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AS

Andragoške studije

Časopis za proučavanje obrazovanja i učenja odraslih

Andragogical Studies

Journal for the Study of Adult Education and Learning

Andragoške studije

Andragoške studije su časopis za proučavanje obrazovanja i učenja odraslih, naučne orijentacije, posvećen teorijsko-koncepcijskim, istorijskim, komparativnim i empirijskim proučavanjima problema obrazovanja odraslih i celoživotnog učenja. Časopis reflektuje i andragošku obrazovnu praksu, obuhvatajući širok spektar sadržaja relevantnih ne samo za Srbiju već i za region jugoistočne Evrope, celu Evropu i međunarodnu zajednicu. Časopis je tematski otvoren za sve nivoe obrazovanja i učenja odraslih, za različite tematske oblasti – od opismenjavanja, preko univerzitetskog obrazovanja, do stručnog usavršavanja, kao i za učenje u formalnom, neformalnom i informalnom kontekstu.

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ČLANCI

ARTICLES

Nikola Koruga¹
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Kritika kao osnova učenja odraslih zasnovanog na utopijskom mišljenju

Apstrakt: Traganje za epistemološkim osnovama učenja odraslih u utopijskom mišljenju i utopijskim praksama predstavlja izazovan zadatak za aktuelna andragoška istraživanja. Utopija i učenje odraslih povezani su na više načina. Utopije su vizije idealnog ili boljeg društva, a učenje je uvek njihov konstitutivni element. Izučavajući te vizije ulazimo u domen kritičke pedagogije i futurističkih studija obrazovanja odraslih. Ovaj rad ima cilj da predstavi mogućnosti razvoja utopijskog mišljenja kao pristupa učenju odraslih, čiji je ključni konstitutivni element – kritika. Kritika ne samo da otvara prostor za promenu, već doprinosi procesu neprekidnog formiranja u okviru novih mreža znanja. Kritika preispituje postojeće znanje, ali i doprinosi stvaranju novog. Misleći o budućnosti otkrivamo i bolje razumemo sadašnjost, ali i otvaramo mogućnost za nove pristupe učenju. Imajući u vidu takav odnos utopije i kritike u učenju odraslih, možemo zaključiti da je opravdano govoriti o kreiranju utopijskog pristupa.

Ključne reči: kritika, učenje odraslih, utopija, pragmatizam, kritička pedagogija

Uvod

Česte su situacije kada u mislima odlutamo u neke bolje svetove, negde gde nema sukoba, negde gde ljudi žive u harmoniji sa svim vrstama, negde gde nema siromaštva. Maštanje o nekim boljim mestima, tj. boljim svetovima, vodi nas ka „obrazovanju žudnje – žudnje za boljim načinom postojanja” (Levitas, 1990, str. 191). To nas motiviše i daje nam snagu da prevazilazimo situacije kada realnost postane nezamislivo teška. Takođe, stvaranje i zamišljanje nepostojećeg može postati deo nastavnog i istraživačkog procesa. Savremena istraživanja obrazovanja ukazuju na to da utopiju možemo posmatrati kao metodologiju interaktivnih istraživanja zasnovanih na dizajnu, odnosno miksu empirijskog istraživanja obrazovanja i teorije zasnovane na dizajnu okruženja za učenje, naročito kada želimo da ispitamo kako funkcionišu inovacije u obrazovanju (Rajala et al., 2023).

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Takođe, utopijska akciona istraživanja se fokusiraju na demokratske interese, pre nego na partikularne, te nastoje da pruže novo razumevanje konteksta uvažavanjem više perspektiva, odnosno znanja i iskustava eksperata i lokalnog znanja, kao i iskustava svakodnevnog života (Nutti, 2016).

Ovaj rad ima cilj da predstavi mogućnosti razvoja utopijskog mišljenja kao pristupa učenju odraslih čiji je ključni konstitutivni element kritika. Takođe, ovaj rad teži da mapira značaj kritike u kreiranju utopijskog pristupa u učenju odraslih. Opisujući postojeće utopijske prakse i pozicioniranje kritike u utopijsko mišljenje ne samo da se rasvetljava odnos učenja odraslih i utopije već se otvara i mogućnost za kreiranje novog pristupa poučavanju odraslih.

Odnos utopije i kritike biće razmatran polazeći od definicije utopije Toma Mojlana, koji kritiku pridodaje utopiji te kritičku utopiju vidi kao formulaciju budućnosti koja ostaje otvorena, istovremeno zahtevajući da preispitujemo trenutne načine postojanja (Ward, 2006). Upravo se u takvom pristupu utopiji može učiti utemeljujući takav proces na kritici. Zbog toga će se u daljoj diskusiji polaziti od definicije kritike koja, smatra Fuko, predstavlja „snop nebrojenih odnosa koji se uspostavljaju između moći, istine i subjekta” (Zaharijević & Krstić, 2018, str. 14). Imajući na umu ovako široko omeđen pojam kritike, odnos utopije i kritike razmatran je iz perspektive mogućnosti učenja odraslih.

Pojam i značaj utopije za učenje odraslih

Za dalju diskusiju neophodno je omeđiti veoma širok termin utopije. S jedne strane, utopijski projekti, koji predstavljaju drugačija mesta, osvojena ili oslobođena aktuelnog poretka, generišu koncepte ne samo na osnovu onoga što učesnici u njihovom osmišljavanju misle ili u šta veruju već i na osnovu onoga što kolektivno rade i stvaraju. Upravo vidljivost alternativa čini osnovu za novi način konceptualnog razmišljanja, naročito kada ideje bivaju realizovane u odnosu na aktuelne okolnosti kojima nastojimo da održimo *status quo* (Cooper, 2014). Primera takvih inicijativa ima dosta u zapadnim demokratijama. Prvo su grupe aktivista zauzimale napuštene prostore u urbanim centrima, te ih privodile nameni u skladu sa potrebama zajednice. Često su to kulturni centri sa naglašenom socijalnom funkcijom te se, osim kolektivnih samoorganizovanih kuhinja (uglavnom veganske) hrane, nude smeštaj, prostor za umetničko stvaranje, politički aktivizam i sl. Danas je takvih prostora sve manje, naročito u urbanim centrima visokorazvijenih država, gde su ne samo prostori već i samo zemljište veoma vredni resursi. Naravno, problem je i u predstavljanju javnosti ideje o proizvodnji i životu koji nisu utemeljeni na principima neoliberalnog ekonomskog modela. Međutim,

težnja da se živi, radi i obrazuje u okruženju drugačijem od onog kojem smo po rođenju prilagođavani ne prestaje da postoji i nije u vezi samo sa „razvijenim”, bogatim demokratijama. Radikalne ekološke komune redovno nastaju širom planete. Najuspešniji modeli se „izvoze” zahvaljujući globalizaciji, bržoj i slobodnijoj razmeni informacija i znanja. Učenje čini značajan deo svih pomenutih zajednica. Međutim, danas je stvaranje utopijskih prostora često inspirisano filozofskim teorijama, odnosno željom da se dobro promišljeni sistemi implementiraju mimo postojanja političke volje ili sistemske podrške. Tako su širom Francuske počele da se osnivaju škole utemeljene na principima Žaka Ransijera (Jacques Ranciere, 2010) i idejama o nomadskoj pedagogiji opisanoj u njegovoj knjizi *Učitelj neznanica*. Dakle, u ovom radu utopiju ne posmatramo iz perspektive društvenog nacрта već iz ugla alternativa koje nagoveštavaju bolju budućnost, a koje su podvrgnute kontinuiranom preispitivanju. Čak i korak dalje, opisane primere valja posmatrati kao proveru i priliku za unapređenje utopijskog mišljenja, odnosno kao susret utopijskih ideja sa praksom i sadašnjim svakodnevnim životom koji otvara mogućnost za učenje.

Ovako omeđen termin utopije navodi nas da učenje odraslih sagledamo iz djuijevske perspektive, u kojoj iskustvo podrazumeva objektivne oblike interakcije između ljudi i okruženja, u kojoj ne postoji reflektivna misao bez razbijanja navika, bez postavljanja hipoteza i njihovog testiranja u praksi (Miettinen, 2000). Upravo takvo razumevanje iskustvenog učenja otvara prostor za promenu svakodnevice kojoj treba kritički pristupati, čak i kada se promeni. U tom kontekstu utopijske prakse postaju poligon za formulisanje novih pristupa ne samo učenju već i aktivnom demokratskom delovanju u okruženju u kojem postojimo. Međutim, kada se osvrnemo na istoriju utopijske misli, kao otelotvorenja misaonog eksperimenta, otvara se pitanje koja je uloga iskustva u učenju odraslih u kontekstu imaginarnog.

Od utopije do utopijskog mišljenja

Utopija, od istoimenog dela Tomasa Mora, izaziva brojne dileme. Jedna od ključnih je pitanje granice utopije, odnosno da li ona prestaje da postoji kada se približi realnosti ili pak tek tada počinje da živi u kontinuiranoj transformaciji. Entoni Gidens (Anthony Giddens) govori o „realnim” utopijama, gde „moguće budućnosti nisu samo konstantno balansiranje u suprotnosti sa sadašnjošću, već su aktivna pomoć u njenom stvaranju. Zato nema potrebe povlačiti oštru crtu između realističnog i utopijskog potencijala” (Giddens, 1994, str. 250). Naime, Gidens predlaže traženje „trećeg puta” konstruisanjem alternativne realnosti utemeljene

na institucionalnim imanentnim mogućnostima. Ta pozicija ukazuje na primenjenost utopijskog mišljenja u aktuelnim politikama. Iako ovde obrazovanje nije u fokusu, nemoguće je sprovesti političke procese bez obrazovanja. Međutim, u ovom radu preispitujem istovremeno doprinos „pasivnih” i „aktivnih” utopija učenju odraslih. Naime, odnos „pasivnih” i „aktivnih” utopija je najkorisnije posmatrati kao kontinuum.

„Pasivne” utopije možemo definisati kao književni podžanr naučne fantastike, odnosno društvene ili sociološke fantastike kako ih Darko Suvin klasifikuje (Suvin, 2017). Kognitivno očuđavanje je fenomen koji je taj istraživač definisao kao ključnu karakteristiku naučne fantastike, za razliku od Brehtovog *Verfremdungseffekt*, gde se posmatranjem nepoznatih situacija predstavljenih na poznat način publika otuđuje od likova, što izaziva potrebu za većim uključivanjem u ono što se odvija na sceni, ali i dubljim promišljanjem odgledanih scena, dok je kognitivno očuđavanje (*cognitive estrangement*) proces koji se događa kada se čitajući o poznatim stvarima predstavljenim na nov, neuobičajen način dolazi do kognitivne, a ne samo emocionalne reakcije na književno delo (Suvin, 2017). Upravo u tom efektu se krije iniciranje procesa učenja pomoću dela naučne fantastike. Kao što je do sada opisivano, utopijom bivamo podstaknuti na pomišljanje aktuelnih okolnosti u kojima živimo, obrazujemo formiranje želje kod polaznika, ali i angažujemo zajednicu da artikuliše moguće alternative kojima se može poboljšati trenutna politička situacija ili neposredno životno okruženje. Često nije dovoljno pitati polaznike šta žele da uče ili im jednostavno nametnuti šta moraju da uče da bi veštinama adekvatno odgovorili na potrebe tržišta. Danas polaznike treba pitati o čemu maštaju, kakvom životu teže, te da zajedno bivamo podstaknuti da gradimo bolje okruženje za učenje. Razgovaranje o nemogućem, a idealnom, otvara prostor da govorimo o željenom a mogućem. Konačno, „pasivne” utopije vode ka dobro poznatoj praksi, pričanju priča, koja je zapravo prelaz ka „aktivnim” utopijama. Ne samo da čitamo i slušamo već formulisane vizije boljih svetova, čak se i angažujemo na njihovom osmišljavanju, što je često vodilo i inspirisalo neke grupe ljudi da formiraju zajednice poput grupe *Twin Oaks*, inspirisane novelom profesora Skinera „Walden 2”.² Dakle, prvi korak ka promeni individue, ali i okruženja, krije se u prihvatanju ideje da možemo i da je opravdano misliti i zamišljati bolje svetove. Na tom putu se inspirišemo i mislimo o već postojećim narativima, ali je podjednako važno da se usudimo da formulišemo i mislimo svoje priče, pa čak da isprobamo neke njihove delove kako bismo ih domislili.

Pripovedanje, slušanje priča, aktivnost je stara koliko i čovek. Potreba da se priseća prošlosti, da se ispriča ili prepriča jedna sudbina, čak jedan događaj,

² Više informacija o zajednici *Twin Oaks* na: <https://www.twinoaks.org/>.

leži u osnovi ljudske komunikacije. Pričanjem priča se prenosi znanje obogaćeno simboličkim sadržajima. Na taj način su se formirale nacije, pokretali ratovi, ali se i gradio mir. Frimen (Freeman, 2015) govori o velikim i malim narativima u istraživanju ljudskog ponašanja. Naime, veliki narativi pristupaju sećanjima, informacije smeštaju u širi kontekst te daju poseban kvalitet informacijama za analizu, dok mali narativi govore o svakodnevicu, pružajući bolji uvid u individualno.

Značajno je napomenuti da i samo čitanje književnih dela na određenom nivou predstavlja proces (ponovnog) (o)pis(iv)anja nas samih. „Čitajući književna ili kvaziknjiževna dela interagujemo sa tekstom ekstrahujući suštinu priče, vraćamo se nazad i dobijene informacije spajamo sa epizodama iz prošlosti” (Freeman, 2015, str. 32). Za učenje odraslih neophodno je imati svest o intertekstualnosti kako bismo razumeli našu interakciju sa tekstom, odnosno moramo razumeti interakciju simbola tokom stvaranja novih narativa. U opisanom mehanizmu narativom pristupamo prošlosti, reminiscencijom se ostvaruje kontinuitet pripovedanja velikih priča, ali u ovom radu pogled je usmeren i ka budućnosti. Promišljanjem utopija pripovedanje dobija novu dimenziju. Oslanjajući se na prošlost a kritički promišljajući sadašnjost gradimo buduće priče koje prevazilaze lično. Zamišljajući idealne svetove odmičemo se od individualnog i ulazimo u domen univerzalnih kolektivnih vrednosti testirajući nove ideje uzimajući u obzir naš odnos prema sadašnjosti. Mnogi individualni i društveni faktori će ometati to putovanje u budućnost, te je ključno biti obazriv prilikom traganja i analiziranja univerzalnih elemenata i vrednosti u utopijskim pričama ili reakcijama na njih. U potrazi za opravdavanjem učenja pomoću imaginarnog, te korišćenjem rezultata tog procesa u obrazovnoj praksi, dolazimo do razumevanja pragmatizma Džona Djuija kroz oblikovanje iskustva iz perspektive koordinisane akcije, navika i umetničkog iskustva (Freeman-Moir, 2011). Ta tri koraka možemo opisati kao zaokruženo iskustvo, koje počinje koordinisanom akcijom koja podrazumeva pažljivo opažanje materijalnog, dok nas navike teraju da razmišljamo na koji način je svet oblikovan i konačno umetničko iskustvo je zaokruženo, uređeno i emocionalno zadovoljavajuće iskustvo (Freeman-Moir, 2011). Razumevanje iskustvenog učenja iz Djuijeve perspektive vodi nas ka pozicioniranju utopije u obrazovanju odraslih. Doživljaj određenog teksta koji nas navodi na preispitivanje navika, prošlosti, te osmišljavanja prakse u boljem društvu, inicira zauzimanje kritičkog stava prema sadašnjosti te formiranje želje da se nove prakse dodatno promisle i isprobaju. Treba napomenuti da je kritiku neophodno inkorporirati u eksperimentisanje sa novim praksama. Na taj način možemo govoriti o kritici kao o inicijalnoj, kada smo podstaknuti da se kritički odnosimo prema realnosti, te kao o integralnoj, kada se kritički stav zauzima prema novim idejama koje su formulisane zahvaljujući inicijalnoj kritici. To je posebno važno u kontekstu učenja

uz utopijsko mišljenje koje na taj način postaje celoživotni proces, a ne konačno rešenje pitanja kako bi trebalo da uredimo (savršeno) društvo.

Utopijski pristup učenju odraslih

Traganje za epistemološkim osnovama učenja odraslih u utopijskom mišljenju i utopijskim praksama predstavlja izazovan zadatak za aktuelnu andragogiju. S jedne strane, treba argumentovati zašto je imaginacija korisna za saznanje u oblasti obrazovanja odraslih, dok, s druge strane, treba stvoriti prostor za saradnju umetnosti i obrazovanja, te na taj način proširiti polje andragoških istraživanja. Govoreći o utopijskom mišljenju imamo na umu početnu definiciju utopije koju karakteriše otvoren odnos prema budućnosti i kritički odnos prema sadašnjosti (Ward, 2006). Ovde se govori o utopijskom mišljenju zato što se uzima u obzir da je to celoživotni proces težnje ka boljim načinima egzistencije (Levitas, 1990). I kada sve to smestimo u kontekst učenja, odnosno promišljanja tekstova, ali i praksi, možemo govoriti o utopijskom pristupu. Promišljajući taj pristup iz perspektive učenja odraslih koji se može ekstrapolirati iz tumačenja dela Džona Djuija ukazuje se na značaj umetnosti za iskustveno učenje s obzirom na to da se kroz umetnost značenja objekata koja su nedovršena razjašnjavaju i upotpunjavaju stvaranjem novog iskustva (Freeman-Moir, 2011).

Utopija može biti pristup koji podrazumeva dovršavanje priča, gde je učesnicima, odnosno ispitanicima dozvoljeno da sami koncipiraju i zaokružuju svoje vizije određenog fenomena. Često to može da podrazumeva unapređivanje iskustava. Međutim, iako se nauka dosta opirala ličnim interpretacijama, maštanju, estetici u učenju, upravo odmicanje od realnog može da bude dobar podsticaj za istraživanje i analizu. Štaviše, svi ti *slobodni kreativni izleti* odraslima ostavljaju još više prostora za interpretaciju sadržaja.

U tom procesu možemo ići i korak dalje te imaginaciju testirati putem obrazovanih intervencija. Novija istraživanja utopiju posmatraju kao metod, gde se „Fukoovom genealoškom metodom izoštravaju saznanja o arheološkom potencijalu utopije, pružajući osećaj kako bi se mogao postići zadatak *iskopavanja budućnosti*” (Stainforth, 2021, str. 610). Naime, utopijski metod se, prema shvatanju Rut Levitas (2010), temelji na tri aspekta: arheološki (sociološka kritika ideje dobrog društva), ontološki (tiče se aktivnih pojedinaca koji čine zamišljeno društvo) i arhitektonski (otvara pitanje koje alternativne institucije mogu isporučiti zamišljenja dobra). Arheološki domen je ključna spona između prošlosti i budućnosti u koji je kritika utkana. Mesto kritike ne samo da je centralno u

građenju utopijskih projekata i stvaranja znanja kroz utopijske eksperimente već je dijahronijska kritičnost prema svemu neophodan uslov razvoja.

Dakle, utopiju savremena nauka ne posmatra samo kao maštanje o budućnosti već kao zamišljanje onoga što može biti, ali još uvek nemamo. Rut Levitas (2010) naglašava da su utopijski pristupi višestruki te mogu biti želja za boljim načinom postojanja, opasno totalitarno maštanje, društvene prakse i primeri rekonstruisanog društva i, konačno, to može biti zamišljanje rekonstrukcije celokupnog društva. Utopiji u učenju odraslih treba prilaziti sa više strana. Pre svega putujući u zamišljene svetove kritikujemo realnost. Takođe, zamišljajući drugačije svetove bivamo vizionari spremni da isprobaju nove načine (boljeg) života. Autori poput Ungera (prema Levitas, 2008) smatraju da se u realnom i mogućem sadrže i imaginacija i praksa. A na čitavom tom putu transformacije čeka nas istinska emancipacija koju postizemo učeći. Imajući u vidu transformativni kvalitet utopije, neophodno je osvrnuti se i na Freireovo razumevanje prakse. Kritička pedagogija, zasnovana na praksi, smatra Piter Majo (2004), pre svega se temelji na prepoznavanju naše nedovršenosti kao ljudskih bića, te stalnoj potrebi za angažovanjem u odbacivanju loših praksi i najavljivanju novih kroz neprekidno reflektovanje o sebi i zajednici. Kada Freireov pojam prakse posmatramo kroz kolektivnu dimenziju učenja, koje je zasnovano na transformativnoj praksi, neophodno je uzeti u obzir da se uči povezivanjem sebe sa ostatkom društva, prevazilaženjem zabluda kako bi se izazvalo stvaranje novih alternativa, stoga je praksa stalno evoluirajuća (Mayo, 2020). Za građenje odnosa utopije i učenja odraslih mogli bismo da u temelj te saradnje ugradimo dva ključna elementa – kritiku i procesnost.

Utopije i učenje odraslih povezani su na više načina. Imajući u vidu da su utopije vizije idealnog ili boljeg društva, učenje je uvek njihov konstitutivni element. Izučavajući te vizije, ne samo da ulazimo u domen kritičke pedagogije već i futurističkih studija obrazovanja odraslih. S druge strane, mnogi autori (Halpin, 2003; Levitas, 2013; Moylan, 2000; Suvin, 1972) utopijske tekstove vide kao didaktičko sredstvo za obrazovanje želje, kritičko promišljanje društvenih fenomena, pokretanje čitaoca na društvenu akciju. Posmatrajući utopije kao pristup u učenju odraslih, možemo govoriti o celoživotnom procesu, u kojem se mladi i odrasli čitaoci pokreću na dalje istraživanje, učenje i promišljanje realnosti te osmišljavanje realizacije boljih svetova, pa makar oni bili, za početak, u domenu ličnog prostora i svakodnevnog života.

Sociološka empirijska istraživanja ukazuju na to da su utopijski projekti andragoški fenomen koji još uvek nije dovoljno istražen, na šta ukazuje sledeći primer. Iskustvo globalnog sela je dvodnevni događaj iskustvenog učenja gde su

ispitanici bili uključeni u rešavanje globalnih problema u realističnim situacijama susretanja sa ograničenim resursima, sukobima među nacijama i sl. Rezultati tog istraživanja su ukazali na činjenicu da ne postoji razlika u sklonosti utopizmu kod mlađih odraslih i starijih od 25 godina, kao ni u nivou obrazovanja (srednje obrazovanje nasuprot visokom obrazovanju) (Peterson et al., 2015). Sociopsihološka istraživanja (Fernando et al., 2019) koja su se bavila funkcijama utopije pokazuju da postoji veza između sadržaja utopije i motivisanosti za društvenu promenu, kao i efekta specifičnog domena na ponašanje, tj. spremnost da se donira novac u dobrotvorne svrhe. U pomenutom istraživanju ispitanici su bili izloženi dvema vrstama utopije: naučnofantastičnoj, odnosno visokotehnološkoj, i zelenoj, ekološkoj utopiji. Rezultati istraživanja (Fernando et al., 2019) pokazali su da pozitivno evaluiranje zelene utopije utiče na veću motivisanost za učesće u društvenim promenama i veću težnju za građanskim angažovanjem u vezi sa ekološkim pitanjima, dok to nije bio slučaj sa naučnofantastičnom, odnosno visokotehnološkom utopijom (Fernando et al., 2019). Kao objašnjenje za takav rezultat autori navode manju participativnu efikasnost u naučnofantastičnim utopijama s obzirom na to da se one percipiraju kao više konzistentne sa aktuelnim tehnološkim napretkom, ograničenih mogućnosti da se učestvuje u razvoju tehnoutopije te verovanjem da su one ostvarljive u dalekoj budućnosti (Fernando et al., 2019).

Ovo istraživanje potvrđuje filozofske osnove utemeljene u odnosu fiktivne i realne utopije. Motivacija da se učestvuje u društvenoj promeni zavisi od toga koliko je utopija inkonzistentna sa aktuelnim okruženjem. Zašto bismo se angažovali da menjamo nešto što ima izvesnu budućnost? Mogli bismo zaključiti da utopijsko mišljenje biva efikasno samo kada zamišljamo radikalno drugačije i bolje društvo, a ne postepenu promenu. Druga dva razloga neuspeha naučnofantastične utopije da motiviše društvenu promenu možemo eksplicirati pomoću andragoških argumenata. Sadržaj znanja te njegova razvijenost i upotrebljivost mogu poslužiti za tumačenje pomenutih rezultata istraživanja. Naime, ako je sadržaj teško razumljiv i nepoznat učesnicima, motivacija za njihovo angažovanje i verovanje u ostvarljivost utopijske vizije, odnosno specifične vrste promene, biće manja ili može potpuno izostati. Mi želimo da se nešto dogodi, mislimo da je to dobro, ali ništa ne znamo o tome. Ne razumemo kako funkcioniše stvaranje elemenata potrebnih za ostvarivanje visokotehnološke utopije. U tako postavljenoj situaciji verovatno ćemo sedeti i čekati da se željena vizija ostvari. Sa zelenom utopijom svedočimo o potpuno drugačijoj situaciji. Neophodno je imati na umu da je zeleni pokret veoma prisutan u javnom prostoru poslednjih godina, a aktivisti koriste veoma jednostavan jezik te preporučuju izvodljive i jasne alternative koje mogu uticati na transformaciju društva, a za početak na lokalne promene i pozitivne uticaje na kvalitet života pojedinaca. Zelene utopije su direktno povezane sa

svakodnevnim životom i mogućnošću da se promena brzo dogodi. Dovoljno je da se lokalna ekološka grupa organizuje i očisti deo korita reke. Vizija te akcije je jasna, znanje potrebno da se opravda to delovanje je dostupno i lako se proširuje na šire vizije, a rezultat te aktivnosti pokreće nove akcije. Mogućnost da učimo i angažujemo se radi ostvarivanja zelene utopije obezbeđuju nam mnogobrojni primeri ekološkoutopijskih zajednica širom sveta. Osećajem da pripadamo zajednici/ama koje unapređuju životno okruženje, koje odgovornim delovanjem čine to okruženje bezbednijim i održivijim za buduće generacije, preko socijalne komponente učenja, ostvaruje se motivaciona funkcija za dalje učenje. S druge strane, visokotehnološke utopije mogu se percipirati kao linearni napredak, koji pored istorijskog razvoja zahteva veoma specifičan domen znanja iz tehničkih nauka kako bi se otvorila mogućnost da se učestvuje u menjanju prakse. Pokret Uradi sam (DIY), otvarajući pristup za učenje i eksperimentisanje sa tehnologijom u zajednici, približio je praktična znanja osobama izvan te stručne oblasti. Još uvek nema dovoljno empirijskih istraživanja kako bismo mogli da tvrdimo da na efektivnost utopijskog mišljenja utiču sadržaj i nivo obrazovanja. Za sada je očigledno da je dobro obratiti pažnju kada govorimo o utopijskom mišljenju u kontekstu učenja odraslih da je utopijskim vizijama neophodno dodati znanje iz specifične oblasti i da treba razumeti teorijsko-vrednosno-ideološkihe aspekte tog znanja kako bismo mogli da zamislimo posledice različitih utopijskih vizija.

Primeri utopijskih praksi u obrazovanju odraslih

Još jedan primer prakse učenja odraslih inspirisan potragom za utopijom, ali i željom da se demokratizuje američko društvo, jeste Narodna škola Hajlander (Highlander Folk School), koju je osnovao Majls Horton (Myles Horton) 1932. godine u Tenesiju (SAD). Hortonov pristup obrazovanju odraslih utemeljen je u više tradicija, a pre svega u konceptu danskih visokih narodnih škola. Istorija Hajlandera počela je obrazovanjem radnika i nezaposlenih osoba, sa ciljem udruživanja i osnaživanja za borbu za radnička prava. Pedesetih i šezdesetih godina prošlog veka fokus je bio na organizovanju civilnog sektora za borbu za ljudska prava i prevazilaženju rasne segregacije, od sedamdesetih godina otvaraju se područja zaštite na radu i zaštita životne sredine, ali i delovanje na globalnom nivou. U 21. veku Hajlanders osnažuje imigrantske zajednice i bavi se međugeneracijskim liderstvom i temama održivog razvoja³. Kao i u prethodnom primeru, tako i u ovom, jasno se iščitavaju uticaji radikalne pedagogije, humanističke filozofije,

³ Informacije o istoriji Hajlandersa preuzete su sa sajta organizacije 13. aprila 2020.
<https://www.highlandercenter.org/our-history-timeline/>

radikalno demokratskog emancipatornog pristupa učenju odraslih. Hajlanders dodatno čini utopijskim mestom i sam prostor i arhitektonsko rešenje koji su uređeni po principima samoodrživosti i učenja u zajednici. Majls Horton u dijalogu sa Paulom Freireom u knjizi *Pravimo put hodajući* nedvosmisleno naglašava da kada pokušava da smisli šta će sa svojim životom, inspiraciju traži čitajući istoriju utopija. Međutim, ističe da je na kraju odbacio utopije, kada je obilazio ostatke utopijskih zajednica u SAD, kao što je Nju Harmoni (New Harmony), na primer. Horton je u njima video povlačenje i zatvaranje u okvire zajednice koja ne komunicira sa društvenim okruženjem (Horton & Freire, 1990). Takvo Hortonovo stanovište je potpuno razumljivo jer je njegov pristup bio usmeren ka izazivanju društvene promene pomoću obrazovanja. Međutim, Hajlanders je bio i ostao mesto za učenje utemeljeno na utopijskim vrednostima. Neophodno je naglasiti da je iznesena kritika na račun postojećih utopija i istorijskih interpretacija tog fenomena upravo doprinos razvoju ka utopiji kao novom pristupu učenju odraslih. Svi ti primeri tragaju za definicijom utopije, kontinuirano je rekonceptualizuju i tragaju za njenim mestom u savremenom obrazovanju, pa i celokupnom društvu. Važno je da se utopijski demokratski eksperiment ne realizuje u takmičenju sa alternativnim pristupima ka društvenoj promeni koja više stavlja naglasak na reformu umesto na radikalnu transformaciju (Milojević, 2002). Sam proces učenja odraslih je na neki način utopijski s obzirom na to da se njegovi efekti mogu manifestovati u budućnosti, a učeći iz prošlosti najavljuje se nešto novo sa nadom da će naši polaznici svojim znanjem unapređivati struku, ali i svoje okruženje. Međutim, Milojević (2005) smatra da je funkcija utopije da dovede do radikalne transformacije obrazovanja, što nam jasno pokazuje da svi akteri obrazovnog procesa moraju biti spremni na kritičku refleksiju, ali i na kreiranje promene koja nastaje kao rezultat kritičkog promišljanja naše celokupne egzistencije u obrazovnom procesu. To podrazumeva odnose, mehanizme kreiranja znanja, anticipiranje uticaja naših aktivnosti na kreiranje budućnosti i sl. Maštanje, sanjarenje, razmišljanje o idealnom društvu deo je svakodnevnog života svake odrasle osobe. Kada se nađemo u veoma teškim okolnostima, kada radimo pod velikim pritiskom i stresom često možemo odlutati na neko nepostojeće mesto gde nema svih tih neprijatnosti. Tako kolegama i kolegamicama, prijateljima i prijateljicama, članovima porodice pričamo kako bismo voleli da živimo, kako bismo svi mogli da živimo. To je prvi utopijski impuls koji zahteva da bude obrazovan kako bismo kreirali moguće u dijaloškoj praksi. Zapravo prelomna tačka koja utopiji može dati karakter novog pristupa učenju odraslih nalazi se u „prevazilaženju dihotomije između korisnog i nekorisnog, kao i podsticanja alternativnog načina mišljenja ka demokratskoj nadi” (Saito, 2020, str. 170). Djujijev pragmatizam u obrazovanju uspostavlja odnos između kreativne demokratije kao

načina života, utopijskog impulsa oličenog u demokratskom eksperimentisanju i zahteva da, sećajući se sopstvenih želja, ukusa i sklonosti, njihove artikulacije i testiranja u odnosu na odgovore drugih, kreiramo izvor kritike i uvežbavamo imaginaciju (Saito, 2020). Odnos utopije i učenja odraslih je interakcija između mašte, kritike i učenja na osnovu radikalno demokratskih eksperimenata.

Kritika u učenju odraslih

Mogli bismo da postavimo stvari tako da je kritika u osnovi (procesa) učenja. Sokratski metod se može okarakterisati kao kritički način dolaženja do istine. Babički pristup sticanja znanja često se koristi kao metod za unapređenje kritičkog mišljenja. Osim toga, kritička refleksija, kako Djui određuje kritičko mišljenje, utkana je i u Enisovu definiciju iz osamdesetih godina prošlog veka, kojom se kritičko mišljenje određuje kao „razumno refleksivno mišljenje fokusirano na odlučivanje u šta da se veruje i šta da se čini” (Ennis, 2015, str. 32). U toj definiciji nije jasna pozicija kritike u odnosu na kritičko mišljenje, ali autorka Orlović Lovren sa autorima Despotović i Bulajić (2016) govori o kritičkom stavu ili kritičkom duhu kao prvom koraku i „spremnosti da se mišljenje instrumentalizuje, da se ima aktivan odnos prema predmetu mišljenja, odnosno problemu koji se rešava i da se deluje autonomno i u skladu sa referentnim sistemom vrednosti” (str. 47). Iz kritičko-pedagoške perspektive kritičko mišljenje se može definisati kao „kritika proživljene društvene i političke realnosti koja omogućava veću slobodu mišljenja i delanja” (Kaplan, 1991, str. 362). Upravo se u tim elementima kritičkog mišljenja oslanjamo na viđenje kritike kao procesa za razumevanje odnosa moći i mogućnost njihove transformacije.

U ovoj diskusiji je neizostavno pomenuti Kantov odgovor na pitanje šta je prosvetćenost, te Fukoov tekst (1984) u kojem odgovara na isto pitanje. Kantov esej je posebno značajan za obrazovanje odraslih s obzirom na to da govori o potrebi da se odrasli oslobode maloletnosti te da budu „rešeni i hrabri da se služe razumom bez ičijeg vođstva” (Kant, 1996, str. 2). Posebno je interesantno što se ističe da je u maloletnosti zaglavljena ne samo odrasla osoba već i čitavo čovečanstvo. Mnogi autori su polemicali o tom tekstu iz više perspektiva. Horhajmer i Adorno (prema Fleischacker, 2013) ukazuju na estetsku viziju neke vrste komplementarnog razuma (*resason*), odnosno naše emancipacije od štetnog instrumentalnog razuma (*instumental reason*). Naime, Adorno „visoku” umetnost vidi kao antipod prosvetiteljskom i poluutopijskim mitovima (Fleischacker, 2013, str. 106). Ovdje se jasno ističe kritika upućena Kantovoj instrumentalizaciji koncepcije razuma, što je podstaklo dehumanizaciju oličenu u totalitarnim

režimima. Horhajmer i Adorno (prema Fleischacker, 2013) ukazuju na činjenicu da simbolički, metaforički, estetski sadržaji mogu biti značajni za oslobođenje od populističke zamke prosvjećivanja. Habermas se na neki način nastavlja na tu argumentaciju fokusirajući se na javni govor, a slično i Kant (1996) to vidi kao test za razumevanje ličnih perspektiva bez nametanja u šta da verujemo, što je minimalan uslov prosvćenosti (Fleischacker, 2013). Habermas nas poziva da anticipiramo situaciju idealnog kritičkog javnog govora, a da ga ne realizujemo. Naime, javne kritičke debate povlače se pred sadržajima zabave u privatne prostore, gde nedostaje kritička procena onoga što promišljamo od strane drugih (Fleischacker, 2013), a samim tim se ugrožavaju razvoj i opstanak demokratije. Očigledno je da su za kritičko obrazovanje neophodni metod javne diskusije, ali i apstraktni sadržaji poput umetnosti. Na taj način se približavamo *demokratskom utopijskom mišljenju* istovremeno uvažavajući primenu principa racionalne kritike, ali i estetizovanog oblika kritičkog promišljanja okruženja, sistema, kako sadašnjosti, tako i budućnosti.

Pre nego što će se upustiti da odgovori na pitanje šta je prosvćenost, Fuko odgovara na pitanje šta je kritika. Naime, Kant (1996) odvaja prosvćenost i kritiku. Fuko proširuje ideju kritike u odnosu na Habermasa posmatrajući je „kao snop nebrojenih odnosa koji se uspostavljaju između moći, istine i subjekta” (Zaharijević & Krstić, 2018, str. 14). Za Fukoa (1996), ideja kritike je da nas oslobodi vladanja, odnosno da nam dozvoli da otkrivamo granice znanja. Fuko se fokusira na odnos znanja i moći te ukazuje na to da je kritika produkt zapadnog sveta koji stoji usko u vezi sa vladanjem (Foucault, 1996). To je svakako nepobitna činjenica, ali zadatak ovog rada je da kritiku te kritičko mišljenje sagleda iz univerzalističke perspektive, koliko je to moguće. Složićemo se da postoje kriterijumi procene znanja, ali da ne smemo zanemariti ni odnose moći i posmatranje kritike kao vrline. To pitanje je nastavilo da intrigira Fukoa, te 1984. odgovara na pitanje šta je prosvćenost sa sumnjom da li smo stigli do odraslosti, pozivajući nas da pravimo razliku između prosvćenosti i humanosti (Foucault, 1996). Za Fukoa „kritička ontologija nije ni teorija, ni doktrina, niti znanje koje se akumulira, već je to ponašanje, filozofski život u kom je kritika ono što jesmo sada i ovde zajedno sa istorijskom analizom granica koje nam se nameću, ali i eksperimenata sa mogućnošću da ih prevaziđemo” (Foucault, 1984, str. 46).

Upravo u tom viđenju kritike pronalazimo funkcije (konkretne) utopije koja ima cilj da kritikom realnosti inspiriše na razmišljanje i realizovanje mogućih boljih okruženja i svetova. Međutim, diskusija o tome šta je kritika nije tako jednostavna ni jednosmerna. Jedna od polaznih tačaka ovog rada je sloboda da se nezavisno misli te ideja da kritika podrazumeva istorijsku analizu i pogled u moguću budućnost u sukobu sa sadašnjošću.

Džudit Butler, promišljajući kritiku iz fukoovske perspektive, pita se kako je moguće da racionalizacija vodi uvećavanju moći (Zaharijević & Krstić, 2018). Butler (2018) objašnjava da moć postavlja granice onome šta subjekt „može” biti, preko čega on više „nije” ili gde počiva u domenu suspendovane ideologije. Kritika dovodi hegemoni moral u pitanje, kritika desubjektivizuje formiranje sopstva, kritika preispituje granice spoznaje (Butler, 2018). Kritika ne samo da otvara potencijal za promenu, za moguće, već doprinosi procesu neprekidnog formiranja u okviru novih mreža znanja. Kritika preispituje postojeće znanje, ali i doprinosi stvaranju novog. Upravo se u tome vidi potencijal utopije za kritičko preispitivanje znanja, ali i kontinuirano učenje u interakciji sa okolinom koju čine druge osobe, ali i ekosistemi poput zajednica, bića i objekata. Kritika kao osnovna komponenta u interakciji utopije i realnosti može dovesti do unapređenja ne samo znanja već i pogleda na svet i razvoja pojedinaca koji su bili deo procesa učenja. Početna pretpostavka se upravo temelji na ideji da će se suprotstavljanjem znanja iz domena realnog u odnosu na konstruisano znanje u domenu utopijskog razvijati veštine mišljenja i pristupi učenju. Ne smemo zanemariti ni interakciju nivoa individualnog i grupnog procesa saznavanja, te prošlog, aktuelnog i budućeg znanja. Te elemente je neophodno dovesti u vezu kako bi se operacionalizovala ideja subjektivizacije kritike, ali i desubjektivizacije koja dovodi do kontinuiranog formiranja sopstva. Konačno, interakcijom kritike i utopije gradi se dijalog koji teži da izazove transformativni efekat, sa namerom da izmeni parametre savremenih i istorijskih ideja i praksi, otvarajući prostor alternativnim obrazovnim pristupima za nove vizije budućnosti (Kuhn, 1999), ali i formiranje utopijskih subjekata.

