products of a country’s culture, and are also quintessentially human entities. Culture grows out of the historical experience, society, and politics of a country. Depending on a country’s culture, an education system may be authoritarian or liberal, elitist or democratic, teacher-centred or student-centred, vocational or general, public or private, religious or secular, or have other characteristics. For their part, organizations and bureaucracies are not mechanical things, but are comprised of human beings – who have their own interests, fears, and ideals. Good management practise is to align individual motivations with organizational goals. Therefore, an important theme of this article is that modernizing ministries of education should use a less technocratic and top-down approach to educational delivery, and should instead apply a more “human relations”

method of operation. More to the point, ministries of education should learn to trust teachers and faculty to be the main custodians of education.

These changes are necessary because the globalization of economic trade and the concurrent shift to a knowledge economy present new challenges to educational systems around the world. Educational establishments need to develop new methods of pedagogy and new organizational forms, in order to adequately serve new kinds of clients with new kinds of expectations and demands.

Educational systems are particularly challenged because educational delivery comprises an almost infinitely large number of factors, which, however, are not always given the attention they deserve. To this end, this article has two parts selected by the author. The first is historical, because policies going forward need to be based on a sound understanding of the underlying social and conceptual context. The second part calls for paradigm change in educational delivery, made necessary because of the nature of the modern global economy and student body

It has been said that education reform is technologically simple, but sociologically complex Fullan [1]. In other words, the technology of education reforms is mostly known; and reforms need only to follow established procedures such as those catalogued in the Bologna Process guidelines, the Dublin Descriptors, and by various kinds of accreditation agencies such as the New England Association of Schools and Colleges or the Foundation for International Business Administration Accreditation. However, sociological complexity means that educational organizations are not mechanical and impersonal entities, but are profoundly human. Therefore, the reform of education systems is less a matter of top-down management by technocratic administrative elites than of empowering rank-and-file teaching personnel and faculty, who are at the forefront or “technical core” of education delivery. Teachers and faculty are self-selected idealists, who love education and students, and can be trusted to be good custodians of education. Effective reform is thus in the first instance a matter of eliciting from teachers and faculty their voluntary participation, enthusiasm, and expertise; but also requires interest from stakeholders in society and the economy.

Literature review. A time-honoured analytical approach to national development is a historical-cultural one, in line with Weber’s classic work [2] on the relation between the Protestant religion and the capitalist economy. Moore [3] and Huntington [4] describe how history, culture, ideas, politics, and institutions are path-dependent, though not path-determined, in motoring large social movements; while Fukuyama [5] places particular emphasis on the role of culture in social change. The connections between culture and institutions are perhaps best synthesized by the Nobel prize-winning economic historian, Douglass North [6], who places culture and institutions at the centre of his analysis, in which he emphasizes that reforms of any kind will not succeed if they are not underpinned by the cultural values of a country. Such an approach is corroborated by another Nobel prize-winning economist, Amartya Sen [7], who notes that general economic growth is much enhanced by the empowerment of individuals and civil society. North’s and Sen’s insights are fleshed out in depth by Acemoglu and Robinson [8], in their widely read *Why Nations Fail*.

A massive formative history and design of the Soviet educational system was compiled by DeWitt [9], who, like Beissinger [10], noted the elitist and managerial aspects of Soviet education. Both authors remarked on a relative neglect of humanism and the social sciences, or, more precisely, on the deformation of humanism and the social sciences by state ideology. In-depth Western reviews of Soviet and Russian education were similarly compiled by Jones [11] and by Holmes *et al.* [12]. As for some more notable Soviet writers, Glazunova [13] analyzed labour education in the USSR, while Iagodin [14] advocated the humanization and democratization of general education. Reflecting the experimental mood of the late-Soviet era, Dneprov *et al.* [15] searched for ways to adapt Russian education to the changing social environment.

A critique of the 1958 Khrushchev and 1984 Brezhnev All-Union reforms and the Gorbachev initiative of 1988 was drawn by Soltys [16], who emphasized that educational systems have not only certain institutional forms, but, as noted by DeWitt, are situated more broadly within a country's strategic vision, with the corollary that an educational system is in the final analysis properly seen as a national civic project.

Aims. The purpose of this article is simply to alert the reader to foundational issues in education that tend to be under-examined in the post-Soviet space. The hope is that the article will stimulate further discussion by the Ukrainian audience, as this audience may consider relevant to specific conditions in Ukraine.

Results. I propose to consider historical context and "ownership" of education, as well as the need for paradigm change.

