ANDRAGOŠKA SPOZNANJA

Studies in Adult Education and Learning

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ANDRAGOGIKA V EVROPI: PRETEKLOST, SEDANJOST IN PRIHODNJE PERSPEKTIVE

Pred kratkim smo na področju izobraževanja odraslih v Evropi obeležili nekaj pomembnih obletnic. V Nemčiji so leta 2019 ljudske visoke šole (*Volkshochschulen*) praznovale stoletnico svojega nastanka, saj so bile leta 1919 vključene v ustavo weimarske republike. Vse od takrat dalje so imele pomembno vlogo v podsistemu izobraževanja odraslih v nemškem izobraževalnem sistemu. Prav tako v Nemčiji je bil leta 1969 ustanovljen *DVV International*, ki je torej leta 2019 obeležil svojo 50-letnico delovanja (Hinzen in Meilhammer, 2022). Tudi v Veliki Britaniji so leta 2019 zaznamovali stoto obletnico znamenitega zaključnega poročila komisije za izobraževanje odraslih v okviru takratnega ministrstva za obnovo ter ob tej priložnosti izdali vizijo in usmeritve za izobraževanje odraslih in vseživljenjsko učenje v 21. stoletju (Centenary Commission on Adult Education, 2019; Field, 2019). Istega leta so v okviru devete trienalne konference ESREA (European Society for Research on the Educaton of Adults), ki je potekala v Beogradu, kolegi iz Srbije proslavili 40-letnico delovanja Katedre za andragogiko in Študijske skupine za andragogiko na Filozofski fakulteti Univerze v Beogradu (ESREA 9th Triennial European Research Conference, 2019). V obdobju 2019–2021 smo zabeležili tudi tri obletnice prepoznavnejših revij na področju izobraževanja odraslih v evropskem prostoru. Leta 2019 je 10-letnico obeležila revija *European Journal for Research on the Education and Learning of Adults* (Fejes idr., 2019), leta 2020 je revija *Studies in the Education of Adults* praznovala 50-letnico (Zukas in Crowther, 2020) in leta 2021 revija *International Journal of Lifelong Education* 40-letnico obstoja (Holford idr., 2021). Ne nazadnje, v okviru desete trienalne konference ESREA, ki je potekala leta 2022 v Milanu, smo proslavili 30. obletnico rojstva organizacije ESREA, ki je bila ustanovljena leta 1991 (Formenti idr., 2023).

Tudi v Sloveniji letos obeležujemo pomembno obletnico. Mineva *50 let*, odkar se je na današnjem Oddelku za pedagogiko in andragogiko Filozofske fakultete Univerze v Ljubljani začela predavati *andragogika*. To so bili začetki oblikovanja andragogike kot samostojne znanstvene discipline in začetki visokošolskega izobraževanja izobraževalcev odraslih (andragogov). Zasluga za to gre Ani Krajnc, ki je prva predavanja iz andragogike imela v letu 1973, leta 1976 je ustanovila andragoško smer v okviru študijskega programa Pedagogika, leta 1992 pa realizirala samostojni visokošolski študij andragogike (Govekar-Okoliš in Ličen, 2008; Krajnc, 2018). Z bolonjsko prenovo visokega šolstva pa se je leta 2010 oblikoval dvoletni samostojni drugostopenjski magistrski študij

andragogike, kot ga z manjšimi modifikacijami na Filozofski fakulteti Univerze v Ljubljani poznamo še danes.

Termin »andragogika« (*Andragogik*) je leta 1833 prvi uporabil nemški profesor Alexander Kapp, kateremu je andragogika pomenila oblikovanje značaja in samospoznanje (*self-knowledge*) ter je vključevala tako splošno kot poklicno izobraževanje. Skoraj sto let kasneje, v 20. letih 20. stoletja, je pojem obudil nemški raziskovalec Eugen Rosenstock-Huessy, kateremu je andragogika pomenila filozofijo, različno od humanističnega liberalnega izobraževanja odraslih ali poklicnega izobraževanja, na podlagi katere se ljudje povezujejo s svojo človeško in duhovno naravnanostjo v službi družbenega razvoja in ki temelji na interakciji znanja in izkušenj. Ta andragogika zahteva novo vrsto poučevanja ter je usmerjena v reševanje družbenih problemov in doseganje boljše družbe. Leta 1957 je nemški profesor Franz Pöggeler izdal knjigo *Einführung in die Andragogik*, s katero je andragogiki prvič poskušal dati znanstveno podlago (opredelil je cilje, motive, vsebine, metode in institucije izobraževanja odraslih) ter se zavzemal za andragogiko, ki zajema preučevanje vseh sistematičnih oblik izobraževanja in učenja odraslih. V sredini 50. in prvi polovici 60. let so tako pojem andragogika prevzeli v Nemčiji, Avstriji, Poljski, na Nizozemskem in v takratni Jugoslaviji; uveljavil se je kot izraz za akademsko preučevanje izobraževanja odraslih in njegovega družbenega konteksta (Krajnc, 1989; Loeng, 2017, 2018; Reischmann, 2005; St. Clair in Käpplinger, 2021).

K prepoznavnosti pojma, ki je iz Evrope (prek Eduarda Lindemana) potoval v Združene države Amerike, pa je gotovo največ prispeval Malcolm Knowles, ki je andragogiko opredelil kot umetnost in znanost o tem, kako pomagati odraslim pri učenju. Oblikoval je pet temeljnih predpostavk o učečih se odraslih, na podlagi katerih je predlagal model za načrtovanje, implementacijo in evalvacijo programov izobraževanja odraslih. Ta temelji na dveh osnovnih atributih, in sicer avtonomnih in samostojnih odraslih učečih se ter vlogi učitelja kot spodbujevalca učenja. Knowles je s konciparanjem andragogike velikemu številu učiteljev odraslih po eni strani ponudil možnost identifikacije, po drugi pa je bil njegov model andragogike deležen tudi številnih kritik tako v ZDA kot v Evropi (gl. Merriam idr., 2007; Reischmann, 2005; Roessger idr., 2022).

V Sloveniji in drugih kontinentalnih evropskih državah izraz »andragogika« ni povezan s specifičnim (Knowlesovim) modelom izobraževanja odraslih, temveč z razvojem akademskih in strokovnih institucij ter publikacij in študijskih programov na področju izobraževanja odraslih (Krajnc, 1989; Reischmann, 2005; Savićević, 1999). A se tovrstno pojmovanje in razumevanje andragogike nista prijela enotno v evropskem prostoru, saj je v prvem desetletju 21. stoletja, kot navajata Fejes in Nicoll (2013), koncept andragogike v uporabi v Srbiji, Bosni in Hercegovini, Hrvaški, Poljski, Sloveniji, Češki, Slovaški, Madžarski, v baltiških državah ter v določeni meri v Nemčiji. V Evropi danes pred uporabo izraza »andragogika« prevladujejo izrazi, kot so *izobraževanje odraslih*, *nadaljevalno izobraževanje* ali *učenje odraslih* (Fejes in Nicoll, 2013), kar pomeni, da se razumevanje andragogike kot samostojne znanstvene discipline ali kot poddiscipline izobraževalnih znanosti (nekje pedagogike) ni uveljavilo, ampak navedeni izrazi v ospredje postavljajo

razumevanje izobraževanja odraslih kot področja raziskovanja, ki je del družboslovnih ter humanističnih znanosti.

Kot ugotavlja Rubenson (2010), je izobraževanje odraslih kot področje raziskovanja vzniknilo v poznih 20. letih 20. stoletja in je od takrat dalje prešlo skozi tri razvojne faze. Prva faza predstavlja odgovor na začetno profesionalizacijo izobraževanja odraslih. V drugi fazi, ki se začne v letu 1964, področje raziskovanja vznikne kot neposreden odgovor na potrebe prakse v izobraževanju odraslih, število univerzitetnih študijskih programov izobraževanja odraslih/andragogike pa v tem obdobju močno naraste predvsem v Evropi in Severni Ameriki, pa tudi v Južni Ameriki, Afriki in Aziji (druga polovica 20. stoletja je bila tudi najplodnejše obdobje za razvoj andragogike kot relativno samostojne znanstvene discipline; gl. Hake, 1992; Loeng, 2018; Note idr., 2020). V tretji fazi (od druge polovice 90. let 20. stoletja dalje) pa se rast specializiranih univerzitetnih oddelkov in programov izobraževanja odraslih/andragogike, vsaj v Evropi in Severni Ameriki, ni nadaljevala, kot ugotavlja Rubenson (2010), ampak se je pojavil nov trend; programi izobraževanja odraslih so se začeli združevati z drugimi področji v večje oddelke, v nekaterih primerih pa so oddelke za izobraževanje odraslih/andragogiko tudi ukinili. Za to obdobje je značilna vse večja fragmentacija področja (gl. tudi Rubenson in Elfert, 2015).

Pri razmisleku o statusu izobraževanja odraslih kot znanstveni disciplini v danes trajajoči tretji razvojni fazi Peter Jarvis in Agnieszka Bron (Bron in Jarvis, 2008), ki prihajata iz dveh različnih tradicij (gl. Biesta, 2015; Hake, 1992; Wyse, 2020) – prvi iz anglosaške tradicije, ki izobraževanje obravnava kot področje (*field*) ali predmet (*object*) raziskovanja, ki ga obravnavajo različne akademske discipline (psihologija, sociologija, filozofija izobraževanja), in, izhajajoč iz te tradicije, stavi na »izobraževanje odraslih« kot področje raziskovanja ter druga iz kontinentalne (vzhodno)evropske tradicije, razvite pod vplivom nemško govorečih držav, ki so vzpostavile izobraževanje kot samostojno akademsko disciplino (pedagogiko, nem. *Pädagogik*), in, izhajajoč iz te tradicije, stavi na »andragogiko« kot znanstveno disciplino (ta se je razvijala bodisi kot del (poddisciplina) pedagogike bodisi kot samostojna znanstvena disciplina (Loeng, 2018, str. 6) – skleneta, da je izobraževanje odraslih mlada znanstvena disciplina, ki jo nekateri imenujejo izobraževanje odraslih, drugi pa andragogika (Bron in Jarvis, 2008; prim. Popović in Reischmann, 2017). Najbolj pogosto je razumljena kot poddisciplina izobraževalnih znanosti (pedagogike). Preučuje učenje in izobraževanje odraslih v formalnem in neformalnem izobraževanju (to je v organiziranih oblikah izobraževanja) ter učenje v priložnostnem kontekstu (to je v vsakdanjem življenju, na delu, v družini, civilni družbi in ob prostočasnih aktivnostih), kar je njeno posebno raziskovalno področje; preučuje priložnosti in pogoje odraslih za izobraževanje in učenje, vzgojo in socializacijo ter njihov razvoj, saj naj bi se odrasli skozi proces učenja, ki poteka vse življenje, nadalje razvijali, spreminjali svoje življenje ter vplivali drug na drugega. Razvila je svojo lastno terminologijo in koncepte, ki vključujejo lastna pojmovanja o učenju, vseživljenjskem učenju, samostojnem učenju, nadaljevalnem izobraževanju ipd.

Raziskovalna skupnost (npr. Egetenmeyer idr., 2019; Jarvis in Chadwick, 1991; Nuissl in Lattke, 2008) in mednarodne organizacije, dejavne na področju izobraževanja odraslih (npr.

DVV International, 2013; Svet Evropske unije, 2011), poudarjajo pomen dobro izobražene-ga kadra, ki deluje v izobraževanju odraslih. Vendar je obseg strokovnjakov, ki delajo na tem področju, širok in raznolik, saj je izobraževanje odraslih povezano z družbeno-ekonomsko, kulturno in politično tradicijo države, poleg tega je sistem izobraževanja odraslih nizko re-guliran (Jütte idr., 2011). Prav tako so za področje izobraževanja odraslih v Evropi značilni razdrobljene možnosti začetnega izobraževanja in nadaljnega usposabljanja ter negotov status zaposlitve, saj številni izobraževalci odraslih nimajo formalne priprave za poučevanje, svetovanje, načrtovanje programov itd., preden vstopijo v profesijo (Andersson idr., 2013). Kljub temu pa se raziskovalci strinjajo, da imajo izobraževanje na univerzitetni ravni, to so študijski programi izobraževanja odraslih/andragogike, ter znanje in kompetence, ki jih tovrstni študijski programi zagotavljajo, ključno vlogo v procesu razvoja profesionalizma (npr. Beszédes, 2022; Egetenmeyer in Käpplinger, 2011; Mikulec, 2019; Gravani idr., 2020).

Glede na to, da koncept andragogike ni enopomenski, da je v evropskem prostoru razu-mljen na različne načine ter da se je v nekaterih geografskih prostorih ohranil, v drugih pa ne (gl. Beszédes, 2022; Loeng, 2018; Savićević, 1999), smo želeli s pričujočo tematsko številko revije nasloviti razvoj andragogike skozi čas v različnih geografskih prostorih Evrope ter avtorje prosili, da odprejo naslednje teme:
- zgodovinske, teoretične in/ali komparativne perspektive pri konceptualizaciji andra-gogike v Evropi,
- vpliv študija andragogike/izobraževanja odraslih na »akademsko profesionalizacijo«, to je profesionalizacijo profesije izobraževalca odraslih/andragoga in njegov profesi-onalni razvoj,
- razvoj študija andragogike/izobraževanja odraslih na evropskih univerzah v različnih (vzhodno- in srednje)evropskih državah,
- vpliv andragogike kot znanstvene discipline na razvoj profesionalne identitete profe-sorjev, študentov in diplomantov na področju izobraževanja odraslih,
- delovna področja in kompetence diplomantov študijskih programov andragogike/izo-braževanja odraslih v evropskih državah,
- vpliv prakse izobraževanja odraslih na oblikovanje andragogike kot znanstvene disci-pline v evropskih državah od sredine 20. stoletja do danes,
- andragogika v današnji sodobni evropski družbi, njeni cilji ter prihodnji izzivi.

Odziv avtorjev na vabilo za oddajo prispevkov za tematsko številko je bil velik, saj je bilo v objavo sprejetih 15 prispevkov, zato smo se na uredništvu odločili, da tematske članke objavimo v dveh številkah revije. V pričujočo številko smo umestili članke, ki obravnavajo konceptualna vprašanja andragogike, razvoj in status andragogike v posameznih evropskih državah (Češki, Slovaški, Madžarski, Estoniji) ter pomen andragogike in/ali izobraževa-nja odraslih za razvoj profesionalizma. V prvo številko revije v letu 2024 pa smo umestili prispevke, ki odgovarjajo na taista vprašanja v državah na območju nekdanje Jugoslavije (gl. Mikulec in Kump, 2018): v Bosni in Hercegovini, na Hrvaškem, v Sloveniji in Srbiji. Vsi tematski prispevki, uvrščeni v prvo številko v letu 2024, pa so že dostopni v rubriki Predobjave na spletni strani revije.

Pričujoča tematska številka *Andragoških spoznanj* obsega osem tematskih člankov.

Prva dva članka obravnavata teoretične in komparativne perspektive pri konceptualizaciji andragogike. V članku *V iskanju bistva andragogike – hermenevtično branje Grundtviga, Knowlesa, Lindemana in Savićevića* sta Anita Malinen in Arja Piirainen na podlagi hermenevtične interpretacije besedil štirih klasičnih teoretikov, ki zagovarjajo različne andragoške pristope (Grundtviga, Knowlesa, Lindemana in Savićevića), iskali bistvo andragogike. Na podlagi rezultatov sta oblikovali tri med seboj prepletena načela, ki predstavljajo bistvo in celovitost razumevanja andragogike: življenjska izkušnja, vzajemna interakcija in »moč z« (*power with*). V drugem članku *Pedagogika in andragogika v primerjavi – pojmovanja in perspektive* Svein Loeng na idejah uveljavljenih avtorjev s področja izobraževanja odraslih razpravlja o pristopih primerjave med pedagogiko in andragogiko ter ugotavlja, da je zanesljiva primerjava možna le na podlagi razjasnitve obeh pojmov, kakor tudi pokaže, da je na konceptualizacijo andragogike v veliki meri vplivala progresivna pedagogika.

Naslednja dva članka obravnavata zgodovinski razvoj in današnji status andragogike v dveh evropskih državah. Martin Kopecký in Michal Šerák v članku *Vzpostavljanje andragogike na Češkem* z zgodovinsko metodo preučujeta razvoj andragogike na Češkem skozi čas (od sredine 20. stoletja do danes). Avtorja pokažeta, kako se je andragogika formirala kot samostojna znanstvena disciplina, ki si prizadeva za kultiviranje odraslih posameznikov s pomočjo (a ne izključno) učenja in izobraževanja, ter ugotavljata, da je v zadnjem obdobju češka andragogika izgubila nekaj svojih prejšnjih ambicij, saj je pojem postal sinonim za vse, kar združuje mednarodno uveljavljen izraz »učenje in izobraževanje odraslih«. V članku *Razvoj in stanje andragogike na Slovaškem* Július Matulčík obravnava nastanek in razvoj andragogike na Slovaškem prek zgodovinske analize ter interpretacije znanstvenih del najpomembnejših predstavnikov slovaške andragogike. Avtor pokaže, da je proces oblikovanja andragogike od 90. let prejšnjega stoletja dalje temeljil tako na tradiciji izobraževanja odraslih na Slovaškem kot na delih tujih predstavnikov andragogike. Posebej se posveti še obravnavi sistema andragogike, ki ga sestavljajo temeljne, aplikativne in »mejne« (npr. andragoška psihologija) andragoške discipline.

Zadnji štirje članki obravnavajo pomen andragogike in/ali izobraževanja odraslih za razvoj profesionalizma. Viktória Beszédes in Éva Farkas v članku z naslovom *Pretekli in sodobni razvoj profesionalizacije učenja in izobraževanja odraslih na Madžarskem* na podlagi relevantne literature in vsebinske analize primarnih virov analizirata značilnosti izobraževanja odraslih kot profesije na Madžarskem, s poudarkom na univerzitetnem izobraževanju strokovnjakov za izobraževanje odraslih. Študija pokaže, da legitimnost izobraževanja odraslih in andragogike na Madžarskem danes žal ostaja nejasna, kar se odraža v kontekstu družbenega prestiža izobraževanja odraslih, njegovem zakonodajnem okolju in profesionalizaciji strokovnjakov za izobraževanje odraslih, ki so v zadnjih skoraj sedmih desetletjih doživeli številne strukturne spremembe. Avtorica članka *Potovanje iz preteklosti v sedanjost: Od študija do učnih izkušenj in strokovne identitete v Estoniji* Larissa Jõgi se osredotoča na razvoj andragogike kot akademske discipline in andragoških programov na Univerzi v Talinu, prikaže razvoj izobraževanja odraslih v Estoniji ter na podlagi prejšnjih raziskav predstavi

učne izkušnje in profesionalno identiteto študentov in diplomantov andragoških programov. Pri tem ugotavlja, da akademski študij andragogike in pridobljene učne izkušnje študentom omogočajo oblikovanje močne učne identitete, ki vpliva na oblikovanje njihove profesionalne identitete. V članku z naslovom *Zakaj se študenti programov izobraževanja odraslih odločajo za sodelovanje pri poučevanju in učenju v mednarodnih okvirih* Monika Staab in Regina Egetenmeyer preučujeta razloge študentov študijskih programov izobraževanja odraslih/andragogike za njihovo udeležbo v mednarodni izmenjavi. Na podlagi intervjujev z diplomanti treh magistrskih programov na univerzah v Würzburgu, Beogradu in Firencah sta ugotovili, da razlogi za udeležbo v mednarodni izmenjavi vključujejo akademske, poklicne, osebne, socialne in jezikovne vidike ter zunanje okoliščine. Tematsko številko zaključuje članek Andri Piliri in Marie N. Gravani *Poklicni status izobraževalcev odraslih: Študija primera s Cipra v obdobju epidemije,* v katerem avtorici – z uporabo kvalitativne metodologije – preučujeta, kako strokovnjaki za izobraževanje odraslih, zaposleni v centrih za izobraževanje odraslih na Cipru, doživljajo svoj poklicni status ter s kakšnimi ovirami, še posebej v kontekstu pandemije covida-19, se soočajo na poti svoje profesionalizacije. Študija identificira vrsto ovir, s katerimi se soočajo izobraževalci odraslih na Cipru, ter poda predloge za izboljšanje njihovega poklicnega statusa, ki temeljijo na ideji humanizacije in večplastnem procesu, ki vključuje tako angažma države kot izobraževalcev odraslih.

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ANDRAGOGY IN EUROPE: PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE PERSPECTIVES

In recent years adult education in Europe has celebrated a number of significant anniversaries. German *Volkshochschulen* celebrated their centennial in 2019. Since their inclusion in the 1919 Weimar Constitution, *Volkshochschulen* have played a very important role in the sub-system of adult education in the German education system. DVV International was established in Germany in 1969 and celebrated its fiftieth anniversary in 2019 (Hinzen & Meilhammer, 2022). In Great Britain the same year marked the centennial of the final report of the Adult Education Committee of the Ministry of Reconstruction of 1919 and on the occasion a new vision and guidelines were published for adult education and lifelong learning in the 21st century (Centenary Commission on Adult Education, 2019; Field, 2019). Also in 2019, within the framework of the ESREA 9th Triennial European Research Conference, colleagues from Serbia celebrated 40 years of the Chair for Andragogy and Study Group for Andragogy at the Faculty of Arts, University of Belgrade (ESREA 9th Triennial European Research Conference, 2019). Three leading European adult education journals also recently reached important milestones: the *European Journal for Research on the Education and Learning of Adults* celebrated its tenth anniversary in 2019 (Fejes et al., 2019), *Studies in the Education of Adults* its fiftieth anniversary in 2020 (Zukas & Crowther, 2020) and the *International Journal of Lifelong Education* its fortieth anniversary in 2021 (Holford et al., 2021). And finally, in 2022 the ESREA 10th Triennial European Research Conference in Milan commemorated the thirtieth anniversary of ESREA, which was established in 1991 (Formenti et al., 2023).

This year also marks an important anniversary in Slovenian adult education, namely fifty years since lectures in *andragogy* began at what is now the Department of Educational Sciences at the Faculty of Arts, University of Ljubljana. These were the beginnings of andragogy as an independent scientific discipline and of higher education for adult educators (andragogues) in Slovenia. Credit for these key initial steps goes to Ana Kranjc, who began her lectures in andragogy in 1973, established andragogy as one of the three study tracks of the pedagogy study programme in 1976, and finally launched andragogy as an independent higher education study programme at the Faculty of Arts in 1992 (Govekar-Okoliš & Ličen 2008; Krajnc, 2018). A second cycle two-year master's studies programme in andragogy was established in 2010 as part of the Bologna reform in higher education and (with some minor modifications) is still offered by the Faculty of Arts today.

The term "andragogy" (*Andragogik*) was first used in 1833 by the German professor Alexander Kapp to mean the formation of character and self-knowledge. It encompassed

both general and vocational education. Nearly a century later, the term was revived in the 1920s by the German researcher Eugen Rosenstock-Huessy, to whom it signified a philosophy different from humanistic liberal adult education or vocational education, which enabled people to connect to their human and spiritual nature in the service of social development, and is based on the interaction of knowledge and experience. The latter calls for a new manner of teaching and aims to address social issues and bringing about a better society. Franz Pöggeler, a German professor, published the book *Einführung in die Andragogik* in 1957 and was the first to try to establish a scientific basis of andragogy (he defined the goals, motives, contents, methods, and institutions of adult education). Pöggeler advocated for an andragogy encompassing the teaching of all the systematic forms of adult education and learning. In the mid-1950s and first half of the 1960s, the term andragogy was adopted in Germany, Austria, Poland, the Netherlands and Yugoslavia; it established itself as the term for the academic teaching of adult education and its social context (Kranjc, 1989; Loeng, 2017, 2018; Reischmann, 2005; St. Clair & Käpplinger, 2021).

The term made its way from Europe to the USA (through Eduard Lindeman). It is Malcolm Knowles who contributed most to popularising andragogy. Characterising it as an art and a science of helping adults learn, he developed five basic assumptions about adult learners on which he based his model for planning, implementing, and evaluating adult education programmes. The model is founded on two basic attributes: autonomous and self-directed adult learners and an adult educator as a facilitator of learning. Knowles's conception of andragogy made it possible for a large number of adult educators to identify with it; however, his model was also criticised both in the USA and in Europe (see Merriam et al., 2007; Reischmann, 2005; Roessger et al., 2022).

In Slovenia and other countries in Continental Europe the term "andragogy" is not connected to a specific (Knowles) model of adult education, but with the development of academic and professional institutions, publications and study programmes in the field of adult education (Krajnc, 1989; Reischmann, 2005; Savičević, 1999). However, this definition and understanding of andragogy did not uniformly catch on across Europe. According to Fejes and Nicoll (2013), in the first decade of the 21st century this concept of andragogy is in use in Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Poland, Slovenia, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary, the Baltic states, and to a certain extent in Germany. It is predominantly terms such as *adult education*, *continuing education* or *adult learning* that are in use in Europe today (Fejes & Nicoll, 2013), which means that the understanding of andragogy as an independent scientific discipline or as a sub-discipline of educational sciences (or pedagogy) has not become established. The three terms instead centre on an understanding of adult education as an area of research, which is part of the social sciences and humanities.

Rubenson (2010) points out that adult education emerged as an area of research in the late 1920s and has since gone through three phases of development. The first phase was in response to the beginnings of the professionalisation of adult education. In the second

phase, which dates back to 1964, the research area began to develop in direct response to the needs of adult education as a field of practice; the number of university study programmes in adult education/andragogy also substantially increased in this period, particularly in Europe and North America, as well as in South America, Africa and Asia (the second half of the 20th century was also the most fruitful period of andragogy's development as a relatively independent scientific discipline; see Hake, 1992; Loeng, 2018; Note et al., 2020). In the third phase of development from the second half of the 1990s onwards, the increase of specialised university departments and programmes in adult education/andragogy, at least in Europe and North America, has not continued, and a new trend emerged: study programmes in adult education have either been combined into bigger departments with other fields of study, and in certain cases departments of adult education/andragogy have even been shut down. An increasing fragmentation of the field has been characteristic of this period (see also Rubenson & Elfert, 2015).

Adult education as a scientific discipline is now in its third developmental phase. Peter Jarvis and Agnieszka Bron (Bron & Jarvis, 2008) come from different traditions (see Biesta, 2015; Hake, 1992; Wyse, 2020): Jarvis from the Anglo-Saxon tradition that regards education as a field or object of research undertaken by various academic disciplines (psychology, sociology, philosophy of education) and coming from this tradition bets on "adult education" as a field of research, and Bron from the continental (eastern) European tradition that developed under the influence of German-speaking countries, which established education as an independent academic discipline (pedagogy, Ger. *Pädagogik*) and based on this tradition bets on "andragogy" as a scientific discipline (developed either as part (sub-discipline) of pedagogy or as an independent scientific discipline (Loeng, 2018, p. 6)). These two authors together conclude that adult education is a young scientific discipline that some call "adult education" and others call "andragogy" (Bron & Jarvis, 2008; cf. Popović & Reischmann, 2017). It is most commonly considered a sub-discipline of the educational sciences (pedagogy). It looks at adult education and learning both in formal and non-formal education (i.e. in organised forms of education) and learning in an informal context (in everyday life, at work, in families, civil society, and leisure activities), which represent its specific research field. It studies the educational and learning opportunities and conditions of adults, formation (*Bildung*) and socialisation, as well as their development, as the process of learning, which is lifelong, enables adults to continue developing, changing their lives and influencing each other. It has developed its own terminology and concepts, including specific conceptions of learning, lifelong learning, self-directed learning, continuing education, etc.

The research community (e.g., Egetenmeyer et al., 2019; Jarvis & Chadwick, 1991; Nuissl & Lattke, 2008) and international organisations active in adult education (e.g., Council of the European Union, 2011; DVV International, 2013) stress the importance of a well-educated workforce in the field of adult education. However, the scope of professionals working in this field is wide and diverse because adult education is connected to the socio-economic, cultural, and political traditions of each country and the low levels of regulation in adult

education systems (Jütte et al., 2011). Furthermore, in Europe adult educators face fragmented options both in terms of their initial education and continuing training, as well as precarious employment status. Many adult educators receive no formal preparation in teaching, counselling, programme development, etc. before they enter the profession (Andersson et al., 2013). Researchers are of the opinion that a university-level education (study programmes in adult education/andragogy) ensure that adult educators have the knowledge and competences which play a key role in developing professionalism in this field (e.g., Beszédes, 2022; Egetenmeyer & Kapplinger, 2011; Mikulec, 2019; Gravani et al., 2020).

As the concept of andragogy is not univocal and is understood in different ways in countries across Europe, and continues to be used in certain geographical areas but not in others (see Beszédes, 2022; Loeng, 2018; Savićević, 1999), the thematic issue in front of you today addresses the development of andragogy through time in various places across Europe. Authors have been asked to examine the following topics:

- The historical, theoretical and/or comparative perspectives in conceptualising andragogy in Europe.
- The influence of university studies in andragogy/adult education on "academic professionalisation", i.e. the professionalisation of the profession of adult educators/andragogues and their professional development.
- The development of study programmes in andragogy/adult education at various (Eastern and Central) European universities.
- The influence of andragogy as a scientific discipline on the development of the professional identity of professors, students, and graduates in the field of adult education.
- The working fields and competences of andragogy/adult education graduates in European countries.
- The influence adult education as a field of practice has had on shaping andragogy as a scientific discipline in European countries from the 1950s onwards.
- Andragogy in contemporary European society, its goals and future challenges.

With fifteen accepted contributions, the response to our call for papers for this issue exceeded our expectations and the editorial team has decided to publish the thematic contributions in two issues. This issue contains articles on conceptual questions concerning andragogy, the development and status of andragogy in some European countries (the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary, Estonia), and the development of professionalism in andragogy and/or adult education. The first issue of 2024 will feature contributions on these questions in countries of the former Yugoslavia (see Mikulec & Kump, 2018): Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Slovenia, and Serbia. All of the thematic contributions from the first issue of 2024 are already accessible on the journal's website in the Online First section.

This issue of *Studies in Adult Education and Learning* consists of eight thematic articles.

The first two articles deal with the theoretical and comparative perspectives in conceptualising andragogy. *Towards the Essence of Andragogy – A Hermeneutical Reading of Grundtvig, Knowles, Lindeman and Savićević* by Anita Malinen and Arja Piirainen seeks out the

essence of andragogy based on a hermeneutical interpretation of four classic theorists representative of different andragogical approaches (Grundtvig, Knowles, Lindeman and Savićević). Based on the results, Malinen and Piirainen formulate three interwoven principles, which represent the essence of andragogy: life experience, mutual interaction, and "power with". In the second article, *Pedagogy and Andragogy in Comparison: Conceptions and Perspectives*, Svein Loang discusses different approaches to comparing pedagogy and andragogy based on the ideas of well-known authors in adult education. He finds that a reliable comparison is only possible if both terms are elucidated and made clear; furthermore, he shows that progressive pedagogy has also significantly influenced the conceptualisation of andragogy.

The next two articles explore the historical development and contemporary status of andragogy in the Czech Republic and Slovakia respectively. Martin Kopecký and Michal Šerák use the historical method in *The Constitution of Andragogy in the Czech Context* to study the development of andragogy from the 1950s until today. They show how andragogy formed as an independent scientific discipline which endeavours to help adult individuals develop and improve through (but not exclusively) learning and education. Kopecký and Šerák point out that in recent years, Czech andragogy has lost some of its former ambitions, as the term has become a synonym for everything that the internationally established expression "adult education and learning" stands for. Meanwhile, Július Matulčík's *Development and Current Status of Andragogy in Slovakia* focuses on the formation and development of andragogy in Slovakia by using historical analysis and by interpreting the scientific work of the foremost representatives of Slovak andragogy. Matulčík shows how from the 1990s onwards, the formation process of andragogy was based both on the tradition of adult education in Slovakia and on the works of foreign representatives of andragogy. He also focuses specifically on the system of andragogy, which comprises of the basic, the applied, and the border branches (e.g. andragogical psychology) of andragogy.

The final four articles address the development of professionalism in andragogy and/or adult education. In their article *Past and Present Developments in the Professionalisation of Adult Learning and Education in Hungary* Viktória Beszédes and Éva Farkas use the relevant literature and content analysis of primary sources to analyse the characteristics of adult education as a profession in Hungary, particularly focusing on university-level education for adult education professionals. The study shows that the legitimacy of adult education and andragogy in Hungary is today unfortunately uncertain, which is mirrored in the context of the social prestige of adult education, its regulatory environment and the professionalisation of adult education professionals, which have gone through a number of structural changes in the last seventy years. Larissa Jõgi's *The Journey From Past to Present: From Academic Studies to Learning Experiences and Professional Identity in Estonia* deals with the development of andragogy as an academic discipline and of andragogical programmes at Tallinn University. Jõgi provides an overview of adult education in Estonia and discusses previous research studies on the learning experiences and professional identity of andragogy students and graduates. She has found that the academic

study programme in andragogy and the acquired learning experiences enable students to construct a strong learner identity which influences their professional identity as well. *Students' Reasons for Participating in International Teaching and Learning Settings in Adult Education Degree Programmes* by Monika Staab and Regina Egetenmeyer examines why adult education/andragogy students decide to participate in international exchange programmes. They interviewed the graduates in three master's programmes at universities in Würzburg, Belgrade, and Florence, and found that the reasons include academic, vocational, personal, social, and linguistic aspects, as well as external circumstances. The final article in this issue is *The Professional Status of Adult Educators: A Case Study From Cyprus in the Era of Pandemic*, in which Andri Piliri and Maria N. Gravani use qualitative methodology to study how adult education professionals employed in adult education institutions on Cyprus experience their professional status and what obstacles, particularly in the context of COVID-19, they face on their path to professionalisation. The study identifies a series of obstacles faced by adult educators in Cyprus and suggests improvements for their professional status that are based on the idea of humanisation, a multi-layered process that requires the participation of both the state and the adult educators.

Borut Mikulec and Monika Govekar Okoliš,
Editors of Thematic Issue

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Anita Malinen, Arja Piirainen

TOWARDS THE ESSENCE OF ANDRAGOGY – A HERMENEUTICAL READING OF GRUNDTVIG, KNOWLES, LINDEMAN AND SAVIĆEVIĆ

ABSTRACT

The aim of this study is to search for the essence of andragogy through a critical examination of andragogy theorists and thereby increase the theoretical understanding of andragogy. Systematic reviews in 2013 and in 2021 led us to probe more deeply into andragogical writings in search of the essence of andragogy. Writings by four classic theorists representing different andragogical approaches – Grundtvig, Knowles, Lindeman and Savićević – were selected for hermeneutic text interpretation. Based on the results, we formulated, as constituting the essence of andragogy, three intertwined principles: 1) lived experience, 2) reciprocal interaction, and 3) "power with". Each principle expresses the qualities that describe its nature. These three principles are necessary and sufficient conditions for the andragogy to be present. If one of these principles is lacking, the wholeness of andragogy is absent, and the phenomenon does not exist.

Keywords: *andragogy, theory building, hermeneutical interpretation*

V ISKANJU BISTVA ANDRAGOGIKE – HERMENEVTIČNO BRANJE GRUNDTVIGA, KNOWLESA, LINDEMANA IN SAVIĆEVIĆA – POVZETEK

Namen prispevka je iskanje bistva andragogike prek kritičnega preučevanja del teoretikov andragogike in poglobljenega teoretičnega razumevanja področja. Sistematična pregleda iz let 2013 in 2021 sta nas v iskanju bistva andragogike spodbudila k bolj poglobljenemu branju andragoških del. Za hermenevtično branje in interpretacijo so bila izbrana besedila štirih klasičnih teoretikov Grundtviga, Knowlesa, Lindemana in Savićevića, ki predstavljajo različne andragoške pristope. Na podlagi rezultatov smo oblikovali tri med seboj prepletena načela, ki predstavljajo bistvo andragogike: 1) življenjska izkušnja, 2) vzajemna interakcija in 3) »moč z« (ang. power with*). Vsako od načel izraža lastnosti, ki opisujejo njegovo naravo. Ta tri načela so nujni in zadostni pogoji, da lahko govorimo o andragogiki. Če manjka eno od načel, ne gre za andragogiko, fenomen ne obstaja.*

Ključne besede: *andragogika, razvijanje teorije, hermenevtična interpretacija*

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INTRODUCTION

This study is motivated by a theoretical curiosity towards andragogy. Its aim is to search for the essence of andragogy through a critical examination of the work of four andragogy theorists and thereby increase the theoretical understanding of andragogy. As adult educators and andragogy practitioners, we have been interested in andragogy for over twenty years. Ten years ago, we understood that we need to return to the roots of the phenomenon. First, we read familiar andragogical texts with fresh eyes and soon realised that more systematic research is needed. Hence, we started with a systematic scientific literature review.

Using "andragogy" as the keyword, this systematic review was conducted in two phases, in 2013 and 2021 (Malinen & Piirainen, 2018). A total of 213 titles and abstracts were identified in the first phase and 251 in the second phase. First, it is noteworthy that researchers have shown increasing interest in andragogy during the last decade. After the 2013 data screening process, 42 of the 213 articles remained for quality assessment. The analysis showed that the most widely used theoretical foundation – in 30 of the 42 publications – was Malcolm Knowles' interpretation of andragogy. Furthermore, the researchers who had based their empirical research design on Knowles' interpretation mainly drew on his six well-known assumptions about adult learners. However, these assumptions constitute only a fraction of Knowles' interpretation. The theoretical foundation of the remaining 12 studies was either the Transformative Theory, Experiential Learning Theory, Action Learning Theory, or critical pedagogy. Another finding was that the study designs and methodological choices were mainly surveys with big data. A few studies had been implemented as action research or quasi-experimental research. Qualitative studies, which were clearly in the minority, were based on, for example, grounded theory methodology, or a phenomenological or narrative methodology. Empirical research interests focused on such domains as e-learning, storytelling, self-reflection, motivation, and learning style. The theoretical papers, in turn, focused on the conceptual differences between andragogy and pedagogy.

