

Conceptual Basis of Educational Service Resource Support

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ABSTRACT

Topicality of the issue researched is preconditioned by the need to describe the conceptual basis and significance of educational service resource support of at the current development stage of Russian vocational education, classification of its main components as well as significance of the need to transform resource support from the factor that hinders development of vocational education into a powerful tool for its improvement and modernization. The purpose of the research is to define the conceptual basis of the theoretical and methodological framework of the system of certification of educational service resource support and its structural logic. The leading research method applied to this issue is the multi-aspect analysis and synthesis of information on the issue researched which is studied in national and foreign scientific sources dedicated to pedagogics, methodology, didactics, economics, law, statistics and other disciplines which allows identifying trends for defining the conceptual basis of the system of certification of educational service resource support and means for its theoretical description. As a result of the research, educational service resources have been identified and classified, concepts have been introduced, and their core reflecting their specifics in certification of educational service resource support has been substantiated. The article may be of use for professors and heads of educational institutions when developing vocational educational programs, including for net-wide application thereof in the contemporary educational environment.

KEYWORDS

Certification of educational service resource support, resources, resource support, resource classification, resource modernisation

ARTICLE HISTORY

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Introduction

The issue of the resource component of activities of an educational organisation is rather hard to research due to insufficient development of its terminological basis. The following terms are used with different conceptual accents: educational resources, resource support, resource potential. Therefore, currently there are no established models, mechanisms and tools for assessing the level of educational service resource support.

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In regulatory documents, scientific publications (Granichina, 2006; Grin, 2006; Drovyannikov, 2008; Ronzhina, 2014; Kirilova & Vlasova, 2016; Vlasova, Kirilova & Curteva, 2016) mention concepts of 'resource support', 'resources of an educational organisation' and other phrases related to the resource framework of introduction of vocational and competence-oriented educational standards; however no common approach in defining these concepts in vocational education has been developed.

The research by O.N.Arefyev (2003, 2007) describes organisational and pedagogical conditions for operating and developing secondary vocational educational institutions in the current market environment, formation of the adaptive college educational system as well as issues of the strategy for this system's transition from the operational mode to the development mode during modernisation. On the other hand, analysis of the researched issue in the pedagogical theory and practice has demonstrated that the theoretical and methodological framework of certification of educational service resource support in the context of social and economic transformations in vocational pedagogics has not been studied.

Methodological Framework

Research Methods

The following methods have been used during the research: theoretical methods (multi-aspect analysis and synthesis of information on the issue researched which is studied in national and foreign scientific sources dedicated to pedagogics, methodology, didactics, economics, law, statistics and other disciplines; analysis and interpretation of sociological research data; analysis of conceptual documents in the vocational education system; generalisation of advanced innovation management experience in secondary vocational educational institutions; system-oriented analysis of federal, regional and local laws and regulations governing the educational sphere; analysis and assessment of the resource component of activities of a vocational educational institution; management project development; analysis of experimental and investigation deliverables); diagnostic methods (tests, surveys, expert examination of documents); empiric methods (psychological and pedagogical observations, experimental and investigational works, survey diagnostic method, quantitative and qualitative methods of deliverables processing, methods of graphic presentation of the research findings); experimental methods (pedagogical ascertaining experiment, development of pedagogical objectives, construction of the advanced qualification trajectory, practical approval of the model for formation of a new type of a professor in vocational pedagogical education and vocational training in the paradigm of the noospheric pedagogics).

Experimental Facilities of the Research

The experimental facilities of the research are the Russian State Vocational Pedagogical University, Sverdlovsk Regional Medical College comprising nine branches in eleven districts of Sverdlovsk Region, and Volodya Soldatov Tobolsk Medical College.

Research Stages

The issue has been researched in three stages:

Stage one. System-oriented analysis of scientific publications that consider issues of the resource component of activities of vocational educational institutions that offer different quality of their educational services.

Stage two. Experimental, analytical and investigational work aimed at assessing resource support of educational service elements by means of developing efficiency assessment criteria for the developed certification system.

