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ПОРІВНЯЛЬНИЙ АНАЛІЗ ОСВІТНІХ ТЕХНОЛОГІЙ У МАЛИХ ШКОЛАХ ПОЛЬЩІ ТА УКРАЇНИ (ПОЧАТОК ХХІ СТ.)

Анотація. Стаття присвячена дослідженню специфіки роботи малих шкіл у Республіці Польща та Україні. Автор з'ясовує, що обидві країни стикаються з подібними викликами, такими як закриття шкіл, низька народжуваність і демографічна криза. Метою статті є висвітлення специфіки використання освітніх технологій малих шкіл у Польщі та Україні. Завданням статті є аналіз проблеми збереження та розвитку таких шкіл в обох країнах, а також виявлення можливостей використання зарубіжного досвіду для поліпшення умов навчання та виховання української молоді.

Для досягнення поставленої мети було використано методи порівняльного аналізу, аналізу законодавчої бази та статистичних даних. Результати дослідження свідчать, що Україна та Польща мають подібні проблеми зі збереженням малокомплектних сільських шкіл. Закриття таких шкіл відбувається через низьку народжуваність, демографічну кризу та недостатність фінансування. В окремих регіонах України вживаються заходи для збереження сільських шкіл, але ця проблема залишається актуальною.

У контексті польського досвіду, як показує практика інших країн, можна знайти нові підходи до розуміння освітніх технологій та методів викладання в невеликих сільських школах. Саме тому досвід, набутий у Польщі, має велике значення для української освіти. Результати дослідження підкреслюють необхідність вивчення та адаптації зарубіжного досвіду для поліпшення ситуації в українських малокомплектних сільських школах.

Ключові слова: повна загальна середня освіта, мала школа, малочисельна школа, освітні технології, сільська освіта, закриття шкіл, Польща, Україна.

COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF MODERN TECHNOLOGIES IN SMALL-SCALE EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS IN POLAND AND UKRAINE (EARLY XXI CENTURY)

Abstract. The development of modern education in Ukrainian rural small schools is an urgent and important issue in the context of the formation of the educational system in Ukraine. The systematic closure of such schools, low birth rates, and the demographic crisis pose serious challenges to providing accessible education in rural areas. A comparative analysis with the experience of Poland, where a similar situation exists, will allow us to identify opportunities to use foreign experience and develop positive practices for Ukrainian education.

The purpose of this article is to highlight the specifics of small schools in Poland and Ukraine. The article aims to analyze the problem of preserving and developing such schools in both countries, as well as to identify opportunities to use foreign experience to improve the conditions of education and upbringing of Ukrainian youth.

To achieve this goal, the methods of comparative analysis, analysis of the legislative framework and statistical data were used. The results of the study show that Ukraine and Poland have similar problems in preserving small rural schools. The closure of such schools is due to low birth rates, the demographic crisis, and lack of funding. Some regions in Ukraine are taking steps to preserve rural schools, but this problem remains urgent.

In the context of the Polish experience, as the practice of other countries shows, new approaches to understanding educational technologies and teaching methods in small rural schools can be found. That is why the experience gained in Poland is of great importance for Ukrainian education. The results of the study emphasize the need to study and adapt foreign experience to improve the situation in Ukrainian small rural schools.

Keywords: small school, educational technologies, rural education, school closure, Poland, Ukraine.

INTRODUCTION

The problem formulation. The establishment of a proficient system of education and youth development stands as a crucial undertaking for the advancement of education in Ukraine during the twenty-first century. The development of modern educational processes in neighbouring countries and Ukraine is characterised by numerous shared challenges.



One of the initiatives involves the preservation and reorganisation of tiny educational institutions. One of the crucial determinants impacting the sustainability of these educational institutions is the absence of a school in rural areas, which leads to the depletion of the local habitat and the subsequent decline of social institutions such as the family and society that are actively engaged in rural communities.

In this particular scenario, the act of sustaining a tiny educational institution presents several distinct benefits. As evidenced by the experiences of several nations, it is feasible to adopt a novel perspective in comprehending educational technologies and pedagogical strategies for instructing children in rural, small-scale educational institutions. The knowledge gained from educational practises in tiny rural schools in Poland holds significant importance for the field of education in Ukraine.

Analysis of recent research and publications. Currently, there is a notable scholarly interest in conducting study on the challenges faced by small rural schools in Ukraine and Poland. This research has been undertaken by scholars such as N. Pobirchenko, O. Savchenko, V. Kuz, O. Kobernyk, O. Liubar, I. Osadchyi, M. Stelmakhovych, O. Sukhomlynska, M. Yarmachenko, and various others. It is imperative to give special consideration to the research conducted by Russian academics about the structuring of the educational procedures inside a smaller educational institution. Notable researchers in this field include L. Baiborodova, V. Bocharova, M. Guryanova, V. Dubinina, A. Yefremov, D. Zabrodin, G. Suvorova, A. Cherniavska, among others.