Kritika kao osnova razvijanja utopijskog pristupa u učenju odraslih

Kritika je ne samo početni korak kritičkog mišljenja već i sastavni deo utopije kao rezultata mišljenja i delanja koji se proverava stavljanjem kritičkih naočara, koje je bolje stalno nositi. Novija istraživanja iz oblasti utopijskih studija ne samo da ne posmatraju utopiju kao nacrt za savršeno društvo već se govori o metodi (Levitas, 2008, 2010; Moylan, 2020) u koji je ugrađena i kritika, između ostalog. U oblasti učenja odraslih predlažem da se za sada govori o pristupu. Da bismo pozicionirali odnos utopije i kritike u procesu razumevanja utopije kao pristupa učenju odraslih, neophodno je osvrnuti se na funkciju utopijskog mišljenja, ali i utopijske prakse u polju andragogije. Jedna od osnovnih funkcija utopijskih nara-

tiva je kognitivno očuđavanje (Suvin, 2017) te obrazovanje želje i nade (Levitas, 2008). Na taj način ne samo da se obezbeđuje podsticaj za formulisanje novog pristupa saznavanju već se otvara mogućnost za eksperimentisanje sa aktivnostima koje mogu da dovedu do širih društvenih promena i unapređenja demokratskih praksi. Istražujući fenomene opisane u književnim delima, dobijamo mogućnost da „izlazimo” na teren, da „putujemo”, ali u fiktivne svetove. Takav pristup omogućava da brusimo argumente i zauzimamo kritički stav prema aktuelnim utopijskim zajednicama koje se na taj način mogu unapređivati, ali i doprinositi kreiranju modela za buduće teorije i prakse utemeljene na kritici. Tom Mojlan (2020) upravo u radikalnoj pedagogiji te Freireovom pristupu emancipaciji kroz teologiju osobađanja govori o metodu koji podrazumeva „dekodiranje dominantnih ideoloških konstrukcija realnosti, a koje prati ponovno imenovanje realnosti kako bi se došlo do istine koja je u skladu sa potrebama i težnjama zajednice” (Mojlan, 2020, str. 79). Dakle, pasivno učenje ovde nije dovoljno. Govoreći u terminima Toma Mojlane (2020), teologija oslobođenja vodi nas ka mogućoj transformaciji društva kroz oslobađanje utopijskog impulsa, koji nam može pomoći da raskinemo veze sa dominantnim strukturama i praksama savremenog sveta te da jasnije formulišemo promene vidljive na utopijskom horizontu. U tom procesu kritika je polazište, integralni deo procesa, ali i spremnost da nove ideje budu ponovo podvrgnute kritici. Permanentna kritika nam pokazuje da je put saznavanja kroz utopije celoživotan.

„Realne”, odnosno konkretne utopije na specifičan način predstavljaju naredni korak u otelotvorenju inovativnih pristupa učenju odraslih testiranjem novih ideja u specifičnom, često kontrolisanom okruženju. Bilo da su to zajednice koje funkcionišu na drugačijim principima od dominantne ideologije, bilo da su prakse koje menjaju deo društvene realnosti (npr. participatorno budžetiranje u lokalnim zajednicama, obezbeđivanje svima zagarantovanog minimalca i sl.), bilo da su to obrazovne intervencije koje tragaju za novim pristupima i rešenjima, neophodno je imati u vidu da, kako Levitas (2010) upozorava, pre svega karakterizacija utopije kao realne umanjuje njihovu snagu, ali i naš kapacitet za učenje i transformaciju. Naime, autorka nas upozorava da nas diskusija o tome šta je „realno” zadržava u okvirima postojećeg društva i znanja te udaljava od holističkih rešenja i promena paradigme (Levitas, 2010). Nije neophodno odbacivati utopijske eksperimente, ali je neophodno da ne odustajemo od zamišljanja radikalno drugačijeg društva i da se libimo maštanja o stvarima koje još uvek ne poznajemo dobro. Upravo zamišljanjem nečeg potpuno drugačijeg polako gradimo njegove obrise i stalno ga osmišljavamo, zato je potrebno ne samo da kritikujemo već i da nam kritika otvori mogućnost za dalje učenje i istraživanje, prelazeći granice

disciplina. Upravo nam SciArt (*science inspired art form* – umetnost inspirisana naukom) ukazuje na nove tendencije interdisciplinarne saradnje u kojima se jasno očituje saradnja nauke i umetnosti, a umetnici i umetnice mogu da budu inspirisani naučnim saznanjima. Takođe, naučna fantastika, sa svojim podžanrom spekulativnom fantastikom, ukazuje i na činjenicu da je umetnosti često neophodna saradnja sa naukom. Konačno, umetnički obrađeni podaci često sežu izvan domena spoznaje te istraživače inspirišu da preispitaju mogućnosti postojanja izmaštanih svetova, često i da tragaju za modelima njihove implementacije, a nekoga motivišu da se bavi naukom, da nešto više sazna i možda unapredi život u svom okruženju.

Fuko nam nudi koncept heterotopija (Foucault & Miskowiec, 1986), koji može biti adekvatan način da se posmatraju i istražuju utopije. Heterotopija, odnosno drugačije mesto, predstavlja prostor gde se prepliće više nivoa (Peters & Humes, 2003), to su fizičke reprezentacije, čak aproksimacije utopija i paralelnih sistema koji imaju mogućnost da postanu utopije. U ovom slučaju utopija ne biva odbačena već kombinovanjem realnog i virtuelnog omogućava nam stvaranje i učenje u drugačijim prostorima, koji imaju specifična pravila funkcionisanja i koji mogu biti novi modeli prakse i konstruisanja novih teorija u obrazovanju. Heterotopija može biti prvi korak ka oslobođenju utopijskog impulsa. Kada imamo na umu učenje odraslih, ne smemo zaboraviti da „upućivanje na nove mogućnosti može postati apstraktno i prazno, sem ukoliko već nemamo osećaj za to koje su mogućnosti i promene poželjne i zbog čega” (Bernstin, 2000, str. 179).

Utopijsko mišljenje ima funkciju u obogaćivanju iskustva koje nije samo u domenima racionalnog i kognitivnog. Ljudsko iskustvo je mnogo bogatije te uključuje mišljenje usmereno ka stvaranju dobrobiti putem težnje ka ličnim i kolektivnim transformacijama (Jarvis, 1993). Naime, misleći o budućnosti, otkrivamo i bolje razumemo sadašnjost, ali i otvaramo mogućnost za nove pristupe učenju. Imajući u vidu slojevitost odnosa utopije i kritike u učenju odraslih, možemo zaključiti da je opravdano govoriti o kreiranju utopijskog pristupa, ali sa idejom da u tom slučaju ne možemo govoriti o zaokruženom modelu ili jasno definisanoj strategiji, s obzirom na to da moramo da budemo svesni primene utopije u određenom kontekstu te da budemo otvoreni za kritiku i transformaciju i tokom samog procesa učenja i poučavanja. Taj pristup će se razvijati onoliko koliko budemo hrabri/kadri da povezujemo elemente kritike sa različitim pristupima utopiji u različitim oblastima i sa različitim nivoima znanja i iskustava. A o rezultatima takvih pokušaja tek ćemo saznati u budućim istraživanjima.

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Critique as the Foundation for Adult Learning Grounded in Utopian Thinking

Abstract: Exploring the epistemological foundations of adult learning within utopian thinking and utopian practices presents a challenging task for current andragogical research. Utopia and adult learning are interconnected in multiple ways. Utopia represents a vision of an ideal or better society, where learning is always a constitutive element. By studying these visions, we enter the domain of critical pedagogy and futuristic studies of adult education. This paper aims to present the possibilities of developing utopian thinking as an approach to adult learning, where critique plays a key constitutive role. Critique not only opens up space for change but also contributes to a continuous process of formation within new networks of knowledge. Critique questions existing knowledge, while also contributing to the creation of the new. By envisioning the future, we not only discover and better understand the present, but also open up possibilities for new approaches to learning. Considering the relationship between utopia and critique in adult learning, we can justify the discussion about the creation of a utopian approach.

Keywords: critique, adult learning, utopia, pragmatism, critical pedagogy

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Disrupting Hegemonic Whiteness: Testimonios as Critical Race Counter-Narratives along the Community College Pathway

Abstract: The purpose of this qualitative case study focused on the early lived experiences of working-class Mexican American students in a community college in Oregon, USA. This article considers hardships that influence student's decision to pursue a community college education. The research questions for the study are "How do your early lived experiences influence you to pursue a community college education"? "What do you foresee as you complete your community college studies"? Each student participant provided their testimonios, all data was recorded, then transcribed for themes. The findings that emerged from testimonios were in relation to family struggle, early schooling experiences, and optimism in their education. Such experiences further the need to examine alienation within institutions of higher education. The author calls for community colleges to critically examine hegemonic whiteness while considering what can be learned in engaging with Mexican American students in their struggles to further their educational aspirations.

Keywords: Mexican Americans, community college, hegemonic whiteness, alienation in education

Introduction

The early philosophies community colleges in the United States of America were founded upon serve as challenges to social justice and equity within the context of education. Specifically, in relation to the lived realities that marginalized communities bring with them into the adult learning environment (Hernandez & Hernandez, 2011). Brint and Karabel (2020) state that community colleges

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promote social equality, increase economic efficiency, and provide students with a common cultural heritage by sorting them into a specialized curriculum. This is managed while answering the call in responding to socio-economic pressures placed upon such institutions by employers and state planners who promote the dire need for technical training within industrial societies.

Community colleges emerged at the turn of the twentieth century in the United States as institutions that promote social mobility by serving the workforce while also championing higher education. This was realized by offering two-year technical jr. college degrees, as well as the option to transfer to universities with a transfer degree, or a specific number of credits to satisfy university requirements for admission (Kane & Rouse, 1999). The premise of such institutions would be to offer cost-effective tuition in the communities in which they serve. In addition, they purport to promote a philosophy that upholds that education must serve both industry and the good of society (Grubbs, 2020; Hardin, 1986; Jeynes, 2007; Kroll, 2012).

Mexican Americans² in Community College

Mexican Americans as a historically marginalized group will continue to confront normalized racism, prejudice, and discrimination within their K-12 schooling experience. Consequently, such ill-treatment will continue pushing students out, and community colleges will continue to serve as a pathway for higher education (Gaxiola Serrano, 2017). There have been long-lasting concerns and criticism aimed at the effectiveness of community colleges as equitable educational institutions for Chicana/o students (Yosso, 2006).

For some Latina/o students, community colleges will serve as the first and last chance to acquire a higher education (Martinez & Fernandez, 2004). Sáenz et al. (2018) indicate that for Mexican American students to succeed in community college their experiences must be conceptualized by way of understanding how cultural capital (Yosso, 2005), plays a vital role in students navigating the experience. In kind, it is urged that community colleges tailor their programs to the cultural assets that Mexican American students bring to community colleges.

Latinx are more likely than any other racialized student population to attend a two-year or community college (Adelman, 2005; Martinez et al., 2017).

² Mexican American in this article is in refer to students born in the U.S. of Mexican descent, or born in Mexico and raised in the U.S. at a young age.

Chicana/o is a person of Mexican origin or descent, but it also can refer to a social consciousness where a person is never closer to themselves than when they are to their community.

Latina/o is a pan-ethnic identity of solidarity amongst people of Latin American origin or descent.

Latinx refers to people of Latin American origin or descent and used as gender neutral.

Carnevale and Fasules (2017) further that even though high school and college graduation rates for the Latinx community are promising, data suggests that such student population has the lowest high school completion rate and is less likely to pursue higher education in comparison to Blacks and Whites. Moreover, many Latinx community college students do not complete their studies or transfer to four-year institutions. Shapiro et al., (2017) found that Latinx completion rates were 10% above Black students, but were much lower standing at 67% and 72% when compared to White and Asian students. Genthe and Harrington (2022) found in a review of the literature that financial, psychosocial, and familial/cultural barriers affect Latinx student persistence in community college.

Critically imperative to consider is that community colleges will continue to serve the masses of people who are failed by the public educational system, such as minorities, immigrants, poor, working class, and non-traditional students. Problematically if students from historically disenfranchised communities are tracked into vocational programs with a deficit view or disdain of their race, class, language, culture, and identity it will squash their aspirations to pursue higher education (Rendon & Valadez, 1993). Abrica and Rivas (2017) found there is a continued need to provide structured support that enables Latinx students to overcome institutional barriers that are deeply and ideologically entrenched in community colleges.

Andragogy and Transformative Learning for Educational Equity

A continued concern exists as students from minoritized, poor, and working-class backgrounds have become increasingly concentrated in community colleges, and not transferring to four-year institutions, or completing their studies. Shaw and London (2001) contend that the purpose, culture, and ideology of community colleges should continue to be interrogated in relation to ethnocentric social class views in the demarcation of differences based on prior schooling, race, class, and gender. Cohen et al., (2014) suggest problematizing deficit ideologies which indiscriminately classify students and serve as barriers in their transfer onto four-year institutions, and considering the ways in which minoritized groups in the U.S. are demarcated in regard to social power dynamics based upon race, class, ethnicity, student ability, gender, etc.

Brown (2006) suggests fostering leadership for social justice and equity within institutions of higher education by incorporating an 'andragogy of transformative leadership'. This stipulates an examination of ontological and epistemological assumptions, values, and beliefs in relation to early socialization, as it

assists future educational leaders to be both critically active and reflective scholars/practitioners in the transformation of personal agency and sense of social responsibility towards and with others Popović and Koulaouzides (2017) advocate that lifelong learning should have a global citizen education emphasis for equipping learners with 1). a deep knowledge of global issues; 2). cognitive skills to think critically; 3). Non-cognitive skills, such as empathy and conflict resolution; 4). Behavioral capacities to act collaboratively and responsively.

Popović and Maksimović (2016) recommend through adult lifelong learning to problematize discourses that de-differentiate, breakdown, blur, and increase the permeability of traditional norms and boundaries as methods for raising critical awareness of power dynamics within social structures. Orlović Lovren and Popović (2017) maintain that the power of adult education is in the active participation of all spheres of life that have specific dimensions in the context of community. But more importantly, meeting 'the people' where they are. Popović and Despotović (2018) argue that the key to a democratic civic society is in the realization of an individual's autonomy through a participative culture in relation to it.

Popović et al. (2018) through conducting research in the former Yugoslavia advise to raise awareness as to the social dimension of 'well-being' in adult learning. This provides adult learners to draw upon their common sense which derives from a cultural, social, and constructed system. Ergo, suggesting a 'public pedagogy' where public spaces become alternative learning sites for adult education and transformational learning. Taylor and Laros (2014) concur that andragogy requires deep reflection in adult education. Thereby, being essential for fostering transformative learning through critical dialogue, the role of emotions, and whole person learning.

Alienation and Education

Karl Marx was the first who theorize alienation and its linkage to human productivity. Marx inferred the manner in which humans produce within the means of production of an economic system created alienated labor. Alienation lies in the deformed relationship amidst what the worker produces, productive activity itself, and lastly her/his species-being (Le Roy, 1965). Hall (2022) takes alienation to task within education suggesting the conditions of labor are defined within the capitalist reproduction of social relations attributed to historical and material dynamics. Troublesomely, their relationship to power reduces education to a commodity through the normalization of alienation. Turk (2014) assesses alienation within the context of education and how it affects student motivation, engagement, and academic success. Turk maintains that alienation occurs when students

feel disconnected from the material being taught, the goals of education, or the wider community, and the negative consequences of this feeling on students.

Bakan and Dua (2014) provide a linkage for understanding Marxism and anti-racism, and furthering how Marxist Theory can be used to understand and critique systems of racial inequality. Bakan and Dua in a further critique of Marx's thought on alienation point out that such a concept explains another form of human suffering, abstractly distinct from exploitation but continuously interacting with it. They put forth alienation creates a sense of aloneness and isolation anchored upon an ethos of market competition with other human beings. For Hill and Maisuria (2022) social class is manifested within structural systems and personal relations within the context of education and beyond, thus marking social, cultural, and economic differences.

The negative messages minoritized students internalize in relation to racialized social class during their K-12 schooling experiences break the spirit and contribute to internalization of alienation in society. In a study by Middleton (1963) he identified six variants that comprise alienation 1). Powerlessness in being able to respond to social problems; 2). Meaninglessness or not understanding the complexity of society; 3). Normlessness in order to get ahead, one must be unethical in practice; 4). Cultural estrangement where the individual accepts popular culture; 5). Social estrangement or loneliness, a feeling of lack or loss of companionship; 6). Estrangement from work, not really fulfilled with what one does, but needing to do so to obtain things needed and wanted. Such findings should continue to be drawn upon in studying the outcome of alienation through early schooling socialization and responding with a social justice lens for furthering educational equity in community colleges.

Hegemonic Whiteness

Mayo (1999) in drawing upon Antonio Gramsci's vein of thought defines hegemony as a social condition where all aspects of social reality are enforced by a dominant group. Also, such aspects are generated and made acceptable to people by way of exercise through influence and the winning of consent. Hegemonic whiteness developed over hundreds of years of human encounters developing into hierarchies that sustain and promote arrangements of affective, attitudinal, behavioral, and cultural standards embedded into institutions, cultures, and individual identities. Cote (2009) states that Whiteness is considered a homogenizing force that unifies White people in maintaining the benefits of White social privilege and supremacy.

Flores (2016) puts forth the origins of hegemonic Whiteness being rooted in colonization and in the rise of nation-states. Whiteness as a social construction can be traced to early settler colonialism and the anxieties that surrounded the boundaries of identity. From its inception early on, Whiteness would be reinforced through money and social status which were predominantly attributed to Euro-American settler colonialists. Purporting that both were integral in the spread of capitalism and in the discursive production of the White subject in opposition to the racialized other. Once racialized categories developed through processes of force and discrimination, hegemonic Whiteness was maintained and normalized through standardization within complex social processes (Bakan & Dua, 2014; Miller, 2022).

De Saxe (2022) avows that hegemonic Whiteness continues to be firmly entrenched because it relies on collective social forces and not solely on individual White people through a normalized default status in which people of color are viewed as racialized and othered. Cabrera (2018) explains that Whiteness serves as a discursive means for normalizing inequality which projects people of color as a deficit in their ability to change their socio-economic reality. Thereby, camouflaging capitalism and how it creates poverty by normalizing it and leaving it unchallenged. Furthermore, hegemonic Whiteness is mutually constitutive of dominant logic and transmitted through social structures such as education, religion, media, the medical field, and the military, besides Whiteness being able to obfuscate material and racial inequality (Hughey, 2010; Romano, 2018).

Casey (2020) mobilizes a Marxian lens in explaining how White supremacy utilizes capitalism for reproducing racial exclusion and discrimination. At the same time in reverse, White supremacy relies on capitalism for socially reproducing the private ownership for the means of production. Mayo (1999) urges the critique of 'social location' in relation to difference and refers to the Southern question furthered by Antonio Gramsci. Within such an ethnocentric frame of thought the darker peasant people of Southern Italy were viewed as having an inferior way of life, while the people of Northern Italy were viewed as having an affluent culture with a higher status. Such views have been unexamined notions of hegemonic Whiteness & racialized social class that have been left behind in history.

There is a gap in academic literature and empirical studies within community college scholarship that problematizes and deconstructs hegemonic Whiteness within such institutions of higher education and the communities in which they serve. Klein (2019) reminds readers that Whiteness is not White people in community colleges, but a discourse or social concept that that is deeply rooted in historical policies and practices that fail to recognize systemic racism. For ex-

ample, institutions of higher education fall short of identifying and deconstructing how hegemonic Whiteness serves as a barrier to institutional equity by lacking a critical examination of their daily business practices deriving from their founding philosophies.

Evatt-Young and Bryson (2021) advise leaders in higher education to call out structures and systems that by intention or not normalize racism and racial inequity. Thompson (2019) contends that Whiteness is difficult to recognize because it has been socially reproduced and normalized. This particularly holds truth for White people who have benefited intergenerationally through social, economic, and political benefits by being socially constructed as White.

In working with the Mexican American student population it is important to interrogate the deficit ideologies of such a community and of all 'minoritized' student populations. This holds sway as to the early mission and philosophies of community college previously stated in this article, and that is to prepare students for the job market, or instilling in them the option to pursue a higher education. How students are viewed with bias must be considered among instructors, staff, and administrators (Chapa & Schink, 2006).

Critical Race Counter-Narratives

Critical Race Theory (CRT) emerged as an intellectual movement that sought to debunk deeply entrenched racism in U.S. institutions. Crenshaw (2011) states "CRT was not, however, simply a product of a philosophical critique of the dominant frames on racial power. It was also a product of activists' engagement with the material manifestations of liberal reform" (Crenshaw, 2011, p. 1260). The foundation of CRT derives from the teachings of Critical Legal Studies which interrogated liberal views of social hierarchy and meritocracy. A methodology of practice within CRT was to implement a counter-narrative as to the experiences of people of color in challenging the master narrative.

By using the counter-narrative approach a "shock story" foregrounds race relations and illuminates the socio-political realities of marginalized communities that render them invisible through negative and stereotypical perceptions (Castro-Salazar & Bagley, 2012). Delgado and Stefancic (2017) assert that society constructs the meaning of the social world by way of tacit agreements which are sustained images, pictures, and scripts that reinforce a master narrative. Therefore, much of what we accept is ridiculous and self-serving, but not perceived as such at the time when it is projected. Critical race theorists have utilized counter-stories to directly challenge, displace, and mock such harmful depictions of people of color.

In educational scholarship, counter-stories have been utilized to tell the stories of those who have been marginalized in relation to the lived experiences of their communities. Social struggles are often not valued, told, or acknowledged (Muñoz & Maldonado, 2012). Counter-stories are utilized as tools for solidarity by those on the margins of society, moreover for furthering the educational persistence and aspirations of such community (Macias et al., 2021; Solorzano & Yosso, 2002). Mayo (1999) advises recognizing stories that students tell based on their own experiences as they can be areas of subjugated knowledge that can serve a purpose for collective emancipation.

In this section, I provide an overview of the methodology and participants in this study. I then go on to present the analysis of themes that emerged from the data, followed by a discussion, and conclusion of the study. I argue it is critically imperative to continue to disrupt hegemonic Whiteness in the lived experiences of community college students in order to further social justice and culturally responsive pedagogies within such institutions. A critical consciousness can bridge an understanding of students' lives to guide their transfer to four-year institutions in furthering their educational and professional aspirations.

The following questions frame this study:

1. How do your early lived struggles influence you to pursue a community college education?
2. What do you foresee as you complete your studies at A Gathering Place of Peace Community College?

Participants and Data Collection

The data for this article draws from a larger qualitative case study conducted at A Gathering Place of Peace Community College located in Santiam, Oregon, USA. A total of 15 students participated in pláticas and semi-structured interviews, in-kind guiding their testimonios. Data was further collected by utilizing participant observation and field notes. All interviews were recorded and transcribed (Seidman, 2006). Three student participants were identified to reflect themes that emerged.

Methodology

Critical ethnographic methods were utilized to take upon an emancipatory positionality to the research. As such, furthering transformative goals while incorporating self-reflexive inquiry as opposed to an objective stance in research (Cer-

vantes-Soon, 2014; Creswell, 2007; Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2011). Yet, centering the stories of students of color is a necessity within critical race research for the disruption of master narratives that socially reproduce inequity within institutions of higher education (Duncan, 2005). *Platicas* as a methodological tool were fused into the study for the cultivation of dialogue with the student participants. Such an approach is Mexican culturally centric which is rooted in various forms of communal communication such as stories, cuentos/stories, or other narrative forms (Guajardo & Guajardo, 2013). Fierros and Bernal (2016) instruct that it being critical that such an approach be cultivated based upon trust and relationship building with the community which one serves.

The *charla* process is a culturally centric form of communication that enables the speaker to make sense of their world and is common in Mediterranean cultures (Gramsci, 1971). Mayo (1999) advocates that *charlas* promulgate democratic social relations which render the learner as a subject of the learning process. In such a way, the culture of the learner is present through a dialogic teaching interaction. Also developed through the '*charla*' practice is that actors create meaning and propose social praxis. Mayo (2005) further advises on the importance of recognizing the role that dialogue has in understanding the world and furthering a war of position through critique and social praxis. Whereby, the importance of listening is followed by evidence of such responsiveness for authentic adult involvement which is a matter of respect (Mayo, 2003). Zanoni (2008) states that *charlas* are Latina/o cultural practices utilized by immigrant groups in affirming epistemology, identity, and agency. Such a form of communication places value on close family interactions, common language functions, and informal verbal exchange.

Testimonio was tied to the study to honor the student participants as holders of knowledge by way of honoring their histories, experiences, cultures, and languages within an educational setting (Delgado-Bernal, 2002). In this fashion, challenging apartheid knowledge presumes that there is only one way of knowing and understanding the world which is sustained through epistemological racism (Perez-Huber, 2008, 2009). Rodriguez-Campo (2021) advances that *testimonio* within educational settings as a promising methodology for addressing the lived realities of students of color and to center their voices in furthering a liberatory praxis.

De Saxe (2022) argues that *testimonio* aims to disrupt the White canon of mainstream education while having the ability to engender and regenerate the discourse of solidarity. Recently, community college scholars have unveiled Latina community college leadership pathways by utilizing *testimonio* as a methodology (Elenes, 2020). Guajardo and Guajardo (2016) advise that to narrate ones cuento/story followed through critical self-reflection enables an understanding of a lived experience. Likewise, the importance of not getting stuck in one's

cuento, but to utilize it as a mechanism for exploring one's journey. Notably, this holds truth for those who live on the margins and find themselves in spaces of resistance, resilience, and struggle.

Data Analysis

Data was analyzed by using a holistic coding process to identify basic themes that emerged. Students recalled and shared their memories, and identified feelings associated with their struggle to obtain a community college education. This served as a dialogical tool for further coding of the data (Marshall & Rossman, 2016; Saldaña, 2015). The themes that emerged were in relation to the student's resilience and idealism to overcome. Lived experiences were analyzed and utilized in the completion of the coding process (Richards, 2014).

Findings

The data analysis culled three themes from the student participants semi-structured interviews, *pláticas*, and *testimonios*. They included:

- (1) *La Lucha*/The Struggle Matters, focused on students' family struggles, and drawing upon such lived experiences as motivation for pursuing a community college education.
- (2) Schooling Blockades, highlighted an array of stereotypes, and beliefs that the students endured during their early schooling experience.
- (3) *El Porvenir*/What is to Come, indicated goals and idealism the students had for obtaining a community college education, and how it would improve their futures. They reflected on the experiences of their families and community as they worked towards completing their degrees. There was an overlap in the emergent themes with the research participants described below.

La Lucha Matters

The students in the study shared their families' *lucha*/struggle as a focal point and motivation for pursuing a community college education. The memories they shared at times seemed with reluctance or insecurity towards the researcher. Their recollections were often narrated with deep emotion and sentiment in my obser-

vations. Through their *testimonios* they expressed feelings of powerlessness and subordination. As we discussed *la lucha* matters, *Dionisio Maldonado* (pseudonym) remembered his families immigrant struggle from Mexico City to lay roots in the city of Santiam.

When we got here my mom started working in the fields. She worked from four in the morning until three in the evening [seriously inhumane conditions]. I remember my mom coming back from work really tired, she couldn't even sit down because her body ached so bad. Seeing that as a little kid has an impact on you. The U.S. is supposed to be about great opportunities. The next thing you know you see your parents struggling working in the fields to get money for the family.

Such experiences of Mexican Immigrant families often go unrecognized by White middle-class mainstream society/educators. Mexican immigrant parents are often viewed as being apathetic to their children's education. *Dionisio's* testimonio illuminated the great physical hardships endured by Mexican immigrant families that labor in agricultural work. They are often unacknowledged for their social and economic contributions in the United States.

The notion of U.S. American exceptionalism and the reality of great opportunity is something else. Whereby, labor as a commodity is welcomed, while the dignity of the human being is denied. Another student participant, *Silvano Gracia* (pseudonym) spoke about his families hardships in Santiam,

My parents were born in Toluca, Mexico, they came here looking for the American Dream. There were few opportunities for them to give me a better life in Mexico. They didn't want me to have that life, they wanted me to do something better for myself. My family is a lower middle class [not poor]. My parents work in the fields, the fields are not a well-paid job. We have always struggled to pay rent, pay bills, and my education [it has always been a struggle]. It's always stressful for our family to think about next month's rent and the bills that are coming up. Or when we all [the family] have to look where we can find a job. Sometimes we pass by the fields and asked the mayordomos/supervisors for work, that we need money to pay for the rent and bills. Sometimes they would say you can work today because some people did not show up so you can replace them. It has always been back and forth trying to find work.

Silvano was very aware of his families hardships in relation to stress and anxiety to survive. He understood his place in community college was beyond him as an individual, but broader in respect to the struggles of his family and community. Cole (2022) asserts that the intensification of class warfare has left entire generations emotionally drained who have witnessed expanding and angst-ridden unemployed and underemployed condemned to privation and desolation. Furthermore, how insecure low-wage slavery squeezes the lifeblood of the collective will.

Jacinto Treviño (pseudonym) another student research participant was attentive as to what his family endured while laying roots in Santiam, Oregon.

My mom is from Reynosa, Tamaulipas, Mexico, and my Dad is from Guanajuato, Guanajuato, Mexico. When they left Mexico it was to get better jobs as they had just had their first child and they did not want him to struggle like they were. My dad is poor and works in the fields that are thirty miles away from where we live. My dad would barely make enough money during the day. We would always have food, but my dad was mostly gone during the day as he worked very long hours. We didn't have the best clothes, sometimes we went to goodwill (second-hand store) because we didn't have any money. We would get teased in school, and sometimes we would get mad and want to do something about it. After you get used to the mistreatment it doesn't really matter.

Jacinto during our *plática* mentioned his families struggle and was aware of the difficult hardships they had endured. He also made the connection of such struggle to his schooling experience, and the derision he experienced in relation to race and social class. *Jacinto* also became numb for protection from scorn and ridicule which has an impact on students schooling and building relations. Inferior views of Mexican Americans as a minoritized group have often depicted them as only having the cognitive ability in serving as labor commodities for agricultural labor (Healey & Stepnick, 2022; Menchaca, 1995).

Schooling Blockades

Upon exploring the student participants schooling experience they were quick to share what they had overcome as Mexican immigrant students. In their *pláticas* they shared deficit views of Mexican students and the ways in which students either resisted or were subordinated by such ideologies within the culture of schooling. *Dionisio* shared,

In primary school, you are a little kid and get all of the basic knowledge. I don't think in my early schooling I ever thought about college. I just imagined what I wanted to be when I grew up. I didn't think I would have to graduate high school and college. High school was a big influence because teachers and peers tell you that if you don't go to college then you are going to be a big loser for the rest of your life. I would hear this in particular from teachers. My peers in high school, the people I would hang around with would say I don't give a crap what teachers say. I am going to work, work, work. I was the big one in my crew, I wanted to go to college, and I wanted to be someone in life. I just didn't want to work and have the same life as my parents.

Dionisio's experiences in schooling were devaluing by way of the messages received from teachers. The teachers projected a White middle-class ethnocentric view in the pursuit and obtainment of a higher education. Such views have often been reinforced through Anglo-conformity, Americanization, and assimilation of Latina/o immigrant communities into U.S. society (Orosco, 2016). Even though *Dionisio* recognized the realities of his situation, he still hung on to hope for a better life through his education.

Silvano vividly recalled his schooling experiences and the social environment he struggled against while obtaining an education,

I experienced quite a few things during my schooling experience. For example, I had a lot of friends in high school who were gangsters and used drugs. Some of them ended up killed or imprisoned. They would often try to get me to join gangs but I would refuse. I also remember in school a lot of people made fun of my accent because I did not speak English well or whatnot. Those students started in ESL classes and I ended up as an Ivy [valedictorian] student. Many people would put me down for what I was doing [finishing high school], they were jealous for whatever reason. It was really sad to see my own people [peers] trying to keep me from accomplishing my goals. But it was the motivation from my family and where I came from. I never forget all the farm work that we did, knowing the hard life, and staying away from all the destruction.

Given the social barriers that were ever present in *Silvano's* schooling experience such as struggling against self-fulfilling prophecies, violence, and internal-

ized oppression, he drew upon the struggles of his family and dignity through hard work for affirming his place in community college. Regardless, of the negativity and the expectations from the larger society, *Silvano* listened to his family's wishes and desires for better opportunities for himself. Mayo (1999) with respect to adult education advises recognizing dialects in communication styles and valuing them. Additionally, it affirms that the dominant language should be learned, but in doing so explains the process of hegemony tied to such language and its relation to power/knowledge (Mayo, 2014).

Jacinto spoke about different memories he had of his schooling experience. He recalled constant belittling by associating with peers from his own ethnic [Mexican] background,

In my elementary school experience, I was labeled a little troublemaker for my short temper with students. In middle school, people started telling me to sell drugs and I kind of started, but then my cousin called me and told me to stop because I could get in trouble. In high school, I changed from being a troublemaker to being the quiet one. I would just go to school and go home. There were gangs everywhere. When I would go to different towns, people [gangs] would ask me to join them, that I should be down with them. I would tell them that I kick it with everyone, I don't mind if you are Black, White, Asian, or whatever, or if you are in a gang or not. I would just tell them [friends] that it's not good. I used to hang out with them and stuff, but I didn't mind them having problems with other people when I didn't.

For many, such experiences would not be validated or accepted as knowledge in an educational setting. However, in *pláticas Jacinto* acknowledged that such experiences were a reality as to what his community lived, and what it took to overcome and pursue a community college education.

Scholarship in working with Mexican American students advises cultivating a sense of belonging for students from historically marginalized backgrounds within their schooling experience (Valenzuela, 1999). Therefore, acknowledging students' lived experiences in the community college environment and utilizing them for students to transmit such experiences onto an academic identity. In addition, furthering holistic and culturally responsive approaches for understanding diverse lived experiences in the curriculum and the pedagogical approaches of instructors (Ponjuán & Hernández, 2016).

El Porvenir

A cornerstone of the study was to explore the meaning and value that community college held for the student participants. As well as understanding their presence as students in relation to their educational aspirations and career goals. *Dioniso* reflected as a community college student,

A Gathering Place of Peace Community College has been like a huge melting pot for me. I like how different cultures blend together. I think this was a great way to start, you meet

a lot of people that have different ideas than you. First of all A Gathering Place of Peace is cheap [tuition] and I can afford it. Second of all, I heard the college is diverse, I figured that I would take the chance and get my general studies, my Associate of Arts Oregon Transfer Degree (AAOT). High school teachers told me that it was a great start for any kind of degree that you work for. So, I decided to come to a Gathering Place of Peace Community College. I think that the college is perfect how it is right now. I don't see myself as a minority here. I see myself as me, I haven't heard any stereotypes of racism going on, and I feel really good attending no negative put-downs against my race.

Dionisio's community college experience was one where he had been provided a space to pursue higher education as an individual. He did not see any flaws in the community college but saw it as a place where as long as there was no overt racism in his mind it was "perfect." Thereupon, his academic experience projected inclusivity through a responsive curriculum and teaching practices. *Silvano* spoke about his optimism in community college and optimism upon completion,

A Gathering Place of Peace Community College has been great. I really enjoy the diversity of the college. The teachers are great they are willing to help you with your homework even after work hours. I really enjoy working with students my own age, there are also students who are 40 or 50 years old. I can see various perspectives from joint generations and both merging together. It's really nice to see, I really enjoy learning new things from them. But I do advise the community college to be more united with schools. We have a lot of young Latinos who are studying in elementary, middle, and high school. We need those people who will be the

future of [U.S.] America to continue to study and get a higher education. They are going to be representing us, we need to continue students into higher education. Life is hard, but never give up on your dreams. Never forget where you come from, don't let anyone stop you.

Appreciative of the diversity at the college, *Silvano* learned from various ethnic and generational perspectives. However, he always looked back to his community and understood the importance of higher education to be attainable for younger generations. Through such experience, he believed in the familial transmission of knowledge for his community and the importance of obtaining a higher education with purpose.

Jacinto wanted to acquire an education to improve his future. He was mindful of the Mexican community not completing school,

It has been a good experience at A Gathering Place of Peace Community College. I have met good teachers, it is an unbelievable and unrealistic feeling to be in higher education. My community college education will positively impact my life because we (Mexicans) don't make it to college or get better jobs. Some of us like to get into gangs. It's not only for Latinos but for different races, there are different types of problems for each race. We can get a better career than our parents, because your parents may have a shitty job because they didn't go to school. Community college is giving you the opportunity to come to school and get an education, be better off than your parents, and get a better career. So, you can one day give your children what you wanted when you were small. I think community colleges should encourage more Latinos to come to college. This is a better life than living day by day, or getting into trouble and getting locked up. You can fall into a cycle of getting locked up, getting out, and getting locked up again. It can take your life.

The social extremities that had exiled so many of his Mexican peers from their schooling experience and society were deeply ingrained in *Jacinto's* memory, and the vital importance in completing his community college studies. For *Jacinto*, he realized that community college was a way in which he could improve his chances of having a better life.

Discussion

Through student *pláticas & testimonios* participants spoke about the hardships their families endured while they struggled to lay roots in Santiam, Oregon, USA as Mexican immigrants. There were various economic issues surfaced such as employment, financial necessities, rent, agricultural labor exploitation, prejudice, racism, and stereotypes aggravated by discrimination within their schooling experiences. Recalling such memories provided students with an empowering space within a community college in sharing their lived struggles to overcome.

Such experiences should be supported by faculty engaging in critical mentoring with students as they advance through their studies. Accordingly, validating their experiences through acceptance and action in furthering their educational pathways (Weiston-Serdan, 2017). Community colleges will continue to play a key role in the lives of Mexican American and minoritized students in furthering their education. A critical consciousness is needed in empowering students through solidarity with faculty and staff by challenging deficit views of historically marginalized communities within such institutions (Ponjuán et al., 2017).

Conclusion

According to Lima (2000) it is a duty for educators to enact advocacy in the schooling of people of color while challenging and confronting indifference. As an example, Chicana/o Studies provides Mexican American students with a strong sense of self and being by building an awareness of civic responsibility to the community (Nuñez, 2011). Specifically, within community colleges it is important for raising awareness of how Mexican American students have historically been mistreated and exiled from the schooling experience in relation to intergenerationally and socially reproduced deficit views and still overcome and obtain a higher education (Jaime-Diaz & Dubkin-Lee, 2023).

There is a continued need to push for the incorporation of an intercultural *conciencial*/awareness that will facilitate culturally responsive pedagogies that value and uphold the dignity of the minoritized, poor, working class, and immigrant communities in community college (Jaime-Diaz & Ramos, 2023). There should be a consistent and persistent struggle to raise awareness through *conocimiento*/ reflexive knowledge in relation to self and others in interaction for identifying and deconstructing internalized prejudices and biases deriving from early socialization and which are socially reproduced. This approach will facilitate an under-

standing to assist community college faculty and staff in responding equitably to racialized social class, and linguistic and cultural diversity of Mexican American and minoritized student populations (Jaime-Diaz & Mèndez-Negrete, 2021).

Campa (2010) in her study of Mexican American community college students advised for the utilization of a critical resilience lens for understanding the hardships that students endure along the community college pathway. In essence, understanding that when drawing upon cultural resources Mexican American students view their purpose as a collective one that is inseparable from their families and communities. Campa (2017) found that resilience serves as a catalyst for Mexican American students to overcome hurdles through a sense of purpose for themselves, and a mindfulness to overcome difficulties while pursuing and completing a community college education. Additionally, Campa (2013) advances the pedagogies of survival and marked the need for community colleges to reconceptualize ideas of success and failure by understanding resilience. This should be understood within the context of students learning from their own struggles, and those of their ancestors, and family members as part and parcel of life-long learning.

