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EDUCATION FOR PEACE AND THE IDEA OF FRATERNITY AND COMMUNITY FRIENDSHIP

WYCHOWANIE DLA POKOJU A IDEA BRATERSTWA I PRZYJAŹNI SPOŁECZNEJ

Streszczenie: Zagadnienie pokoju jest przedmiotem badań zarówno jako element nauki, jak również jako element codziennego życia. Kształtowanie ludzkich postaw zmierzających do akceptacji pokojowego współistnienia społeczeństw i narodów jest jednym z najważniejszych celów wychowania. Zbudowanie trwałego pokoju na świecie jest samą istotą edukacji. Wychowanie dla pokoju jest długofalowym procesem budowanym na rozumieniu innych ludzi, empatii i miłości braterskiej, która prowadzi do dialogu. Takie stanowisko jest blisko wizji papieża Franciszka, który swoją koncepcję wychowania dla pokoju opiera na idei braterstwa i przyjaźni społecznej. Celem artykułu jest ukazanie intelektualnych odniesień różnych wizji i koncepcji wychowania dla pokoju. Mimo niekiedy różnic w podejściu co do istoty i drogi praktycznej realizacji pedagogiki pokoju, to wspólnym mianownikiem tych koncepcji jest dobro człowieka i dobro wspólne.

Słowa kluczowe: Wychowanie, pokój, wychowanie dla pokoju, braterstwo, przyjaźń społeczna

Abstract: The issue of peace is being studied both as an element of scholarship and as an element of everyday life. The formation of human attitudes aimed at accepting the peaceful coexistence of societies and nations is one of the most important goals of education. Building lasting peace

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in the world is the very essence of education. Education for peace is a long-term process—built on understanding for others, empathy, and brotherly love—that leads to dialogue. This position is close to the vision of Pope Francis, who bases his concept of education for peace on the idea of fraternity and community friendship. The purpose of this article is to show the intellectual references of different visions and concepts of education for peace. Despite occasional differences in the approach to the essence and practical implementation of the pedagogy of peace, the common denominator of these concepts is the good of humankind and the common good.

Keywords: Education, peace, education for peace, fraternity, community friendship

Introduction

The ongoing war in Ukraine today unveils the dimensions of the humanitarian crisis and reveals, once again, its humanistic senselessness and the low moral motives of its initiators. In recent decades, Europeans had formed the belief that the outbreak of regular war in this part of the world was inconceivable. Meanwhile, the killing of civilians—including women and children, in front of the whole world—for imperial and political gain has become a brutal fact of life. It is also in this context that the conviction of peacebuilding as both a value and an objective of education should be strengthened. One may wonder about the motives for initiating armed conflicts. Do they arise solely from the frailties of human nature? Understanding these motives could contribute to preventing the emergence of wars. The preamble to UNESCO's Constitutive Act reads: "Since wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that the defenses of peace must be constructed" (UNESCO).³

Peace as a fundamental value and subject of pedagogical research

The issue of peace is being studied both as part of science and as part of everyday life. The study of war and peace have a lot in common and even intertwine. Łukasz Roman argues that both polemology and irenology are pacifist in nature. Their goal is to seek to create and shape peace, but in different ways. In the light of polemology, the phenomenon of war must be eliminated in order to build peace. From the point of view of irenology, by contrast, the construction of peace will be possible through studying its theory. "The difference, however, is that polemology starts from the knowledge of the causes of war and seeks to eliminate them, and

³ For the English UNESCO Constitution of 1945, see: Constitution of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization https://www.unesco.org/en/legal-affairs/constitution?TSPD_101_Ro=08071387ofab2000e3fd2538e044bd143fo67ofdae7452d53f859f1358ed98662b4a55268294956408bd809680143000ab332ddadde71bfbc7bboaec24411d3f4f2806f58125d3a51dc1a04c661c58593eece8af7d9afcf8ae70b8990a9408cf (accessed Oct. 18, 2023).

through their elimination—to create peace, while ireonology seeks to eliminate war as a result of building peace through the elimination of war” (Roman 2017, p. 85). Thus, the fundamental goal of both scientific disciplines is to build peace, but by different means: either by the method of eliminating wars (polemology) or by the method of creating peace (ireonology).