This systematic review prompted us to probe more deeply into andragogical writings and to search for the essence of andragogy. The need for a theoretical examination of andragogy of this kind has been regularly pointed out in andragogical papers (e.g. Holton III et al., 2009; Loeng 2018; Rachal, 2002, 2015; Savićević 2012; St. Clair & Käpplinger, 2021). Hence, this study, which is based on the work of two well-known andragogical scholars, Malcolm Knowles and Dušan Savićević, and two others less directly linked to andragogy, N. F. S. Grundtvig and Eduard Lindeman (see Fischer & Podeschi, 1989; Warren, 1989). The four represent different perspectives, different cultures and different eras. Grundtvig (1783–1872) was a Danish theologian philosopher-poet, who sought to clarify the relationship between religion, history and poetry and their relationship to people's lives (Warren, 1989), and whose writings centre around the concepts of the living word and living interaction. Lindeman (1885–1953) is generally recognized as a giant in the field of adult education. Some even refer to him as "the father of modern adult education" (Warren,

1989). Knowles (1913–1997) is the best-known modern interpreter and advocate of andragogy. Knowles' interpretation was influenced by the work of Lindeman and Savićević. In turn, Savićević (1929–2015) was a well-known European professor of andragogy, who contributed significantly to the clarification of the concepts of andragogy and lifelong learning. Why select these four theorists? First, the writings of all four are acknowledged classics. Second, they represent different geographical areas, languages, and eras. Third, their ideas seem to have profound interconnections that deserve to be clarified.

Brookfield (1992) proposed that building a formal theory should satisfy five criteria. The first, the criterion of assumptive awareness, asks if the assumptions underlying formal theoretical elaborations are made explicit. In the case of andragogical theory, assessment of its underlying theoretical roots and foundations is a matter of immediate urgency (see, e.g., St. Clair & Käpplinger, 2021). The second, the criterion of discreteness, refers to the extent to which a body of theoretical ideas is seen to refer to a phenomenon that is discrete, distinct, and separate by concentrating on specific aspects of practice which are observable across diverse contexts. The third, the criterion of comprehensiveness, refers to the extent to which any formal theory accounts for all aspects of the phenomenon studied. Many theoretical perspectives surround the theme of andragogy, but a more comprehensive theory continues to be lacking. These criteria are naturally followed by the fourth criterion of re-formulative consistency, which refers to the extent to which a theory changes over time in response to new research, to critical analyses, and to the theorist's own interpretive leaps forward. Finally, the fifth criterion of connectedness demands that theoretical assertions can be understood by practitioners, in this case practitioners in andragogical contexts.

HERMENEUTICAL TEXT INTERPRETATION

This study is a particular form of textual analysis (Ricouer, 1991, pp. 156–165). Interpretation of textual sources – in this case, andragogical texts – is needed in order to specify concepts and to re-construct theoretical formulations. The hermeneutical text interpretation process consists of three intertwined phases: 1) reading, 2) understanding, and 3) re-structuring. According to Ricoeur (1991, p. 113), a hermeneutical reading is a dialectic of two activities, explanation and understanding. To explain is to reveal the structure, i.e., the internal relations of dependence that constitute the text. To interpret is to follow the path of thought opened by the text, to place oneself en route toward the orient of the text (Ricoeur, 1991, pp. 112–122.). Ricoeur considers this dialectic in two different ways: as proceeding from understanding to explanation, and as proceeding from explanation to understanding. The relation between explanation and understanding, and between understanding and explanation is the "hermeneutical circle" (Ricoeur, 1991, pp. 162–167). The text is a whole, open to several readings and to several constructions. In this sense, problems of interpretation are due to the text itself, which is more than a linear succession of sentences (see Ricouer, 1991, pp. 158–159). Interpretations are always open to change and criticism, especially on account of two basic characteristics. First, an interpretation is

always "wholly interpretative": it is possible to argue for or against it, to oppose it, to arbitrate between interpretations of it, or to seek alternatives (Palonen, 1988, p. 15; Ricoeur, 1991, pp. 157–159). Second, an interpretation is "inexhaustible": no interpretation provides an all-sufficient conception of a phenomenon (Palonen, 1988, p. 15; Ricouer, 1991, pp. 159–160). Andragogy and the andragogical texts under interpretation are complex and multidimensional phenomena. Consequently, our interpretation is also "wholly interpretative" and "inexhaustible". It offers only one conceptual "lens" – and a necessarily selective one, owing to the qualities of interpretation – for viewing andragogy, which is carried out from a specific perspective with specific aims and specific analytical tools (see Salner, 1989).

Interpretation is always prejudiced (Gadamer, 1988). Hence, andragogical texts are not "pure" objects of research that are independent of us as researchers and our research process. The researcher is always part of what is being studied (Denzin, 1989, p. 31). In our case, we have been working on the hermeneutical circle in constant dialogue with selected andragogical texts and – of course – with each other. We have brought our prior experiences, our own perspectives and understanding to the texts under study, and thus the resulting interpretation is a creative process in which our prejudgments have been expanded through interaction with the texts and each other (see Gadamer, 1988). It is also important to remember that a text is autonomous in relation to the subjective intentions of its author. Although the text puts questions to the interpreter and thus has the power to trigger new knowledge and assumptions about it, the text also constrains the interpreter (Ricouer, 1991). To sum up, in this study, andragogical texts were interpreted in dialogue between the four theorists, their texts, and the researchers. The aim was to discover concepts and structures and thereby achieve a better understanding of andragogy as a phenomenon. Interpretation was present in all phases of this study from the selection and the re-construction of sources to text interpretation and theory generation (Palonen, 1988, p. 13, 191; Siljander, 1982, pp. 5–6). The most essential distinction in these processes is that between the "already understood" and "understanding better" (Palonen, 1988, pp. 14–15). From this standpoint, this research offers one suggestion for a theoretical formulation of andragogy, that is, for a re-construction of the essences of andragogy.

We sought to increase the objectivity of our interpretation of the selected texts by leaning on certain remarks by Ricouer (1991, p. 157). First, we fixed meaning by reading the chosen theorists' writings many times to understand their meanings from an andragogical perspective. Second, we tried to dissociate the texts from what we understood to be the mental intention of the theorists (cf. Siljander, 2011). After reading we extracted the texts for analysis: Grundtvig (1836/1991, 1838/1991, 1840/1991, 1847/1991, 1854/1991); Knowles (1980, 1989, 1990, 2002, 2019); Lindeman (1926, 1932, 1935, 1938/1987, 1944, 1945, 1951/1987); Savićević (1999, 2008, 2012). We then arranged the texts in table format to facilitate analysis of the similarities and differences between the theorists. Gradually, three principles of andragogy began to emerge. Based on the hermeneutical text analysis and re-construction process, we concluded that three intertwined principles

constitute the essence of andragogy: 1) lived experience, 2) reciprocal interaction, and 3) "power with". Each of these principles is informed by qualities describing its nature. The origins of these qualities are manifested in the original texts. In the following section, the citations from the four theorists' writings are presented in italics. Finally, we re-constructed a holistic description of the essence of andragogy.

THE FIRST PRINCIPLE: LIVED EXPERIENCE

The first principle – lived experience – refers to the learner's experience. This concept seems to be at the core of the writings of Grundtvig, Knowles and Lindeman. While Savićević does not use precisely this word, the idea of lived experience is implicit in his writings.

Grundtvig's philosophy is known for his concepts of "*living interaction*" and "*living word*". The word "*living*" can be seen as parallel in meaning with the word "*lived*". Grundtvig emphasizes "*living*" or lived experience throughout his writings, although he also uses words other than lived and sometimes also uses them metaphorically. For Grundtvig, one's life history as a whole is the basis for all learning, development and education. Grundtvig (1836/1991) refers to "the single person's own life": "*Furthermore it must be added that to be genuine, 'enlightenment' must originate mostly from the single person's own life or at least be tried to see if it fits*" (p. 42). He continues:

> *I maintain that if the school really is to be an educational institution for the benefit of life, it must first of all make neither education nor itself its goal but the requirements of life, and secondly it must take life as it really is and only strive to shed light on and promote its usefulness. For no school can create a new life in us, and it must therefore neither destroy the old one nor waste time developing rules which a different and better life would supposedly follow, if such were to be found.* (Grundtvig, 1838/1991, p. 82)

Grundtvig's "lived" is very holistic, and includes sensations, emotions and tones:

> *but the 'sentiment' which forms his own life, 'the eye' through which he conceives of its events, and 'the tone' in which he expresses his experience, all of them he needs from his youth to bring with him into life, and that is one of the main reasons for a Folk High School.* (Grundtvig, 1836/1991, pp. 42–43)

Briefly, "lived", for Grundtvig, refers to one's life history as a whole, while enlightenment for life is at the core of his philosophy. This happens through a kind of awakening process:

> *an institution of enlightenment that is by which the People gradually would be awakened to self-consciousness, and where the leaders were learning just as much from the youth as they learned from them, such a living interaction and mutual teaching whereby a bridge was laid across the yawning abyss […]* (Grundtvig, 1840/1991, p. 57).

To realise this gradual awakening to self-consciousness and enlightenment for life requires a certain kind of environment:

> *As I say, I would prefer to end now, but I dare not to do so before I have expressed as kindly and frankly as I can, my convictions concerning the school curriculum for life which* appears *to have the voice of the people behind it even though it assuredly has both the nature of the people and the experience of history against it.* (Grundtvig, 1838/1991, p. 90)

For Knowles "the role of the adult's experience" is one of the basic characteristics of adult learner. He writes:

> *Adults come into an educational activity with both a greater volume and a different quality of experience from youths. By virtue of simply having lived longer, they have accumulated more experience than they had as youths […]. The fact of greater experience also has some potentially negative effects. As we accumulate experience, we tend to develop mental habits, biases, and presuppositions that tend to cause us to close our minds to new ideas, fresh perceptions and alternative ways of thinking […]. There is another, more subtle reason for emphasizing the utilization of the experience of the learners; it has to do with the learner's self-identity […]. To adults, their experience is who they are. They define who they are in terms of the accumulation of their unique sets of experience (e.g. occupations, work, travelling). Adults are what they have done. Because of this they have a deep investment in its value. The implication of this fact is that in any situation in which adult's experience is ignored or devalued, they perceive this as not rejecting just their experience, but rejecting them as persons.* (Knowles, 1990, pp. 58–60)

Knowles compares adults with youths: adults have more experience than youths. He also emphasizes the potential negative effects of more experience: adults tend to close their minds owing to their mental habits. Furthermore, Knowles reminds us that adults' experience is related to their self-identity: if adults' experience is ignored or devalued, they are rejected as persons. Knowles (1990) encourages us to analyse our experiences: "*Experience is the richest resource for adult's learning: therefore the core methodology of adult education is the analysis of experience*" (p. 31). Through the analysis of experience "*learners discover for themselves the gaps between where they are now and where they want to be*" (Knowles, 1990, p. 58).

Lindeman puts adults' lived experience at the heart of his writings. He says that "*adult experience is already there waiting to be appropriated. Experience is the adult learner's living textbook*" (Lindeman, 1926, p. 10). This metaphor of a living textbook encapsulates the role of life history in adult education. What, then, is written in the pages of this textbook that await appropriation? Lindeman has a holistic, flowing view of adult development and growth:

> *Growth should be a process of integrating emotions with thought, an evolving capacity for feeling more deeply and thinking more clearly. Educative experience spans the whole of life. And experience proceeds from any situation to which adjustment is made with accompanying mental release. Experiences can never happen twice for we move forward into time as changing organisms; education, by the same token, can never stop without abandoning personality to the barren existence of instinctive, habitual responses.* (Lindeman, 1926, p. 172)

Lindeman connects this kind of growth process to creativity and freedom:

> *Intelligence, power, self-expression and freedom come to have meaning only when we see them as cooperating parts of a functioning whole: the integrated personality […] [;] we experience these aspects of personality as concurrences, as forces which flow into each other at moments of creativity.* (Lindeman, 1926, p. 84)

He reminds his reader of the primary importance of the learner: "*the resource of highest value in adult education is the learner's experience. If education is life, then life is also education. Too much of learning consists of vicarious substitution of someone else's experience and knowledge*" (Lindeman, 1926, pp. 9–10). The adult's living textbook cannot be replaced with anyone else's, such as a teacher's, experience or knowledge.

As mentioned earlier, Savićević does not use the term experience or lived experience as such. He writes about self-instruction and lifelong education, arguing that "*lifelong education influences changes of the environment (family, working, cultural), as well as personality. Such changes are interdependent. Education and self-instruction, besides their presence throughout the whole life, should be an internal part of life*" (Savićević, 1999, p. 179). For him, self-instruction as an integral part of the concept of lifelong education means that "*an individual never stops changing*" (Savićević, 1999, p. 179). Furthermore:

> *Self-instruction enlarges the possibility of the engagement and development of personality, social forces can be recognized, a readiness and knowledge to manage them in life have been created, and a greater level of maturity and life self-regulation have been attained […][;] within the framework of education, self-instruction has an essential importance in the creation of a view of the world.* (Savićević, 1999, p. 188)

The re-construction of "lived experience" seems to have at least *four fundamental qualities:* lived through, indivisible, awakening and growing adult. First, *lived-through experience* refers to experiences which one has already *lived through* or passed, and not to someone else's experiences. Lived-through experiences are a resource or a living textbook for learners, as underlined by the theorists. Lindeman (1926) even argues that "*in adult education the curriculum is built around the student's needs and interests*" (p. 8).

Second, *indivisible* refers to the holistic quality of lived experience as a wholly bodily experience. Thus, sensations and emotions are an integral part of experience. In Lindeman's

(1926, p. 49) thinking, we are not fractional personalities, but dwell in experiences (cf. Polanyi, 1964, pp. x–xi). This means that lived experiences are a natural and fundamental part of (adult) life and that they inform daily routines. As noted earlier, Knowles (1990, pp. 58–60) reminds us of the potential negative effects of lived experience. Lindeman (1926) has also noticed the limiting power of lived experience: "*The whole of life is learning, therefore education can have no endings. Adulthood, maturity, defines its limits. The concept is inclusive*" (p. 6). On the basis of these two qualities the notion of the "private mixtures" of lived experiences resembles the Husserlian concept of the life-world, the world of the natural attitude one's everyday life, i.e., the world one finds oneself in without thinking about it, just as the world of things surrounds us without our making a conscious deliberate effort to notice it (see Dilthey, 1985, p. 223).

The third quality of "lived experience" – common to all four theorists – is some kind of *awakening* process. When, in the natural course of day-to-day life, we experience things, we "believe" in them and attribute real existence to them. Lived experiences are taken for granted and we do not consider them critically. Therefore, "awakening" is needed; we need to open our eyes to our continuous process of development. In Grundtvig's (1936) words, "*people would gradually be awakened to self-consciousness*" (p. 57) and Savićević's (1999) words, "*to 'awaken' an individual to accept the fundamental responsibility for personal development*" (p. 179).

The fourth quality of "lived" experiences follows quite naturally from the preceding three. It is a kind of (adult) overall growth process, perhaps a kind of *growing adult* process. It includes such processes as broadening one's perspectives, managing one's personal development or growing into freedom. Grundtvig writes about "*Enlightenment for Life*" and self-consciousness. Lindeman (1926) asserts that "growth is the goal of life" (p. 202). He uses expressions like "*the quest for life's meaning*", referring to individual changes towards self-mastery and growing into freedom (Lindeman, 1926, p. 11, 70). Savićević (1999, p. 179), in turn, writes about the creation of personality and the creation of human happiness. Knowles (1989, p. 132) argues that learners progress towards greater self-actualisation and self-direction.

To sum up, lived experience is at the core of andragogy. Lived experience is indivisible and lived through and constitutes the basis for a process of awakening and growing into adulthood. "Awakenings" are a crucial part of adult life that generate a kind of personal growth, a kind of becoming. Is it a more and more adult becoming? Or is it a more and more human becoming?

THE SECOND PRINCIPLE: RECIPROCAL INTERACTION

The second principle – named here as reciprocal interaction – seems to be another core element of andragogy for Grundtvig, Knowles, Lindeman and Savićević, although the concepts they use in their writings on interaction differ.

Grundtvig writes about interaction using his "own", familiar word "living" in different combinations, for example, "living tool", "lively talk". Grundtvig's ideas about mutual teaching and dialogue are captured in the following citations:

Certainly it is easy to say that both firstly and lastly it is the mouth which must be used, partly because it is the only living tool for the spirit on earth, and partly because we never will get more in common with the People than that can be therein and by itself be passed on from the mouth to mouth as well, and it is easily said that only to the same degree as the speech becomes dialogue partly between old people and young ones, and partly between youngsters themselves, only to the same degree the enlightenment will succeed […]. Coming now to the question of what should be communicated to the youth at the Folk High School by means of as lively talk as can be made […] (Grundtvig, 1840/1991, pp. 58–60).

And furthermore:

All good educators know this. In their presentation of the general condition for human living and the sound use of human life they will make the students aware of the fact that when the human heart, which is the source of human living, is not there, all human education (enlightenment) is out of the question […]. For they are not to jump out of their skin but are to save it as far as possible and to live within it. In order to do this they must be more familiar with themselves, their people, and their mother tongue than our youth has been awakened, helped and shaped to be in any school up to now. (Grundtvig, 1854/1991, p. 108)

Grundtvig's "lived" interaction is holistic, embodied. He describes interaction with the bodily words "mouth", "heart", "skin", and even "mother tongue". People bring to dialogue their being and life histories as a whole.

Knowles (1990) underlines his view that andragogy is about helping adults to learn, "*[t]o help the learners become aware of the 'need to know'*" (p. 58). Knowles (1989) emphasizes the mutuality of responsibilities throughout the learning process: "*mutuality of responsibilities in defining goals, planning and conducting activities and evaluating is obvious*" (pp. 82–85). The designing and conducting of "*learning experiences happens also through interaction; an adult educator and an adult learner together define the substance of the basic unit of learning*" (Knowles, 1989, pp. 82–85). Another essential element for Knowles (1980) is an educative environment:

Even more importantly, the psychological climate should be one which causes adults to feel accepted, respected, and supported: in which there exists a spirit of mutuality between teachers and learners as joint inquirers; in which there is freedom to expression without fear of punishment or ridicule. People tend to feel more 'adult' in an atmosphere that is friendly and informal, in which they are known by name and valued as unique individuals. (pp. 46–47)

Furthermore, Knowles (1990) refers to humanistic psychologists' definition of a "*safe, caring, accepting, trusting, respectful, and understanding psychological climate*" (p. 123). However,

he adds *the conditions of mutuality and informality* to the list and names it "*An Atmosphere of Adultness*" (Knowles, 1990, p. 123).

For Lindeman (1935), "*effective education is a social process*" (p. 47). "*The social process is essentially a 'contact between minds'. The 'community of me and you' represents the beginning of society. Minds which interact remain forever functions of separate organisms; the relations* between them *constitute social phenomena*" (Lindeman, 1926, p. 154).

This social process happens in discussion, which is a teaching method for adults, discussion by questioning and being critical in live teaching situations. Lindeman (1926) states that "*discussion is more than talk*" and "*words become habits – whereupon they lose their teaching function*" (p. 8). Lindeman describes discussion in detail. One essential feature of Lindeman's (1926, p. 8) definition is that learning is achieved via the route of situations, not subjects. "*The best teaching method is one which emerges from situation-experiences*" and "*[d]iscussion brings the learning situation into alignment with the living situation to the actual experiences*" (Lindeman, 1935, p. 47).

Another essential element in discussion is creative mood. "*The creative mood is more than an attitude of expectancy*" (Lindeman, 1926, p. 93). "*The rigidities of adulthood need loosening before anything creative can happen in the sphere of social control*" (Lindeman, 1926, p. 92). Lindeman (1926) also describes the key questions for creative discussion, which reveals underlying assumptions: "*What situation have we here? What sort of problem does it show? What new information does it involve? and What action will set us on towards a solution?*" (p. 193). Lindeman (1926) concludes that "*to add a new quality to experience, we stand in the presence of creation*" (p. 166).

The third essential element concerns the teacher's role. Lindeman (1926) requires that teachers exhibit holistic presence and courage:

> When discussion is used as method for adult teaching, the teacher becomes group chairman; […] nor is he the oracle who supplies answers which students carry off in their notebooks […] whatever he brings to the group in the form of opinions, facts and experiences must be open to question and criticism on the same terms as the contributions of other participants. (pp. 185–189)

In a previous passage, he writes, "*Brave the teacher who dares to reveal his special subject in the context of the whole life and learning*", and "*happy the student whose teacher knows more than his subject*" (Lindeman, 1926, p. 173). To sum up, the purpose of discussion is the same as the purpose of adult education: "*to give meaning to the categories of experiences, not to classifications of knowledge*" (Lindeman, 1926, p. 195).

Savićević's three key concepts are a dialectic process, a co-operative relationship, and the fundamental responsibility for personal development. His idea of interaction is crystallised in these two sentences: "*education and self-instruction are two sides of one integral process notwithstanding the level at which they appear*" and "*[t]heir interdependence is indisputable*

and for that reason we observe them as a dialectic process" (Savićević, 1999, p. 180). Self-instruction and education are interdependent and form a dialectic process between society and human life. He claims that humans become autonomous through self-instruction in a co-operative relationship. He also argues that responsibility for personal and social development play key roles in change:

> *a basic feature of humans as social beings is their striving for new knowledge. During the process of labour and social and individual life they try to recognise more completely the secrets of nature and society. In such a process people may improve and promote themselves.* (Savićević, 1999, p. 180)

Savićević (1999) also reminds us that "*self-instruction has historical roots in the desire of humanity to exceed itself and change the existing realities and the world in which it lives*" (p. 180). He proposes that traditional authority should be replaced by a co-operative relationship: "*The traditional authority in education and teaching, which belonged to a teacher […] should be replaced with a co-operative relationship which is more intensive if the level of education and age are higher*" (Savićević, 1999, p. 183).

Savićević (1999) asks a crucial philosophical question:

> *how to 'awaken' an individual to accept the fundamental responsibility for personal development as well as for the development of society on which it depends. Such responsibility cannot be realized without acquiring knowledge as a basis for choices among alternatives during social and personal development.* (p. 179)

The idea of humans as social beings is the basis for reciprocal interaction and dialectic development between society and human life.

The re-construction of reciprocal interaction seems to have at least *four fundamental qualities:* "living word", mutual connection, curious togetherness and responsibility. What is an andragogical way of interaction? The first, *"living word",* refers to the holistic sense of being alive, here and now. "Living" also refers to bodily presence with sensations, to "lived through" experiences, involving ways of integrating the experience and knowledge of head and heart. "Living word" describes the individual's lived experiences, their own perspectives. The plurality of these "living words", first-person perspectives and "lived through" experiences constitute the foundation for interaction.

The second, *"mutual connection",* refers to invisible and silent connections to others, to individuals orienting to each other. Mutuality is a type of interdependence loaded with respect and an intentional awareness of being-in-the world with others. It is a mental, wordless "place" which has little to do with one's physical surroundings. Grundtvig's (1854/1991) definition is near to this original meaning: "*living mutual contact is there where the heart is a part of awakening*" (p. 108). Knowles (1990), in turn, terms "*the conditions of mutuality and informality*" as "*an Atmosphere of Adultness*" (p. 123).

Third, individuals' orientation towards each other is loaded with *curious togetherness*. Curiosity is a driving force for interaction. It is a quality of energy that serves the study of one's own and others' experiences – "living textbooks" – without preconceptions, through questioning and critical appraisal. For curious orientation to take place, *"loosening the rigidities of adulthood"* and *"add[ing] a new quality to experience"* are necessary*;* then *"we stand in the presence of creation"* (Lindeman, 1926, p. 166). Savićević (1999) uses the concept of "*co-operative relationships*", which vary by level of education and age (p. 179), and Knowles (1989) writes that "*learning experiences happen also through interaction*" (pp. 82–85). To sum up, situation-experiences laden with curiosity and creativity "*can enlighten the learners*" (Grundtvig, 1854/1991, p. 108).

Fourth, two kinds of *responsibilities* are present throughout the learning process. Each individual is responsible for their own personal learning and development. As Savićević (1999) writes, it is important to "*awaken an individual's fundamental responsibility for personal development as well as for the development of the society on which it depends*" (p. 179). This responsibility "*need[s] knowledge as a basis for choices among alternatives during social and personal development*" (Savićević, 1999, p. 179). Responsibilities to others refers to helping each other and bearing with each other throughout the whole situation or process. Lindeman (1951/1987) writes about participants' responsibilities as mutual: "*he [who] brings to the group in the form of opinions, facts and experiences must be open to question and criticism on the same terms as the contributions of other participants*" (p. 128). Knowles (1990) even writes that some responsibilities are mutual: "*mutuality of responsibility in defining goals, planning and conducting activities and evaluating is obvious*" (p. 57).

To summarise, a living connection and an orientation towards otherness are at the core of reciprocal interaction, which emerges both in a living connection to otherness and in a curious, responsible orientation towards togetherness. It is important to notice that this kind of reciprocal interaction can emerge anywhere and at any time.

THE THIRD PRINCIPLE: "POWER WITH"

We have named the third principle "power with", a term that both Lindeman and Savićević have used in their texts. All four theorists write – although again using different concepts – about power and humanity. Power is present in, for example, Grundtvig's "*folkelig culture*", Lindeman's "*power with*", Savićević's "*world interconnections*", and Knowles' self-direction and self-actualisation.

For Grundtvig the idea of "power with" is obvious in his writings about natural equality, human friendship, the mutual freedom of adults in the community and the creation of a "folkelig" culture. For Grundtvig "power with" emerges in the idea of living word and living society. Grundtvig (1838/1991) has a whole-hearted trust in every human being's educational potential, "*as everything human on this earth must be at first, but yet real, with the capacity for total perfection*" (p. 90):

> *The same educational ability is to be found in the poor man's cabin as in the rich man's mansion. This natural equality, which is now to be found really only in the Nordic countries where no foreigner has forced his way in and enslaved the former inhabitants, we cannot cherish enough since it is capable of giving our love of the fatherland a greater depth and the education of the people a greater truth than would otherwise be possible.* (p. 87)

Grundtvig uses the term "*folkelighed*", meaning community life, which all people share. "*Folkelighed*" is bound up with the preservation of identity, of a nations' literature, poetry, and way of life (Lawson, 1991, p. 14). Freedom and true friendship are essential for a "*folkelig culture*" to emerge. Grundtvig (1836/1991) writes, "*the freedom of the People and the living activity in all beneficial directions must develop just as quietly and gently, refreshingly and completely from the free voice of the people as did the People's equality*" (p. 33).

Grundtvig (1847/1991) suggests that "*who[ever] creates a Folk High School open to all, must necessarily think of the advances to all of the people and all of the country*" (p. 95):

> *I call this a 'high school', not as a matter of pride or conceit but to indicate that this must be, in a decent manner, a free school for adults. It must strive to awaken, nourish, and clarify a higher concept of human living in general than is commonly held, and specifically of the life of the Danish people and the Danish citizen.* (Grundtvig, 1854/1991, p. 107.)

The idea of "power with" is present in Knowles' description of adults' active participation in educational processes. For Knowles, it is important that all one's "fellow citizens" can participate according to their needs. Thus, the aim is "*to deliver adult educational services to our undereducated fellow citizens at their convenience in terms of time, place, and pace, as well as in terms of their needs to perform life roles effectively*" (Knowles, 2019, p. 97). Adult learners should have power "*in defining [their] goals, planning and conducting activities and evaluating*" their learning process. Knowles (1989) trusts adults' ability to assume different life roles, such as "*learner, friend, family member, citizen, worker and leisure time-user*" (pp. 82–85). Knowles (2002) dreams "*of new kinds of community learning centers in every part of our country and other countries as well. These are the new forms of education that are emerging from a society in the process of transformation.*" (p. 4).

For Lindeman (1951/1987) "power with" is the core of social philosophy. And as he stated earlier, "*the beginning of society is [the] community of 'me and you'*" (Lindeman, 1926, p. 154). "Power with" and freedom form an essential pair of concepts for Lindeman (1926): "*We do not acquire freedom – we grow into freedom*" and "*freedom can never be absolute*" and in the beginning "*none of us is self-determined*", but always related with others, otherness (pp. 68–70). Lindeman (1926) combines citizenship with freedom and creativeness: "*dynamic freedom stirs the personality in the direction of radical, causative, originative activity. The function of freedom is to create*" (p. 78). And further: "*When the function of citizenship loses its creativeness it also loses its meaning*" (Lindeman, 1926, p. 127).

Lindeman writes a lot about social action groups. He argues that "*all successful adult education groups sooner or later become a social action group*" (Lindeman, 1945, p. 12). He says that "*adult education is the laboratory for democratic experience and bears two democratic struggles: a) learning methods and b) tool[s] for social movement*" (Lindeman, 1945, p. 10). Lindeman (1926) also applies the idea of "power with" to working life: "*production was seen as becoming more participatory and collaborative, so that managers' 'power over' workers was transposed into 'power with' them*" (p. 27).

Lindeman (1945) sees culture as "*a root for adult education and [the]emergence of new social forms, which are various in different countries*" and it "*cannot transform to other cultures*" (p. 11). Lindeman (1932) solves this through "*internationalism*", "*an inventive correlation of superiorities to mean capacity to produce a certain variety of goods to create a qualitatively distinct set of cultural objects and values*" (p. 71).

In sum, Lindeman's (1926) world view is holistic:

> *Stimuli or causes are somehow related to responses or effects in us as well as in the universe of which we are parts. We can therefore be free only within the scheme of nature. Successful human adjustment is never wholly to or against nature, but always partially with [nature], we cannot be free from ourselves or the natural objects which surround us, and consequently the only freedom worth talking about is freedom-with.* (pp. 68)

The philosophy of lifelong education for Savićević is oriented towards people and their human essence. Lifelong education is profoundly informed by "power with" relations, which also raises the average level of education, culture, and society.

> *Understanding lifelong education as an educational philosophy, as a concept, it is oriented, or we want it to be oriented, towards people, towards their human essence and towards their development, but not towards the creation of a 'usable' person, as a worker only. Lifelong education is an essential factor in the creation of human happiness. When education is democratized, it becomes education for everybody. Lifelong education is not only for social, economic, and political benefits. It should contribute to the development of human potential and to the creation of human happiness […] As such [lifelong education] is both the final aim of social development and the most important active element in it.* (Savićević, 1999, p. 166, 180).

Savićević (1999) reminds us of the consequences of the traditional organisation of teaching:

> *Educational institutions are not aware how much the traditional organization of teaching and the traditional relation of lecturer and student contribute to the acceptance of a passive observing position of a learner and how much it will reflect afterwards upon the performing of social and working roles.* (p. 180)

Savićević (2008) also writes about groups: "*new social groups, which are important to see and reflecting for learning and education in power with relations, are women, ethnic and racial groups, elderly, migrants, displaced persons and the poor*" (p. 363). For him, adult education is a tool for a free and democratic society: "*It is impossible to build a free and democratic society without accomplished issues for adult education*" (Savićević, 1999, p. 180). For Savićević (1999), "*the complete human environment – work, education, society and family – fulfils the function of education*" (p. 180).

Savićević, like Lindeman, has a holistic perspective on other cultures and civilizations. He writes about "*world interconnections*" (Savićević, 2008):

> *Learning activities are interconnecting at local, regional and global levels […][;] learning could help man and mankind in complete understanding of other cultures and other civilizations in meaningful management of the increased number of problems, in respecting the elements of global views and in respecting the elements of global systems.* (p. 364)

The re-construction of "power with" seems to have at least *three fundamental qualities:* equality, creation of culture, and understanding of other cultures. First, these theorists write about equal participation in different situations. Equality is a necessary condition for "power with" to be realised. Furthermore, freedom is a necessary condition for equality. According to Grundtvig, if one is not free, one can never enjoy true fellowship (Warren, 1989, p. 216). Lindeman (1951/1987, p. 128), in turn, highlights the equality between learners as members of organisations, cultures, and societies. Savićević (2008, p. 363) reminds us that when participating in learning and education, all social groups (e.g., elderly, migrant, poor) are equal.

Second, "power with" relations are essential in the creation of culture. How does the creation of culture take place? Grundtvig's (1840/1991) "*folkelig*" culture and its creation of culture happens as a combination of history and poetry, which "*in my eyes […] opens the brightest prospects*" (p. 61). Lindeman (1951/1987, pp. 128–129) argues that creating cultures happens through social action in local communities and environmental institutions (e.g., education, economic life). For Savićević (1999), in turn, "*the person […] is the one who creates everything and from whom everything is being created. As such he is both the final aim of social development and the most important active element in it*" (p. 166). Knowles (2002, p. 4) connects societal transformation with the new forms of education.

Third, understanding other cultures demands participation in learning activities and situations from a diversity of perspectives (e.g., different religions and nationalities). Why is understanding other cultures so important for these theorists? Grundtvig's (1838/1991) idea of freedom and education concerns all humanity: "*what we all are in need of, but the proposals for these things all have the same fundamental flaw in them as Plato's Republic, where the guardians of freedom and education themselves swallow up both*" (p. 93). Knowles (2019), in turn, writes:

I don't discount the fact that there are cultural differences that need to be taken into account in interacting with people from different cultures. But my current perception is that these differences are more in terms of customs than in fundamental processes, such as learning. I honor their customs and am willing to adapt to them, but I accept and respect their basic humanity. (p. 45)

Lindeman uses the concept "*internationalism*". He writes that "*we simply cannot have this good life any longer unless the whole world is moving in the same direction*" (Lindeman, 1951/1987, p. 130). Savićević uses the concept "*world interconnections*". He argues that "*learning could help man and mankind in complete understanding of other cultures and other civilizations*" (Savićević, 2008, p. 364). Learning leads to social development and human happiness.

To sum up, the essence of the "power with" principle is equality, the creation of culture and understanding of other cultures. Andragogy, when "power with" is actualised, can create equality between and give a voice to different human beings, organisations, cultures, and societies. However, equality is not possible without "freedom-with". Understanding of other cultures can minimise conflicts between societies and create well-being.

THE ESSENCE OF ANDRAGOGY: THE PRINCIPLES AND THEIR QUALITIES

To summarise, our re-construction comprises three principles and their qualities (see Table 1). The phenomenon re-constructed here as andragogy applies to all human beings in reciprocal "power with" situations in different groups, cultures and societies. It should be noted that this re-construction is not linked to any specific context; rather, any context can be seen from an andragogical perspective. Furthermore, these principles and their qualities are intertwined. If one principle is missing, the wholeness of andragogy is also missing, and we can no longer speak about andragogy.

Table 1
Re-construction of andragogy: the principles and their qualities

Principles of andragogy	Qualities of principles
Lived experience	Lived through Indivisible Awakening Growing adult
Reciprocal interaction	Living word Mutual connection Curious togetherness Responsibility
"Power with"	Equality Creation of culture Understanding other cultures

These principles are necessary and sufficient conditions for the realisation of andragogy. If we accept this re-construction of andragogy, it entails a profound transformation in the perspective on education in any context and at any human age.

CONCLUSION

For the purposes of this study, we selected four theorists representing four different approaches to andragogy: the *Folkbildung* of Grundtvig from Denmark, the andragogical approach of Knowles from North America, the social theory of andragogy developed by Lindeman, also from North America, and the andragogy theory of Dušan Savićević from Serbia. This selection yielded sufficient variation and breadth for hermeneutical interpretation.

We consider the hermeneutical process reported here, i.e., the analysis, interpretation, and re-construction of writings by these four theorists, to have been fruitful. To enhance the trustworthiness of our study, we followed Ricouer's (1991) four trains of objectivity: 1) fixation of the meaning of andragogy in the form of three principles and their qualities derived from 2) dissociation from the authentic writings of the selected theorists' texts; 3) putting aside non-ostensive references and discovering the universal range of andragogy; and 4) awareness of the limitations of the study. We were only able to use writings of these four theorists that have been published in Finnish, Swedish or English. Consequently, other influential theorists (e.g., Alexander Kapp, Eugen Rosenstock-Huessy, Serguey Zmeyov, Jost Reichmann, Franz Pöggeler) could not be included.

This re-construction of the essence of andragogy forms the proposition outlined here for a theoretical formulation of andragogy. This proposition should, however, be researched and validated further by scholars who have not been party to this research process (cf. Brookfield, 1992). While we do not present direct implications for practice, practitioners working in different andragogical contexts should evaluate the practical consequences and transferability of this proposition for themselves (cf. Brookfield, 1992). However, a larger purpose having to do with improving some aspects of andragogy underlies all formal theorising. The purpose of theory is essentially the pragmatic one of helping practitioners to enhance and refine their understanding and praxis. If our conceptualisation is deemed useful, it should enable practitioners to better understand andragogy and to develop their own andragogical practices.

As mentioned earlier, more refined, alternative theoretical interpretations are always possible. Reformulation is in any case needed to further develop the theory of andragogy. Here, we have focused on a re-construction based on the writings of four theorists. We intend to continue our andragogy project in at least three directions. First, we aim to probe deeper into the philosophical understanding of andragogy by addressing the question "Wherein are the philosophical roots of andragogy?" Second, the present findings offer us a clue that andragogy and experiential learning theories have something in common. This connection merits careful research. Third, methodological diversity – especially more qualitative research – is needed. We challenge scholars to engage more in

phenomenon-based research. Our goal is to strengthen andragogy as a scientific approach by deepening and broadening its theoretical foundations. While a single theory that explains andragogy in its entirety may never emerge, we are hopeful that this process will stimulate further inquiry and research.

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Svein Loeng

PEDAGOGY AND ANDRAGOGY IN COMPARISON – CONCEPTIONS AND PERSPECTIVES

ABSTRACT

This article draws attention to the comparison of pedagogy and andragogy. It is based on well-known writers within the field of adult education and learning. The selected literature is considered to give a representative picture of how comparing pedagogy and andragogy is generally approached, serving as my basis for critical consideration. In general, the comparisons are based on the traditional understanding of pedagogy and the understanding of andragogy in line with Knowles's theory. This does not give a true picture of the circumstances. Pedagogy is much more than traditional pedagogy, and andragogy is much more than Knowles's andragogy. The conclusion is that a reliable comparison demands a clarification of the terms included. Attention is also drawn to three perspectives on the pedagogy–andragogy relationship, namely, dichotomous, continuum, and relational perspectives. Here, too, a traditional understanding of pedagogy is the basis.