AIM AND TASKS OF THE RESEARCH

The aforementioned studies do not comprehensively cover all facets of the operations of small schools in Poland and Ukraine, as the issue is brought to the forefront by the inherent conflicts within the current educational system. The research objective of this article is to elucidate the distinctive characteristics of tiny educational institutions in Ukraine and Poland.

RESEARCH METHODS

The study employs many research methods. In order to achieve our objectives and facilitate a comparative analysis of media education in Ukraine and Poland, we employed the historical and logical method, the technique of generalisation, the method of analysis and synthesis, the system method, and the method of content analysis.

RESULTS OF THE RESEARCH

It is widely acknowledged that the replication of a certain educational experience from one country to another through mechanical means is an unattainable endeavour, as it is subject to nuanced variations in contextual variables. Ukraine necessitates the establishment of a distinct approach to the development of a novel model of rural educational institutions. The global experience in creating rural schools with a focus on general education, especially tiny schools, that cater to the educational demands in Ukraine, is also deserving of scholarly consideration. Conducting a comparative analysis of small schools across other nations, such as Poland, might facilitate the identification of chances to leverage foreign experiences and adopt excellent practises.

These kind of educational institutions are prevalent in numerous nations, particularly in rural regions. These entities possess distinct objectives and employ unique educational methodologies and social strategies. As exemplified, the French populace takes great pride in the concept of «small schools» characterised by a single class, as noted in the source (Chervonyj M. A. 2009, p. 97).

The contemporary notion of a «small school» encompasses a diverse range of educational institutions that vary in terms of their activities, operational circumstances, student enrollment, national and social demographics, and geographical placement.

Based on the definitions provided by encyclopaedic sources from Russia and Ukraine, a tiny school can be described as an educational institution that lacks parallel classrooms and typically accommodates a limited number of students. In such schools, it is customary to merge pupils from two, three, or four different grades into a single class. A single instructor is responsible for instructing a group of students, sometimes referred to as a class set (Jarmachenko M., 2001, p.10).

Within the legislative framework of both states, these notions are expounded upon and encompass the definitions of a «small general education institution» and a «small educational institution».

The closure of small schools in rural areas poses a significant challenge in their development and sustainability, as these institutions are vital for the local community.

Figure 1 illustrates the percentage of closed schools in Ukraine during the early years of the 21st century.

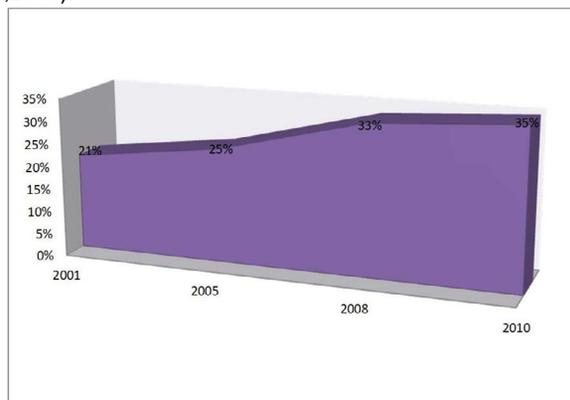
The graphic illustrates a discernible trend in the closure of tiny rural schools. In the preceding decade, approximately one-third of educational institutions in Poland and Ukraine were closed.

The primary factors contributing to this phenomenon can be attributed to the low birth rate and demographic crises experienced throughout the 1990s, alongside the insufficient allocation of financial resources towards these educational institutions. This assertion is substantiated by professionals affiliated with the Ministry of Education and Science. Based on the available data, it is evident that a significant proportion of general education institutions in Ukraine, specifically 26 percent as reported by IA «World of Education,» are presently categorised as tiny, amounting to about three and a half thousand establishments. Approximately 800 elementary schools, constituting 24 percent of the overall number, exhibit a student-to-class ratio of up to 10.

According to experts, a significant majority of these eight hundred schools, specifically seven hundred, are situated in rural regions. Based on data provided by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports of Ukraine, it has been observed that a total of 951 educational institutions have ceased operations in Ukraine since 2001. Among these closures, 740 schools were located in rural areas, accounting for approximately 78% of the overall number of closed schools.



According to a study conducted in the year 2000, there has been a significant decline of 555,300 pupils (equivalent to a 25.6% decrease) in rural compulsory educational institutions (Jedyné osvítne informacijne vikno Ukrajiný; Glówné uwarunkowania współpracy samorządów i organizacji, 2009).



