

DOŚWIADCZENIA MIĘDZYNARODOWE TRZECIEGO WIEKU UNIwersYTETÓW : KLUCZ DO SUKCESU

Anastazja Bogucka

specjalista sekretariatu

Tarnopolski Narodowy Uniwersytet Medyczny

e-mail: bogutskaaa@tdmu.edu.ua

ORCID id 0000-0002-0325-8803

Streszczenie. Uniwersytety trzeciego wieku – instytucje edukacyjne, ośrodki wypoczynkowe, ośrodki kulturalne i społeczne. Ich celem jest zachęcenie osób starszych do prowadzenia aktywnego stylu życia poprzez angażowanie ich w komunikację i wypoczynek, rozwijanie nowych zdolności lub doskonalenie umiejętności, dzielenie się doświadczeniami i uczenie się. Artykuł przedstawia interpretację pojęcia „trzeciego wieku”. Zidentyfikowaliśmy również korzyści społeczne płynące z uniwersytetów trzeciej generacji, jak również ich rola w tworzeniu środowiska sprzyjającego ludziom w późniejszym życiu.

Światowe modele uniwersytetów trzeciego wieku różnią się między sobą metodami i formami nauczania, organizacją i udziałem osób w różnym wieku, rodzajami programów nauczania, a także interakcją z tradycyjnymi uczelniami.

Główne światowe modele uniwersytetów trzeciej generacji: model brytyjski - koncepcja wyjściowa to samofinansowanie, samoorganizacja, wzajemne wsparcie i uczenia się we współpracy; model francuski - z wykorzystaniem koncepcji ścisłego partnerstwa między uniwersytetami trzeciej generacji a uniwersytetami tradycyjnymi; model południowoamerykański jest bardzo podobny do modelu francuskiego i obejmuje różne programy edukacyjne dla grup społecznych znajdujących się w niekorzystnej sytuacji i w gorszym położeniu, jak również dla osób w starszym wieku; model północnoamerykański francuskojęzyczny - wykłady prowadzone są przez wykładowców i profesorów z tradycyjnych uczelni, a studenci są stale zaangażowani w wybór przedmiotów; oraz model chiński, który opiera się na zachowanie i rozwój społeczeństwa, refleksja filozoficzna i kulturowa wzbogacanie, jak również promowanie naturalnej harmonii.

Słowa kluczowe: edukacja, ludzie, uniwersytet, pojęcie, poziom wykształcenia, uniwersytet trzeciego wieku, ludzie drugiego wieku.

INTERNATIONAL EXPERIENCE OF THE UNIVERSITIES OF THE THIRD AGE: CODE FOR SUCCESS

Anastasiia Bohutska

I. Horbachevsky Ternopil National Medical University

e-mail: bogutskaaa@tdmu.edu.ua

ORCID id 0000-0002-0325-8803

Abstract. The Universities of the Third Age (U3As) are learning institutions, leisure, cultural and social centers. They are aimed at encouraging the elderly to active life style by involving them in communication and organization of leisure, development of new abilities or skills improvement, sharing life experience and studying. The interpretation of the notion ‘the third age’ is presented in the article. We have also

defined social benefits of the U3As as well as their role in creation of favourable settings for seniors.

The main world models of the U3As differ in the arrangement of activities, aims and types of the learning programs, methods of training and forms of education, the role of the elderly in their organization, as well as cooperation with traditional universities. The models of the U3As all over the world have been defined, i.e. British model – for using the concept of self-financing, self-assistance, self-arrangement and shared learning of the U3As; French model – for using the concept of close cooperation of the U3As with the traditional universities; South American model is very similar to the French model and involves different learning programs for vulnerable and disadvantaged groups of people in the society as well as seniors; French-Speaking North American model – applies lectures by teachers and professors of traditional universities although the students constantly take part in the U3As administration; and Chinese model that works for saving and improvement of the society, philosophical reflection and cultural consolidation, as well as natural harmony maintaining.

Keywords: University of the Third Age (U3A), U3A models (British, French, South American, French-Speaking North American, Chinese), U3A methods and forms, the third age.