Stage three. Practical approval of proprietary approaches to certification of educational service resource support in the area of vocational education.

Results

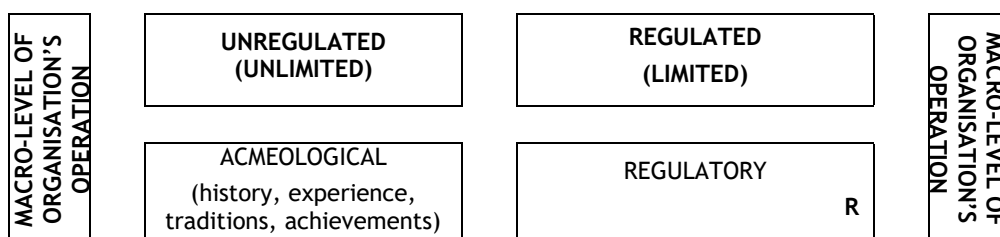
The tactic factor of efficient introduction of vocational and competence-oriented educational standards in the Russian Federation are organisational mechanisms to create efficient environment for their implementation and resource support of all kinds of activities both of an educational organisation itself and implemented educational programmes. The vocational educational system has been set a critical task to optimise *resource support mechanisms* by establishing the system of regulated elements needed to allocate and relocate resources of an educational organisation, as well as to transform resources from one form to another, including into qualitative efficiency indicators of the educational service.

Innovations in the vocational education system have required *resource modernisation* which is complicated due to absence of the theoretical and methodological framework of educational service resource support. *Resource transformation to the more efficient level in comparison with the equivalent resources used is resource modernisation* which is impossible without *resource thinking* as a fundamental basis for the strategy since each strategy must conform to the resources available. However, resource thinking is not just discussing what we have and what we need. It takes speed of response and efficiency. The category of resources itself, its specifics, dependence of results on availability and combination of resources as well as the need for changing the resource basis, arrangement of its logistics for new results to be achieved, types, forms of resource existence, their properties and role in educational services need to be understood.

We have defined the concept of the **educational service resource**: *it is an aggregate of characteristics, tools and opportunities whose transformation and integration has an impact on efficiency of conditions and quality of the educational service.*

From the point of view of the resource theory, any organisation is first of all an aggregate of different production resources. The main resources of the organisation are those regulated and unregulated. Figure 1 shows a proprietary approach to classification of resources of an educational organisation.

During the period of active development of an organisation as well as sustainable economic development in the society regulated resources and efficient management thereof are definitely of primary importance for the organisation. During the period of decline of the organisation or during financial and economic crisis much more attention of the organisation is focused on its unregulated resources.