Picture. 1. Dynamics of closing small schools in Ukraine (2001-2011)

From 2006, and in the specific context of Poland from 2008, the closure of small schools in Ukraine has been contingent upon the approval of local authorities, as well as the collective decision-making process involving the community and parents. Nevertheless, the practical reality is that the insufficient allocation of finances for rural schools has taken precedence over the imperative to maintain and uphold the existence of these educational institutions (Pęczkowski R. Małe szkoły w systemie edukacji...).

During the period from 2006 to 2008, efforts were made to optimise the network of general education institutions in the various regions of Ukraine. A comprehensive execution of the School Bus programme was initiated in rural regions. Nevertheless, the aforementioned programme, which was initiated in the Sumy region, encompassing 77% of schools (comprising 54 tiny schools) situated in rural locales, did not achieve complete implementation (V Sumskij oblasti realizujetsja prohrama «Shkilnyj avtobus» (2001)). There is a trend of school closures in many regions of Ukraine, including Poltava (Brusenskyj, 2007), Luhansk, and Kharkiv (Jedyné osvítne informacijne vikno Ukrajiný MON ta IA «Svit osvity»). The circumstances in the Kyiv region exhibited certain distinctions. The prevailing stance of the state regional administration was focused on the preservation of rural schools (Chervonyj, 2009.).

The regions of Cherkasy, Kherson, Poltava, Mykolaiv, and Chernihiv in Ukraine have the highest concentration of tiny schools in rural areas, with percentages ranging from 50% to 61%. According to the data, almost 25% of general education schools at the primary and secondary levels (grades 1-11) had an enrollment of less than 100 students, indicating that these schools meet the criteria for potential closure (Jedyné osvítne informacijne vikno Ukrajiný MON ta IA «Svit osvity»).

In the context of Poland, there has been a notable emphasis on the financial challenges associated with small schools, which are deemed to be problematic. Specifically, the cost of education per pupil in such schools is said to be 5-6 times higher than the established norms. Frequently, this phenomenon can be attributed to the substantial disparity between the design capacity of educational institutions and their actual occupancy rates. Simultaneously, Poland was in the process of establishing educational structures that, rather than necessitating the closure of smaller schools, enabled a single teacher to instruct all topics throughout grades 1-5 while receiving remuneration double the standard rate (Chervonyj, 2009.)

According to statistical data spanning from 2005 to 2011, it was observed that around 33% of small schools in Ukraine underwent closure ((Jedyné osvítne informacijne vikno Ukrajiný MON ta IA «Svit osvity»). Undoubtedly, this phenomenon exerted a detrimental influence not alone on the progress of rural areas, but also on the overall standard of education. Analogous circumstances could be witnessed in Poland. Based on internet publications, it has been reported that there is a significant decline of 44% in the number of small schools in Poland at present. Notably, a majority of these schools are situated in rural areas (Z Małej Szkoły w Wielki Świat URL: <http://mala.szkoła.pl>).

In light of the unfavourable circumstances in Ukraine, the Budget Declaration for 2011, as ratified by the Ukrainian government, stipulates the optimisation of educational institutions. Specifically, schools catering to the 1st grade with an enrollment of fewer than 10 students, schools serving the 2nd and 3rd grades with less than 40 students, and schools accommodating students from grades 1 to 3 with an enrollment of less than 100 students are to undergo optimisation measures.

The ultimate outcome of this situation is uncertain and will only be determined over time. An further rationale for the closure of tiny schools pertains to the substandard level of education provided. This assertion is not universally corroborated. The study done by the Kyiv School of Economics and the World Bank, as reported in the publication «Dzerkalo Tyzhnia,» did not provide evidence to support the notion that class size and school had a significant impact on learning results in secondary schools (Likarchuk, 2011).



Based on data from the State Statistics Service, it can be observed that approximately one out of every five schools in Ukraine presently accommodates a student population of no more than 40-50 individuals, indicating their classification as tiny institutions (V Sumskij oblasti realizujetsja prohrama «Shkilnyj avtobus», 2001).

Consequently, the closing of these educational institutions may result in an inadequate provision of education within rural regions. This assertion holds true in contemporary times, as a rural small school is an integral element within the educational landscape, encompassing kindergarten, primary and secondary schools, supplementary educational institutions, and cultural establishments. It is imperative to recognise that such a school cannot operate in isolation from its natural surroundings, but rather is intricately connected to and influenced by the surrounding environment. From this perspective, a rural small school functions as an integral member of society, actively engaging with social organisations that tackle rural development concerns. Specialised education and educational programmes aimed at individualising education have been effectively implemented in small schools (Pęczkowski R. Małe szkoły w systemie edukacji konieczność, problem czy szansa, pp. 174–192.)