Mayo (1999) endorses resilience through social struggle by positing that transformative adult education should reflect and act upon the world through rigor and dialogical education. This line of thought should be maintained for communal empowerment in the understanding of oppression in relation to power dynamics and struggling for the realization of a global/civil society (Mayo, 2003, 2014). For Mayo (2005) in order to cultivate such reality there must be a reflection and a mutual feeling of marginality between educatee and educator as this draws their humanity closer to realizing worker/student empowerment through the harvesting of critical consciousness in the spirit and pursuit of social justice for the common good.

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Narušavanje hegemonijskog belog identiteta: *Testimonios* kao kontranarativ kritičke teorije rase u procesu pohađanja koledža u zajednici

Apstrakt: Cilj ove kvalitativne studije slučaja jesu rana životna iskustva radničke klase meksičko-američkih studenata na koledžu u zajednici u Oregonu, SAD. U ovom članku se razmatraju teškoće koje utiču na odluku studenata da nastave obrazovanje. Istraživačka pitanja su: kako vaša rana životna iskustva utiču na vas kako biste težili obrazovanju na koledžu i šta planirate nakon završavanja studije na koledžu? Svaki student, učesnik istraživanja, ispričao je svoje svedočenje (*testimonios*), svi podaci su snimljeni, a zatim transkribovani. Dobijeni nalazi, proizašli iz *testimonios*-a, bili su u vezi sa porodičnom borbom, ranim školskim iskustvima i optimizmom u njihovom obrazovanju. Takva iskustva dalje naglašavaju potrebu za ispitivanjem otuđenosti u okviru institucija visokog obrazovanja. Autor poziva koledže da kritički ispitaju hegemonijski beli identitet, uzimajući u obzir šta se može naučiti od meksičko-američkih studenata u njihovim borbama za dalje obrazovne aspiracije.

Ključne reči: Meksički Amerikanci, koledž, hegemoniska belina, otuđenje u obrazovanju

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Zašto skrenuti s puta: obrazovanje i putovanje

Apstrakt: Različite obrazovne paradigme često su predstavljane jednom istom metaforom: metaforom putovanja. U prvom delu rada izlažu se tipični primeri istovećenja obrazovanja i putovanja i rekonstruišu razlozi njihovog povezivanja. Potom se metafori putovanja suprotstavlja metafora *lutanja* – upravo da bi se istakao njen previdan, zaboravljan ili zanemarivan, ali makar podjednako dragocen obrazovni potencijal. Najzad se sugeriše napuštanje vizije unapred konačno određenog skupa vrednosti koje zastupa obrazovanje, u korist otvaranja mogućnosti koje diverzitet njegovih putanja pruža. Kritičkom analizom razumevanja putovanja Odiseja, Rusoovog Emila, Robinzona Krusoa, kao analogona obrazovne avanture, pokazuje se da nije ni uputno ni plodonosno besprizivno usvojiti i slediti obrazac po kome su početak obrazovanja (tačka polaska) i njegov cilj (tačka dolaska ili odredište) strogo definisani, naročito ukoliko on podrazumeva isključenje svakog odstupanja od trajektorije koja spaja „ishodište” i „odredište”. Inspiraciju i svojevrsnu šifru za alternativni model obrazovne procedure, kojim bi se izbegle manjkavosti njenog shvaćanja kao manje ili više pravolinijskog i jednodimenzionalnog transfera znanja i veština, autori pronalaze u deridijanskom poimanju *derive*.

Ključne reči: obrazovanje, putovanje, *derive*, Ruso

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Etimološka predigra

Putovanje i obrazovanje, već na prvi i najstariji pogled, povezuje *iskustvo*. Isto kao što se danas obrazovanje vidi kao transformativno iskustvo, tako se nekad već u imenovanju videlo putovanje. Naime, indoevropski koren reči „iskustvo“ bio je *per*, u značenju „pokušati“, „probati“, „rizikovati“. Latinske reči *experior* i *experimentum* preuzele su njegov semantički bagaž i on do danas živi u svim jezicima u reči „eksperiment“. Iskustvo je i kod nas iskušavanje i iskušenje, koje stavlja na kušnju iskušnika. Prizor putnika koji proverava i odmerava svoju snagu i vrednost na testu putovanja drevna je slika svakog takvog podviga i svakog podvižnika – reči takođe nastalih od praslovenskog *dvig*, kao drugog imena za „kretanje“. Tako se i mnoga sekundarna značenja onog *per* odnose na kretanje ili iskustvo kretanja: „preći preko nekog prostora“, „doseći cilj“, „izaći“. Na nemačkom jeziku se sada iskustvo kaže *Erfahrung*, a poteklo je od starovisokonemačkog *irfaran*, koje nije imalo drugo značenje do „putovati“, „izlaziti“, „prelaziti“, čak „lutati“. Nemački pridev *bewandert* danas znači „iskusan“, „vešt“, „znalački“, ali je u XV veku značio samo „srećno (do)putovao“ (Leed, 1991, str. 5–6).

Taj duboko ukorenjeni doživljaj da je putovanje iskustvo kojim se proverava i prokazuje karakter putnika preneo se onda i na put odrastanja i uneo u smisao obrazovanja. „Putovanje je kod mladih deo obrazovanja, a kod starijih deo iskustva“, otpočinje svoj esej „O putovanju“ Frensis Bekon (Bacon, 2018, str. 33). A mlade valja povesti i, kao što se kaže, „izvesti na put“. Kada je reč o (iz)vođenju, i starogrčka reč *paidagogos* [παῖδαγωγός] kovanica je sastavljena od glagola *ago* [ἄγω], u značenju „voditi“, i imenice *pais* [παῖς] (genitivi *paidos*), „dete“ ili „dečak“. Pedagog tako označava nekog ko vodi dete, a u retkom preklapanju jezika i bića koje zatičemo u antičkoj Grčkoj, pedagog je to doslovno i bio – rob koji vodi dete do škole ili učitelja. Ali, „za ruku voditi“ ima perspektivu da avanzuje do „rukovoditi“. U antičkom Rimu „pedagog“ će postati „tutor“ i – otvoriće se brojna „pedagoška“ pitanja o prirodi puta koji dete prelazi te o mogućoj, željenoj ili očekivanoj ulozi pedagoga na tom putovanju. U prilog povezivanja obrazovanja sa putovanjem, uz to, govori i etimologija latinskog termina za obrazovanje – *educare*. *E* (od) + *ducare* (voditi) doslovno bi značilo izvesti iz, voditi od, odvesti, izvesti.

Putovanje kao pohod

Arhetipsko putovanje, o kome je detaljno ispričano, rezervirano je, međutim, ne za plemenite prosvetne poslanike antike, već za jednog morepolovca i njegovu epopeju, za *Odiseju*. Kao praputovanje – ili pralutanje – ona je postala nezaobilazan momenat svake rasprave o putovanju, a Odisej „polimorfni, politro-

pni, mnogoliki...“ junak (Milić, 2022, str. 71, 75; Zaharijević & Krstić, 2017), čije (re)interpretacije ne prestaju. Ali ni sama *Odiseja* ne pripoveda samo o putovanju već i o obrazovanju, o obrazovanju kroz putovanje ili o putovanju koje obrazuje. Stav da taj mit Homera (ili Homerà) – ta priča o jednom junaku čiji je prekomorski povratak kući, izvoru, poreklu, tački polaska, uglavnom bio nevoljno ali domišljato lutanje – predstavlja prvi i najznačajniji vaspitno-obrazovni ideal antičke Grčke nije nikakva retkost. To će, uostalom, uz brojne kritike na Homerov račun, priznati već i Platon, pozivajući se u *Državi* više puta na Homerove vaspitne vrednosti (Platon, 2017). Taj vaspitno-obrazovni ideal koji dele svi Grci staje u ime *Paideia* [παίδεια].

Paideja, izvorni termin koji obuhvata pojam vaspitanja i obrazovanja, predstavlja uzoran način na koji ljudski život treba da se oblikuje, usmerava, razvija, saobrazno idealnom oblikovanju zajednice, odnosno *polis*a. To oblikovanje podrazumeva harmoničan razvoj celokupne čovekove ličnosti, odnosno njegovih duhovnih i telesnih moći i sklonosti, u skladu sa specifično starogrčkim shvatanjem *kalokagatije* [καλοκάγαθία] – spoja lepog i dobrog (videti Jeger, 1991, str. 9–10). Premda se Homer ne bavi direktno temom vaspitanja i obrazovanja, karakter njegovog pesništva podražava i podržava vrednosti koje se smatraju okosnicom paideje. Te vrednosti su kod Homera ovaploćene u slikama plemstva, a naročito *heroja* – slikama koje imaju veliku vaspitno-obrazovnu moć (Jeger, 1991, str. 37–38): *Odiseja*, skupa sa *Ilijadom*, ispostavlja valjane uzore koji, saopštavajući kako treba ili ne treba da postupamo, prenose obrazovno-vaspitne ideale.

Nije malo onih koji slede taj „nativ“. Kod nas, Zoran Dimić u knjizi *Političke obrazovanja: od Paideje do Bildunga*, o Ahilu i Odiseju piše kao o formulu za „večnu čovekovu vaspitno-obrazovnu“ paradigmu: „tako Homer zapravo uči Grke svih generacija da svoja dela ne procenjuju nekakvim svojim sitničarskim i utilitarnim religioznim i moralnim normama, već onim najvišim, koje na umu imaju interes svih Helena, tj. čoveka uopšte“ (Dimić, 2017, str. 69). Iako je, dakle, reč o skladnom oblikovanju individue, jasno je vidljiva univerzalistička pretenzija, barem kada je posredi ishod. Naravno, bez opštosti se ne može govoriti o idealima, pa se zaključuje da bez ideala nema ni (valjanog) obrazovanja. Takvi univerzalistički i/a monistički zahtevi, naročito kada je reč o obrazovanju, pre su redovna nego izuzetna pojava. U takvim pristupima sporno neće postati ukazivanje na postojanje tipskih ideala već nedvosmislen poziv da se ispuni određeni cilj i sledi ekskluzivna staza koja vodi ka njegovom ostvarenju.

Da ni mitska priča o jednom, više silom prilika, lualici nego o putniku ne može, međutim, jednoznačno da prenese vaspitno-obrazovni ideal paideje, sugerise već i predgovor srpskom izdanju *Odiseje*, u kome Miron Flašar ukazuje na brojne razlike *Ilijade* i *Odiseje*, te na izrazitu atipičnost Odiseja kao heroja.

On se služi i dozvoljenim i nedozvoljenim sredstvima, a njegove vrline ubedljivog govorništva (vrlina koju, uzgred, prikriva) (Homer, 2002, str. 17), lukavosti, promišljenosti, iako pripadaju ideji valjanog stratega u antičkom svetu, teško da se mogu uklopiti u paideju o kojoj piše Platon, a naročito se ne mogu uskladiti sa Sokratovom (Σωκράτης) opaskom da je „bolje nepravdu trpeti nego nepravdu činiti“ (Platon, 1968, str. 117). Takve „vrline“ bi se pre mogle pripisati sofistima.

Adorno (Adorno) i Horkhajmer (Horkheimer) će, međutim, odisejske ideale homerovskog obrazovanja prepoznati i u savremnim društvenim stremljenjima građanstva (Horkheimer & Adorno, 1989, str. 55). Ono nepoznato, bilo da je reč o prirodi ili drugim ljudima, drugim kulturama i civilizacijama, u našem kulturnom krugu je, već s Odisejom, viđeno kao nešto primitivno, varvarsko, nešto što valja svesti na svoju meru i podrediti našem razumu i razlogu. Ali, pošto se prirodom i njenim silama ne može ovladati neposredno, pukim nasiljem, neophodno je lukavstvo. Ta praprosvetiteljska putna strategija nalaže da se prema novinama i opasnostima, kojima se Odisej i njegova posada izlažu, ipak odnosi proračunato, takoreći koketno, kao kada, vezan za jarbol, Odisej sluša zov sirena i odoleva neodoljivom. *Ratio* dominira tim odnosom, pa čak i onda kada ulaže sebe i svoje zakone, on „kalkulacijom vlastitog uloga dovodi do negacije one moći u koju ulaže“ (Horkheimer & Adorno, 1989, str. 62). Jedna univerzalna ekonomija, pred svime od njega različitim, zastrašenog subjekta.

Odiseja je i za Deridu (Jacques Derrida) „sama forma ekonomije, doslovno ‘zakona kuće‘“, piše Malabu (Malabou & Derrida, 2004, str. 4). Doslovno „zakon kuće“, zato što je u pitanju složenica koja spaja domaćinstvo (*oikos*) i zakon (*nomos*), a iz doslovnog smisla deriviraju i ostali. Ekonomija se odnosi na razmenu dobara, ona nastaje kao „znanost upravljanja domaćinstvom“ zato što je potrebno umeti upravljati resursima kojima raspolažemo tako da donesemo najveće dobro domaćinstvu: ekonomski zakon utvrđuje na koji način se odvijaju to upravljanje i razmena, takođe proklamujući da se ona mora odigravati. *Odiseja* je putovanje koje je „sama forma ekonomije“ zato što je neprekidno reč o odnosu ulaganja, gubitka i dobitka. Inicijacija putovanja, kretanja, predstavlja ulaganje koje ima svoje željeno odredište – svako ulaganje pretpostavlja mogućnost dobiti, a premda se razmena stalno dešava, konačna dobit (ili gubitak) može se izračunati tek na kraju, odnosno kada se putovanje završi – Odisejevim povratkom kući (Derrida 1992c, str. 7).

Odisej je računčijijski, šičardžijski lukav i, štaviše, predstavlja model *homo oeconomicusa*: „Način ponašanja pustolova Odiseja podseća na način ponašanja u prigodnoj razmeni“ (Horkheimer & Adorno, 1989, str. 71). Ulog podrazumeva i mogućnost neuspeha, pa rizik treba svesti na minimum: rizikovati tek ili taman toliko da se opravdaju sredstva kojima se postiže cilj. Putnik Odisej i svaki putnik

koji će putovati na njegovom tragu, fatalno izmešten iz poznatog okruženja, nevolje susreta sa nepoznatim prevazilazi na svoj način razumljenim upoznavanjem – ovladavanjem njime. „Upoznati da bi se ovladalo“ kod Odiseja bi trebalo da se dešava doslovno jer mitski jezik još ne poznaje dualizam označenog i označitelja, jer reči, kao u epizodi sa samoimenovanjem „Niko“ (*Udeis*), imaju vlast nad stvarima (Horkheimer & Adorno, 1989, str. 69). Imenovanje je već saznanje, a saznanje je ovladavanje i *vice versa*.

Dobrobit znanja, koje će se na kraju pretvoriti i u dobrobit putovanja, proizilazi iz učinkovitosti, koja povratno postaje garancija istinitosti saznanog. Ovladavanje prati i korišćenje, odnosno upotreba tog nad čim se zagospodarilo. Tu ideju nalazimo i kod jednog drugog pustolova i brodolomca. Reč je o Robinzonu Krusou, o knjizi o njemu koja će, inače, zaslužiti da bude jedna od jedine dve knjige koje Ruso (Rousseau) preporučuje učeniku Emilu da čita zarad obrazovanja. Robinzon uistinu ne luta kao Odisej, on je izgubljen, prevashodno zato što nije poslušao očev savet da ne putuje. Izgubljenost koja se očitava u odvojenosti od doma može se prenebregnuti – put iskupljenja u tom slučaju nije povratak već proizvodnja doma (*oikos*). Rusoov *Emil* potvrđuje da se stvari spoznaju onda kada se vide, shvate kao alati, odnosno sredstva – baš kao što to radi Robinzon: „Emil, koji samo na to misli kako će da snabde svoje ostrvo, gledaće stvari drugim očima. Robinzon bi mnogo više cenio dućan jednog kovača nego sve Saidove drangulije. Prvi bi mu se činio kao vrlo uvažen čovek, a drugi kao bedni šarlatan“ (Ruso, 1950, str. 235). U narednim rečenicama ističe se da je, premda znanje o stvarima po sebi može biti dobro, mnogo značajnije naučiti kako ljudi i stvari funkcionišu, kako ljudi misle, „i onaj je naj mudriji koji se ume najbolje poslužiti tim oruđem“ (Ruso, 1950, str. 235).

Tako se Odisejeva lukavost i Robinzonova proizvodnja preklapaju sa svrhom saznavanja, sa svrhom znanja: donošenje koristi ili dobrobiti. „Lukavi pojedinac već je onaj *homo oeconomicus* na kojeg će jednom *ličiti svi razumni*: stoga je Odiseja već ujedno i Robinzonijada“ (Horkheimer & Adorno, 1989, str. 72; kurziv autora). Ta izolovanost ili otuđenost pojedinca pretvorila se u uslov njegove mogućnosti, odredivši i paradigmu „razumnog“ postupanja. Izuzetni, usamljeni i zbog hude sudbine s početka zlosrećni heroji, koji ipak svojim snagama uspevaju da postignu sve što mogu ili moraju, da se vrate kući ili izgrade dom onde gde su se zadesili, postaju uzori i ogledalo sveta u kojem caruje ekonomski svetonazor.

Odiseja tako utemeljuje, postavlja i svedoči onu ambivalenciju koju sadrži sama zamisao putovanja. Dom je dobar, kuća je nešto dobro, a opet valja krenuti na put – ne bi li joj se vratilo. Putovanje je takođe dobro – ukoliko je prolazno, ukoliko se slavi povratak, ukoliko se, još izraženije, junak ponovo sretne sa svojom vernom Penelopom. Putovanje u nepoznato nas menja, oblikuje, ali samo ako

smo imali odakle da krenemo i ako je u njemu neprestano živa želja, čak potreba da se vratimo u izvorište, da se iskustvom promjenjeni iznova (re)konstituišemo; fihteovskim rečnikom, da se sa iskušanim, pounutrenim, svarenim ne-ja povratimo onom ja od koga smo krenuli i koje tek po tom iskustvu stiče dostojanstvo.

Ponovni dolazak kući sa putovanja, štaviše, imao je u kulturi starih Grka značajan ritualni status i formalni karakter, ako je verovati rekonstrukciji Dejvida Morisa (Morris, 2022, str. 105), poput ceremonije venčanja. Tako je, za razliku od linearnog, cikcak obrasca pikarskog romana, i kružni luk *Odiseje* – zasnovan na njenoj kompoziciji „prstena“ (videti: Bird, 2020; Mendelsohn, 2020) – suspendovan dok se povratak kući ne dovrši. Jer, ne samo da je povratak neophodan kako bi putovanje moglo da se slavodobitno sumira i proceni njegov doprinos, doprinos uvek domaćem prosperitetu, već je njegov izostanak prokletstvo, osuda, zapravo i nije putovanje nego nešto drugo, strašno, najstrašnije – lutanje. Putovanje mora da se okonča: u njega se i upušta onda kada se ima u vidu njegovo dovršenje, te se svi naponi ulažu s tim pred očima, a vrednost samog putovanja utvrđuje s obzirom na uspešnost povratka.

Obrazovanje kao u/osvajanje

U novovekovlju, najkasnije od Montenjovih *Ogleda*,⁴ obrazovanje je i izrekom viđeno kao putovanje. Zapadna kulturna baština tada govori (i) o „unutrašnjem“ putovanju, o kretanju duha, razvoju sposobnosti, akumulaciji ideja ili znanja (Rabecq, 1957). U tom slučaju se obrazovanje zamišlja bez fizičkog kretanja i bez neposrednog susreta sa drugim: putovanje samo kao unutrašnje kretanje sebstva u, takoreći, razvoju. Takva odiseja sebstva je, recimo, ona Dekartova (Descartes): njegove meditacije predstavljaju putovanje, odnosno potragu za Istinom, *à la recherche de la vérité*. Ono što Dekart poručuje, doduše, ne tiče se toliko prirode putovanja: naglasak na putovanju sebstva ne govori da li putovanje treba da bude prevashodno unutrašnje ili spoljašnje niti obavezuje da pojedinac mora biti sam tokom čitavog svog puta. Osnovni naum, na koji Dekart više puta podseća, jeste da se pojedinac ne može obrazovati učeći iz putovanja drugog nego da sam mora da se zaputi, otisne, krene na putovanje, da bi ono za njega imalo istinsku (obrazovnu) vrednost (Descartes, 1998).

Dominantna paradigma koja nedvosmisleno povezuje putovanje i obrazovanje u doba renesanse i novog veka ipak je u sliku putovanja upisivala i unutrašnje i spoljašnje događanje. Montenj, Monteskje (Montesquieu), Erazmo (Desiderius

⁴ Van Den Abejl (Van den Abbeele, 1992: xv) navodi da se metafora obrazovanja kao putovanja već u Montenjovo vreme smatrala klasičnom.

Erasmus Roterodamus), Ruso, osam pisanja o putovanju i njegovim obrazovnim potencijalima, odista i putuju. Sva ta putovanja, međutim, u manjoj ili većoj meri povezivaće i ideja o jasno definisanom obrazovnom cilju ili *odredištu*.

Obrazovanje, u svakom slučaju, sada predstavlja put koji nas izvodi iz stanja neznanja, slepo usvojenih običaja i stečenih predrasuda (videti Montenj, 1964, str. 48) – upravo ono „izlaženje“ koje će postati amblematski čuveno po Kantovoj formuli(aciji) i prosvetiteljstva: „izlazak [*Ausgang*] čoveka iz samoskrivljene nezrelosti“ (Kant, 1968, str. 35; uporediti: Krstić, 2014; Krstić, 2016, str. 62–98). U velikoj Enciklopediji francuskih prosvetitelja, Luj d'Žakur (Louis de Jaucourt) 1765. godine potpisuje članak „Putovanje“ i – uz opšte gramatičko značenje transporta ličnosti sa jednog mesta na drugo, bilo da je reč o putovanju za Italiju ili o „velikom putovanju“ kada se ličnost polaže u grobnicu, te značenje koje ima u trgovini, kada je reč o prevozu „nameštaja, pšenice i drugih stvari“ – poseban odeljak izdvaja za treće značenje, za razumevanje putovanja *kao* obrazovanja:

Putovanje (*obrazovanje*). Velikani antike su procenili da nema bolje životne škole od putovanja; škole u kojoj se uči raznolikosti tolikih drugih života, gde se uvek pronalazi neka nova lekcija velike knjige sveta i gde je promena vazduha sa vežbanjem korisna za telo i duh. (Jaucourt, 1765, str. 476)

I tako ne samo da metafora putovanja postaje drugo ime za obrazovanje, nego i samo putovanje podrazumeva obrazovanje. Valja stvarno putovati, izaći u svet, za razliku od Kanta, upravo da bi se obrazovalo. Smatra(lo) se da nije najgori način da se izađe iz nezrelosti ili maloletstva putovanje u (potpuno, što više) strane predele, pa je stoga najprikladnije da se na put pođe već u „mladoj dobi“ (Montenj, 1964). Putovanje nas izlaže društvenoj, kulturnoj, običajnoj drugosti, vodi preispitivanju prethodno stečenih „znanja“ u susretu sa oblastima u kojima se ona razotkrivaju kao samo lokalna uverenja i na taj način nas osposobljava za samostalno rasuđivanje. Obrazovna vrednost putovanja kod Montenja prevashodno leži u tom kontaktu sa drugošću; manje, mada i to, u neminovnom empirijskom upoznavanju *geografije* pri izmeštanju *toposa*, a više u onome što to izmeštanje provocira: blagodet upoznavanja i „komunikacije“ sa drugačijim *mišljenjem* – susret sa od nas različitim narodima ne bismo li „iz njega doneli poglavito njihov dobar ukus i njihov način života i ponašanja, i izgllačali i izoštrili svoj mozak o njihov“ (Montenj, 1964, str. 53).

Ni obrazovanje, dakle, nije moglo da umakne epohalnoj „bekonizaciji“ prirode i „makijavelizaciji“ društva. Odredište obrazovnog putovanja (od) sada se pronalazi u osvajanju znanja i ovladavanju njime, a obrazovanje samo postaje proces njegovog „sticanja“. Tako i čuveni češki reformator obrazovanja Komenski

(John Amos Comenius) u XVII veku piše: „Život je tek *put*, koji je priprema za večnost” – i koji podrazumeva upoznavanje sa svim stvarima, ne bi li se njima, a time i sobom, *ovladalo*“ (Comenius, 1907, str. 32–37; kurziv naš).

Na jedan poslovično ambivalentan način, svi ti momenti su vidljivi i u Rusoovom pedagoškom klasiku *Emil*, delu koje na izvestan način zaokružuje vaspitno-obrazovnu tradiciju moderne i otvara (tek da bi ih neuspešno zatvorilo) mogućnosti ili dileme drugačijeg pristupa. Ideja putovanja je jedan od njegovih suštinskih motiva, ne samo zbog toga što završni odeljak nosi naziv „O putovanju“, već zato što je putovanje poslednji korak kojim se kruniše i dovršava Emilovo obrazovanje. Putovanje kod Rusoa s razlogom dolazi na kraju – „Putovanja prirodno podstiču da se ide do vrhunca i krunišu stvaranje čoveka dobrim ili zlim“ (Rousseau, 2002, str. 104). Putovanje, dakle, dovršava obrazovni proces, ali pošto putovanje očigledno može da donese i dobro i loše onom koji se obrazuje, pitanje je šta treba učiniti da bi putovanje, a time i obrazovanje, donelo dobrobit. Ruso, i inače sklon „psihologizacijama“, namah prevodi to pitanje u uslove koje karakter putnika treba da zadovolji da bi putovanje bilo uspešno: „Samo onima priliče [putovanja] koji su dovoljno jaki u sebi da slušaju pouke grešaka ne dopuštajući da ih one zavedu, i da gledaju primer poroka ne dopuštajući da ih on zanese“ (Rousseau, 2002, str. 104).

Ima li Ruso ovde u vidu Odiseja, koji se nije dao zvesti čarima Kalipso i Kirke? Tako bar misli Van den Abejl, koji podseća da je upravo slika Odiseja koji čuva dostojanstvo pred Kirkom poslužila za ilustraciju korica prvog izdanja pete knjige Rusoovog *Emila* (Van den Abbeele, 1992, str. 91). Možda Odisej nije bio zaveden, ali ga to, kao što znamo, nije sprečilo da uživa u porocima. Dopušta li Ruso greške ako njima nismo zavedeni? – Da, ukoliko su tuđe i ukoliko se na njima uči, reklo bi se. Putnik mora da okonča putovanje, ne napravivši pogrešno skretanje kada ga otkrije, ne odajući se zavodljivosti poroka koje upoznaje, stičući uvid u greške ne trpeći posledice zbog njih. Da bi odgovorio tako zahtevnim izazovima, mora se opremiti za put, mora se *podučiti*.

I tu nastupa učitelj, mentor, (ruko)vodič. Njegova uloga je da pruži toliko vaspitanja i obrazovanja učeniku koliko mu je dovoljno da doputuje a da ne zaluta. Putovanje je kod Rusoa završni korak obrazovanja prevashodno zato što pojedinac već mora biti dovoljno učen da bi putovanje moglo na najbolji način da doprinese njegovom (daljem) obrazovanju. Verno praćenje saveta, smernica, *instrukcija* učitelja ili mentora trebalo bi da garantuje bezbedan i berićetan put. Ali, priprema ili obrazovni milje, iako presudno važni, nisu i jedini uslovi koji će obezbediti *korisnost* putovanja. Da bi putovanje donelo prosperitet, ono mora da ima i jasno definisan cilj. Putovanja kojima to manjka – *lutanja* – nekorisna su za obrazovanje. Drugim rečima, putovanje za Rusoa više nije tek metafora obra-

zovanja već njegov sastavni deo, pa samim tim putovanje ne treba da se odvija putovanja radi nego isključivo zarad saznanja i u funkciji obrazovanja:

Sve što se zbiva s razlogom mora imati svoja pravila. I putovanja, shvaćena kao deo obrazovanja, takođe moraju imati svoja. Putovati putovanja radi znači lutati [*c'est errer*], biti skitnica. Putovanje zarad pouke još uvek je odveć nejasna stvar. Pouka bez određenog cilja nije ništa. (Rousseau, 2002, str. 105)

Ruso bez predumišljaja prekoračuje taj mali grafemski i verovatno etimološki razmak koji je postojao između *errer* i *l'erreur*. Lutanje je greška. I jedno i drugo je nepoželjno. Putovanje kao obrazovanje mora biti teleološki koncipirano. Emil sme, kao i Odisej, da uživa u čarima Kirke ili nekog/nečeg drugog dokle god to neće uticati na krajnje odredište putovanja. Ali, šta za Rusoa znači pogrešiti? Šta je greška jednog obrazovnog putovanja? I na kraju, ako Emil već mora biti obrazovan da bi krenuo na putovanje, zašto je uopšte neophodno putovati?

U poglavlju „O putovanju“, nakon nekoliko uvodnih rečenica o potrebi da se utvrde značaj i obrazovna vrednost putovanja, koji podrazumevaju njegov *telos*, Ruso pravi svojevrsan *derive* i započinje naizgled sasvim drugu priču – o knjigama – priču koja će poslužiti (kao i svaka priča) uspostavljanju analogije. Šta predstavlja čitanje? Ako je putovanje kretanje kroz „znanje“ koje se nalazi u svetu, onda je čitanje kretanje kroz „znanje“ koje se nalazi u knjigama. Ali „zloupotreba knjiga ubija znanje“, reći će Ruso, a „tako mnogo knjiga navodi nas da zanemarimo knjigu Sveta“ (Rousseau, 2002, str. 100). Podležće rezonovanje kreće se sledećim smerom: treba znati putovati; dakle, treba znati posmatrati stvari, usmeriti pogled na njih (na odgovarajući način), da bi se iz njih moglo nešto saznati. Oni koji čitaju dopuštaju da ih previše vodi „pogled“ autora i time ne podstiču čin mišljenja ili, još gore, uopšte sami ne misle.

Ova Rusoova kritika se posebno odnosi upravo na knjige koje govore o putovanjima: ako je putovanje svojevrsno čitanje (sveta), onda je čitanje o putovanju zapravo čitanje čitanja, pa se postavlja isto pitanje koje će i Ransijer (Jacques Rancière) dva veka kasnije u sličnoj formi (mada sa drugačijim naumom) postaviti u *Učitelju neznanici* (videti Rancière, 2010, str. 13): nije li čitanje čitanja udaljavanje od smisla? Odnosno, čitanje čitanja ne može imati veću obrazovnu vrednost od čitanja samog. A prvo čitanje (sveta) onda je u stvari *gledanje* – ono je na epistemološkoj lestvici izvora saznanja smešteno iznad čitanja. Stoga spoznaja treba da bude neposredna. Ako sumnjam u ispravnost vlastite spoznaje, imam još više razloga da sumnjam u ispravnost tuđe, pa je lakše razvejati sopstvene predrasude nego boriti se i sa svojim i sa tuđim: „Previše je probijati se i kroz predrasude autora i kroz svoje predrasude da bismo došli do istine“, zapaža Ruso. Najčešći je

slučaj da su pripovedanja putnika ili pisaca prožeta „lažnim i hotimičnim izopačavanjima“. Međutim, „čak i kada bi putnici saopštavali samo ono što su videli svojim očima ili u šta su verovali, i kada ne bi imali nikakvu nameru da nas obmanu, ta istina, zbog manjkavosti opažanja, ne bi bila pouzdana“ (Rousseau, 2002, str. 100–101).

Taj poznati zahtev da putnik mora lično da pređe put, kada je reč o obrazovanju uopšte, u izvesnoj je tenziji sa ulogom učitelja. Učitelj kod Rusoa, Ruso kao učitelj, treba da pripremi Emila za put; zadužen je za „prvi deo“ obrazovanja. Ali, ukoliko učitelj treba da nauči učenika kako da *gleda*, kako da *posmatra*, odnosno kako da čita „knjigu Sveta“, kako se ne bi dogodilo da proteže „zaluta“ ili da bude „zaveden“, to znači da postoji (da se pretpostavlja) *pravi* način učenja. Učiteljev svetonazor prema instrukcijama nije samo vrednosno iznad Emilovog, za koga bi moglo da se kaže da je mlad, neiskusn i neobrazovan, već je i iznad svakog drugog – koji se može pronaći u knjigama. Učenik tako ne sme da bude zaveden interpretacijama drugih, ali da ne bi bio zaveden samim stvarima, odnosno svojim neobučanim posmatranjem sveta, neophodno je da usvoji, barem do određene mere, onu *pravu* interpretaciju, čiji je skrbnik i ovlašćeni prenosilac učitelj. Paradoksalno, neposrednost spoznaje zahteva prethodno obrazovanje. Ono će nam pomoći da ne lutamo već da putujemo usmereno i sa zadatim ciljem – ne bismo li bili samostalni u saznavanju i delanju.

Ali zašto se onda uopšte, bez te navigacije iskusnog saobraćajca, dešavaju greške, lutanja i zastranjivanja? – Raspravljajući o prirodi i izvoru greške ili obmane u obrazovanju (i/kao putovanju), Ruso se okreće opštijem problemu koji do danas zaokuplja mislioce: odnos reči i stvari, stvari i termina za nju, „označitelja i označenog“.

Kod svakog učenja, ma kakvo ono bilo, zastupni znaci su beznačajni bez pojma pretstavljenih (sic) stvari. Ipak, uvek ograničavamo dete na ove znake, a da mu nikada ne možemo učiniti razumljivom nijednu od stvari koju oni predstavljaju. Dok mislimo da ga upoznajemo sa geografijom, učimo ga samo da pozna geografsku kartu; učimo ga da zna imena gradova, zemalja i reka, koja po njegovom shvatanju postoje samo na hartiji, na kojoj mu ih pokazujemo. (Ruso, 1950, str. 116)

Ta tema je otvorena već na sredini druge knjige *Emila*, znatno pre ključnih razmatranja o vrednosti putovanja, i rasvetljava i potkrepljuje Rusoovo na više mesta istaknuto insistiranje na oštroj razlici putovanja i čitanja: oni koji čitaju uče samo (prazne) reči i ništa više. Rusoov primer potpunog izostanka referenta (označitelja) nisu ništa drugo do mape (kartografija), prazne oznake – koje

upravo teže najvećoj mogućoj preciznosti u označavanju (Van den Abbeele, 1992, str. 88). Ovde nije reč samo o jednostavnoj ili jednosložnoj afirmaciji empirijskog karaktera putovanja, nasuprot prividnom znanju koje se ogleda u uvežbanju „apstraktnih“ pojmova, pojmova ispražnjenih od realnog sadržaja. Lutanja i „izvođenja na pravi put“ postoje i pri čitanju i na putovanju. Učenik i dok čita *luta* među rečima: čak i kada su mu „poznate“, one su tu tek prividno, budući da ostaje nejasno na šta tačno upućuju. Ali, lišen saveta mentora, učenik *luta* i kada je na putovanju, bilo zato što to putovanje nema dovoljno jasan i definisan cilj, bilo zato što putnik nema dovoljno „znanja“ da taj cilj sprovede u delo. Pismom se pripremalo za putovanje i putovanje se vraća pismu. Onaj koji putuje nailazi na nepoznato, to nepoznato zatim imenuje, ali taj proces je, za Rusoa i kod Rusoa, kao i „društvo“, kompromitovan i korumpiran iznutra, već u jeziku ili kroz jezik. Jer, i kada ne čita reči iz knjige, i kada sam putuje, misli pojedinca su oblikovane značenjem reči koje je do tada naučio. Čak i kada sâm imenuje nepoznato, sam gest imenovanja može biti pogrešan. To što je označitelj neposredno pred nama ne znači da smo u stanju da neposredno uočimo njegov smisao. Tako i dalje (i uvek) lako možemo da budemo zavedeni na pogrešan put i na najbrži i najodređenom putovanju, da se udaljimo od one „prirode“ i onog „prirodnog značenja“ kojem teži Ruso.⁵

Protiv teleologije pravog puta

Rusoova problemska topografija (mišljenja) obrazovanja može se ili mora uzeti u obzir, što ne obavezuje i na njegove putokaze. Pitanja koja je otvorio, više nego odgovori koje je ponudio, provociraće i drugačije, pa i kardinalno suprotstavljene pristupe. Među njima izdvajamo onaj koji osporava paradigmu putovanja i obrazovanja sa jasnim *odredištem*, instrukcijom i *pravim putem*, (re)afirmišući *lutanje*, *skretanje* i jedno razumevanje obrazovanja koje nije nužno podređeno instrukciji. Takva gledišta ili, pre, takve deklaracije nisu retke u savremenim teorijama obrazovanja:

Biti obrazovan ne znači stići na neko odredište; to znači putovati s različitim pogledom. Ne treba se grozničavo pripremati za ono što leži ispred nas, nego s preciznošću, strašću i ukusom raditi na vrednim stvarima koje su nam pri ruci. (Peters, 1965, str. 110)

⁵ „Prirodno“ je u tom smislu kod Rusoa ono što je svrsishodno: svrsishodnost stvari je i njihova prirodnost. Kao što je za Aristotela u prirodi brtve da bude oštra, tako i za Rusoa upotrebnost sama po sebi nije suprotna prirodi. Naprotiv, sugestija je da je od svih načina upotrebe najbolje spoznati, a onda i primenjivati onaj koji je u skladu sa samom svrhom – odnosno prirodom stvari.

Može li obrazovanje da bude bez konačnog odredišta? Bez obrazovanog? Bez obrazovanosti? Da li bi uopšte bilo obrazovanje ukoliko ne bi svoju *svrhu* pronalazilo u dosezanju destiniranog cilja ili makar u (is)trajnom kretanju u njegovom *smeru*, *ka* njemu, imajući ga uvek u vidu kao zvezdu vodilju? I ukoliko bi bilo zamislivo i moguće takvo „besciljno“ obrazovno putovanje, kako bi se profilisalo, organizovalo, predstavilo, strukturiralo i, posebno, u čemu bi se sastojao neki njegov obrazovni doprinos koji bi ga preporučio kao bolji „model“ u odnosu na tradicionalni, na „ideal-tip“ nabaždareni model obrazovanja? A ako bi se ispostavilo da i nije potpuno moguće, može li njegova zamisao da posluži makar kao korektiv potonjem, da destabilizuje i depotencira „odredište“, da afirmiše (značaj) odstupanja, skretanja sa propisanog kursa?

Pohvala lutanju, međutim, ne može biti direktna, kao što ni samo lutanje nikad nije. Besciljno lutanje kao učenje već je dobilo svoje zastupnike (na primer, Stenhouse, 1975; Oakeshott, 2000; cf. Hardarson, 2012), a filozofska apologija lutanja mogla bi se pratiti, unazad, od Hajdegerovih (Heidegger) šumskih puteva, preko Ničea (Nietzsche), Đordana Bruna (Giordano Bruno), pa sve do, recimo, Platonovog „Fedra“. Na čvorištu savremenih filozofskih strujanja, vide-smo, i sam lualica koji je preduzimaio duge planinske šetnje, Niče ne šeta kao antička peripatetička škola nego luta planinskim stazama. *Ich bin ein Wanderer und ein Bergsteiger*, kaže Zaratustra, započinjući svoj ponoćni pohod na planinski greben ka dalekoj luci. „Lualica i planinar“, priznaje on ili, kako je kod nas prevedeno, „putnik i pešak po brdima“. To se odigrava na početku trećeg dela knjige, koji je naslovljen „Der Wanderer“ (u našem prevodu „Putnik“; Niče, 1980, str. 155). Lualica luta planinom u mraku bez ikakvih mera predostrožnosti; Niče i njegov Zaratustra, smeli i izdržljivi, neustrašivi, spremni da preuzmu rizik. Rizik uspona i mišljenja, izazivanja i odgovora na izazove. Rizik demontaže i remontovanja mišljenja, racionalnosti uopšte, smisla. Ne postoji (više?) srećni lualica, nekakav eskapistički artefakt; arhetip lualice je (sada?) strog ali i radostan mislilac sa najvišim ulozima i bez ikakvog utočišta, bez kakvog god apsoluta (Morris, 2022, str. 16–17).