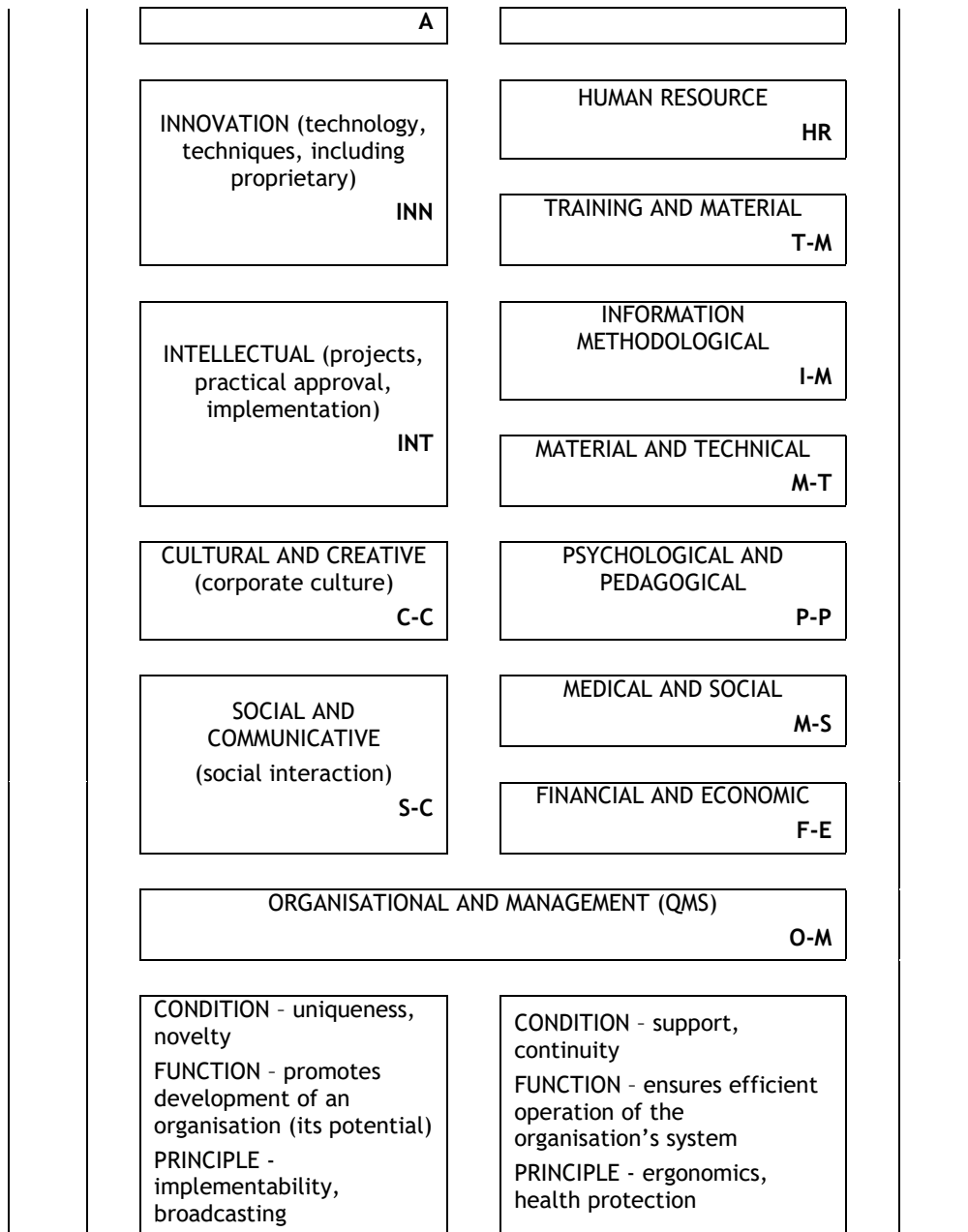


Figure 1. Classification of Resources of an Educational Organisation

The proposed conceptual basis proves the proprietary concept of linearity and acme cyclicity of educational service resources. Figure 2 presents a model of linearity, direct relationship between conditions and a set of resources, between the result of the educational service and an aggregate of conditions.

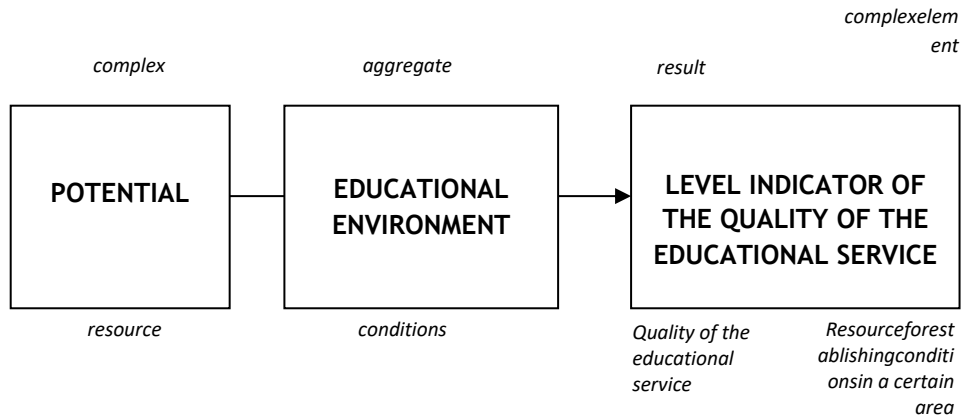


Figure 2. Model of Linearity of Educational Service Resources

Figure 3 demonstrates a model of acme cyclicity of educational service resources which represents transformation of any deliverable, in particular, of the educational service, into another field resource.