Keywords: *pedagogy, andragogy, adult education, adult learning, progressivism*

PEDAGOGIKA IN ANDRAGOGIKA V PRIMERJAVI – POJMOVANJA IN PERSPEKTIVE – POVZETEK

Članek opozarja na primerjave med pedagogiko in andragogiko. Temelji na idejah uveljavljenih avtorjev na področju izobraževanja in učenja odraslih. Izbrana literatura podaja reprezentativno sliko splošnega pristopa do primerjave pedagogike in andragogike. Na splošno so primerjave osnovane na tradicionalnem razumevanju pedagogike in razumevanju andragogike v skladu s teorijo, ki jo je razvil Malcolm Knowles. Zaključki pokažejo, da je zanesljiva primerjava možna le na podlagi razjasnitve pojmov. Članek se posveti tudi trem perspektivam na odnos med pedagogiko in andragogiko: perspektivam dihotomije, kontinuuma in odnosov. Tudi tukaj osnovo predstavlja tradicionalno razumevanje pedagogike.

Ključne besede: *pedagogika, andragogika, izobraževanje odraslih, učenje odraslih, progresivizem*

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INTRODUCTION

Since the concept of andragogy entered the scene in the English-speaking world around 1970, andragogical literature has contained quite a number of comparisons of pedagogy and andragogy. Finger and Asún (2001) state that "it has become standard practice in adult education to oppose – or at least compare – pedagogy and andragogy" (p. 70). These comparisons are mostly based on a traditional "schoolmaster-like" description of pedagogy. Andragogy, on the other hand, is generally perceived as synonymous to Knowles's andragogy. "Schoolmaster-like" pedagogy is a traditional pedagogical approach, with characteristics such as transmission, content- and teacher-orientation, and a view of the learner as dependent. Beyond this, the term "schoolmaster" is often assigned a derogatory meaning, referring to a person who is magisterial and admonishing. Some of the literature in the field of adult education and learning seems to tend towards this view without expressing it directly. Such a basis for comparison further increases the difference between pedagogy and andragogy.

To make a reliable comparison, the two concepts must be clarified. Neither pedagogy nor andragogy is an unambiguous concept. Pedagogy is much more than "schoolmaster-pedagogy", while andragogy is much more than Knowles's andragogy.

To give a truthful picture of the relation between these two concepts, all nuances should be expressed, and the comparison should clarify which understanding of the concepts it is based on. To compare pedagogy and andragogy without taking different conceptions into account is inappropriate. To declare that pedagogy should be replaced by andragogy is almost empty of meaning if the basis of the understanding of the concepts is not specified.

DISCREPANCY BETWEEN PEDAGOGY AND ADULT EDUCATION

When adult education began to be organised systematically in the early 1920s, the pedagogical model was the only one adult educators could refer to, which meant the traditional understanding of pedagogy. Soon discontent arose among adult educators and adult learners with respect to this traditional pedagogical model. Many of the learner characteristics set forth in the pedagogical model did not fit the characteristics of adult learners. Pedagogy was based on the transmission of knowledge. Adult learners seemed to be dissatisfied with pedagogical teaching strategies, such as lectures, assigned readings, drills, quizzes, note memorising and examinations (Holmes & Abington-Cooper, 2000; Knowles, 1980). This dissatisfaction resulted in high dropout rates.

The first signs of the traditional model of pedagogy being inappropriate for adults appeared in Eduard Lindeman's *The Meaning of Adult Education* (1926). He claimed that adults learn best when actively involved in determining what, how, and when to learn. Lindeman (1926, pp. 4–7) introduced these four assumptions dedicated to "those who need to be learners":
1) Education is life, not a mere preparation for an unknown kind of future living.
2) Education revolves around non-vocational ideals.
3) The approach to adult education will be via the route of situations, not subjects.
4) The resource of highest value in adult education is the learner's experience.

In Lindeman's opinion, the purpose of learning is to make life meaningful and it must be about discovering the meaning of our experiences. His book makes an important contribution to a new perspective on adult learning. He puts what characterises adult learners into words. It must be mentioned that Lindeman did not use the term andragogy to signify his approach to adult learning.

Conaway (2009, p. 32) refers to Gehring (2000) and Ozuah (2005) when she brings up five major points emphasised in pedagogical theory: children's lack of experience, their dependency in the learning situation, their external motivation, their readiness to learn and content-oriented learning. A consequence of this understanding is that children are externally motivated because they are closely linked to content- or subject-oriented learning, maintaining the child's natural dependency on the teacher. Because of their status in the societal hierarchy, children are dependent on adults directing and guiding them: "It should be noted that pedagogy is fundamentally a teacher-centred model, where the teacher determines what will be learned, how it will be learned, when it will be learned, and if it has been learned" (Ozuah, 2005, p. 83).

This is commonly considered to be in contrast to andragogy, referred to as the education of adults. Adults bring valuable experiential knowledge with them and have community-oriented aspirations (Gehring, 2000). Andragogy is usually described as learner-centred; the learner is responsible for achieving his or her own learning goals through self-direction and evaluation (Marshak, 1983). The teacher is not a transmitter of knowledge and skills, but a facilitator or helper in the learning process.

DIFFERENT CONCEPTIONS OF ANDRAGOGY

The concept of andragogy is ambiguous. It deals with adult education and learning in some way or another, but apart from this, various understandings of the concept exist (Loeng, 2018). The generally accepted view of andragogy in the English-speaking world is in line with Knowles's andragogy from the 1970s.

Knowles (1980) formulated the following assumptions about adult learners: as individuals mature,
1) their self-concept moves from one of being a dependent personality towards one of being a self-directed human being;
2) they accumulate a growing reservoir of experience that becomes an increasingly rich source for learning;
3) their readiness to learn becomes oriented increasingly to the developmental tasks of their social roles; and
4) their time perspective changes from one of postponed application of knowledge to immediacy of application, and accordingly, their orientation towards learning shifts from one of subject-centredness to one of performance-centredness (in the 1970 edition, he used "problem-centredness").

In 1984, Knowles added a fifth assumption: As a person matures, the motivation to learn is internal. These assumptions formed the basis of the common understanding of andragogy in the English-speaking world.

Many authors have declared andragogy to be a unique perspective on adult education and learning, different from or sometimes incompatible with pedagogy, according to Finger and Asún (2001, p. 70).

The already-mentioned Eduard Lindeman was one of Knowles's greatest inspirations. Knowles (1989, p. 8) stated that Lindeman's book, *The Meaning of Adult Education*, was his main source of inspiration and ideas for a quarter of a century.

Still, there is at least one essential difference between these two central figures within adult education. Knowles has an individualistic focus and valued ideals such as individualism, self-realisation, independence and self-direction. Lindeman focused on social commitment and social change. He wanted to use adult education as a means to social change.

What is less known is that Lindeman was inspired by Eugen Rosenstock-Huessy (Loeng, 2013). Rosenstock-Huessy was a leading force in the first theoretical and academic reflections on the field of adult education in the 1920s. His ideas led to a new practice and he became a source of inspiration for adult educators in the interwar and post-war period. Andragogy is, according to Rosenstock-Huessy (1924), a turning away from mere pedagogy and demagogy. To him, andragogy is a term for all school-like education of adults. These schools should not be characterised by the transmission of information and teacher-centredness but should contribute to a new understanding of consciousness-raising. Like Lindeman, he had a social focus. Andragogy is a new kind of teaching that aims to solve social problems and move towards a better future (Rosenstock-Huessy, 1925).

To draw an even more complex picture of the different conceptions of andragogy, Alexander Kapp should be mentioned. He was, as far as we know, the first one to use the concept of andragogy (Kapp, 1833; Loeng, 2017). His approach was different from the already-mentioned representatives of andragogy. Kapp introduced his andragogy in 1833 based on Plato's educational theory (Loeng, 2017).

The different perceptions of andragogy illustrate a multifaceted term. Additionally, further confusion arises because some consider andragogy to be synonymous with adult learning, while others use it to denote a specific sort of adult learning, particularly Knowles's andragogy.

Differentiating between North American and European andragogy is also appropriate. The latter arose long before Knowles's andragogy and had a different basis. In European andragogy, the social perspective is more prominent (Höghielm, 1985). In particular, Eastern European andragogy attaches importance to the socialisation function of andragogy, in addition to self-realisation. Knowles, as a representative of North American andragogy, stands out with a more individualistic focus. According to Sandlin (2005), Knowles seemed to ignore the relationship between the individual and society. Lindeman

is also a North American, but he is closest to European andragogy with his emphasis on adult learning as a means to achieving social change. Andragogy in Great Britain is more similar to North American than to German andragogy (Savićević, 1999b). The above shows that the picture is not entirely clear.

When it comes to the perception of andragogy as a scientific discipline, the situation is varied (Savićević, 1999b). On one side, some theorists rejected the possibility of establishing an independent andragogical science. The opposite extreme argued in favour of andragogy as an integrative science, with disciplines such as sociology, psychology and others to be integrated into a common andragogical science (the Dutch variant). Somewhere in between, andragogy was subordinate to or belonging to pedagogy or other established sciences such as sociology, psychology, anthropology and others. There were also proponents of andragogy as a fairly independent scientific discipline, with andragogy as an integral science of adult education and learning. Supporters of this understanding were particularly to be found in Germany, Poland, Hungary, former Czechoslovakia, former Yugoslavia, and the Netherlands.

The first attempts to give andragogy a scientific basis were made in the 1950s. In this context, Franz Pöggeler (1957) was considered a pioneer with his book *Einführung in die Andragogik* (*Introduction to andragogy*). In the decades that followed, several theoretical standpoints have crystallized into different perceptions of andragogy.

An institution that has contributed significantly to the development of andragogy as a scientific discipline is the University of Bamberg in Germany. An andragogical chair (Lehrstuhl für Andragogik) was established in 1994, focusing on the scientific side of adult education. Andragogy became the term for the scientific discipline studying adult education and learning (Reischmann, 1996).

ANDRAGOGY AND PROGRESSIVISM

Throughout the 1900s, the traditional conception of pedagogy was challenged by progressivism, introducing new ways of seeking knowledge. A chief exponent of progressive education was John Dewey. In short, progressive education was learner-centred and the teaching methods were focused on active inquiry, problem-solving and investigation. Disagreement was encouraged and the classroom was a place where differences could be articulated and analysed. Learners were treated as participants, not objects, and the goals were both individual and social. "In liberating the learner, a potential was released for the improvement of society and culture" (Elias & Merriam, 1995, p. 47).

The progressives' view of education was to a great extent adopted by adult educators (Elias & Merriam, 1995). This meant increased focus on factors like socialisation, the centrality of experience in the sense of the learners' experiences, in addition to the practical and pragmatic. Reason, experience, and feeling began to replace tradition and authority as the chief ways of arriving at truth (Elias & Merriam, 1995, p. 46).

Dewey's progressive pedagogy was especially influential in North American andragogy, which was represented by Malcolm Knowles. Elias and Merriam (1995) write that "Knowles's description of the adult educator as andragogue rather than pedagogue is in reality a contrast between the view of the teacher of traditional education and that proposed by the progressives" (p. 65).

As previously mentioned, Eduard Lindeman was one of Knowles's greatest inspirations. Lindeman is generally considered a link between progressivism and adult education (Fischer & Podeschi, 1989). According to Elias and Merriam (1995), "there is scarcely an adult educator whose ideas cannot be traced at least in some indirect form to the seminal ideas of Dewey and Lindeman" (pp. 68–69). "Lindeman goes on to give a definition of adult education that is truly Deweyan and progressive and that underlies the theoretical and practical thinking of many adult educators today" (Elias & Merriam, 1995, p. 64). In their opinion, "all adult educators accept the basic progressive premise that education is a process of reflective inquiry" (p. 74). So it is valid to say that there is a line from Dewey, via Lindeman, to Knowles. This relationship resulted in an andragogy with great similarities to progressive pedagogy.

ANDRAGOGY – PEDAGOGY-DISTANT OR PEDAGOGY-CLOSE?

If we compare traditional pedagogy to Knowles's andragogy, andragogy is without a doubt pedagogy-distant. However, if progressive pedagogy is the basis of comparison, andragogy is pedagogy-close. Which of these comparisons is the most truthful depends on, among other things, basic educational views. It is unreasonable to say that the most correct way is to compare traditional pedagogy with an understanding of andragogy in line with Knowles. There are so many other possible comparisons.

Traditional pedagogy includes characteristics such as learner dependency, content- and teacher-oriented learning, external motivation, and considering learner experience to be of little importance. In comparison with andragogy, these characteristics of traditional pedagogy will be strongly misleading, not least when it comes to learner experience. Malcolm Knowles, Eduard Lindeman and Eugen Rosenstock-Huessy are prominent representatives of twentieth-century andragogy, and they all attach importance to learner experience. Knowles (1970) stated that the learning process is related to and makes use of the learner's experience; experiences increasingly become a source of learning. Lindeman, who was one of Knowles' greatest inspirations, claimed that in adult education, the learner's experience is the resource of the highest value and that learning must be about discovering the meaning of our experiences (Lindeman, 1926). Although Lindeman never developed an independent theory in the name of andragogy, Davenport (1987, p. 17) called him the spiritual father of andragogy.

What is less known is that Lindeman was inspired by Eugen Rosenstock-Huessy, who was a pioneer in the use of the concept of andragogy. To Rosenstock-Huessy (1925), teaching should be based on the experiences and ideas of the learners. The participants should be made conscious of their own experiences and aware of the need for social

integration (Loeng, 2013). He also called attention to the importance of dialogue and communication. As opposed to Descartes' "*cogito ergo sum*" ("I think, therefore I am"), he introduced the formula "*Audi, ne moriamur*" ("Listen, otherwise we die") (Tate, 1986).

In terms of learner experience, Alexander Kapp's (1833) andragogy differs from the three above mentioned representatives of andragogy. Kapp's andragogy has a rationalistic focus, with Plato's educational theory as a starting point. The importance of learner experience is toned down; the emphasis is on inner qualities such as character forming and self-knowledge (Loeng, 2017).

To understand the relationship between pedagogy and andragogy, you must understand the historical origin, writes Savićević (1999a). He is a representative of Eastern European andragogy, where andragogy is explicitly considered to be one of the pedagogical disciplines, with pedagogy as the superior discipline. Savićević (1999b) points out that this does not necessarily mean that andragogy belongs to pedagogy. Neither does it mean that andragogy is derived from pedagogy. In his opinion, German philosophy and pedagogy form a fruitful basis for andragogy, but they have two different starting points. Pedagogy has developed from philosophy and has a deductive structure. According to Savićević (1999a), andragogy has an inductive starting point and is a product of the labour movement and workers' education in the 1800s and the first decades of the 1900s.

THE PEDAGOGY–ANDRAGOGY RELATIONSHIP – THREE DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVES

The last part of this article looks more closely at three different perspectives concerning the pedagogy–andragogy relationship. All three perspectives are based on a traditional understanding of pedagogy and an understanding of andragogy in line with Knowles's andragogy. Consequently, these perspectives are pedagogy-distant.

A Dichotomous Perspective

A dichotomy is expressed by using the words "either" and "or". The assumption is that there are only two positions. When expressing it this way, you may be forced into one of these extreme positions.

In the 1970 edition of *The Modern Practice of Adult Education*, Knowles expresses a dichotomous perspective on the relation between pedagogy and andragogy. He describes the differences this way:

Pedagogy
- The pupil's role is dependency.
- The teacher is responsible for learning taking place.
- The pupil's experience is of little importance.
- The school/society decides what is to be learnt.
- The subject matter knowledge is not useful until later in life.
- The curriculum is organised in logical subject areas.

Andragogy
- The learner moves towards increasing self-directedness.
- The teacher encourages increasing self-directedness.
- Experiences become an increasing source for learning.
- Learn what you need to learn.
- Provides knowledge and abilities to cope with everyday life in a better way.
- Learning is organised around categories that enable learner competence development.

If you present two concepts as dichotomous, this is a false dichotomy if there are evident overlapping alternatives or if the two positions are not mutually exclusive. A false dichotomy can be used to force someone into an extreme position. Rothwell (2013) states that false dichotomies denote the tendency to view the world in terms of only two opposing possibilities when other possibilities are available and to describe this dichotomy in an extreme mode of expression. This gives people a predisposition to see problems and solutions only in extremes. Rothwell (2013) claims that such either-or descriptions lock us into a mindset of narrow vision. Most problems or events are somewhere in between, not black or white. Most likely, this also applies to the relation between pedagogy and andragogy. The either-or perspective may be too restrictive, thereby representing a false dichotomy.

Bright (2018) comes to the conclusion that Knowles's characteristics of adult learners, including self-directedness, rich experience, specific learning needs, competence and learning orientation, can all in different ways be applied to children as well. He also refers to Knowles's criteria to justify the distinctive and fundamentally different nature of adults as opposed to children. Bright (2018) claims that humanistic psychology does not make this distinction and would consider the criteria relevant to all humans. He asserts that the criteria were formulated to establish a specific field of adult learning and development. In this way, a false dichotomy is established by creating two subgroups within the population.

A Continuum Perspective

A continuum is a continuous sequence between two ends or extremes that are very different from each other. In this case, pedagogy and andragogy are the extremes of this continuum. To make the extremes different from one another, a traditional understanding of pedagogy is appropriate to use in this case. Between these extremes, there are lots of positions representing degrees on this unbroken line between pedagogy and andragogy. The elements change in character gradually without any clear dividing points.

In the 1970 edition of *The Modern Practice of Adult Education*, Knowles suggested a dichotomy in the subtitle, *Andragogy versus Pedagogy*. This dichotomisation of the relation to pedagogy was criticised, and in the 1980 edition, the subtitle was changed to *From Pedagogy to Andragogy*. This indicates a continuum rather than a dichotomy, suggesting that the difference between children and adults is a question of degree, not kind (Hartree, 1984).

Ozuah (2005) concludes that andragogy and pedagogy are opposed to each other but are not necessarily mutually exclusive paradigms:

> It is true that the assumptions of pedagogy do not acknowledge the principles of andragogy (or adult learning theory), but rather focus on the dependent personality, subject-centeredness, extrinsic motivation, and irrelevant prior experiences. However, it should be noted that andragogy contains an appreciation and acceptance of pedagogy in many instances. For example, adult learning practitioners believe that pedagogy is an appropriate approach in situations where adult learners are truly dependent and have no relevant prior experiences. (p. 84)

However, he believes that practitioners of andragogy will gradually steer the learner away from the dependency of pedagogy towards increasing autonomy and self-direction (Ozuah, 2005).

Cross (1981) classifies Knowles's assumptions in personal and situational characteristics. Personal characteristics such as learning readiness and self-concept must be viewed on a continuum. They represent a gradual growth or development and do not belong to either childhood or adulthood. Situational characteristics, such as part-time versus full-time learning and voluntary versus compulsory, are dichotomous (Cross, 1981).

Humanagogy

An example of a continuum perspective is Knudson's (1979, 1980) approach that he calls humanagogy. His starting point is to consider human learning more by degree than by kind. Knudson states that it is the degree that separates adults from children in the learning situation, not the fact that they are adults and children. On this basis, he claims that adult educators can exclude neither pedagogy nor andragogy. By excluding pedagogy, you also exclude the adult who still acts and thinks like a child (Knudson, 1979, 1980).

Knudson's humanagogy takes into consideration that the adult has been a child. When a human develops, previous experiences will shape later experiences, which, in turn, will play a part in shaping later experiences and so on. Consequently, no experiences from earlier life will be lost; they are more or less integrated in later experiences. So experiences are very central to this approach: "To exclude principles of pedagogy from adult education is in essence to ignore the fact that as humans we retain a certain amount of childhood experiences which prevent us from operating differently at later ages" (Knudson, 1979, p. 262).

So the influence of previous experiences in learning situations is a central focus in humanagogy. If, for example, traumatic school experiences from childhood are dominating, the adult will act and react according to these experiences (that means acting like a "child"). If you "overcome" these experiences, they will not dominate the learning situation. Then the adult will be able to act like an "adult". According to humanagogy, andragogical principles

can be used in the latter case. Then the adult is able to cope with his/her "fear of learning" rooted in negative learning experiences. In Knudson's (1979, 1980) opinion, andragogy is the proper approach for adults who are less psychologically caught up in their childhood experiences.

Unlike the separate terms of pedagogy and andragogy, humanagogy represents the differences and the similarities that exist between both adults and children as learning human beings. It approaches human learning as a matter of degree, not kind. Jarvis (2010) describes humanagogy as a *human* theory of learning and not a theory of "child learning", "adult learning" or "elderly learning". He states that it is a theory of learning that combines pedagogy, andragogy and gerogogy and considers every aspect of the presently accepted psychological theory (Jarvis 2001, p. 152). However, Jarvis characterises humanagogy as a clumsy word that has gained a great deal of currency since it was introduced, and he asks himself what makes humanagogy a concept different from that of human learning. In his opinion, Knudson's term is probably unnecessary, even though his emphasis on human learning is very important (Jarvis, 2001, pp. 152–153).

Grow's Staged Self-Directed Learning Model

Grow's (1991) Staged Self-Directed Learning Model also represents a continuum perspective; it accounts for varying degrees along a continuum where teacher-centred learning and self-directed learning are the extremes. The move from the teacher-centred extreme to the self-directed one implies a move from a traditional pedagogical approach to an increasing emphasis on andragogical principles.

According to Grow (1991), self-direction is both a personal attribute that develops in stages and a situational response. The degree of self-direction can be a response to a specific learning situation, but it is also an ability that it is possible to learn. Therefore, the goal of the educational process must be to produce self-directed learners.

Students have varying abilities to relate to teaching that requires self-direction. Learners in stage 1 have little self-direction. They are dependent learners and learning is teacher-centred. Learners in stage 2 are moderately self-directed. They are interested and interestable, as Grow (1991) puts it, and the teacher should be a motivator and guide. Stage 3 is a transitional stage towards self-direction. The teacher is a facilitator, and the learners are involved in discussions facilitated by the teacher, who participates as an equal. Stage 4 learners are highly self-directed, and the teacher is a consultant and delegator. The learners can set their own goals and standards with or without help from experts (Grow, 1991).

There may be a bad coherence between the teacher's role and style and the students' stage of self-direction. The teacher must adapt to the students' stage of self-direction and allow them to be more self-directed in their learning. Therefore, good teaching is situational by nature and this must be an integrated part of teaching. It must be individualised to fit the learners' degree of self-direction and allow them to become more self-directed. Problems arise when the teaching style does not match the learner's degree of self-direction.

An Orthogonal Perspective

Research carried out by Delahaye (1987) indicates that the relationship between pedagogy and andragogy is not necessarily linear or on a continuum; they are independent variables and consequently not subject to covariation.

The study was carried out among 205 students at the undergraduate level, who were taking a one-semester course in either psychology, human resource management or general management. The students were asked to respond to 25 andragogical and 25 pedagogical questions.

The study was based on the following assumptions underlying pedagogy and andragogy (Delahaye, 1987, p. 4; Marshak, 1983, p. 80):

Pedagogy
- It is teacher-centred.
- The teacher sets the goals.
- The teacher leads the learning process.
- The teacher evaluates the results.
- It is subject/topic oriented.
- It is the transmission of knowledge.
- The teacher encourages learning.
- The teacher has a central role in imparting new knowledge and skills.

Andragogy
- It is learner-centred.
- Learning is self-directed.
- The teacher is the facilitator.
- It is problem/project oriented.
- It uses experience-based techniques.
- Self-motivation is needed to encourage learning.
- The learners have a central role in acquiring new knowledge and skills.

If pedagogy and andragogy were on a continuum, a high score for pedagogy would cause a corresponding low score for andragogy and vice versa. This was not the result. The majority of the students had a high score on both pedagogy and andragogy focused questions. This reveals that the use of pedagogical principles does not simultaneously exclude the use of andragogical principles. The study also shows that the use of "many" pedagogical principles does not exclude the simultaneous use of "many" andragogical ones. One set of principles must not necessarily be reduced correspondingly when the use of the other set is increased. A relationship based on a continuum would imply that a lower degree of pedagogical orientation leads to a higher degree of andragogical orientation and vice versa.

Delahaye (1987) conceived of learner maturity as moving through the following four stages:

Stage 1: Low andragogy/high pedagogy
Stage 2: High andragogy/high pedagogy
Stage 3: High andragogy/low pedagogy
Stage 4: Low andragogy/low pedagogy

He used the term "learner maturity" to give reasons for the amount of pedagogical and andragogical principles in the learning situation. Learner maturity consists of the learner's past experiences, expectations, attitudes to the coming learning event and the amount of present knowledge in the subject area (Delahaye, 1987).

A natural starting point is Stage 1, "high pedagogy" and "low andragogy". Delahaye (1987) states that this stage represents the Knowlesian interpretation of pedagogy. Here, we find the learners with low "learner maturity". The learner needs the support of pedagogical structure. As learner maturity increases, the learner may be interested in some andragogical "liberties", but is simultaneously not confident enough to leave the support provided by the pedagogical structure. This is a learner at Stage 2. As the process proceeds, the learner increasingly dares to free himself from the structure of pedagogy and indulge in the principles of andragogy. This is a learner at Stage 3. At Stage 4, the learner participates in learning without the assistance of a teacher or a facilitator. He or she needs neither the structure of pedagogy nor the mutual support and guidance of andragogy (Delahaye, 1987).

CONCLUSION

This article highlights some distinguishing features of the pedagogy–andragogy debate:
- When pedagogy and andragogy are compared, the idea that pedagogy equals traditional pedagogy/"schoolmaster-pedagogy" is generally taken for granted.
- Andragogy is generally conceived of in line with Knowles's andragogy; different notions of andragogy are rarely accounted for.
- The fact that progressive pedagogy has influenced andragogy to a great extent is rarely mentioned.

Neither pedagogy nor andragogy is an unambiguous term. A reliable comparison implies a clarification of the terms included. The fact that pedagogy today is different from the one in the 1920s is hardly ever made an issue. When the comparison is carried out on the basis of traditional pedagogy or "schoolmaster-pedagogy", the difference between pedagogy and andragogy is found to be great. Traditional pedagogy possesses characteristics such as learner dependency, content- and teacher-oriented learning, and external motivation, while learner experience has little importance. The above characteristics of traditional pedagogy will be highly misleading when it comes to establishing the characteristics of andragogy, not least when it comes to learner experience. As already commented in the introduction, "schoolmaster-pedagogy" might be considered a more extreme variant of traditional pedagogy, leading to an even greater difference between pedagogy and andragogy.

On the other hand, the basis for comparison is completely different if it incorporates progressive pedagogy, which has obviously contributed to a different view of education. Moreover, if we also take into consideration that North American and parts of European andragogy are largely influenced by progressivism, the basis of comparison is further changed.

The article also discusses the relationship between pedagogy and andragogy from a dichotomous, continuum, and orthogonal perspectives. Here, too, the basis is a traditional view of pedagogy and a view of andragogy that is in line with Knowles's andragogy.

In certain contexts, the conclusion is that pedagogy should be replaced by andragogy. Based on what has been previously discussed in this article, it is necessary to know what understanding of pedagogy and andragogy is used.

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THE CONSTITUTION OF ANDRAGOGY IN THE CZECH CONTEXT

ABSTRACT

The paper focuses on the evolution of attempts to integrate adult education in the Czech academia from approximately the mid–20th century onwards as well as on the various approaches to the concept of andragogy in that period. It applies the historic method mixed with elements of theoretical and comparative research. The paper starts by describing extended time periods in which the term andragogy was not yet in use. Then it sheds light on attempts to establish andragogy as an independent scientific discipline that seeks to cultivate adult individuals by means of (not exclusively) learning and education. The subsequent section pays attention to the recent period in which Czech andragogy lost some of its previous ambitions. Thus, the paper shows the main shifts in approaches to andragogy as well as the differences between the dominant approaches in the Czech and Western (European) contexts. A delayed mirroring of European trends is characteristic of the Czech development.

Keywords: *adult education, popular education, andragogy, integral andragogy, Czech Republic*

VZPOSTAVLJANJE ANDRAGOGIKE NA ČEŠKEM – POVZETEK

Članek se osredotoča na evolucijo poskusov integracije izobraževanja odraslih v visokošolsko izobraževanje na Češkem od približno sredine 20. stoletja naprej in na pristope k andragogiki v tem obdobju. Uporabljena je zgodovinska metoda z elementi teoretične in primerjalne raziskave. Članek na začetku obravnava daljša časovna obdobja, ko izraz andragogika še ni bil v rabi. Nato osvetljuje poskuse, da bi se andragogika vzpostavila kot neodvisna znanstvena disciplina, ki prek (ne zgolj) učenja in izobraževanja spodbuja razvoj odraslih ljudi. V nadaljevanju se osredotoča na nedavno zgodovino, ko je češka andragogika opustila nekaj svojih preteklih ambicij. Članek tako pokaže razvoj pristopov k andragogiki kot tudi razlike med pomembnejšimi pristopi znotraj češkega in zahodnega (evropskega) okvira. Za razvoj andragogike na Češkem je značilno zrcaljenje evropskih trendov s časovnim zamikom.

Ključne besede: *izobraževanje odraslih, ljudsko izobraževanje, andragogika, integralna andragogika, Češka*

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INTRODUCTION

Adult education and the study thereof are often said to be strongly determined by unique social and cultural contexts. In other words, whether in Europe or beyond, there is no single story of adult education (research) – there is a multitude of stories. The paper examines the Czech case over a time period from the end of WWII to the present. In addition to the broader social (and political) context, it captures especially the nature of the attempts at a scientific approach to adult education. The history of Czech society was relatively discontinuous over the time period studied, and the same applies to those attempts.

We primarily take a historical approach (e.g., Németh & Pöggeler, 2002), observing phenomena that are often idiographic but not isolated in the national territory. The international context of adult education was always at play, at least through links between adult education and societal change or through interactions in the domain of social sciences. The purpose of the paper is to describe the stages of the development of Czech academic approaches to conceptualising adult education. It focuses primarily on different ways of relating to the term andragogy while juxtaposing those to the European situation. It distinguishes between the following stages: the interwar period, the period between the end of WWII and the late 1960s, the two decades of the 1970s and 1980s, and finally the stage from 1990 to the present. The latter period receives the most attention. The paper describes and interprets transformations of the broader society, of adult education practice, and of academic conceptualisations of adult education.

AN OUTLINE OF EARLY HISTORY

Adult education as a practical field has a rich tradition in the Czech lands. The development of popular education efforts is characteristic of the modern society that started emerging in the early 19th century at the latest. Such efforts were not only a tool in the hands of emancipatory movements (national, working class, women's, etc.) but also the integral condition of their success. Thanks to government support, the era of popular education (or *Volksbildung*)[1] reached its peak during the first Czechoslovak Republic (1918–1938), and some segments continued to develop after the Second World War.

Nevertheless, the theoretical study of adult education as well as the efforts to professionalise the field underwent a divergent and much more complicated development. Although it was already in the late 19th century that academic scholars such as Otakar Hostinský, Tomáš Masaryk, or Gustav A. Lindner paid attention to the subject matter, most of the era's popular education or *Volksbildung* activities were characterised by spontaneity and lack of professionalism. The interwar period's increased government interest in and continuing institutionalisation of *Volksbildung* sparked debates about the educators'

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1   The German term is used here because it is close to the Czech notion *lidovýchova*. *Lidovýchova* (*Volksbildung*) is a more specific term than *adult education* as it underlines the collective (social and cultural) aspects of education.

qualifications and the possible establishment of independent academic departments of *Volksbildung*. Moreover, in 1919, Czechoslovakia became one of the founding members of The World Association for Adult Education, and the head of state Tomáš Masaryk served as the Association's first president until 1927 (Trnka, 1970, p. 261). Yet it was still teachers and volunteers who continued to drive the *Volksbildung* practice.

Thus, in spite of the rich local tradition of popular education that dated back to the Austro-Hungarian monarchy and culminated in the context of the democratic Czechoslovak Republic, research efforts failed to match the field's actual development. Although a few quality scholarly works attempting to reflect the realities of *Volksbildung* were published in the interwar period (e.g., Bláha, 1927; Trnka, 1934), the field can be characterised as merely a discursive practice until the mid-20th century. Despite some notable previous efforts (which were nevertheless determined by their temporal political contexts), it is only in the 1960s that attempts to establish a scientific discipline studying diverse aspects of adult education can be observed (also given the relative short-lived existence of *Volksbildung* as an independent academic discipline).

THE ACADEMIC DISCIPLINE OF *VOLKSBILDUNG*

A new impetus for research on the realities of adult education came in the context of the post-WWII political development. Faced with the need to adequately respond to the current political problems in the temporary absence of a functioning legislature, the country's political parties agreed to authorise the President to rule by decree. Edvard Beneš, one of the founding fathers of independent Czechoslovakia and Masaryk's presidential successor, adopted a series of norms.

President Beneš also signed Decree No. 130/1945, *On Government Policy of Popular Education*. In addition to a general framework for providing popular education, the decree formulated the country's first set of specific binding educational and training requirements for popular educators. The instruction was to be organised by the Technical Schools of Popular Education and by the newly established academic departments of *Volksbildung* and health care. Following this provision, the newly established Faculty of Education at Charles University in Prague opened its *Volksbildung* Department in the 1947/48 academic year.

The department was led by philosopher and leading *Volksbildung* theoretician Tomáš Trnka, who was named the first Czech full professor in the discipline. Its four-year academic programme was built on broad scientific and philosophical foundations. As one of the country's first scholars, Trnka justified the specifics and differences of adult education as opposed to adolescent education. The underlying thesis was that *Volksbildung* should cover the cultivation of individuals in all contexts, including mental and physical aspects, based on the fundamental condition of the free will of the person to be educated (Trnka, 1970, p. 3). He also put together the first college textbook on adult education in the history of the Czech lands.

This concept contradicted the ascending ideology of the Communist Party. After a coup d'état in February 1948, the party assumed power in Czechoslovakia and Trnka was dismissed. The programme was gradually reduced in coverage and reoriented towards political and cultural propaganda. Moreover, following the dismissal of certain teachers, the department became unable to secure adequate instructional quality. It was shut down by the end of the 1949/50 academic year, which marked the demise of the entire discipline for decades to come (Gallo & Škoda, 1986, p. 240).

Despite its short lifespan, the department provided a strong impulse for the future development of adult education research. For example, members of the department launched a discussion on establishing a new discipline, so-called *adult pedagogy*.[2] Yet for decades, its evolution was affected by the era's "Marxist" perspective on pedagogy that reduced its target groups to children and adolescents.

Even in the absence of formal academic institutions studying the principles and conditions of adult education, there were alternative means available to conduct at least limited research in the field, namely in specific educational fields such as higher education pedagogy and military education.

It was not until the early 1960s that a new political situation allowed for the rehabilitation of adult education. The ideas of Comenius were used to successfully redefine pedagogy as a general theory of education. Throughout the Soviet bloc, a new perspective took root that communist education is a lifelong process and its target group includes people of all ages (Skalka, 1978a, p. 13). This led to the recognition of adult education as one of pedagogy's subdisciplines.

In contrast, attempts to legitimise andragogy were mostly rejected. Marxist pedagogy viewed the so-called andragogical concept as incorrect and outdated (Skalka, 1978b, pp. 73–75). Andragogy, especially with regard to its religious-ideological inspirations drawn from the works of Hanselmann and Pöggeler (the former often refers to Protestantism and the latter explicitly relies on Catholicism; both view education as a way of constantly perfecting people in order to bring them closer to God, who already is perfect), was labelled as a bourgeois idealist theory, one with "extremely alien philosophical and ideological foundations", and Marxist pedagogues were to take "a highly critical position to it and work to uncover its harmful ideas" (Gallo & Škoda, 1986, p. 228).

THE EMERGENCE AND DEVELOPMENT OF ACADEMIC PROGRAMMES OF ADULT EDUCATION AFTER THE SECOND WORLD WAR

Discussions about the quality and effectiveness of further education policy were sparked by factors such as economic problems, labour force restructuring, a new emphasis on developing the skills of the working class, technological development, and changing

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2 *Adult pedagogy* is a literal translation of the Czech *pedagogika dospělých*. The official translation from these times was more general – *adult education*.

political contexts. The entire period after the coup of 1948 was marked by the need to quickly generate a sufficient number of qualified and ideologically screened workers to assume management positions, as well as to expand the manufacturing workforce.

The educational system responded to that need by launching special educational programmes targeted at employees as early as in the 1948/49 academic year. As a result, Czechoslovakia's adult education system consisted of three segments: school-based, non-formal, and work-based adult education. The educational practice developed mainly in quantitative terms, with consistently stagnating educational quality, as pointed out by later scholars. This situation was caused by an inadequate learning environment, by the lack of research on the principles and methods of adult pedagogy, and by the educators' weak professional backgrounds (Šerák, 2016, pp. 62–63).

In 1961, these pitfalls motivated the policy makers to include adult education in the *Government Plan of Science and Research Activities*. The centrally coordinated subsidy scheme determined the research areas eligible for government funding, with 5-year plans setting various thematic priorities (Váňa, 1961, pp. 1–2). For adult education, the *Plan* declared it necessary to study new forms and methods, develop the professional skills of adult educators, generate a theoretical framework for the emerging discipline of adult pedagogy, and build a foundation for further applied research in the different areas (Filozofická fakulta Univerzity Karlovy [FF UK], 1974, p. 4). Initially, most attention was paid to the basic theoretical background (the subject matter of adult pedagogy and its relation to general pedagogy) and to comparative studies (international and historical). Subsequently, the *Plan* tackled specific issues of adult education such as ways to modernise the educational process, adult education didactics, educational effectiveness, adult education psychology, etc.

Whereas non-formal adult education was the primary research focus in 1961–66, later five-year plans also reflected on school- and work-based education while increasingly integrating theoretical and methodological topics (Skalka, 1978b, p. 81). For the first time, the topics for basic research covered comprehensive theoretical work on the education of older adults and the elderly, thus laying the foundation for the future development of Czechoslovak gerontagogy (Šerák, 2016, p. 66).