Historical context and "ownership" of education. A keen insight has it that an educational system is designed for the kind of society it is called upon to serve [17]. Here one notes that Ukraine was long a part of the monarchical Russian Empire and then recently the Soviet Union. Under both regime types a major concern of the central government was the control of territories and populations, not the development of civil society and autonomous institutions. The political and administrative culture within Ukraine was correspondingly elitist or managerial, with economic-technocratic values predominating over humanitarian and social concerns. Public institutions were characterized by what Hofstede [18] called "high power distance," in which subordinates passively deferred to their institutional superiors. The viewpoints and inputs of lower-level members were not only not encouraged, but often were actively distrusted, because these members' civic activity could upset the political monopoly of the government and the economic plans decreed by state officials. These officials considered themselves to possess superior technical knowledge, which legitimized their exclusive right to govern.

Soviet secondary education was marked after the Khrushchev All-Union reform of 1958 by a re-strengthened vocational paradigm, in which the aim was to increase direct links between secondary and vocational education, and then to shorten the distance between the schools and local factories or economic enterprises where the school graduates were to obtain assured employment. Higher education similarly came to be marked by an applied science instead of fundamental science paradigm

[19] [20]. Schools and technical institutes had the obligation to provide specific quotas of graduates to economic enterprises, so that state economic plans would be fulfilled. Industrial ministries were vertically integrated and had their own feeder vocational schools and technical or research institutes. The result was one of vertical compartmentalization of the industrial ministries, whereby the ministries were isolated from each other and often unknowingly duplicated the same functions and research. The overall picture was one in which there was little self-exploration and experimentation of talents by students and little horizontal mobility of professionals and diffusion of innovations.

In contrast to Russian imperial and Soviet education, North American education, to whose pedagogical model many East European schools and universities aspire, was typified by a strong orientation on grassroots civic values and the liberal arts. The United States and Canada at the time of their settlement by Europeans were frontier societies and were lightly governed, consequently local people acquired the custom of materially and morally supporting education and solving problems by themselves. Elementary education was initially arranged by religious communities, and had a large humanities and social content. But as technological requirements for a skilled labour force became more demanding, and as education was extended to higher grades and became more expensive, schools came under the jurisdiction of municipal and regional governments [21]. Nonetheless, the custom of strong local oversight remained in the form of considerable institutional capacity in both finance and governance. Municipalities and regions traditionally possessed school governing boards comprised of local parents and interested people; they raised and spent part of their own taxes for school support, hired their own teachers, and had a voice in the curriculum.

The United States and then Canada were the first countries to extend their secondary educational systems upwards and thus create “mass” universities, which brought in a large proportion of the eligible student cohort and thus increased the total amount of useable brainpower.. It may be noted that the design and content of the two educational systems was pre-industrial [22]; and yet, seemingly paradoxically, the two countries developed economies that were vigorous and technologically sophisticated. In other words, a humanities- and liberal arts-oriented educational system proved beneficial for economic and scientific progress. This progress occurred within national cultures marked by rule of law, low power distance, emphasis on personal civic responsibility, and trust in the professional integrity of teachers and faculty.

The contrast between Russian/Soviet and North American education raises the issue of “ownership” of education and the question of who should have authority to shape the upbringing of future generations. Ownership is closely related to purposes. As described by Manzer [23], education has three main purposes. The first is to prepare young people for employment in the national economy. The second purpose is to enhance the liberal development of individuals, and the third is to equip young people for citizenship. These three main purposes may be combined in many different ways, depending on a country’s values and needs as mediated through the

general culture of that country. But under the recent trend towards economic neo-liberalism in Western countries, the economic service function, born of a perceived need for greater economic competitiveness, now tends to crowd out the purposes of personal development and citizenship.

Consequently, there has been more emphasis placed on technocratic performance checks and accreditations; and on “accountability” – which is usually taken to mean accountability to the market. This trend has spawned the opinion that educational institutions should be operated more along “market principles” and that STEM (science, technology, engineering, mathematics) content should be increased at the expense of humanities and social sciences. The emphasis is on service to the economy and efficiency in educational delivery, at the same time that there is a retreat from social justice in access to education.

If the dominance of the economic service paradigm in education is a fairly recent phenomenon in North America and Western Europe, this was the dominant paradigm in the Soviet Union and remains so in most of the Soviet successor states. From the 1960s to the end of the Soviet era the social class structure became increasingly rigid and upward professional mobility for rural and working-class youths was much reduced, something which meant that many natural talents were undeveloped. Ironically, the capitalist neo-liberal paradigm and the Soviet technocratic paradigm share some prominent features. Both are top-down models that privilege the intelligence and expertise of the few over the many; both tend towards vocationalism and credentialism in the sphere of economics and towards applied science over fundamental science in higher education; both are non-liberal and non-person-regarding; both are socially non-egalitarian in practice; both take a small view of human nature and potential; and both claim to act on society’s behalf yet tend to exclude society from participation in public policy.