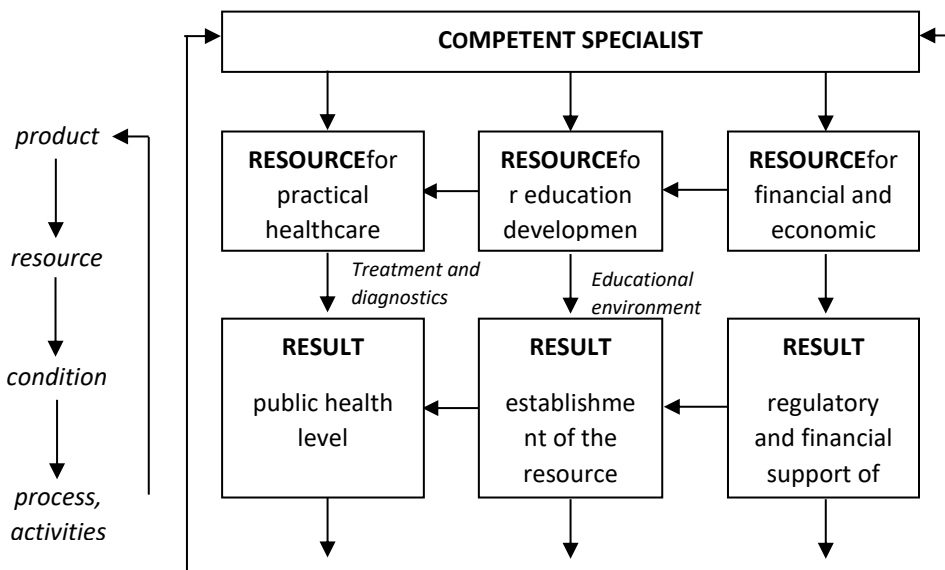


Figure 3. Model of Acme Cyclicity of Educational Service Resources

Theoretical substantiation of certification of educational service resource support includes defining of structure of the conditions necessary to fulfil requirements set for outcomes of educational programs, necessary attributes, parameters and characteristics of conditions with standardisation and regulation of compliance therewith, and as a basis – development of the resource support management and control system within the system claimed.



Discussions

Issues of operation and development of educational activities are discussed in psychological, pedagogical and methodological sources. In the research of M.M. Potashnik & A.M. Moiseev (1998), O.A. Granichina (2006), V.I. Droyannikov (2008), V.P. Panasyuk & A. Lyar (2016) theoretical issues of educational system management are developed, scientific support and substantiation of management activities are performed.

The research by E.F. Zeer (2003), V.I. Zagvyazinsky (2006) is focused on psychological and pedagogical aspects of management activities in an educational institution. Today, management, organisational, economic and legal aspects considered in the works of A.M. Novikov (2000) etc. have become especially significant.

The contemporary Russian specialists who have studied the issue of resources, resource support and resource potential include V.V. Platonov (1999), I.O. Korobeynikov (2000), A.M. Grin (2006), M.V. Vladyka (2008).

The mainstream issues of development of the service industry are studied in the works of I.V. Li (1998), A.A. Korostelev (2007).

The works of R. Heilbroner & W. Milberg (1998), O.N. Arefyev (2003; 2007), Y.A. Ozcan (2009), A.F. Zakirova (2015), Yu.S. Serbulov (2009), C. Pisinger (2009), N. V. Ronzhina (2014), O. B. Akimova, E. M. Dorozhkin & G.P. Sikorskaya (2014), O.V. Pokosovskaya (2015), O.E. Malikh et al. (2016) have had certain impact on the logic of our research.