The coordination of the research effort was entrusted to psychologist and educator František Hyhlík, head of the Pedagogy and Psychology Department of the newly established Institute of Popular Education and Journalism at Charles University. The effective implementation of the research effort had been hampered by the previous absence of an umbrella research institution with an exclusive focus on adult education. In spite of that, research implementation was consistently one of the *Government Plan*'s best organised and coordinated priority areas. As stated in the peer review of a priority area implementation report in 1974, "in our country these days, adult pedagogy is radically more successful than traditional pedagogy" (Kozel, 1974, pp. 139–140).

The outputs of the above priority areas include, for example: a set of studies gradually published by the Faculty of Arts, Charles University; the bulletin *Výchova a vzdělávání*

dospělých (*Adult Education*) presenting work-in-progress on an encyclopaedia of adult pedagogy or special comparative studies on adult pedagogy abroad; and above all, a series of synthetic works including some pioneering college textbooks and journal articles (FF UK, 1974, p. 101).

As a fundamental, albeit previously unintended, effect of these research activities, the concentration of scholars of diverse institutional and disciplinary backgrounds generated a synergy stimulating the development of not only adult pedagogy as a rehabilitated scientific discipline but subsequently also a new type of academic programme based on it, *Výchova a vzdělávání dospělých* (Adult Education; Škoda, 1996, p. 133). Members of the above research team became the core staff members of the newly established academic departments of adult education in Prague (Charles University), Olomouc (Palacký University), Bratislava (Comenius University), and Prešov (Pavol Jozef Šafárik University).

Previously, from the early 1960s, adult education issues had been tackled by programmes of popular education or higher education pedagogy at the faculties of philosophy or education of the above universities. Subsequent development went in the direction of the integrated study of various dimensions of adult education. This resulted in the gradual formation of academic programmes concerned exclusively with comprehensive aspects of adult education. However, the programmes were not labelled uniformly: depending on regional and institutional specifics, the names Popular Education, Adult Pedagogy, or Adult Education were used. It was under the latter name that the field was included on the official list of the subdisciplines of pedagogy in 1967 (Škoda, 1996, p. 134), yet it took another seven years to implement a Ministry of Education plan and develop a somewhat uniform concept of the programme.

During that time, the foundations of two competing streams of andragogical thought were laid that would fully manifest themselves in the new social context after the 1989 revolution. They were based in the different orientations of the respective academic institutions.

From 1962, the discipline's development was strongly driven by the Department of Pedagogy and Psychology, Institute of Popular Education and Journalism, Charles University in Prague (formerly Institute of Popular Education and Journalism), where one of the new adult education programmes was launched. In 1972, the department was transformed into the Department of Adult Education and transferred to the Faculty of Arts, Charles University, where it has been based ever since (now under the name Department of Adult Education and Personnel Management). From its inception, the department was characterised by a more reduced and concentrated concept of adult pedagogy/andragogy, often referred to as the education-oriented concept. Here, andragogy is viewed as a "scientific discipline and academic programme focusing on all aspects of adult education and learning" (Beneš, 2014, p. 11), i.e. studying the subject matter adult education in all its forms, contexts, and environments (Kopecký, 2013, p. 34), not only at the institutional and intentional levels but also as part of everyday life (the realms of work, citizenship, self-actualisation, etc.). While this concept is now labelled "andragogy", it is in fact closer

to the contemporary European mainstream research on adult learning and education. The latter is defined by its field as the core of its identity, but does not strive for its own methodology, among other things (see Fejes et al., 2022, p. 121). Given this foundation and its primary focus on the content and organisational/methodological aspects of adult education, the concept is somewhat related to pedagogical paradigms and partly follows the same trajectory as pedagogy did in the past on its way from philosophy to social science.

The alternative concept of adult education studies is represented by the Pedagogy Department of the Faculty of Arts, Palacký University Olomouc, and its dual-major programme of Sociology/Adult Education launched in the 1969/70 academic year (Klega, 1981, p. 9). From its very beginning, the programme accentuated sociological perspectives on adult education (focusing e.g. on the context of social change, the social functions of adult education, or sociological theory). However, it was not until the 1975/76 academic year that Palacký University stabilised its Adult Education programme, and the eponymous new department was only separated from the Pedagogy Department in 1979 (Klega, 1981, p. 9).

ADULT PEDAGOGY IN THE 1970S AND 1980S

The evolution of the theory and practice of adult education outlined above was negatively affected by the 1968 Warsaw Pact invasion of Czechoslovakia. Referred to as the Normalisation, the renewed ideological pressure of the following two decades resulted in the shutting down of many academic institutions and dismissals of countless professionals, who often had to find work in the manufacturing sector. Research in some areas was severely restricted or outright discontinued. Adult education programmes became fundamentally indoctrinated and deformed, a fact that almost resulted in their dissolution after the 1989 revolution (see below).

In spite of the above, the 1970s and 1980s were marked by a quantitative growth of academic publications on selected areas of adult education. In 1968, the European Centre for Leisure and Education was established in Prague as a joint venture of UNESCO and the Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences. It was tasked with coordinating and documenting research in the field of leisure with special respect to its educational aspects. Its research reports were published in the periodical *Bulletin for Sociology of Leisure, Education and Culture*.

At the Czech Ministry of Education, detailed review articles on the outcomes of ministerial research activities were published by the Adult Education Commission in its bulletins. Government education policy was increasingly shaped by research evidence on the changing status and significance of the field (Škoda, 1985, p. 50). Adult education was gradually incorporated into government policy, as evidenced by a number of policy documents. It became the dominant perspective that lifelong education is important for the development of a "socialist society" and adult education forms an integral part of the country's educational system. There were increasing calls for creating the conditions for workforce mobility and retraining in the context of a changing work environment, technological development, and skills obsolescence.

These strategies immediately shaped the nature of adult education research as well as the concept of academic programmes in the field. In 1976, expert committees of Czech and Slovak state ministries of education recommended more differentiated cultivation of college-educated professionals in line with policy documents and changing educational realities. As a result, the academic programmes of Popular Education were discontinued while two new programmes were created to better reflect the current state of adult education: *theory of culture* for non-formal adult education (categorised as an arts discipline) and *adult education* for school- and work-based adult education (categorised as a pedagogical discipline; Gallo, 1986, p. 8).

Consistent political pressure was applied on instruction in both types of programmes. The activities of academic departments were deformed by increasing demand for providing college instruction to screened cadres from the different ministries and priority organisations. This was mostly the case of part-time education; the domain of work-based education was generally less ideologised, with businesses striving to secure practically oriented instruction for their employees. In contrast, ideological deformation affected the domains of non-formal and civic education the most (Vymazal, 2002, pp. 100–101).

The above thesis, namely that vocational education and training were relatively less ideologised than other segments of adult education, is also supported by an abundance of outputs produced by a network of company-based educational institutions, such as guidelines, research studies, and policies. These institutions date back to the 1950s, when many were formed with a view to educating qualified workers in line with industry demands, all in the context of the post-war economic reconstruction, technological development, a changing workforce structure, and the need to develop the skills of the emerging working class.

A later piece of legislation codified two types of company-based providers of vocational education (Institutes) and training (Technical Schools). A subsequent government decree provided for a third type, namely Company-Based Work Schools. Adult education was primarily valued for its effects on qualifications, integration, and humanisation. Emphasis was placed on self-teaching instead of group instruction. The 1980s saw the experimental introduction of vocational self-teaching centres, i.e. skills-oriented educational institutions that individualised the learning process by providing a repertoire of learning aids (professional literature, tape recordings, educational motion pictures, computers, etc.; see Livečka, 1984, pp. 141–143).

The abundance of course materials disseminated demonstrates that the practice was highly up-to-date and compatible with international evidence, as exemplified by ICT-supported instruction, programmed learning, effective self-directed learning, etc. Ministerial, industry-wide and company-based institutes produced numerous scholarly publications; the above-mentioned government scheme of basic research released periodical bulletins for its different priority areas; and there were publications by the Socialist Academy of the Czech Socialist Republic (a leading non-formal adult education institution at the time);

etc. The country's labour union federation supported activities to develop workers' skills and implement the decisions of political leadership, as well as education in the aesthetic, cultural, sports, and other domains (Neužil, 1975, pp. 41–45).

The communist regime entered a slow liberalisation process in the mid-1980s. There were efforts to reform the centrally planned economy and make society more democratic. This was reflected in the intensification of diverse educational activities. To bring down the curtain on the normalisation era, the international conference *Current Priorities in Adult Education* was held under the auspices of the Prague academic department in April 1989. The participation of scholars from the USA, Canada, the UK, Austria, Germany, Sweden, and Finland foreshadowed the transformations to come.

THE 1990S AS A TURN AND AN ATTEMPTED RETURN – BUT WHERE?

Associated with radical changes in politics, the economy, and beyond, the year 1989 also proved to be a turning point in education and research. After all, it was college students who played a decisive role at the outset of the Velvet Revolution.

Given their disproportionate ideological deformation, the social sciences and humanities (e.g. philosophy, sociology) were affected even more fundamentally than other disciplines (engineering). The academic departments of adult education were no exception among the social sciences.

The narrative of return was typical of the early 1990s developments. It was employed both at the rhetoric level (most emblematically in the notion of returning to Europe with its democracy and prosperity) and at the level of everyday life, for example, when the academics who had been dismissed during the normalisation era rejoined their former teams.

Underlying the narrative was a mix of rationales that can be subsumed under Habermas' term rectifying (*nachholende*) revolution (according to Jeffries, 2022, p. 376): to overcome the discredited heritage of ideological leadership, to correct some of the injustices suffered by the previously discriminated academics, to increase the quality of work, or to catch up with the international state of the art. In other words, there was a collective attempt to overcome the baggage of the past and return to a seemingly natural trajectory.

Likely also at play was a sense of moral blame, albeit not necessarily one targeted at specific people. To blame was rather the discipline of adult education and its problematic close association with the old regime, and some were suggesting to outright remove the discredited discipline from universities. Others hoped for a radical turn to re-legitimise adult education and preserve the field by providing it with a new meaning and impetus for development. Thus the concept of *andragogy* was introduced as the embodiment of a symbolic turn in both strategy and content. It was Vladimír Jochmann who introduced the concept in the Czech context and gathered support for it (Šimek, 2004, p. 145).

However, the story of a rectifying revolution in Czech andragogy was marked by at least two paradoxes. First, there is a disconnect between, on the one hand, the value-based

concepts of andragogy presented by Pöggeler, Hanselmann, or Ten Have, and on the other hand, the concept that gained traction in Czechoslovakia and its successor country, the Czech Republic. The Western European approaches of the 1950s to 1970s that had helped introduce andragogy in the academia were characterised by relatively strong normative orientations (Loeng, 2010, pp. 68–72, 76). The main founding fathers of post-WWII Western European andragogy formulated its goals not only as a science, a research orientation, or a study programme, but also more practically and normatively, treating andragogy as a field supporting adults and their concrete value orientations. Pöggeler (1971) emphasised the religious role of adult education, he and Hanselmann (Škoda, 1996, p. 94) highlighted the need to deal with the key questions of the meaning of human life and rejected the field's religious and political neutrality, and Hanselmann even considered religious faith to be an important trait of an adult educator (Matulčík, 2004, p. 84). In contrast, the worldview that shaped Ten Have's approach to andragogy was not religious but radically political and, more specifically, social democratic (Matulčík, 2004, p. 98).

In the post-revolutionary Czech society, political and economic liberalism or neoliberalism, as a set of assumptions about a free individual and his/her task to adapt to societal demands while maximising his/her utility, became the mainstream perspective on the individual and society. The Czech version of andragogy was no exception, given the almost complete absence of social ethics in its foundation. The 1990s were marked by andragogy's pragmatic orientation towards the domain of work and human resources development. This (seemingly) apolitical strategy was strongly driven by the demands of a changing labour market.

Even discussions of non-vocational adult education were marked by the notion of a universal, non-contextualised individual. While focus on the microsocial level was the norm, social/societal developments were mentioned rarely and only as a distant framework providing new stimuli for education, one that does not need to be problematised. Therefore, the first paradox observed can be referred to as the paradox of values.

The second paradox can be called the paradox of obsolescence. The nationwide effort to catch up with the West, which was generally seen as the role model, motivated Czech andragogy to adopt approaches that had been more or less abandoned at the time. Here, perhaps more poignant than Heraclitus' saying that "you cannot step into the same river twice" is Cratylus' reply "nor once either" – because the river changes in the time between assuming one's intent and acting on it. Metaphors aside, the Czech effort to introduce andragogy as an umbrella concept for evidence-based adult education was inspired by ambitions that eventually proved to be too bold and thus unrealistic. This was not due to the field's focus on the specifics of adult individuals[3] but rather to the goal of building a "strong" version of an independent scientific discipline.

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3   After 1989, the Czech scholarly community departed from the previous era's belief that adults can be "brought up" in terms of direct formation of character and attitudes, which clearly corresponds with the beliefs of Pöggeler and indirectly also Knowles.

By "strong" we refer not only to the discipline's intended comprehensive coverage of adult education but also to its ambition of building a system of knowledge underlying various activities to effectively guide an adult individual through life and support all aspects of his/her development (typically Hanselmann and Ten Have). Such knowledge should serve not only education but also counselling and some elements of therapy, social work, and intervention (Matulčík, 2004, p. 118). The ambition for andragogy to guide the adult through his/her life was not only bold but, above all, beyond the reach of the social sciences. Therefore, the contemporary field sees the *research* of adult *learning* as an interdisciplinary and pluralistic field (Fejes & Nicoll, 2013; Fejes & Nylander, 2019).

However critical one can be of the "strong" notion of andragogy as an independent discipline, it still a source of ideas of interest to today's scholars. Above all, adult education was viewed as deserving a systematic approach – worth of observation in all its forms as a diversified but at the same time distinct phenomenon of social relevance. To understand it requires more than an eclectic erudition relying here on sociology, there on psychology, anthropology, or economics. In other words, one needs long-term reflection on adult education as a whole.

ON THE WAY TO ANDRAGOGY AND BEYOND (FROM 1990 TO THE PRESENT)

In the 1990s and 2000s, it was the Department of Sociology and Andragogy at Palacký University that led the way of andragogy as a discipline and simultaneously a set of interventions. This was the underlying idea of the concept of *integral andragogy,* which became the long-term foundation of the Department's teaching and research activities and also inspired some other universities, especially in Slovakia. Informed by the works of German-language authors (mainly Hanselmann), Ten Have, and also Polish authors like Radlińska, Wroczyńsky or Turos, it was the above-mentioned Vladimír Jochmann who elaborated the concept (Šimek & Dopita, 2018, pp. 247–248).

The keyword *integral* referred to multiple intentions, namely to include and integrate four main areas: adult education, personnel management, social work, and cultural work (Šimek, 2004, p. 145). The ambition was to go beyond a 'mere' scientific discipline and provide tools for the mobilisation and management of human resources. Integral andragogy was presented as a theory and practice of leadership in the broadest sense of the term, as a science of the adult individual's adaptation to social institutions in its educative dimension (Jochmann, 1992, p. 21). Additional emphasis was placed on the individual's social ties and ability to adapt to social change, with sociology providing an important basis of the concept. Although the adult individual is the focus of integral andragogy, attention is also paid to other stages of the lifecycle and the ways to develop one's ability to cope with difficult situations at different ages (Šimek, 2004, pp. 146–149).

Integral andragogy was not embraced by Charles University as the other centre of 1990s Czech andragogy, whose perspective was more conventional in a sense (see above). At the same time, both institutions emphasised andragogy as an independent discipline, with

clear boundaries dividing it from pedagogy and other fields, one capable of formulating its own original theories and methodology.

And precisely the discipline's high ambition may have been one of the reasons why the effort to legitimise Czech andragogy as a full-fledged independent discipline became its central theme in the 1990s. This was at least partly inevitable, as further use of older Czech publications was precluded by their severe limitations. More specifically, it was necessary to revisit the fundamental questions of the area we refer to as general andragogy or andragogical theory: how adults are defined, where and why they get their education, or what kind of contents, forms, and benefits to adult education there are. Additional priority areas included didactics in adult education and education policy at the level of national government and international organisations, with their concepts of lifelong education and learning.[4]

The efforts in these directions were not matched by a significant volume of empirical research. This brings us to another paradox: Czech andragogy as a scientific discipline was founded predominantly in a top-down manner: there was a general argument about its tasks and instruments but also a persistent deficit of empirical research on concrete forms of adult learning and education.

Among other factors, the deficit was caused by the academic departments' primary instructional orientation. A relatively strong influx of andragogy students proved to be an ambiguous factor for academic programmes. On the one hand, the general public showed strong interest in the field and viewed it as promising; on the other hand, the ensuing radical massification of teaching made it difficult to uphold the classic Humboldtian ideal of unity in teaching and research. Opportunities for more ambitious research goals were further undercut by the composition of academic departments, which were typically understaffed and partly recruited among adult education practitioners oriented towards "knowledge-how" rather than "knowledge-that". An entire study would be needed to encompass the debate on the massification of Czech college education in relation to andragogy (for more details, see Poláchová Vašťatková & Dopita, 2019).

The popular demand for academic programmes in adult education had another important effect. It helped spark the formerly pedagogically oriented departments' interest in adding adult education and andragogy to their portfolios. The fact that the formerly institution-centred academic and public debate on education shifted towards lifelong learning worked in the same direction.

The development of empirical (mostly quantitative) research in adult education was boosted by new academic departments entering the stage (especially the Masaryk University in

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4   To better characterise the founding era of Czech andragogy, a brief note on the way international influences were mediated by specific leaders is necessary. Franz Pöggeler made repeated guest appearances in Prague; Walter Leirman (Leuven University) was also actively interested in the Czech discipline; Jindra Kulich (Vancouver University), a Czech expatriate based in Canada, taught at several universities (especially in Olomouc); and the 1990s saw the return of Milan Beneš (Freie Universiät Berlin), a long-term German expatriate of the younger generation.

Brno) but also by factors like internationalisation, generational changes in academic staff, or the political demand for expertise.

In the middle of the last decade, then, it could be observed that Czech adult learning research had been able to encompass most of the key topics of European research in the field, as represented by the different European Society for Research on the Education of Adults (ESREA) Networks (Dopita, 2015, pp. 28–29). Yet questions about the extent, quality, and impact of that research remain unanswered (Poláchová Vaštatková & Dopita, 2017).

Adult education programmes can be studied at five public universities in the Czech Republic. All the programmes have the word andragogy in their titles. At the Charles University (Prague), there are programmes integrating andragogy with personnel management (Faculty of Arts, bachelor's degree (BA) and master's degree (MA) levels) and andragogy with educational management (Faculty of Education, MA level). At the Palacký University (Olomouc, Faculty of Arts), andragogy can be studied with an orientation towards human resource development or as a dual-major programme with sociology (at the BA level) or as single-major programmes (at the MA and Ph.D. levels). The Masaryk University (Brno) offers MA and Ph.D. programmes at its Faculty of Arts. A BA programme is organised by the University of Ostrava (Faculty of Education). Until recently, the Tomáš Baťa University in Zlín offered a BA programme in personnel management in NGOs.

All in all, there is a clear long-term tendency in the Czech context to use the concept of andragogy in increasingly habitual ways, out of inertia. To put it in more flattering terms, andragogy has become a traditional concept. The general debate on the discipline's possibilities and position within the social sciences has been fading. Instead of debating the mission of a specific discipline as a whole, its theories, and more importantly, instead of producing a set of tools to manage adult education in its broad sense, increasing attention has been paid to particular topics and issues of adult learning and related phenomena.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The paper has identified and described the main stages of the development of Czech adult education practice and the different academic approaches to adult education from the end of the Second World War to the present. Czech academia consistently responded to existing social conditions and forms of adult education practice, and it also debated alternative conceptualisations of adult education while reflecting international debate.

The Interwar period before the emergence of college programmes in adult education was characterised by an advanced adult education practice and the intermittent attention of intellectuals. The post-WWII period only saw short-term efforts to develop adult education research and it was not until the 1960s that such efforts strengthened. In a discontinuous development, the 1970s and 1980s stage was marked by disparate advances in adult education practice. In view of the state of the academia, among other things, only partial achievements were made in the context of overall stagnation. The social transformation of

the late 20th century brought new hope. The stage of the last three decades started with a turn to andragogy as an ambitious but inconsistent project. Czech authors identified with the concept to effect a symbolic and thematic turn while bolstering it (selectively) with Western inspirations. Their high ambition to form both an independent discipline and a set of techniques to shape the practice proved unrealistic and, as a result, in the Czech context, the concept of *andragogy* has increasingly become a synonym of all that is represented by the international term *adult learning and education.* This is bringing the field – again paradoxically – to meeting the 1990s goal of forming a standard social scientific discipline. The concept of andragogy can be expected to continue to be used for some time, probably in the long term. So far, there has been no attempt to argue for replacing it, let alone to foster a debate on such a proposal. The question is to what extent the concept of andragogy has become a "shell institution", one whose actual content only partially meets the original expectations of the 1990s. However, the current situation is a result of a silent, relatively long and perhaps even natural evolution, rather than a kind of revolution. We have thus witnessed a long-expected convergence (actual, rather than merely terminological) between Czech and international research based on their orientation toward specific areas of the diverse and dynamic realities of adult learning and education. In other words, the real content of the term andragogy in the contemporary Czech context is consistent with what the global mainstream refers to as adult learning and education.

Funding

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Július Matulčík

DEVELOPMENT AND CURRENT STATUS OF ANDRAGOGY IN SLOVAKIA

ABSTRACT

The paper deals with the origin and development of andragogy in Slovakia. Its aim is to present the constitution, development, and system of andragogy in Slovakia by means of a historical analysis and based on that analysis, the discovery, recognition, and interpretation of facts from the scientific works of the most important representatives of andragogy. The concept of andragogy as an integral part of the educational sciences began to take shape in Slovakia in the 1990s in the new social and political conditions. This process was based both on the traditions of adult education in Slovakia and on the theoretical foundations of adult pedagogy, mainly the works of foreign representatives of andragogy. The paper presents and discusses the systematisation of andragogy, the content definition of general andragogy, and the basic and applied disciplines of andragogy. Contemporary Slovak andragogy presents a conceptually and substantively elaborated theory of adult education.

Keywords: *adult education, lifelong learning, adult pedagogy, andragogy, system of andragogical sciences*

RAZVOJ IN STANJE ANDRAGOGIKE NA SLOVAŠKEM – POVZETEK

Članek obravnava začetek in razvoj andragogike na Slovaškem. Cilj članka je predstaviti vzpostavitev, razvoj in sistem andragogike na Slovaškem na podlagi zgodovinske analize, na tej podlagi pa odkriti, prepoznati in interpretirati podatke iz znanstvenih del najpomembnejših predstavnikov andragogike. Koncept andragogike kot integralni del izobraževalnih znanosti se je na Slovaškem začel oblikovati v devetdesetih letih prejšnjega stoletja v novih družbenih in političnih razmerah. Ta proces je izhajal tako iz tradicije izobraževanja odraslih na Slovaškem kot tudi iz teoretičnih temeljev pedagogike odraslih, večinoma iz del tujih predstavnikov andragogike. Članek razpravlja o sistemizaciji andragogike, opredelitvi vsebine splošne andragogike ter o osnovnih in aplikativnih disciplinah andragogike. Sodobna slovaška andragogika predstavlja konceptualno in vsebinsko razčlenjeno teorijo izobraževanja odraslih.

Ključne besede: *izobraževanje odraslih, vseživljenjsko učenje, pedagogika odraslih, andragogika, sistem andragoških znanosti*

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INTRODUCTION

In the fourth part of his work *De rerum humanarum emendatione consultationis catholicae, Pampaedia*, Komenský (1966) defined comprehensive education as the universal education of the entire humankind that should help people to achieve the highest perfection possible. Komenský's demand was to make universal education available to everyone – *omnes, in entirety – omnia*, and for everyone to be *comprehensively – omnino* educated. This extraordinary demand to meet one of the elementary human rights is most relevant even today and means applying democratic principles when it comes to access to any kind of education for everyone, throughout life. Komenský's (1992) statement: "Any age is earmarked for learning and people have been given the same limits both for life and education" (p. 88) is an apt expression of the idea of lifelong education. However, this idea only began to be applied to a greater extent in the second half of the 20th century. For example, 1970 was declared *the year of lifelong education* by the General Assembly of the United Nations Organization.

Adult education holds an important position in the concept of lifelong education as its organic part. The requirement that adult education be understood as an essential part of the system of lifelong education first appeared during the *third world conference on adult education* (CONFINTEA III) in Tokyo in 1972. Moreover, the conference recommended that adult education be given adequate academic recognition, i.e. develop as a university study and scientific field (UNESCO, 1972, pp. 39–58). Due to the significant political changes in Europe in the late 1980s, the growing importance of adult education as part of lifelong education and training led to the intensive development and expansion of the theory of adult education – andragogy, particularly in Central and Eastern Europe, including Slovakia.

The aim of the paper is to present and discuss the constitution, development, and system of andragogy in Slovakia. For this purpose, two main research questions are addressed: How was Slovak andragogy formed? How and through the work of which prominent Slovak authors was the system of andragogy and its disciplines created? On the basis of the research questions, using the historical research method (Matulčík, 1998) and analysing the scientific works of the most prominent representatives of Slovak andragogy, the paper focuses on the historical, theoretical, and international background of the constitution of Slovak andragogy, its understanding, systematisation, and content definition of the key theoretical and applied disciplines.

STARTING POINTS OF SLOVAK ANDRAGOGY

The theory and practice of adult education have a complex history of development in Slovakia.

From a terminological point of view, several terms were used in the past, for example, *public education* (today viewed mostly from the historical point of view), *adult training and education, adult education, adult pedagogy*. As stated in *Výchova a vzdelávanie dospelých:*

Andragogika (Ďurič et al., 2000), a terminological and explanatory dictionary, the state of terminological flexibility and creative search lasted until the end of the 1980s. A significant role in this search was played by the periodically published *Osvetový zborník* (People's Education Miscellany), which later transformed into the *Osveta* journal, subtitled *Časopis pre otázky teórie kultúry a výchovy dospelých* (Journal of Cultural Theory and Adult Education Issues). For a long time, this remained the only professional journal of its kind in all of Czechoslovakia. After it folded, its role was partly taken over by *Osvetová práca* (Tasks of Public Education), today the *Národná osveta* (Public Education) journal.

The development of mainly extracurricular adult education and training depended to a great extent on the involvement of the Institute of Public Education and the Research Institute of Culture and Public Opinion. It was through their effort that in the 1970s and 1980s a whole range of significant theoretical studies and publications were published, of which many were the outcome of important research programmes (e.g. *System of Adult Education and Training: Final Studies From the Completion of the State Scientific Research Task*; Institute of Public Education & the Research Institute of Culture and Public Opinion, 1972).

The most prominent authors whose works on general adult pedagogy, the history of adult education and training, didactics, and the theory of adult education contributed significantly to the formation of Slovak adult pedagogy as an autonomous branch of science cultivated within the general theory of education – general pedagogy – were Š. Pasiar, P. Paška, J. Perhács, M. Tuma, and M. Cirbes, among others.

In the changed circumstances of the 1990s (the fall of the totalitarian regime and the establishment of democracy after the first free elections in June 1990), a new concept of the theory of adult education, unencumbered by ideology, started to form. After taking into account the new developments in the theory and practice of adult education and training both abroad and in Slovakia, the term andragogy proved to be the most suitable.

The term andragogy was first systemised within "anthropogogy" and its use was first justified in Slovakia by Š. Švec (1988). He based it on the medical naming and gnoseological-praxeological model (paediatrics – general medicine – geriatrics). Švec included pedagogy, andragogy, and geragogy in anthropogogy. We can agree with C. Határ's (2011) opinion that from a methodological point of view and contrary to pedagogy and andragogy, in Slovak conditions geragogy has not achieved the status of an autonomous science yet. It has developed principally within (social) andragogy and gerontology.

The growing interest in andragogy or the andragogical concept of the theory of adult education in Slovakia has not resulted merely from the previous lack of knowledge on andragogy or its past biased criticism stemming from ideology (e.g. see the entry "andragogika" in *Pedagogická encyklopédia Slovenska 1*; Pavlík, 1984). It reflected the needs of social practice, the growing need for specific ways of solving the problems of adult people within the context of the pressing needs of lifelong education (Prusáková, 1996).

A crucial role in creating the Slovak concept of andragogy, still within the Czechoslovak Republic (Czecho-Slovakia), was played by the annual meetings of the heads of departments of adult education (later andragogy) held in the early 1990s. It should be said that in Czecho-Slovakia, the theory of adult education developed relatively autonomously in both the Czech and the Slovak Federal Republic. The meetings of the departments after 1989 on the direction of the discipline (adult education – andragogy) and the field of study of the discipline (adult education – andragogy) were of a discussion character. The acceptance and creation of the concept of andragogy was based on specific theoretical backgrounds both in the Czech Republic and in the Slovak Republic as well as on the specific conditions of the departments. The acceptance of the concept of andragogy was fully within the remit of the individual departments, as can be seen from the fact that the departments did not approve it at the same time. The meeting venues alternated among the Faculties of Arts of Charles University in Prague, Palacký University in Olomouc, Comenius University in Bratislava, and the University of Prešov in Prešov. They dealt with issues concerning the further development of the theory of adult education and the field of studies as such at individual faculties. A new term, andragogy, to denote the science of adult education was proposed by Vladimír Jochmann of Palacký University and subsequently accepted during the very first meeting in 1989 (Matulčík, 2004, p. 118).

Vladimír Jochmann (1992) justifies in three points the use of the new term to name the science on adult education and training:

1. By combining H. Hanselmann's social-andragogical and therapeutic perception of andragogy with F. Pöggeler's didactically understood concept of andragogy, and taking into account the orientation of andragogy to cultural and socio-educational work in the works of Polish authors R. Wroczyñski and L. Turos, the term andragogy would cover what is known in the world as "adult education", "social work" (social adult pedagogy) and "cultural work" (cultural-educational work).
2. The term andragogy is not so encumbered by the traditional understanding of education, which opens up the way to a broader understanding of education as a social function.
3. The terminological separation of adult education and training from pedagogy puts emphasis on the specifics of adult education, the difference in methods and in the overall approach to working with adults in contrast to working with children and young adults.

However, Jochmann did not see the separation of andragogy from pedagogy as complete detachment. He perceived them as two relatively independent branches within one science on education. Jochmann (1992) defines andragogy as a typical science, anthropological in character, which is based on two other anthropological sciences – sociology and psychology. He sees andragogy as an empirical-theoretical science on adult education that studies adult education as one of the basic social functions in all its elements and aspects. Jochmann's integral andragogy became the basis for creating the specific concepts

of andragogy in the Czech and Slovak Republics. These were determined by the specifics and differences in the conditions, needs, and staff members of respective departments.

In terms of creating and developing the andragogical concept, the two academic workplaces that contributed most to the rise of andragogy in Slovakia in the 1990s were the Department of Andragogy at the Faculty of Arts, Comenius University, and the Department of Social Work and Andragogy at the Faculty of Arts, University of Prešov.

THE SLOVAK CONCEPT OF ANDRAGOGY, ITS UNDERSTANDING AND SYSTEM

Andragogy in Slovakia and the perspectives of its development as a newly perceived scientific and study field was first introduced by V. Prusáková (1996). According to her, the concept of andragogy is much broader than the concept of adult pedagogy. Prusáková (2005) defines andragogy as the "science on educating an adult human being that deals with the intentional socialisation of adults, with helping adult people in all areas of life (professional life, leisure time, social security)" (p. 8). In this context, the subject of andragogy covers adult education, adult training and learning, and adult counselling. Research into adult training and education requires an interdisciplinary approach, however, the subject of research does not comprise psychological or sociological issues but andragogical ones (Prusáková, 2005).

After adopting the systemisation of andragogy of its significant representatives abroad (e.g. Jochmann, 1992; Pöggeler, 1974; Samolovčev, 1963; Savicević, 1991; Turos, 1993) and following the theoretical bases of the systemisation of andragogy and adult pedagogy in Slovakia, the systemisation of andragogy was established on the principles of the basic areas of human life – profession, leisure time, and social security (Prusáková, 2005). The system of andragogy, according to Prusáková (2005, p. 16), comprises of (1) *general – systematic andragogy* with theoretical branches from:
- the history of adult education and andragogical thinking,
- andragogical didactics,
- the theory of adult formation,
- comparative andragogy,

and (2) *applied disciplines* encompassing:
- professional andragogy,
- social andragogy, and
- cultural-educational andragogy.

A different, broader structure of the system of andragogy was later presented by C. Határ (2011). He classified the branches of andragogy into three groups: basic, border, and applied. In this structure, both the theoretical and methodological bases that take into account the typical integrative and interdisciplinary character of andragogy, and reflection of andragogical practice, its needs and specifics, show themselves in the form of the border and applied andragogical branches (see Figure 1).

Figure 1
System of andragogy
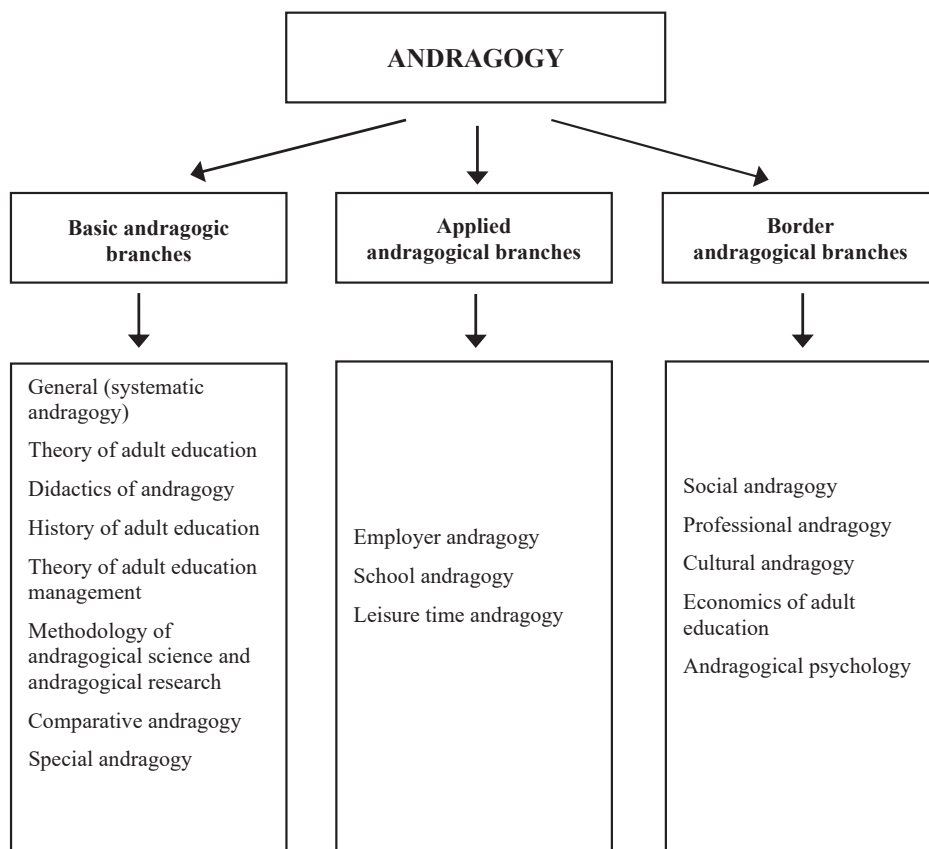
Note. Adapted from "Geragogika – tretí pilier výchovovedy" by C. Határ, 2011, *Lifelong Learning – celoživotní vzdělávání, 1*(1), 87.

From the point of view of the importance, state and development status, as well as the importance for practical use, *general – systematic andragogy*, *history of adult education*, *adult didactics*, *theory of adult formation, comparative andragogy, professional, social and cultural and educational andragogy*, or *andragogical psychology* can be considered to be the most important andragogical branches at present. Within the ones already established, a lot of other branches developed further, e.g. *geragogy, andragogical counselling, management of adult education*, *special andragogy*, etc. Border branches, e.g. *andragogical psychology*, *sociology of adult education*, etc. are also of special significance for the development of andragogy.

In the following, we further elaborate on the meaning of all basic and applied andragogical branches. As we have indicated, these are the key disciplines most frequently mentioned in the systematisation of andragogy.

General – systematic andragogy

General – systematic andragogy was first defined by V. Prusáková in 2005. She justified the use of the term "systematic andragogy" as one that, in her opinion, fits better with the essence of striving for the universality of the system of andragogical thinking (Prusáková, 2005). From the point of view of the development of andragogical science and practice, systemic understanding of andragogical phenomena and processes is purposeful and enlightening. The system allows relations to be found and relations allow for finding causes and effects. It is possible to see where regularity and stability can be expected on the one hand, and where dynamics and transformations are to be sought on the other. Systematic andragogy comprises the most general principles, conditions and research procedures. At its core are the methodological foundations and defined general goals of andragogical thinking (Prusáková, 2005, p. 9). Apart from representing the whole concept of andragogical theory, systematic andragogy also stands for the general branch of science that forms its basis, the core. In this sense, systematic andragogy deals with the subject of andragogy, its general characterisation, its structure. It defines the most general research principles, conditions, methods, and cognitive goals, and provides the theoretical basis. Systematic andragogy also clarifies the basic concepts and the importance of the system to help understand the phenomena and processes of adult education, training, self-education, self-training and self-improvement (Prusáková, 2005, p. 17).

Moreover, general – systematic andragogy also comprises the issues of terminology, issues of definition and interpretation of andragogical terms and concepts. Among the authors who were first to address the issue of terminology are Š. Švec (2002, 2008), J. Matulčík (2004), and V. Prusáková (2005). It follows from the definition of general – systematic andragogy that it also includes andragogical methodology which is often listed in the system of educational sciences as part of the methodology of sciences on education.

General – systemic andragogy is also included in the system of branches of andragogy by Š. Švec (2000a). He defines it as a branch studying social-philosophical frameworks of adult education and learning, the goals of education, the possibilities and needs, theoretical concepts of andragogy, and the position of adults within the process of education and learning.