МІЖНАРОДНИЙ ДОСВІД УНІВЕРСИТЕТІВ ТРЕТЬОГО ВІКУ: КЛЮЧ ДО УСПІХУ

Анастасія Богуцька
фахівець секретаріату

Тернопільського національного медичного університету
e-mail: bogutskaaa@tdmu.edu.ua
ORCID iD 0000-0002-0325-8803

Анотація. Університети третього віку – навчальні заклади, центри дозвілля, культурні та соціальні центри. Вони спрямовані на заохочення людей похилого віку до активного способу життя шляхом залучення їх до спілкування та організації дозвілля, розвитку нових здібностей або вдосконалення навичок, обміну досвідом та навчання. У статті представлено тлумачення поняття „третій вік”. Ми також визначили соціальні переваги Університетів третього віку, а також їх роль у створенні сприятливих умов для людей похилого віку.

Світові моделі Університетів третього віку відрізняються між собою за методами та формами навчання, організацією діяльності та участю в ній людей похилого віку, видами навчальних програм, а також співпрацею з традиційними університетами.

Основні світові моделі Університетів третього віку: британська модель – визначальною концепцією є самофінансування, самоорганізація, взаємодопомога та спільне навчання; французька модель – використання концепції тісної співпраці Університетів третього віку з традиційними університетами; південноамериканська модель дуже схожа на французьку і передбачає різні навчальні програми для вразливих та неблагополучних верст населення, а також людей похилого віку; північноамериканська франкомовна модель – передбачає лекції викладачів та професорів традиційних університетів, при цьому студенти постійно беруть участь у виборі заходів; та китайська модель, основою якої є

збереження та вдосконалення суспільства, філософські роздуми та культурне збагачення, а також підтримка природної гармонії.

Ключові слова: освіта, людина, університет, концепція, рівень освіти, університет третього віку, люди похилого віку.

Nowadays, one of the most common forms of implementation of the idea of non-formal education of the elderly is the University of the Third Age (U3A), which functions as educational institutions, social, cultural, cognitive, leisure centers and contributes to creating favorable conditions for life and self-realization of the seniors.

The purpose of the article is to analyze the leading concepts and models of world experience of the U3A: French, British, Chinese, French-Speaking North American and South American.

Today, in many countries the international movement U3As is very popular. Their aim is to create a variety of educational, social, cultural and leisure centers to encourage elderly people to active life by involving them in sharing experiences, acquiring new knowledge, forming some new skills or improvement of the existing ones, communication and organization of meaningful leisure, etc. [1, p. 1].

After retirement, elder peoples` engagement into society alters, as well as their life values: the meaning of life, understanding of happiness, good, evil; the way of their lives, daily routine, goals and objectives, social life also change much. Elderly people pay more attention to mental world and physical state. The near future begins to prevail over the distant one; personal life orientations and perspectives are decreased in the elderly`s minds. The people, who pursue an active lifestyle, pay more attention to future but the passive elderly – to the past. That is why the active ones are more optimistic, objectively perceive the changes in themselves regardless of age, they have a propensity for self-development and activity [2, p. 260-267].

In international practice, the movement of the U3As is considered the most successful project to create favorable conditions and provide opportunities for self-realization of the elderly.

Laslett, in his book, *A Fresh Map of Life* (1989) puts into perspective a number of recent demographic and sociological changes, which have given rise to the comparatively recent phenomenon of the Third Age. Until the first half of this century adults spent virtually all their lives in the Second Age, working and caring for family. They then entered the Fourth Age, a period of dependency and decrepitude prior to death. A fundamental change in this centuries-old pattern began to emerge in many countries, from around the 1950s. Then, for the first time in history, a combination of compulsory retirement, pensions and increased longevity resulted in the great majority of older people in industrialized countries spending many healthy, active, and potentially self-fulfilling years in the Third Age [3].

The interpretation of the concept of "the third age" refers not so much to the age category of people 50-75 years and older, but to their social status, when everyday life no longer involves permanent work and responsibility for the family [4].

The elderly role in the social and economic development of countries, their participation in all aspects of society become a defining component of the International Association of Universities of the Third Age (IAUTA), which was founded in 1974 and has more than 130 participating countries. Currently, the International Association of Third Age Universities unites more than 25,000 universities worldwide. The main

purpose of IAUTA's activities is proclaimed in the organization's statute, and its essence is "to unite the Universities of the Third Age around the world and organizations that have different names but similar tasks." The main principle of the association is "creation with the support of U3As all around the world an international network of lifelong learning institutions to provide assistance and participation for the elderly regarding their educational needs [5, p. 3].

As a voluntary organization, the International Association of Universities of the Third Age (IAUTA) promotes international cooperation between U3As, sharing work experiences and exchange of members – senior students. For example, there is an interesting experience of cooperation and exchange of participants of the U3As between Great Britain and partner organizations of the USA, Japan, Switzerland. An important task of IAUTA is to encourage and support U3As in different countries, both those with a widespread network and countries with this process only initiating.