Gaston Bouthoul, who in 1945 founded the world’s first polemological institute in Paris to study the phenomenon of war and armed conflict, proclaimed the thesis, “If you want peace, get to know war” (Roman, p. 82).⁴ He was convinced that ensuring peace and avoiding future wars is possible only if we learn about the phenomenon of war—its nature, causes, and essence. Analyzing and studying the problem of war can help create a framework for learning about peace. Thus observing and analyzing the phenomenon of war should be undertaken, just as other social phenomena are observed and analyzed (Roman, p. 82). The science that deals with the study of war and various armed conflicts is polemology. Its aims to analyze the nature of these phenomena; identify the conditions of place and time; evaluate the frequency of their occurrence, size, and severity; and examine cause-effect relationships (Huzarski 2012, p. 10).

Stanislaw Kawula stresses that peace is not only the absence of war, but before all else it is the absence of hostility between people, states, and nations. Education for peace should, in the first place, restore a person’s sense of life and value. According to Kawula, the educational program should be framed in terms of a pedagogy of dialogue, reconciliation, and coexistence. “In this way, education for peace acquires ideological-moral and at the same time socio-political aspects” (Kawula 1988, pp. 48–49). The formation of human attitudes aimed at accepting the peaceful coexistence of societies and nations is thus a primary goal of education. Confirming the promotion of upbringing for peace and a concern for a peaceful world future is, among other things, the declaration “On the Education of Societies in the Spirit of Peace” adopted at the request of Poland by the UN General Assembly on December 15, 1978.

In light of the above terminological findings, it is worth clarifying the concept of peaceful child development. Here I will use the concept by Katarzyna Olbrycht, who defines the concept of “a situation of peaceful child development.” Olbrycht presents the development of the human being as a person by adopting the perspective of Christian personalism and referring to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights affirmed by the international community, largely inspired by Jacques Maritain. Therefore, those changes become developmental which strengthen one’s own sense of dignity, freedom, and reasonableness; responsibility for recognized human values; changes that deepen the capacity for love, understood as a voluntary gift of oneself to another person; as well as creative and active participation in

4 The original French quote “*Si tu veux la paix connais la guerre*” is translated to Polish in Roman’s work as „Jeśli chcesz pokoju, poznaj wojnę.”

the community. “Situations supporting a child’s development will be consistently understood as situations (a system of stimulus and task conditions) that support the child’s personal growth. However, the distinction ‘peaceful’ requires clarification. It should be understood as conditions of development in peace and for peace” (Olbrycht 1999, pp. 70–71).

Olbrycht, like John Paul II, understands the concept of peace more broadly than the mere absence of war. Instead, it is a state of perceived and realistically experienced security. Norwegian peace researcher John Galtung (who founded the Peace Research Institute in Oslo) propounded the thesis that peace should be understood in the category of process, not fact. Process, in turn, here means the making of various changes, both at the level of international relations and the social structures of individual states. Peacebuilding, according to the author, should, on one hand, lead to the elimination of various manifestations of violence (structural and personal) from social relations. On the other hand, it should lead to the creation of living conditions conducive to the satisfaction of human needs (Galtung 1975). Such action ought to result in constructing a sense of security in society. The need for security is a fundamental human need; its satisfaction is a prerequisite for the physical and psychological development and proper functioning of the individual in society. In light of personal development, a sense of security is a condition for human functioning as a person in all its dimensions. A lack of peace in a person’s life—especially for a child, who has less physical and mental (emotional) resilience as well as less ability to intellectually grasp difficult, painful situations—is a destructive factor in all aspects of his or her life. External and internal difficulties become the cause of a variety of sufferings that the person must learn to live with, since they are largely happening independently of him or her.

To a large degree the future of the world depends on the consistent defense of peace, as well as the just implementation of a new social and economic order. Not the least important element in maintaining world peace is education, which makes it possible to understand the nature, complexity, and developmental tendencies of the modern world and, importantly, to guide this development. It is therefore necessary to seek new theories and effective educational practices understood in terms of social good, which could contribute to mutual understanding, agreement, and peace.