To sum up, both terms, systematic and general andragogy, are used in Slovakia, while the content definition is basically the same. The term systematic andragogy emphasises the systematic grasp of andragogical phenomena and processes both from the point of view of andragogical theory and from the point of view of andragogical practice.

History of adult education and andragogical thinking

The history of adult education and andragogical thinking deals with the genesis and development of andragogical theory, methodology, and andragogical institutions. It has both general and specific laws of development. Its task is to uncover historical patterns of adult education development on the national and international (world) levels, as well as

those in the histories of organisations and institutions operating during different stages of social development (Ďurič et al., 2000). It uncovers social-economic, cultural and civilizational contexts of the development of adult education. The history of adult education must not be based just on simple description of phenomena, processes, institutions or personages (their life and views). The importance of this scientific field lies in the pursuit of their deeper and more complex analysis that would take into account the causality of the monitored phenomena by applying the historical approach. Thus, the approximation and evaluation of the contribution of important personages in adult education theory and practice represent an important part of the history of adult education and andragogical thinking. The history of the theory and practice of adult education has as a field been significantly enriched by the outcome of the scientific project entitled *Rola osobnosti v rozvoji teórie edukácie dospelých* (The Role of Personality in Developing the Theory of Adult Education), which took place in 2016–2018. The results of the project were published in *Acta andragogica* 5–7 (2017, 2018, 2020), in which 38 prominent personalities of world, Czech, and Slovak andragogy were presented.

Andragogical didactics

Andragogical didactics, also *andro-didactics* or *adult didactics* is an adult teaching-oriented theory of adult education. It deals with the goals, contents, methods, forms, and means of adult education. Based on empirical research, it studies educational processes, their laws. On the basis of research into educational processes in various educational environments, it defines the general principles of the didactic transformation of contents and didactic performance or of educational methodology (Prusáková, 2005). The foundations of andragogical didactics were laid by the works of Milan Cirbes (1989) and Miroslav Tuma (1987, 1990). M. Cirbes's (1989) monograph *Didaktika dospelých* (Didactics of Adults) was the first basal professional publication in the sphere of the theory of adult education. The author's claim that the success of the didactic process depends principally on its organisation by a teacher, as well as on knowing the goal, the subject matter, the principles and didactic methods as the most important means of achieving the educational goals applies fully even today. M. Tuma's (1987) monograph *Metódy výchovy a vzdelávania dospelých* (Methods of Adult Education and Training), with Cirbes's *Didaktika dospelých* (Didactics of Adults), is the first publication specifically dedicated to the issue of the methods of adult education based on the broader starting points of the theory of systems, synergy, communicational processes and informatisation. The classification methods take into account the division according to thought processes, the issues of rationalisation, optimalisation, and creativity within the process of adult education. The author was the first in Slovak professional literature to show the division of methods according to the degree of innovation and the trends in improving the methods. M. Tuma's (1990) more recent publication, the monograph *Moderné metódy vzdelávania* (Modern Methods of Education), takes into account the newest trends in the methods of adult education, while J. Kalnický's (1994) *Progresívna andragogika – androdidaktika (Progressive Andragogy – Androdidactics) was the first publication* on adult education didactics after andragogy had become firmly established in Slovakia.

The issue of the educational impact of an adult educator, the issues of a teacher's personality and their competences represent a special, very important part of didactics. The determinants of a teacher's professional growth within the context of the quality of adult education was the focus of the publication *Andragogický rozvoj lektora* by M. Krystoň and V. Prusáková (2015) and their colleagues.

Theory of adult formation

The theory of adult formation examines the educational process of forming a person's personality, their self-formation and self-creation within social groups and communities. To better know the contents of adult education means to examine human personality more accurately and partially from the point of formation; to examine the goals of formation and its basic elements, with special emphasis on individual parts of formation which are distinguished by their specifics while at the same time they create an integrated unit (Perhács & Paška, 1995). Thus, the subject of the theory of adult formation comprises adult formation and adult self-formation, its goals, conditions, process of formation, its dynamics and outcomes. The process of exploring the personality of an adult person from the perspective of the effect of educational agents, goals, forms and methods of formation, more particularly within the context of the issue of possibilities of bringing up adult people is an important area of the theory of adult formation. The most important author of several publications on the theory of adult formation is Ján Perhács (1982, 1986; Perhács & Paška, 1995), the author of such publications as *Vybrané kapitoly z teórie výchovy dospelých* (Selected Topics From the Theory of Adult Education), *Základy teórie výchovy dospelých* (Basics in the Theory of Adult Education), or *Dospelý človek v procese výchovy* (Adults Within Educational Processes).

J. Perhács's (1996) significant achievement was pointing out the relationship between the theory of formation and social andragogy.

Comparative andragogy

Comparative andragogy was established in Slovakia on the foundations of comparative pedagogy. Comparative andragogy began to be constituted as an independent branch on the instigation of Milan Krankus's (1987) study *K problematike porovnávacích výskumov výchovy a vzdelávania dospelých* (On the Issues of Adult Education Comparative Research), which dealt with some terminological and methodological issues. More works targeted at comparative research in adult education, including the methods of comparative research were published in the 1990s (Matulčík, 1996, 1997, 1998), e.g. *Probleme und Chancen des Vergleichs nationaler Bildungsysteme in Europa* (Problems and Chances of Comparing National Education Systems in Europe), *Basic Questions of the Theory of Comparative Andragogy*, *Metódy porovnávacej andragogiky* (Methods of Comparative Andragogy). Matulčík (2004) introduced the concept of comparative andragogy as a scientific branch in his publication *Teórie výchovy a vzdelávania dospelých v zahraničí* (Adult Education Theories Abroad). His findings are based on the analyses of the works of the

world's prominent comparatists in the area of adult education (F. Pöggeler, J. H. Knoll, C. Titmus, A. N. Charters, J. Kulich, L. Turos, B. Samolovčev, D. M. Savićević, etc.). Matulčík (2004) defines comparative andragogy as one of the key scientific sub-branches of andragogy, whose aim is to get to know, interpret and compare foreign systems of adult education, their individual parts, and elements. Such research also comprises the study, analysis, interpretation and comparison of various issues, concepts, theories, methods, forms and means of adult education in individual countries while taking into consideration the socio-economic, political, cultural, national and historical specifics and conditions.

Comparative andragogy performs an important integrative function – it is an intersection of andragogical theories, educational concepts, projects and reforms in the area of education and is distinctly focused on practice. Its current importance is confirmed by I. Pirohová's (2015) latest publication, *Teórie vzdelávania dospelých* (Theories of Adult Education), as well as M. Schubert's (2017, 2020) *Teoretické koncepcie andragogiky* (Theoretical Conceptions of Andragogy) and *Komparatívna andragogika* (Comparative Andragogy).

Professional andragogy

The focus of professional andragogy as an applied andragogical branch representing one of the three subsystems of andragogy was first defined by Viera Prusáková in 1996. Her definition was based on three basic areas of human life: professional, leisure time, and social security.

Professional andragogy deals with applying andragogical theory in the area of work and work organisations. Primarily, it focuses on further professional education. It is closely related to company education. It develops in close connection with personnel management and educational and career counselling. It deals with relationships between the requirements of a certain professional field and the fulfilment of the need for the self-realisation and self-development of individuals (Prusáková, 1996).

From the point of view of andragogical practice, professional andragogy focuses on further professional adult education targeted at improving, expanding, and innovating qualifications and competences. It comprises all forms of professional and vocational education in the course of active working life after having completed professional training within the school system.

Further professional education can be divided into qualifying and re-qualifying education (Prusáková, 2005). Qualifying education focuses mainly on:
- increasing of qualifications,
- deepening of qualifications,
- innovating of qualifications,
- specialisation of qualifications,
- broadening of qualifications,
- renewing of qualifications,

while requalifying education focuses on changing qualifications by obtaining new qualifications and is part of active employment policy.

Personnel management, i.e. care of human resources development, is a significant part of professional andragogy. Vladimír Frk and Ivana Pirohová (2016), the authors of the first university textbook *Profesijná andragogika* (Professional Andragogy), have a large share in the development of this area of professional andragogy, perceived by some authors (e.g. Tureckiová (2013) in the Czech Republic) as personnel andragogy. They see professional andragogy as a branch of andragogy that focuses on human resources management in connection with the need of applying a competence approach to the development and education of staff and managers. Professional andragogy also includes staff management issues, especially leadership styles.

However, applying different approaches when defining professional andragogy is not contradictory to Prusáková's first definition mentioned above. In accordance with this definition, D. Temiaková et al. (2020) published the university textbook *Profesijná andragogika* (Professional Andragogy) which covers all its areas: further professional education and its forms, the development and training of employees within the framework of human resources management, as well as andragogical career counselling.

Social andragogy

The second subsystem of andragogy is social andragogy. Its foundations were laid by Ján Perhács (1996, 2006) in the study *Úlohy teórie výchovy dospelých v procese konštituovania a rozvíjania sociálnej andragogiky* (The Tasks of the Theory of Adult Education in the Process of Constituting and Developing Social Andragogy) and particularly in the study *Sociálna andragogika* (Social Andragogy). The works of J. Perhács were followed up by C. Határ's (2009, 2012) publications *Sociálna pedagogika, sociálna andragogika a sociálna práca – teoretické, profesijné a vzťahové reflexie* (Social Pedagogy, Social Andragogy and Social Work – Theoretical, Professional and Relational Reflections) and *Sociálna andragogika: Kapitoly z teórie a metodiky sociálno-edukačnej starostlivosti o dospelých* (Social Andragogy: Topics on the Theory and Methodology of Social and Educational Care of Adults), and by the works of Lea Szabová-Šírová (2015), the author of the monograph *Sociálna andragogika: Teoretické, empirické a praktické aspekty* (Social Andragogy: Theoretical, Empirical and Practical Aspects).

Social andragogy performs the social function of studying the socialising process of adult people from the point of view of their educational activation. It explores the relationship between social environment and educating of adults. It emphasises the need to explore the process of adult socialisation from the perspective of their educational activation (Perhács, 2000). Social andragogy focuses on helping adults solve the social troubles they are not able to solve either on their own or with the help of their immediate surroundings (Szabová-Šírová, 2015). Contrary to social work, which mostly focuses on directing social workers to non-andragogical activities (Perhács, 2006), andragogical help is mainly of an educational and counselling nature.

The aim of social andragogy is to improve social relations or to help guide an adult person towards creating adequate interpersonal relations and improving their social performance (parents, workers, friends, family members, members of a specific society or community, etc.), to improved and mature social relations, and to deeper communication leading to partnership and solidarity (Perhács, 2006).

The goal of social andragogy was similarly defined by C. Határ (2009). Social andragogy deals with both public and private institutional socio-educational care and social help for adults. Its goal is (auto)education, the development and cultivation of an adult's personality to the maximum degree possible, the harmonisation of intra- and interpersonal relations, the elimination of social conflicts between an individual and their surroundings, and preventing or solving both common and difficult life situations (Határ, 2009).

The goals of social andragogy are determined by its tasks and functions – socialising and personal, individualising functions. The goals and functions of social work and social andragogy are also related to the system of social andragogy. According to J. Perhács (2006), the system is represented by a certain framework of a social environment and social institutions, carrying out the task of educating adults, as well as the task of the self-educating process of forming and creating a personality of an adult person in the conditions of a social environment, and their socialisation. Thus, from this point of view, social andragogy explores three integrated categories of the social system: the personality of an adult person, their interaction within the social system, and the social environment of intentional and functional character.

Cultural-educational andragogy

The applied branch of andragogy, cultural-educational andragogy represents the third subsystem of andragogy. In the 1990s, in the early stages of constituting and developing the concept of systematic andragogy and its sub-branches, this subsystem was labelled with such terms as cultural andragogy, socio-cultural or even cultural-educational andragogy (Švec, 2000b). The search for a more accurate name that would take into account both the historical traditions of folk and cultural education in Slovakia and the current practice of cultural-educational activities brought about the term "cultural-educational andragogy". As the author of the term, R. Čornaničová (2011) claims that the use of the term was justified by the nature of the activities of the professional cultural-educational workers and by the definition of the type of institutions where these kinds of activities were a priority.

Čornaničová (2006, 2011) laid the theoretical and methodological foundations of cultural-educational andragogy in such works as *Od kultúrnej ku kultúrno-osvetovej andragogike* (From Cultural to Cultural and Public Education Andragogy) and *Kultúrno-osvetová andragogika* (Cultural and Public Education Andragogy). Her ideas were based on the analysis of the relationship between culture, education in culture studies, and cultural-educational activities. Her work has served as inspiration to other authors, e.g. M. Krystoň (2011) and V. Kupcová (2014).

Cultural-educational andragogy focuses on activities cultivating an individual in their leisure time; on people's interests, civic education, artistic activities, and other educational activities (Čornaničová & Matulčík, 2010). The subject of cultural-educational andragogy is cultural-educational activities understood in a broader sense and representing the specific area of cultural-educational influence. It covers cultural-educational, cultural-creative, cultural-experiential and other educational and cultivating activities.

The specifics of cultural-educational activities lie both in their broad variety focused on participation and in the mutual interlacing of its layers. The goal of cultural-educational andragogy is to explore two areas of cultural-educational activities. The first area is that of interest (non-professional) leisure-time participation of a wide range of the population in social cultural processes. This predominantly concerns the processes of accepting, adopting, and internalising cultural values, creative ways of expressing reality (creating cultural values) in a variety of cultural-educational activities, such as leisure time activities, educational, artistic and non-artistic, cultural and experiential, etc. within cultural-educational activities. The second area is the professional occupation of a cultural-educational worker as an intentional, specifically institutionalised and organised engagement in cultural-educational work (Čornaničová & Matulčík, 2010).

The theory of cultural-educational activities, which was systemised by cultural-educational andragogy, has gone through several stages of development. We agree with Čornaničová (2011) that it is a continual process of searching and changing, heading for ever deeper theoretical reflection and scientific elaboration. This statement applies to all branches of andragogy or to andragogy as a science.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

As a young science, andragogy is constantly evolving. Its development in Slovakia was considerably sustained by andragogical research based on the need to develop andragogy and its system as a science, on reflecting the needs of practical use, and on the need of andragogy as a field of studies training professionals for andragogical practice. It was carried out at academic workplaces at universities in Bratislava, Prešov, Banská Bystrica, and Nitra. The published outputs of andragogical research carried out in Slovakia for over thirty years since the adoption of the andragogical concept of the theory of adult education were based on the need of developing andragogy and its system as a science while they also reflected the needs of their practical application. Particularly in the early stages, these outputs helped to promote both andragogy, which was little-known then, and adult education, thus improving the quality of several areas of andragogical practice – professional, social, and cultural-educational.

Despite its relatively short existence, it is gratifying to note that thanks to the results of the research and scientific activities of Slovak experts in andragogy, Slovak andragogy can be defined as refined and profiled both in terms of its concept and contents as well as its theoretical-methodological foundations. From the original, early disciplines, new

disciplines of andragogy are being separated and defined by methodology and contents. Some branches are more sophisticated in terms of methodology and concept (e.g. adult didactics – androdidactics), others are just beginning to form. The determinants that have considerable effect on the development of these branches are the needs of social practice and the needs resulting from the internal development of the science. The theoretical development of the issue of senior education and constituting of geragogy can serve as examples of the significant synergic action of both factors. Though geragogy is listed as the third component of educational sciences, alongside pedagogy and andragogy, it was constituted and is developing within andragogy, more particularly within social andragogy. Other monographs that have been published range from andragogical counselling, andragogical diagnosing, to andragogical communication, or to border branches such as human resources management development, management of education, andragogical psychology, etc.

As a science andragogy began forming and has been developing in Slovakia at universities in Bratislava, Prešov, Nitra, and Banská Bystrica in close connection with the formation and development of andragogy as a field of studies, or study programmes, the curricula of which take into account the needs and requirements of practical use, thus incorporating the newest findings. While in the early 1990s the notion of andragogy was generally relatively unknown, later on, also thanks to the first graduates, employers began to show more interest in hiring them, and consequently making the number of students increase also. Andragogy has become part of other study fields and programmes, e.g. Speech Therapy and Therapeutic Pedagogy, Social Work, or Economics and Management, etc.

The social demand for andragogy graduates or graduates of study programmes that incorporate andragogy is directly related to the growing importance of further education within the framework of lifelong education and learning. The demand for andragogical theory and practice and thus for highly qualified experts working in this area is growing. The integrative character of andragogy provides all the prerequisites for the broad use of graduates both in practice and in research areas.

The study programme of Andragogy was listed within the Education and Upbringing group of study fields as was stipulated by the System of Study Fields issued by the Ministry of Education of the Slovak Republic (2002), No. 2090/2002. However, despite long-term efforts for the "emancipation" of andragogy, for its equal status with pedagogy within the educational sciences, andragogy is still often perceived as just a part or a branch of pedagogy. This is evidenced by its being included among pedagogical sciences in the aforementioned system of study fields, alongside pre-school and elementary pedagogy, special or therapeutic pedagogy, etc. The ongoing problem and trend of the "pedagogisation" of andragogy was demonstrated in 2017 by integrating the Department of Andragogy at the Faculty of Arts of Comenius University with the Department of Pedagogy, a step that has had a negative effect on the development of andragogy as a science and as a field of studies, and faced a negative reaction from practitioners in the field as well.

Moreover, in 2019, by the decree of the Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sports, the study programme of Andragogy was replaced by a more broadly understood field of studies, Teacher Training and Education Science. In Slovakia the situation has occurred in which andragogy is perceived, largely by practitioners, as an independent branch oriented to a specific practice and closer to practice-oriented branches such as economics, management, information and communication technologies, etc. than to pedagogy. Thus, the efforts to legitimise andragogy in relation to pedagogy are still ongoing, a process that is particularly evident within academia.

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PAST AND PRESENT DEVELOPMENTS IN THE PROFESSIONALISATION OF ADULT LEARNING AND EDUCATION IN HUNGARY

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to provide a descriptive analysis of the characteristics of adult learning and education as a profession in Hungary, with a particular emphasis on the professionalisation of the profession and its practitioners. In the study, we seek to answer the question of what the main characteristics of adult learning and education are and whether it can be classified as a profession in Hungary according to traditional theories of the profession. The topic was examined in detail along the lines of relevant literature and data obtained from content analysis of primary source documents. The study shows that the legitimacy of adult education in Hungary remains unclear, which is reflected in the context of the social prestige of adult education, its legislative environment, and the professionalisation of adult learning professionals, which have undergone many structural changes over the past nearly seven decades.

Keywords: *adult learning and education, adult learning professionals, professionalisation, training pathways, andragogy, Hungary*

PRETEKLI IN SODOBNI RAZVOJ PROFESIONALIZACIJE UČENJA IN IZOBRAŽEVANJA ODRASLIH NA MADŽARSKEM – POVZETEK

Prispevek predstavlja opisno analizo značilnosti učenja in izobraževanja odraslih kot profesije na Madžarskem, s posebnim poudarkom na profesionalizaciji profesije kot tudi izvajalcev. Odgovoriti želimo na vprašanji, kaj so glavne značilnosti učenja in izobraževanja odraslih ter ali je to dejavnost v skladu s tradicionalnimi teorijami o profesijah možno uvrstiti med profesije na Madžarskem. Tematika je bila natančno raziskana prek pregleda relevantne literature in podatkov, pridobljenih na podlagi vsebinske analize primarnih virov. Raziskava je pokazala, da legitimnost izobraževanja odraslih na Madžarskem ostaja nejasna, kar odražajo tudi okoliščine družbenega prestiža izobraževanja odraslih, zakonodaje in profesionalizacije stroke, ki so v preteklih skoraj sedmih desetletjih doživele veliko sprememb.

Ključne besede: *učenje in izobraževanje odraslih, strokovnjaki za učenje odraslih, profesionalizacija, usposabljanje, andragogika, Madžarska*

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INTRODUCTION

The European Pillar of Social Rights Action Plan has set ambitious goals for the upskilling and reskilling of adults, stating that at least 60% of the total adult population in the European Union should participate in training each year by 2030, while the employment level of the population between 20–64 years of age should reach at least 78% (European Commission, 2021). In order to reach these goals, participation in adult learning and education (ALE) must be enhanced significantly; unfortunately, it is already substantially below the EU average in Hungary.

Despite significant reforms and funding, participation in adult learning in Hungary has not improved much over the last decade and has remained well below (at 7.9%) the EU average (11.9% in 2022; Eurostat, 2023; Figure 1).

Figure 1

Participation rate in education and training (last 4 weeks) in Hungary (%)
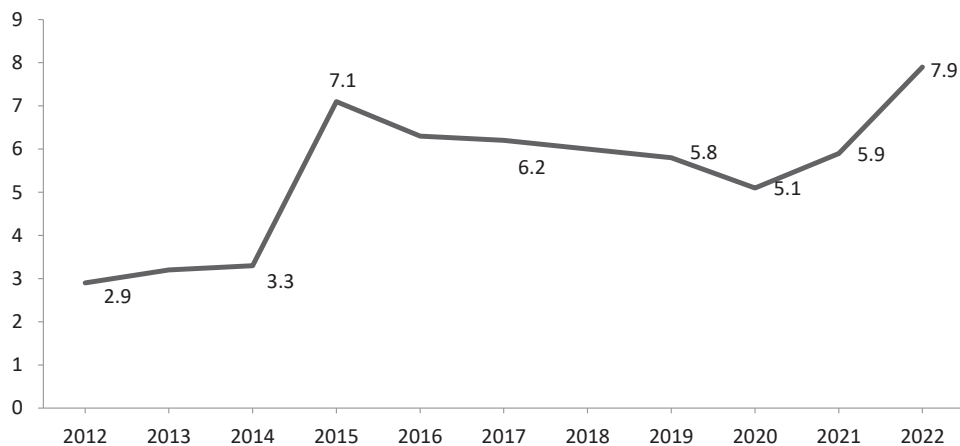
Note. Adapted from *Participation rate in education and training (last 4 weeks)*, by Eurostat, 2023 (https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/databrowser/view/trng_lfse_01/default/table?lang=en).

In order to enhance the opportunities for and the scope and level of ALE, improving the preparedness of adult learning professionals[1] is a top priority in ALE policies in Europe. One of the assurances for the quality of adult learning is the participation of qualified, trained and talented educators in ALE. In order to achieve this, apart from the development of educational methodologies and curricula, the member states must also contribute with appropriate investment and other measures to the enhancement of basic and advanced professional training of adult learning professionals (Council of the European Union, 2021).

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1   In this study, the term adult learning professionals is used as a collective term. It refers to all persons involved in the organisation and delivery of ALE, such as andragogues, adult educators, coordinators, programme developers, etc.

The necessity of and the demand for the professionalisation of adult learning professionals was already articulated in the first strategy for lifelong learning for the period between 2007 and 2013 in Hungary (Ministry of Education, 2006). The 2014 to 2020 strategy states that it is of special importance that adult learning professionals, cultural professionals, and andragogues are prepared for training deviant youths, addicts, and prison inmates (Ministry of Human Resources, 2016). The actions necessary to achieve the goals contained in the strategies were not taken, so Hungary still has a serious backlog to tackle in the area of the professionalisation of adult learning professionals. There have not been favourable policies for training adult learning professionals during the past decade. The argument has emerged several times during the history of this professional area: what do adult educators[2] do, and what is the task of Andragogues[3]? In the middle of the 2010s, during professional debates that flared up as a result of these arguments, the relevance of this professional area was straightforwardly questioned. During the transformation of higher education in 2015 this led to the termination of the bachelor's (BA) degree in Andragogy and the master's (MA) degree in Adult Education Teacher. Professional and political debates regarding the profession of ALE and the training of adult learning professionals continue even today, which is a great obstacle to andragogy becoming an independent discipline in a legal and professional sense, and hinder the stabilisation of the professional status of adult learning professionals.

The aim of the following study is to analyse the current state of ALE as a profession in Hungary. In the study, we seek to answer the question of what the main characteristics of ALE are and whether it can be classified as a profession in Hungary according to traditional theories of the profession. The topic was examined in detail along the lines of relevant literature and data obtained from content analysis of primary source documents.

In the following, the current characteristics of the ALE profession in Hungary will be examined in relation to traditional theories of the profession, with a focus on the legitimacy of the profession and the university-level education of adult learning professionals. The conclusion of the study is that ALE in Hungary cannot be classified among the traditional professions, which is due, among other things, to the lack of professional legitimacy and social prestige, the current legal environment, and the negative development trend of university courses in ALE.

PROFESSIONALISATION OF ALE TO GAIN THE STATUS OF A PROFESSION IN HUNGARY

The professionalisation of an occupation means the public recognition of an occupation as a profession (Adams, 2018), which was regarded for a long time as a linear process consisting of special, well-defined stages. According to Wilensky (1964), professionalisation

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2   Adult educator terminology refers to those who are working as teachers/trainers in direct contact with adult learners.

3   Andragogue is the title of qualification obtained with a BA and MA degree in Andragogy.

starts with the performance of an activity, which is followed by the occurrence of training for the performance of this activity, then the conditions for admission to the profession are defined, and the last step is the establishment of a professional organisation. The last part of the process is to legitimate the profession, in other words, the creation of legal regulations and a professional code of ethics (Wilensky, 1964). This view reflects a traditional approach to professions, whose aim is to explore the distinguishing and/ or similar features, making a given profession clearly distinguishable from other professions. Representatives of the taxonomic approach to professionalisation markedly stress specific knowledge and the formal recognition (by universities) of knowledge (Barber, 1963; Freidson, 1989; Greenwood, 1957; Klass, 1961; Wright, 1951). Based on this, the knowledge acquired in higher education fundamentally distinguishes professions from other occupations (Freidson, 1989), because professions can only be performed by those who possess professional knowledge and competences recognised by an established and legitimate body. Representatives of the taxonomic approach, apart from the significance of higher education qualifications, also regarded professional conduct control, entry conditions, and a code of ethics as features of key importance (Ovesni, 2009).

The area of ALE was analysed for a long time with the help of the traditional taxonomic approach (Egetenmeyer et al., 2019), based on which Nuissl (2010) came to the conclusion that Andragogy could not be classified as a profession because of the following reasons:

(1)   lack of special institutional structure and inter-sectoral co-operation,
(2)   lack of admission control,
(3)   lack of compulsory and uniform university education,
(4)   not satisfactory employment conditions,
(5)   different self-definition of professionals, lack of uniform identity.

Based on the traditional approaches, ALE cannot be classified as a traditional profession in Hungary either, and the reasons are discussed in detail below:

(1)   Similarly to pedagogy, andragogy is a discipline of inter-disciplinary character, which overlaps several various areas of other disciplines such as psychology, sociology, social psychology, philosophy, organisational development and management. The profession of Andragogy is not really linked to organisations and has no specific organisational structure. This is so also because the acquisition of learning and studying cannot be tied to a single or definite institution or location. They are available at schools, workplaces, cultural organisations and on MOOC[4] in every form and formal, non-formal and informal context. ALE is regulated by law in Hungary, but anybody, regardless of types of institutions, can perform such activities provided that they satisfy the legal requirements and are in possession of a licence to perform activities relating to ALE.[5]

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4   Massive open online course.

5   Based on effective legal regulations, an organisation may perform ALE activities if such an intent is reported to the state administrative body responsible for such activities (Pest County Government Office) and the

(2) In Hungary there is no reliable information available regarding the role, activities, and competences of the organisers of ALE and those of adult learning professionals. In several countries (e.g. Sweden, Denmark, Finland, Serbia) it is required or recommended that professionals working in ALE have qualifications. In Hungary only professional managers responsible for ALE and adult education experts are required to have formal qualifications. However, no minimum competences, terms of experience, or qualifications are defined in the case of other adult learning professionals (designers, developers, organisers, educators, mentors, tutors, etc.) for taking up this profession.

Regarding licensed ALE institutions, Act LXXVII of 2013 on Adult Education (2013) prescribes the employment of a professional manager, who is required to have a higher education qualification in Andragogy, or a teacher's degree as well as three years of professional experience in the area of ALE. The tasks and powers of a professional manager are not defined in the Act, and it is not mandatory that the professional manager is a full-time employee. An andragogy qualification is also determined as a condition for fulfilling the job of adult education experts,[6] together with other professions such as Pedagogy, Psychology, Human Resource Counselling, Cultural Management, etc. Apart from professional qualifications, professional experts are also required to have 5 years of professional experience in (adult) education. Adult education experts conduct a preliminary professional assessment of ALE programmes and they also participate in the regulatory supervision conducted in ALE institutions every four years. Adult education experts are obliged to participate in a minimum 20-hour advanced training programme every two years, which is organised by the state administrative body responsible for ALE, the Pest County Government Office. During the advanced training programmes current issues regarding legal regulations on ALE and expert activities in ALE are covered. Upon completing these courses, the experts are required to pass an exam, which is a condition for continuing their expert activities. If the experts fail to fulfil their obligation regarding participation in advanced training courses, their names are deleted from the expert register and they are banned from conducting expert work. It is clear that currently the activities of adult education experts are the most regulated ones in the ALE system. ALE organisers and adult educators, however, are still not required to have knowledge or experience in ALE, Andragogy or Didactics (Beszédes, 2020b).

Office has registered the institution. The list of institutions conducting ALE activities can be accessed in the *Adult Learning and Education Data Providing System* (2023). Nearly 13 thousand organisations were listed in the register of ALE institutions in March 2023. Since registration is mandatory for all institutions conducting ALE, economic enterprises conducting internal training exclusively for their own employees are also listed in the register. Organisations that conduct professional training for adults to obtain qualifications recognised by the state or training supported by the state or EU funds need to acquire a licence from the Pest County Government Office. 735 ALE institutions were licensed in March 2023.

6   Those who wish to conduct adult education expert activities as defined by the law on ALE are obliged to report such an intent to the state administration organisation responsible for ALE (Pest County Government Office). The Office registers the list of adult education experts electronically (Adult Learning and Education Data Providing System, 2023). Nearly 600 adult education experts were registered in March 2023.

(3) There was no special curriculum (subject) for the targeted training of adult learning professionals in the general curricula of higher education institutions prior to 2006. In earlier courses for Cultural Manager, Human Resources Counselling and Adult Education, and Cultural Manager majors, only Andragogy studies could be conducted. So representatives of the Andragogy profession welcomed the fact that the BA degree in Andragogy was established in 2006, which was followed by the MA degree in Andragogy and MA degree in Adult Education (Andragogy) Teacher[7] in 2008. At the same time the environment in higher education was not favourable for training adult learning professionals during the following decade, and this area suffered great losses due to the re-structuring of the system of higher education in 2015, when the BA degree in Andragogy and MA degree in Adult Education (Andragogy) Teacher were discontinued[8].

(4) There is no reliable information regarding the conditions for the employment of adult learning professionals. Typically, adult educators teach adults as a secondary job while they perform their main jobs. Based on our experience, we can distinguish two major groups of adult educators: teachers who conduct ALE in their free time and those who are recognised professionals in their own professional areas (lawyers, economists, cosmeticians, tourism professionals, shop managers, etc.) and participate in ALE by way of their professional experience and practice. The definition of an adult educator or adult learning professional cannot be found in strategic documents or legal regulations. An andragogy qualification or an obligation to participate in advanced andragogy training courses are not mandatory employment requirements for fulfilling jobs in ALE (except in the case of adult education experts). The employment conditions of adult educators are not clear either. They are employed on fixed-term contracts, generally for the duration of a training course or a teaching module. Because of these features it is impossible to determine how many adult educators are working in Hungary currently (Farkas, 2013).

(5) To this date, two major Delphi Surveys have been conducted in Hungary, which aimed at exploring the views and identity of adult learning professionals. Feketéné Szakos (2003), among others, came to the conclusion that the knowledge, views and understanding of the professional terminology of adult learning professionals involved in the study show a diverse picture. Farkas (2013) concluded that early-stage professionals were more inclined to regard ALE as an established profession, while more experienced professionals thought that ALE was still in the process of becoming a profession and, in order for it to become a profession, training professionals was of utmost importance (Beszédes, 2022). The examination of Andragogue

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7   Adult Education (Andragogy) Teacher training was useful for elementary or high school teachers who, in addition to traditional students, also taught adult learners in formal ALE. This program focused on the specifics of adult learning, andragogy didactics, in a practice-oriented way.

8   For a detailed description of the history of training adult learning professionals, see the section entitled "70 years of training adult learning professionals in Hungary".

identity raises several issues. It is not easy to extend the concept and to understand the identity of a professional activity that is permanently changing and which cannot be classified as a traditional profession, therefore policy makers question even the relevance of this profession from time to time. Hungarian study results indicate that the marked features of the development of the professional identity of Andragogy cannot be addressed since this profession continues to undergo new understanding. The pressure to comply with the permanently changing legal-economic-social challenges, the more and more uncertain operational conditions and the negative messages conveyed by policy makers have created hostile professional interest groups with different views and prejudices. This division hinders joint interest representation and makes it gravely difficult to develop professional identity (Farkas, 2013).

Mandatory professional training (or the lack of it) also has a great impact on the development of professional identity. According to researchers in this area, professional identity develops in professional communities (Bimrose & Brown, 2019) and during professional training and practice, which adds great value to the significance of professional preparation (Bierema, 2011; Reischmann, 2010; Wilson, 2001). Apart from enhancing knowledge and competences, professional training contributes to the formation and stabilisation of reflexive views and professional identity (Karm, 2007), which develops by way of environmental interactions and experience (van Dellen & Cohen-Scali, 2015).

As opposed to the taxonomic approach, based on Saks (2012), who articulated neo-Weberian views, the process of professionalisation cannot be regarded as a linear process, because, due to socio-political effects, not every learned occupation gains professional status. The process of professionalisation depends on the existence of formal (legal) regulation of a profession (Adams, 2018; Saks, 2012). Similarly to the above, Despotović (2010) explains the process of professionalisation "as a process of establishing credibility and legitimacy of certain types of work or activity in terms of public recognition, institutional structure and standardization in the management and operation of groups and individuals within" (Despotović, 2010, p. 48). The author conducted his study of the latter regarding the national level of legitimacy and the scientific and professional recognition of ALE. Evetts (2013) confirms that the policy efforts of a given state have a significant effect on the development and shaping of professions because they ensure professional legitimacy and a training system necessary for performing professional activities.

Social legitimacy of ALE as an independent professional activity in Hungary

Based on Despotović (2010), public recognition (legitimacy) of a profession is manifested if it is recognised as an independent professional activity. This can be examined from two perspectives. Is a given professional activity on the list of economic activities recognised by the state or on the list of occupations? In Hungary the Uniform System for Classification of Economic Activities (NACE-TEÁOR; Central Statistical Office, n.d.) contains the list and description of economic activities recognised by the state. ALE is not on this

list as an independent economic activity but appears as part of branches of vocations such as "primary education" and "other forms of education". The latter also includes various vocational courses for adults, hobby and general and advanced vocational courses for the purpose of self-development, which do not provide formal qualifications (Central Statistical Office, 2021).

In the Hungarian Standard Classification of Occupations (FEOR; Central Statistical Office, 2011), the uniform classification system of occupations recognised by the state, there is no recognised occupation in the area of ALE. At the same time activities relating to ALE occur in the description of several occupations. "Educational managers" plan, manage and co-ordinate training activities, "Educators, teachers in secondary level institutions of education" can also conduct educational activities in ALE and advanced training institutions. "Other specialized teaching professionals" perform training outside the regular school system, "Training and staff development professionals" organise and perform internal training programmes within organisations (Beszédes, 2020a). Occupations mainly relating to ALE within the regular school system appear on the list of occupations. In contrast, Andragogues, ALE organisers[9] and adult educators, who are specialised in ALE and train a significantly higher number of adults outside the regular school system, are not indicated in the system.

Although Andragogy or ALE is not listed as an economic activity or occupation, university level andragogy education is present in Hungary and is described in detail in the next chapter.

70 YEARS OF TRAINING ADULT LEARNING PROFESSIONALS IN HUNGARY

According to Jarvis (2004), the development of ALE as a profession is not comparable with the process of the traditional development of a profession because both ALE and its individual steps lose their value as a result of social development, so the question is not whether this area can or cannot be declared a profession, but whether the individuals working in this occupation can be qualified as professionals. Gorman and Sandefur (2011) say that because of current labour market features and the decreasing responsibility and management position of the state, the old interpretations of professions cannot be applied anymore. From the identification of differences between professions and occupations the focus shifted to making distinctions between activities that require expert knowledge and the ones that do not, bringing the new professionalism approach to the forefront (Egetenmeyer at al., 2019; Evetts, 2013).

Formal qualification in a given professional area is regarded as a fundamental condition of professionalism by Jakimiuk (2020). In this regard, training professionals at university level may be considered as a stage along the road to professionalism (Egetenmeyer & Käpplinger, 2011). Academic studies support significant inter- and intrapersonal

9   ALE organiser terminology refers to a person who plans, organises, and monitors the courses that ALE institutions offer to adult learners.

processes, which have an effect on professional values, self-awareness, and the worldview professionals formulate (Karu & Jõgi, 2014), as well as the development of professional identity and personal competences (Semrau et al., 2016; Wilson, 2001).

Regarding university degrees in ALE, a general problem is that ALE covers diverse professional areas where the activities of professionals and the knowledge relating to these areas become more and more diversified (Jütte et al., 2011). Training professionals is performed in a peculiar way, which is determined by national and cultural features and the requirements of professional development (Egetenmeyer et al., 2017). A uniform job profile cannot be attributed to those who perform ALE (Lattke, 2016). What is more, there is restricted information available about various different groups of such professionals (Sava, 2011; Zarifis & Papadimitriou, 2020). Due to the diverse nature of this professional area and job profiles, university courses are mainly capable of developing only some parts of the expected job competences (Boffo et al., 2016).

Training cultural and adult learning professionals has a long history in Hungary. Higher education degrees in ALE, which have undergone multiple transformations, changes in name and training structure, have been a matter of focal interest by society and professionals as well as scrutinised by representatives of current educational policies. Even the development of this professional area and the way it became independent – its detachment from a pedagogical role – was not a process without complications since it took long decades for ALE to be regarded as an independent and recognised discipline. During the past few decades, it has always been the current political power that determined the goals and ideology of training professionals. In the communist era, the educational policy directives in the 1950s articulated the significance of training professionals based on the world view of Marxism-Leninism. This approach made it possible for popular education to become a profession (T. Molnár, 2016). Therefore, training adult learning professionals was institutionalised in ALE in Hungary when subjects to train popular educators were launched at the Kossuth Lajos University in 1956 (today the University of Debrecen). Such subjects were launched in 1961 at the Eötvös Loránd University in Budapest (Farkas, 2013).