Thanks to the efforts of the International Association of Universities of the Third Age, the organization held the 18th Congress in Nantes (France, September 1996) and the 19th Congress in Schwabisch Gmund (Germany, September 1998). The Nantes Congress was joined by 400 participants from 17 countries. At these congresses the problems of generation of the elderly and the need to resist all forms of their isolation and violation of rights were discussed [6, p. 77]. Congress in Germany dedicated to the problem "Learning in the third age. How and why? ", gathered more than 500 participants [6, p. 78].

Since its inception in 1972 till now, the U3As have been established and function on all five continents and provide opportunities for learning, self-development and self-realization for millions of elderly people [4]. For example, at the turn of the millennium in China, there were 19,300 training centers for the elderly, which trained about 181,000 people [ibid.].

In the research of M. Formosa [ibid.], E. Gunder [7] and others, the social benefits of the activities of the U3As for society are revealed and their role in ensuring optimal levels of active and successful life of the elderly is characterized. In fact, the U3As, according to researchers, help the elderly to remain integrated into society and actively influence the formation of their social environment, while promoting their intellectual and spiritual development.

In M. Formosa's book "Universities of the Third Age: A Rationale for Transformative Education in Later Life" [4] the following basic models of functioning of U3As which differ both in the organization of their activity and level of communication with basic traditional universities, maintenance and types of proposed educational programs, forms of educational activities, forms of participation of members of the U3A in their organization and functioning.

The leading models of U3As functioning in the modern world are the following:

the French model, which is based on the concept of the expediency of maintaining a close relationship between the U3As and traditional universities. A significant factor that contributed to creation of an appropriate social situation for the development of the idea of starting a university activities of U3As, was the adoption in France in 1968 a law that set before universities the task of helping to increase the literacy of the population. The U3As following the French model are in Germany, Poland, Venezuela, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Uruguay, Ecuador, Mexico and the Dominican Republic);

British model that is widespread in the UK and other English-speaking countries. The dominant concept of the British model of organization and functioning of U3As is self-organization, self-financing, mutual assistance in learning without a lot of support from external resources [8]. Universities that follow the British model are in Australia, Bolivia, Brazil, Ecuador, Paraguay and other countries) [ibid.];

the Chinese model that is associated with the preservation and development of citizenship, cultural consolidation and philosophical reflection, as well as the maintenance and development of physical harmony;

the French-Speaking North America model which is based on close association with universities, with lectures by university professors but the daily management of activities is carried out by students;

the South American model which is similar to the French model, but includes a variety of learning programs and care for the most disadvantaged and vulnerable segments of the elderly population [4].

The idea of creating U3As belongs to Pierre Vella and the heart of this idea was to combine the education for the elderly and gerontological research, thereby helping to improve the quality of life of these people [ibid.].

Pierre Vella substantiated and formulated the main goals of the new type of educational institutions [ibid.]:

- improving the quality of life of the elderly;
- implementation of permanent educational programs for the elderly together with young colleagues;
- coordination of gerontological research and research programs;
- implementation of permanent educational programs in gerontology.

The first university for people of retirement age was opened in Toulouse, France [ibid.]. The main purpose of its opening and functioning was to improve the quality of elderly people's life by involving them in educational programs that were launched at the university. All educational activities at universities were scheduled for the whole day, 5 days a week, for 8–9 months of the current year. The program was so successful that other groups both in Toulouse and in other parts of France and other European countries were formed soon.

In 1973, a course in gerontology, which was introduced at the Toulouse University of Social Sciences exclusively for local retirees, was highly appreciated. Toulouse University of the Third Age was open to all persons who reached retirement age. This university did not offer or provide any qualification; university students did not pass the exams; at the university was no requirement for mastering certain programs; financial contributions were minimal.

We should note that since the late 1970s even within France other approaches to functioning of the U3As developed that led to creation of several universities by local government. They were not associated with the traditional universities. Universities have also expanded their primary orientation on the elderly people by involving other educationally vulnerable groups of population. Sometimes programs have been announced for young retirees, housewives, unemployed, and people with disabilities. Some U3As were renamed to reflect the changing concept of its function, such as Universities of Leisure, Universities of Free Time and Medieval Universities.