When analyzing the idea of education for peace, special attention should be given to the opinion of Bogusław Śliwerski. In his “Pedagogy of Peace in Conditions of Permanent Unrest,” Śliwerski questions the effectiveness of such an upbringing. This is because he claims that with “the approach to upbringing as a peculiar or separate peaceful, non-conflict activity is connected with the hope, illusion, or dream that it is possible to obtain certainty of achieving it through relatively permanent character changes in pupils (attitudes, habits, beliefs, etc.), in accordance with the educational ideal (model, goal) imposed on them [...]. However, if the referral

to war is decided not by educators, but by politicians, then even the best and most effective upbringing must break down when a young person is faced with a choice: joining the warfare of his own country, formation, or desertion. Thus the peaceful attitudes of citizens and the sustainability of these attitudes are not determined by upbringing, but by politics and politicians, who can at any time undo the efforts of educators [...]. Therefore, I do not believe in education for peace created in such a way in the course of education, because it becomes only a record of pious wishes and dreamy sighs, with all due respect to the noble humanistic messages contained in it” (Śliwerski 2016, pp. 20–21). In the belief of the quoted author, it is the school that should enable students (alumni) to find their own identity in their autonomous relationship with a world full of wars and threats of war.

Education for peace

The ideas of education for peace have their origins in the views of educators of the early 20th century in the “New Education” movement. This generation of pedagogues was sensitive to the situation of the child and his development, yet at the same time showed the contradictions of a social life that hindered this development and demanded its reconstruction. Among these pedagogues, an important place was occupied by Maria Montessori (1870–1952), who can be called a pioneer of the idea of education for peace. She demonstrated, like many modern scholars, that peace is not the mere absence of war, or the result of political negotiations and compromises, but the result of a consistent, long-term educational process. Building lasting peace is the very essence of education, while the task of politics is to uphold peacekeeping and prevent warfare. Montessori expressed the belief that peace is closely related to the principles of justice and love between people, building a world based on harmony. She saw great danger in the moral disunity of people and the breakdown of the importance of reason. Montessori pointed out the need to implement peace education already at an early stage of childhood education. She outlined the fundamental circles of education for peace: the circle of interpersonal relations (person-to-person), the circle of social life, and the circle determined by the mutual relations between man and nature. Therefore, she postulated the necessity of building a separate “pedagogy of peace” that would explain the moral aspects of interpersonal relations and the formation of social life based on community (Wojnar 2000, pp. 17–19).

It is worth mentioning at this point that the very concept of “pedagogy of peace” with a broad meaning, including issues of educational theory and practice, was first used by Pope Paul VI in 1969. It subsequently spread through the efforts of UNESCO. In Poland, the first definitions of peace pedagogy were formulated by Bogdan Suchodolski, Irena Wojnar, Eugenia Anna Wesołowska, and Halina Gajdamowicz in the 1980s and 1990s. Joanna Leek notes that organizations such as UNESCO and UNICEF are particularly committed to peace. Peace education

as defined by UNESCO is primarily an activity aimed at promoting a culture of peace. Here peace is a value that needs to be conveyed to children and young people by shaping in them attitudes and behaviors that support peace, teaching ways to resolve conflicts through dialogue and agreement without recourse to violence (Leek 2014, p. 249; UNESCO 2002; Babicki 2017, p. 212). UNICEF, on the other hand, in formulating a definition of education for peace, talks about the process of promoting the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values necessary to induce a change in behavior that will give the younger generation and adults the opportunity to prevent conflict and violence. It is therefore about resolving conflicts peacefully and creating favorable conditions for the reign of peace at both the interpersonal and international levels (Leek, p. 249; Fountain 1999, p. 1).

Irena Wojnar argues that the basis of peace pedagogy is built on such values as “community, tolerance, understanding, and a special role in the implementation of educational practice is related to highlighting the community of cultural heritage, the cultural identity of Europe” (Wojnar, p. 20). The cited author argues after Hermann Röhrs that Europe is a polyphony of spiritual values. She writes: “Röhrs reflects on the peculiarity of *Homo Europaeus*, reminds us of the three historical sources of this idea; they are Athens, Rome, and Jerusalem defining three basic areas of values and principles—historical reflection in the service of man’s existential needs, the norms of the legal and state structure, and religious life, transcendence. European cultural education would materialize in this realm of values, encompassing selected ideas and works of philosophy, literature, and art. [...] In this way, the permanence of tradition would become an inspiration and enrichment of the experience of the present, a basis for strengthening tolerance, respect for diversity, and respect for peaceful coexistence” (Wojnar, p. 21). Education for peace, then, is a long-term process—built on understanding for others, empathy, and brotherly love—which leads to dialogue. This position is quite close to Pope Francis’s vision of the need to build fraternity and community friendship in the world.