As a result of a model shift within this professional area in the 1970s, the importance of public culture gained emphasis instead of training popular educators. Political will continued to be a determining factor and cultural policies contained ideological expectations in training, which influenced its social judgement and acceptance. Even the professionals in this area were of diverse opinions and the professional attitude of institutions engaged in training was reflected in the content of the training courses (T. Molnár, 2016).

The changes in the political regime in 1989 brought about renewal in the profession and also in training professionals. As a result of social and economic processes induced by the political changes the profession and, because of it, training professionals also became very differentiated. Following the modernisation of the general curriculum in 1992, as a result of the modernisation of the content of the training course, the new name of the degree at the undergraduate level became "Cultural Management", while at the postgraduate

university level the new name was "Cultural and Adult Education Manager". The differentiation of the profession and making the training marketable led to the establishment of new degrees, where the diverse features of the profession occurred. Apart from the Cultural Management degree, a new BA and MA degree in Human Resources Management (which later became the basis for a BA degree in Andragogy) was launched (Cserné Adermann, 2006). These new degrees were very popular with a high number of students. There was great demand for new graduates because masses of unemployed people needed re-training to satisfy the demand in the changed economic environment, and conscious management of human resources gained ever increasing value with enterprises.

The name of the MA degree in "Cultural and Adult Education Manager" was changed to "Cultural Manager" in 2002. The requirements relating to this qualification also changed, as a result of which the content of the training was narrowed, and the ratio of ALE and management studies decreased significantly. The change occurred at a time when the regulation of ALE was elevated to legislation level. European and world trends, the recommendations of the 5th International Conference on Adult Education (UNESCO, 1997) and the key messages of the Memorandum on Lifelong Learning (Commission of the European Communities, 2000) significantly influenced the development of the first independent Act CI of 2001 on Adult Education. The scope of the Act covered ALE outside the regular school system. It contained a set of regulations that were well-structured, focussed on the management, set of institutions, content requirements and support system of ALE, and was considered to contain the most up-to-date principles in the European Union. A significant merit of this Act was the legal declaration of the quality and the quality assurance elements of ALE. The accreditation system was built on a verification process based upon self-assessment, which was based on the examination of the existence of preliminarily determined requirements. Its aim was to verify that a given ALE institution, by way of its regulated processes, could meet at high quality level the expectations of adults and other interested partners. Two types of ALE accreditation were developed: accreditation of institutions and programme accreditation. At that time Hungary was one of the few member states in the European Union where quality assurance of ALE was developed. By the end of that decade approximately 1500 institutions undertook to adopt the accreditation process certifying compliance with higher quality requirements, which was a condition for the use of domestic and European Union funds[10] (Farkas, 2013). In the case of accredited institutions and programmes, there were legal regulations with provisions on the professional and qualification requirements of educators; however, special professional knowledge in ALE and experience were not required.

The birth of the BA degree in Andragogy

In 2006 there was a turning point in the history of training cultural and adult learning professionals. In higher education the Bologna process introduced radical changes to the

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10   Following Hungary's accession to the European Union in 2004, unprecedented amounts of EU funding were made available for ALE, which significantly increased the demand for it.

structure of earlier university-level qualifications. The termination of degrees linked to ALE and culture transfer conducted earlier was on the agenda again. On the one hand, the decision makers in this matter missed the attachment of this area to sciences, and, on the other hand, they also debated whether this field could be fitted to economic requirements. In the wake of policy decisions, it became clear that either there could be a compromise that would result in the development of Andragogy as a new BA degree or all such types of training would be terminated. The risk that ALE subjects might be terminated brought together educators in this profession and a new BA degree in Andragogy was developed as a result of exemplary co-operation of higher education institutions. In its methodology the BA in Andragogy preserved the content of several subjects taught earlier; these were subjects that could not remain independent in the transformation process of higher education. A common feature of subjects taught earlier, which became part of the BA degree in Andragogy in 2006, was that problems relating to Andragogy were highlighted in each of them. These were Human Resources Management and Cultural Management, so it was logical that they continued to exist as specialisations of a BA in Andragogy. At the same time, when a BA in Andragogy was established, another, fourth specialisation came into existence, namely the subject called "Adult Education Organiser", which provided new opportunities for individuals seeking employment in the ALE market (Cserné Adermann, 2010).

The postgraduate pathway for training adult learning professionals was the 2-year MA degree in Andragogy first launched in the academic year 2008/2009. The BA degree in Andragogy mainly prepared students for the organisation of activities relating to ALE as well as to perform related operational tasks. Graduates of the MA degree in Andragogy, however, were also capable of managing all this and also possessed wider knowledge, special skills and competences necessary for conducting methodological research in their doctoral studies. Apart from obtaining a master's degree in Andragogy, bachelor's graduates in Andragogy could also attend courses such as "Human Resource Manager" and "Cultural Mediator" at the master's level to enhance their knowledge. Higher education institutions develop their training programmes on the basis of learning outcomes-based training and outcome requirements. However, the content of training programmes may vary according to the traditions of the higher education institution, local needs, and available human resources capacity. Beszédes' (2020a) research has shown that the main subject areas in the MA programme are andragogy research and research methodology, adult education theory, social andragogy, legal regulation, training organisation and development, and group leadership and learning/teaching methods.

A significant result of the transformation of teacher training was that a university level course was launched in September 2009 for the acquisition of the qualification of an MA degree in Adult Education (Andragogy) Teacher, which prepared the students attending this course for effectively and efficiently applicable teaching and learning strategies and methods in ALE. This was a quality advancement in terms of enhancing the professional prestige of ALE since earlier it was impossible to obtain a university degree in teaching

in ALE. The fact that there were legal conditions for becoming an Adult Education (Andragogy) Teacher confirmed that the organisation and implementation of ALE was considered a profession, and that professional training and qualifications are needed when dealing with adults.

During the history of ALE and the related profession, it first seemed that everything was in place both in the professional area and in scientific classification. Andragogy degrees were adopted as educational science and the whole vertical structure was created and incorporated into the system of higher education: Andragogy bachelor's and master's degrees (Andragogy MA, Cultural Mediation MA, Human Resources Manager MA) and ALE sub-programmes within the framework of the Doctoral Schools of Educational Sciences. The relevant organisational unit in this field at the University of Pécs was promoted to the rank of Faculty during this period and the Faculty of Adult Education and Human Resources Development was officially established in May 2005. It is very important to mention this because it was the one and only university faculty that referred to ALE in its name.

The fall of the BA degree in Andragogy

There was great interest in a BA degree in Andragogy even before the first academic year. Based on the number of applicants, it was among the 20 most popular higher education programmes. 18 higher education institutions offered BA degrees in Andragogy. Between 2006 and 2011 the number of applicants for full time training programmes was around 4,000 and a total of 750–850 applicants were accepted each academic year. Approximately an average of 47% of the admittees attending this course received state funding for their studies. In 2011 the number of applicants for this subject was still high, however, the number of admittees was only 569, and state funding for students decreased significantly (Higher Education Admission Information [HEAI], 2022). The Government that came to power in 2010 brought a new turn in the whole system of higher education. With the adoption of a new act on higher education in 2011, a reform was launched in higher education. Aversion to Andragogy gained strength again and the labour market role and the relevance of this subject in higher education was questioned by policy makers. As a result of this, in 2012 the educational policy significantly decreased the number of applicants who could be admitted to study this subject. In 2013 various Government measures made admittance to study Andragogy practically impossible. In 2013 and in 2014 the number of applicants for full time training decreased by 86% compared to the number in 2010. In the academic year 2014/2015 only 70 applicants (9% of the number in 2010) were admitted in the whole country to a BA in Andragogy and only 5 higher education institutions out of 18 could launch the training programme (HEAI, 2022). It is quite clear that 18 training institutions are not capable of providing the same quality of education. At the same time, however, the quality indicators of higher education institutions should have been considered when measures were taken to decrease the number of Andragogy students. The number of applicants and admittees for correspondence training, during which all the training costs were mainly covered by adult students, was more or less the

same between 2007 and 2011. In 2012 both the number of applicants and that of the admittees decreased significantly. The obligation of passing an advanced level maturity exam at secondary schools, which was mandatory even for those who passed their maturity exams[11] prior to the introduction of the two-level maturity exam system (2005), and which was made a condition for application and admittance for correspondence training in Andragogy in 2013, made it almost impossible for applicants to study this subject at university level.

In 2015, as a result of an unprecedented measure taken by the Government in the history of the profession and professional training, the BA degree in Andragogy was terminated together with the MA degree in Adult Education (Andragogy) Teacher that was also deemed unnecessary. This measure sealed the fate of the previously mentioned Faculty of Adult Education and Human Resources Development, which was also terminated in the year of the 10th anniversary of its establishment.

Political will overrode professional arguments and considerations again. In the middle of the 2010s new expectations and professional requirements emerged again since parallel with the termination of the BA degree in Andragogy, the relevant Government administration responsible for higher education created the BA degree in Community Coordination with three different specialisations: Cultural Community Coordinator, Youth Community Coordinator, and Human Developer. This latter course "inherited" the professional subjects linked to ALE.

On the whole, however, the ratio of ALE studies decreased significantly again, the results achieved until then levelled off, and the recognition of educational science, which had been achieved as a result of hard efforts, was questioned again. The profession of ALE was not supported by an independent BA degree anymore. However, the MA degree in Andragogy remained in place, creating an opportunity for students to attend relevant sub-programmes offered by doctoral schools. In the absence of a BA programme, recruitment for MA courses is problematic. 31 students joined a master's programme in Andragogy in Hungary in 2022 (HEAI, 2022).

Besides traditional university level training courses, specialised postgraduate training courses are available for the professional development of adult learning professionals. The specialised postgraduate training courses are built on higher educational degrees, however, they do not provide higher levels of qualification. The duration of the courses is at least two or a maximum of four semesters, and students completing such courses obtain

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11   The two-level secondary school leaving examination was introduced in 2005, which makes it possible for students to take the secondary school leaving examination either at an ordinary (intermediate) or an advanced level in each of the four compulsory subjects (Hungarian language and literature, Mathematics, History, and a foreign language). Students are allowed to select the fifth subject, which can also be a vocational subject in upper secondary vocational schools. In 2022, 3% of the pupils passed the secondary school leaving exam at the advanced level in Hungarian language and literature, 7% in Mathematics, 12% in History, 41% in English, and 21% in German. The ordinary and advanced level secondary school leaving certificates are classified as level 4 of the European Qualifications Framework.

diplomas certifying special professional qualifications. In the 2022/2023 academic year, five specialised training courses were offered by higher education institutions,[12] but data on the number of participants in these courses are not available.

To summarise, there are four levels for professional development in ALE at university level in Hungary available in 2023 (Figure 2):
- BA in Community Coordination (launched in 2017) together with a human development specialised course that provides andragogy-didactic training,
- MA in Andragogy (from 2008),
- Doctoral Programmes in Educational Science (from 1993),
- Specialised postgraduate training courses.

Figure 2

Training pathways for adult learning professionals in Hungary
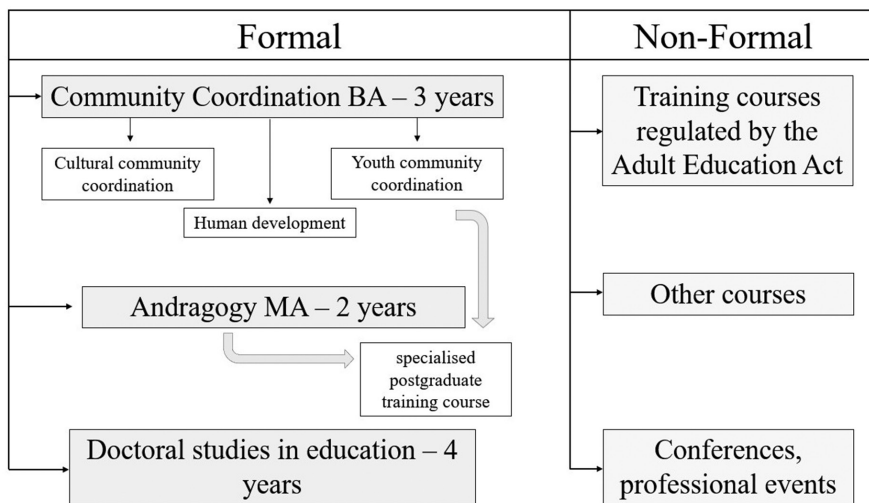
Note. Adapted from "A felnőttnevelési szakemberek formális képzési útjainak komparatív vizsgálata Magyarországon és Szerbiában" by V. Beszédes, 2021, p. 153.

Non-formal (further) training pathways include in-company training, short-term training courses organised by non-profit organisations and projects (e.g. organised by the Tempus Public Foundation, 2018), conferences (e.g. Durkó Mátyás Adult Education Conference, 2022; MellearN Conference, 2023, EPALE Conference, 2023) and Erasmus+ mobility programmes (European Commission, 2023) to enhance the knowledge of adult learning professionals.

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12   Trainer in ALE; Development in ALE; Competence Development in ALE, Teacher in Andragogy, ALE Specialist (Oktatási Hivatal, 2023).

Scientific background of andragogy

The existence or lack of scientific research, research centres, scientific journals and professional associations are also determining factors in the professionalisation of ALE (Despotović, 2010). There is a Doctoral School of Educational Science at five universities in Hungary, but there is an Andragogy sub-programme only at the Eötvös Loránd University in Budapest. Andragogy is also present at the University of Debrecen in a sub-programme named "Adult Education, Vocational Education and Training and Cultural Education". There are no Andragogy or ALE sub-programmes within doctoral schools at other universities, but they accept research topics related to adult learning. Reviewing the curricula of doctoral schools in the area of educational science, we can see that – except in the case of the curriculum of Eötvös Loránd University – they rarely or do not offer courses in Andragogy/ALE (Beszédes, 2020a).

Data referring to PhD dissertations can be found in the database of the Hungarian National Doctoral Council (2023). Research (Beszédes, 2022) has shown that only 34 PhD dissertations out of all the PhD dissertations defended in the field of education between 2001 and 2020 focused on a topic related to andragogy. In addition, there is a low number of topics relating to ALE on the list of doctoral thesis topics. The results suggest that research problems related to andragogy are not a focal point of scientific interest in Hungary. The lack of scientific research has a hindering effect on laying the scientific foundation for the epistemology and further development of this scientific area (Beszédes, 2022).

Another hindering factor is that the profession of ALE has no scientific journal[13] and no innovative professional forums at present.

CONCLUSIONS

The profession of ALE in Hungary has not been able to develop to be a profession in the classical sense and has never been able to be proactive. Although ALE is considered a legitimate professional activity, there is no state-recognised profession specialising in ALE (such as andragogy), which requires specific knowledge and skills at the university level. The field of ALE was always determined by political interests in Hungary: it was not the profession that constructed the pillars of regulation, but the regulations that created the pillars of the profession.

It is widely known and it is the painful reality that social support for Andragogy, ALE and even adult learning professionals continues to decline significantly, as evidenced by the partial dismantling of academic professionalisation pathways. In addition, the current social and political environment does not favour initiatives that aim to elevate domestic ALE to the European level.

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13 The following journals were available earlier: *Andragógia* (Andragogy) 1983–1989, *Felnőttképzés* (Adult Education) 2003–2011, *Felnőttképzési Szemle* (Adult Education Review) 2007–2016, *Andragógia és művelődéselmélet* (Andragogy and Theory of Education) 2013–2014.

Solutions to the problems of training professionals must not be expected from the state educational system only. The professional community in this scientific area can do a lot for the cause of training professionals. By co-operating in the form of a "public body", the professional organisations can develop quality indicators for adult educators and elaborate a professional qualification system (conditions) for professionals working in the area of ALE. The qualification system of a professional area – if it is generally accepted – may be more profound than any state-elaborated system.

However, in order to do this, professional self-organisation, collective efforts, cohesion, co-operation based on common principles, clear professional objectives, and permanent and substantial discussions between the stakeholders are needed. If we can achieve all this, then maybe policy makers will have a more favourable attitude towards our objectives and will support us in achieving them.

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Larissa Jõgi

THE JOURNEY FROM PAST TO PRESENT: FROM ACADEMIC STUDIES TO LEARNING EXPERIENCES AND PROFESSIONAL IDENTITY IN ESTONIA

ABSTRACT

The focus of this paper is on the development of andragogy as an academic discipline and andragogy programmes at Tallinn University. It also reviews the development of adult education in Estonia and outlines empirical findings from previous research related to the learning experiences and the professional identity of students and graduates of andragogy programmes. The research questions in this paper are: What are the main developments of adult education and andragogy as an academic discipline? How do andragogy students and graduates understand their learning experience and professional identity? The findings suggest that academic studies and learning experiences enable students to construct a strong learner identity, which impacts the formation of professional identity. The sense of professional identity becomes stronger during the period of academic studies and continues to develop as a self-developmental process with professional, educational, and personal choices.

Keywords: *development of adult education in Estonia, andragogy, andragogy programmes, learning experience, professional identity*

POTOVANJE IZ PRETEKLOSTI V SEDANJOST: OD ŠTUDIJA DO UČNIH IZKUŠENJ IN PROFESIONALNE IDENTITETE V ESTONIJI – POVZETEK

Članek se osredotoča na razvoj andragogike kot akademske discipline in andragoških programov na Univerzi v Talinu. Prinaša pregled razvoja izobraževanja odraslih v Estoniji in predstavlja rezultate preteklih raziskav o učnih izkušnjah in profesionalni identiteti študentov in diplomantov andragoških programov. Članek naslavlja vprašanja poglavitnih razvojnih točk izobraževanja odraslih in andragogike kot akademske discipline ter kako študenti in diplomanti andragogike razumejo svoje učne izkušnje in profesionalno identiteto. Rezultati kažejo, da študij in učne izkušnje študentom omogočajo vzpostavitev močne identitete učečih se posameznikov, kar vpliva tudi na oblikovanje njihove profesionalne identitete. Občutek profesionalne identitete postane močnejši v času študija in se nadalje razvija v procesu samorazvoja prek strokovnih, izobraževalnih in osebnih odločitev.

Ključne besede: *razvoj izobraževanja odraslih v Estoniji, andragogika, andragoški programi, učne izkušnje, profesionalna identiteta*

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PREFACE

Writing this paper I thought that it is a very demanding task to integrate such important issues into one paper. This task was challenging and gave me an opportunity to create a reflective overview of the history of the academic field of andragogy and the development of adult education in Estonia. My personal academic and professional journey began at Tallinn University at the groundbreaking and transformational time of transition from a socialist social order to a liberal market economy. The restoration of independence marked the beginning of systematic changes in Estonian society, including changes in the educational sphere. The Soviet order was done away with and this brought about changes in the whole society, in people's values and identities (Lauristin et al., 2017). In 2021 we celebrated thirty-five years since the establishment of the Chair of Andragogy (1986) and twenty years since the opening of the bachelor's and master's programmes in andragogy at Tallinn University (2001). It has been a meaningful journey from the past to the present to learn about who our students are as learners, how their professional identity is formed, what the impact of the studies is and how our graduates position themselves in their professional practice.

INTRODUCTION

Andragogy is not an unambiguously definable term and theoretical concept in international scientific literature and the same can be said for the term adult education. The variety of terminology is related to andragogy's interdisciplinarity as a scientific discipline and area of academic research. The ambiguity of the terms andragogy and adult education is connected with different educational traditions, ideologies, paradigms and the formation of the area in different cultural spaces. We view andragogy as a scientific and study area which deals with the learning and teaching processes of adults, their life and learning paths, and the conceptualisation of individual and collective experience in various areas and life situations. We also consider adult learners, adult educators' professionalisation and identity, adult education, training and lifelong learning to be the content and research problem of andragogy (Märja et al., 2021).

In the international literature there are two co-existing but distinctive terms: adult education and education for adults. *Adult education* is mostly used in the context of non-formal or liberal education (Jarvis, 1998, p. 38). *Education for adults* is mainly related to whatever educational process or adult learning, be it in a non-formal, general, professional, adult or higher education context or education outside any educational institution (Jarvis, 1998, p. 45). In the Estonian professional community we have agreed that we use *adult education* and *education for adults* as synonyms (Märja et al., 2003). The term andragogy was originally used to signify adult learning and teaching (1920–1960), and later (1960–1970) the theory of adult education. The issues of adult learning, adulthood, and subjectivity were added to reflect the changes of the educational concept (1970–1990; Jarvis, 2011). In 1990–2010 the theme of lifelong learning emerged. Finnish educational sociologist

Risto Rinne wrote that the message of lifelong learning has become an extensive social and cultural goal, the realisation of which ideally ensures flexible learning opportunities and expands access to education and learning everywhere and for everyone during their whole life (Naumanen et al., 2008a, p. 248). According to this vision, the acquisition of education lasts the whole life and includes formal, non-formal, and informal learning, and is an opportunity for self-realisation and a human right.

Over the years I have met with many students and graduates and experienced how important, unique and distinctive the learning experience and readiness for lifelong learning were for them. In creating and diversifying learning opportunities, it is important to know and understand, in addition to international developments, the history of Estonian adult education as well as the changes in the field of adult education that have taken place and to better understand the experiences and identities of andragogy students and graduates.

My research questions in this article are: What are the main historical developments of adult education in Estonia? How do students and graduates understand their learning experience and professional identity and how are these comprehensions related to their academic studies? The paper has two aims. First, to give an overview of the important milestones in the history of the development of adult education and andragogy as an academic discipline in Estonia. Second, to reflect on some of the results from previous research related to the learning experience and professional identity of students and graduates of andragogy programmes. The paper is structured in the following way: first, I will give an overview of the history of adult education in Estonia and the academic field of andragogy at Tallinn University. Then I will present a number of theoretical considerations and discuss selected findings from previous qualitative research carried out in 2014–2023.

HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF ADULT EDUCATION IN ESTONIA

European educational trends and values, especially those of Finland, Denmark, and Sweden, have over the years influenced the development of adult education and set an example for Estonia. Nordic-Baltic cooperation in adult education was established in 1936 and re-established after Estonian independence in 1991 (Jõgi & Karu, 2018; Jõgi & Roosalu, 2020). This cooperation was a developmental process that promoted the basic values of adult education: supporting individual growth, inspiring the culture of democracy, transmitting and integrating cultural traditions into Estonian adult education activities, relying on dialogue, equality, voluntariness, responsibility, and valuing education for life. These were the main values of the Nordic-Baltic cooperation in the early post-Soviet period (Ibrus, 2005, pp. 38–39). Estonian adult education can be seen as an inherently Nordic cultural feature, which relies on the premise of wide social support, originating in the philosophy of Nikolaj Frederik Severin Grundtvig, whereby any individual is entitled to learn and participate in social decision-making processes (Gustavsson, 2000; Maliszewski, 2008). The typical Nordic non-formal adult education in the form of learning circles, educational associations, and folk high schools has been of significant importance

for Estonian adult education. At the start of the 1990s with Estonia's regained independence the pre-requisites for the professionalisation of adult education were developed and later consolidated (Jõgi & Gross, 2009). I agree with Karin Filander (2012, p. 135) that we need to know historical milestones in order to understand the present struggles of meaning making in adult education, because it has lost its links to its history with the state, to social movements as well as to the historical and ideological roots of progressive and radical adult education.

The history of adult education in Estonia is more than 100 years old and is characterised by similar traditions and values, changes and events typical at the time for Nordic adult education (Jõgi et al., 2008). This history may be conditionally divided into eight periods. In the following, I will briefly discuss this by presenting an overview based on the empirical data from the research project "Nordic-Baltic Cooperation in Adult Education: Experiences and Stories. 2014–2018". The empirical data was collected using secondary data from multiple documentary sources about Estonian adult education and focus group interviews which were conducted with adult education practitioners (Jõgi & Roosalu, 2020).

The start of adult education in Estonia goes back to *1906*, when the Estonian Folk Education Association was founded in Tallinn in order to "disseminate knowledge amongst the people" (Laane, 1994, p. 12). The main task of the Association was to raise the level of education by creating learning circles, various educational institutions, choirs, museums, libraries, and the book shop "Rahva Raamat" ("Folk Book"). The Association was the springboard for the idea of Tallinn Folk University. The Estonian Folk Education Association was also active in other towns and areas of Estonia. The activity of the Association may in the contemporary context be interpreted as a systematic and well thought out national strategy of adult education, which was consciously planned and carried out via various educational activities: the foundation of libraries, folk high schools and different courses for adults, and the extended opportunity for adults to obtain secondary education. The *folk high school* was founded and operated in the evenings, giving the chance to learn to the adults unable to participate during the day.

Non-formal educational activities became even more extensive in *1920–30*. This is the period of regulating adult education and the start of the formation of its educational policy. A respective coordination council was set up in the Ministry of Education of the Estonian Republic. The council discussed the national aims of non-formal education and emphasised the need to "involve individuals and all layers of society into the non-formal education to ensure the development of the Estonian nation on the path of democratic statehood" (Laane, 1994, p. 36).

In *1930–1940* the examples for goal setting in non-formal adult education were Finland, Sweden, and Denmark. International relations and contacts supported the sharing of ideas, information, teaching methods, and diverse non-formal educational activities, as well as taking over the long tradition of folk high schools from Denmark and Sweden. The traditional study form of the "learning circle" in Finnish high schools was taken as

an example. The learning circles movement became one of the most considerable and systematic approaches of Estonian non-formal adult education (Laane, 1994, p. 66). In this period, the Estonian Education Union started carrying out its most extensive task of educating professional adult educators. Scientists, intellectuals, artists were registered as adult educators in the Estonian Education Union. They were expected to have higher education, the skills to give lectures in an engaging way and carry out lectures and courses based on adults' needs and interests (Laane, 1994, pp. 69–70).

The Soviet period of *1940–1980* was the time of interruptions and disoriented changes in Estonian culture, values, educational aims and opportunities. *1950–1970* was the start of establishing a system for training and retraining workers in Soviet Estonia and in the 1970s the creation and implementation of a training system for managers and specialists was continued.

The period of *1970–1980* is considered to be significant in the history of adult education in Estonia (Märja, 2000, p. 3) due to the appearance of two directions in adult education: the improvement of qualifications and professional skills for workers and the direction of management and psychology meant for economic managers and school leaders. However, there was a lack of adult educators with the necessary education and skills familiar with the specific characteristics of adult learning and of teaching adults (Märja, 2000, p. 4).

The 2010 Human Development Report of Estonia shows the three waves of changes that took place in the period of *1980–2010*. These waves are reflected in the developments that took place in Estonian adult education in 1980–2010. During the period from the end of the 1980s until the middle of 1990s the key words were *freedom* and *self-determination*. The next period from the second part of the *1990s until 2000* was characterised by major state regulation, the formation of institutional structure in education. The most essential characteristic of the third period of *2000–2010* was deeper integration into the European education space (Heidmets et al., 2011, pp. 97–98).

The decade of *1980–1990* may be considered the period of shaping the adult educational policy and modernising the theoretical and methodological basis for adult education. The Chair of Andragogy and Educational Leadership was established at the Tallinn Pedagogical Institute in *1986* with the aim to develop learning possibilities and research. The professional training of education managers was unparalleled at that time: it was long-lasting, systematic, methodologically and theoretically grounded, and made it possible to put the acquired knowledge immediately into the practice of school management (Märja, 2000, p. 10).

The restoration of Estonian independence in *1991* changed the overall legislation regulating the education system. One of the milestones in the history of adult education was passing the Adult Education Act in *1993,* which established the basis for legislative and educational policy in adult training, set up the legal basis for adult training and ensured legally guaranteed opportunities for adults. Estonia was one of the first among the former socialist countries which passed similar laws. The implementation of the Act had a major

influence on the role of adult education and its further development in Estonia (Märja et al., 2004, p. 239). The years *1990–2000* in Estonian adult education were the time of searching and of rapid changes, establishing and strengthening international relations and the major growth of cooperation between the public, private, and third sector. The Association of Estonian Adult Educators ANDRAS was established in 1991. This time also marks the start of the Estonian Adult Education National Programme and the creation of adult education legislation. Universities and professional education institutions were actively engaged in the creation and improvement of opportunities for adult learning and there were state financed or municipally funded evening secondary schools and adult upper secondary schools (Märja, 2000, pp. 52–53). In 1997 ANDRAS, first in the Baltic states, launched the Adult Learner's Week and Adult Education Forum in Estonia, which became the beginning of the creation and implementation of adult educators' training programmes. For various reasons, the national programme for adult education was not adopted. However, the discussion about it should be interpreted in the context of our time as an attempt to set up the strategic and methodological basis for the vision of adult education in Estonia, the main principles of which were declared in the Estonian non-formal education programme (Vihalemm, 1995). Despite the absence of doubts about the need for adult education and training, there was too little clarity of concepts and terminology. There were more ideas, thoughts and plans than strategic acts and future vision (Märja et al., 2004, p. 283).

1996 marks the beginning of significant changes in adult education, which were initiated by UNESCO and reflected in the adopted declarations and strategic development plans with the aims of creating opportunities for learning and enabling the lifelong learning of everyone (Adult Learning in a World of Risk, Agenda for the Future; UNESCO Institute for Education, 1997a, 1997b). The use of the term lifelong learning in different documents regulating education in Estonia for the most part matched the issues of adult education; however, it was not clear what exactly was meant by it and who, how much, for whom and for what purpose should create the opportunity for adult learning, how to regulate this by legislation, and whose task it is. According to the report for the educational commission of the EU (Märja & Vooglaid, 1995), adult education in Estonia was not considered a factor of social regulation and economics in the 1990s. The state regulation was insufficient and the information and statistical overview of adult learning and training were inadequate. However, despite the inaccuracy of the statistics, it is possible to note that the number of institutions and companies engaged in adult training was growing continuously from 1991 onwards. The training market was diverse and dynamic as far as training providers and content are concerned. However, there were regional problems with access to the professional complementary training as the majority of education providers were located in Tallinn. Despite the variety of opportunities for professional training in Estonia, the participation of the working age population in the training was low. For instance, in 1999 only 11% of the working age population took part in complementary and retraining courses; the majority of them were women with higher education. The people who needed the training most were the ones with poor education and lower

income, but very few of them participated in the trainings (Elukestva õppe vajaduste analüüs, 2002, p. 6).

The period of 1990–2000 is important in Estonian adult education history for many reasons. The decade was the period of formation of public and private institutions of adult education providers and the institutional structure of Estonian adult education (Märja, 2000, p. 44). Three non-governmental umbrella organisations for adult education were established at the beginning of the decade: the Association of Estonian Adult Educators ANDRAS, the Estonian Non-Formal Adult Education Association, and the Open Education Union. The latter two were engaged in the development of non-formal education and the promotion of its ideas (Vihalemm, 1998, p. 245), whereas the primary tasks of ANDRAS were related to the integration of adult education organisations and international cooperation.

The importance of the *period of 2000–2010* in the history of adult education in Estonia is connected with several issues. International cooperation and the transitional period before joining the EU broadened the learning opportunities for adults in higher education. The Bologna declaration (European Ministers of Education, 1999) changed the organisation of studies in higher education. The adoption of 3+2 study programmes initiated the significant growth of open curricula and opportunities for open studies in universities, thus affecting the age structure of the university student body. In 2001 Tallinn University opened bachelor's and master's study programmes in andragogy, giving opportunities to acquire higher education qualifications and continue the academic studies for everyone whose professional interests were connected with lifelong learning, adult education and training.

The framework of national professional standards, including those of an adult educator (established in 2004), aimed at the advancement of professional education, was established to systematically direct adult education development on the basis of data, visions and strategic programmes (Haridus- ja Teadusministeerium, 2009, p. 14). The period is also important for adult educational policy development as it coincides with the creation of the first National Adult Education Development Plan 2009–2013. Its implementation follows the principle of ensuring flexible opportunities and access to both formal and non-formal education for adults (Haridus- ja Teadusministeerium, 2009, p. 19).

The *period of 2010–2020* was the time after joining the EU and its educational space; it brought with it legislation regulations in adult education and diverse learning opportunities for adults. A significant amount of EU resources was invested in opportunities for lifelong learning. The numerous developments of the period include, for instance, participation in the Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies (PIAAC). The promotion of adult education was a consistent, cooperative, and purposeful activity and became network based, involving many stakeholder groups. The steady development of adult education over the years was summed up in the mid-term report of the Lifelong Learning Strategy in Estonia 2020: "The system of adult education in Estonia works relatively well" (Haridus- ja Teadusministeerium, 2019, p. 21).

ANDRAGOGY: DEVELOPMENT OF THE ACADEMIC DISCIPLINE AT TALLINN UNIVERSITY

The Chair of Andragogy and Educational Leadership was established at the Tallinn Pedagogical Institute in 1986 with the aim of developing and organising teaching and research activities in adult education and educational management; it has been providing training for adult education professionals for 37 years. The history and development of adult education in Estonia is also closely linked to the development of andragogy as an academic discipline: as a research and teaching strand it was and currently is the only independent academic unit in Estonian and Baltic States universities that focuses on the development of research and teaching at both the undergraduate and postgraduate level.

The bachelor's (180 European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System credits – ECTS, 3 years) and master's programmes (120 ECTS, 2 years) both titled "Andragogy" launched at Tallinn University in 2001. Today these programmes are part of the Lifelong and Non-Formal Education academic strand of the Institute of Educational Sciences at Tallinn University. The bachelor's programme has compulsory and core courses modules, as well as special modules: Adult Education and Educator; Adult Learning in Different Contexts. The master's programme consists of three main modules: Professional Development and Identity; Development, Training and Counselling Processes in the Context of Lifelong Learning, and Educational Research. Graduates of the programmes work in non-formal, formal, and informal learning institutions, state organisations, and private companies, for instance, as training managers and specialists, project leaders, human resource developers, and adult educators. The theoretical basis of the programmes is formed by the interdisciplinary concepts of educational and social sciences and based on social-cultural and sociological approaches to the culture of learning, focusing on the humanistic approach to the holistic development of the human being, a vision of the adult learner, and on theories of adult learning. The core values of the teaching practices are learner-centred development, attention to group processes, a focus on reflective, developmental, and group learning, and the active creation of meanings by learners themselves. During the studies, the learning-teaching context supports two interrelated processes: the interpersonal process (dialogue, interaction, and active participation) and the intrapersonal process (self-awareness, autonomy, responsibility, self-regulation, ability to reflect and construct knowledge about themselves, as well as deep, reflective, and critical learning).

Research and development projects have been considered important from the very beginning and included research, development, and teaching activities, international cooperation and participation in international networks. In addition to academic accreditation in 2004 and 2011 and evaluation of groups of educational curricula in 2016, in the period 2008–2015 the curricula of andragogy was the subject of expert analyses in several international research and cooperation projects (e.g. Teaching Adult Educators in Continuing and Higher Education (TEACH); Training of Adult Educators in Institutions of Higher Education: A Focus on Central, Eastern and South Eastern Europe; Adult Learning Professions in Europe (ALPINE): A Study of the Current Situation, Trends and Issues; Becoming Adult

Educators in the European Area (BAEA), and Recognition of Adult Educators Experiential and Accredited Learning). All of this has allowed for the comparison of curricula objectives, content, learning outcomes, and teaching practices to similar programmes at other European universities and become the basis for further development work.

An important event was the launch of the interdisciplinary international joint ERASMUS MUNDUS master's degree programme Adult Education for Social Change in cooperation with the University of Glasgow, the Open University of Cyprus, and the University of Malta in 2016. The programme is funded by the European Union for the period 2016–2025 and focuses on faculty and student mobility, international field placements, and consortium-based joint research. The programme offers the opportunity to participate in international placement, which will take place in three semesters in different countries during the mobility periods. Graduates of the programme will receive an international master's degree.

FROM ACADEMIC STUDIES TO LEARNING EXPERIENCES AND PROFESSIONAL IDENTITY: THEORETICAL CONSIDERATIONS

In designing the future directions of andragogy programmes and in the advancement of learning and teaching practice, it is important to explore and analyse the perceptions of learning and professional identities of the students and graduates of our programmes and the underpinnings of their attitudes to learning and their chosen educational and professional paths.

In the context of the Bologna process, bachelor's and master's programmes have undergone many changes during the years. Implementing and developing curricula is an opportunity to ensure the systematic and research based development of the programmes, their main task being the support of the learning process and the formation of our students' professional identity (Jõgi & Karu, 2020, p. 146). Several qualitative studies have been carried out during the years that focused on the learning, learning experience, and professional identity of the students and graduates of andragogy programmes (Jõgi & Karu, 2020; Karu, 2020; Karu & Jõgi, 2014; Raccioppi, 2023). The theoretical context of these studies is based on social-constructivist and social-cultural approaches and on adult learning theories. The main arguments for carrying out such studies in the context of academic programmes are found in *Linking Teaching and Research Disciplines and Departments* (Jenkins et al., 2007):

- academic departments are central to developing the links between field research and student learning;
- implications for better teaching and supporting learning at the university have to be constructed on the basis of research.

We consider the development of our students' professional identity as a learning process and an ongoing part of the formation of the professional identity of adult education professionals, the focus of which is developing an understanding of adult learning and the self as a learner.

Learning and learning experience are part of higher education studies, life, and identity. The theoretical research of learning has for a long time been focused on the humanistic, social-constructivist, and critical approach (Brookfield, 2005; Brookfield & Holst, 2014), and during the last decade also on holistic, social-cultural, and biographical approaches (Formenti & Castiglioni, 2014; Hoggan, 2016; Merriam, 2017). The researchers have raised important questions about psychological (Dirkx, 2006; Johnson & Taylor, 2006; Wolfe, 2006), phenomenological (Lonka, 2018; Yorks & Kasl, 2002), and social (Jarvis, 2011) aspects of adult education. The studies dealt with the processes of deep learning and their connection to the psychological and social well-being of adult students (Fujiwara, 2012; Schuller & Wattson, 2009), the formation of experiences and identity (Antikainen & Komonen, 2003), life course and biographical processes (Baumgartner, 2001; Biesta, 2008; Isopahkala-Bouret, 2017).