Educational programs for the elderly differed in the form of organization, content, style and manner of holding classes. Generally, they demonstrated the availability of the

offered university courses, contracts courses, research groups, combination of public lecture with training courses, trips and physical health programs. The courses offered are mainly related to the humanities and arts. Funding for the U3As also varies considerably. Some U3As are largely funded by traditional universities; others – at the expense of charitable funds, contributions and financial grants of local governments; some universities are funded mainly by their members in various ways, depending on the assets of the participants. This approach has developed according to economic conditions. In the 90s of the 20th century the number of the U3As in which their members are responsible for payment for courses and rent increased [8]. Therefore this leads to changes in the curriculum, where the primary focus is on the acquiring knowledge and development of skills and abilities. In France, a conference is organized every two years and an annual information letter is published.

All educational programs of the U3As function of the French model have high academic standards.

By 1975, the idea of creation of the U3As had spread to other French universities, as well as to universities in Germany, Belgium, Denmark, Poland, Italy, Spain, the Netherlands, Switzerland, Sweden, Finland, and other countries.

An analysis of the materials that we have studied shows that in Germany the U3As usually are related to traditional universities of academic model. Studying is provided by university professors who believe that special teaching methods and programs should be developed taking into account the needs of elderly people.

The education of people of the third age in Germany (the so-called Seniorensstudium) began in the 70's of the 20th century. At that time, the most potential students considered such studying as an opportunity to overtake knowledge that they could not have acquired after graduation due to certain objective or subjective reasons, in other words as an attempt to compensate for the lack of education at a certain level.

During this period in Oldenburg (1979) and Dortmund (1981, 1984) a number of discussions took place on the problem of "opening higher education institutions for older adults." In the early 80's of the 20th century a pilot project "Development and practical evaluation of educational offers for the training of animators and cartoonist from among the elderly people" was implemented at the University of Dortmund. This was the ground for development of the first training courses for the elderly people in West Germany. In 1995, the Federal Union (Association) "Opening of Higher Education Institutions for Older Adults" was founded - the main organization of the German "universities for the elderly", which in 1996 was renamed "Federal Professional Society for Scientific Training of the Elderly" (BAG-WiWA).

The first enrollment in educational institutions of this type was conducted at the universities of Dortmund, Oldenburg, Mannheim, Frankfurt, Bielefeld, Munster and Magdeburg. Since then the number of universities that could provide education for older adults has constantly increased. Thus, until 1994, educational courses for the older adults and elderly people were offered by 35 higher education institutions; in 1997 its number increased to 42; and in the winter semester of 2000/2001 academic year already 50 higher education institutions have offered its services to the elderly people.

Nowadays, the number of higher education institutions for seniors is more than 60 and more than 30 thousand people aged 50 to 75 years and older study there (42% – men and 58% – women). At the same time, approximately 35% of elderly people are aged 60-64, 25% – 65-69 years.

In German educational institutions for the elderly people, there are different types and forms of education: regular full-time studying, extension services and training of seniors. Regular education (ordentliches Studium) is presented in the form of a formal right of an elderly person to go to a higher education institution similar to a young person who has completed secondary education (Abitur). However, taking into account the chosen specialization by an elderly person, there may be certain restrictions on admission. Approximately 25% of elderly people choose this type of higher education. The content and structure of education is governed by regulatory documents and regulations on the organization of the educational process. In the course of training, older people should, as a rule, provide evidence of success in the form of attending seminars, intermediate tests and examinations. Education at the university ends with a final exam and the issuance of a diploma. It is possible to prepare further dissertation work under the conditions of successful study in bachelor's or master's program (Promotion).

Extension service in university (Gasthörer Studium) are the function of advanced training in certain fields of knowledge. Elderly people who would like to update their previously acquired professional knowledge or improve their quality without the need to pass exams or obtain any certificate choose this form of education. At the same time, as a rule, a document on secondary education is not required (except for higher education institutions in Bavaria). However, in some higher educational institutions of the country there are exceptions, when the admission of elderly people to this form of education is carried out taking into account the available professional education, previous work experience or special (for example, scientific, artistic, etc.) interests.

A wide range of specializations and individual courses except those that are subject to admission restrictions are offered to these students. Students should independently plan their studies at the university, supervision by pedagogical or administrative staff is not provided. The organization of students learning, as a rule, is provided at special departments in universities, as well as a central department for advanced training of the elderly people, which contains information on the procedure for admission to studying, regulations on tuition and form of payment, etc. 15-20% of elderly people chose this form of education.