A na, zasad, kraju te filozofske struje u znaku lutanja – suptilnost. Deridijanska analiza *dolaska* (*arrive*) i *odlaska* (*derrive*) pokazuje ukrojenu i ukorenjenu ambivalentnost, nastanjenu u ovim pojmovima. Već ti termini u kojima razumevamo putovanje, njegovi odredbeni orijentiri, podrivaju njegovu samorazumljivost i baštine napetost njegove figure (Malabou & Derrida, 2004, str. 1–2). *Deriver* kao odlazak, predstavlja tačku razdvajanja, napuštanja. Vođeni latinskom etimologijom, gde *rivus* stoji za potok, ali i izvorište, dok je *ripa* obala, zaključujemo da je doslovno značenje napuštanje obale ili izvorišta. Ali, rečeno može imati dva sasvim odvojena smisla. S jedne strane, derivacija je kontinuirana, zacrtana,

to jest (pred)određena trajektorija koja ide iz izvora (porekla, osnove), pa tako imamo i etimološke derivacije, kao što je ova, odnosno derivaciju kao regularno i predviđeno kretanje iz izvorišta. S druge strane, pak, derivacija je i gubitak pravca, skretanje. Čamac koji je *a la derive* skrenuo je sa kursa, zalutao (Malabou & Derrida, 2004, str. 1).

Ni *arrive* se ne pokazuje jednoznačnim pod brižljivijim pogledom. Ono označava dolazak kao dosezanje, dostizanje izvora, obale, luke ili pristizanje na ma koje odredište, dospeće do cilja – okončavanje putovanja. Ali *arriver* se koristi i kao drugo ime za događaj, za nešto što dolazi ili što sledi, što proističe iz samog putovanja ili iz njegovog kraja, bilo da je reč o nečem očekivanom ili neočekivanom, iznenađujućem. To što proističe, što će doći ili što dolazi, može, međutim, i da uznemiri ili spreči polazak, dosezanje cilja ili okončanje procesa. Takav *arriver* je događaj koji u sebi nosi rizik, doslovno metodički rizik u smislu μέθοδος, budući da se odnosi na mogućnost da se ne pređe nameravani put uprkos sistematičnom poštovanju postupnog prelaženja planiranih koraka. Upravo taj metodički rizik istovremeno je uslov da se išta „novo“ na putu pojavi. Putovanje bez tog aspekta „dolaska“, bez ukalkulisanog i pred-određenog prispeća – bez „odredišta“ – kao da se i ne može zamisliti ili se ne može nazvati putovanjem. S druge, ne ciljno-racionalne strane gledano, da li zaista putovanje, u nekom iole emfatičkom smislu, zaslužuje svoj naziv ukoliko se liši svake nove informacije koja ga iznenađuje i svake neplanirane sadržine?

Sagledavanje mesta koje *derive* može da zauzme u učionici nije najlošiji pristup odstupanju od obrazovne telelogije. Pokušavajući da pruži odgovor na pitanje „čemu (za čega ili koga je) obrazovanje?“, Gert Bijesta razlučuje i opisuje dva dominantna uverenja. Jedni vide glavni zadatak obrazovanja, a time i obrazovnih ustanova, kao ispostavljanje i uspostavljanje kvalifikacije: proizvesti kvalifikovan kadar, osposobiti za veštine (*skills*) pojedince koji kroz obrazovni sistem prolaze. Drugi pak smatraju da je osnovna svrha obrazovanja socijalizacija, odnosno integracija „novih lica“ u postojeći društveno-kulturni i politički poredak. Oba pristupa zapostavljaju ono što za Bijestu predstavlja možda i srž samog obrazovanja: proces subjektivacije – proizvodnja subjektivnosti – i ono suprotno od toga. Rečnikom pozajmljenim od Fukoa (Foucault), tehnike vladanja su tehnike obrazovanja (u smislu možda i kontingentnog oblikovanja, formiranja) ili uopšte subjektivacije subjekta. Vladanje je kretanje „subjektivacije“, pretvaranje pojedinaca u subjekte, odnosno „podanike“, mehanizmima koji moć i istinu drže u najtešnjoj blizini. Obrnutim kretanjem, kritikom, subjekt se opunomoćuje da dovede u pitanje i ospori tako formiranog subjekta, kao i čitave poretke diskursa koji se izdaju za istinite, da okrene subjektivaciju, da pokrene desubjektivaciju, izade iz situacije samoskrivljenog prepuštanja vladanju i oslobodi se kontrole određenog

autoriteta (Foucault 1990, str. 39; uporediti Foucault 1983; Zaharijević & Krstić, 2018). U svakom slučaju, obrazovanje postaje krajnje „neobrazujuće“ ukoliko socijalizacija ili kvalifikacija postanu njegovi isključivi ciljevi, odnosno ako „nije zainteresovano za načine na koje polaznici mogu da steknu nezavisnost i od takvih (postojećih) poredaka“ (Biesta, 2010, str. 75). Kako univerzalno podružljivo obrazovanje da omogući takvu univerzalnu *samoemancipaciju*?

Nastojeći da pronađe odgovor na to pitanje, Biesta će nekoliko godina ranije, prateći ideje iznete u delu *The Community of Those Who Have Nothing in Common* američkog filozofa Alfonsa Lingisa (Lingis, 1994), ustanoviti razliku između singularnog, *jedinstvenog glasa* bića kao individue i *glasa zajednice* (Biesta, 2006, str. 56). Da bismo razumeli u kom su odnosu glas pojedinca i glas zajednice, važno je znati na koji način Lingis određuje zajednicu, a naročito jedan njen vid koji naziva *racionalna zajednica*. Racionalnu zajednicu ne sačinjavaju tek zajedničke (*common*) opservacije, maksime u okviru kojih se dela i zajednička uverenja već je nju „proizveo i ona proizvodi zajednički diskurs u mnogo jačem smislu“ (Lingis, 1994, str. 109). U skladu s tim, glas zajednice nije fenomen koji je spoljašnji u odnosu na subjekta-delatnika, već je pre reč o mehanizmima za proizvodnju subjekta, za oblikovanje njegovih unutrašnjih stavova i uverenja – to jest za subjektivaciju: „uvidi pojedinaca formulisani su u univerzalnim kategorijama, tako da su odvojeni od indeksa ovde-sada onoga ko ih je prvi formulisao“ (Lingis, 1994, str. 110).⁶ Treba otvoriti mogućnost govora u kojem „zajednica“ neće govoriti kroz nas i čuti onaj govor koji ne dolazi iz zajednice, odnosno govor *stranca*. Omogućiti objašnjenje koje nije objašnjenje poretka i čuti ono koje je *strano* – koje je dakle drugo, nepripadajuće, zalutalo, koje je *derive*.

Za to je potreban drugačiji pristup učenju od onog koji zastupa najuvreženija i najuticajnija teorija učenja: učenje usvajanjem. Usvaja se nešto spoljašnje, što postoji i pre čina učenja: znanje, veština, vrednost, koje zatim dolaze u posed onog koji uči. Nemali broj različitih psiholoških teorija koje objašnjavaju taj proces uglavnom su saglasne da je u učenju reč o takvom sticanju. To je način na koji racionalna zajednica putem obrazovanja funkcioniše; idući stazom obrazovanja usvajamo vrednosti, ciljeve, logiku, orijentire racionalnosti. Postoji, međutim, i drugi način na koji može da se posmatra obrazovno putovanje. On učenje ne razumeva kao ovladavanje veštinom, privajanje ili posedovanje nečeg već postojjećeg, već kao odgovor na „novo“, na „pitanje“ koje tera na promenu kursa. „Ako

⁶ Naravno da razumevanje *common sense*-a kao političkog diskursa ili diskursa moći nije novina. Osim Lingisa, tu temu su razrađivali Niče, Kanguilem (Georges Canguilem), Fuko, Delez (Deleuze) i Derida, ali ovde nismo prevashodno zainteresovani za (de)konstrukciju „racionalnog“ kao dominantne pozicije (šta se to tačno pod „racionalnim“ podrazumeva i zbog čega?) već se prvenstveno pitamo kako takva vrsta dominantnog diskursa utiče na (ne)mogućnost drugačijeg govora, a samim tim i na mogućnost nedirigovanog obrazovanja.

posmatramo učenje na taj način, možemo reći da je neko naučio nešto ne kada je kadar da prepiše i ponovi ono što je već postojalo, već kada odgovara na ono što je nepoznato, drugačije, ono što izaziva, iritira ili čak uznemirava“ (Biesta, 2006, str. 68). Na taj način učenje postaje osmišljavanje, stvaranje, dopuštanje da se strano ili nepoznato dogodi. „Nema istinskog putovanja bez događaja, niti dolaska bez 'dolaženja'. Ono što mora da se desi ili dođe jeste samo odstupanje ili skretanje koje omogućava drugom da se glavom i bradom pojavi“ (Malabou & Derrida, 2004, str. 2–4).

Govoreći o obrazovanju (a ne o putovanju), Gert Biesta će primetiti isto to:

Rizik postoji zato što učenike ne treba posmatrati kao objekte koje valja oblikovati i disciplinovati, već kao subjekte kojima pripada moć delovanja i odgovornosti. Da, obrazujemo zato što želimo rezultate i zato što želimo da naši učenici uče i postižu. Ali to ne znači ni da je moguća ni da je poželjna jedna obrazovna tehnologija, to jest, situacija u kojoj postoji savršeno podudaranje „inputa“ i „autputa“. Razlog leži u jednostavnoj činjenici da, ukoliko izbacimo rizik iz obrazovanja, postoji realna šansa da u potpunosti odbacimo obrazovanje. (Biesta, 2013, str. 1)

Učenje uvek uvodi u neki poredak (znanja ili društva), ali ono mora uvek i da ostavi mogućnost za odgovor kao *jedinstveni glas* koji nije unapred predviđen ili kategorizovan. Ne samo to, ako poslušamo Ransijera (Rancière, 2010), učenje, kao i objašnjavanje, nije ništa drugo nego *obećanje razumevanja*, razumevanja koje naknadno dolazi, ali za koje ne postoji nikakav garant da je konačno, a samim tim ni jedino legitimno ili ispravno. Svako razumevanje ili objašnjenje koje sebe uzima za konačno nije ništa drugo nego simulacija poretka. Učenje, da bi uopšte bilo učenje, mora moći da promaši, da *ne ispuni obećanje* – to je rizik koji dopušta učenju da se odvija. U suprotnom, učenje bi se pretvorilo u faktički iskaz, u reprodukciju i repetitivnu jednih istih činjenica, što bi značilo da se ništa *novo* nikada ne bi dogodilo ni naučilo. A bez mogućnosti drugačijeg odgovora, obrazovanje prestaje da bude obrazovanje i postaje ekonomija ili, pre, rečima Deride, tehnologija:

Kada je putanja jasna i data, kada određeno znanje unapred otvara put, odluka je već doneta, podjednako bi se moglo reći da nema odluke koja bi se tek donela; neodgovorno, a čiste savesti, jednostavno se primenjuje ili implementira program. [...] To od delanja čini jednostavnu primenu znanja ili veština. To od etike i politike čini tehnologiju. (Derrida, 1992, str. 41, 45)

Derive tako postaje otklon od unapred zadate putanje, istraživačko skretanje koje omogućava da obrazovanje ne „zaluta“ u tehnologiju, ili lutanje koje remeti, prekida stvaranje onog *oikosa* koji preobražava obrazovanje u ekonomiju. Ono je mogućnost *drugачijeg* odgovora, mogućnost da se *strano* čuje, da se skretanjem od *sensus communis*-a omogući drugačije mišljenje, mišljenje uopšte, ono koje je uslov *samoemancipacije*. Zbog toga *derive* nije trajna nemogućnost dolaska. Pre bismo mogli reći da je reč o rezu, o prekidu – prekidu između odlaska i dolaska, između objašnjenja i razumevanja, između polazne tačke i odredišta.

Za odmereno lutanje

Ukoliko za obrazovni potencijal *derivea* kažemo da je obrazovanje kao prekid, to znači da ga ne razumevamo kao diskurzivnu praksu već upravo kao odnos.⁷ Odnos, ne isključivo prema narativu – bio on odisejski, rusooovski, ransijerovski ili deridijanski – već odnos u učionici, odnos prema drugom, odnos u obrazovanju koji se ne temelji na hijerarhiji i postojećem poretku Znanja već na aberaciji, na promeni, na mogućnosti da se promaši, da se krene „krivim“ umesto „pravim“ putem, proizlazio taj pravi put iz ekonomskih ciljeva, Sokratove majeutike ili odabranog (odobrenog?) putovanja za mladog Emila. Dopustiti da se čuje glas drugog znači promeniti kurs, odbaciti odredište, ne doneti odluku unapred.

Čini se da je tek na taj način moguće zasnovano reći da se u obrazovanju ne afirmiše isključivo odredište već i mogućnost odstupanja od njega. U tom smislu, obrazovanje kao putovanje bez destinacije, lutanje, nije suprotni pol „krute“ obrazovne politike sa jasno definisanim ciljevima. Lutanje je pre put ka samokritici, način da se izađe iz dominantne strukture svaki put kada ona počne da se zatvara – pa tako i način da obrazovni proces samog sebe iznova preispituje. Emancipatorski potencijal *derivea* se tek odatle p(r)ojavljuje.

⁷ Prekid je takođe nešto što donosi stalnu promenu odnosa. U tom smislu, Deridin *derive* možemo da dovedemo u vezu sa njegovim razumevanjem dekonstrukcije: „Ono što se letimice naziva dekonstrukcijom nikada nije tehnički skup diskurzivnih postupaka, još manje novi hermeneutički metod koji radi na arhivama ili iskazima u zaklonu date i stabilne institucije“ (Derrida, 1992b, str. 22). Na drugom mestu nalazimo: „Mislim da se ona sastoji samo od prenošenja, kao i od mišljenja kroz prenošenje [...]“ (Derrida, 1985, str. 206).

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Why Divert from the Path?: Education and Travel

Abstract: Different educational paradigms are often represented by the same metaphor: the metaphor of a journey. In the first part of the paper, typical examples of equating education with travelling are presented and the underlying reasons for their connection are reconstructed. Then, the metaphor of wandering is contrasted with that of travelling – precisely to highlight its overlooked, forgotten, or neglected, but at least equally valuable educational potential. Finally, it is suggested to abandon the vision of a predefined set of values that education represents, in favour of opening up the possibilities offered by the diversity of its paths. Through a critical analysis of the understanding of the journeys of Odysseus, Rousseau's Emile, and Robinson Crusoe, as analogues of educational adventures, it is shown that it is neither advisable nor fruitful to uncritically adopt and follow a pattern where the beginning of education (the point of departure) and its goal (the point of arrival or destination) are strictly predefined, especially if it entails the exclusion of any deviation from the trajectory connecting the „origin” and „destination”. Inspiration and a kind of code for an alternative model of educational procedure, which would avoid the shortcomings of its understanding as a more or less straight-line and one-dimensional transfer of knowledge and skills, are found in Derrida's concept of *dérive*.

Keywords: education, travel, *dérive*, Rousseau

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Implementation of the European Agenda for Adult Learning in Portugal and Slovenia⁴

Abstract: In this paper, we analyse the implementation of the *Council Resolution on a renewed European agenda for adult learning* (hereafter 2011 Agenda) in the period 2012–2020 in two European Union (EU) member states: Portugal and Slovenia. Theoretically, our discussion draws on studies researching European governance in adult learning. At the same time, empirically we perform a comparative analysis between the two countries and discuss similarities and differences in terms of adult learning (AL) policy ideas, activities of national coordinators for the implementation of the 2011 Agenda, and AL related European Social Funds projects. Our findings indicate that the normative vision of 2011 Agenda is well embedded in both countries' policies, that national coordinators undertook various activities to implement 2011 Agenda, and that EU funds play a key role in funding and directing both countries' AL systems.

Keywords: European agenda for adult learning, Portugal, Slovenia, governance mechanisms, policy instruments

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Introduction

The role of the European Union (EU) in adult learning (AL) policymaking has received significant attention in the field of adult education in the last two decades (e.g. Field, 2018; Holford et al., 2014; Milana et al., 2020). The EU is identified, among others, as one of the intergovernmental organisations that promote particular discourses and policies of AL and stimulates international *policy transfer* (Mikulec, 2018, 2021). Although AL policies have no legal effects on member states due to the principle of subsidiarity, they are exercised and supported through “soft law”, different governance mechanisms, and policy instruments (Milana & Klatt, 2020). Nevertheless, while the role of the EU in AL policymaking, as well as other intergovernmental organisations, received considerable attention in the scientific community, less is known about the traveling of policies from the EU to the national level and their real impact on member states policies and practices that go beyond discursive dissemination and implementation (cf. Crossley, 2019; Jakobi, 2009; Lima et al., 2022).

Therefore, by elaborating on governance mechanisms and policy instruments used during the implementation of the *Council Resolution on a renewed European agenda for adult learning* (hereafter 2011 Agenda) (Council of the EU [CEU], 2011) in the period 2012–2020, the paper aims to trace its impact in two EU member states: Portugal and Slovenia. We do that by analysing the translation of ideas from 2011 Agenda to national AL policies, as well as through activities undertaken by both countries “National Coordinators for the Implementation of the European Agenda for Adult Learning” (NC-EAAL) networks funded by Erasmus+⁵ and AL projects (reforms) funded by European Social Fund (ESF) that supports employment-related projects and investments in Europe’s human capital. The paper explores the following two research questions: (1) How was the 2011 Agenda implemented in AL policies and practices in Portugal and Slovenia? To what extent were ideas from 2011 Agenda translated into national policies and practices of both countries?

In the following, we first briefly introduce the theoretical framework. Next, we outline our methodological approach and provide an analysis of the Portuguese and Slovene implementation of 2011 Agenda. In the final section, we discuss the identified similarities and differences. Our findings indicate that the normative vision of 2011 Agenda is well embedded in both countries policies, that NC-EAALs undertook various activities to implement 2011 Agenda, and that EU funds play a key role in funding and directing of both countries AL systems.

⁵ NC-EAAL are designated by each country to facilitate cooperation between European Commission and European countries in implementing the EAAL. NC-EAAL sets out a work programme with specific actions their organisation is going to take to implement the EAAL in their country (Milana & Klatt, 2020).

The EU and AL Policymaking

The EU, the successor of the European Economic Community established in 1957, and renamed in 1967 as the European Community, was established in 1993 when the Maastricht Treaty came into force. It has a primarily continental European reach and is one of the key agencies contributing to the formation of European (adult) education policy. Although the genesis of European education policy can be traced back to 1957, it was not until 1996 – the European year of lifelong learning (LLL) – that the EU began to devote more attention to AL. From then on, the EU became an increasingly influential actor in the norm and standard setting for AL and/or LLL. However, while the commitment to LLL has improved the status, importance, and visibility of AL in the EU, it has also primarily strengthened the economic objectives and instrumental conceptualisation of AL and emphasised human capital and the vocational perspective of LLL (see Holford & Milana, 2023; Mikulec, 2018, 2019; Rasmussen, 2014).

For the purpose of governance of European AL policy, the European Commission (EC) adopted an open method of coordination (OMC), which is “the means of disseminating best practices and achieving greater convergence in key EU objectives” (European Council, 2000, article 37). The OMC was introduced to improve the effectiveness, coordination and measurability of the outcomes of LLL policies. The OMC works in addition to other traditional legal frameworks and it establishes a new form of multilevel educational governance in which informal normative pressures and the EC’s agenda attempt to direct reforms in the area of LLL. It is exercised in the form of “soft law” (e.g. recommendations, guidelines, resolutions, conclusions, indicators, benchmarks, and statistical data) and implemented via established networks (Lawn & Grek, 2012). However, although soft law does not constitute an external imposition of norms but is based on the voluntary and gradual implementation of the recommendations from the member states, the EU strives to establish monitoring mechanisms through benchmarks and indicators at the European level, to measure and compare the progress of member states, and to disseminate desirable AL ideas and concepts (Mikulec, 2021).

As shown by researchers (Milana & Klatt, 2020; Milana et al., 2020), 2011 Agenda went through three historical periods. In the first, pre-foundations stage (1996–2005), EU sets grounds for the establishment of AL as a policy domain marked by the 1996 *European Year of lifelong learning*, *Memorandum on lifelong learning* in 2000 and Council’s *Resolution on lifelong learning* in 2002. In the second, foundation stage (2006–2010), AL became “a clearly defined policy domain” (Milana et al., 2020, p. 239) marked by the EC’s *Adult Learning: it is*

never too late to learn in 2006) and the Council's *Conclusions on adult learning of 22 May 2008*, among others. While in the third, consolidation stage (from 2011 onwards), which is marked by acceptance of *2011 Agenda*, AL remains a clearly defined policy domain, but with its own "modus operandi" and its own legal, epistemic, and procedural functions (Milana & Klatt, 2020, p. 59; Milana et al., 2020, p. 241).

The normative vision of 2011 Agenda is shaped by the following ideas: to secure access to high-quality learning opportunities for adults; to develop a new approach based on learning outcomes and learner responsibility and autonomy; to foster greater awareness among adults that learning is a lifelong endeavor; to encourage the development of effective lifelong guidance systems and systems for the validation of non-formal and informal learning; to ensure the comprehensive provision aimed at acquiring key competences; to ensure flexible learning pathways (including in-company training and workplace-based learning); to promote the role of social partners and civil society in articulating training needs for adults; to make well-developed learning provision for seniors (active and healthy aging); and to promote AL as a means to increase solidarity between age generations and cultures (CEU, 2011, pp. 3–4).

Short-term priority areas of 2011 Agenda for 2012–2014 invited member states to make LLL and mobility a reality, to improve the quality and efficiency of AL, to promote equity, social cohesion, and active citizenship through AL, to promote creativity and innovation of adults and their learning environments, and to improve the knowledge base on AL and monitoring the AL sector (CEU, 2011, pp. 5–6). In 2015 new priority areas were set (till 2020), which included better governance of AL (coordination and coherence with other policy areas), increased supply and take-up of high quality provision (literacy, numeracy, and digital skills, outreach and guidance), flexible and wider access to learning (workplace learning, use of ICT, second chance opportunities), and better quality assurance (policy monitoring, data gathering, education of adult educators) (EC, 2019, p. 4–5).

Finally, while 2011 Agenda works through OMC, it is also based on core *governance mechanisms*, that aim towards concrete policy objectives, such as standard-setting (normative actions and common goals), capacity-building (good practices helping implement policy solutions), elite learning (changes of the value system of national actors), and financial redistribution (include conditionality to support reforms). These governance mechanisms are supported by several *policy instruments* that strive to achieve concrete policy outcomes. These include: (1) coordinated working groups and networks established and coordinated by the EC (e.g. Working Group on AL, NC-EAAL); (2) mutual and peer-learning ar-

rangements for representatives of member states and EC staff; (3) data generation (qualitative and quantitative data, such as, for example, European Adult Education Survey); (4) benchmarks that are agreed at European level (e.g. 15% of adults participating in LLL by the end of 2020); and (5) funding schemes, such as ESF, Erasmus+ and the Europe Programme for Employment and Social Innovation (EaSI) (Milana & Klatt, 2020, pp. 61–72; Milana et al., 2020, pp. 241–242).

Methodology

For the comparative empirical analysis, we selected Portugal and Slovenia, both of which are EU member states. These are semiperipheral countries (Sousa Santos, 1993) in the EU, which have different histories, welfare regimes, and AL systems (Desjardins, 2017). After World War II the Portuguese history relates to the significant social changes after 1974 – the establishment and consolidation of a democratic regime and the further integration into the European Economic Community (EEC) in 1986, while in Slovenia it is related to the establishment of a socialistic state – being part of Yugoslavia until Slovenia declared its independence in 1991. Nowadays, both countries are democratic republics with a high degree of centralised governance and coordinated market economies (Guimarães & Mikulec, 2021, p. 113). However, observing both countries from the welfare state regimes, Portugal mainly represents the “Mediterranean” regime, which is characterised by medium income protection and less developed active labour market policy, while Slovenia represents the “continental” regime, which is characterised by good income protection with medium developed active labour market policy (Roosmaa & Saar, 2017).

Both countries experienced EU political and economic pressures, such as imposed structural adjustment and austerity measures after the 2008 economic crisis, which severely affected public funding and led to the privatisation of higher education and AL (Antunes, 2016; Mikulec & Jelenc Krašovec, 2016). Furthermore, in AL both countries depend on the funding provided by the ESF, as national funds declined or never were that relevant, such as in Portugal. Nevertheless, both countries in the period 2012–2020 show low participation rates of adults participating in LLL and high inequality in participation (OECD, 2019).

In a comparative analysis, we juxtaposed two country cases following Egetenmeyer’s (2020) proposed steps of descriptive and analytical juxtaposition (data collection, searching for common features) and analytical interpretation.

Three different comparative categories were developed to guide our comparison: (a) AL policy ideas; (b) NC-EAAL activities; and (c) ESF AL projects.

As regards the selection of sources, we analysed official national AL policy documents (e.g., National Assembly, 2013; Qualifica, 2023a, 2023b), official data and reports from websites about NC-EAAL activities and ESF AL projects (ACS, 2023a, 2023b; ANQEP, 2015, 2017; CPI, 2023; Instituto do Emprego e Formação Profissional, n.d.) as well as scientific journal articles about AL in Portugal and Slovenia to improve the reliability and objectivity of the comparisons made. All sources analysed relate to the period of 2011 Agenda implementation in the years 2012–2020 in both countries.

Portugal

Portugal is a country in southern Europe with a population of almost 11 million people. It's located on the shores of the Atlantic Ocean and all borders are made with Spain. The Governance of AL is divided between two main ministries, The Ministry of Education and The Ministry of Labour. AL policy was adopted after 1999 and was strongly influenced by EU LLL guidelines and ESF. Two new forms of certified provision, such as recognition of prior learning (RPL) and AL training courses, have been developed, to widen access to education and training and to raise school education attainment of the adult population (Guimarães & Mikulec, 2021, p. 115). Therefore, since 2000, Portugal developed several measures to get higher levels of qualifications for the adult population (Lima, 2012). In 2007, the National Qualifications System (NQS) (ANQEP, 2023d) was established in Portugal to promote, coordinate, and enhance vocational education and training (VET) programs, as well as improve the overall qualifications levels of both the youth and adult population. Nevertheless, Portugal continues to have one of the highest proportion of adults in the EU, aged between 25 and 64, who have not completed upper-secondary education (in 2020, 44.6%), along with high levels of the population's illiteracy.

AL policy ideas

In 2015, the Socialist government approved a new policy for AL named “Qualifica Program” with the main goal of qualifying half of the active Portuguese population (Corcetti & Loretto, 2020). The Qualifica Program “is a program aimed at adults with incomplete education and training courses and aims to improve the qualifi-

cation levels of adults, contributing to the progression of the population's qualifications and the improvement of individuals' employability" (Qualifica, 2023a). Furthermore, it also aims towards increasing digital and functional literacy and reducing illiteracy rates, aligning training provision with labour market needs, facilitating tailored training pathways, and promoting the greater investment of adults (especially low qualified) in education and training pathways (OECD, 2022). Within the scope of the Qualifica Program, a national network of specialized centres (i.e. Qualifica Centres) for the qualification of adults was created which have wide coverage of the national territory and which are promoted by different types of entities (e.g., regular schools, training centres, city councils). These entities provide an individualized public service to adults, allowing the definition of the most appropriate qualification path for each specific situation, depending on the characteristics of each person, their educational and professional background, and their ambitions and expectations (Qualifica, 2023b).

Aligned with the establishment of the ANQEP is also the *National Qualifications System*. This aims at young people and adults and: (a) fosters design and update of the National Qualifications Catalogue (an instrument that regulates non-tertiary level dual certification qualifications); (b) regulate and streamline the offer of VET with dual certification, the offer of specialized artistic education and the system of recognition, validation and certification of competences (RVCC), of both school and professional scope, aimed at adults; (c) promote and guarantee the necessary information and guidance devices, the complementarity and flexibility of education and professional training systems and the quality of the aforementioned offers, in conjunction with the other entities responsible for these matters; (d) coordinate the design of pathways, curriculum development and specific methodologies for double certification VET and the RVCC processes; participate in the development of initial and continuous training references for teachers, trainers and other professionals involved in the qualification; contribute to the international comparability of qualifications and to mobility between youth and adult VET systems, through representation and cooperation mechanisms at European and international level (ANQEP, 2023).

NC-EAAL activities

In Portugal, ANQEP aims to enhance local engagement and collaboration in the field of adult learning by establishing a diverse network of Qualifica Centres. These centers encompass various entities such as Employment and Vocational Training Centers, VET Centres, Public Schools, Professional Schools, and other relevant

organizations. The goal is to foster stronger connections and partnerships with community associations, municipalities, educational and training providers, as well as employers. This approach encourages a multi-stakeholder approach where local communities, educational institutions, and employers work together to promote and support AL initiatives. By increasing collaboration among these entities, ANQEP seeks to create a more comprehensive and effective AL ecosystem that addresses the specific needs of individuals and local communities (Teixeira, 2020).

The main activities undertaken by NC-EAAL, for which ANQEP is in charge, are related to the implementation of various projects and activities (EC co-financed 75% of the work activities for the years 2012/2013, 2014/2015, 2016/2017, 2018/2019 and 2020/2021). In order to promote AL in the period 2012–2020, ANQEP has undertaken various initiatives. These include: (1) conducting workshops and seminars with stakeholders targeting labour market needs (DGERT, 2023), (2) running the Portuguese part of the online EPAL platform (ANQEP, 2023c); (3) investing in better AL quality by providing relevant and learner-centered programs, supporting educators, recognizing prior learning, and ensuring alignment with labour market needs (Godinho et al., 2016); (4) awareness-raising activities for adults through webinars, contests (e.g. Concurso Todos Contam), conferences (e.g. Conferência Nacional de Ensino Profissional and open days (e.g. Dia do Ensino Profissional) (ANQEP, 2015, 2017); (5) dissemination activities that serve as repositories of information and resources related to qualification and vocational education; and (6) providing support to Qualifica Centers and engaging in transnational cooperation (Corcetti & Loretto, 2020).

ESF AL projects

The data from European structural and investment funds (ESIF) 2014–2020 show that Portugal received 36 987 764 846 € from which 24,7% or 9 150 840 778 € belonged to ESF. Among 15 ESIF themes, “education & vocational training” was the second highest-scoring theme in Portugal (EC, 2023a).

In Table 1, the data about the name of the project, its main aims, financial value, and co-financing institution (providing 15% or 20% of funding, while 80% or 85% is provided from ESF) are gathered. As Table 1 shows, a range of new developments and reforms were undertaken, addressing various aspects such as improving adult literacy, the development of basic skills, supporting RPL arrangements, the enhancement of employee competencies, and the implementation of upskilling programs for adults. However, when we look at the financial values of the projects, we can conclude that the projects that are related to the improving competencies of employees for work-related reasons are the dominant ones.

Table 1. Overview of ESF AL projects in Portugal

Project	Aims	Financial Value	Co-Financing Institution
Learning System – Direct Management (2011–2020)	Apprenticeship programs enabling individuals to acquire academic and professional certifications, facilitating their entry into the workforce.	89 896 750,97 €	Ministry responsible for Education
Learning System – External Entities (2011–2020)		442 626 370,87 €	
Learning System – Balances (2011–2013)		723 476,72 €	
Youth Education and Training Courses (2011–2020)	Addressing deficiencies in qualifications, both academic and professional, by imparting academic, technical, social, and interpersonal skills (facilitating individuals entry into various career opportunities)	6 408 584,91 €	Ministry responsible for Education
Technological Specialization Courses (2011–2020)	Courses providing non-higher education and training at a post-secondary level and aiming to cater the requirements of the business sector by producing intermediate-level professionals who possess the necessary skills to adapt to the ever-evolving job market and contribute to its ongoing growth and development.	11 190 381,22 €	Ministry responsible for Education
Tender Procedure Trainers (2013–2020)	Recruiting workers to establish a public employment relationship.	95 299 592,79 €	Ministry responsible for Education
Centers for Qualification and Professional Education (2015–2016)	Opening of New Centers for Qualification and Professional Education	3 436 158,98 €	Ministry responsible for Education
Recognition and Validation of Skills (2011–2013)	Aims to elevate the qualification levels of adults by recognizing and validating the professional skills they have acquired throughout their lives in various contexts. It also serves as a new training opportunity for individuals who have not completed or discontinued formal education at an early stage.	11 961 172,56 €	Ministry responsible for Education

Project	Aims	Financial Value	Co-Financing Institution
Training in Basic Skills (2020)	Enables the acquisition of fundamental skills in reading, writing, numeracy, and information and communication technologies essential for enrolling in an adult education and training course (EFA courses) or being referred to a RVCC for basic-level skills.	161 522,98 €	Ministry responsible for Education
Active Life – Qualifica + (2020)	Courses aim to facilitate the reintegration of unemployed individuals into the job	1 031 649,74 €	
Active Life – Qualifica + – External Entities (2020)	market by providing expedited enrolment in short-term training programs. The primary objective is to encourage and support swift integration	1 522 154,87 €	Ministry responsible for Education
Active Life – Qualified Employment – Direct Management (2014–2020)	into these courses, enabling participants to enhance their employability and seize new job opportunities.	198 654 991,66 €	
Portuguese for All Program / Portuguese as a Host Language (2013–2020)	Aims to facilitate the integration into the labor market and the assertion of social rights by offering free Portuguese language courses. These courses aim to help individuals improve their language skills.	2 566 499,62 €	Ministry responsible for Education
Modular Training (2017–2020)	It enables the adult Portuguese population to update and enhance their theoretical and practical knowledge, thereby raising their educational and professional qualifications.	4 581 478,91 €	Ministry responsible for Education
Modular Training – Employed Assets (2013–2016)		17 274 020,38 €	
Modular Training – Active Life – External Activities (2013)		5 390 934,85 €	
Modular Training – Active Life – Direct Management (2013)		25 334 628,32 €	
Algarve Training Program (2013–2020)	Aims to promote the advancement of qualifications and employment opportunities for workers in the Algarve region who have fixed-term or temporary employment contracts. It involves providing	5 063 475,79 €	Ministry responsible for Education

Project	Aims	Financial Value	Co-Financing Institution
	financial support for training activities and facilitating the conversion of these contracts into permanent ones or renewing them for a minimum duration of 12 months.		
Qualification-Employment Program (2011)	The primary objective of this program is to enhance the skills of registered unemployed individuals, ultimately promoting their successful integration into the labor market. The program achieves this by collaborating with training entities to deliver a combination of theoretical training and practical hands-on experience within a real work environment.	1 583 975,46 €	Ministry responsible for Education
Training Voucher (2012–2020)	It is a direct funding mechanism that supports training initiatives provided to individuals registered within the network of Employment Centers and Employment and Vocational Training Centers operated by the Institute of Employment and Vocational Training.	6 222 340,18 €	Ministry responsible for Education
Active Life – Qualified Employment – External Entities (2014–2020)	These initiatives aim to facilitate the re-entry of unemployed individuals into the job market by providing expedited enrolment in short-term training programs. The primary goal is to encourage and support swift integration into these courses, enabling participants to enhance their employability and seize new job opportunities.	33 051 754,04 €	Ministry responsible for Education
Active Life – Young (2015–2020)		22 942 681,96 €	
Young + Digital Program (2020)	The program focuses on acquiring specialized skills in the digital field and aims to enhance the professional competencies of young adults, ultimately improving their prospects for employment.	231 698,57 €	Ministry responsible for Education
Upskills (2020)	The UPskill Program has the objective of retraining individuals, whether unemployed or underemployed,	482 636,26 €	Ministry responsible for Education

Project	Aims	Financial Value	Co-Financing Institution
	in various fields of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT). The program relies on active participation from companies operating in the national market, as they identify specific technological areas and job vacancies based on their genuine talent requirements.		
Adult Education and Training Courses (2011–2020)	These courses enable the enhancement of the educational and professional qualifications of the adult Portuguese population, thereby improving their employment prospects.	462 926 060,98 €	Ministry responsible for Education
Professional Internships in Public Administration (2012–2019)	Professional Internships programs for AL that aim to provide adults with opportunities to gain practical work experience, enhance their skills and improve their employability.	102 561 789,08 €	Ministry responsible for Education
Professional Internships – Port. 129/2009 (2013)		777 316,33 €	
Professional internships (2017–2018)		57 521 377,73 €	
Professional Internships – Employment Qualification (2012–2013)		98 716,16 €	
Professional Internships Levels III and IV (2012–2013)		358 501,13 €	
Internships Employment (2012–2019)		826 292 615,72 €	
Heritage Internships (2013–2015)		1 369,04 €	
Reativar (2015–2019)		9 053 990,33 €	
Active Young Employment (2015–2019)	Promotes the development and professional integration of young adults who have not completed compulsory education. Its primary objective is to facilitate their further educational and professional qualification processes, ultimately improving their employability conditions.	3 397 311,32 €	Ministry responsible for Education

Project	Aims	Financial Value	Co-Financing Institution
Arts and Crafts Training (2016–2019)	Aims to provide training for individuals seeking employment in a specific sector (focuses also on promoting and selling handcrafted products).	48 607,49 €	Ministry responsible for Education
Employment + Digital (2020)	Training projects tailored to the specific needs of the targeted workers and their respective industry sectors.	71 020,24 €	Ministry responsible for Education
Extraordinary Support for the Maintenance of Current Employment Contracts (2020)	Aims to support the enhancement of workers' professional qualifications, ultimately improving their employability.	1 898 818,82 €	Ministry responsible for Education
Extraordinary Training Plan (2020)		592 088,92 €	
Extraordinary Support for the Progressive Resumption of Activity – Training (2020)	Provides support for the development of workers' professional qualifications, with the goal of increasing their level of qualification and enhancing their employability whenever feasible.	151 420,88 €	Ministry responsible for Education
Shared Management Centers – Professional Training (2011–2012) (2020)	The program's objective is to plan, implement, support, and evaluate initiatives for initial or ongoing professional training. This includes activities related RVCC of skills, all with the aim of developing qualified human resources, fostering employment, enhancing the value of companies, and promoting regional and local socio-economic development.	172 964 014,00 €	Ministry responsible for Education
Actions and Cooperation with Other Entities (2011–2012) (2020)	Actions and Cooperation with Other Entities (aiming at promoting qualification and VET)	20 289 228,30 €	Ministry responsible for Education

Source: Adapted from Instituto do Emprego e Formação Profissional (n.d.).

Slovenia

Slovenia is a country located in Central Europe with a population of 2.07 million. It became a member of the EU in 2004. After independence in 1991, the Slovenian government introduced an array of systemic measures that gave a new

impetus to the development of AL policy and infrastructure, among others, special laws (in 1996 and 2018) regulating non-formal AL and public interest in AL as well a law on national vocational qualifications (NVQs), and the government adopted national programmes for AL (one covering period 2004–2010 and second covering period 2013–2020). AL policy in Slovenia, i.e. *Resolution on the Master Plan for Adult Education in the Republic of Slovenia* (ReMPAE) (National Assembly, 2013), strives to balance personal, social, and economic goals through the following: non-formal education (programmes for literacy skills, active citizenship, social cohesion, information, and communication technologies), formal education (programmes for improving formal education attainment of adults) and AL for the labour market (programmes of active labour market policy and NVQs) (Guimarães & Mikulec, 2021, pp. 115–116; Mikulec & Jelenc Krašovec, 2016, pp. 155–157).