Adult learning is observed in different contexts, e.g., communities, voluntary associations, various areas of life like healthcare, employment, education, and in different organisations, e.g., universities (Fujiwara, 2012). The studies about adult learners are presented in literature on sociology, psychology, and educational philosophy with various epistemological, theoretical, and methodological approaches (Formenti & Castiglioni, 2014, p. 244), which all expand the overall understanding of the learner and learning. Learning in adult age is seen as an individual, emotional, social, lifelong, and life-embracing process. It is partly conscious, partly unconscious and unexpressed (Rossiter & Clark, 2007). Learning is related to human life, stories and time, supports adaptation to changes and coping with the challenges of adult life, self-realisation and development (Phillips & Soltis, 2015). Therefore adult learning is recognised to be lifelong, continuous, ongoing, and life-embracing. Peter Jarvis views adult learning as a lifelong and continuous process that takes place at any stage of life (Jarvis, 1998, p. 38) and conscious living as lifelong learning, emphasising that adults have always had the capacity to learn continuously and that this is not a new phenomenon, in earlier times there was simply less need for it (Jarvis, 2009).

Conceptions of adult learning have over the years been the subject of interest for many researchers studying the phenomenon, discourse, process, and experience of adult learning. According to the research traditions of learning as a lifelong process, the method of qualitative study is applied in life history research (Jarvis, 2011) and biographical study (Alheit, 2011; Alheit & Dausien, 2007). Learning comprehensions are variative and shaped through life and learning experiences, they differ from generation to generation and depend on the unique experience of the learners and their relations networks.

COMPREHENSIONS OF LEARNING AND THE FORMATION OF PROFESSIONAL IDENTITY IN THE CONTEXT OF LEARNING AT UNIVERSITY

In one of our first research forays into students' comprehensions of learning, we were interested in the following question (Karu & Jõgi, 2014): what are the comprehensions of students of self as a learner and as an adult educator in the professional studies context?

Empirical data for this research was collected during four semesters from 17 students aged 21 to 51 from different fields of adult education practice. We used multiple methods of data collection: reflective writing, thematic essays, and narrative interviews. The data was analysed using thematic analysis and pragmatic phenomenography (Karu & Jõgi, 2014, p. 111). The findings showed that the students' learning experience and comprehensions of learning are variative. The comprehensions of learning were strongly connected to methodological and teaching approaches that we used in the teaching practice and linked to previous experience and self-conceptions. At the same time there was a common and pervasive understanding of learning as an ongoing process. Learning is experienced as a significant, continuous, enjoyable process and is associated with the transformation of knowledge and self:

> I think learning experiences are really special and significant for me as an educator. Since learning for me is a continuous and lifelong process, it is basically a hobby, then it is ok for me to keep a rhythm that makes the learning process enjoyable. (Student V, 31 years old)

Comprehensions of learning are the foundation of professional knowledge and a part of identity formation, and learning is also considered a meaningful part of life:

> I believe that learning is beneficial and meaningful if you have an internal interest and motivation for lifelong learning. Continuous learning has become a part of my life, also a part of my professional work. (Student A, 49 years old)

The idea of lifelong learning is maximalist, contradictory, and allows for a relatively wide interpretation (Naumanen at al., 2008b, p. 263; Saar, 2010). The identity of an adult learner is complex, develops during academic studies, in the course of the whole life and is based on the adult's perceptions of self and comprehensions of learning and, in addition to social factors, is also affected by individual peculiarities (Sfard & Prusak, 2005). Such an identity is "socially given, maintained and socially changing" (Antikainen et al., 2009, p. 221).

From an andragogical point of view, the learners themselves and their personal and learning experiences constitute the resource for learning and identity development (Knowles et al., 2015). We consider experiences and learning to be essential pre-requisites for adult learning, including the learner's identity and experiences, in the context of education and course of life (Elder et al., 2003) on the basis of the phenomenological and narrative approach (van Manen, 2001) and P. Jarvis's (1992) model of social learning.

In our later research on the development of the professional identity of our students, we approached professional identity from the social-cultural point of view which emphasises the relationship of identity with learning and social context. The socio-cultural approach links the learning comprehensions, learning context, and professional activities with learning and identity formation processes. Based on Wenger`s (1998) ideas that learning becomes meaningful in the light of identity formation and learning considered is

the transformation of identity, we understand professional identity as an inter-relational, lifelong, and dialogical process that is socially constructed through learning, discourses, and interactions; it develops during the process of learning, which involves reflection on the learning experience that shapes the learner self and learner identity (Jõgi & Karu, 2020, p. 149). The focus of this study was on the formation of professional identity in the context of learning at the university and to look at how a professional identity is formed during and at the end of academic studies, as well as how students construct their learning experiences and understanding of being a learner and an adult education professional. The sample consisted of two groups of undergraduate and postgraduate students (N-64). The empirical data was collected using a survey with open questions concerning learning and experiences of learning, and written self-reflections from students' learning portfolios. The collected data was analysed using pragmatic phenomenography analysis (Jõgi & Karu, 2020, p. 151).

The findings from this research showed that professional identities develop through learning experience, which shapes the learner's self and learner's identity:

> Learning at the university has given me the direction and the key for becoming an adult educator and andragogue. It's up to me what kind of doors I will open with this key. (Postgraduate student K, 24 years old).

The sense of professional identity becomes stronger over time, but is still developing until the end of one's studies. The creation of the learner's identity and contextual learning are going on at the same time and manifesting through changes in one's comprehensions of learning and future self.

> I see myself as a lifelong learner who supports and learns to learn from others. I have understood that learning is a deeply personal and internal process for each person. I am like an artist who chooses the colours and creates my own painting. (Graduate student S, 26 years old)

The formation of professional identity was experienced by students over time as a conscious and also partly unconscious process, an uncertain learning journey, which involved present, past and future, and was explained using similar metaphors: the journey, travelling, discovery trip, trail, mission trip. The data analysis showed that the pre-requisites supporting identity and learning are self-awareness, curiosity, creativity, ability to adapt, and the skills to create and develop social relations. These pre-requisites may be considered the learner's identity features which support adaptation and indicate the connections between life and learning, the sense of need for lifelong learning, strong motivation to commit to the learning process, self-reliance, and learning skills (Crick et al., 2004; Knapper & Cropley, 2000).

Academic studies and learning experience enable students to construct a strong learner identity, which in turn impacts the formation of professional identity. The long-term

study of generations of learners carried out in Finland demonstrates similar findings and highlights the impact of previous learning experience on adult identity and life choices, including educational choices (Antikainen, 2006, p. 243; Antikainen & Komonen, 2003). The earlier typical linear model of an adult life course, with youth being spent learning, followed by the working period and retirement, has nowadays been replaced for many people by the overlapping model, where the borders between personal life, leisure time, study and work are getting blurry, overlap or are missing, so one studies when there is a need, an opportunity or interest (Vanttaja & Rinne, 2008, p. 89). Thus, the formation of the adult learner's identity and learning is life-embracing and lifelong, related to individual experience and influenced by the studies, learning process and changes in learning comprehensions. Comprehensions of learning, the learner`s identity, and identity formation are crucial resources in the development of professional identity in the learning context during academic studies but also for the future professional development of adult education professionals.

One of the most recent alumni researches (Raccioppi, 2023) focused on analysing the sense of professional identity in andragogy programme graduates. The research question was how the professional identity of graduates is formed. The theoretical framework of this study drew on Knud Illeris' (2014) identity structure, three-dimensional approach to learning and Jack Mezirow's (2000) transformative learning theory. A purposive sample of 6 graduates was formed. The data was collected through narrative interviews and analysed using narrative analysis (Raccioppi, 2023, p. 19). The findings showed that professional identity is formed through transformative learning in the tension between cognitive, emotional, and social dimensions. It is important to add that professional identity formation is not a process dependent on academic studies; however, previous learning experience at university influences how professional tasks, different life events, and professional identity are interpreted and what meanings are given to the experiences and identity formation.

There are similar findings in our previous research (Jõgi & Karu, 2020; Karu & Jõgi, 2014). Graduates conceptualise learning as a lifelong and continuous process and interpret a wide range of experiences as a lifelong learning process. In terms of professional identity formation, three main factors emerged: environment, social relations, and transformative events. The process of identity formation is dominated by adaptation, independence, self-transcendence, and self-esteem, the meanings of learning, courage, responsibility, pushing boundaries, social relationships, learning, and the uniqueness of people and experiences. The common meaning was that "the academic studies in andragogy programmes offered a possibility to study and learn like adults, not like passive students in other university programmes" (Graduate student K, 32). The learning environment and andragogy studies were highlighted as meaningful experiences related to life changes, life events, people and self-reflection, expanding one's world view, and noticing learning (Racioppi, 2023).

Our previous findings also showed that the sense of identity becomes stronger during academic studies that have a particular impact on the development of professional identity

in relation to comprehensions of learning, being a learner, and the vision of oneself as a learner (Jõgi & Karu, 2020). Thus, analysis of the empirical data confirms this and at the same time suggests that personal, social, and professional identities are closely inter-related. Professional identity formation is also at the forefront of the work environment, providing opportunities for continued learning and for understanding and supporting others. The graduates' narratives confirmed that professional identity ensures professional development by enabling people to relate to their own personal identity.

In summary, the findings from all three qualitative studies discussed above suggest that the sense of professional identity in students and graduates becomes stronger over time and continues to develop as a self-developmental process with professional, education-al, and personal choices. The findings also highlight that the professional orientation and identity of our students during their studies needs to be systematically reflected and supported. The development and formation of a professional identity is a complex and interrelated process, where students need new ways of defining themselves as learners and professionals in adult education. Systematic self and group reflections, including written reflections on learning experiences and future selves during the academic studies, are cru-cial individual and collective resources for professional identity formation.

CONCLUSIONS

In 2021 we honoured, together with our students, colleagues and social partners, the 35th anniversary of the academic field of andragogy at Tallinn University with the conference "Celebrating Learning". Andragogy as an academic discipline for us has the potential for sustainable development at Tallinn University. The curricula taught in its framework will in the nearer future be affected by international cooperation, the interdisciplinary approach, and the solutions of novel educational technology. Estonian researchers' per-ceptions of andragogy as a scientific discipline may change over time due to disciplinary challenges and interdisciplinary influences. The future of andragogy as an academic dis-cipline is a future full of challenges and requires continued and systematic development and research activities.

The historical overview and the findings presented in this paper have value for further discussion and development of andragogy programmes, especially in discussions on the advancement of learning and teaching practices of adult education professionals. This paper does not provide a complete overview of adult education and andragogy as an aca-demic discipline in Estonia, but will hopefully spark interest or curiosity for comparative research on the professionalisation of adult education and the development of profession-al identity in adult education professionals.

For the most part, the stories of researchers, developers, and university professors in Estonia and other European universities who have contributed the most to the teaching and learning process and to studies in adult education, devotedly working, cooperating, believing and hoping, still remain unwritten and untold, not shared or analysed. That

is why I hope this paper will be of interest to those researchers, scholars, and doctoral students who are motivated to carry out comparative studies of adult education and wish to capture the narrative of how andragogy as an academic discipline and adult education developed in Europe. Until now such an overview or grand narrative has been lacking.

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Monika Staab, Regina Egetenmeyer

STUDENTS' REASONS FOR PARTICIPATING IN INTERNATIONAL TEACHING AND LEARNING SETTINGS IN ADULT EDUCATION DEGREE PROGRAMMES

ABSTRACT

Based on the assumption that international perspectives play a rather minor role for adult education students in their studies, this paper researches the reasons for participating in international teaching and learning situations during their studies. The paper draws on data from 22 interviews with graduates of three master's programmes with a focus on adult education at the Universities of Würzburg, Belgrade, and Florence. Based on this data, the reasons for participation include academic, career-related, personal, social, and language-related aspects as well as external circumstances. These reasons indicate starting points for adult education programmes to promote the engagement of their students with international, intercultural, and global perspectives. This can help tailor international teaching and learning settings to students' needs and requirements.

Keywords: *motivation, internationalisation, adult education, international mobility, academic professionalisation*

ZAKAJ SE ŠTUDENTI PROGRAMOV IZOBRAŽEVANJA ODRASLIH ODLOČAJO ZA SODELOVANJE PRI POUČEVANJU IN UČENJU V MEDNARODNIH OKVIRIH – POVZETEK

Na podlagi predpostavke, da imajo mednarodne perspektive precej majhno vlogo v študiju študentov programov izobraževanja odraslih, ta prispevek raziskuje, zakaj ti študenti med študijem sodelujejo pri mednarodnem poučevanju in učenju. Članek temelji na analizi 22 intervjujev z diplomanti treh magistrskih programov s poudarkom na izobraževanju odraslih na Univerzi v Würzburgu, Univerzi v Beogradu in Univerzi v Firencah. Rezultati so pokazali, da razlogi za sodelovanje vključujejo izobrazbene, karierne, osebne, družbene in jezikovne vidike, razlog pa so lahko tudi zunanje okoliščine. Rezultati raziskave ponujajo izhodišča za to, kako bi lahko študijski programi na področju izobraževanja odraslih spodbujali angažiranost študentov v mednarodnih, medkulturnih in globalnih okvirih. Z njihovim upoštevanjem bi lahko okvire mednarodnega poučevanja in učenja uspešneje prilagajali potrebam študentov.

Ključne besede: *motivacija, internacionalizacija, izobraževanje odraslih, mednarodna mobilnost, profesionalizacija v akademskem okolju*

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INTRODUCTION

The Bologna Process, which has its beginnings in the Sorbonne Conference and Declaration of 1998 and the Bologna Declaration of 1999 (European Commission et al., 2020, p. 13), has seen study systems across Europe shift towards bachelor's and master's degrees. This has affected adult education programmes. In line with its objectives, the Bologna Process has led to the harmonisation of European study systems and the creation of a European Higher Education Area. The resulting increase in study system comparability has the potential to create greater international mobility between degree programmes and other aspects of internationalisation (Allemann-Ghionda, 2014, p. 669). This is evident, for example, in the growing number of internationally mobile students in Europe and worldwide (UIS.Stat, 2023). The Erasmus programme, which was established in the 1980s, further contributed to this development in Europe (de Wit & Altbach, 2021, pp. 30–31). However, the internationalisation of higher education does not refer to international mobility alone, but describes the whole process of integrating international, intercultural, or global dimensions into all areas of higher education (de Wit & Hunter, 2015; Knight, 2004, 2008). The term "international" is used here in a broad sense to refer not only to the relationship between two countries, but also to supranational (above the state level) and transnational (below the state level) perspectives (Egetenmeyer, 2022, p. 28). "Intercultural" encompasses the diversity of cultures (Knight, 2008, pp. 21–22), whereby culture refers to a shared knowledge and familiarity that creates a certain degree of normality between people (Rathje, 2006). "Global" in turn refers to the worldwide perspective (Knight, 2008, p. 22).

With regard to adult education programmes, however, it can be assumed that the participation of students in international mobility is rather low. International studies point to lower levels of international student activity in education when it comes to student participation in international mobility (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development [OECD], 2021, p. 217). This is despite the fact that numerous studies related to international mobility point to its positive effects on students' academic, career, personal, and linguistic development (e.g., Amendola & Restaino, 2017; Egetenmeyer, 2012; European Commission, 2019; International and Comparative Studies for Students and Practitioners in Adult Education and Lifelong Learning [INTALL], 2021; Özışık, 2017; van Mol, 2014; Woisch & Willige, 2015). Moreover, it can be argued that there is a growing need for adult education practitioners who can meet the demands of an increasingly global and internationally networked field of work. This can be attributed to the target group of adult education becoming more diverse (e.g. due to migration), the growing influence of international and European policies on the structures of adult education, and the development of an international market for continuing education (Egetenmeyer, 2017, pp. 129–131). Consequently, this raises the question as to why the participation rate of students in adult education seems to be rather low. And vice versa: what prompts adult education students to participate in such programmes?

This article analyses the reasons of graduates of three master's programmes with a focus on adult education at three different European universities for their participation in international teaching and learning settings. International teaching and learning settings are understood as organised and planned didactic arrangements (Ludwig, 2012) that integrate international, intercultural, or global perspectives into teaching and learning. In addition to the well-known international mobility programmes (study abroad and internships abroad), there are other forms of cross-border teaching and learning settings, such as seasonal schools, international conferences and workshops abroad, or international joint programmes. Furthermore, degree programmes can incorporate international teaching and learning settings at home, as part of internationalisation at home[1] (Beelen & Jones, 2015; Beelen & Leask, 2011). This can include teaching by international guest lecturers, the presence of international students, the integration of international topics into teaching, internationally oriented certificates, or international conferences or workshops at the home university. In the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, digitalised forms of teaching and learning are also playing an increasingly important role in international education (Chang & Gomes, 2022). Although the calls for internationalisation at home (Beelen & Jones, 2015; Beelen & Leask, 2011) and internationalisation of curricula[2] (Brewer & Leask, 2022; Leask, 2015) have received increased attention in higher education policy discourse in recent years (de Wit, 2019), forms of cross-border mobility continue to be the focus of statistics and empirical studies. This article is devoted to the entire spectrum of international teaching and learning settings – both cross-border and at home. The aim is to provide a broader perspective on the reasons for participation in international initiatives in adult education programmes.

To this end, an analytical framework for the study is laid out with reference to motivation and higher education research, and the methodological approach is clarified. The reasons provided in the available data are presented, from which possible starting points for the promotion of international teaching and learning settings for adult education programmes are derived.

RESEARCH ON PARTICIPATION IN INTERNATIONAL TEACHING AND LEARNING SETTINGS

When looking at reasons for participation, the focus is on the question of what motivates students to participate in international teaching and learning settings. In the

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1　*Internationalisation at home* concerns the intentional integration of international, intercultural, or global perspectives into the learning environment of students at their home university. The goal is to provide all students with the opportunity to gain international and intercultural experience, regardless of their mobility abroad (Beelen & Jones, 2015; Beelen & Leask, 2011).

2　*Internationalisation of the curriculum* refers to the conscious and sustainable integration of international, intercultural, or global perspectives into the curriculum. It refers both to teaching and learning settings at the home university and to cross-border teaching and learning settings. The term "curriculum" includes the formal curriculum of the programme, the informal curriculum (e.g., additional support services), and the hidden curriculum (e.g., specific literature selection or teaching methods; Brewer & Leask, 2022; Leask, 2015).

psychology of learning, motives are understood as the "relatively stable (dispositional, latent) readiness to be activated to act in certain situations. The activated state in a particular situation is called *motivation*." (Edelmann & Wittmann, 2019, p. 214, own translation). In other words, motives can explain why a person acts in a certain way. In addition, situational circumstances, in form of incentives, regulate motivation (Edelmann & Wittmann, 2019). The participation of students in international teaching and learning settings can consequently be the result of the interplay of individual motives and situational incentives. Students may participate for their own sake (e.g. curiosity, personal interest = intrinsic motivation) or to strive for certain outcomes or consequences (e.g. knowledge gain = extrinsic motivation). Furthermore, their participation may be triggered more by themselves or externally by other people or factors (Edelmann & Wittmann, 2019, p. 215). By exploring the reasons for participation, the analysis examines both motives and incentives that motivate students to participate in international teaching and learning settings.

In higher education research, numerous studies have identified various motives and situational incentives that are decisive for participation in international teaching and learning settings. However, the results mainly relate to international mobility (e.g. study abroad, internships abroad). Focusing on the reasons for participation, research highlights personal, academic, social, career-related and language-related aspects (Amendola & Restaino, 2017; de Winter et al., 2021; European Commission, 2019; Lesjak et al., 2015; Marciniak & Winnicki, 2019; Woisch & Willige, 2015). In these studies, motives of enjoyment and experience are mostly in the foreground when it comes to students' participation in international mobility (Lesjak et al., 2015, p. 861; Marciniak & Winnicki, 2019, p. 102; Woisch & Willige, 2015, p. 71). These can be considered as personal reasons, which also include the desire for personal development (e.g. development of self-confidence; European Commission, 2019, p. 74; Woisch & Willige, 2015, p. 72). In addition, a study by the German Academic Exchange Service, based on a panel of the German Centre for Higher Education and Science Research, found that students are more willing to participate if their families and schools give them a positive impression of international mobility and/ or if students have already had experience of international mobility abroad in the form of a school exchange, language study trip, or internship (Heublein et al., 2015, pp. 39–40). A longitudinal panel with students from the USA reinforces the assumption that previous international experiences during studies (here: foreign language study and international virtual exchange) positively influence the decision to study abroad (Lee et al., 2022). Students' previous international experiences and attitudes towards internationality can thus be seen as further personal reasons.

Academic reasons relate to the enhancement of professional knowledge and skills (Lesjak et al., 2015, p. 854; Woisch & Willige, 2015, p. 72). In this context, German students show a higher willingness to participate in international mobility if they consider their own academic performance to be positive (Heublein et al., 2015, pp. 34–36).

Career-related reasons are linked to career goals and better career opportunities (European Commission, 2019, p. 74; Lesjak et al., 2015, p. 854; Woisch & Willige, 2015, p. 72). In a study on the motivation of German social work students to participate in international activities during their studies, it was shown that the willingness to participate is higher among students who perceive international aspects as important for their occupational field (Petrow, 2013, p. 12). This suggests that students may see greater added value in participating in international experiences in their studies for occupational fields that are considered more internationally oriented. This could partly explain the differences in participation in international mobility by subject and level of study (OECD, 2021, p. 217).

Furthermore, social reasons relate to meeting and interacting with new people (European Commission, 2019, p. 74; Lesjak et al., 2015, p. 854; Marciniak & Winnicki, 2019, p. 102), without primarily seeking to gain advantages in the workplace. Language-related reasons focus, on the other hand, on improving foreign language skills (European Commission, 2019, p. 74; Lesjak et al., 2015, p. 854; Marciniak & Winnicki, 2019, p. 102, Woisch & Willige, 2015, p. 72).

To explore the reasons for participation, it may also be instructive to examine the reasons against participation. It can be assumed that the reasons against participation can conversely also lead to participation. In this context, Bilecen and van Mol (2017, p. 1250) point to disparities in access to (and benefits from) international mobility that can depend on labour market structures, national policy structures, and higher education institutions, as well as individual factors, including gender, age, and socio-economic background. In student surveys on participation in international mobility, family and social aspects, as well as financial and organisational obstacles, are commonly identified as reasons for students' non-participation (de Winter et al., 2021, pp. 517–518; European Commission, 2019, p. 73; Middendorff et al., 2017, pp. 21–22; Woisch & Willige, 2015, pp. 94–95). These findings suggest that external circumstances, such as financial aspects, may also have an influence on participation in international teaching and learning settings.

The participation of students in international teaching and learning settings must consequently be considered against the background of various factors that can hinder participation, but also promote it. Based on previous studies, the reasons can be categorised as academic, career-related, personal, social, and language-related. According to Petrow (2013), it should be noted that several motives usually play a role in the decision to participate in international mobility. Furthermore, it could be assumed that external circumstances also influence the motivation to participate.

It should be noted that the outlined studies focus almost exclusively on international mobility and do not consider the full range of international teaching and learning settings that might be available to students. Furthermore, there is a lack of data on the participation of adult education students. This article aims to provide further information on this.

METHODOLOGY

This article draws on interview data collected as part of a doctoral project. A total of 22 guided interviews with graduates[3] of three master's programmes with a focus on adult education at the universities of Würzburg, Belgrade, and Florence are the basis for the analysis. The three research fields were chosen in order to convey a differentiated picture of the research object. For example, in the master's programmes in Würzburg and Florence, adult education is only part of an educational science programme, while the programme in Belgrade focuses exclusively on adult education. In addition, the Universities of Würzburg and Florence have been involved in the Erasmus programme for many years, while the University of Belgrade, located outside the EU, has only been able to participate in the Erasmus programme as a full member since 2019. It was also important that different international teaching and learning settings were offered in the degree programmes in order to cover a wide range of international settings. The degree programmes have also been involved in joint cooperation.

The sample consists of 8 graduates of the master's programme in Würzburg, 8 graduates of the master's programme in Belgrade, and 6 graduates of the master's programme in Florence. An interview guide was used to explore the underlying research interest in a structured way while at the same time allowing for the necessary openness (Friebertshäuser & Langer, 2013, p. 439). The graduates were asked which international teaching and learning settings they had participated in during their master's studies, what their reasons for participating were, what they took away from their participation and how this affects their current career path. The interviews offer a retrospective understanding of the reasons for participation. The interviewees' statements relate to their international experiences prior to the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic. The interviews were conducted almost exclusively by telephone between February 2020 and July 2020. The sample was selected according to predefined criteria, with respondents having completed their master's degree and having participated in international activities during their studies. The interviews were recorded and transcribed by the researcher with the support of a transcription company, using a uniform transcription system based on Dresing and Pehl (2018). In order to make personal data non-identifiable, the interviews were anonymised by aggregating information (Meyermann & Porzelt, 2014). The graduates signed consent forms for participation and the use of personal data.

The data collected was analysed according to the content-structuring qualitative content analysis method by Kuckartz (2018). This procedure allows qualitative data to be analysed in a systematic and structured way. In the first step, a basic understanding of the data material was gained in an initial data review. This was followed by the formation of formal categories that enable a thematic structuring (Reinhoffer, 2008, p. 131). Based on the

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3   Of the 22 interviews, 20 were conducted with graduates of the three master's programmes. Two additional interviews were conducted with students who had yet to complete their master's studies. In the following, all interviewees are referred to as "graduates".

theoretical considerations, the following categories of reasons for participation could be formulated deductively: academic, career-related, personal, social, language-related, and external circumstances. In the next step, these categories were further differentiated in terms of content. The data was analysed in a cross-national way. This analysis allows more generalised assumptions to be drawn about how to promote participation in international teaching and learning settings in adult education programmes. In some cases, however, country-specific or university-specific assumptions were identified. The university of origin of the graduates is noted for traceability in the data cited below.

Limitations in the data analysis are mainly due to linguistic aspects. When conducting the interviews, language barriers on the part of the interviewed graduates from Belgrade and Florence, for whom the interviews were not conducted in their first language, as well as technical faults during the telephone interviews, led to interruptions and difficulties in understanding. For this reason, statements that were not clearly understandable were not taken into account in the data analysis. The statements of the graduates of the master's programme in Würzburg were translated from German into English, which is marked accordingly in the quotations below. In addition, the graduates' reasons for participating in international teaching and learning settings had to be reflected in terms of social desirability, as the interviewer worked as a research assistant in adult education at the University of Würzburg. In this way, the graduates' answers could tend to correspond to external expectations (Bogner & Landrock, 2015, p. 2). Such statements are not included in the analysis.

REASONS FOR PARTICIPATION

Across the graduates of the three master's programmes, different reasons for participating in teaching and learning settings can be identified. These can be divided into academic, career-related, personal, and language-related reasons as well as external circumstances.

The reasons refer to the graduates' participation in the following international teaching and learning settings: 1. cross-border teaching and learning settings: study abroad (12[4]), internship abroad (3), seasonal school (19), international conferences or workshops abroad (2), assisting in an international teaching and learning setting abroad (1); and 2. international teaching and learning settings at home: teaching of international guest lecturers (9), presence of international students in teaching (4), international topics in teaching (2), internationally oriented certificate (5), international conferences or workshops at the home university (2), internship with international orientation (1), assisting in an international teaching and learning setting at the home university (4).

The international teaching and learning settings may vary in the three master's programmes. The international teaching and learning settings are only partially embedded in the formal curriculum of the programmes. As a result, graduates were largely free to

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4   The numbers indicate how many of the 22 graduates report their participation in the international teaching and learning settings.

decide whether and in which international teaching and learning settings they would like to participate (Staab, forthcoming).

Academic reasons

Graduates' participation in international teaching and learning settings is based on reasons related to their studies. It involves the acquisition of academic knowledge. From the data, it appears that one reason is to *learn about different perspectives in education and adult education* through interaction and communication with students and lecturers from other countries. For example, being taught by international guest lecturers provides graduates with new, additional perspectives on the topics covered in their master's programme.

> I mean, in the bachelor's degree, which was purely in German, I'll say that we learned a lot about the education system here, about adult education/continuing education, about the different concepts. And I just found it incredibly exciting to see how things work in an international context. (I 1.2, 92–96; University of Würzburg; own translation)[5]

Another identifiable reason for the graduates is to *learn about new topics in education and adult education* by participating in international teaching and learning settings. As one of the graduates describes, she wants to learn about comparative research by participating in a seasonal school dealing with a topic that is not taught at her university (I 3.4; University of Florence).

The graduates' participation in international teaching and learning is also motivated by the desire to *learn about different teaching and learning methods*. By participating in international teaching and learning settings, graduates want to experience what kind of teaching and learning methods are used at other universities and by other lecturers. This enables them to expand their methodological and didactic knowledge: "And yes, to look beyond the horizon and see how they implement methodology and didactics, what are the current measures for learning" (I 1.1, 89-91; University of Würzburg; own translation).

Closely related to this is the desire to *learn about studying education and adult education in another country*. This reason is mentioned in the context of studying abroad in particular. By spending time studying at another university, graduates want to learn and experience how students of the same subject study in another country.

The academic reasons given indicate that graduates hope to acquire additional academic knowledge through their participation. It seems particularly interesting for the graduates to learn more about international perspectives in adult education.

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5 The information following the interview quotes refers to the interview identification number, the line number in the interview transcript, the university from which the graduates graduated and whether the interview quotes were translated from their original language into English.

Career-related reasons

Other reasons given by the graduates are related to their career development. The data shows that one reason for graduates to participate in international teaching and learning settings is to *improve their opportunities on the labour market*. They assume that future employers will value their international experience and that this will give them an advantage when looking for a job.

> Well, there were two reasons actually. First one, it's an honest reason. I mean, because of the situation in Serbia and everything, I couldn't find a proper job and I wanted to just upskill myself a bit. And I thought that's the good way to do it. (I 2.1, 135-137; University of Belgrade)

As this quote from a Serbian graduate shows, the employment situation in one's own country seems to be related to participation in international teaching and learning settings. Career-related reasons tend to be linked to the national labour market situation.

In connection with participation in international conferences, the reason to *build a professional network* also becomes apparent. Networking with different members of the field of adult education seems to be beneficial to one of the graduates for future collaborations, for example in joint projects (I. 2.8; University of Belgrade).

It is evident from the data that graduates associate their participation in international teaching and learning settings with benefits for their future careers. This may be related to the respective labour market situation in their home countries or to career aspirations.

Personal reasons

Participating in international teaching and learning settings is also motivated by personal reasons. It relates to personal experiences and aspects that are not related to academic or career goals. In terms of graduates' participation in a study abroad or seasonal school, one reason identified in the data is to *take on a personal challenge*. Going abroad is perceived by graduates both as a personal challenge and as an opportunity to grow from this experience.

Furthermore, the reason to *broaden one's perspective* by participating in international teaching and learning settings is evident in the data. This reason is mentioned in particular in relation to experience abroad: "I really wanted to go abroad again […] I need this change for myself, to get new impressions that I can then process and compare or reflect, question with what I already know, so to speak" (I 1.8, 97-103; University of Würzburg; own translation).

For one graduate, who has work and family commitments in addition to her master's degree, an additional reason for attending a two-week seasonal school can be identified. This is that participating gives her *time off from her daily routine*. The two-week programme, which is combined with a trip to another country, gives the interviewee the opportunity to detach herself from work and family commitments and to concentrate fully on herself and her studies during this time (I 3.3; University of Florence).

The reason to *travel to another country* is illustrated by an interview with another graduate about her participation in a study abroad programme. She expresses a particular interest in getting to know the host country and region and exploring it from a tourist point of view (I 2.5; University of Belgrade).

In the data, it becomes evident that graduates also justify their participation in different teaching and learning settings by wanting to *gain new international experience due to previous school or study-related experiences*. The graduates report that they have already had their first international experiences during school or studies, which was a positive experience for them and made them want to experience more. This is illustrated by the following example:

> But with [Professor X from England]. And that was such a great seminar. It was such a great lecturer, who was so passionate about adult education that it aroused my enthusiasm and I realised, 'Oh, okay, there's something new and exciting. I'd like to take a closer look at that.' And so it was that [...] after the seminar [...] the applications for the Winter School started. And I thought to myself, 'I have to do that. I just have to be there.' (I 1.7, 44-51; University of Würzburg; own translation)

Participation in a seminar by an international guest lecturer arouses the graduate's personal interest in gaining further international experience during her studies. It motivated her to attend a seasonal school. Consequently, positive previous international experiences in a school or university context seem to strengthen personal interest in internationality and motivate participation in further international teaching and learning settings.

Furthermore, it can be seen in the data that graduates participate in international teaching and learning settings because they *have an interest in international experiences due to their family background*. This reasoning, however, appears to be more based on an underlying interest in internationality, as one graduate describes below:

> Well, I think I am someone who is basically very interested internationally. My parents always made sure that we had some international contacts relatively early on. My mum was a student when we were children and she brought a fellow student with her who was there for an exchange semester from Zimbabwe. So this international contact is something I've always liked. (I 1.7, 439-444; University of Würzburg; own translation)

In the quotation, it becomes clear that international experiences in one's own family can awaken an interest in gaining international experiences in studies later on when these are considered positive. However, it seems that this interest may not be the sole reason for participation, but rather has a reinforcing effect on other reasons.

From the previous sections, it appears that graduates participate in international teaching and learning settings because they associate such participation with opportunities for

their personal development and personal growth. However, the specific reasons may vary from person to person due to different previous experiences, needs, and wants.

Social reasons

Social reasons are mentioned among graduates in relation to their participation in study abroad and seasonal schools. Here, graduates justify their participation with the opportunity to *network with people from other countries*. Getting to know people from different backgrounds is expressed by the graduates as an important motivating factor: "And first of all I participated in international offers to meet and to get to know people from other countries and cultures who like me are studying adult education in order to compare our ideas or our experience" (I 3.3, 51-54; University of Florence).

In this case, no career motives are associated with it, but rather social aspects are standing in the foreground. There is also no explicit reference to gaining academic knowledge through the exchange. Getting to know and sharing experiences with people from other contexts seems to be the central aspect.

Language-related reasons

Language-related reasons are also cited by graduates with regard to their participation in international teaching and learning settings. In the data, the reason to *expand their foreign language skills* is expressed among the graduates. This can relate to acquiring basic knowledge of English or other languages as expressed below:

> So first, I decided to do this experience in abroad because first, I didn't speak English. For me, I think that it's really important to know English and you can speak with the other people. [...] And second, also because I wanted to learn a little bit German [...] (I 3.6, 280-290; University of Florence).

Furthermore, this reason may also be linked to the desire to improve English skills in the field of adult education, e.g. with regard to specialist terminology (I 2.8; University of Belgrade). However, language-related reasons seem to be rather less pronounced among the interviewed master's programme graduates.

External circumstances

In addition to the reasons mentioned above, graduates name external circumstances as reasons for their participation in international teaching and learning settings. Their participation is thus stimulated by external persons or factors. One reason can be identified in the fact that graduates *feel attracted by the structural arrangement of the settings*. For example, one graduate says that she wanted to participate in a seasonal school because the format, which included excursions and non-curricular activities in addition to lectures, appealed to her (I 1.5; University of Würzburg). The time component also plays a role, especially when it comes to study abroad and seasonal school. Graduates choose to participate in these international teaching and learning settings because they allow them to

go abroad for only a few weeks to a few months and do not require a stay abroad of six months or longer. This seems easier to reconcile with other commitments and is less of an obstacle (I 1.4, I 3.2; University of Würzburg). In addition, the subject-specific relevance of the study abroad (I 2.4; University of Belgrade) as well as the financial support (I 2.5; University of Belgrade) are further aspects for the graduates. It is also perceived as positive that information is provided by the university to support the organisation of study abroad (I 1.4; University of Würzburg).

In addition, it can be seen in the data that graduates justify their participation by saying that they *feel obliged to take part*. However, this reason was only given by graduates of the master's programme in Würzburg. The graduates refer to participation in seminars by international guest lecturers and a seasonal school, which earn credits in their studies. The graduates participate because they perceive the offers as an integral part of their curriculum (I 1.4, I 1.6, I 1.7; University of Würzburg). This seems to be related to the fact that their participation can be accredited in their studies.

Another identifiable reason is that graduates are *encouraged to participate by the academic unit.*[6] This is done by advertising the opportunity or by approaching the graduates directly.

> I just got a call from a professor and she said, 'You can apply for winter school if you want.' I said, 'Yes, what's that?' She said, 'It's really good, some lectures, and you will be two weeks in Germany' I said, 'Yes, okay. Why not?' 'And everything is paid for you,' and I said, 'Yes, okay. Why not?' (I 2.1, 293-297; University of Belgrade)

As described in the example above, the graduate is motivated to participate in the seasonal school by a professor in her master's programme. The graduate was informed about this opportunity and invited to participate.

Likewise, it is evident in the data that graduates can *be encouraged to participate by exchanging experiences with students*. This is illustrated by the following quote.

> I also talked to some people who had already been there the year before or in spring, and then I went in summer. And I listened to their experiences, what it was like, and they were able to recommend it to me, which is why I finally decided to go there. (I 1.4, 89-93; University of Würzburg; own translation)

The exchange with former mobile students can encourage graduates to take part in international teaching and learning offers, as in this case with regard to studying abroad. The exchange seems to give them reassurance and remove any remaining doubts.

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6   The umbrella term "academic unit" is used to refer to a department, school, chair, or professorship. It means a unit within a faculty that is active in teaching and/or research in a specific subject area.

The preceding remarks clearly show that external circumstances can contribute to motivating graduates to participate in international teaching and learning settings.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The graduates give reasons for their participation in international teaching and learning settings related to academic studies, career, and language as well as social and personal aspects, and external circumstances. This is in line with the findings of previous studies, which mostly refer to international mobility across disciplines (Amendola & Restaino, 2017; de Winter et al., 2021; European Commission, 2019; Lesjak et al., 2015; Marciniak & Winnicki, 2019; Woisch & Willige, 2015). With reference to the identified reasons, possible starting points can be derived for adult education programmes to promote the engagement of their students with international, intercultural, and global perspectives.

