

## New educational strategies for life quality of retirement age people during pandemic

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### Abstract

The article considers the problem of activation of people of retirement age during the period of self-isolation and studies education as a means of their activation. As a research method, the questionnaire method was used, which allows us most effectively to find out the features in the attitude of retirement age people who are in self-isolation to personal development through education. It is determined that with the help of education in conditions of self-isolation and in the presence of a modern information society, elderly people want to activate their resources, increase their own professional competence in various fields of knowledge, and master various skills in response to a stressful situation during the situation of self-isolation. It is revealed that most of all during the period of self-isolation, people of retirement age need knowledge from the field of psychology and pedagogy; slightly less in knowledge from the field of medicine and political science; rather low interest in knowledge from the field of agricultural sciences. It is shown that people of retirement age showed interest in computer literacy, knowledge about a healthy lifestyle, history and culture of their native land.

**Keywords:** Self-isolation, coronavirus pandemic, retirement age, educational strategies.

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## 1. Introduction

In the current situation associated with the coronavirus pandemic, people of retirement age found themselves in a difficult situation, as they more than others in a situation of strict long-term self-isolation were. At the same time, in modern Russian society, there is a significant formal and informal aging of the population, in many respects, due to the unfavorable socio-economic situation that has developed in the context of a systemic crisis (Usak, Masalimova, Cherdymova & Shaidullina, 2020; Antsyferova, 2001; Vasilkova, 2009; Vershlovsky, 2002; Baltes, 1994; Abramova, 2000; Podobeda, 2002). This accelerated aging of the population has significant negative consequences for the state and society. The question arises about how and what to offer to the minds of people of retirement age in this difficult period. One of the ways out can be considered education (Sapogova, 2001; Cherdymova, 2017; Shakhmatov, 1996; Serov, 2005; Gromkova, 2005; Arkhipova, 2008). The education of people of retirement age, like any social phenomenon, is characterized by internal patterns, cause-and-effect relationships. The relevance of the study is related to the need to eliminate the problems that have arisen, to justify the functioning of the education system as a means of activating older people for further use of their acquired knowledge and skills in practical activities in order to form, optimize and improve (Agapova, 2006; Molchanova, 1999; Cherdymova, 2016; Asmolov, 1996; Bayanova, Sizova, Chistyakov, Prokopyev & Vasbieva, 2019). In Russia, a group of older people found themselves largely outside the educational process. The implemented social policy in the Russian Federation offers this category of citizens a passive role of the recipient and consumer of social benefits, as well as the provision of protection, instead of activation in obtaining the necessary information, social benefits and services.

The analysis of the literature allows us to identify a number of problems that are significant in the context of studying education as a means of activating people of retirement age: the need of society for a person who has an active position, while older people are forgotten in social policy (Krasnova, 1999; Maksimova, 1998; Karasaevskaya, 1978; Kholostova, Egorov & Rubtsov, 2004; Razumovskaya et al., 2018). Analysis of the scientific literature shows that the problems of education as a means of activating people of retirement age are poorly studied in Russian science and practice. The existing education of elderly people allows us to state the presence of specific features of this process (Bekhtereva, 2007; Brunshinsky, 1979; Dubrovina, 2007; Krasnova, 2000; Yarkina, 1993).

If we talk about Russian society, the education of older people should be established in it as an extremely important and productive resource for the harmonization and development of the individual and society, prolonged socialization and activation of older generations, maximum use of their intellectual, moral, and political potential in the interests of this group of people and society as a whole.

Analyzing the features of the education of elderly people and the need for it during the period of self-isolation due to the coronavirus, it is necessary to note the fact that it is education that becomes a means of activation, social activity of a person, which opens up access to intellectual and cultural values to an increasing number of people; education turns into the sphere of educational services. It should also be noted that for an elderly person, education is largely one of the ways to realize personal potential and an active life position.

## 2. Materials and methods

Education of people of retirement age is a broad concept that covers both training, retraining, advanced training of the working-age population, and activities in the field of organizing training for the elderly. The aim of the research is to study the impact of education on the active life and professional position of people of retirement age. To study the attitude of people of retirement age to education, a questionnaire survey method was used.

Research objectives:

- To investigate the features of the inclusion of retirement age people in the social space;
- To analyze the specifics of informing the public about the opportunities of people of retirement age;
- To learn what topics are most interesting for older people: psychological and educational services for people of retirement age; relations with employers; the role of people of retirement age in the education of the younger generation; the features of the modern social situation and upbringing of children; system of family values and the ways of its implementation; the role of family traditions in education and the role of elderly in their formation and maintenance; fundamentals of medical knowledge; age features; relations with family members.

The study used the following questions:

How do you spend your free time in a situation of self-isolation?