Gutmann [24] presents a useful taxonomy of educational systems, the first of which she calls the “family state.” This is a state-centred model of education which attempts to create a like-mindedness and camaraderie among citizens as one would find among family members. A good example of this was the educational system attempted by the Soviet Union. The second model is the “state of families,” in which parochial, economic, ideological, religious or other interests try to use the state in order to shape the educational system into their own likeness. An example of this is Western neo-liberals and social conservatives, who often advocate more “market-like” and “competitive” educational systems that would disproportionately benefit their own social categories. The third of Gutmann’s models is the “state of individuals,” in which a neutral state is subordinated to individual desires. The state of individuals does not advocate any particular ideology and holds that authority over education should be given to educational professionals. The final model, Gutmann’s preference, is the “democratic state” of education. Unlike the state-centric so-called family state, a democratic state recognizes the value of parental guidance in passing on particular conceptions of the good life. Unlike the state of families, a democratic state recognizes the value of professional authority in enabling young people to appreciate and evaluate ways of life other than those favoured by their families (for

families may be limited in their imagination or be intolerant). And unlike a state of individuals, a democratic state recognizes the value of political education for the common rights and duties of citizenship. Gutmann's larger point is that the education of the people's civic character promotes democracy and mutual respect in society. In this way, democracy and democratic education are mutually reinforcing; both are an ideal and a process at the same time. Democracy creates a mood of respect for different ideas and inclusion of all social groups. Democracy, social inclusion, and equal citizenship combine to produce sound educational systems [25].

The commentaries by Manzer and Gutmann illustrate that issues of ownership of educational systems are complex, and are immersed in a culture's social values. Thus the design of an educational system suitable for Ukraine should be the subject of a broad national discussion; and the values and practices of the system should be made overt. Otherwise the, not always best, values and practices already in place will continue to drift onward from habit. Unfortunately, broad national discussions have been rare in the post-Soviet region and the traditional technocratic and bureaucratic assumptions about the best purposes of education often remain entrenched.

The need for paradigm change. There is a need for paradigm change in education because modern-day students are different from those of earlier generations. The current era is one of personal rights and democracy. The spread of democracy around the world can be said to have two major impulses. The first impulse is social and political. Young people are more knowledgeable, they have more opportunities for international travel, they want more individual freedoms and career choices, and they feel a greater sense of self-efficacy. Young people are not as deferential to traditions and superiors as were their parents. The second major impulse for democracy is technological and economic. Professions are becoming more specialized and technologically sophisticated; this puts more functional and political power into the hands of people who have the specialized skills to operate modern economies [26]. Concomitantly, modern organizations are more decentralized and frequently have international contacts and partners.

These parallel trends towards democratization have important effects on both the social and individual levels. On the social level, the economically and politically most successful countries are those that are the most inclusive, and can maximally improve conditions for human creativity. Such societies make stronger efforts for gender inclusion, and the inclusion of people of different ethnic, religious, and personal identities [27] [28]. Democratization also has a profound effect at the level of the individual. As mentioned, modern generations are less deferential to authority, including teacher and faculty authority. Young people cannot be *told* what to do or how to think, but must be *persuaded* to do so. A student cannot be forced to learn, but must create meaning for herself. It is the student who decides whether learning will occur; and awareness of this fact activates the newer pedagogical philosophy of student-centred learning. The key point to note is that student-centred learning calls for a fundamental change in the way education is conducted, and for a fundamental change in the culture of educational institutions and ministry of education agencies. Schools and agencies should become less authoritative and coercive entities and

become more egalitarian, service-oriented, and motivated by the personal aspirations of the individuals within them. Ministerial agencies should encourage local capacity-building and re-cast themselves as “open systems” or “listening organizations,” which interact with and learn from the social environment.

It is students and parents who are the main “clients” of learning. But students and parents are not necessarily the best judges of their educational interests – something that is problematic for democratic theory – and their presence within the educational system is transient. For their part, ordinary citizens are amateurs and are poorly informed about inside details of education. And further still, ministry officials at the peak of educational bureaucracies in capital cities are far removed from classrooms and often poorly understand the needs, problems, and potentials of learning and teaching at the classroom level. It is for this reason that some ministerial rules are misconceptualized or unnecessarily time-consuming.