As shown in the data, participation in international teaching and learning settings can be associated with an academic interest and added value. Learning about new perspectives and content in adult education that can enrich previous studies seems appealing. Through participation, graduates wish to broaden their experience and knowledge in the field of adult education. Furthermore, there is an expectation that participation will contribute to their personal development and to the development of their foreign language skills. Consequently, it may be relevant to make adult education students more aware of the opportunities for their professional and personal development that come with participation in international teaching and learning settings. This can highlight the added value of participation, even if it requires additional time and financial resources that may stand in the way of participation, as in the case of international mobility (European Commission, 2019, p. 73; Middendorff et al., 2017, pp. 21–22; Woisch & Willige, 2015, pp. 94–95).

At the same time, participation can also be associated with career advantages. In this context, the situation on the local labour market could be an additional factor in students' participation in international teaching and learning settings if they expect it to give them advantages over their fellow students. According to Petrow's (2013) study, however, one could assume that career-related reasons only become relevant if students perceive the field of adult education as internationally connected and international experiences as being relevant in their work. At the same time, participation in international teaching and learning settings can support this perception by drawing attention to international perspectives and international networks in adult education. Such experiences may encourage participation in further international teaching and learning settings, as is also evident from the data. Previous international experiences in school, university and family settings can trigger an interest in international experiences that contributes to a willingness to participate. This points to the potential of international teaching and learning settings at home (e.g. international guest lecturers or international students in teaching, international topics in teaching) which allow students to come into contact with international perspectives during their regular studies, without going abroad. This can awaken their

interest in taking part in further, additional initiatives, such as study abroad or seasonal school. This connection is also pointed out in previous studies (Heublein et al., 2015, pp. 39–40; Lee et al., 2022, p. 217).

The data also shows that the structural arrangement of the settings has an influence on the level of participation. From the graduates' perspective, the appealing structure of the international teaching and learning settings, as well as the subject-specific relevance, play a role. Financial, time or organisational aspects are also mentioned in relation to participation. This suggests that an appealing format tailored to the students and their needs is an important prerequisite for promoting participation among adult education students in international teaching and learning settings. For example, offering a seasonal school, which usually lasts between one and three weeks, can be particularly interesting for students who would otherwise not be able to go abroad for an extended period of time due to family or work commitments. International teaching and learning settings at home can be another way of providing students with international, intercultural, or global perspectives without a large financial or time commitment.

In addition, the graduates of the master's programmes were encouraged by professors and staff to participate in selected international teaching and learning situations. According to Egetenmeyer (2010), it is precisely this support from the academic staff that is an important factor, whereby she refers to the application for study abroad. A direct approach through information events and consultations seems to have a supportive effect, as this may reduce uncertainties and doubts among students. In this context, the exchange of experiences with other students also appears to be important, as shown in the data. Similarly, Egetenmeyer (2010) highlights the support provided by the involvement of former internationally mobile students in the application process for study abroad. Social exchange also serves as a motive for participation. Given the variety of international teaching and learning settings, one could conclude from these findings that organisational support and interpersonal exchanges can be essential to student participation in international teaching and learning settings. This requires the creation of opportunities where students can actively share their international and intercultural experiences with their fellow students in order to spark an interest in international, intercultural, and global perspectives. This can also include building social networks with students at universities abroad. Similarly, there is a need for organisational structures that promote the inclusion of international, intercultural, and global perspectives in the curriculum.

Finally, it can be concluded that the reasons for participating in international teaching and learning situations can vary greatly between individuals. In addition to the desire to develop professionally, personally, and in terms of language, participation can be related to social aspects, career prospects, prior international experience, the arrangement of the settings, and external support. This suggests providing different opportunities to increase adult education students' motivation to participate in international teaching and learning settings. In this context, it seems important to establish support structures that can address doubts and uncertainties among students and draw attention to the importance

of international teaching and learning settings for students' development. Further studies examining students' non-participation in international teaching and learning settings could provide further insights and reveal weaknesses in existing organisational structures. Similarly, large-scale quantitative studies could provide a clearer picture of the level of participation as well as the distribution across international teaching and learning settings. Since the data refers to the time before the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, it might also be useful to take a closer look at virtual offerings of international teaching and learning settings. Virtual forms are not considered in the present study.

Acknowledgments

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THE PROFESSIONAL STATUS OF ADULT EDUCATORS: A CASE STUDY FROM CYPRUS IN THE ERA OF PANDEMIC

ABSTRACT

The paper reports findings from a research study carried out with adult education professionals working in Adult Education Centres (AECs) in Cyprus. It aims to explore how they experience their professional status in the programme as well as identify barriers that hinder their professionalisation and particular barriers caused in the course of the COVID-19 pandemic. The study harnesses qualitative methodology and adopts a bottom-up approach as it gives voice to adult educators and makes meaning out of their working experiences. It makes suggestions for the improvement of their professional status based on the idea of humanisation, a multifaceted process in which both the state and adult educators themselves should become communions.

Keywords: *adult educators, professional status, Adult Education Centres, COVID-19 pandemic, Cyprus*

PROFESIONALNI STATUS IZOBRAŽEVALCEV ODRASLIH: ŠTUDIJA PRIMERA S CIPRA V OBDOBJU EPIDEMIJE – POVZETEK

Članek poroča o rezultatih raziskovalne študije, ki je bila izvedena z izvajalci izobraževanja odraslih, zaposlenimi v centrih za izobraževanje odraslih na Cipru. Ukvarja se z vprašanji, kako doživljajo svoj profesionalni status, s kakšnimi ovirami se soočajo na poti k profesionalizaciji in še posebej kakšne so bile ovire v kontekstu epidemije covida-19. Študija na podlagi kvalitativne metodologije in pristopa od spodaj navzgor daje glas učiteljem odraslih in osmišlja njihove delovne izkušnje. Članek vključuje predloge za izboljšanje njihovega profesionalnega statusa na podlagi ideje humanizacije. V tem večplastnem procesu morata tesno sodelovati tako država kot izobraževalci sami.

Ključne besede: *izobraževalci odraslih, profesionalni status, centri za izobraževanje odraslih, epidemija covida-19, Ciper*

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INTRODUCTION

This paper aspires to explore the experiences and perceptions of adult educators working in the Adult Education Centres in Cyprus regarding their professional status in the programme as well as possible barriers and challenges they have faced influencing their status amidst the pandemic. Following on previous published research on the role of higher education in the professionalisation of adult educators (Gravani et al., 2020) and, in particular, of the distance learning university in Cyprus (Gravani & Karagiorgi, 2020), and an illustration of the early steps adopted for vocational education trainers' professionalisation (Zenios & Chatzipanagiotou, 2020) on the island, the present paper takes a step further. It harnesses adult educator professionals' insights to investigate how they have experienced their professional status in a precarious time, a time of crisis that emerged out of the COVID-19 pandemic, and to explore the impact that this has had on their professionalisation.

The discussion on the professionalisation of adult learning professionals is not a new one. According to Gravani & Karagiorgi (2020), it has been a contested issue with some researchers claiming the necessity for systematisation in the field and some others assuming a more critical perspective and associating professionalisation to the exercise of power and control from the state. Nonetheless, both the European Union (EU) directive and the urgent need to cope with the heterogeneity, diversity and plurality of those working in the adult education sector, have made the professionalisation of adult educators a requirement for Member States (Gravani & Karagiorgi, 2020; Jütte et. al. 2011; Mikulec, 2019; Murphy, 2017; Sava, 2011) and a relatively new area of adult education research to be considered.

A number of studies have examined the profile and identity of adult educators (Jütte & Lattke, 2014), their qualifications and the need for certain competences (Research voor Beleid, 2010), the policy, discourse, and impact of professionalisation on the field (Egetenmeyer & Käpplinger, 2011; Mikulec, 2019; Murphy, 2017), the role of higher education in the professionalisation of adult educators (Gravani & Karagiorgi, 2020). However, the field remains relatively unexplored, fragmented and incoherent, and it is still considered a challenge to form a profession for the adult educator (Bierema, 2011; Gravani & Karagiorgi, 2020). This also depicts the situation in Cyprus, where actions towards the professionalisation of adult educators have been limited, despite attempts to reconstruct the adult education sector in the last two decades by introducing a system for assessing and certifying vocational education trainers and establishing two university master's programmes in adult education (Continuing Education and Lifelong Learning at the Open University of Cyprus and Adult Education at a private university; Gravani & Ioannidou, 2016; Gravani & Karagiorgi, 2020).

These attempts are considered insufficient, since adult educators, in the Cypriot context, are still facing several challenges related to their professional status and are perceived as a particularly vulnerable group, especially in the course of the COVID-19 pandemic. This is more or less the situation in most European countries and especially in those where there is a low degree of professionalisation in the relevant field. In this context, while there have been many studies investigating the effects of the COVID-19 health crisis on adult

learners (Boeren et al., 2020; James & Thériault, 2020), little research has reported on its impact on adult educators' professional status and lives.

The research reported in this paper aspires, by giving voice to the experiences and perceptions of the participants, to illuminate some of the challenges that adult educators teaching in a non-formal adult education programme, the Adult Education Centres (AECs) in Cyprus, face, in general and in particular, amidst the pandemic. It endeavours to contribute to the research in the local and international context regarding adult educators' professional status. It also views the pandemic crisis as an opportunity to reflect on the challenges that adult educators encounter in Cyprus and perhaps also elsewhere. The study can also be considered as a challenge, at a wider level, to enhance the awareness of the stakeholders, policy makers, and educational planners, in creating a coherent policy framework for adult educators' professionalisation.

The main aims guiding the study are the following: to explore the ways in which the adult educators working in the AECs have experienced their professional status in the programme; to point out any possible barriers in the programme that might have hindered their professionalisation; to unveil the extent to which the pandemic COVID-19 crisis has influenced the professional status of the adult educators working in the AECs.

In what follows, the conceptual framework of the study is briefly presented. The methodology adopted in the study is then described, followed by an illustration of the research findings and their critical discussion in the light of the relevant literature.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The study took place in the context of the Cypriot educational system, which is highly centralised and in which adult education is less systematised and coordinated. Consequently, the available adult education structures and programmes are still significantly limited (Gravani & Ioannidou, 2016). The study focuses on the AECs at a specific time, during the period of the COVID-19 pandemic. AECs are the main provider of non-formal adult education in Cyprus, and operate under the Directorate of Primary Education of the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, and Youth (MoECSY).

According to the MoECSY, AECs aim at the general development of each adult's personality as well as the social, financial and cultural development of citizens and society in general. The AECs operate in urban and rural areas in the premises of primary and secondary schools or other public buildings (Gravani & Ioannidou, 2016). The sessions take place between November 1st and May 30th. The MoECSY announces a call of interest every year for those involved in teaching in the AECs. The interested parties (educators or regional managers) apply via the ministry's platform and, after being selected, are allocated to the AECs for a certain period of time.

During the COVID-19 pandemic and lockdown period, AECs had to close down for several months to restrict the spread of the virus. According to the European report on

the "Impact of the Pandemic on Adult Education in Cyprus" (European Association for the Education of Adults, 2020), the shift to distance and on-line learning modes in AECs was not feasible not only because of the general lockdown (March-April 2020), but also because AEC courses officially ended in May. Furthermore, AECs remained closed during the school year 2020–2021. The research presented explores how adult educators' professional status was affected by this situation.

The research is based on four main concepts: "professionalisation", "professional status", "employment status", and "adult educator". There is no single definition for all the aforementioned concepts, since they can be interpreted with a range of different meanings, changing over time and according to the context in which they are used. However, as Evans (2002) commented, it is required in the early stage of a study to present some basic interpretations of the main concepts. In light of this, some specific characteristics of the above terms can lead to the adoption of broad working definitions.

The concept of "professionalisation" derives from the word "profession", which has its roots in the Latin word *profiteri* that means "a public pronouncement of certain principles and intentions and devotion to a certain way of life" (du Toit, 1995, p. 165). As stated by Murphy (2020), "professionalisation includes the development of professions" (p. 130). Similarly, Hoyle (1982) commented much earlier that the notion includes the process whereby "an occupation increasingly meets the criteria attributed to a profession" (p. 161). Furthermore, according to Despotović (2010), who defines the term in greater detail, professionalisation can be understood as "a process of establishing credibility and legitimacy of certain types of work or activity in terms of public recognition, institutional structure and standardization in the management and operation of groups and individuals within" (p. 2). Therefore, professionalisation is a desirable outcome for every occupational group (Timmons, 2011).

The notion of "professional status" is linked to the concept of "professionalisation", as it can be seen as its main component. In recent years, more and more occupations have acquired professional status and are thus recognised as professions (Morrell, 2020). It must be emphasised that the concept of professional status is identified with those characteristics that turn an occupation into a profession. An occupation without a professional status simply means a vocation or known employment (Bierema, 2011). However, it must be taken into consideration that professions are actually semantic social constructs as their meaning has never been static. Therefore, the standards that an occupational sector needs to fulfil in order to be developed as a full-fledged and dedicated profession change over time (Morrell, 2020). The most common prerequisites of a profession are the following: theory-based academic qualification pathways, specific norms and codes of ethics, professional autonomy, client-based and social interactions, self-control by professional associations, supporting public welfare (Perks, 1993, pp. 12–14).

The term "employment status" is presented as an important element for the development of the professional status of an occupational group. Burchell et al. (1999) identify employment status as "the classification of workers according to whether they are employees,

who are employed under a contract of employment, or independent or self-employed workers who may work under a contract for services or one of a number of other arrangements" (p. 1). Individuals' employment status affects their rights and obligations, which are based on legislation and related to labour protection, social security, and taxation. The study focuses on non-standard forms of employment and specifically on self-employment. Although self-employment entails the loss of employer-provided benefits and job security, in some extraordinary cases it might offer comparatively higher earning potential and greater autonomy (Budig, 2006).

With regard to the adult educator, Merriam and Brockett (2007) proposed that he/she is a practitioner involved in purposefully educative activities addressed to adults. The above definition is extremely broad due to the lack of information regarding various elements (e.g. socio-demographic characteristics, competences, roles, states of employment) of the profession of the adult educators (Gravani & Karagiorgi, 2020). In the light of the aforesaid, adult educators come from a variety of educational contexts and there is a diversity regarding their roles and states of employment (Chen et al., 2021). Hence, the complexity of the profile of adult educators does not allow a coherent investigation of their professional status. The professionalisation of the field is presented as a necessity since it could contribute to the development of a stronger sense of shared vision and enhancement of practices, teaching, and research (Bierema, 2011).

The research builds on Hoyle's (2008) theoretical conceptions of professionalisation and professional status. Hoyle (2008) argues that the fluid concept of professionalisation can be distinguished into two components. The first concerns the institutional component, which includes the ambition of a profession to meet and to maintain certain criteria. These criteria include: strong limit, academic credentials, university affiliation, self-governing professional body, professional autonomy, code of ethics, etc. The second component, which is defined as the service element, is related to the process by which the knowledge, skills and commitment of professionals is continually strengthened in the interest of clients. The aspects of these components are not considered static but can vary independently since they are transformed according to the context within which they are examined. According to Hoyle (2008), the notion of professional status refers to the official recognition of an occupational group as a profession. Recognition can be achieved in a variety of ways depending on the needs of the occupational group and the context within which they are examined.

Based on the introduction and the conceptual framework presented above, the formulated research questions guiding the study are the following:
1. How have adult educators working in the adult education centres experienced their professional status in the programme?
2. What have been the possible barriers hindering the process of adult educators' professionalisation in the programme?
3. To what extend has the professional status of the adult educators been affected by the pandemic COVID-19 crisis and at what levels?

METHODOLOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS

The present study adopted a qualitative bricolage research approach. Bricolage research, as conceptualised by Denzin and Lincoln (1999), suggests the combination of multiple methodological practices that add "rigor, breadth, complexity, richness, and depth" (p. 6). In particular, the study used Hermeneutic Phenomenology (HP) in the research design phase, setting the research questions and developing the research tools, as well as Constructivist Grounded Theory (CGT) in the phase of data analysis. On the one hand, the application of HP aims to enrich the understanding of the phenomenon through the participants' experiences and perspectives (van Manen, 1990). On the other hand, CGT seems to be an ideal analytical procedure for an in-depth study of the phenomenon, since it allows the development of multiple theoretical categories and the investigation of the relationships between them (Charmaz, 2006).

A case study research strategy was adopted, aiming at an in-depth investigation of the phenomenon "within its real-life context" (Yin, 2009, p. 18). The research focuses on a specific group of adult educators, teaching adults in the AECs (the most important non-formal adult education programme in Cyprus), and in particular in one AEC in a specific geographical area, the region of Famagusta. The AEC of the Famagusta area offers a variety of interdisciplinary courses, which are categorised as follows: 1) foreign languages (e.g. English, Arabic, Bulgarian, French, German), 2) theoretical subjects (e.g. A tour to Cyprus, Literature, Psychology), 3) practical subjects (e.g. Dance, Painting, Wood sculpture, Computers). Each thematic course is offered in 24 sessions of 90 minutes each or 48 sessions of 45 minutes each. An instrumental case study was adopted since the multiple mini cases – the thematic courses – are considered as the vehicle for providing an in-depth understanding and rich description of participants' experiences, views, and opinions of their professional status. Figure 1 depicts the choices made in the context of the case study research strategy.

Figure 1
Case study strategy
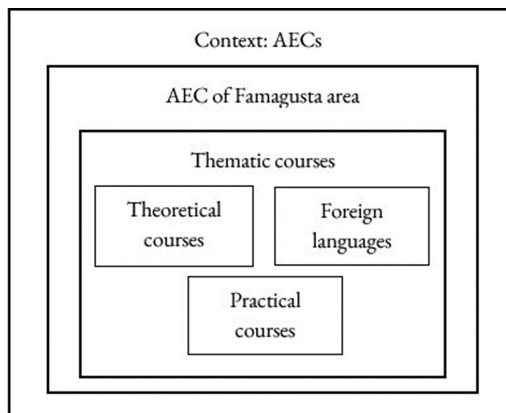
In-depth semi-structured interviews were the main tool for data collection. As a flexible tool, they are used to illuminate the different experiences, feelings, thoughts of the participants regarding the phenomenon under investigation (Kvale, 2006). Overall, six interviews were conducted with AECs' educators. They were carried out over a month (June 2021). Purposeful random sampling was applied to select the participants in the study (Patton, 2015). Two adult educators, who were available to participate in the research, were randomly selected from each thematic course of the AEC in Famagusta. Of the six adult educators chosen, four were women and two men, with their ages ranging from 32 to 65. The participants, like all the educators of the AECs, were hired by purchasing services and were self-employed. The participants were interviewed separately via telephone or teleconference (due to COVID-19 restrictions) at a time that was most convenient to them. Each of the interviews lasted between 1 to 1.5 hours. For the purposes of clarity and anonymity, the participants in this study are referred to as Adult educator 1, Adult educator 2, etc. Table 1 gives an account of the educators' profiles.

Table 1
Adult educators' profiles

Adult educator	Gender	Teaching subject	University degree	Specialised knowledge	Formal qualifications in AT&L*	Years of experience
1	Male	Theoretical subject "A tour in Cyprus"	Yes	-	No	3
2	Female	Foreign language "Italian language"	Yes	-	No	7
3	Male	Practical subject "Woodcarving"	No	Yes	No	21
4	Female	Practical subject "Handcrafts"	No	Yes	No	9
5	Female	Practical subject "Painting"	Yes	-	No	4
6	Female	Practical Subject "Gymnastics"	Yes	-	Yes	13

Note. AT&L = adult teaching and learning.

Data analysis was completed in the light of the CGT approach. The goal of CGT analysis is to approach the truth in an inductive way "through the eyes of the participant" (Clarke, 2019, p. 6). The process started by indexing participants' responses under the questions asked during the semi-structured interviews. The next formal stage of analysis included initial and focused coding. During initial coding, the transcribed

data were analysed line-by-line gerunds, which helped the researchers retain proximity with the participants' narratives (Charmaz, 2006). *In vivo* codes were used, where the exact words of informants were utilised as a code. While engaging in focused coding, through a process that is well known as the "constant comparative method", the initial codes were replaced with fewer but more focused codes (Charmaz, 2017). In this process analytical memos were used as a powerful reflection tool, writing about the codes, emerging categories, and connections between these categories (Charmaz, 2006; Charmaz & Thornberg, 2020). The categories that emerged are presented in the subsequent section along with the relevant quotes under two main headings: *professional status and barriers to professionalisation* and *the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on adult educators' professional status*.

FINDINGS

Professional status and barriers to professionalisation

The research revealed the low degree of professionalisation of the adult educators working in the AECs. Throughout their interviews, the educators commented on the various challenges they have faced influencing their professional status. In what follows their experiences and perceptions are presented under the sub-themes *professional qualifications, continuing professional development, working conditions, physical environment, facilities and resources*, and *lack of recognition and support*.

Professional qualifications

The analysis revealed that the adult educators in the sample came from a variety of educational backgrounds with diverse qualifications. In the study, the educators' professional qualifications were explored in terms of the relevance of their university degree and specialised knowledge on the subject they taught as well as in terms of the extent of their qualifications in adult teaching and learning.

As we have already seen in Table 1 above, four out of the six adult educators interviewed (n=4) have a diploma relevant to the course they taught. In particular, all the theoretical courses, foreign language courses and some practical subjects (Gymnastics, Painting) are taught by secondary school teachers who have a higher education degree. However, in the case of other practical courses (Handcrafts, Wood sculpture), individuals with specialised knowledge in the relevant field and no higher education degree were employed to teach. The research highlights the lack of academic or other formal qualifications in adult teaching and learning. All except one (n=5) adult educators interviewed have no specialised knowledge in adult education. Therefore, adult educators are hired in the AECs on the basis of the assessment of their first degree or of their specialised subject knowledge, while most of them have no specialisation in adult education.

Given the above, five (n=5) out of the six adult educators interviewed complained about not having professional qualifications in the principles and practices of adult education.

They expressed the opinion that these qualifications are necessary for the development of the profession of the adult educator. A female educator teaching Italian, who has seven years of experience, presented the problem clearly:

> Unfortunately, we don't have official qualifications for teaching adults. […] This poses a series of problems for us. We were trained to teach children and not adults. Our practice is based on the experience gained over the years in the AECs and not on formal qualifications. (Adult educator 2)

In a similar vein, a male educator with three years of experience argued: "We need formal qualifications to be able to work efficiently with adult students" (Adult educator 1). The adult educators acknowledged that obtaining formal skills in andragogy is essential for the development of their professional identity and the improvement of their practice. A female educator, the only one with a master's degree in Continuing and Lifelong Learning, argued that formal qualifications in adult education have a major impact on her practice: "Attending the master's programme in Continuing Education and Lifelong Learning helped me improve my teaching practices" (Adult educator 6).

In the following statement a female educator explained why educators are not interested in obtaining formal qualifications in andragogy. She commented:

> The state must help us to acquire formal qualifications in adult education […]. I'd like to attend a master's programme in adult education. However, I feel that this may not help me to improve my professional status in this particular context. I feel very tired now. Nothing will change in my life. Also, I don't have the money to pay for a master's degree. (Adult educator 2)

The educators in the study believe that the provision of formal education in adult education is the state's responsibility. However, it is left to the individuals to ensure they have the time and money for supplementary education in adult education. The above interviewee gave two reasons as to why adult educators are not involved in formal education: first, tiredness and frustration due to problems that adult educators face, and second, lack of financial means to invest in further education.

Continuing professional development (CPD)

Regarding CPD, all the participants in the study (n=6) mentioned an annual training seminar designed for all the educators working in the AECs and offered by the MoESY at the beginning of the academic year. This optional seminar focuses on the general principles of adult education, teaching and learning. A female educator commented on this: "At the beginning of each academic year, the ministry organises a seminar on the general principles and practices of adult education, the skills and attitudes of the adult educator, the management of adult learners" (Adult educator 4).

Almost all, five (n=5) out of the six (n=6), adult educators interviewed had participated in this seminar. Only one educator, with twenty years of experience, did not attend it, since he felt that it "was a waste of time". He stated:

> I wouldn't call it a seminar. It was an informative report and they read to us. I've heard the same things twenty times. What do you do in the classroom, what is allowed, what is forbidden! To be honest, these are boring things for me. (Adult educator 3)

Almost all the adult educators, with one exception (n=5), argued that one seminar organised annually by the state was insufficient and they expressed the opinion that continuing education and training is a key precondition of their professional development. A female educator teaching a practical course gave a response typical of the group: "With only one seminar, you don't do anything great. You can't achieve anything. More systematic training is needed" (Adult educator 4).

In a similar way, two participants stated that the updating of adult educator's skills and competencies is essential because it is interconnected with the improvement of their teaching practices. A male educator commented on the above: "I think more seminars are needed. We need to get to know about the adult teaching methods. We don't know them" (Adult educator 3). Similarly, a female educator argued: "Certainly, the more you are trained, the better your teaching practices are. I have gained some techniques but they are for children and they can't meet the needs of adult learners. We definitely need seminars" (Adult educator 6).

The adult educators quoted above, talking in light of their experience in the adult education context, underlined the need to learn how to improve the quality of their work. Other interviewees in the study also reported that during their employment in the AECs, they had to attend a limited number of seminars not related to adult education, which were organised by the MoECSY. They commented on the highly centralised adult education system and the top-down approach adopted, according to which the state decides on the type of continuing education that the educators should attend, regardless of their needs. Therefore, they identify a gap between adult educators' educational needs and the training that the state provides.

Working conditions

All of the participants interviewed (n=6) argued that their working conditions are precarious and have a negative impact on their professional status. Three main crucial issues emerged in the interviews regarding their employment status. The first theme that emerged from the interviews is the financial disadvantages of self-employment. Adult educators working in AECs are hired as services by the state. Every year on the basis of an open call, the MoECSY purchases services from those interested in teaching at the AECs. As a result, adult educators are considered self-employed and they have to pay for their

social security, medical care taxes and other contributions towards state funds themselves. The following quote from an interview with a male adult educator underlined the above:

> A big issue is that we pay for social insurance by ourselves. The institute doesn't even cover our travel expenses. We have to cover it, be self-employed, pay for our travel expenses. What is left for us? Only the effort. (Adult educator 2)

The issue becomes palpable that since adult educators are considered to be self-employed, the state does not cover their travel expenses, which in some cases cost more than their actual teaching salary. This makes them think that their work "is not appreciated" (Adult educator 3). All the participants proposed a change in their employment status and recognition as public servants.

The second theme raised in most of the interviews (n=5), with one exception, is their low wages. The participants vividly expressed their negative feelings about their payment using the words "frustration", "despair", "anger". The following statement from a female educator with nine years of experience is indicative:

> The salary is poor. If they gave us something more, it would be better. We do much more than what we are paid for. We have responsibilities that aren't ours. It's our responsibility to put together a group of students. Only when all of them pay us, the group is formed, we can continue the programme and get our regular salary […]. I feel very frustrated! (Adult educator 4)

The adult educator complained about her payment, which seems rather poor in relation to her effort and responsibilities assigned. An adult educator's fee for a 45 minute lesson for a full group of students is set by the MoECSY at €18.63, while most of the time, courses are cancelled due to a small number or because of no learners.

It is worth pointing out that only one participant in the research, a female educator with thirteen years of experience, appeared to be satisfied with her payment. She said: "The salary is very good. For me it is a good extra income" (Adult educator 4). However, she was an exception as she was the only adult educator in the sample whose teaching role in the AECs was supplementary to her main job.

The third theme that emerged from the interviews is the financial uncertainty that adult educators face from June to September, when there are no classes to teach, so they are not paid. Four (n=4) out of the six participants commented on their unemployment status during the summer months when they do not receive any unemployment allowance from the state since they are considered self-employed. Some, like the adult educator quoted below, admitted that this poses a challenge to their livelihood: "We don't receive unemployment allowance. Some of my colleagues with families cannot survive during the summer months and they are forced to find another job as soon as classes are over" (Adult educator 4).

Physical environment, facilities and resources

AECs operate in the premises of public primary or secondary schools that are designed to meet the needs of school students, not adults. All the participants in the study (n=5), with one exception, argued that the inadequacy of the infrastructure constitutes a major challenge to their teaching practice. The above is indicative not only of the lack of organisation of the AECs on behalf of the state, but also of the lack of recognition of the adult educators as professionals. A male educator argued:

> The courses take place in an elementary school. How can an old woman sit in a child's chair? [...] We are supposed to be professionals. But how can we ensure the provision of quality education under these circumstances? Learners come to the AECs and trust to us their training. They expect us to support them in achieving their goals, their dreams. (Adult educator 1)

The educator above expressed his concerns about the quality of the teaching provision. He identified a strong relationship between the professional status of the adult educators in the AECs and the quality of the education provided. This reflects his belief that teaching is a profession, shared among the rest of the educators in the sample. They see themselves as having a moral obligation towards learners to ensure the delivery of a high standards service.

Furthermore, all of the participants (n=6) identified the absence of appropriate resources and infrastructure in the programme as an additional factor hindering learning. They underlined the limited access to basic technological learning tools such as a cassette player, a photocopier, a projector. A male educator stated:

> We have no computers or interactive whiteboards. There are no photocopier machines. We make photocopies at our own expenses. This underestimates us as professionals. I have written a letter to our supervisors complaining about the shortages we experience. However, I haven't heard back from them. (Adult educator 3)

It is palpable from the above that educators have limited autonomy to secure supportive learning resources, which is as a result of the central control exercised over the AECs by the state.

Lack of recognition and support

All the participants in the study (n=6) agreed that they did not feel supported while working at the AECs and did not get the recognition they deserved. Thus, they expressed feelings of disappointment and tiredness. The following female adult educator talked of having felt marginalised, neglected, under-recognised and largely unsupported by the managerial and administrative staff:

> They underestimate us. When you underestimate the educators, you also underestimate the institution. There is a frustration from all colleagues. We feel that our employment status won't change and we cannot do anything to change it. We don't have the power. They tell us: 'This is it, even if you like it or not! If you don't like it, just leave'. (Adult educator 2)

Similarly, another educator in the research articulated clearly that adult educators working in the AECs did not have support from their administrators, something that hindered their professional practice.

> The administrators sit inside the office and give us instructions. They never come to the classroom to see our problems. They never approach us. Even if they know about our difficulties, they do nothing. We were told that we had to solve these problems on our own. (Adult educator 1)

Additionally, the analysis revealed that adult educators working in AECs are a group of professionals who have no voice and remain silent. As a result, they do not fight for their rights and their professional status is degraded. A male participant commented that:

> The majority of the educators are afraid of complaining about the challenges they face. They don't want to lose their job. Most of them have families. If they lose their job, how could they survive? So they keep making concessions, while the administration is absent. (Adult educator 2)

THE IMPACT OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC ON ADULT EDUCATORS' PROFESSIONAL STATUS

All the adult educators in the sample (n=6) agreed that the period of the COVID-19 pandemic has been challenging for them. First, they raised the issue of the absence of official information regarding the closure of the AECs, circulated by the state. As indicated in the findings, the educators were informed about the temporary closure of the AECs from the press. Hence, they strongly expressed their frustration and advocated for the necessity to have been informed beforehand by the MoECSY. The following statement is indicative of the above:

> The AECs should have contacted us. We learned about the interruption of the courses from the television. The authority in charge, as an organised group that employs people, should have contacted us and informed us about the interruption of the courses. (Adult educator 1)

Another educator shared similar views:

> They hadn't told us anything. At some point retrospectively the MoESY informed the AECs that classes were postponed. We weren't informed immediately. They didn't notify us about the reopening of the AECs. But this is the situation in Cyprus in general and in the AECs in particular. They don't care about us; we are always the last to learn. (Adult educator 2)

Second, adult educators pointed out the challenges they had faced regarding their employability due to COVID-19. Specifically, five (n=5) out of the six educators commented on the financial instability they had experienced. Since they are self-employed, they faced unemployment with the closure of the AECs during the pandemic. One of the educators stated:

> The truth is that we were waiting, whether we would be paid or not. We couldn't apply for unemployment allowance from the government. We had no information about what would happen. Just at some point, after many months of waiting, we received a support allowance from the government. They gave us 60% of our salary. (Adult educator 3)

In the above statement, the participant explained that educators had been included in the government's financial support plan. This aimed to subsidise people who were working in the private sector or were self-employed and who faced unemployment due to the general lockdown. Therefore, the educators received an allowance. However, the interviewee complained about the lack of information regarding their inclusion in the support plan and the payment of their allowance. This posed a challenge to their livelihoods, especially amongst those who were solely working as educators in AECs. One of the interviewees commented:

> Educators working in the AEC were financially and psychologically affected by the situation. Most of them could not survive. Some were forced to work elsewhere temporarily in order to financially support their families. They dumped us; they forgot us. That's the way I feel. (Adult educator 1)

As can be concluded from the above, the financial instability experienced during the pandemic was linked to feelings of uncertainty and anxiety. The above educator gives a picture of some of his colleagues whose well-being was negatively affected. Some of them, in order to survive and support their families, had to find another job, which was not related to their educational background. Consequently, adult educators once again felt marginalised. Overall, the pandemic crisis has exposed the vulnerability of adult educators, who, due to their self-employment status, were deprived of any employment rights.

Finally, some of the participants expressed feelings of sadness when they had realised that learners could not have access to the AECs for more than 12 months. They argued that courses should have been delivered online and expressed their need to have been trained in e-learning.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUDING REMARKS

The research revealed that there is a limited degree of professionalisation amongst educators in the AECs and the process of developing professional status appears to be complex and problematic. Furthermore, a relational interdependence appears to exist between the concept of professionalisation in the context of adult education, professional status, and employment status. In light of this, five main themes can be underlined when looking at the adult educators' narratives.

The first and common theme identified among all the participants is their discontent regarding their professional qualifications. According to Jakimiuk (2020), professional qualifications include certificates, diplomas, credentials, which confirm individuals' theoretical knowledge and practical skills. For educators who work in the AECs, an educational background in andragogy is not required by the state and even continuing training in adult education is not mandatory. Therefore, they are hired on the basis of their first degree or specialist knowledge of the subject they teach. This is a common practice in small countries such as Cyprus, where the institutional structure of adult education is less developed (Mayo et al., 2008).

The participants talked of feeling incompetent as far as their didactical practices are concerned and attributed this to the lack of formal preparations in teaching adults. However, they argued that the experience gained through the teaching in the AECs plays an important role in ensuring the quality of their practice. According to Jõgi and Gross (2009), adult educators develop their skills, knowledge, and identity through the experience and reflection on their practice. From a constructivist perspective, this means that educators, through an action of knowing, attribute meaning to their experiences and act on a set of assumptions shaped by similar previous experiences (Palmieri et al., 2020).

The above is related to the second theme that emerged in the interviews. The adult educators pointed out that professional development opportunities presented to them were limited and insufficient. At the same time, guided by a centralised bureaucratic logic, they expressed the view that it is the state's responsibility to provide the appropriate opportunities for their professional development and not their own. This finding indicates that the participants do not view the advancement of their occupational group to a professional level as a relational and multifaceted process. According to Egetenmeyer et al. (2019), besides the state (macro-level) and organisations (meso-level), individuals (micro-level) are also relevant actors in achieving professionalisation. Furthermore, the participants proposed their continuing professional training in andragogy in order to improve the quality of adult education provision. Considering the first two themes, within a professional field, as suggested by Jakimiuk (2020), educational standards and legal solutions for professional qualifications should be defined and implemented.

As for the third theme, the participants perceived their working conditions as being critical due to their employment status. Adult educators in AECs are hired as services by the

state and they are self-employed. Their self-employment status seems to play an important role in their degraded professional status and therefore hinders the professionalisation process. This status, which makes them vulnerable, entails poor earnings, the lack of social security, and the risk of unemployment. It is important to note that the educators face unemployment from June to September when the AECs are closed. As Egetenmeyer and Käpplinger (2011) have noted, professionalisation includes rights for professionals. Therefore, for the educators working in the AECs, the process of professionalisation presupposes the change of their employment status, which is the main obstacle that affects them as professionals and as human beings.

In parallel, in relation to the fourth theme, they felt that the problematic environment and the absence of appropriate resources did not allow them to act as professionals in various pedagogical situations. Indeed, the concept of a professional educator is linked to professional teaching and learning infrastructures (Simons & Kelchtermans, 2008). Moreover, the absence of recognition and support made them feel socially and institutionally marginalised. According to Knowles (1980), recognition of adult education staff is presented as a necessity because of their important role in society of providing knowledge, skills, attitudes or values to adults.

The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic crisis on the professional status of the educators in AECs has also been highlighted in the study and has revealed the weakness of the Cypriot educational system to cope with the crisis. The AECs were paralysed for several months, as they were closed. During this period, adult educators working in AECs, due to their state of employment, faced unemployment, which posed a challenge to their livelihood and well-being. The educators complained of being marginalised by society and the socio-political system and felt that they had no value as human beings as well as professionals. In particular, they justified the above by criticising the absence of official information articulated by the government regarding their future as professionals in the AECs. Additionally, they did not receive any information about whether they could receive any unemployment benefits and experienced insecurity.

Taking all of the above into account, the participants reflected on their professional status and the obstacles that hinder this process. Through a process of critical consciousness, they struggle against the objectification of all the adult educators in the AECs as things to be known and acted upon (Freire, 1970, 2005). To use Freire's ideas (1970, 2005), the adult educators seem to be in a state of dehumanisation, which needs to be reversed. In this case, the path to their professionalisation can be identified with becoming more human, more professional. The humanisation of the participants will be achieved through the reduction of the restrictive conditions and the oppressive practices employed by the state. Accordingly, it is important that the educators escape from the precariousness that arises from their employment status and see themselves as potential professionals in order to form a common professional identity and articulate a shared professional vision amongst all adult educators in the AECs.

The process of their humanisation is multifaceted and both the state and the individuals must become "agents of curiosity, become investigators, become subjects in an ongoing process of quest for the revelation of the 'why' of things and facts" (Freire, 1999, p. 105). For this reason, policy makers need to create and implement policies aimed towards the professionalisation of all adult educators in the non-formal sector. At the same time, the educators must not link adult education with the standards of classical professions but instead perceive it as an occupation with a deeply social purpose.

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