Hence, in addition to the drawbacks associated with tiny schools in Poland and Ukraine, it is noteworthy that small rural schools possess several advantages in comparison to conventional educational institutions. According to available data, it has been observed that around 67% of schools located in rural areas possess dedicated educational and research plots. According to a study conducted by (Chervonyj, 2009, p. 100), over 79% of rural schools possess and actively engage in agricultural activities on their own land. These schools not only cultivate the land but also yield harvests that are comparable to, if not surpassing, those of local farmers. As a result, these schools are able to sustain themselves by producing their own food resources.

Furthermore, the extensive expertise possessed by teachers regarding the unique qualities and living circumstances of each student, as well as their close proximity to nature and conducive educational environments, enable the organisation of the educational process at an elevated standard. This, in turn, facilitates the creation of an environment conducive to integrated learning.

Moreover, the presence of a small school plays a significant role in the cultivation of an individual's personality, serving as a crucial social element. This influence extends beyond the student body and encompasses families, particularly those facing socio-economic challenges.

Furthermore, the amalgamation of a village school, kindergarten, and community centre might be perceived as a unified hub for cultural activities within the village. Representatives from the leadership of innovative schools in rural parts of Poland and Ukraine have the view that the school plays a crucial role in the overall development of the region. The presence of a school is indicative of the existence of vitality and activity.

Furthermore, this is the opportune location for the establishment of pioneering primary-level educational institutions with a limited student body, such as «School-Family» and similar models. These institutions can be tailored to the unique characteristics of the region and the demographic conditions prevalent in the town. This innovation is expected to guarantee equitable access to high-quality education for students in the primary school age group.

An additional rationale for the conservation of tiny schools in rural regions is to the discontinuation of the classroom structure within these educational establishments. According to Likarchuk (I.), it is imperative to implement several modes of learning, including individual, group, optional, and remote learning. Additionally, the organisation of teachers' work should follow the «teacher on a business trip» approach, with the involvement of teacher-methodologists from the methodology office (Likarchuk, 2011).

In the given context, an additional proposition about the presence of schools in rural regions has surfaced in Poland, which involves the conversion of tiny schools into satellite campuses of fundamental educational establishments (Społeczno-Oświatowe Stowarzyszenie Pomocy Pokrzywdzonym i Niepełnosprawnym «Eduktor» w Łomży).

According to a National Educational Initiative in Poland known as «Our New School,» there is an implementation of various measures in rural schools. These measures include promoting educational openness, utilising project-based methods, implementing competitive selection processes, and providing support to leaders who are actively implementing innovative approaches in education (Społeczno-Oświatowe Stowarzyszenie Pomocy Pokrzywdzonym i Niepełnosprawnym «Eduktor» w Łomży).

Another kind of small school existence in Poland is the «school bus - mobile laboratory.» The bus is outfitted with laboratories that encompass physical, chemical, and biological disciplines. The entity in question journeys to geographically isolated regions where educational sessions are conducted (Główne uwarunkowania współpracy samorządów i organizacji, 2009).

In the context of educating young individuals residing in rural regions, particularly with regards to labour education within small-scale educational institutions, rural Poland has embraced the implementation of dual education, as well as integrated programmes that combine general education with vocational training. Upon completion of their studies at said educational institution, students are awarded a diploma as well as a certificate of vocational education. Rural areas address the challenge of specialised education and professional mastery with the following approach (Główne uwarunkowania współpracy samorządów i organizacji, 2009).

Therefore, it can be asserted that smaller educational institutions produce graduates who possess a practical orientation. However, these individuals may not consistently encounter suitable opportunities to apply their abilities and competencies.

The issue of retaining small schools in rural areas has garnered significant attention, as indicated by the organisation of conferences, roundtables, and similar events throughout Poland.



CONCLUSIONS AND PROSPECTS OF FURTHER RESEARCH

In contemporary times, inside the Republic of Poland, there exists a prevailing trend wherein small-scale educational institutions have been delineated and are presently functioning in accordance with specific frameworks. These frameworks encompass the provision of individualised classes and the instruction of diverse age cohorts through tailored curricula. The construction of individual routes and the methods for conducting training sessions has been comprehensively detailed by scientists.

Consequently, conducting a comparative examination of small schools in Ukraine and Poland has facilitated the identification of analogous challenges pertaining to their growth and sustainability. These challenges encompass inadequate alignment between the schools physical infrastructure and contemporary developmental standards, limited student enrollment, substandard educational services, and insufficient methodological support. There are potential avenues for future investigation in examining the evolution of these educational institutions during the latter half of the twentieth century.

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