Do you have a desire to learn something new?

Would you like to enroll in any online courses to gain new knowledge?

What kind of knowledge are you most interested in?

Would you like to attend classes on your own or together with friends?

Have you discussed various options for getting an education at your age?

How do your relatives relate to this desire?

Do your loved ones contribute to your desire to learn?

In what form are classes more desirable for you?

This questionnaire method allows us most effectively to find out the features in the attitude of retirement age people who are in self-isolation to personal development through education.

### 3. Results

Within the modern information society, getting an education is important for all people, and for people of retirement age. The vast majority of respondents (91% of the total number of responses) have a desire to learn, taking into account the conditions of self-isolation. The opinion of children, friends, or neighbors was decisive in less than 13 % of cases. The survey data suggest that information about educational services and training programs for people of retirement age is not well distributed in public organizations, whose clients are potential participants in such educational projects.

The leading motive for obtaining knowledge in older people during the period of self-isolation is the acquisition of knowledge (80%). In most cases, it is important for respondents to gain knowledge (80% of the total number of responses). Every second participant in the survey said that he/she wants to be knowledgeable in various fields of knowledge (53% of the total number of responses). The next most important motive for getting an education for people of retirement age is communication (76%). In addition, a significant proportion of the responses related to the motive *to distract in communication from the stressful situation associated with the coronavirus* (13% of the total number of responses). In all variants of the answers, the key characteristic is communication. Therefore, every fourth person wants to be a part of the team and claims that communication is important for them (25 % of the total number of responses). This means that it is very important for people of retirement age to maintain strong social ties and communication skills. They construct the development of a new network of communication

based on interests, including such interests as obtaining new and necessary information. Another motive is a way to take up free time (65%). The proportion of such cases indicates that at the retirement age, a person has a huge amount of spare time and not everyone successfully finds a way out of this situation. The desire to feel young, as a motive for learning, suggests that the vast majority of older people adequately perceive their age and their educational abilities (13 % of the total number of responses). The dominant role of obtaining information can also be traced in the analysis of the following group of questions concerning what is important for older people in communicating with other students. Most elderly people are interested in gaining knowledge, in the mutual exchange of experience, in improving their level of competence, which, in turn, indicates a high level of social activity. According to the results of the survey, the majority of respondents says that mutual exchange of knowledge and experience is important for them (63 % of the total number of respondents). It can be assumed that with the help of education in the modern information society, older people want to activate their resources, increase their own competence in various fields of knowledge, and master various skills in response to a stressful situation in the situation of self-isolation. According to the study, not only communicating with teachers helps, but also interaction with other students, every third participant in the survey, in this regard, needs the experience and knowledge of others (35% of the total number of respondents). The vast majority of people want to learn not for the sake of communication, but for the sake of gaining new knowledge and necessary information. Relative to these answers, the proportion of others is insignificant. Only 3% of the total number of respondents indicates that there is no time to communicate. This proportion of responses confirms the assumption that the main motive for learning is to gain knowledge. Elderly people, adequately perceiving the growing need for knowledge and their educational abilities, do not come for the sake of communication. They want to receive timely and reliable information. All respondents (100%) indicated that they found the new knowledge useful. More than half of the respondents are going to use the new knowledge in later life (61% of the respondents), and every fifth is ready to pass on the experience to their relatives, friends, neighbors (21 % of the respondents). This is especially important, because today knowledge is important as a means of integrating people of retirement age into the space of the information society, where, in addition to owning information, its use, transmission, and multiplication are also necessary for successful life. At the same time, a more detailed analysis of the data obtained makes it possible to assert that the intention to use the acquired knowledge and skills may not go to the level of practical actions. In less than 3% of cases, older people indicated the need to gain knowledge for better understanding other people. This may indicate the need for this age group to understand the psychology of people better. High-quality information in this area of knowledge can contribute to the improvement and development of communication networks of older people.

Describing in detail the interest of older people in subject areas of knowledge, it can be assumed that people of retirement age tend to understand the behavior of different age groups of the population, strive to improve the ways of communication and interaction with representatives of these groups. According to the results of the survey, three-quarters of all respondents answered this way (71% of the total number of responses). Older people are confident that knowledge from the field of psychology and pedagogy can contribute to the expansion of their social networks. The interest of elderly people in medicine was lower than it was expected at the beginning of the study. In spite of the fact that representatives of a particular demographic group, although are interested in knowledge about the possibilities of treatment and prevention of age-related diseases, but still this information is not predominant. 41% of the respondents want to get knowledge about this area. The interest of elderly people in agronomy was unexpectedly low. In less than 3% of cases, people of retirement age stated the need for information that relates to the management of household farming, improving the quality of care