AL policy ideas

The general framework of ReMPAE (National Assembly, 2013) recognises that globalisation processes and socio-economic changes, such as the economic crisis, unemployment, and an aging population, make it necessary for Slovenia to invest in human capital. LLL is seen as the primary method for all individuals in a society to gain employability. In this context, the ReMPAE emphasises that Slovenia must contribute to the implementation of recommendations and goals from the “ET 2020” and “Europe 2020” strategies, with emphasis on common European indicators and measurable outcomes (the core two indicators state that by 2020 19% of adults will participate in LLL based on Labour Force Survey and 45% of adults will participate in LLL based on Adult Education Survey) that enable comparisons between EU member states in AL (p. 13). The ReMPAE identifies three main groups of problems, which are congruent with the 2011 Agenda (and Europe 2020): the level of education and its quality, participation, and justice in AL, and systemic issues (such as inadequate financing of general (non)formal education and weak stakeholder’s cooperation). Following this framework, the ReMPAE emphasises that: substantial additional effort is required to ensure second-chance measures and key competencies (reading, numeracy and digital skills) for different target groups; new approach in AL, based on learning outcomes and learner responsibility and autonomy, should be a priority; AL qualifications should be recognised within the European and national qualifications framework and the national system for validation of non-formal and informal

learning established; LLL career guidance and counselling in AL are being established; quality (professional staff training, quality standards) and awareness raising activities (learning festivals and parades, LLL weeks) in AL will be improved (pp. 14–19).

NC-EAAL activities

The NC-EAAL project in Slovenia runs from 2012 on, aims toward the popularisation of 2011 Agenda’s “key messages and educational policy measures at EU and national level”, and intend to raise awareness of the importance of AL and LLL, as well “opportunities available for the adult population” (ACS, 2023a).

In the period 2012–2015 the focus was on awareness-raising activities, such as: (a) learning parades (days of learning communities), i.e. a series of one-day festivals and professional events that took place each time in different places across the country; (b) promotion videos, i.e. good practice examples of non-formal AL programmes for vulnerable groups (young adults, unemployed, migrants and rural population) that promote adult basic skills and key competences; (c) e-learning corner that offer web-resources for self-directed online learning, as well information about online education offer; (d) and Web-based ICT materials, such as Learning Parade E-bulletins (ACS, 2023a).

In the period 2015–2017, the focus of NC-EAAL project broadened in scope. Firstly, due to the need for coordinated and effective implementation of the 2011 Agenda, stakeholder’s based “Coordinating Board for Adult Education” was set in 2015; however, this met only two times and never came into practice. Secondly, a new “Adult Learning Awareness Raising Strategy” was set along with six thematic action plans (e.g. effective outreach activities, the role of adult educators in the AL awareness process, effective media and visual promotion, increased role of learners in awareness raising processes) contributing to a widened approach to awareness raising on AL and LLL. Thirdly, events for promoting adult skills (and other key competencies) continued and were also linked to wider European (i.e. annual conference of European Basic Skills Network) and national (21st Adult Education Colloquium) conferences; however, the events more specifically focused on key competences for “improved employability” and “active involvement in learning communities”. Finally, Web-based ICT materials, such as Learning Parade E-bulletins, YouTube videos about skills, competencies, and AL on European and national levels, infographics about vulnerable groups characteristics in AL (ACS, 2023a).

Finally, in the period 2017–2020 different consultation events took place under the “Upskilling Pathways” initiative⁶, as well as two national AL conferences. Furthermore, “Upskilling Pathways e-portal” was set up where existing policy measures and examples of good practice are presented, while Web-based ICT materials continued to be published as well (ACS, 2023a).

ESF AL projects

The data from ESIF 2014–2020 show that Slovenia received 5 665 174 886 € from which 16,1% or 911.666.998 € belonged to ESF. Among 14 ESIF themes, “education & vocational training” was the eighth scoring theme in Slovenia (EC, 2023b).

In this period, 14 ESF projects directly supported AL development; 4 from *Cohesion policy 2007–2013* under the priority area “Operational Programme for Human Resources Development” and 10 from *Cohesion policy 2014–2020* under the priority area “Knowledge, skills and Lifelong Learning to enhance employability” (Republika Slovenija, 2022). In Table 2, the data about the name of the project, its main aims, financial value, and co-financing institution (providing 15% or 20% of funding, while 80% or 85% is provided from ESF) are gathered⁷. As Table 2 shows, new development and reforms were related to diverse topics, such as adult literacy and basic skills development, establishing approaches (system) for RPL, investments in professionalization of adult educators, enabling guidance and counseling services for adults, improving competencies of employees, and establishing programmes for upskilling of adults. However, when we look at the financial values of the projects, we can conclude that the projects that are related to the improving competencies of employees for work-related reasons are the dominant ones.

⁶ The *Recommendation of 19 December 2016 on Upskilling Pathways: New opportunities for adults* (CEU, 2016) is the main legislative proposal of the *Skills Agenda for Europe* in the field of AL targeting low-qualified and low-skilled adults. The initiative is a key building block of the *European Pillar of Social Rights*, which promotes equal rights to quality and inclusive education, training and LLL, in order to support fair and well-functioning labour markets and welfare systems. The Recommendation aims to help adults acquire a minimum level of literacy, numeracy and digital skills and/or acquire a broader set of skills and competences by progressing towards an upper secondary qualification or equivalent (cf. Clancy et al., 2020).

⁷ However, it should be noted that this is our reconstruction of implemented ESF projects and might not represent a full and comprehensive list of all ESF projects in the given time period, because data about AL ESF projects are unsystematic, sometimes unclear and not publically available through common online platform or document.

Table 2. Overview of ESF AL projects in Slovenia

Project	Aims	Financial value	Co-financing institution
Literacy development and assessment and recognition of non-formal learning 2011–2014	Developing basic skills, key competences, and assessment and recognition of non-formal knowledge and experiences of adults	518.300 €	Ministry, responsible for education
Education and training for adult education professionals 2011–2014	Developing AL knowledge and competences for different groups of adult educators through basic and advanced training	610.000 €	Ministry, responsible for education
Introduction of the model of identifying and validating non-formally acquired knowledge in adult education 2012–2014	Enabling adults to validate knowledge and experience they acquired along their life path together with a validation consultant and to give these knowledge visibility and value	650.380 €	Ministry, responsible for education
Survey of Adult skills PIAAC 2013–2015	Identification of adult competences (literacy, numeracy and problem solving skills in technology-rich environments) necessary for the job market and active participation in society	1.339.000 €	Ministry, responsible for education
Competences of adult education professionals 2016–2018	Development of competences of professional associates and managers in entrepreneurship, LLL and lifelong career orientation	3.400.000 €	Ministry, responsible for education
Professional Support in the Area of Basic Adult Competences Development 2016–2022	Development of basic skills and literacy of adults, improved employability, personal development, quality and counselling work in AL	1.893.375 €	Ministry, responsible for education
Professional support to information and guidance activities and validation of non-formal knowledge 2016–2021	Improving the competences of employees to reduce disparities between their qualifications and labour market needs through validation of non-formal and informal knowledge and development of effective approaches to information and guidance for less educated, older than 45 years employed adults	809.000 €	Ministry, responsible for education

Project	Aims	Financial value	Co-financing institution
Specializations and upskilling after obtaining secondary or higher professional education and retraining for employees in healthcare, culture and regulated professions in other fields in the years 2016–2022	*(data not available)	3.682.800 €	Ministry, responsible for education
Development and support for the upskilling of qualifications and specializations and upskilling after acquired education 2016–2022	*(data not available)	118.223 €	Ministry, responsible for education
Raising the professional competence of teachers in 2016 – 2022	Improving the competences for the implementation of the pedagogical process and connecting the learning content with examples from practice	3.000.000 €	Ministry, responsible for education
Raising the quality of the validation system of non-formally and informally acquired knowledge 2016–2022	Development of new methodology for validation of non-formal and informal knowledge	1.217.167,80 €	Ministry, responsible for labour
Competence Centers for Human Resources Development 2016–2022	Training of employees for improving their competences, productivity, creativity and innovation, and strengthening the competitiveness of the Slovenian economy	12.620.000,00 €	Ministry, responsible for labour
Raising the level of education 2016–2022	Increasing the involvement of adults in LLL and improving the competences that adults need for the labour market, greater employability and mobility	5.484.570,37 €	Ministry, responsible for labour
Non-formal education and training 2017–2019	Encouraging training of employees for competitiveness and employability (increasing the competence and mobility of employees) and strengthening the competitiveness of employers	2.100.000 €	Ministry, responsible for labour
Comprehensive Support for Actively Ageing Workforce 2017–2022	Prolong the work activity of older employees by strengthening their competences, eliminating stereotypes about older employees and empowering employers to manage an aging workforce	29.936.237,21 €	Ministry, responsible for labour

Project	Aims	Financial value	Co-financing institution
Development of programs for upskilling in continuing vocational education and training in 2017–2022	Development of new publicly recognised continuing vocational and training programs	484.106,20 €	Ministry, responsible for education
Strengthening the competencies of professionals in the field of managing an innovative educational institution in the period from 2018 to 2022	Development of competencies needed by AL professionals due to constant changes in the nature of their work	2.813.809,99 €	Ministry, responsible for education
Implementation of continuing vocational education and training programs in the years 2018–2022	Increasing the involvement of employees in continuing VET programs and improving their competences due to the needs of the labour market, greater employability and mobility between areas of work	16.815.893,80 €	Ministry, responsible for education
Encouraging persons facing the loss of employment into labour market measures 2018–2022	Inclusion of persons who are about to lose their jobs in measures on the labour market through comprehensive support (providing information, motivation, career counselling, trainings, education)	4.000.000 €	Ministry, responsible for education

Source: Annual programme of adult education (APAE), 2014, 2016; ACS, 2023b; CPI, 2023; Republika Slovenija, 2022; SRIPS, 2023.

Comparison and Interpretation

Portugal and Slovenia are both small economies and semiperipheral EU countries. As such, they are both strongly influenced by the EU in terms of economic policies, as well as broader LLL policies aimed at adapting adults to the needs of the labour market (Guimarães & Mikulec, 2021, p. 117; cf. Holford, 2023, p. 7). Based on this background and analysis of two country cases, we can present the following findings regarding the implementation of the 2011 Agenda in Portugal and Slovenia.

First, we can acknowledge that the normative vision (policy ideas) of 2011 Agenda is well embedded in AL policies of both countries as emphasis is given to: learning outcomes based approach and learner responsibility and autonomy; AL qualifications linked to national and European qualifications frameworks; functional system for the RPL; improved qualifications levels of adults; employability

and aligning training provision with labour market needs; increased functional and digital literacy; and awareness raising in AL. Therefore, identified instrumental and vocational conceptualisation of 2011 Agenda (Holford & Milana, 2023; cf. Mikulec, 2018; Milana & Klatt, 2020;) clearly entered into AL policies of both countries (Lima and Guimarães, 2018; cf. Mikulec & Jelenc Krašovec, 2016). However, while in Portugal AL policy greater emphasis is given to reducing illiteracy rates, establishing tailored (flexible) training pathways, and improving qualifications levels of adults through RVCC, due to the high proportion of adults without upper-secondary education and lack of equity opportunities for low-skilled and those without qualifications (Guimarães & Mikulec, 2021, p. 114; Mikulec & Guimarães, 2022, pp. 8–9), in Slovenia more emphasis is given to the key competences, guidance, and counseling services for adults and high-quality learning opportunities for adults to increase low participation of adults in LLL and enable unemployed to return to the labour market (Mikulec, 2021, p. 47). Furthermore, unlike Portugal, Slovenian AL policy also includes European benchmarks based on LFS and AES data to measure its progress in reaching EU targets.

Second, NC-EAAL of both countries' undertook various project activities to implement 2011 Agenda in the period 2012–2020 and to popularise 2011 Agenda's key messages. In both countries National Coordinator's focused on: awareness raising activities about AL opportunities; establishing a multi-stakeholder approach to AL governance (although this has been more successfully implemented in Portugal case); and organising (national, European) conferences and workshops on adult skills, key competences and labour market needs. However, NC-EAAL activities also differ in both countries. In Portugal, NC-EAAL focused on better quality provision and supporting EPALE online platform, due to their work in promoting and disseminating EPALE platform within Portugal's adult education community and ensuring the quality of contributions made to EPALE (ANQEP, 2018; EC, 2023c). In Slovenia, greater emphasis was given to the implementation of the Upskilling Pathways initiative due to the low participation of adults in LLL and a high number of adults with low literacy skills (according to PIAAC data, more than 30% of adults have low literacy levels and numeracy skills) (Mikulec, forthcoming). Last but not least, while in Slovenia all NC-EAAL activities are very well documented in written records and promotion videos freely available on NC-EAAL webpage, no such webpage specially dedicated to NC-EAAL activities can be found in Portugal.

Third, Portugal received more funds from ESIF (and among these also more from ESF) than Slovenia. Moreover, "education & vocational training" was the second highest scoring theme in Portugal, while in Slovenia this theme was placed in the middle among priority themes. We believe the reason for this dif-

ference lies in much higher rates of adults (aged 25–64) in Portugal with educational attainment levels below upper-secondary education (47.8% in Portugal, 11.2% in Slovenia) (European Commission, EACEA, & Eurydice, 2021, p. 30). Nevertheless, as shown by OECD (2019, p. 94), Slovenia and Portugal are the two highest scoring countries regarding the funding of AL system supported by the EU funds: in Slovenia, 57% of total expenditure on AL is funded by ESF, and in Portugal about 40%. With ESF both countries supported the development of AL system and implemented reforms related to improving the competencies of employees for work-related reasons, upskilling of adults, raising adults' levels of professional qualifications, and improving adult literacy and basic skills development (including digital skills). Among these, projects related to the improving competencies of employees or low-skilled adults for work-related reasons are, regarding the amount of funding provided, also the dominant ones. However, in Slovenia, the focus was also on establishing approaches (system) for RPL, professionalization of adult educators, and enabling guidance and counseling services for adults. Overall, in both countries, ESF represents an important support mechanism for achieving European AL goals at the national level and one of the most effective instruments used for policy transfer (Guimarães & Mikulec, 2021, p. 117; Mikulec & Jelenc Krašovec, 2016, pp. 165–166; Mikulec, 2021, p. 49).

Conclusion

In this paper, we examined the impact of 2011 Agenda on AL policies and practices in Portugal and Slovenia. We emphasised that 2011 Agenda works through OMC, is based on governance mechanisms aiming towards concrete policy objectives, and is supported by several policy instruments that strive to achieve concrete policy outcomes. Based on this background we showed: first, that the normative vision (policy ideas) of 2011 Agenda (this being primarily instrumental and vocational) is well embedded in AL policies of both countries; second, that NC-EAAL of both countries undertook various project activities to implement 2011 Agenda and to popularise its key messages; and third, that Slovenia and Portugal heavily relied on the EU funds regarding the funding of their AL systems and that both countries implemented employment-related projects with ESF with the aim to improve competences of employees or low-skilled adults for work-related reasons. Therefore, we conclude that ESF represents a key policy instrument for achieving European (2011 Agenda) AL policy objectives at the national level and also, that this is one of the most effective policy instruments used for policy transfer from the European to the national level.

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Implementacija Evropske agende za učenje odraslih u Portugaliji i Sloveniji¹¹

Apstrakt: U ovom radu analiziramo implementaciju Rezolucije Saveta o obnovljenoj evropskoj agendi za učenje odraslih (u daljem tekstu Agenda 2011) u periodu 2012–2020. u dve države članice Evropske unije: Portugaliji i Sloveniji. Naša diskusija se oslanja na studije koje istražuju evropsko upravljanje u oblasti učenja odraslih, dok empirijski izvodimo komparativnu analizu između dve zemlje i raspravljamo o sličnostima i razlikama u političkim idejama o obrazovanju odraslih, aktivnostima nacionalnih koordinatora za implementaciju Agende 2011 i projekata Evropskog socijalnog fonda u vezi sa učenjem odraslih. Naši nalazi ukazuju na to da je normativna vizija Agende 2011 dobro ukorenjena u politikama obe zemlje, da su nacionalni koordinatori preduzeli razne aktivnosti za implementaciju Agende 2011, kao i da fondovi EU igraju ključnu ulogu u finansiranju i usmeravanju sistema učenja odraslih obe zemlje.

Ključne reči: Evropska agenda za učenje odraslih, Portugalija, Slovenija, mehanizmi upravljanja, politički instrumenti

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Measuring the Impact of Literacy Programs on Social Inclusion, Health and Labour Market Participation: A Study of a Dutch Program

Abstract: Nowadays, 24.5% of the European population is still at risk of poverty and can be considered as citizens risking social exclusion. A low level of proficiency in literacy skills is indicated as one of the important reasons for social exclusion. It is argued that literacy programs for vulnerable adults act as a lever for the improvement of literacy and, in turn, for enhancing participants' social inclusion, health, as well as labour market position. However, to date, evidence of the impact of these programs is scarce. This study aims to fill this gap by measuring the outcomes of the Dutch program 'Language for Life' ('Taal voor het Leven'). The findings indicate that after five months, for many social inclusion indicators, more than half of the participants' group showed an increase. Improvement in physical and psychological health and labour market position is less prominent than improvement in the social inclusion indicators. This study does not only support the importance of a policy in literacy (on the national or regional level) aiming

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at increasing social inclusion by offering possibilities to improve language proficiency. Moreover, it aims to contribute to the investment in research aiming to monitor the outcomes of language programs.

Keywords: Literacy programs, adult learning, educational impact, literacy, social inclusion

Introduction

Social inclusion has been at the centre of European policies since the 1970s (Podneiks, 2006). European Policy Agendas and Commission, such as the Social Policy Agenda and the Amsterdam Treaty, have paid particular attention to the problem of social exclusion and how to combat it (Atkinson et al., 2004). However, despite this interest, during the past years, Eurostat statistics have repeatedly indicated the increasing problem of social exclusion in European member states. In 2013 for example, overall, 24.5 % of the EU population were at risk of poverty or social exclusion (Eurostat, 2014).

The interest in the phenomenon of social inclusion has led to a wide variety of definitions and indicators. In general, social inclusion is defined as the opposite of social exclusion. Social exclusion can be defined as the outcome of processes which shut people out from the social, economic, political and cultural systems which contribute to the integration of a person into the community (Cappo, 2002). From an economic perspective, social exclusion is related to factors, which inhibit individuals from fully participating in society like health status, poverty and unemployment (e.g., Atkinson et al., 2004; Sparkes, 1999).

For adults, illiteracy, or the lack of reading and writing skills, is a severe barrier to dealing with issues at work and other domains in daily life, such as health, finances, and social life. Therefore, illiteracy has been argued as one of the cornerstones of social exclusion (e.g. European Commission, 2007, 2008). The multiple effects of low proficiency in literacy skills on social inclusion have been confirmed by the results of the 2013 OECD Survey of Adult Skills (as a product of the Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies – PIAAC) indicating that in all countries included in the study, the respondents with lower proficiency in literacy, for example, were more likely than those with better literacy skills to report poor health (OECD, 2013). The extent of the problem of low proficiency in literacy is evidenced in OECD studies. For example, based on the results of this study in the Netherlands 12% of the population lacks literacy proficiency (Buisman et al., 2013).

Defining low proficiency in literacy skills as one of the most important levers of social exclusion has led to the plea of developing literacy programs to combat social exclusion, to enable vulnerable adults to meet the complexities that characterize their daily lives (e.g. Kumpulainen, 2010; Nillson, 2010). However, despite the plea for developing literacy programs for adults vulnerable in terms of social exclusion, the number of studies measuring the impact of educational interventions aiming to enhance literacy and social inclusion, is still quite scarce (Carpentieri, 2013). In this respect, scholars like Carpentieri (2013) as well as organisations such as the OECD underline the importance of questioning if existing literacy programs are effective (Windisch, 2015). With this study, we aim to provide evidence of the benefits for vulnerable adults participating in Dutch literacy programs in terms of increasing social inclusion as well as health and labour market position. The core research question is: to what extent do participants in Dutch Literacy programs show an increase in social inclusion indicators, health indicators and labour market position?

Literacy Programs and Increase in Social Inclusion

To capture the complexity of the concept of social inclusion from a social perspective, various scholars define social inclusion as a multidimensional process of behavioural change depending on a person's interaction with different situations and with different environmental conditions. In this respect, based on identity theories and the socio-emotional selectivity theory, De Greef, Verté, and Segers (2014) define social inclusion on an individual level, referring to the processes of activation and internalization and on a collective level, referring to the processes of participation and connection. While activation and internalization describe social inclusion as processes that enhance functional and emotional satisfaction for the individual, participation and connection are concerned with the processes of enhancing the functional and emotional satisfaction for the individual in connection to the social environment (Verté et al., 2007).

Activation implies the acquisition of basic skills vital to cope with practical daily problems. According to Bjørkøe (2009), activation concerns the involvement of learners in meaningful and communicative activities leading to an increase of liveability within the direct surroundings referred to as functional satisfaction. Internalisation refers to the use of these basic skills and results in an increase of feelings of happiness and safety, or an increase of emotional satisfaction. Important basic skills are for example national language skills, international language skills, digital skills, assertiveness, upbringing and labour skills, voluntary

work skills, neighbourhood skills and contact skills (Andrews & Withey, 1974; Benjamin 1994; Huisman and Tubbing, 2005; Liu, 1974).

Participation refers to the growing functionality of an individual in connection to the environment. For example, engagement in social activities, which are available in their direct social environment and participation in the wider society are good examples of social inclusion through participation (Guildford, 2000; Verté et al., 2007). In contrast to functional participation in social activities, connection refers to the emotional satisfaction gained by having more and better connections to the environment. The process of connection contains the pursuit of intimacy and active commitment to others (Huisman et al., 2003; Santrock, 2008). Concretely, the processes of participation and connection refer to being active in associations and the neighbourhood, being active in nature and sports, being involved in arts and culture, developing intimate contacts and preventing loneliness.

In this study, for studying social inclusion, we combine the economic and social perspectives by focusing on health status and labour market position on the one hand and the processes of activation, internalisation, participation and connection on the other hand. Research conducted in the Netherlands (De Greef et al., 2012), using the same instruments as in this study, indicated circa 40% to 60% of the participants show an increase in scores on social inclusion indicators after participating in language courses, including language skills. Other evaluation studies of literacy programs focused only on outcomes in terms of level of literacy proficiency. In their report, based on a review of the studies of Alamprese et al. (2011), Sabatini et al. (2011), Greenberg et al. (2011) and Hock & Mellard (2011), Kok and Scholte (2013) indicate that participants of literacy programs on average show an increase of 5.2 % in scores on reading tests. Likewise, the Department of Labour in New Zealand (2010) evaluated the eighteen literacy courses offered by companies throughout New Zealand. The course took four to twelve months. The differences between pre- and post-test scores, among other writing skills, indicated that at the end of the courses, around 66 per cent of the participants had improved their writing score, 17 per cent showed a decrease in the writing score, and for 17 per cent, there was no change. In a recent study, Reder (2012) reported on the Longitudinal Study of Adult Learning (LSAL) which measured the growth of adults' literacy over nearly a decade. At six points in time in-depth interviews and assessments were conducted, measuring literacy proficiency, engagement in everyday literacy practices and self-perceived wave-to-wave changes in literacy skills and practices. The findings indicate no immediate relationship between proficiency change and participation in adult basic skills

programs. However, the results show significantly more perceived improvement in literacy proficiency over periods that included program participation than over periods that did not.

Literacy Programs and an Increase in Health

In the 2013 WHO report, Kickbusch et al. (2013) are talking about a health literacy crisis in Europe and beyond. The results of the recent European Health Literacy Survey show that nearly 50% of all adults in the eight European countries tested have inadequate or problematic health literacy skills. According to Sørensen et al. (2012, p. 3), “health literacy is linked to literacy and entails people’s knowledge, motivation and competences to access, understand, appraise, and apply health information to make judgments and take decisions in everyday life concerning healthcare, disease prevention and health promotion to maintain or improve quality of life during the life course”. In other words, literacy skills are needed to make use of the system of health care and ensure a healthy life. During the past decade, due to the increasing complexity of today’s healthcare systems, adults with low proficiency in literacy skills have experienced serious challenges in using them in daily life. If one has low proficiency in literacy, most current healthcare systems become difficult to understand and navigate. Not being able to read at a certain level of proficiency makes it nearly impossible to gain access to the health system.

During the past decades, many research studies have confirmed the relationship between literacy and health. The results of the systematic literature review by DeWalt, et al. (2004) evidenced that “reading ability is related to knowledge about health and health care, hospitalization, global measures of health, and some chronic diseases. People who read at lower levels are generally 1.5 to 3 times more likely to have an adverse outcome than people who read at higher levels” (DeWalt et al., 2004, p. 1236).

To date, many studies have been published on interventions to improve health outcomes for patients with low literacy. Review studies of DeWalt et al. (2004) and Pignone et al. (2005) addressed the effects of interventions to mitigate the effects of low literacy on health outcomes by adapting the health care to the level of literacy proficiency of the patients. On the contrary, no studies are published on the impact of general literacy programs, on participant’s health, supporting adult participants in the basic skills of reading and writing.

Literacy Programs and an Increase in Labour Market Position

To explain labour market outcomes in terms of the degree of labour force participation, the extent of unemployment, and the wage or occupational status, many studies have focussed on the effects of formal initial education (years of education and level of education). However, studies such as the study of Chiswick et al. (2002) have evidenced that part of the improvement in labour market outcomes attributed to higher levels of education could be due to higher levels of proficiency in literacy and numeracy (Chiswick et al., 2002).

Nevertheless, the results from studies on the impact of literacy programs on labour market outcomes are inconclusive. The results of an interview study by Tett et al. (2006) showed that learners were positive about the likelihood of their literacy involvement improving their employment situation – 51% of the participants in literacy programs made additional comments on concrete improved job opportunities and promotional prospects. A study conducted in Dutch literacy programs (De Greef et al., 2012) indicated that 7% to 20% of the participants experience a to have a better labour market position (apprenticeship: 7%; paid job with guidance: 14%; seeking a job: 20%; paid job: 20%; voluntary work: 21%)

However, other studies have indicated that although participants in literacy programs believe that participation would lead to improved job opportunities, little evidence supports this belief. For example, the Malicky and Norman study (1994) showed that after following a literacy program, participants generally returned to the same low-paying temporary jobs they had before, due to the psychological, social and educational backgrounds of the participants.

Research Questions

The general research question in this study is: to what extent do participants in Dutch Literacy programs show an increase in social inclusion indicators, health indicators and labour market position?

Social inclusion is defined from an economic and social perspective. This leads to the following specific questions:

- (1) Do participants in Dutch Literacy programs show the change in social inclusion in terms of activation, internalisation, participation and connection?
- (2) Do participants in Dutch Literacy programs show a change in experienced health?
- (3) Do participants in Dutch Literacy programs show a change in labour market position?

Methodology

Research design

To assess the changes in social inclusion, health and labour market position during a literacy program a single group pre-test / post-test approach is used. For ethical reasons, no control group (no participation in a literacy program) is included. Given the feelings of shame associated with having low proficiency in literacy skills and experiencing social exclusion, we consider it unethical to report to vulnerable adults low levels of literacy and, in turn, social inclusion (pre-test) while simultaneously denying them access to a literacy program.

Intervention: The Language for Life program

The Dutch government has initiated programs for vulnerable adults to increase their social inclusion by improving their proficiency in literacy skills. One of these programs, developed by the Dutch Reading & Writing Foundation (Stichting Lezen & Schrijven), is the 'Language for Life' ('Taal voor het Leven') program. The Foundation develops and supports language courses in cooperation with regional adult education centres and local or regional language institutions in six regions of The Netherlands. The core aim of all courses is to support participants in acquiring a higher level of literacy proficiency to deal better with daily issues. These courses have a combined curriculum based on learning basic skills with a special focus on improving one's proficiency in literacy. More in detail, the learning contents and –activities focus on the use of basic skills (including literacy skills) in daily life and work. In other words, the courses seem to focus on improving the proficiency of functional literacy as explained by Bulajić et al. (2019). To sum up, the curriculum is based on a functional perspective of literacy skills connected to the participant's daily life and work environment.

Sample

Demographics of the different samples can be found in Table 2. Most of the adult learners are female (65% to 75%) and a foreigner (90% to 95%). About half of the group of adult learners are 43 years or older (49% to 59%) and have mastered secondary school or lower (47% to 51%) (see Table 2). Furthermore, most of them just joined 10 years or less than 10 years of education (50% to

60%). Finally, there weren't any reports of learning difficulties among the learners (e.g., dyslexia and ADHD) to prevent biased teaching focusing on these learning difficulties.

Table 1. Socio-demographic characteristics

Characteristic / Category	SIT-instrument N = 297	Reading test N = 273	Writing test N = 180
Gender (male / female)	25 / 75	36 / 65	34 / 66
Nationality (autochthone / foreign)	5 / 95	10 / 90	10 / 90
Native speaker (Dutch / non Dutch)	*	12 / 88	9 / 91
Age			
<= 34	22	17	17
35 – 42	29	24	27
43 – 50	27	33	39
>= 51	22	26	17
Highest level of education			
Primary school	26	31	31
Secondary school	21	20	18
Further education on level of middle class	13	18	19
Higher education / University	21	17	16
Other	19	14	16
Total years of education			
< 5 years	21	24	24
6 - 10 years	29	36	34
11 - 15 years	28	25	25
> 16 years	21	16	17

* These items have not been measured.

Instruments

The reading and writing tests measure the level of proficiency in reading and writing referring to the Entry Level and Level 1F of the new framework for literacy and numeracy (including digital skills) of the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science (CINOP 2012). These levels refer to the first basic levels in proficiency of using daily language in private and working life. The tests are developed by a team of experts in reading and writing and are validated among

adult learners joining language programs comparable with the language programs of this study.

To assess the level of reading skills (focusing on if one can read basic texts in daily life) two parallel versions of a test are used consisting of 61 and 54 short questions. E.g., an example of a birth card is given, with the following question: A son is born: true or false? Or an advertisement in the newspaper, which one has to interpret by answering questions about the advertisement. The scores are expressed in percentages of response accuracy.

To assess the level of writing skills, specifically the ability to write basic texts in daily life, two parallel versions of a test are used, each consisting of 8 assignments with a total of 112 items. Example of an assignment: 'Complete the sentence with your own word' or 'Write a correct sentence with the provided words' or 'Write a letter to a friend to explain why you can't join his party'. The rubrics in the rating form refer to ten dimensions of writing. Learner answers are rated by two trained external assessors (not the teachers). The final score is the sum of the scores for all assignments, which results in a score from 0 to 112 and should be divided by the maximum score and multiplied by 100.

Social inclusion was measured by the following scales of the SIT-instrument of De Greef, Segers, and Verté (2010): 'national language skills', 'digital language skills', 'assertiveness', 'labour and upbringing skills', 'meeting and attempting', 'active in nature and sport' (see table 1). All items have to be answered on a scale of 1 to 10 concerning if the specific item suits the participant or not. For the scale measuring loneliness, the answering categories are 1 (yes), 2 (more or less), and 3 (no). We recorded the questions in such a way that we make it a positive interpretation, and call this 'preventing loneliness'. So, a higher score means less loneliness.

For measuring health, we followed the approach used in the Belgian Ageing Studies of Verté et al. (2007) which was based on the Medical Outcome Study (MOS) (Kempen et al., 1995). We measured physical health and psychological health (see Table 1), using a three-point and four-point Likert scale. Furthermore, the position on the labour market is assessed using five separate items: 'I have or function in a paid job', 'I do voluntary work', 'I am in an apprenticeship', 'I seek a job' and 'I have a paid job with guidance'. Respondents had to answer on a scale of 1 (applies not to me), to 10 (applies very much to me).

Table 2. Overview Social Inclusion indicators

Characteristic	Example item	Number of items	Cronbach's Alpha
Social inclusion			
National language skills	I can understand things that I see on TV	9	0.946
Digital language skills	I can use the internet	3	0.948
Assertiveness	I am self-confident	5	0.890
Labour- and upbringing skills	I have good parenting skills for raising my children	4	0.792
Meeting and attempting	I meet plenty of people	4	0.863
Being active in nature and sports	I take part in sports activities	4	0.765
Preventing loneliness	I have people to rely on when times are difficult	11	0.823
Health			
Physical health	My health has limited me in taking a little walk	7	0.881
Psychological health	I'm feeling unhappy and depressed	6	0.868
Labour market position			
Paid job	I have a paid job	1	Not applicable
Voluntary work	I'm doing voluntary work	1	Not applicable
Apprenticeship	I'm having an apprenticeship	1	Not applicable
To seek a job	I'm actively seeking for a job	1	Not applicable
Paid job with guidance	I have a paid job and someone is guiding me	1	Not applicable

Furthermore, respondents have been asked to answer questions concerning socio-demographic factors: gender, nationality, age, the highest level of education, total years of education, (un)employment and professional qualification.

Procedure

At each learning centre or language institution instructors have been asked to participate in the research with their courses. This resulted in 103 classes of learners joining this study. A paper version of the SIT instrument, the reading test or the writing test was administered on location in class. If learners encountered problems during the filling out, these could be resolved directly. All learners were invited to fill out the SIT questionnaire. For the reading and writing test (as well

as the SIT questionnaire), several learner groups were selected, and within these groups, learners should have at least a proficiency level of A1 in the Dutch language. The post-test of the SIT questionnaire, the reading, and the writing test were administered 5 months after the pre-test.

The number of usable cases differs per instrument as shown in Table 1. There were three different groups of participants and each group used one of the tests or the SIT instrument. So none of the learners completed two tests, but only the SIT instrument (pre- and post-test), the reading test (pre- and post-test) or the writing test (pre- and post-test). Thus, not all instruments were offered to all learners, as this took too much time during the course itself and seemed to unpleasantly interfere with the course itself. On the other hand, not all learners were present at both the pre- and post-test. The following numbers show the number of learners, who filled in the questionnaire or test: SIT questionnaire 297 (443 pre-test, 297 post-test); reading test: 273 (503 pre-test, 273 post-test); writing test 180 (445 pre-test, 196 post-test).

Method of analysis

The extent of change in social inclusion variables, health and labour market position, was calculated as the percentage of change of the pre-test score $(\text{post-test} - \text{pre-test score}) / \text{pre-test score} * 100$. Subsequently, we made 4 categories, with 25% as cut of rate, resulting in 4 categories 1) a large decrease <<-25%; 2) a small decrease -25 to <0%; 3) a small increase > 0 to 25%; 4) large increase >> 25%. The magnitude and direction of change can depend on the starting position. Accordingly, for the participants with high scores on the pre-test the so-called ceiling effect can occur. For participants with a starting position at the lower end of a scale, it is much easier to improve than for participants at the higher end of a scale. Participants with a starting position at the higher end of the scale are more likely to show a decrease, so a negative change. Besides, to analyse if the change in the reading or writing test is significant a Paired Samples T-test has been conducted. Finally, to determine if elements of the learning environment or the socio-demographic factors influence the increase of change an analysis based on ANCOVA-tests, ANOVA tests, Chi-Square tests and t-tests.

Results

Change in social inclusion

Concerning the variables assessing social inclusion the following changes can be observed.

Concerning the reading test 59% of the participants showed an improvement in reading skills (small plus large increase). According to Figure 1, participants with lower pre-test scores show the largest increase in reading skills (1–25: 93% and 25–50: 71%). Two categories with higher pre-test scores stay rather stable with some small decreases (35%; 55%) and small increases (39%; 43%).

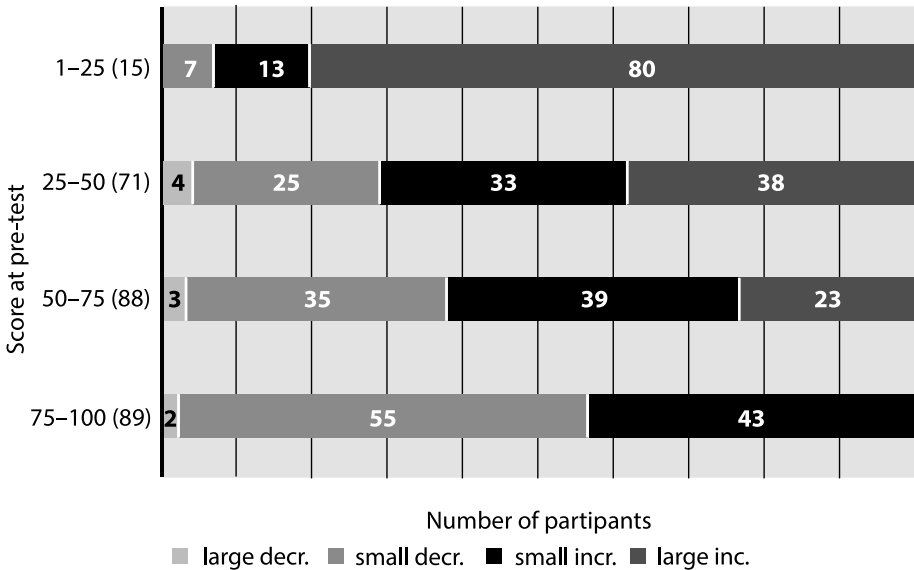


Figure 1. Changes in reading test scores

Concerning the writing test 58% of the respondents improved their writing skills. According to Figure 2, the participants with lower pre-test scores showed the largest increase (64%; 43%), as well as the largest decrease (22%; 24%). The former was expected the latter was unexpected. Participants with higher pre-test scores stayed rather stable with mainly small decreases (35%; 59%) and small increases (43%; 33%). According to the results of the T-test, the change seems to be significant ($T(272) = -5,561; p < .00$).

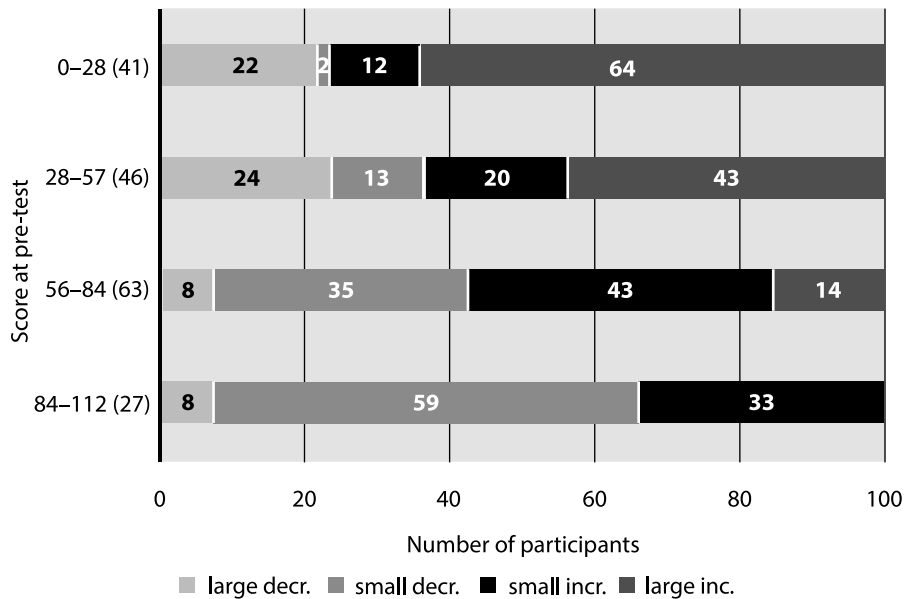


Figure 2. Changes in writing test scores

For (functional) national language skills, the results indicate an improvement for 71% of the participants. Participants with lower pre-test scores show the largest increase. Participants with the highest pre-test score show mainly a small or large decrease (see Figure 3A). Concerning digital skills 66% of the participants improve on this aspect. The group of participants with the highest pre-test score shows not only a small and large decrease but also a small increase (see Figure 3B). According to the results of the T-test, the change seems to be significant ($T(179) = -2.856$; $p < 0.005$).