Agnieszka Piejka notes numerous themes and problems that arise regarding human-world relations on the level of education for peace. The basic question is how to develop in the individual a sense of responsibility and causation of world peace. The search for an answer to this question is also carried out in the field of social pedagogy and multicultural and intercultural education since the modern world cannot be understood without reference to its multicultural dimension. At various initiatives to promote the idea of peace, the category of “culture of peace” is increasingly invoked. Thus, upon the author’s further reflection, the formation of a culture of peace is such an important educational commitment that it obliges all people to ask questions about the concrete possibilities of its implementation. However, a multiplicity of relevant perspectives must be taken into account: “from the perspective of the smallest communities, which are the child’s first educational environment, through the areas of social participation (peer groups, hometowns,

educational and religious institutions), which expand in the course of his life, to the continental and global perspective, when man is seen as a representative of the great human community of beings inhabiting the earth. Each of these perspectives is important for the formation of human identity” (Piejka 2015, p. 123; Babicki, p. 216). It then becomes pedagogy’s task to create a certain space so that individuals can engage the process of forming a culture of peace within themselves from childhood.

If peace education is the promotion of the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values necessary to bring about changes in the behavior of children and adolescents, this raises various practical implications, including for educational activities. One proposal worth noting is an educational program called “The Peace Gene.” The author of this program, Agnieszka Uniewska, points out that it refers to mutual care, upbringing, and the complex process of socialization and enculturation. It is related to the belief in goodness and nobility, which a person has within himself or herself and which must be nurtured and strengthened from early childhood, creating optimal conditions for development. In her program, Uniewska refers to the views of Albert Bandura and Richard Walters, who believed that aggression is a learned way of behaving—of coping with life and overcoming life’s obstacles that make it difficult or impossible to achieve one’s goal. Therefore, if we react aggressively, it means that such ways of acting have been fixed in our memory as effective, and such patterns of behavior have been assimilated by us in the process of socialization offered to us by our social environment. This further means that if it is possible to learn aggressive behavior, it is also possible to unlearn it, and to realize for what reasons the path of violence and evil is not a constructive solution for human beings but is a destructive path to nowhere (Uniewska 2003, p. 548; Bandura, Walters 1968; Babicki, p. 216).

Education for peace understood as a complex educational process should implement specific content. The commonly accepted content, indicated by Wesółowska, aims to:

- Understand the rationale of other nations (social groups) and counter hostility and aggression between them;
- Do conscious and purposeful educational work for peacekeeping;
- Create awareness that an important cause of the emergence of conflicts is social inequality and political games;
- Raise awareness of the effects of war to show the value of living in peace against this background;
- Form the belief that both peace and war are manmade, and the realization of a peaceful world order also lies in human hands;
- Direct the forces and potential of alumni toward creative and useful activities rather than destructive ones;
- Form an attitude of respect for others and the ability to have interpersonal dialogue (Wesółowska 2003, p. 172).

The idea of fraternity and community friendship

If we consider that one cause of modern crisis and conflict is the weakening of the sensitivity of conscience, then religious leaders and people of deep faith have an important role to play in reviving it. Therefore, the voice of churches can and should be heard in the public sphere to remind people of human dignity, their due rights, and the ability of people to resolve conflicts and develop friendship. This is a peace-building and fraternity-building activity, not a political activity tied to the interests of selected parties or certain social groups. One of the first such endeavors may be to strive for the recognition of the right to religious freedom, which all religious leaders and followers can and should strive to preserve (Kampka 2020, p. 20).