Senior education (i.e. older people over the age of 65) is a specific form of education as a free student. The peculiarity of such education is its special support through special guidance, counseling and training support. At the same time, each higher education institution has its own forms of such educational support, i.e. its own models of senior training (so-called "Senioren studium"). These learning models usually include a structured curriculum, regular attendance of special training events (including trips), the opportunity to listen to a series of lectures, and so on.

In each federal state of Germany, several universities and specialized higher education institutions offer to the elderly people either to get a new specialty (usually in the humanities or science) or to attend a separate training course (in the same specialties).

Let's consider organization of education for the elderly people at the University of Dortmund. Elderly people from the age of 50 years are enrolled in this university. The certificate of secondary education is not required; all that is required is a desire to acquire knowledge. The training lasts five semesters, which ends with an internship and writing a report on and preparation for the final project. After graduation, participants

receive a certificate. Admission to the university (60 places) is held annually in October for the autumn-winter semester.

Everyone interested to study should timely pass an interview with a consultant or a member of the senior department working group. The tuition fee is 90 euros per semester. This university department offers the following specializations to the elderly people and seniors: social gerontology, sociology, pastoral work, psychology, philosophy and theology. In addition, the university provides the opportunity to take a course in other areas of knowledge, information of which can be obtained during a conversation with a consultant. The first semester lasts 4 months (from November to February). Compulsory study activities are 48 hours per semester, two hours for study event twice a week. During the internship, students can test the knowledge gained during the training by performing practical work: the university offers community work, group physical education, visiting nursing homes, participation in integration work with foreigners, providing assistance to kindergartens, schools and other educational institutions, work with the elderly people in employment agencies, organizing public work among neighbors at the place of residence, etc. The duration of practice is 72 hours.

Polish U3As work completely on the French model on the basis of classical universities. The U3As in Poland belong to a national association integrated into the Warszawa Medicine Faculty. Therefore, Polish U3As have established close cooperation with French universities, especially opening groups for people to prepare them for retirement. In Poland, the U3As are the most popular institutions for the elderly people's education.

The first such university was founded by Professor Halina Schwartz at the Medical Center for Postgraduate Education. Warsaw University of the Third Age based on the French model. It began its activities on November 12, 1975. It was one of the first in Europe. At the time of its foundation, 323 people were studying at the university, and in 2003/2004 academic year the number of students was already 1254. Today, the Warsaw University maintains close relationship with institutions that teach adults both in Poland and abroad.

At present there are 22 U3As in Poland. In recent years the country has set a course to create a federation of Polish U3As. Jerzy Halicki distinguished the following educational goals to be implemented in Polish U3As: – old age prevention. University programs aim to overcome the negative signs of aging by promoting mental and physical activity, motivate to increase and deepen knowledge; to involve students in the processes of learning new knowledge, expanding and deepening existing ones; preparing a person for retirement. For this purpose the seminars on psychology and philosophy of life, establishing contacts with other people are held; involvement in various types of social activity; to community activities. University students study under the slogan: "Working for yourself, be useful to others". They participate in public activities for helping people with disabilities, in self-assistance groups [9].

The experience of Austria, which has developed its own model of the U3As that is different from the French or British models, is of great interest for Ukraine. Austrian U3As provide qualifications for elderly students studying in a regular academic program. They are, in fact, members of the Senior Students' Association. These Associations stand for the rights of the elderly in universities and their representatives are present at Senate meetings.

In the Czech Republic there are about 50 groups of U3As. A National Organization was established to coordinate and enhance cooperation between groups of U3As. In Italy, there are more than 150 U3As, mostly of an academic mode, although not all of them function on the basis of traditional universities. Spain has about 100 U3As and projects that provide educational and social activities for the poor. At least six of them function on the basis of traditional universities.

Conclusions

Thus, the analysis of the materials allows drawing conclusion that in the international practice the concept of education of elderly people in U3As is really significant. U3As function as educational institutions, social, cultural or leisure centers and play a significant role in encouraging the elderly to be active by involving them in acquiring new knowledge, sharing life experiences, forming new or improving existing skills, communication and organization of meaningful leisure.

We found that in international practice the U3As differ regarding organization of their activities, the level of relations with traditional universities, the content and types of learning programs, forms of educational activities, forms of participation of U3As members in their organization and functioning. The leading world models of functioning of U3As are carried out: French, British, Chinese, French-Speaking North American and South American.

The study of conceptual approaches and models of U3As in international practice creates new opportunities for organization and functioning of similar institutions in Ukraine.

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