Such situations call not for direction from the top, but for the free exchange of ideas and adoption of best practices in what is termed the “shared leadership” [29] [30] [31] model of education. In this model all actors are encouraged to pool their talents and ideas; and education becomes a widely shared public trust [32]. In practice the main custodians of education in most countries are in fact teachers and faculty, though formal laws usually specify ministerial or governmental dominance.

Along with the paradigm shift to student-centred learning, it is desirable that ministerial agencies should learn to treat teachers and faculty as members of a “dignified profession” that can be trusted to act in the best interests of students and society. In North America, trust in the professional integrity of teachers and university faculty was accompanied by their high social status and high salaries. A dignified profession [33] has the five following features:

- The profession is full-time. This implies financial security for the individual instructor.
- The profession has training schools within a university setting. This affirms that its members have special knowledge and competencies not possessed by others, and that state agencies and the public defer to this knowledge and these competencies.
- The profession has its own association. This enables practitioners to obtain social and political allies, and to work for their own benefit while also benefitting the broader society.
- The profession has legal protection, including the right to set its own standards of competence and to exclude outsiders who do not meet these standards. Therefore a state agency does not set standards for academics’ qualifications and does not conduct attestations of the members.
- The profession has a code of ethics, by which the profession is licenced to regulate and police the conduct of its members. A state agency does not conduct the disciplining of the profession’s members, because the profession is entrusted to do this itself.

In a North American or Bologna-style university it is taken for granted that faculty constitute a dignified profession that possesses all of the above attributes.

Furthermore, Western universities are both teaching and research institutions; many faculty members are world-rank and some are Nobel Prize winners. The inappropriateness of having ministry bureaucrats, often amateurs, telling such faculty what and how to teach is obvious. Faculty must have the academic freedom and practical means to follow up on new ideas from any source in the world, without having to wait for ministry officials to “codify” knowledge [34] and approve instructional content.

A useful step towards increasing the status of Ukrainian teachers and faculty would be a sharp salary increase, which would bring more highly talented recruits into the educational profession. At the same time, the teaching workload should be reduced so as to give educators time for the improvement of lessons and for research.

Overworked teachers cannot be held accountable for large numbers of details. Relevant here are the notions of the “control paradox” [35] and that “responsibility requires freedom” [36]. The control paradox refers to a situation where a large number of often contradictory, unclear, or unimplementable rules cause upper-level bureaucratic officials to lose control of activities at lower levels. That is, a proliferation of rules causes less, not more, accountability of lower officials to higher. Rules decreed from the top become self-defeating [37]. The solution can come only from lower functionaries, who can resolve contradictions and blockages at the ground level provided that they have the freedom to apply their own judgement to actual conditions.

Discussion. Consequently, state officials and society in general should learn to empower and trust teachers and faculty who are at the technical core of education – and who can, for example, adjust in their classrooms to students who might need additional academic backgrounding or who may be unusually advanced for their age category. Likewise, it is locally situated faculty who make adjustments for the cultural or sociological characteristics of their students. Trust in faculty not only improves education delivery, it relieves the ministry of education of the burden of micro-management and improves accountability [38]. Accountability can be achieved if there is transparency both from the inside and outside of educational institutions. That is, people both within and outside the educational institutions can record the misappropriation of funds or poor performance of academic departments by recourse to internal grievance procedures, or to the public press or the laws and law courts of the country

To reiterate, the empowerment of faculty, their status as a dignified profession, and the transparency of educational institutions ensure the accountable and honest functioning of these institutions without the need for close bureaucratic checks and controls from the top. It may be noted that the rapid success obtained by the University of Kievo-Mohyla Academy in Ukraine and KIMEP University in Kazakhstan, for example, owed to the soundness of the North American liberal arts and decentralized educational model. It may also be noted (from the author’s personal observation) that the accreditations that KIMEP has undergone more recently were not relevant to this success; and should be understood mostly as just *post facto* expressions of the ideology of the neo-liberal “accountability” paradigm

and as ordinary marketing instruments. That is, the North American model *created* KIMEP's success, and subsequent accreditations merely *confirmed* this and reassure the public [39]. The marketing instrument may have a proper place in the survival of a university within a competitive educational market, but the qualitative notion of academic integrity and quantitative notion of accreditation for marketing purposes should not be confused.

Conclusions. In summary, operative paradigms of educational systems are profoundly shaped by history and culture. For educational reforms to be successful, the deep social and conceptual foundations of educational systems need to be recognized and brought to the surface for policy discussion. Reforms also need to recognize that educational institutions are quintessentially human and social; therefore reforms need to be attentive to sociological factors within these institutions.

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