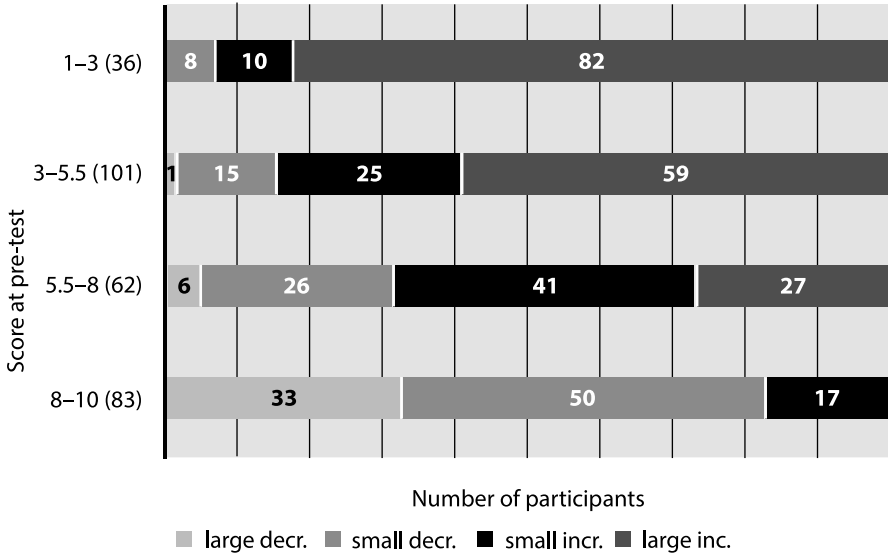


Figure 3A. Changes in national language skills scores

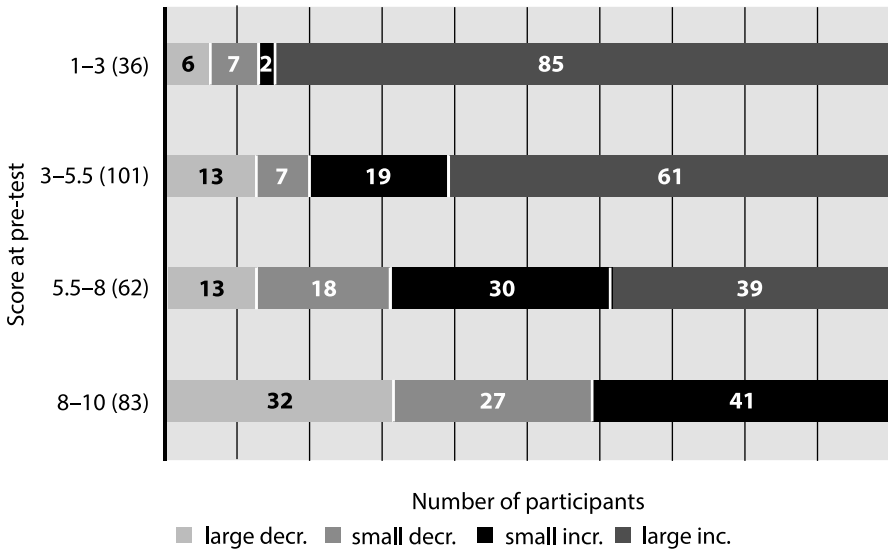


Figure 3B. Changes in digital skills scores

Besides, the score for assertiveness increased for 66% of the participants. Almost all participants in the two categories with the smallest pre-test scores show

a large increase. On the contrary, participants with a medium initial score show a small increase, while the category exhibits a small decrease (see Figure 3C).

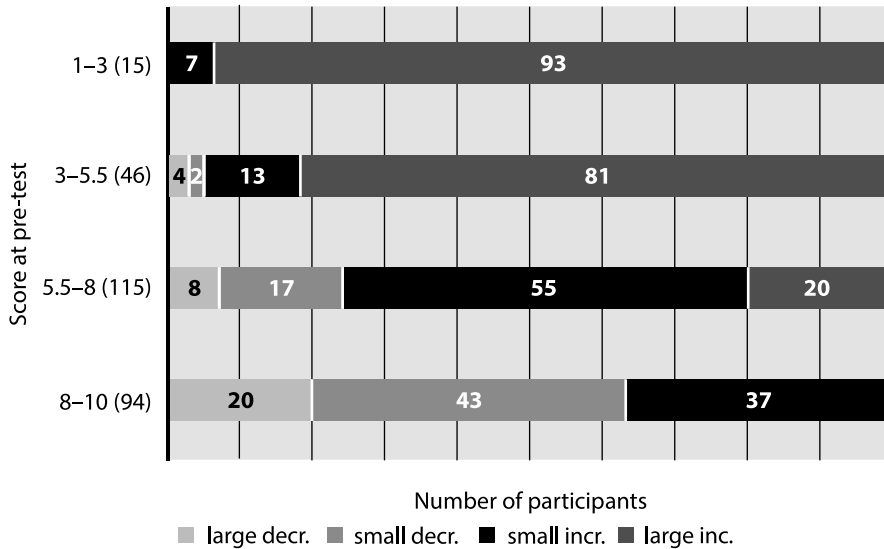


Figure 3C. Changes in assertiveness scores

Labour and upbringing skills increased for 48% of the participants. It follows the same pattern as for assertiveness. Almost all participants in the two categories with the smallest pre-test score show a large increase and participants with the highest pre-test score show a small increase. The lower percentage of increase compared to the other variables can be explained by the rather high pre-test score (see Figure 3D).

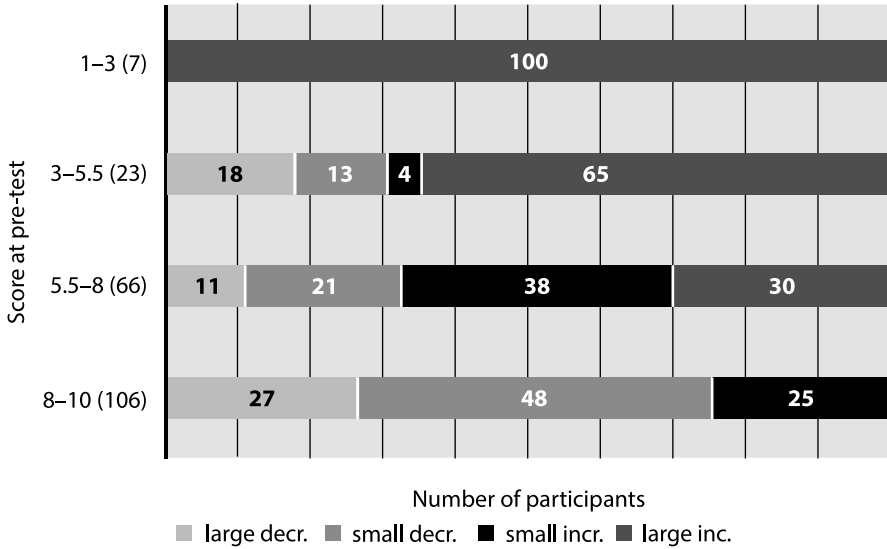


Figure 3D. Changes in labour and upbringing skills scores

Meeting and attempting increased for 58% of the participants. Also for this scale, the two categories with the lower pre-test scores experience a large increase. The category with the highest initial scores is characterized by high percentages for large and small decreases (see Figure 3E). Furthermore, engagement in nature and sports has increased for 57% of the participants. Large increases can be observed for those with lower initial scores (see Figure 3F).

For the final social inclusion indicator, preventing loneliness, due to the small range of the answer scale (1–3), two pre-test categories were created. Fifty-one per cent of the participants experienced an improvement. Participants in the low pre-test scores category show large increases, while those in the high pre-test score category show small decreases (see Figure 3G).

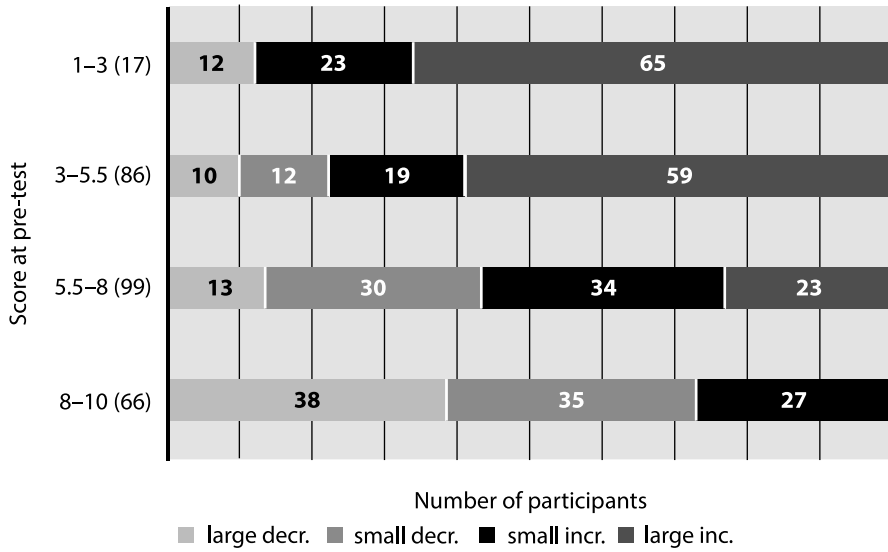


Figure 3E. Changes in meeting and attempting scores

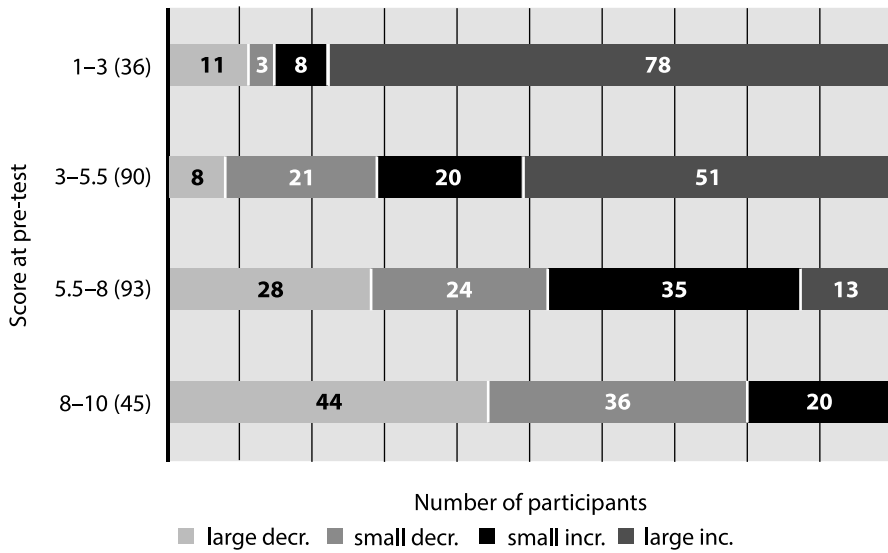


Figure 3F. Changes in scores on being active in nature and sports scores

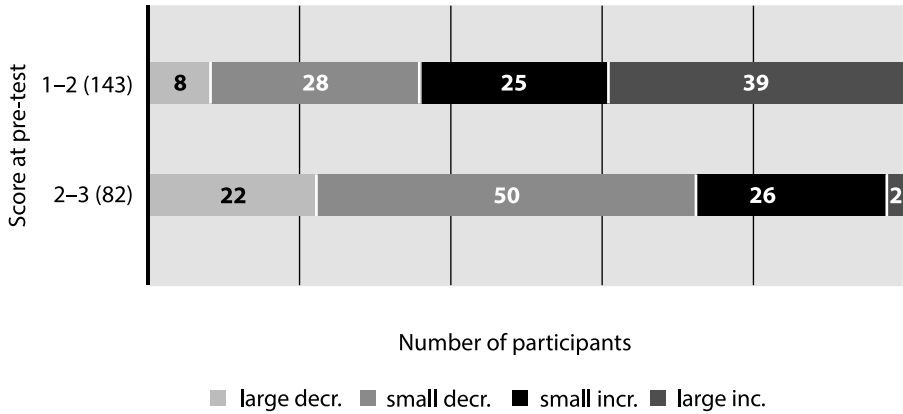


Figure 3G. Changes preventing loneliness scores

To conclude, improvements in scores range between 48% and 71%. The highest scores are achieved for national language skills (71%), digital skills (66%), and assertiveness (66%). The lowest improvement applies to labour and upbringing skills (48%) and preventing loneliness (51%). For all scores, a similar pattern can be observed, known as the “ceiling effect.” Participants with low pre-test scores mainly show small and large increases, while participants with higher pre-test scores mainly exhibit some small decreases or, to a lesser extent, a large decrease.

Change in health

For physical and psychological health, due to the limited range of answering categories, a different categorization of pre-test scores was used for both scales. Self-perceived physical health has increased for 39% of the participants. This is mainly attributed to a large increase in participants with low pre-test scores (see Figure 4A). Psychological health increased for 53% of the participants. Most participants in the low pre-test scores category showed a high increase; however, the number of participants in this category is small. Participants in the high pre-test scores category exhibit both small decreases and increases (see Figure 4B). In conclusion, less than half of the participants experienced an increase. However, a large group of participants had high pre-test scores, making improvements challenging to achieve.

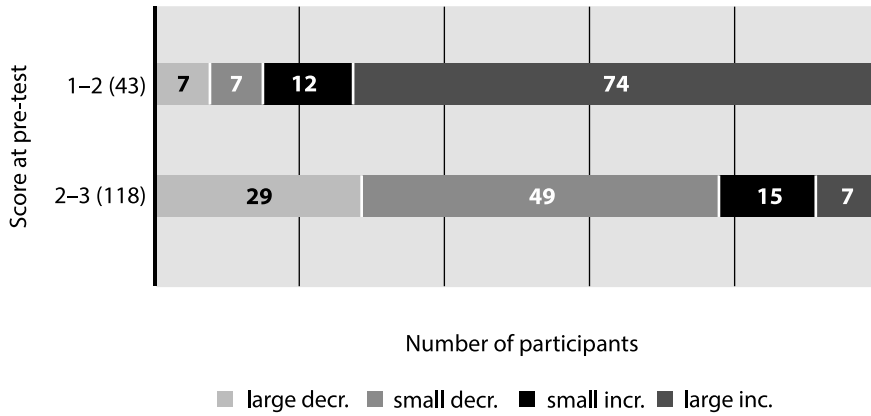


Figure 4A. Changes in physical health scores

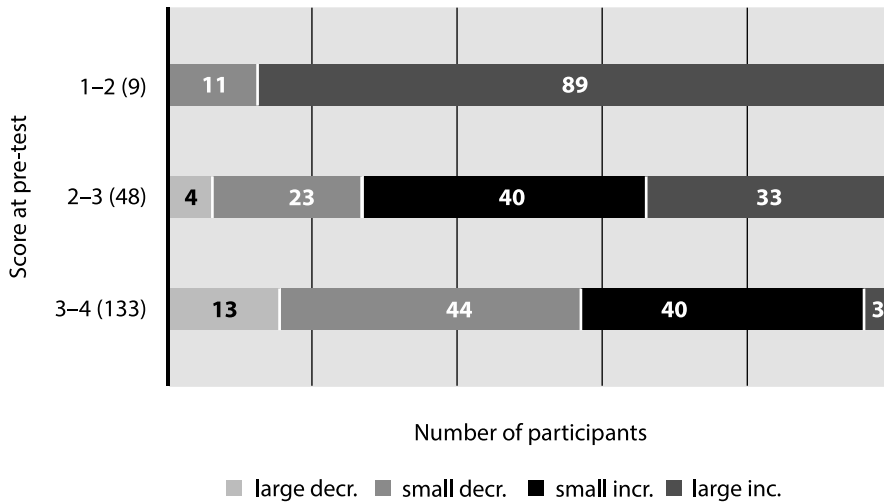


Figure 4B. Changes in psychological health scores

Change in labour market position

The position on the labour market was assessed using 5 questions, each addressing a specific role in the labour market. The questions are not exclusive; participants can have multiple positions, such as being a volunteer and searching for a job. The pattern for the position ‘searching for a job’ differs from the other posi-

tions. There is a rather high score for both a large decrease and a large increase, and a low score for small changes (increase or decrease). This indicates some dynamics for this position. Participants indicating a decrease may have found a job and are no longer searching, while participants indicating an increase may have become more active and are now eager to find a job. The other positions are characterized by relatively high percentages for no change. Between 21% and 36% of the participants indicate an increase. So, for these positions, there is less observed increase (see Figure 5).

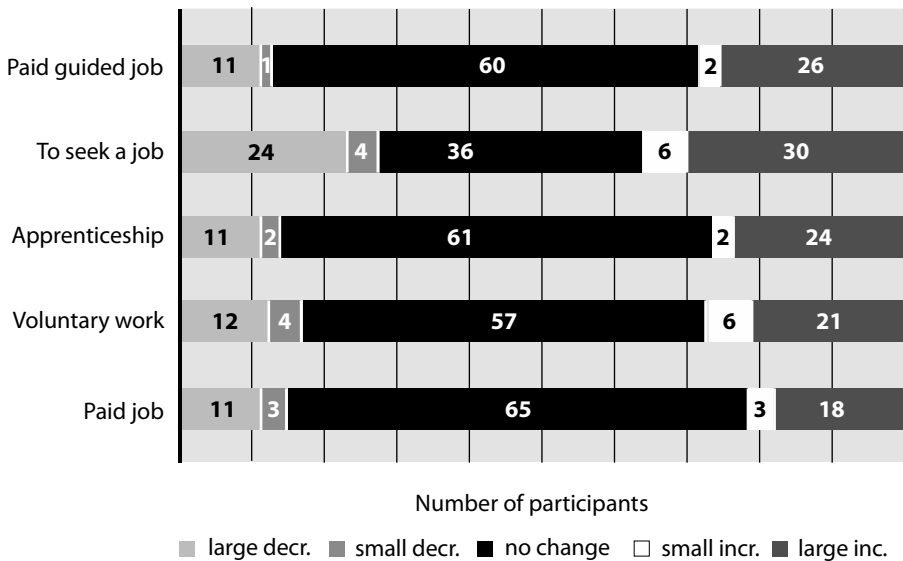


Figure 5. Changes in labour market position scores

Influential factors

Based on the analysis of the influence of the elements of the learning environment and sociodemographic factors conducted by ANCOVA tests, ANOVA tests, Chi-Square tests, and t-tests, it becomes clear that none of the elements of the learning environment and sociodemographic factors has a significant influence on the increase of the reading and writing scores. On the contrary, some of these elements of the learning environment and socio-demographic factors influence the variables of the SIT instrument, to mention:

- Gender has a significant impact on 'Labour and upbringing skills' by which the increase among women is larger ($\chi^2(1, N = 90) = 0.89, p = .03$).
- Diploma has a significant impact on 'Psychological health' by which the increase among participants with a diploma is larger ($\chi^2(3, N = 168) = 8.33, p = .04$).
- The support of the teacher has a significant impact on 'Meeting and attempting' ($F(3, 167) = 2.66, p = .05$) and 'Being active in nature and Sports' ($F(3, 159) = 3.32, p = .02$).
- The learning contents and –activities have a significant impact on 'National language skills' ($F(3, 273) = 4.31, p = .005$).
- The transfer possibilities have a significant impact on 'Physical health' ($F(3, 133) = 4.67, p = .004$).
- The support of a volunteer has a significant impact on 'Assertiveness' ($F(3, 21) = 2.74, p = .045$) and 'Labour– and upbringing skills' ($F(3, 154) = 3.06, p = .03$).

Conclusions and Discussion

This study provides an answer to the question if and to what extent adult participants experience an increase in social inclusion after joining a language course as part of the program 'Language for Life.

The results indicate that 48% to 71% of participants experienced an increase in the social inclusion indicators, except for health and labour market positions. Concerning the latter, a smaller group of participants experienced an increase.

Benchmarking these findings is difficult as the results of former studies are inconclusive, with some studies reporting moderate increases in proficiency (Department of Labour in New Zealand) while others (Reder, 2012) show no relation between participation in basic skills programs and an increase in literacy test scores. In addition to the inconclusiveness (and related to it), the studies differ in the instruments used, the points of measurement and methods of analysis.

Compared to the Longitudinal Study of Adult Learning (Reder, 2012) showing no impact of participation in basic skills programs on reading and writing skills, our data show an increase in literacy skills from 59% (reading) to 58% (writing) of the participants. This might be due to the specific character of the courses in our study. They do not focus on the development of

literacy skills per se, but on increasing social inclusion via the improvement of language skills.

The study conducted by the Department of Labour in New Zealand (2010) shows better writing skills for 66% of the adults after joining basic skills programs. However, in this case, post-tests were administered after the courses which took on average 6 to 9 months, whereas in our study the post-test was administered after 5 months. This difference in measurement period might explain the difference in impact.

When we compare the other social inclusion data reported here with the data collected in other Dutch literacy programs, using the same instruments and data collection procedures (De Greef et al., 2012), the Language for Life courses reported here show more positive outcomes. The 2012 data indicate an increase of 42% (labour and upbringing skills) to 58% (national language skills) of the participants, while our data show increases of 51% (preventing loneliness) to 71% (national language skills) of the participants.

Physical health has increased for 39% of the participants while psychological health increased for 53% of the participants. Given no comparable studies have been found, benchmarking these findings is not possible. However, compared to the rate of increase for the social inclusion indicators (between 48% and 71% of the participants showing an increase), the increase is less prominent. It might be questioned if especially the findings for the increase in physical health are due to the fact that the contents of the courses are not specifically targeted towards health literacy. Being able to deal with a medical system in a country might ask for language courses more specifically targeted towards health literacy.

For the labour market position, the findings show that between 21% and 36% of the participants indicate an increase for changes in their labour market position. Compared to the data collected in other Dutch literacy programs (De Greef et al., 2012), the outcomes of the Language for Life program in terms of labour market position are more positive: 7% to 21% of the participants indicate a change in labour market positions (De Greef et al., 2012) versus 21% to 36% of the participants after joining the Language for Life program.

According to the results of the analysis, it seems that mostly the elements of the learning environment influence the increase of the variables in social inclusion. The influence of the socio-demographic factors seems to be rather small. Finally, it becomes clear that it was not possible to determine a significant influence of the elements of the learning environment and the socio-demographic factors on the increase of reading and writing skills.

Directions for future research

Although the data reported in this study offer interesting insights into the various outcomes of language courses for vulnerable adults, several questions remain open for future research.

Firstly, the use of objective measures (reading and writing tests) as well as self-reporting questionnaires is an important step in collecting evidence on the impact of language courses for vulnerable adults. However, monitoring the impact of language courses by administering assessments in different consecutive waves is necessary to cross-validate our findings in the long term. We agree with the UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning (2010), which argues that programs concerning adult literacy should not be reviewed incidentally but on a systematic basis. Only then can policymakers and researchers bridge the gap between research and policymaking in adult education. In other words, only then will it be possible to translate research results into new adult education policies framed by the outcomes of impact studies.

Secondly, it is not yet clear which elements of the learning environment in language courses contribute to the increase in social inclusion. Although different strands of research, such as learning environments research and transfer of training research, have provided evidence of dimensions of the learning environment contributing to learning gains, for adult literacy programs, evidence is very scarce. To develop a framework of quality indicators for adult education programs (as part of an adult education policy) to optimize their effectiveness, this evidence is necessary.

Implications for policy

According to the results of this study, it appears that the language courses organized by the Dutch regional adult education centers and language institutions, in cooperation with the Dutch Reading & Writing Foundation as part of the program 'Language for Life,' show promise in terms of increasing social inclusion, health, and labor market position.

The findings of this study have influenced the decision of the Dutch Ministry of Education, Culture, and Science to implement this program throughout the Netherlands and include it in a new action strategy to prevent and address low proficiency in literacy skills. This underscores the importance of developing and implementing tools to monitor the impact of language courses on social inclusion, health, and labour market position. The findings can assist policymakers in prioritizing investments in adult education to combat social exclusion.

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Merenje uticaja programa pismenosti na socijalno uključivanje, zdravlje i učešće na tržištu rada: studija holandskog programa

Apstrakt: Danas 24,5% evropske populacije živi u riziku od siromaštva i mogu se smatrati građanima koji su u riziku od socijalne isključenosti. Nizak nivo veština pismenosti je jedan od ključnih razloga socijalne isključenosti. Tvrdi se da programi pismenosti za ranjive grupe odraslih deluju kao pokretač za poboljšanje pismenosti, a time i za unapređenje socijalnog uključivanja, zdravlja i položaja na tržištu rada. Međutim, dokaza o uticaju tih programa još uvek nema u dovoljnoj meri. Ova studija ima cilj da popuni taj jaz merenjem rezultata holandskog programa *Jezik za život* ("Taal voor het Leven"). Rezultati istraživanja pokazuju da, nakon pet meseci, za mnoge indikatore socijalnog uključivanja, više od polovina grupe učesnika pokazuje napredak. Poboljšanje fizičkog i psihološkog zdravlja, kao i položaj na tržištu rada manje su izraženi nego poboljšanje u pogledu indikatora socijalnog uključivanja. Ova studija ne podržava samo važnost politike pismenosti (na nacionalnom ili regionalnom nivou) čiji je cilj povećanje socijalnog uključivanja nuđenjem mogućnosti za unapređenje jezičke sposobnosti, već ima cilj da doprinese ulaganju u istraživanje i praćenje rezultata programa pismenosti.

Ključne reči: programi pismenosti, učenje odraslih, obrazovni uticaj, pismenost, socijalno uključivanje

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How Students Report about Their Education Experiences during the First Year of Covid-19 Pandemic?⁴

Abstract: The aim of this work was to understand the significance of education for students during the Covid-19 pandemic and to explore the context in which educational activities and organizational changes in schooling were spontaneously mentioned. This paper is part of a broader qualitative study in which students' narratives about their experiences during the first year of the pandemic were collected online. From the initial sample of 70 narratives, only those with educational content were selected for further analysis. Thus, the final sample included 34 narratives from 17 high school and 17 university students (5 male and 29 female participants) aged 15–25 ($M=20$). University students' reports were more focused on the positive aspects of online learning, the advantages of self-organizing, and concerns about further education, while secondary school students referred more to difficulties arising from new practices that had a significant impact on daily routines and social aspects.

Keywords: students, Covid-19 pandemic, education, narratives, qualitative study

Education during the Covid-19 Pandemic

The Covid-19 pandemic has significantly affected the everyday life activities, relations, experiences, and well-being of students all around the globe. More than 90% of the world's student population abruptly faced lockdowns in the period with no vaccines and limited health service capacity. The Covid-19 pandemic is considered

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one of the greatest disruptions in the history of education (UNESCO, 2020). It was uniquely challenging for students due to the changes in school and social life that required adaptations of their daily routines (Santos, 2020). These threats to the future of education have alarmed experts worldwide, as the education climate is rapidly changing and revealing the shortcomings of different education systems.

The Importance of Andragogical Principles

With an outburst of the Covid-19 pandemic, the orthodox approach to education was forced to reconsider its widely established practice. Sirbu (2020) points to even greater necessity for acknowledging andragogical principles. Relying on Knowless and Brookfield, Sirbu emphasises: voluntary participation of the learner, creating a cooperative learning climate and demonstrating respect for the students' self-worth, collaboration, utilising practical application, critical self-reflection of learning process, and nurturing self-direction. However, andragogical study in Serbia has shown that university students have not participated enough in adapting and organising online education that was realised in pandemic conditions (Ljujić, 2021).

As a useful extension to both andragogy and pedagogy, heutagogy is predominantly concerned with learner agency concept (Moore, 2020). One of the most important ideas behind heutagogy is to foster agency and engagement in the learning process, and all that with the help of using technology and social media. Moreover, it relies on the humanistic perspective, with learner-centred educational process and the constructivist viewpoint. Blaschke (2019) finds that the current school system suppresses the ability of younger learners to demonstrate self-determination. He considers pedagogy-andragogy-heutagogy continuum, which presents the gradual increase in the level of learner's maturity and autonomy, as well as decrease of instructor's control and course structuring. Therefore, heutagogy seems a suitable perspective for a crisis such as pandemic, which requires a remote approach to learning.

Lastly, it would be important to emphasise the considerable effect of applied andragogy, that is, the encounter of andragogy and psychology in the context of the Covid-19 pandemic. Relying on descriptive qualitative analysis, Fadkhurosi and Kusmaryani (2021) showed that andragogy-based counselling via WhatsApp successfully reduced students' anxiety during the course of pandemic. Namely, authors recognized that the concept of counselling and andragogy have the common goal, in line with the method of self-understanding, focusing on one important thing that becomes a challenge for oneself, and experience that is the key to determining future decisions.

Research on Education during the Pandemic

There has been a growing interest among researchers regarding the organisational changes in the schooling system during the pandemic and particularly emergency remote teaching and learning (Ristić Dedić & Jokić, 2021; Stančić & Senić Ružić, 2021). The Covid-19 pandemic is considered both an opportunity and a challenge especially for higher education (Toquero, 2020), as well as a disorienting social experience and an opportunity to engage in learning processes (Koulaouzides, 2021). A variety of methods were applied in order to directly approach the issues that education faced, in particular students and teachers (Pokhrel & Chhetri, 2021; Džamonja Ignjatović, 2021; Spasenović, 2021; Institut za psihologiju, 2020; Plazinić, 2021).

Youth Perspectives on “Online” Learning

Different studies showed a lack of personal contact and interaction between teachers and students, as well as among students in online emergency remote teaching and learning, compared to regular classroom practice (Vasojević et al., 2021). When it comes to high school students, Italian study showed that many of them might have felt misunderstood by the teachers due to relational distance, resulting in perceiving homework and online classes as stressors and missing friends more (Fioretti et al., 2020). Another paper also suggested that the absence of direct communication and contact with teachers can negatively affect the quality of teaching process and the results achieved. At the same time, it proved that asynchronous communication and physical distance can help students realise the value of teaching as a complex process of socio-emotional learning and not just the maintenance of academic achievements (Hebib, 2021).

Previous research on the impact of remote teaching and learning on students are mainly region-specific, although they point to many similar universal implications. One qualitative study with university students and faculty members from Saudi Arabia showed that students perceived both advantages and challenges when it came to online learning (Bdair, 2021). As advantages, they have noticed a flexible learning environment and organisation of time, improved academic achievement, and motivation to become more independent learners. On the other hand, they have faced issues such as inadequate implementations of online learning, maintaining academic integrity, inability to learn from interactions with peers and educators, and assignment overload. Meanwhile, in another qualitative research, high school students were prone to complain about too

much homework, lack of motivation and time management, fear of losing touch with their friends, feeling uncertain about the transition to college, missing out on important events (i.e., graduation) (Scott et al., 2021).

Qualitative Research in Serbian Context

In the corpus of studies investigating how students in Serbia experienced their education through distance learning and school closures due to the pandemic, mostly online quantitative surveys have been conducted so far (UNICEF, 2020; Zavod za unapređivanje obrazovanja i vaspitanja, 2021). However, there are qualitative studies that have compared online teaching and learning to the classroom practice in Serbia (Vasojević et al., 2021), which investigated schoolchildren's multigenre narratives about learning during the school closure (including stories, letters, and requests) (Kovács Cerović et al., 2021), and conducted in-depth interviews with university students about their experiences during the lockdown (Vuletić et al., 2021). In the state of emergency in April 2020, Vasojević et al. (2021) collected data about high school students' perspectives on the disadvantages of online learning. They reported unsatisfying communication with teachers, too much schoolwork, lack of peer contact, and missing the classroom practice. Kovács Cerović and associates (2021) carried out the research in May and June 2020, when the state of emergency had been lifted but the schools were still closed. The study showed that many high school students evaluated remote learning as demanding and felt overwhelmed by the content, excessive tasks, and amount of homework. Students also faced technological difficulties, especially because they had no previous experience with some of the online platforms (both their own and teachers' technological literacy was significantly underdeveloped). Moreover, they expressed serious concerns about the quality of knowledge and what is the "fair" assessment, and the future of their education.

The perspective on academic integrity could be noticed among university students as well (Vuletić et al., 2021). In April and May 2020, they reported elevated stress levels regarding the organisation of lectures and especially practical work, professors' lack of engagement, and inadequately adapted number of obligations and lessons' pace. Although there were participants who recognised the benefits of timesaving in online studying, most students faced problems with concentration, attention span, procrastination, self-efficacy, and motivation, which affected their general well-being⁵.

⁵ In the mentioned paper (fn. 6), the term **well-being** "implies not only the absence of negative symptoms, but participants' personal evaluation of their life satisfaction and meaningfulness, as well as predominance of

All three above-mentioned studies point to one of the biggest challenges for young people's adaptation to imposed changes in the education system, which is self-organisation, unencouraged prior to the pandemic. Thus, the importance of self-regulated learning for developing the 21st century competencies (Wolters, 2010), was additionally emphasised in the circumstances of education during the pandemic.

However, aforementioned research about experiences of university students also emphasised a few positive aspects for some participants, such as more leisure time and opportunity to self-organise, as well as using studying and pro-activity as a coping mechanism for gaining control over otherwise uncertain life.

These studies provide significant insights into high school and university students' experiences of changes in the education system during or slightly after the lockdown, while the schools and faculties were still closed. However, youths' memories, perceptions, and experiences of remote education could have changed their tone over time, while the mentioned studies (Institut Džamonja Ignjatović et al., 2021; Kovács Cerović et al., 2021; Vasojević et al., 2021;) represented only the fresh impressions in full swing of the crisis. Therefore, new research is required in the field of contemporary education systems that can initiate the subsequent evaluation of the effects of remote learning and narratives around it.

Aim of the Research

This paper is a part of a broader qualitative study (see Nikitović et al., 2023), which intended to "give voice" to young people and understand the impact of Covid-19 pandemic on their lives, with a special reference to the experience of "self". Secondary school and university students have provided reports about the significant impressions and occurrences in their lives during the first year of the Covid-19 pandemic that addressed several critical issues. The persistent appearance of the comments regarding education encouraged the emergence of the following research questions: What is the place of education in students' spontaneous reports? How did high school and university students perceive changes caused by the Covid-19 pandemic in the education system? Are these changes perceived only as risky or also beneficial for that period and the future of their education as well?

Therefore, the main aim of this paper was to explore and describe what education meant to high school and university students in Serbia during the first year of the Covid-19 pandemic. Moreover, the intention was to examine whether,

functional attitudes, emotions, and coping mechanisms," and will be used in this paper as well, with particular focus on developmental perspective.

and in what context, they spontaneously mentioned organisational changes in schooling and educational activities during the pandemic (both academic activities and learning and extracurricular activities). The aim will be achieved throughout several objectives: 1) Determine the place that education holds in students' spontaneous reports by calculating the percentage of number of words in the reports dedicated to the topic of education (descriptive statistics); 2) Describe the manner in which students' approach the topic of education during the Covid-19 pandemic by conducting thematic analysis (qualitative analysis); 3) Describe the differences between high school and university students regarding their spontaneous reports about educational experiences.

Method

Sample

The sample initially consisted of 70 reports written by 70 participants, i.e., students from Serbia. After the researchers got familiar with the contents, they decided to single out those reports which spontaneously mentioned materials about students' experiences regarding education. Therefore, the final sample consisted of 34 narratives written by 34 students aged 15 to 25 ($M = 20$), both secondary school and university students (see Table 1).

Table 1. The Participants

Participants' characteristics		Frequency
Gender	Female	29
	Male	5
Level of study	Secondary school	17
	University	17

Data Collection

The instrument was an online questionnaire, administered in the period from March to May 2021. It consisted of two types of items: multiple choice questions which referred to the demographic variables (age, sex, and education level) and open question (with a minimum character limit of 800, including spaces) encouraging students to write about their positive and negative experiences during the first year of Covid-19 pandemic, as well as its effects on the changes in their

self-image. The sample was convenient, and data was collected via social media platforms. The participation was voluntary and anonymous. Raw responses arrived directly to the head researcher, who distributed the adjusted data to the rest of the research team. The research procedure was approved by the Institutional Review Board of the Faculty of Philosophy, University of Belgrade, which issued an ethical licence to the research team.

Data Analysis

Seven researchers read all the 70 narratives in order to collaboratively develop the scheme for coding by using the MAXQDA Analytics Pro 2020 software. The approach to coding was atheoretical, mapping the spontaneously mentioned experiences during the Covid-19 pandemic and the way these experiences affected the self-image and functioning of participants. All researchers made a consensus on the coding system throughout the discussion, and few codes distinguished, directly related to the educational experiences. Three researchers extracted those 34 reports that contain education-related codes and continued the analysis. The first step was counting the words dedicated to education in each student's report and representing them in percentages for conducting basic variance analysis and descriptive statistics. Finally, the thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006) was applied to a total of 87 coded segments. The three researchers engaged in an inductive and iterative process of regrouping similar codes into higher-order codes, that is, themes that concerned the experiences related to education during the first year of the pandemic. The higher-order codes were eventually categorised into parent themes that resembled positive and negative poles of these experiences. The overview of the themes and the codes relevant to the aim of the research could be seen on the thematic map (Figure 1).

Findings

Descriptive Statistics

Proportions of Content Dedicated to Education in Students' Reports

About a half of the participants, thus every second one, spontaneously reported something related to education in their narratives about the first year of the Covid-19 pandemic. For each of the selected reports ($N = 34$), the words in all those sentences related to education content were summarised, and these sums turned

into percentages⁶, thus indicating the proportion of the report dedicated to education (see Appendix A). The statistics for percentages could be seen in Table 2.

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics: Percentages of Words Dedicated to Educational Content within Reports

N	min	max	S.D.	Mean		Skewness		Kurtosis	
				Statistic	S.E.	Statistic	S.E.	Statistic	S.E.
34	3.25	64.50	16.41	25.70	2.81	.68	.40	-.13	.79

The distribution of the percentages is mesokurtic and slightly right skewed, which means that the lower numbers of percentages are more represented than higher, which vary more (see Figure 1). On average, students wrote less than 25% of the report with regard to education-related topics (*Median* = 24.27, *Mode* = 12.5).

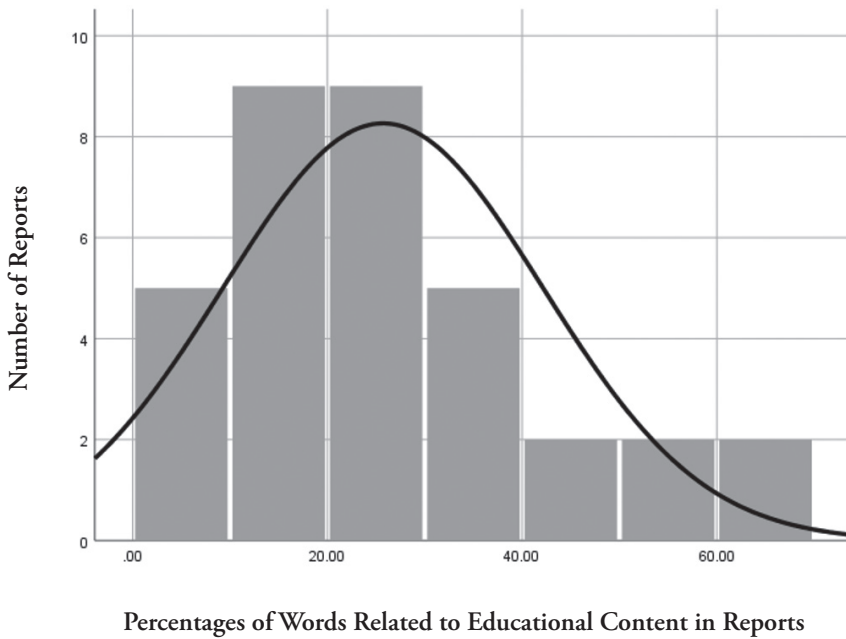


Figure 1. Distribution of Percentages of Words Dedicated to Educational Content within Reports

⁶ The 100% stands for the sum of all the words within one whole report.

Additionally, those participants who evaluated their experiences with the new organisational changes in education positively (32.4% of participants) wrote significantly less words about it on average than those participants whose experiences were negative or ambivalent⁷ (67.6%), $F = 7.05$, $p = .01$. In this respect there were no significant differences between groups of secondary school and university students.

Thematic Analysis

Figure 2 represents the distinguished major themes (2) and sub themes (4) that researchers abstracted, as well as the codes produced in the first stage of seven researchers' joint work.