The categories of fraternity and friendship often appear in Pope Francis's teaching as universal values and make an important contribution to the practice of interpersonal and interreligious dialogue. The encyclicals "*Laudato si*" and "*Fratelli tutti*," written admittedly from a Catholic perspective, nevertheless appeal to arguments that can be accepted irrespective of religion. The Pope in "*Fratelli tutti*" wishes to make his own contribution to the reflection on human life in the social dimension. Friendship and fraternity have a social dimension because of the social nature of man. The idea is that societies, faced with various crises and phenomena depreciating human dignity, should be able to respond with a new dream of fraternity and community friendship. And the vision of community friendship presented by the Pope seems to be an idea close to everyone who is concerned about the future of man. The joint document by Francis and Ahmed El-Tayyeb is considered an important turning point in interreligious dialogue. Both religious leaders realize that religion is sometimes used to justify violent acts. At the same time, they recognize the growing awareness of believers and what dangers this may entail. They conclude that the multiplicity of faiths and religions can be treated just like ethnic/multicultural diversity. Believers can live together and work together for peace, justice, and friendship, which should be understood as an attitude of openness and concern for the development of others (Kampka, p. 19).

Community friendship leads to fraternity, a fundamental and universal value. Relationships between people and nations should be built on this foundation so that the disadvantaged do not feel excluded and unnecessary, but rather accepted and supported as part of the same human family. For this reason, the Pope proposes that by cultivating feelings of fraternity toward one another, we become promoters of a culture of peace that would foster sustainable development, tolerance, social inclusion, mutual understanding, and solidarity (Franciszek 2022, p. 11).

Community friendship and fraternity, as understood by Francis, means the need to get closer to each other, to express one's opinion, to listen to each other, to seek points of contact; all of this falls under the expression "to dialogue." The Pope calls for authentic encounter and sincere conversation to help each other. He reminds

us that persistent and courageous dialogue is not news, unlike disagreements and conflicts. Authentic dialogue subtly helps the world live better, far more so than we could ever imagine. He also stresses that too often dialogue is mistaken for “the feverish exchange of opinions on social networks, frequently based on media information that is not always reliable. These exchanges are merely parallel monologues. They may attract some attention by their sharp and aggressive tone. But monologues engage no one, and their content is frequently self-serving and contradictory.”⁵

According to Francis, the way to achieve fraternity and community friendship is therefore dialogue, which refers to the logic of self-giving, an attitude of selflessness towards the other. Dialogue here means the need to get closer to each other, to listen to the other, to get to know each other, to look for points of convergence and skillfully express one’s own opinion. Authentic (social) dialogue presupposes the ability to respect the other person’s point of view and is a condition for commitment to the common good. The beginning of building dialogue, a path in interpersonal communication based on community friendship, is to recognize the temptation that surrounds us to be indifferent to others, especially the most vulnerable. The Pope indicts modern Western civilization when he states: “Let us admit that, for all the progress we have made, we are still ‘illiterate’ when it comes to accompanying, caring for and supporting the most frail and vulnerable members of our developed societies. We have become accustomed to looking the other way, passing by, ignoring situations until they affect us directly” (Vatican’s English translation; Franciszek 2020, p. 47).

The dialogue of which the Pope speaks should be educational. It should be noted that authentic dialogue always takes place in the intersubjective space of the “in-between.” In this space, there should be no room for hidden and instrumental appropriation. The intersubjective space, characterized by the hidden rationale of one’s own point of view, with its own intentions and motivations, and thus opaque to the parties, ceases to be, even if it creates such an appearance, a space of dialogic in-between. “Thus, the biggest obstacle to dialogue (including in education) is not the lack of dialogue, because when there is no dialogue one can still strive for it, but “dialogue” directed and apparent, making the space between something non-transparent and ambiguous. Directed and sham dialogue consists, in fact, in

5 For the Vatican’s English translation of *Fratelli Tutti* used here, see: The Holy See, Encyclical Letter *Fratelli Tutti* of the Holy Father Francis *On Fraternity and Social Friendship*, chap. 6, sec. 200, https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/encyclicals/documents/papa-francesco_20201003_enciclica-fratelli-tutti.html (accessed Oct. 18, 2023). The Polish source (cited in the bibliography) reads: „[...] gorączkową wymianą opinii na portalach społecznościowych, często ukształtowaną przez nie zawsze wiarygodne informacje medialne. Są to tylko monologi, które postępują równolegle, niekiedy narzucając się uwadze innych za sprawą swego podniesionego lub agresywnego tonu. Jednak monologi nie angażują nikogo, a w rezultacie ich treść jest często oportunistyczna i sprzeczna” (Franciszek 2020, pp. 139–140).

stylizing and staging certain actions in such a way that they appear in the perception of others precisely as dialogue, although no real functions of dialogue are fulfilled by these actions” (Gara, Jankowska, Zawadzka 2019, p. 8). In light of this statement, educational dialogue that is real and full-scale in nature can take place when all parties to the intersubjective “in-between” express a willingness and desire to distance themselves from each other. The distance from the self thus created enlarges the space in which the dialogue is carried out.