A number of dissertation works describe organisational and pedagogical conditions of operation and development of vocational educational organisations in the current market environment, formation of the adaptive college educational system as well as issues of the strategy for this system's transition from the operational mode to the development mode in the education modernisation context. On the other hand, analysis of the researched issue within the pedagogical theory and practice has demonstrated that the issue of certification of educational service resource support in the context of social and economic transformations in vocational pedagogics has not been studied.

The accelerating dynamics of structural changes in the economy has preconditioned the need for continuous update of vocational educational contents, which resulted in the need to adopt vocational and Federal State Educational Standards for all vocational education levels. In accordance with the formulations of the Russian Academy of Education, the Federal State Educational Standard (FSES) of Vocational Education is an aggregate of three systems of requirements: for the structure, outcomes and conditions of implementation of main educational programmes. In accordance with the FSES Concept, requirements for conditions of implementation of main educational programmes mean integral description of an aggregate of conditions necessary for implementation of educational programmes structured by the spheres of vocational education resource support (human resourcing, financial and economic support, inventory and logistics support, and information support).

The principal regulatory document governing provision of educational services in the Russian Federation, i.e. Federal Law "On Education in the Russian Federation" No. 273-ФЗ dated 29 December 2012, contains such concepts as conditions, educational resources and tools, but the content analysis of the effective regulations in the area of vocational education has demonstrated that no common terminological approaches to definition of these concepts has been developed.

In different sources the term 'resources' has certain attributes depending on the vocational activities it pertains to. Resources are a tool which is used when necessary; they are the sources of material and spiritual values that are needed to carry out any activity; they also include money, values, stock, opportunities, sources of funds, income, an aggregate of labour, material, technical and financial tools necessary to perform any production works; they are a limited number of elements necessary to produce values; they are essential tools and capabilities of the system.

Resource analysis is very useful and interesting owing to its three main objectives and dimensions. The first thing which makes resources interesting is that an organisation may and should gain sustainable economic benefits if they are managed efficiently. Resources should become reliable multipliers of sustainability of an educational organisation. Secondly, resources develop and increase competitiveness of an educational organisation. In this regard the resource theory may identify interconnections and explain factors of competitive advantages, as well as their dynamics within the resource categories of an organization. There is a distinction between organizations caused by different resources they hold and manage. The resource theory states that resources are unevenly distributed among organisations, thus resulting in a competitive advantage or vulnerability of a company. If a competitive advantage of an organisation associates with the fact that it owns a certain resource, then other organisations attempt to block or slow down the use of such resources by creating various obstacles. Thirdly, it is interesting to analyse the use of resources in terms of mitigation of organisational losses which as we know may create the so called 'invisible enterprise' in any organisation. An 'invisible' enterprise may consume huge amounts of resources without producing any goods and values for consumers. By revealing and eliminating organisational losses and mitigating the effect of the 'invisible enterprise', an organisation may substantially improve its operation and the level of educational services.

Conclusion

A theoretical and methodological analysis of scientific literature covering the issue researched has been conducted by the authors, and it has been established that currently there is a need to develop a system of efficient educational service resource support and scientifically substantiate it. Educational organisations which mainly use as their base the existing management traditions and stable public funding demonstrate inert reaction to the changes occurring in vocational educational and labour industry, which is preconditioned by underestimation of key elements of educational services, including resource support. The conceptual basis proposed in the article is fortified by the proprietary concept of linearity and acme cyclicity of educational service resources. The article presents the linearity model via direct correlation between conditions and a set of resources, the outcome of the educational service and an aggregate of conditions, and the model of acme cyclicity of resources which demonstrates transformation of the outcome of educational service into another field source.

This article may be of use for vocational educational organisations adapting to new operational conditions in the sphere of education, as well as for education specialists focused on developing a system to monitor quality of education.

New issues and problems to be solved have arisen in the course of the research. The research needs to be continued to develop tools and techniques for assessment of the level of educational service resource support, to address the issue of training heads of vocational educational organisations to perform investigational and analytical activities in the area of resource modernisation.



Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the authors.

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