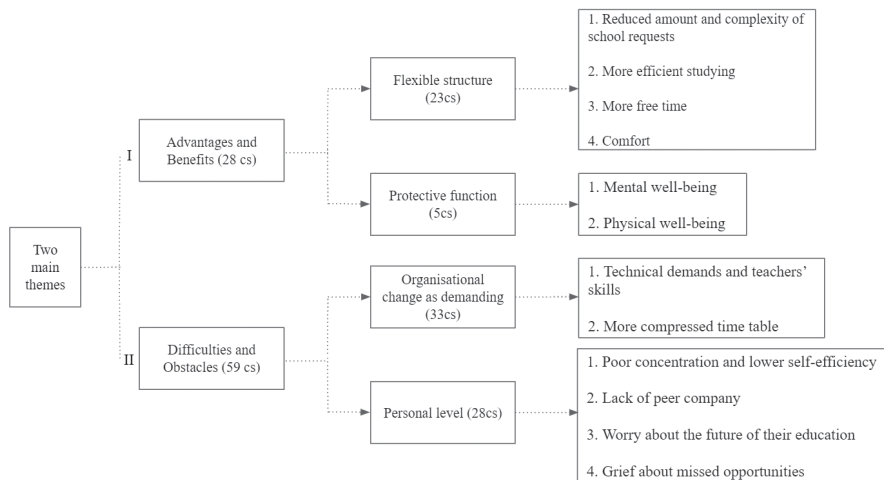


Figure 2. The Thematic Map of the Main Themes and Coded Segments

As it can be seen in Figure 2, students' reports about their education in the first year of the pandemic can be divided into two major themes in general: *advantages and benefits of newly established forms of education* (28 coded segments) and *difficulties and obstacles faced by students* (59 coded segments).

⁷ When both positive and negative perspectives are represented in the same report, the negative ones are more prominent.

Advantages and Benefits of Online Schooling

Some students reported on the benefits of online schooling. They primarily experienced their online schooling as more unconstrained and flexible regarding the school assignments and time organisation. Additionally, few participants used the imposed situation regarding new online forms of schooling as an opportunity to preserve their personal psycho-physical well-being. Hence, within the firstly mentioned major theme, which refers to advantages and benefits that students articulated, two subthemes were detected and named *Flexible Structure* and *Protective Function*.

Flexible Structure. Refers to the recognised gains brought by the new manner of education system functioning. Although acknowledging the hardship of online schooling, some students managed to find benefits of this system mainly because of the reduced amount of school obligations and requests, which meant more leisure time. The space opened up for both high school and university students to work on themselves, pursue hobbies, and develop the skills for which they previously have had no time and opportunity during the school days.

In the beginning it felt good not to go to school and its toxic surroundings. My school tasks were maximally reduced, so I had more free time to devote to myself which I did, and I can honestly say that I'm the best version of myself ever. (Ana, f, 18)

I want to point out some of the things that were good. I was really pleased with online school. I organised myself much better and the extra time I got I spent outside, "in nature", out of Belgrade, both during the curfew and during summer, when covid related measures were reduced. (Ema, f, 24)

Being able to self-organise, university students found more time for catching up with school assignments they were lagging behind, while secondary school students in particular felt like they had more time to focus on improving their grades and preparing for entrance exams.

Some difficult colloquiums were cancelled, and I passed a hard exam via Skype which made it easier to take it off my back. (Luka, m, 23)

... then we all had online school which was much harder than regular school. The positive thing was that we had more time to prepare for our entrance exams and that at the end of the year we had better grades and GPA. (Jasmina, f, 15)

One more important code that stood out was *comfortableness*. Particularly, two students recognized the advantage and benefit of following the lessons from the comfort of their own home or place of their choice. They found engaging in lessons from home timesaving.

Corona virus didn't have an impact either on my university achievements or private life. Even so it felt good not having to go to university all the time. It was more. (Lea, f, 23)

Protective Function. Two codes are recognised within this subtheme: psychological and physical well-being. As for psychological, the focus on education is singled out as a significant coping strategy for some adolescents. Focusing on school assignments and their execution seems to be a significant resource (especially during the period of lockdown) for coping with the situation. Distraction by focusing on academic obligations thus proved to be a certain shield against stress caused by uncertainties that pandemic brought.

...but because I couldn't socialise during the lockdown, I had to take my mind off that fact. I did that by dedicating myself more than ever to my school obligations: I did my assignments as soon as I got them and I can honestly say that it helped me both mentally, and in terms of better grades. I am very content with myself. (Mila, f, 18)

On the other hand, only one participant recognized the online schooling as a means of protection against getting infected with the virus.

When they announced that we are going to be under lockdown and our faculties would not work for the time being, I felt relieved because that meant that, in some way, I will be protected at home and that there's less chance that I will pass the virus to any member of my family. (Jelena, f, 22)

Difficulties and Obstacles

Other side of adolescents' experiences is presented within the second major theme. Observing the quantity of coded segments within the two major themes in Figure 1 (28 against 59) shows a tendency of students to evaluate their educational experience mainly negatively during the first year of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Organisational Changes as Demanding. Students primarily referred to the technical requirements and inadequate skills of teachers to carry out the teaching process in online format. Although there was a university student in the sample

who recognised the effort professors have made (*All in all I was surprised how most of our professors were really okay towards students*), most of the participants felt like teachers and professors were not able to meet the requests. It is important to highlight that these kinds of disadvantages were more prominent in answers of younger participants, that is, high school students. As collected data suggested, these students were more sensitive and vulnerable to organisational changes in education, partly due to the lack of external structure that had been provided to them by their teachers in regular classroom practice.

I became less and less involved with my hobbies because I was too busy with online school which was so hard. We can't just learn from the screen because teachers are not equipped for the online format of school. (Nina, 17, f)

I feel that we have distanced ourselves from the professors and our peers. School is no longer a place I like to visit, nor do I consider the time spent at school to be of high quality, because we have to learn everything by ourselves, and contacts with professors are almost non-existent. (Ana, 18, f)

In addition to emphasising that the knowledge they acquired was not on the same level as before, that cheating was easier in online format, and practical work was disabled, participants also spoke about the harmfulness of staring at computers for long periods of time.

The first thing that comes to mind is a feeling of freedom, without responsibility, because my first association is what the school looked like in April and May (of 2020). It was very disorganised and there was a lot of cheating. I feel a little scared because I know that I didn't acquire the knowledge of the material that was done then, and I will probably need it. (Marija, 16, f)

We all know the harmfulness of sitting in front of a computer for a long period of time; we feel tired all the time and when we look at our accomplishments for the day– (it feels like) there's nothing. (Ivana, 17, f)

The last code within this sub theme relates to more compressed timetables of exams. With current pandemic status dictating the necessary measures, examination periods were frequently put too close together, so university students found that newly established patterns to be often overwhelming, exhausting, and hard to keep up with.

Because of the pandemic, in September I had examination periods just a few days apart. I just didn't have the energy for the third one, so I left some of my exams untaken. (Luka, 23, m)

Personal Level. It has been recorded that students singled out cognitive, conative, and affective problems referring to the educational sphere of their lives. They reported on a kind of mental inertia that refers primarily to the cognitive aspect. The situation was so overwhelming for some of them that they could not maintain the concentration necessary for learning and listening to the lectures. It was also followed by the low self-efficacy, which led to the decrease in working habits acquired earlier.

I felt like I had lost track of reality and time. My focus is more and more declining, and I am usually a very organised and diligent person. (Nina, 17, f)

...and of course, I wasn't able to prepare for any of my exams (in the summer of 2020). So, I didn't pass any of my exams in June and concentration and motivation were not my allies. (Katarina, 21, f)

One of the factors, which stood out and exerted influence on such conditions, was also the format of lessons that they began to experience after some time as monotonous and consequently boring. It led to the conclusion that there was a certain experience in relation to going to faculty/school.

I really don't like online school. I think it's not a real school and whether we like it or not we are aware that much less knowledge is acquired because we simply cannot resist the chance we have for cheating, etc. (Ena, 16, f)

Special code within this segment was the lack of peers' company in the school setting. Naturally, since schooling and spending time with friends for high school students is closely linked together, they missed it more.

All in all, it is hard for me mostly because we don't go to school, we don't often see friends, and I can hardly wait for this to be over. (Ena, 16, f)

Grief about the missed opportunities is another significant code within this segment. Participants expressed disappointment and sadness about the impossibility to have prom/graduation celebrations, missing their school trips, various cultural manifestations, concerts, parties, etc.

I was not able to spend as much time with my friends and partner as I would have liked and I could not attend various events that I like (concerts, festivals, parties, get-togethers). This made me feel like my youth was passing me by while I wasn't enjoying it as I would have liked. (Sara, 25, f)

I am still just a high school girl who gets more and more sad news: there's no prom night or senior school trip, taking final exams will not be the same... nothing is nor will be normal. (Hana, 18, f)

We could not hold the graduation ceremony since it would have endangered us and many people from our surroundings. So, we did not even get to celebrate the end of a beautiful period in our lives. In addition to the university, my social life was largely limited due to fear for my loved ones. (Sara, 25, f)

While grief about missed opportunities refers to the chances and occasions that participants felt like missing in the past, worrying about their future (further) education is another important code that is directed towards concern regarding the future educational and career ventures. Younger participants were much more likely to recognise that their peers spent more time on social media platforms while they should have been studying; that since the quality of schooling has decreased with online format their generation could be at risk in their future school endeavours (for example with enrolment at a university), while university students showed concerns about their professional carriers, whether they would be able to find jobs, or just a place to start practical work. The latter was especially dominant among participants who selected fields for which praxis and near human contact was a necessity (i.e. medical students and filmmakers) and among those students who were at the turning points of their education, who were graduating from high school or college.

In this situation I saw more clearly holes in the system and I'm becoming more and more worried about the future of my generation. They didn't do anything productive, they just hung out on social media platforms. (Nina, 17, f)

I lost a lot of precious experience at university since some practical work was not possible to organise (for example internships in hospital). (Sara, 25, f)

Discussion

In a presented online survey, secondary school and university students reported about their positive and negative experiences, as well as the effects of the pandemic crisis on their sense of self. Besides all the other relevant topics, only half of the participants spontaneously mentioned education-related content, i.e., every second participant did not. This finding is consistent with the finding of the research of the narratives collected online for a sample of secondary school students in Italy (Fioretti et al., 2020) which also indicate the lack of relation towards school and education in students' narratives about their experiences during the pandemic. Thereby, data in research conducted by Fioretti and colleagues were processed using different methods, by counting of key words mentioned in narratives (such as "school"), unlike our approach, which took into account the entire codes/text related to education. In our research topic of education took approximately a quarter of the average report, less among those participants who have noticed benefits and more among those who mainly saw the downsides of remote learning. Therefore, those students who were more unsatisfied felt a greater need to express their thoughts and feelings, so the important message behind the reports could be interpreted as an appeal.

The number of students unsatisfied or ambivalent about the introduced changes in the education practice was higher, but almost a third of participants managed to see exclusively positive sides. The thematic analysis has shown that some of these participants felt more comfortable being able to organise their own time and catch up with 1) hobbies and skills which they did not manage to deal with before the pandemic and 2) schoolwork and studies. Although there were differences between secondary school and university students regarding the *type of assignments* they had to achieve, the motivation to engage in these obligations probably depended on their academic aspirations also and not only on the age or level of studying. Like other young people in Serbia and the world (e.g. Bdair, 2021; UNICEF, 2020), some of our students favoured online studying because it was timesaving, there was flexible scheduling of learning and leisure, as well as the comfortable environment for monitoring the lectures. Only one student from our study appreciated remote learning for its core purpose (to prevent the spread of the virus), which made him feel sincerely grateful.

The benefits of remote teaching and learning have been recognised in the context of well-being. As previous research in Serbia with university students suggested, self-organising and proactivity represent functional coping strategies that are beneficial for psychological well-being and provide a sense of relaxa-

tion and self-content. Additionally, the same study (Vuletić et al., 2021, p. 12) mentioned that the *rational evaluation of the situation and following the preventive measures* could be considered coping mechanisms. Being able to recognise positive elements of remote learning points to the fact that students from our research have also developed adapting abilities to the rapidly changing education climate and crises such as the global pandemic. This proves that both secondary school and university students' mental health might benefit from the opportunity to self-direct and engage in their own education process (e.g. Fadkhurossi & Kusmaryani, 2021). Students show self-reflectiveness and motivation to study when they find studying directly connected to their personal aim and future career (see Sirbu, 2020). The realised students' autonomy and engagement are probably emphasised due to pandemic-related conditions, such as enhanced technology, social media usage, and time-flexibility (Blaschke, 2019; Moore, 2020). Aforementioned aspects were not directly connected to online classes and lectures, but leisure time and solo-studying.

On the other hand, participants who emphasised the negative aspects, especially those who additionally noticed positive ones, showed the need to elaborate on their experiences. Some of these reports might represent the means young people used to reflect and work through the negative elements of the crisis. Most of the difficulties that students have noticed are in agreement with previous research mentioned in the introduction (Bdair, 2021; Džamonja Ignjatović et al., 2021; Kovács Cerović et al., 2021; Ristić Dedić & Jokić, 2021; Scott et al., 2021; Vasojević et al., 2021), but also with those findings from even before the pandemic (Wong, 2007), indicating technological limitations and personal issues connected to e-learning, compared to regular learning i.e. the classroom practice.

However, when it comes to difficulties participants faced regarding the organisational challenges during the pandemic, they were somewhat different between the groups of secondary and university students. It seems that secondary school students suffered more from the lack of external structure imposed by the teachers. They were probably used to having their time scheduled from the early school levels, so some of them might have been confused with sudden switching between too much leisure time and overwhelming schoolwork. The other explanation might be connected with teachers' inability to create a structure using the online platforms and means, which led to increased confusion among younger students. Possible solutions might lie in collaboration with students, understanding their preference (e.g. social media), as well as enhancing digital literacy of teachers and professors.

Although there are individual differences when it comes to appreciation of external or internal structuring, participants clearly recognised the effects of the pandemic on their own behaviour. The importance of developing willingness, motivation and self-management behaviour in learning situations is particularly relevant for successful online learning (Wolters, 2010) and emergency remote learning during the pandemic era. This indicates the necessity of preparing students to be e-learners and to become psychologically prepared for the e-learning environment (Wong, 2007). University students learned to enjoy and appreciate their independence and self-organisation, so professors' tendency to structure their time during lockdown with additional work and deadlines might have been frustrating for some.

Throughout the reports, most of the participants were sending a message that something should be changed in the education practice and system, for they were not able to accommodate and achieve expected results. Some of them were facing concentration and motivation difficulties, which consequently led to decrease in self-efficacy and satisfaction. Not being able to self-organise, secondary school students expected teachers to help them, but they were busy trying to get ahead with their own assignments. Compared to secondary school students, university students perceived that their teachers had worked hard and put more effort into organising the lectures.

Henceforth, some students probably used these reports to send a message that they had needed additional support and understanding at the time, but no way to acquire it. In regular circumstances, this kind of support could be provided by peers in the school setting (Hebib, 2021), which was particularly denied during the state of emergency. School should be a safe space for adolescents to develop their social and emotional skills, and, for some, making the studying less monotonous and peers more easily approachable. Moreover, it offers some kinds of rewards (graduation, excursions, and trips) for decent behaviour, which can be a strong motivator for school assignments and time for resting and gaining strength for further studying. High school students often complained about missing these important events, making them feel alienated, frustrated, and increasing their time spent on social media and other consuming online activities. As one of the previously mentioned papers clearly stated (Vasojević et al., 2021), students from our research also seem to be missing the classroom practice.

Participants stated their worries about their future education, which were also different for the groups of secondary school and university students. Secondary school students noticed how online studying might affect their knowledge and ability to meet necessary criteria for enrolling at the faculty they find interesting. Moreover, the lack of academic integrity might have helped the minority of students make their way through the year with higher grades but leaving respon-

sible students with a sense of injustice and anxiety. These results are in accordance with previous research in Serbia (Kovács Cerović et al., 2021). Although worried about academic integrity, university students were facing different obstacles, such as lack of practical training and subsequent inability to find jobs in the future (Klikovac et al., 2021). However, as mentioned, anxiety difficulties connected to worries about future education might be reduced with the help of andragogy-based counselling (Fadkhurosi & Kusmaryani, 2021). Since practical training is necessary for linking academic knowledge and scientific concepts with practical knowledge and skills which is essential in some domains like medical studies (Krnjaić, 2015), these results are expected. In the context of lifelong learning (European Commission, 2000) and adult education, practical training and student internships is an opportunity for learning and application of professional, expert knowledge (Krnjaić, 2015; Sirbu, 2020), as well as for becoming familiar with and developing professional culture (Steiner, 2013).

However, the fact that participants spontaneously mentioned and articulated these troubles, with no previous suggestion or direct question from the researchers, is a particularly noteworthy result with practical implications for improving the education system and making it more resilient in the case of crisis.

Conclusion

The contribution of this study lies in the specific methodological approach with researchers occupying phenomenological epistemological position and avoiding any suggestions to initiate the education-related topics in the narratives. Unlike other quantitative and qualitative studies, that explicitly dealt with the interruption of formal schooling caused by the pandemic, the intention of this paper was to investigate if and in what context educational activities and organisational changes in schooling were mentioned *spontaneously*, i.e., what is the position of education and educational activities in the students' subjective experiences during the pandemic. We also considered the potential effects of the pandemic on students' future education. To the best of our knowledge, this is the first study that approaches the problem of students' education during the pandemic in this specific and indirect way. Education was an important part of about half of the total number of reports, within which the fourth of the text on average was dedicated to the educational content.

This study proves how there are still many students who firmly rely on the systems' ability to provide structure for learning, making them more and more dependent, less critically oriented, thus unprepared to become aware adult members

of the future society. Henceforth, one of the implications is that students should be encouraged and taught how to structure their own time even before the university level. Adaptation was problematic for some students, resulting in decrease or impairment of their psycho-physical well-being. Last but not least, there were participants who did not mention any educational activities in their reports, although it is expected that these activities occupied a significant part of their everyday lives.

Both secondary school and university students emphasised positive and negative effects of remote teaching and learning but faced certain differences when it came to concrete assignments and (unsatisfied or fulfilled) needs. Almost all students found themselves missing the regular classroom practice and learned to appreciate the socio-emotional benefits from physically going to school. Participants showed worries about their future education, pointing to the lower quality of knowledge, lack of academic integrity and opportunities for practical training. These issues could seriously affect students' aspirations and plans for further education and professional careers. It is necessary to devise ways to prevent the long-term consequences of education during the pandemic for further education of young people, as well as their adult education and professional development.

Practical Implications

Students in their narratives about life during the pandemic, even when they were not directly asked about their educational experiences, clearly point to the weaknesses of the educational system, which are particularly prominent in terms of organizational changes in education and emergency remote learning. Thus, implications for educational practice point to the necessity of supporting the development of students' self regulation, particularly working habits, self regulated learning, planning and time management as well as both students' and teachers' digital competences and critical thinking. Important aspects of self-regulation articulated in this paper relate to processes and aspects such as: defining goals, planning, assessing one's own abilities, self-evaluation during the learning process, noticing weaknesses and difficulties in learning, planning problem solving procedures, assessing learning effects and achievements etc. All this is of special importance in educational process for the development of an individual's critical attitude, for his conscious reflexive decision-making and taking responsibility in making decisions important for further education, career management and achieving subjective psychological well-being. In this respect recommendations are related to the necessity for improving regular school practice and resilience of the school system for potential future emergency situations.

Limitations

This study covers a very wide period of time during the Covid-19 pandemic: from lockdown and closure of all schools and universities, including some hybrid forms and almost regular forms of schooling with (intensive) preventive measures, to a variety of implemented online methods and procedures. This is the reason why the conclusions are more general than expected for qualitative studies. Moreover, the study did not cover some groups of students, particularly vulnerable groups who lack internet access and adequate devices necessary for distance learning. Additionally, overrepresented girls could lead towards (gender) biased conclusions.

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Appendix A

Frequencies, Percentages and Evaluation of Education-Related Content in Reports

N	Student, f/m	Total number of words in the report (100%)	Number of words in segments dedicated to education	Percentage of words in segments dedicated to education (%)	Evaluation of the experience*
1	Nina, f	255	107	36.90	-
2	Lara, f	226	31	8.93	+
3	Milena, f	155	34	13.33	+
4	Jana, f	266	10	4.42	-
5	Olja, f	1001	60	38.71	-
6	Ivana, f	231	133	50.00	-
7	Tamara, f	561	119	11.89	+
8	Luka, m	204	82	35.50	-
9	Jelena, f	150	19	3.39	+
10	Ema, f	254	46	22.55	+
11	Jelena, f	167	39	26.00	+
12	Marko, m	453	129	50.79	-
13	Bojana, f	220	77	46.11	-
14	Mila, f	193	61	13.47	+
15	Sara, f	151	49	22.27	-
16	Ena, f	257	65	33.68	-
17	Jasmina, f	155	43	28.48	-
18	Irena, f	177	69	26.85	-
19	Nikola, f	136	70	45.16	-
20	Lea, f	351	36	20.34	+
21	Marta, f	507	40	29.41	+
22	Petar, m	176	96	27.35	-
23	Katarina, f	152	138	27.22	-
24	Dušan, m	437	30	17.05	-
25	Marija, f	244	94	61.84	-
26	Jovana, f	249	51	11.67	+
27	Anđela, f	169	35	14.34	-
28	Valerija, f	176	76	30.52	-
29	Ana, f	914	109	64.50	-
30	Mirjana, f	237	22	12.50	-
31	Isidora, f	154	33	3.61	-
32	Hana, f	160	46	19.41	-
33	Dorotea, f	255	5	3.25	-
34	Nada, f	226	20	12.50	+

Note. Plus (+) stands for positive, and minus (-) for negative evaluation.

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Kako učenici i studenti izveštavaju o svojim obrazovnim iskustvima tokom prve godine pandemije kovida 19?¹¹

Apstrakt: Cilj ovog rada je da steknemo uvid šta je obrazovanje značilo učenicima i studentima tokom pandemije kovida 19 i u kom su kontekstu obrazovne aktivnosti i organizacione promene u školovanju spontano pominjane. Ovaj rad je deo šire kvalitativne studije u kojoj su narativi učenika i studenata o njihovim iskustvima tokom prve godine pandemije prikupljeni onlajn. Od inicijalnog uzorka, koji se sastojao od 70 narativa, za dalju analizu odabrani su samo oni sa obrazovnim sadržajem. Stoga su krajnji uzorak činila 34 narativa, koji potiču od 17 učenika srednje škole i 17 studenata (N=34, od toga 29 ženskog pola), uzrasta od 15 do 25 godina ($M=20$). Izveštaji studenata su se više odnosili na pozitivne aspekte onlajn učenja i prednosti samoorganizovanja, kao i na zabrinutost zbog daljeg obrazovanja, dok su učenici srednjih škola više naglašavali teškoće koje su poticale od novog načina rada, koji je značajno uticao na njihovu dnevnu rutinu i društveni život.

Ključne reči: učenici i studenti, pandemija kovida 19, obrazovanje, narativi, kvalitativna studija

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Motivational and Personality Factors in Sports Coaches' Non-formal Education⁵

Abstract: This review summarizes the available literature on the non-formal education of sports coaches. Considering the complexity of the sports coaches' job, it is recognized that formal education alone is not sufficient, and non-formal education within this field may need to be mandatory. Earlier studies suggested that motivation and personality could be crucial predictors of the willingness to continuously learn. The most promising motivational theory in the context of education is the self-determination theory, which emphasizes that even controlled, external motivation could be internalized. Furthermore, some personality traits (e.g., curiosity, conscientiousness) are associated with non-formal education and should, therefore, be fostered even in those individuals who did not autonomously decide to enroll in a program. This review also identified a clear lack of studies investigating the motivational and personality determinants of non-formal education in sports coaches, and future studies should aim to fill this gap.

Keywords: lifelong learning, non-formal education, sports coaches, motivation for learning, personality traits

Introduction

Sports coaching is usually defined as an extremely demanding, complex, and multi-layered activity (Cushion et al., 2010; Lyle, 2002). To achieve the pri-

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mary goal of the coaching profession – improving the performance of athletes and sports teams evaluated through competitions (Cushion et al., 2010), sports coaches must effectively perform numerous occupational roles. These roles are typically reflected in the following tasks: 1) technical and tactical training of athletes, 2) planning the training process, 3) conducting training, 4) control of physical fitness (preparedness) and selection of athletes, 4) analysis and correction of the training process and competition, 5) managing performances during competitions, 6) keeping work and competitions documentation, 7) writing work reports, 8) providing material and technical conditions for exercising and the training process (Regulations on the nomenclature of sports professions and titles; Law on Sports, 2016).

Several other indicators contribute to the complexity and dynamism of the sports coaching profession. The list of necessary knowledge and skills mentioned earlier (Perkins & Hahn, 2020) certainly changes depending on the level of athletes' development and age, as indicated by the Development Model for Sports Participation (Côté et al., 2003). This model recommends a developmental approach to coaching that emphasizes adjustment to the individual developmental needs of an athlete. In addition, the sports coaching profession often goes beyond the domain of sports, given that the coach can and does have a wider role in improving the physical and psychosocial growth and development of athletes through sports activity (Perkins & Hahn, 2020). This imposes a need for the acquisition of skills and knowledge in areas such as physical and mental health, psychosocial development, etc. The demandingness of the sports coaching profession also stems from the fact that coaching is taking place in a complex social context. This complexity manifests through various institutional, political, ideological, as well as cultural, and national pressures on coaches (Jones, 2000), and demands their skillful adaptation. The social aspect of the sports coaching profession is also emphasized because it is essentially a social activity that balances personal and collective needs and goals (Cushion et al., 2010), requiring a wide range of interpersonal skills (Mesquita et al., 2010).

It is almost impossible for coaches to comply with all these requirements without a wide range of knowledge and skills (for example, “identifying and setting achievable and realistic goals; developing action plans and strategies for the goal achievement; monitoring progress and implementing any required changes; encouraging, inspiring and motivating others; developing policies and procedures...” [p. 464]; for a systematic review of sports coaches' knowledge and skills (see Perkins & Hahn, 2020). To successfully acquire indispensable knowledge and skills, coaches should have access to adequate and efficient education. It is

stated that non-formal education (NFE) is one of the essential aspects of sports coaches' professional development (Woodman, 1993).

This paper focuses on the subject of individual and social factors underpinning the NFE of sports coaches. As mentioned earlier, sports coaching is a demanding and complex vocation that imposes continuous improvement, if full professional capacity is to be achieved. We consider the possibilities for an upgrade of the existing system of organizing the permanent education of sports coaches, as a prerequisite for improving their skills and knowledge. By achieving this goal prescribed by the Action Plan for the implementation of the Sports Development Strategy in the Republic of Serbia 2014–2018 (Ministry of Youth and Sports, 2021), we could contribute to realizing the ultimate goal, which is improving athletes' performance and results. When it comes to individual factors, this paper reviews motivational and personality factors that could explain why sports coaches engage in NFE. More precisely, it focuses on the motivation and personality characteristics of sports coaches who chose to update their professional competencies through NFE. As far as social factors are concerned, we consider the question of legal norms in this area. This is especially important for educators from Serbia given the fact that the Law on Sports in Serbia (Law on Sports, 2016) recently has changed in a way that individuals without specific formal education must undergo vocational training to become sports coaches. We also tackled the question that emerged after the above-mentioned changes in the law were made: has motivation for vocational training changed among those for whom vocational training became mandatory? Another social factor that we focus on is an institutional one, especially one concerning the organization of NFE. We wonder if there are aspects of the organization of NFE that make the pursuit of further education difficult. By removing the identified technical obstacles and shortcomings we would be able to improve the education system for (future) sports coaches.

The Role of Non-formal Education in the Development of Sports Coaches' Professional Competencies

Non-formal (optional) education is an inseparable aspect of the concept of lifelong learning, along with the formal (obligatory) education and informal (experiential) education. (Kuka, 2012; Laal & Salamati, 2012). Lifelong learning (LLL) can be defined as a voluntary, self-motivated, quest for knowledge due to professional or personal reasons, which lasts throughout the whole life (Coşkun & Demirel, 2010; Laal & Salamati, 2012). Formal education includes gaining

knowledge within institutions such as primary school, high school, and university. After completing any of these three levels of formal education, individuals receive a diploma or certificate to make them employable within a certain professional field. As well as in other disciplines, the basic form of sports coach education is the formal one and some studies indicate that this type of education is positively valued by coaches (Hannays, 2020; Kubayi et al., 2016; Mesquita et al., 2010; Vargas-Tonsing, 2007), that formal education increases coaching efficiency and reduces the rate of coach burnout (Frey, 2007; Maleté & Feltz, 2000), and diminishes various negative experiences (Taylor, 1992). However, there are notions that formal education is just one of many aspects of the process of developing coaching skills and knowledge (Erickson et al., 2008; Nelson & Cushion, 2006). It is mentioned that if the coach wants to develop a full capacity of coaching competencies, one must continue education beyond the formal level (Abraham & Collins, 1998).

Next, informal education is sometimes called accidental learning because it refers to knowledge and skills people collect daily by interacting with others regardless of context (Laal & Salamati, 2012). Finally, non-formal learning is a learning type that is also structured and held by an institution/organization but is more flexible than formal learning (Eshach, 2007), and it could also lead to certification. Non-formal education (delivered via workshops, courses, learning-by-doing, etc.) enables people to build knowledge and skills on topics not included in the standard curriculum that governs formal teaching (Simel, 2011). Non-formal and informal education is crucial for all individuals who strive to improve their professional competence, especially nowadays since we are facing rapid technological advances and growing research evidence in every scientific field. Sometimes, completing formal education is a prerequisite to enrolling in non-formal programs. Lessing and de Witt (2007) noted that various programs for professional development (including non-formal education) have the best impact on professional growth when they address the individual needs of participants, when they take individuals' background knowledge into account, and when they offer diverse perspectives based on experiences of other professionals. Some research studies indicate that sports coaches recognize the importance of these other types of learning, in addition to formal ones (Hannays, 2020; Kubayi et al., 2016; Vargas-Tonsing, 2007). In general, all forms of coaching education are gaining more and more popularity (Hannays, 2020). Thus, more and more sports coaches attend non-formal (e.g., attending subject-specific workshops, and conferences, working with an expert coach; Cushion et al., 2010) and informal education (reading and using the internet, learning from family, and friends, attending public lectures, and others; Cushion et al., 2010), as they are increasingly

engaged in the so-called self-directed learning (SDL) which is an autonomously led approach to the organization and attainment of knowledge (Kaufman, 2003). Previous studies showed that SDL is a very effective method for training adult learners (Ellinger, 2004). SDL can be understood as a process initiated by an individual, which may or may not involve the help of others, where the person identifies their own learning needs, develops learning goals, finds resources to attain these goals, selects and implements appropriate learning strategies, and finally, determines how to evaluate outcomes of learning (Knowles, 1975).

Sports Coaches' Motivation for Non-formal Education

The question of motivation for professional development and engaging in NFE is a critical segment of sports coach education. To achieve the goal of improving the sports coaching expertise and competence set by the Action Plan for the implementation of the Sports Development Strategy in the Republic of Serbia 2014–2018 (Ministry of Youth and Sports, 2021), it is necessary to find out the motives, but also the obstacles faced by coaches when pursuing education programs. Such knowledge would enable us to adequately and timely intervene leading to improvement of the level of sports coaches' education.

Motivation is often described as a factor that energizes and directs someone's behavior. There are many theories of motivation, however, one of the most influential theories of motivation nowadays is the Self-determination theory (SDT; Deci & Ryan, 1985). Self-determination theory is based on basic psychological needs (autonomy, competence, and relatedness) and was extensively investigated in different contexts of human functioning so it has more empirical support than some other theories. However, the most interesting thing about SDT is the assumption that what once was external motivation could become internalized. This is very important, knowing that the current Law on Sports (2016) requests mandatory further/additional education of sports coaches therefore their starting motivation is most likely external. Below we summarized the main assumptions of SDT as well as some of the results of previous studies.

SDT assumes that motivation is not a unitary phenomenon, there are various types of motivations, and people differ not only based on the amount but also the type of motivations (Ryan & Deci, 2000). SDT makes distinctions between autonomous and controlled motivation. More precisely, autonomous motivation consists of intrinsic motivation but also some aspects of extrinsic motivation (in situations where a person is identified with the value of some

actions). Controlled motivation consists of external regulation (for example rewards or punishments) but also internal regulation (avoidance of shame, approval motive, ego-involvements, etc.). Finally, this theory also assumes demotivation which could be described as a lack of intent and motivation (Deci & Ryan, 2008). Although autonomous and controlled motivation affects behavior by providing energy and direction, various research showed that different outcomes are associated with each. Overall, it was shown that autonomous motivation is associated with better psychological health, better performance, and longer persistence (Deci & Ryan, 2008).

SDT is often investigated in the context of education and learning. Many studies showed that autonomous motivation is associated with better educational outcomes. For example, autonomous motivation is associated with decreased drop-out intention (Hardre & Reeve 2003; Vallerand et al., 1997), more deep learning (Grolnick & Ryan, 1987; Vansteenkiste, Simons, et al., 2005; Vansteenkiste, Zhou, et al., 2005) and better academic performance (Black & Deci, 2000; Grolnick et al., 1991; Pintrich & De Groot, 1990; Soenens & Vansteenkiste, 2005). Not just educational outcomes but also better indicators of the mental health of students are associated with autonomous motivation. In one study (Black & Deci, 2000), students that reported that entering a particular course was an autonomous decision also showed lower anxiety, higher enjoyment, and competence.

For education, one of the most important practical implications of SDT is the idea that via the process of internalization motivation that was regulated by external factors may become internal (Deci et al., 1991). For example, it is possible that a person who was enrolled in some program to obtain a certificate, during the process became interested in the subjects and started valuing the importance of knowledge. One study (Black & Deci, 2000) showed a positive association between students' perception of their teacher autonomy support and an increase in their self-regulated motivation. However, it is important to know that it is also possible that external rewards decrease internal motivation (Deci et al., 1999).

At this moment, in the Republic of Serbia, additional non-formal education is mandatory for some groups of sports coaches (that did not obtain a formal university degree) in order to be able to continue working in their field. Therefore, their main motivation for enrollment into these programs is not autonomous but rather controlled which could negatively impact the learning outcomes. However, based on assumptions of SDT even, in this case, it is possible to cultivate more internal motivation. Additionally, knowing that external rewards (such as a certificate) could decrease internal motivation it becomes even more

challenging to create a learning atmosphere that will enhance curiosity, interest, and finally competence.

Previous studies that investigated the motivation for NFE usually did not rely on some systematic approach or theory. Rather than that, they are isolated studies with a limited number of participants and specific learning situations. Moreover, the results are often inconsistent, which is expected, considering the different methodologies and definitions of motivation that they are using. Some authors (e.g., Hubackova & Semradova, 2014) emphasize that adults might be motivated by pragmatic reasons for starting additional education such as: getting a qualification with the aim to earn more money or get a better professional position, the need to get a certificate, etc. In their study with students, less than a fifth of participants (17.5%) were motivated by internal motivation i.e., the need for personal development (Hubackova & Semradova, 2014). The rest were motivated by external factors such as getting a degree (27.50%), the gain of a new qualification (22.50%), employer's demand (20%), and higher financial appraisal (12.50%) (Hubackova & Semradova, 2014).

A similar pattern of results was also obtained in Eurostat research (cited in Moustakas, 2018) where motivational reasons for participation in adult education in the European Union were mostly job-related and external such as better work performance or salary (44.4%), obligatory participation (21.5%), reducing the chance for unemployment (12.3%), increasing the chance for getting a job (11.6%), mandatory certification (10.1%), starting own business (3.3%). However, a significant percentage of people also reported internal motivation such as: getting knowledge and skills related to subjects they are interested in (32%), getting knowledge and skills useful in everyday life (25.5%), making friends or for entertainment (8.8%). In line with previously mentioned results, another study suggests that internal motivation could be an important factor for NFE. Namely, the association between mastery goal orientation and NFE was also demonstrated (Hee et al., 2019).

The OECD data (OECD, 2022) collected in the period between 2012 and 2015 suggested that external motivation could be the dominant reason for enrolling in programs of non-formal education. Namely, across all 30 countries included in this report, the percentage of people who attended some program of formal or non-formal education while they did not want to participate was higher than those who willingly participated (Figure 1). Unfortunately, this report did not include data for the Republic of Serbia, although, we expect that the predominant motivation is similar to in the above-mentioned countries.

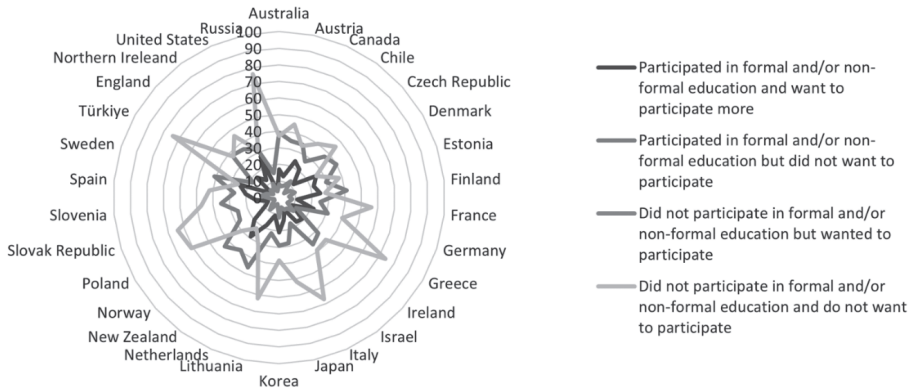


Figure 1. Willingness to participate in formal and/or non-formal education (adults aged 25–64 years).

Note. Graph is based on the OECD dataset Survey of Adult Skills (OECD, 2022).

According to our knowledge, there is no systematic research that examines the motivation of sports coaches enrolled in non-formal education. However, considering the sports coaches' motivation for non-formal education from the prism of SDT, while taking into account all demands that they are facing, it became clear that both, controlled and autonomous motivation should be expected. Formal requirements, defined by law, that are the necessary conditions for becoming a sports coach will activate external, controlled motivation and it might, at first, even suppress or negatively impact internal motivation. However, it is known that even controlled motivation could be internalized (which is associated with better learning outcomes). Therefore, it is important to make effort in understanding sports coaches' motivation for non-formal education and create a learning atmosphere that will engage internal motivation for NFE.

Researchers mostly focus on attitudes and preferences toward education and professional development, as well as incentives for further education (Cushion et al., 2010). We rarely get to the reason, that is, we rarely discover what motivates coaches to learn. Although the motivation for NFE is investigated in the context of other professional areas, it is not advisable to entirely generalize their findings, because of the complexity of the coaching profession, and because of the work status of sports coaches, which is often at the level of volunteering or part-time jobs (North, 2009). It is why research, that exclusively concentrates on the sports coaches' motivation for education, not only formal but also non-formal, informal, and self-directed, is necessary.

Sports coaches seem to differ in their preferences for a particular form of education (Brook, 2016). Namely, highly educated coaches, compared to those with lower education, in addition to formal, value other forms of learning such as informal and non-formal education (Mesquita et al., 2010). Coaches who are evaluated as highly successful are more likely to actively search for additional sources of knowledge and skills throughout their careers (van der Merwe et al., 2015). It is also noticeable that more mature and experienced coaches more often access non-formal and informal education programs (Brook, 2016). Younger sports coaches, without much work experience, prefer the specific form of learning – learning by doing (Erickson et al., 2008).

The question of coaches' preferences towards certain types of education touches on the issue of the coach learning process, as well as the organization of the sports education system. There are indications that the sports education system is organized in a way that does not sufficiently prepare coaches for the future challenges and demands of the profession (Nelson & Cushion, 2006). In particular, these statements refer to the system of formal education. Although coaches, as already mentioned, appreciate every form of education, they still prefer practical ones, acknowledging that formal education is the least informative (Gilbert et al., 2006; Werthner & Trudel, 2006). What is most valued are specific forms of informal education, primarily working with coaching experts, learning by doing, and interacting with peer coaches (Mesquita et al., 2010). Coaches highly value the mentoring concept in the learning process such as the possibility of observing other colleagues and experts, as well as sharing knowledge through interaction. This may be more a result of the fact that formal education programs are still organized in classrooms, that learning materials are rarely changed, and that they are not sufficiently accompanied by practice (Mesquita et al., 2010). The nature of the coaching profession demands, in addition to theoretical knowledge, the acquisition of a whole sort of experiential skills, which are developed during practice. Both theoretical and experiential learning types are required if one wants to develop sports coaching competencies and improve professional growth. Mesquita et al. (2010) recommend a holistic approach to coaches' education with a balanced combination of different types of learning (formal, informal, and non-formal), enabling the interaction of theoretical and experiential learning sources.