Dialogue is the most appropriate way to build peace based on fraternity and community friendship and openness to others. Speaking of dialogue, which must be enriched and illuminated by motivations, rational arguments, diverse perspectives, contributions from different fields of knowledge and points of view, the Pope does not exclude that it is possible to arrive at certain fundamental truths which must and always will be maintained. To paraphrase Francis, accepting that certain enduring values exist—even if they are not always easy to recognize—lends solidity and stability to social ethics (Franciszek 2020, p. 147). His voice on the issue of peace as a fundamental value in human life is clear and strong in its message and argumentation. Francis argues that peace is an autonomous value and stems from respect for the natural order, and is therefore of a universal nature. We already encounter this view from Pope John XXIII in his encyclical “*Pacem in terris*,” which begins with the words: “Peace on Earth—which man throughout the ages has so longed for and sought after—can never be established, never guaranteed, except by the diligent observance of the divinely established order.”⁶

Such a view is shared by Jozef Półturzycki, who argues that peace is a sacred value, since it is a gift and good of God. The concept of peace has a relational dimension, as it is always between two subjects (parties), including God and man (Półturzycki 2003, p. 163). Pope Francis refers to the issue of fraternal bonds and community friendship as a necessary principle for preserving and later developing peace in human relations. As Janusz Szulist argues, in Francis’s understanding, the source of fraternal relations is to be found in the idea of divine fatherhood. The words of Christ provide a biblical justification for this belief: “But be not ye called Rabbi: for one is your Master, even Christ; and all ye are brethren. And call no man your father upon the earth: for one is your Father, which is in heaven.” (Matthew 23:8–9, KJV). From Jesus’s words it is inferred that all those who accept his word and follow it in their lives are equal (Shulist 2015, p. 244). In Francis’s teaching,

6 For the Vatican’s English translation of “*Pacem in Terris*” used here, see: The Holy See, Encyclical of Pope John XXIII on Establishing Universal Peace in Truth, Justice, Charity, and Liberty, chap. 1, sec. 1, https://www.vatican.va/content/john-xxiii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_j-xxiii_enc_11041963_pacem.html (accessed Oct. 18, 2023). The Polish source (cited in the bibliography) reads: „Pokój na świecie, którego wszyscy ludzie wszystkich czasów tak żarliwie pragnęli, nie może być budowany i utrwalany inaczej, jak tylko przez wierne zachowywanie porządku ustanowionego przez Boga” (Jan XXIII 1963, p. 1).

as in that of John Paul II, the conviction resounds that peace is an indivisible value, that is, either it is a value for all people or for no one. Peace can only be achieved and maintained if there is a need and readiness in all people to commit to the common good. Education for peace should awaken in all people precisely this need for peaceful coexistence.

Conclusion

The idea of educating for peace has been built and is being developed by various circles and entities: individuals and scientific teams, international organizations and institutions (UN, UNESCO, Christian Churches—especially the Catholic Church—teaching organizations). An original vision of education for peace is offered by the Catholic Church, showing that the idea of peace will take place when the world community is one human family and when a just social order prevails.

The concept of education for peace presented by Pope Francis is a continuation of the Church's previous teaching on this issue. Peaceful coexistence takes place wherever God's order is preserved, which is the foundation for the development of the human person. The principles defining the framework for the implementing educational practices toward peace have a strictly personalistic character and are based on the idea of fraternity and community friendship. In his reflection on peace, Francis analyzes the existence of a human being who is open to God and at the same time capable of building an all-embracing unity. For the practice of education for peace to have its intended effect, it should be expanded, more widespread, going beyond the school system. It needs to extend to the education of university students and adult education in various organizational forms.

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