for this site. The interests of people of retirement age turned out to be much broader than the area of establishing interpersonal relationships and taking care of their health. In about 17% of cases, respondents expressed extreme interest in political science. This indirectly confirms the high level of attention of people of retirement age to the political situation in modern society. It is known that this gerontology-group is the most active part of the electorate in the state, and information about the main trends in the development of political processes and phenomena in Russia allows older people to feel more knowledgeable in the situation of discussion or political choice. Another area of interest for older people is the need to gain knowledge about the peculiarities of the upbringing of the younger generation, ways to avoid conflicts with them. This was the answer of every fifth of the respondents (21% of the total number of respondents). Knowledge related to the field of household management, improving this component of everyday life, is needed by 19 % of respondents. Other subject areas indicated by the respondents themselves accounted for 19 % of the total number of responses. Among them are computer literacy, knowledge about a healthy lifestyle, legal literacy, history and culture of the native land. The data obtained can be evidence of older people interest in obtaining information about new equipment and technologies, including computers; information about laws explaining the rights and obligations of various groups of the population; knowledge about the possibility of preserving health and improving the quality of life; knowledge about the history of the region, its development features and differences from other areas.

It should be noted that the majority of respondents would have come for knowledge acquisition. The share of such responses was 61% of the total number of responses. The obtained data once again confirms the assumption that it is necessary to obtain new information and knowledge in the conditions of modern society. A third of respondents said that older people want to take an active life position in society and keep up with the times (41% of the total number of responses). For the sake of communication, every third respondent is ready to learn (35 % of the total number of responses). Such results may indicate a certain lack of communication, which is experienced by older people. The results obtained can serve as evidence that a well-structured learning process arouses interest in classes among the elderly. In addition, the research materials suggest that people of this age group tend to receive timely information and knowledge necessary in everyday life. 19% of respondents want to feel young. The proportion of such responses suggests that older people are interested in receiving information that relates to various changes taking place in modern conditions, they want to keep abreast of life, keep up with the younger generation, and be knowledgeable in various fields of knowledge and technology. Older people are interested not so much in developing a communication network, but in forming an active life position with the help of educational services. That is, the main motive for learning for people of retirement age is to gain knowledge. Older people express the need for lifelong learning, which is facilitated by the effectiveness of educational programs designed for people of this age group.

#### **4. Discussion**

Changes in the political and socio-economic life of the country have generated such negative consequences as unemployment, rising prices, property stratification of society, an increase in the criminal situation, forced migration of the population, professional poverty, a drop in the birth rate, etc. Though the word activation has been used frequently in recent years, most social work professionals will probably agree that one person is not able to empower another with the ability to control their own life situations. The only thing that is possible is to create conditions through which customers can control their own life situations, that is, to activate them.

This practice is based on the strength, abilities of people, and not on their pathology. The task of the educational system is to try to raise the bar of the client's self-esteem, to strive to build a relationship

with him/her that could open the way to learning through communication, and then to the heart of the client, increasing their ability to independently control their life circumstances. Teachers can try to understand their clients, if they need to get an impulse to self-realization of their own forces, etc. Educators should abandon this understanding of their role and encourage clients to decide for themselves what they want. You cannot teach people to be active, at least not in the usual sense of the word teach.

Activation as a process requires professionals to apply in practice the basic values of pedagogical work: respect for the individual and his/her right to self-determination. The work carried out should be something like helping people and communities to solve serious personal and social problems. By adhering firmly to these values, it is necessary to believe that people themselves know what they want, and have the right to think that they are able to get what they want.

## 5. Conclusion

The education of people of retirement age, like any social phenomenon, is characterized by internal patterns, cause-and-effect relationships. Education helps people of retirement age to preserve themselves and realize themselves as individuals, it compensates for their previous professional activities, and for many it has a prestigious value.

The aging of the population is one of the global problems of the modern world. The survey data allow us to state that all respondents are interested and respect the knowledge and experience of other people; are ready to participate in classes organized by other students of this institution; express interest in actively positioning their point of view, their knowledge, skills and abilities, but some of them need the appropriate support of teachers. All this shows that education is one of the means of activating older people, an incentive to continue studying new areas of knowledge and improving existing experience.

Identifying the attitude of people of retirement age to education, we can draw the following conclusions. The main channels of dissemination of information about the activities of educational institutions for the elderly are advertising in the media and personal informal contacts. People of retirement age are interested not so much in the development of a communication network, but in obtaining the necessary knowledge and information, therefore, the main motive for the admission of elderly people is to acquire knowledge. People of retirement age are expressing the need for education throughout life.

All this shows that education is one of the ways to activate people of retirement age successfully, an incentive to continue studying new areas of knowledge and improving existing experience.

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