Surveys of coaches' preferences towards education partially reveal the topics coaches are interested to learn about. Coaches often emphasize that non-formal education programs are not adapted to their needs, because they are significantly far from the real challenges of the coaching profession (Vargas-Tonsing, 2007). Coaches especially emphasize the importance of the following topics that would further encourage them to learn: communication with athletes and their parents,

advanced teaching techniques, fitness techniques, motivational techniques, goal setting, visualization, character building, athlete nutrition, first aid, stress management, sports psychology, and numerous others (Hannays, 2020; Kubayi et al., 2016; Vargas-Tonsing, 2007). It is concluded that what would encourage coaches to continue education is the legal obligation (Hannays, 2020; Vargas-Tonsing, 2007), but also the coherence between topics of the education programs and their wishes and needs.

Useful information about sports coaches' education is provided by studies that are interested in possible obstacles that coaches encounter in the process of career development (e.g., Cross, 1981; Hughes, 2005). For example, some situational factors, such as lack of money and accumulated family responsibilities can act as potential obstacles to non-formal education (Hughes, 2005). In addition, Cross (1981) identified some institutional (e.g., inadequate class schedule and duration) and dispositional deterrents (e.g., personal attitudes, and perception). We can assume that the same kinds of obstacles can be found among sports coaches. Particularly, sports coaches mostly mentioned the lack of relevant courses, time, and money as the main obstacles to their NFE and professional improvement (Hughes, 2005). It is also interesting that many coaches emphasized that they would increase their participation in NFE if it was held online (Hannays, 2020; Kubayi et al., 2016; Vargas-Tonsing, 2007), due to their work and family obligations. To sum up, NFE of sports coaches' could be popularized if, in addition to its mandatory status, there were funds for education providing more affordable and accessible education programs in terms of money, place, and time. In addition, programs designed to focus on the coaches' needs, desires, and interests might significantly remove the remaining obstacles to professional development.

Not only sports coaches, but more and more governments as well, recognize the importance of education for professional development. Following this trend, our government adopted the Sports Development Strategy in the Republic of Serbia 2014–2018 (2015), as well as the Action Plan for its implementation (Ministry of Youth and Sports, 2021). Sports Development Strategy (2015) sets up the improvement of the expertise and capacity of professionalism in the sports field as a primary goal. It has also been recognized that in order to achieve this goal, the education (either formal or non-formal) of individuals who want to become sports coaches should be mandatory. Consequently, the Regulations on professional development for the performance of certain professional tasks in sports (2020) based on the Law on Sports (2016) prescribe the necessity of obtaining the certificate through non-formal education for individuals who did not complete formal education in the field of sports at the university level. However, these individuals are eligible for non-formal education in sports only if they pos-

sess a high school diploma. The required non-formal education programs can be organized and implemented only by institutions that meet the conditions prescribed by the same law. This way, the government does not allow any individual without a prescribed level of education (formal or non-formal) to engage in sports coaching, which ensures the increase of sports coaches' expertise and competence. Legal regulations through which governments of different countries want to improve the level of coach expertise and competence certainly contributed to the growing popularity of NFE among sports coaches (Vargas-Tonsing, 2007). That is why the NFE of coaches increasingly has a mandatory status in career development with clear, predefined principles and rules.

Sports Coaches' Personality Traits as Predictors of Engaging in Non-formal Education

As we already mentioned, the working environment in a sports setting implies the ability to quickly adapt to various changes. Consequently, the importance of NFE for sports coaches is very evident as well as the role of motivation in continuous education. Acquisition of knowledge is a process influenced by numerous factors such as individual, social, and cultural ones (Cushion, 2013). As mentioned earlier, various personal factors can either motivate or demotivate a person to continue their education (Cross, 1981). Among others, these personal factors are traits and qualities, such as motives, interests, inclinations, abilities, psychological, moral, and spiritual values, and beliefs, etc. (Stepanchenko & Briskin, 2019).

However, it remains unclear what personality traits are significant predictors of sports coaches' propensity to engage in programs of non-formal education. According to our knowledge, no study investigated the association between personality traits and enrolment in non-formal programs for sports coaches. Among the few, research in the area of formal sports education points out that indeed, not just personality traits but the set of individual factors can influence the formation and professional development of teachers of physical education and sport comprising of temperament, character, abilities, specifics of interests, peculiarities of psychic processes and intellect, physical fitness (Stepanchenko & Briskin, 2019). We assume that we can expect the same in the domain of non-formal sports coaches' education. The vast majority of available studies examined the personality traits of successful coaches (e.g., Perez-Ramirez, 2002; Tušak & Tušak, 2001). Although it is reasonable to assume that the most successful coaches also put additional efforts into learning new skills and acquiring

new knowledge, a direct association was not tested. Studies that investigated the role of personality traits in the context of NFE showed that a personality trait that could be associated with the tendency of an individual to commit to NFE activities is curiosity (Fulcher, 2004). Curiosity is frequently described as a core part of motivational and reward-sensitivity mechanisms (Depue, 1996), and it can be defined as a tendency to explore, to seek novel, complex and challenging interactions (Kashdan & Steger, 2007). According to some authors, curiosity may facilitate learning, competence, and a sense of self-determination (Berlyne, 1960). Research in which NFE has been studied in the context of the Big Five Personality Model has shown that openness to experience, conscientiousness, agreeableness, and emotional stability (i.e., low neuroticism), all showed positive correlations with NFE skills (Subramaniam & Suhaimi, 2022). In one meta-analysis that examined different correlates of readiness for the previously mentioned SDL approach, it has been found that internal locus of control, high motivation, strong support, and self-efficacy correlate positively with SDL, and are also important for increasing the willingness to use SDL in students (Boyer et al., 2014). Rotter (1966) defined internal locus of control as a belief of a person that they are the masters of their own life, and therefore are confident in the possibility to control their environment. Individuals with an internal locus of control perceive a strong connection between their actions and consequences (Ng et al., 2006). Bandura conceptualized self-efficacy as a person's belief in their own capability to succeed in the performance of a particular task (Heslin & Klehe, 2006). Although self-efficacy is more specific to context and circumstances, compared to the way in which personality traits are usually defined, it has been found that self-efficacy is one of the strongest motivational predictors, in terms of the effort, persistence, and even success in training and task performance (Heslin & Klehe, 2006).

A short review of studies that investigated the association between various personality traits and NFE suggests that the factor of personality should be also considered in understanding the phenomenon of professional development. Also, it is reasonable to assume that the personality traits that the above-mentioned studies identified as good predictors of NFE are also relevant in the domain of sports education. Moreover, some personality traits could also affect motivation and indirectly the learning outcomes. For example, sports coaches that are more curious, and open to experience will probably be internally motivated to learn more about their topics of interest and they might try various learning settings (e.g. independent reading and problem-solving, enrolling in different programs and education, sharing knowledge with colleagues, etc.). On the other hand, some personality traits could also negatively impact some-

one's desire and ability for further education and learning (e.g. dogmatic, rigid people will probably be opposed to new ideas, research, or practical findings and maybe even to teaching techniques that the instructor might use which will negatively affect their enrolment and learning outcomes). Future studies should further explore which personality traits are associated with NFE and the relationship between personality traits and motivation for participating in the programs of NFE in sports coaches.

Conclusion

In this paper, we considered the topic of individual and social factors which affect the NFE of sports coaches. We focused on individual factors of motivation and personality, as well as social factors such as the law and organizational aspects of NFE of sports coaches. The complexity of the sports coach's profession requires a careful and systematic approach to education that goes beyond formal education. Nowadays, it is hard to imagine successful sports coaches' professional development without continuous education. The sports coaches' education is increasingly becoming the focus of researchers, not only due to its specifics but also to the fact that more and more countries, like Serbia, thrive to improve the sports coaches' professional competence through education. Taking this into account, we believe that only research-driven educational practices can ensure the improvement of both coaches' and athletes' performance. In order to promote educational practices in this domain, we discussed several questions regarding individual and social factors underpinning the NFE of sports coaches. First of all, we questioned the contribution of individual factors such as motivation and personality. We wanted to find out what aspects of motivation and personality contribute to NFE. Secondly, we tackled the question of social factors of NFE in the domain of sport. We wondered how the state law and the organization of the educational system can contribute to the pursuit of further education.

Earlier studies show that the coaches themselves increasingly recognize the importance of education and actively participate in NFE programs. It is stated that among different individual factors, motivation significantly directs the course of NFE of sports coaches. Although sports coaches' external motivation, namely job, better work performance, and salary-related requirements, govern toward NFE, authors also emphasize the importance of intrinsic motivation. As proposed by SDT theory, even controlled motivation could be internalized. Although the mandatory status of sports coaches' education can arouse extrinsic

factors of motivation, it can be used to stimulate intrinsic factors, for example by aligning the content of the program with the coach's wishes and personal needs. This is exactly one of the biggest wishes of the coaches. According to the sports coaches' statements, there is still room for improvement, both in the education conditions and education topics. A holistic approach to education with a balanced ratio of theoretical and practical teaching, with a special emphasis on mentoring, which coaches recognize as one of the most desirable ways of acquiring coaching skills and knowledge, would prove to be particularly effective (Mesquita et al., 2010).

We could get additional important information for shaping the educational context by researching another important individual factor, the coach's personality. Research indicates that the coach's personality impacts numerous aspects of the coach's work (performance, success, coaching style, etc.), so it is reasonable to assume that it also has its role in the field of education. Certain personality traits (e.g., curiosity, openness to experience, conscientiousness, agreeableness, and emotional stability) underpin the need for NFE, while others, such as dogmatism and rigidity could be categorized as obstacles. Future studies should identify which personality traits of sports coaches are predictors of their enrolment in NFE and more importantly is there an interaction between motivation and personality traits. This information could be useful when creating individualized approaches to coach education. If there is not much space for an individual approach during group-organized courses, that space could be opened during mentoring work, which the coaches themselves highly appreciate. This means that mentors, while working with each coach, could improve the learning process of the coach, by knowing basic facts about personality and how it affects the learning process.

Researchers note that there are several social changes that impact areas of coach education. A growing number of countries require non-formal education to become a sports coach (for those without necessary formal education), considering that adequate education is one of the basic prerequisites for pursuing this profession. This means that it is not enough if someone has the experience of being an athlete to become a coach as well. Given that the research shows that the mandatory status of education for sports coaches is one of the most effective ways to raise the level of sports coaches' competence, it is up to educators to do their best to make this education flexible and affordable enough, to attract as many (potential) coaches as possible. Interestingly, the coaches themselves recognize the importance of the mandatory status of education and even recommend it.

The way the NFE of sports coaches is organized arises as an important factor that could increase or decrease the percentage of coaches attending additional classes. As mentioned earlier, some studies especially point to the need of aligning NFE with coaches' real needs and the interests when it comes to the covered topics. Sports coaches seem to prefer topics such as communication with athletes and their parents, advanced teaching techniques, fitness techniques, motivational techniques, goal setting, visualization, character building, athlete nutrition, first aid, stress management, sports psychology, and numerous others (Hannays, 2020; Kubayi et al., 2016; Vargas-Tonsing, 2007). Likewise, coaches emphasize the necessity of flexibility in terms of the schedule of classes, the duration of courses, and the acceptability of financial costs. One possible way to overcome the financial obstacle is to provide some sort of financial aid to at least some individuals who want to enroll in additional, non-formal vocational training. The desirability of online organized classes is especially emphasized as a reflection of the necessity of harmonizing education with the pace of life and work.

If we understand sports coaches' professional development as a process during which numerous factors (individual, social, cultural, etc.) are intertwined, then it is necessary to shed light on how each of them contributes to the outcome. The literature review yielded the information that the studies examining individual and social factors that could predict coaches' engagement in different forms of continuing education are lacking. The main limitation of this paper is related to the fact that there are not many published papers covering the topic of sports coaches' NFE. This limitation further constrains the generalization of conclusions made in this paper, but it also shows us what questions require future research attention. Future studies should investigate the role of various individual factors, such as attitudes, personality characteristics, beliefs, etc., as potential predictors of engaging in NFE in sports. We especially recommend highlighting the role of motivational factors in the education process. Given that motivation directs our behavior toward a goal, it is necessary to deepen the understanding of which intrinsic and extrinsic factors, and to what extent, contribute to the coach participating in professional development programs. This could help us improve the organization of the NFE in a way that would prompt the internal motivation of coaches as a guarantee of better educational outcomes. Future studies should also address the question of different social and cultural factors, such as legal norms, the technical part of the education system, financial funds, cultural attitudes toward NFE in sports, etc. Together, this could eliminate the obstacles that make NFE hard to pursue and yield a more holistic and organized research-based education system for sports coaches.

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Motivacioni faktori i osobine ličnosti u neformalnom obrazovanju sportskih trenera

Apstrakt: U ovom pregledu je sumirana dostupna literatura o neformalnom obrazovanju sportskih trenera. S obzirom na složenost posla sportskih trenera, prepoznaje se da formalno obrazovanje samo po sebi nije dovoljno i da bi neformalno obrazovanje u toj oblasti možda trebalo da bude obavezno. Prethodna istraživanja su pokazala da motivacija i osobine ličnosti mogu biti ključni prediktori spremnosti za kontinuirano učenje. Najperspektivnija teorija motivacije u kontekstu obrazovanja je teorija samoodređenja, koja naglašava da čak i kontrolisana, spoljna motivacija može postati internalizovana. Osim toga, neki lični atributi (npr. radoznalost, savesnost) povezani su sa neformalnim obrazovanjem i stoga bi trebalo podsticati i kod onih pojedinaca koji nisu autonomno odlučili da se upišu u program. U ovom pregledu se takođe identifikuje jasan nedostatak studija koje istražuju motivacioni faktori i osobine ličnosti u neformalnom obrazovanju sportskih trenera, te bi u budućim istraživanjima trebalo težiti popunjavanju tog jaza.

Ključne reči: celoživotno učenje, neformalno obrazovanje, sportski treneri, motivacija za učenje, osobine ličnosti

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HRONIKA, POLEMIKA, KRITIKA

CHRONICLE, POLEMICS, REVIEW

Unsettling the Water: Adult Learning and Women's Empowerment across the Globe

At ICAE's training in Beirut, EAEA's Aleksandra Kozyra has spoken to adult educators from Lebanon, Algeria, Nigeria, Uruguay and Ecuador about their work in women's empowerment.

Is there a topic in adult learning and education that would resonate with adult educators from across the globe: those based in Latin America, Middle East, as well as Europe? The last edition of the IALLA, ICAE's Academy of Lifelong Learning Advocacy, hosted by the Arab House for Adult Education and Development, took place in Beirut, Lebanon last April and focused on adult education and women. As a woman coming from Poland, where our reproductive rights are being drastically curbed, I could not think of a more timely topic.

Together with 16 participants from 12 countries, we explored feminist epistemology, embodied learning and public pedagogy during workshops and lectures run by Katarina Popovic, Secretary-General of ICAE, and Maja Maksimovic, Assistant Professor at the Department of Pedagogy and Andragogy at the Faculty of Philosophy of the University of Belgrade. Most importantly, we learned from each other, and I was constantly inspired by the wealth and breadth of experience among the participants.

We continued the exchange in between the sessions, at breakfast and in the evenings. From supporting women's mental health in times of political and economic instability in Lebanon, to the use of art-based pedagogy in the design of public spaces in Uruguay, I am sharing what is only a snapshot of my discussions with five adult educators who work in women's empowerment in their communities.

Emptying the fear

"We're a country that witnesses wars and internal conflicts all the time. So dealing with trauma is something that we keep doing, and it's part of my job," tells me **Samar Sahyoun** when I ask her about her work as an adult educator in Lebanon.

In her professional life, Samar wears many hats. She trains teachers, works in family education, and is the Secretary for Women's Affairs in Lebanon's Youth Movement. She also supports women who are in the process of getting a divorce.

According to Samar, the multiple crises that the country is facing have contributed to a general feeling of anxiety in society, which has also affected adult education.

"We have had so many economic and security challenges in Lebanon. For sure, you have heard of the explosion that we had in Beirut in 2020. Because of the high inflation, people haven't been able to retrieve their money from banks. They're not able to pay tuition fees for their children. Our public schools are on strike. We are even lacking medicines," says Samar. **"We don't feel safe, and a lot of people are just emptying their fear."**

In this context, her work with women, especially in the area of mental health, has become particularly important. Facing constant pressure and responsibility to take care of their families, they tend to forget about their own needs.

"Working with women on that level is multifaceted," she continues. "It's often difficult for me as an adult educator, because I don't always know the personal context. It's complicated work, sometimes it's individual, sometimes it's group work."

Samar gives an example of a recent workshop that she did with 80 women in the North of Lebanon, which aimed to help the participants connect with their inner selves.

"The nice thing about it was that the age range was very wide: I had people in their 30s and people in their 70s," says Samar.

According to her, there is an increasing awareness among women in Lebanon about the importance of self-care and mental health.

"We have NGOs that provide free counselling and support, and sometimes there is so much interest that there are waiting lists. More and more women are becoming self-educated, they find resources online. I notice that Lebanese women are now reading books and watching movies that speak about mental health," she tells me.

There are multiple topics that Samar would like to focus more on in the future, such as policy and advocacy ("We have laws that aim to improve women's rights and give them more power, but they are not necessarily being implemented," she says). She is particularly interested in improving the economic independence of women, including small-business entrepreneurship. "I would like to see more initiatives in which women are encouraged to make their own products and sell them," she says, looking ahead.

Who has the truth?

For **Shanez Kechroud** from e-graines, improving financial capabilities is key to supporting women's economic independence.

Together with another trainer, Shanez runs workshops in the south of Algeria for women who produce handicraft. While her colleague focuses on the design of the products, Shanez helps participants with the administrative side of their work.

"We look together at how to calculate the costs of the material and the revenue. A lot of it is about being able to plan ahead, and asking yourself questions like – how much do I need to sell to pay this amount? I also help them make a request to get an artisan card, and count in the fee for it that they will need to include in their planning," says Shanez.

According to Shanez, improving financial capabilities is often connected to other life skills.

"We noticed that some of our participants struggled with literacy – for example, in a group of six women, three wouldn't be able to read or write," she says. "This meant that I couldn't work with them, and it really bothered me, as having the financial capabilities is very important: many of the women were selling at a loss," she continues.

To address this gap, Shanez and her colleague reached out to the National Literacy Office in Algeria and asked for contacts with local schools and educators that offered literacy courses. Linking the participants with them brought uplifting results.

"In each of my three workshops, I had three women who started literacy classes and were very happy about them. **They still call me to keep me posted on their achievements; they now do more things on their own, for example going on YouTube to look up videos that their children sent them,**" says Shanez.

The connection to the participants of her workshops is something that Shanez finds very important in her experience as an adult educator. Her workshops include small groups and take place in the homes of the participants, which brings out a feeling of intimacy.

"You sit on the floor together, you eat together, it creates a connection. It's a process," she says. She gives an example of her recent workshop, in which she saw changes happen bit by bit. "On the first day, all the women were wearing headscarves. On the second day, they took them off. On the third day, we put some music on, and we all started to dance together."

Shanez adds that she finds it important to create a relationship of equality. "They already have their own way of working with the material, and we always

try to get to know their method. **It's a process of co-creation. Also on a human level, I've learnt so much from them, from their wisdom and resilience,**" she continues.

She comes back to one topic that we have been discussing during the training: post-colonial approaches to what counts as knowledge, and who owns it.

"Who has the truth?," she asks. "We come together to share our truths."

Telling stories: under the moonlight and in the classroom

"Once you unsettle the water, people open up," says Professor **Bolanle Clara Simeon Fayomi**.

Bolanle teaches adult education at the Obafemi Awolowo University in Ife-Ife, Nigeria. At the IALLA, she conducted a workshop on art-based methods in adult education, with a focus on storytelling. During one of the activities, we explored the story of Yemoja, Yoruba goddess of water.

"When we do that kind of activity together, a lot of things come up. You realise that in our class you also saw this happen," she points out to me in the evening after our workshop. "We saw interpersonal or religious experiences emerge. Things that I, who told the story, did not even think of, but a lot of people related to."

She admits that other teachers, especially in academia, are sometimes hesitant to use art-based methods with their students.

"**People tend to forget that we are also emotional beings,**" she says. "They will want to look at everything strictly from the point of view of being an academic. Of wearing an outer shell and not feeling anything. And then they come to my class, and they are amazed, asking: are you really playing clubs? Are you really dancing?"

According to Bolanle, this comes much more naturally to the students than to the lecturers.

"In the African way of life, we are communal people. For instance, there is what we call a story by moonlight, where people, all of us living within the community, come together under the moonlight and share stories. So it's not hard for students to go along with this methodology. They find it easy to find a story to talk about, a story to be involved in," she explains.

Bolanle sees art-based methods as a way to help learners process their own emotions and deal with personal trauma. Our work on the story of Yemoja, which touches on body-shaming and self-harm among women, is a good illustration.

For Bolanle, using art-based methods is also the way ahead: it is an advantage that adult educators will have over AI.

“AI will not be able to actually manage the emotions that are there, and that’s something that learning can produce. **One thing that cannot be taken from us is our creativity, and this is the only way we can be relevant in this future,**” she concludes.

Public spaces – whose spaces?

“It’s not that people who live in poverty are not or can’t be creative. They don’t have the same cultural power, because we’re continuously excluding them,” says **Cecilia de la Peña**. Cecilia works for IPRU, the Institute of Economic and Social Promotion of Uruguay. IPRU is a civil society organisation which promotes the dignity and rights of youth and adults, based in Montevideo.

With three main branches: social, economic and educational, it aims to make an impact on women and youth in a state of poverty by running non-formal programmes.

One important activity of IPRU is its support for neighbourhoods with illegal settlements. “We know that after some time, these settlements will need to be legalised, and we work with the communities to explore how the public spaces or community projects could be designed,” says Cecilia.

The question of public spaces is one that is also central to women’s participation in community life.

“When it comes to young women in Uruguay, what we saw is that when you cross poverty and women, it is especially women who abandon formal education, and who are then more likely to be young parents. In one of our projects, we work with young mothers, under 18, to explore how they could still live a full life,” Cecilia tells me.

“**A major part of it is connected to access to the city, which means access to education, culture, health services,**” she continues. “We try to think how we can provide tools in order for them to experience different aspects of the city. We have found that most public policies actually reinforce exclusion by focusing on the community, on being in a familiar environment. To amplify their experiences, we try to, for example, provide transport to different parts of the city. We then organise meetings between these adolescents and those from other communities, with a focus on different topics, for example on sports or culture.”

Even in their own neighbourhoods, vulnerable groups often feel unsafe. “We noticed that young people and women don’t have a place to be in their own

neighbourhood,” says Cecilia. “Because it’s dangerous, or because they are not accepted. It’s a topic we try to dig into. We’ve done art projects together with our participants – for example, making murals or putting up lights in abandoned spaces.”

“We are always bringing the issue of gender in these spaces,” she continues. “Because we know it is women who are more present in the community, but those who have the power are men.”

Getting a seat at the table

According to **Maria Cianci Bastidas** from CLADE, Latin American Campaign for the Right to Education, changing power structures is not possible without advocacy. Maria has joined my conversation with Cecilia to give insight into the work of CLADE, a network representing national, regional and international organisations active in education in Latin America and the Caribbean. Focusing to a large extent on social and economic disparities, it advocates the right to education of the groups that continue to be marginalised: rural women, indigenous communities, inmates, LGBTQI+ community.

In recent years, CLADE has been a strong voice in the CONFINTEA process, especially in the lead-up to and follow-up of the CONFINTEA VII in Marrakech last year. CONFINTEA, the International Conference on Adult Education, is the only global policy process that is centred on adult learning and education.

“We have done many activities, for example, we participated in the regional consultation of UNESCO, making a survey of the recommendations of the continent and the Caribbean,” lists Maria. “We also made a decalogue on the ten most important points for our times, which also got good coverage at the event. We are now monitoring the Marrakech Framework for Action, looking at the local experiences that can contribute to improving funding and conditions of teaching and learning of young people and adults.”

CLADE is active in advocacy at different levels. The work isn’t easy, and there is sometimes pushback from other groups – for example, the advocacy for comprehensive sex education programmes among CLADE and its members goes against the demands of conservative groups, who see sex education as a private sphere.

Another task of CLADE is to monitor the extent to which civil society is involved in policymaking. The picture is mixed, but Maria cites some positive examples, one of which comes from Ecuador, where she is based.

“Just last week, one of the representatives of the Chilean Ministry for Education sat down with civil society organisations to listen to their requests on the Education for All framework. In Ecuador, there was recently a meeting between civil society and representatives of the state. **Already sitting down with civil society sets an agenda.**”

The dream of Maria and CLADE would be to train public officials and little by little, create an environment where civil society and policymakers sit at the same table to work on policy papers and agreements.

One success story is Uruguay, where civil society is actively involved in different policy processes, at different levels – I hear from Cecilia about IPRU’s recent project that collaborated with a municipality to revitalise an abandoned square. Cecilia cites multiple reasons why such partnerships are possible in Uruguay but not necessarily elsewhere in the region; one of them is the fact that health and education systems have been public for decades. This has been made possible thanks to historically strong and vocal trade unions and social movements. “**It’s not that someone just came and gave us our rights,**” she specifies.

This is something that resonates with me, as it seems similar to the narrative that we hear in Poland: that since we didn’t experience the feminist waves in the countries of the Eastern bloc as they happened in the West, women’s rights were just given to us by the powers that be. A narrative that, as I explored while preparing for the training, is largely false.

“You don’t just get invited to meetings or consultations. You need to put constant, constant pressure,” adds Maria.

If there is one reflection that I have taken away from the exchange with other participants at the training, it is exactly that: you can’t always take your own rights for granted. But while our work in civil society is often about taking one step forward, and then two steps back, it is reassuring to be reminded that we don’t exist in a vacuum, and we don’t necessarily have to start from scratch.

This article was originally published on EPALe, the Electronic Platform for Adult Learning in Europe in two parts:

- *Sharing our truths: stories of women’s empowerment in Lebanon and Algeria*
- *Unsettling the Water: adult learning and Women’s empowerment across the Globe*

Aleksandra Kozyra, EAEA

„Dizajniranje javnih prostora za sve” – refleksije studenata andragogije na učešće u kratkom programu Erasmus+ (BIP)

U periodu od februara do maja 2023. godine, dve studentkinje i jedan student andragogije na Filozofskom fakultetu i dve studentkinje studija roda na Fakultetu političkih nauka učestvovali su, kao predstavnici Univerziteta u Beogradu, u kombinovanom intenzivnom programu razmene pod nazivom „Dizajniranje javnih prostora za sve: dostupnost, inkluzija i rod“.

Program je pokrenut u saradnji Politehničkog univerziteta Katalonije (Španija), Tehničkog univerziteta Kluž-Napoka (Rumunija), Univerziteta u Vasi (Finska) i Univerziteta u Beogradu (Srbija), a učesnici su bili studenti i studentkinje iz te četiri države. Osim uključivanja internacionalne perspektive, osnovna zamisao programa je bila u tome da se javni prostori sagledaju i analiziraju u interdisciplinarnoj relaciji nauka i disciplina koje se njih dotiču – od industrijskog dizajna, arhitekture, prostornog planiranja, mašinstva, robotike, pa sve do političkih nauka, studija komunikacije i andragogije. Program je nastao u okrilju mreže Erasmus+ i koncipiran je tako da doprinosi ostvarenju četiri cilja održivog razvoja (SDGs). Reč je o ciljevima broj 4 – kvalitetno obrazovanje, broj 5 – rodna ravnopravnost, broj 10 – smanjenje nejednakosti i broj 11 – održivi gradovi i održive zajednice.

Sastojao se iz četiri nedelje onlajn sinhrono i asinhrono nastave o pojmovima dostupnost, inkluzija, rod, ali i na temu ciljeva održivog razvoja i komunikacije u interkulturalnom i interdisciplinarnom timu, čime je postavljena teorijska podloga za celokupan program. Naredni korak je bilo formiranje četiri internacionalna i interdisciplinarna tima, pažljivo sastavljena tako da se u svakom nađe barem po jedna osoba iz svake države učesnice i da u timu postoji izbalansiran odnos svih studijskih grupa. Svaki tim je, uz podršku nastavnika u ulozi mentora, radio na redizajniranju jednog javnog prostora koji se nalazi u Španiji, Finskoj, Rumuniji ili Srbiji, koje su, prethodno, nacionalni timovi odabirali iz svog okruženja. Centralni deo programa se odvijao uživo, tokom petodnevnog boravka

u mestu Vilanova i la Dëltru, u Španiji, gde su timovi intenzivno radili na projektima i imali priliku da ih predstave ostalim kolegicama i kolegama. Druženja su spontano nicala među učesnicima, a sam program je obuhvatao pregršt obrazovno-sociokulturnih aktivnosti, kao što su multimedijalna društvena igra za upoznavanje sa istorijom grada Vilanova i la Dëltru, isprobavanje kulinarskih specijaliteta iz različitih zemalja, odlazak na izlet na degustaciju vina u obližnju vinariju i posmatranje katalonske akrobatske aktivnosti pod nazivom „Ljudski tornjevi“ (*Human towers*). Završni deo programa je realizovan u onlajn okruženju, a podrazumevao je kreiranje postera i videa kojima se rešenja redizajniranih javnih prostora predstavljaju odgovarajućoj relevantnoj publici, poput donosilaca odluka ili građana koji koriste prostor.

Da bismo približili iskustvo učešća u tom programu, u daljem tekstu ćemo se osvrnuti na procese koji su na nas ostavili snažan trag, opisati određene elemente koji su za nas bili najznačajniji i podeliti pojedine lične utiske o celokupnom iskustvu.

Iako okosnicu programa čine tri pojma – dostupnost (*accessibility*), inkluzija (*inclusion*) i rod (*gender*), ne mislimo da je program nastojao da razreši sve dileme u vezi sa tim pojmovima niti se toliko insistiralo na njihovom definisanju i razgraničenju. Ali je u uvodnom delu programa ponuđen solidan teorijski okvir za te pojmove u kontekstu javnih prostora, čime je učesnicima programa bila obezbeđena adekvatna polazna osnova za timski rad. To je bilo važno, s obzirom na to da su polazne osnove učesnika i pristupi temi javnih prostora bili vrlo raznorodni. Kako dolazimo iz područja društveno-humanističkih nauka, odnosno andragogije, ti pojmovi nam uglavnom nisu bili strani, ali su i među nama postojale razlike u aspektima teme koji su nam bili bliži. Nekima od nas su bila važna pitanja demokratičnosti i ravnopravnosti u korišćenju prostora, drugima inkluzije, trećima pitanja transformativnog potencijala javnih prostora za pojedince, četvrtima pitanja roda i slično. Na primer, Majda navodi da je njena motivacija za učestvovanje u tom programu proizašla iz lične angažovanosti na polju feminizma. Međutim, isto tako, osvestila je da: „Pre programa, o javnim prostorima nisam mnogo razmišljala. Posmatrala sam ih prvenstveno sa stanovišta njihove funkcije, kao mesta prelaza sa jedne na drugu destinaciju, ili kao mesta koja posećujem zbog određenog sadržaja koji se ne tiče samog prostora.“ Upravo ovaj uvid o ulozi i uticaju koji na nas imaju, ili mogu imati, javni prostori osvetljava mesto i ulogu andragoškog pristupa temi javnih prostora, koji (nam) se pokazao značajnim i u pripremnom delu programa i kasnije, tokom samog rada u timovima.

U pripremnj fazi programa, radi odabira javnih prostora koje ćemo predstaviti ostatku grupe, odlučili smo se na šetnju gradom. Na predlog doc. dr Maje Maksimović, mentorke sa našeg Univerziteta, koja dolazi sa Katedre za andrago-

giju, kretali smo se bez jasne strukture u smislu destinacije, ali istovremeno sa vrlo jasnom idejom posmatranja prostora i njegovog analiziranja sa stanovišta dostupnosti. Efekte tako koncipirane šetnje slikovito opisuje Majdin komentar: „Boravak u različitim prostorima tog dana, u kontekstu koji nije praktično orijentisan, dozvolio mi je da osvestim svoje prisustvo u prostoru i vlastitu reakciju na njega. Jedan od tih prostora bio je park Bristol u blizini Autobuske stanice Beograd. Posmatrajući ga, bila sam ispunjena negativnim emocijama. Kako je park bio napušten i lišen bilo kakvog tipičnog sadržaja jednog parka, imala sam želju da ga što pre napustim i o njemu ne razmišljam.“ Upravo andragoški pristup šetnji kroz javne prostore doprineo je tome da koristimo elemente i aspekte tih prostora, svoja tela, emocije i samorefleksiju kao metode i alate učenja o sebi i o prostorima.

Timovi su radili na projektima unapređenja različitih javnih prostora kao što su parkovi, trgovi, ulice, napuštene fabrike, prostori oko autobuskih i željezničkih stanica, biblioteke, a andragoški pristup je podrazumevao razmatranje mogućnosti da, osim svoje primarne namene, koja uglavnom nije obrazovna, pomenuti javni prostori, kao i brojni drugi, mogu biti oplemenjeni i obrazovnom komponentom. No, čak i onda kada im je osnovna funkcija obrazovna (poput prostorija fakulteta, biblioteka i slično), sasvim je moguće da se u njima ne primenjuju andragoška načela. Upravo to vrlo dobro odslikava doprinos Uroša u radu njegovog tima: „...moj tim je imao specifičan zadatak s obzirom na to da je prostor koji je trebalo da redizajniramo bila jedna javna institucija čija je primarna namena obrazovna – biblioteka u gradu Vasa, u Finskoj. Predlagao sam da se ova biblioteka rastereti suvišnih arhitektonskih elemenata i, time, otvori i prodiše. Takav se prostor, po potrebi, može lakše prilagoditi organizaciji neke tribine ili javnog predavanja stručnjaka na temu koja je od značaja za lokalnu zajednicu.“

Na ovom primeru se vrlo jasno uviđa važnost interdisciplinarnosti – za ostvarljivost ovih predloga, neophodno je objediniti andragošku perspektivu sa arhitektonskom i inženjerskom. No, transformativni potencijal interdisciplinarnog pristupa se ne ogleda samo u pozitivnim izmenama samih javnih prostora već i u pozitivnim promenama koje takav pristup izmenama javnih prostora može imati i na društvo. Jedan od timova u kojem su učestvovala Majda, kao master studentkinja andragogije, i Jovana, doktorandkinja studija roda, koja je prethodno završila integrisane studije arhitekture, radio je na formulisanju predloga za uključivanje zajednice u demokratski proces odlučivanja o načinu na koji će park Bristol biti preuređen. U timu se razgovaralo o mehanizmima učešća javnosti u procesu donošenja odluka o javnim prostorima – a upravo takvi mehanizmi nose transformativni potencijal za društvo. No, taj tim, kao i drugi, istovremeno je bio suočen sa neophodnošću pregovaranja, (demokratskog) donošenja odluka, pominjenja međusobnih razlika, odnosno sa primenom onoga o čemu su diskutovali

„na svojoj koži“ – što nosi poseban andragoški transformativni potencijal za sve učesnike, pojedinačno. O tome slikovito svedoči uvid do kojeg je došla Majda: „Detaljnije upoznavanje sa mogućnostima angažovanja javnosti me je na izvestan način osnažilo, podstičući me na razmišljanje o sopstvenoj ulozi, pravima i odgovornostima koje imam prema menjanju javnih prostora.“

Uz opisanu vrednost interdisciplinarnosti, jednako značajan i važan aspekt programa je njegov međunarodni karakter, koji se ostvarivao u interesantnoj dihotomiji dovoljno velikog broja učesnika da se obezbedi raznovrsnost, a opet dovoljno malog broja da se obezbedi intimnost razmene i komunikacije.

Još jedan značajan element istraživanja javnih prostora bilo je upoznavanje sa njihovom istorijom: „Tokom projekta, ovakvo upoznavanje sa prostorom nisam posmatrala kao značajno. Ipak, nakon nekoliko meseci sam posmatrala park Bristol i, prisećajući se njegovog izgleda i veličine u nekim od ranijih istorijskih perioda, osetila sam tugu zbog njegovog zapuštenog izgleda. Istovremeno, imala sam potrebu da o njemu brinem, osećajući se pomalo nemoćno zbog njegovog nepromenjenog stanja u odnosu na to kakav je bio kada smo ga prvi put obišli na početku programa“, priseća se Majda. No, ne samo što nam je zahvaljujući učešću u programu Beograd postao prijemčiviji već nam je i gradić Vilanova i la Īeltru prirastao srcu, kao dopadljiv, miran primorski grad, sa dugom istorijom. I sam boravak u prostorijama Politehničkog univerziteta u Kataloniji, gde su bile održane deonice programa uživo, ostavio je Uroša zapitanim nad prostornim aspektom iskustva studija u Beogradu: „[Na Politehničkom univerzitetu u Kataloniji] Sve deluje lagodno, komforno, neusiljeno, prirodno i slobodno. Tako sam se i osećao. Bio sam slobodan u prostoru koji je tome značajno doprinomio i poželeo sam da i moj fakultet u Beogradu nekim budućim studentima i studentkinjama omogući takav doživljaj.“

Kao što se može videti iz ovog prikaza, program se sastojao iz različitih elemenata koji mogu predstavljati podsticajne situacije učenja. Za nas su najznačajniji bili upravo njegovi gradivni elementi – interdisciplinarna i internacionalna saradnja, višeslojno upoznavanje sa temom javnih prostora, zblizavanje sa studentima iz različitih kultura i svih nas međusobno koji dolazimo sa Univerziteta u Beogradu. Čini nam se da smo učešćem u programu spoznali jednu novu funkciju obrazovanja odraslih u dizajniranju javnih prostora. Fizičkim kretanjem kroz javni prostor, prepuštanjem telesnom i emocionalnom doživljaju tih prostora, osećanjem slobode u njima, razmenjivanjem tih doživljaja sa drugima, deljenjem ličnih istorija sa javnim prostorom i upoznavanjem sa istorijskom pozadinom tog javnog prostora, počeli smo da osećamo potrebu da sa njima interagujemo, na njih delujemo i o njima brinemo.

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Democratic Dialogue and Debate by the Danube: Conference Report from the Active Democratic Citizenship and Adult Learning ESREA Network

The Active Democratic Citizenship and Adult Learning Network held a conference in Belgrade in May of this year. Participants travelled from Finland, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Poland, Serbia, Slovenia, Sweden, Italy, Cyprus, and the US. The conference proved both highly stimulating and convivial. As one would expect there were papers and workshops, but there were also meetings and discussions with Serbian activists and artists.

The title of the conference was ‘Movements for democracy, critical learning and the limits of what we know’.

A key focus of the conference was on our learning as researchers, adult educators and as a network community. Wrestling with the profoundly serious challenges to democracy and citizenship of our time – to democracy, citizenship, the environment – multiple presentations seemed to be asking or exploring what we might learn from experienced activists and successful social movements, from failed projects and successful campaigns, from history, policy, and political education programs, and from ordinary citizens pushing back against environmental destruction.

There was genuine curiosity and a sense of exploration as we were invited to consider how we may learn through epiphany, improvisation, and play; or learn collaboratively as communities of inquiry, together with research participants. The presentations and corridor conversations had a deep, reflexive character as we asked ourselves and each other how we may want to engage in research and how we understand the core values and ethics of adult education. Some took the route of theoretical work, clearing some conceptual ground, while others engaged directly with pedagogical questions of how we might want to teach and what could be worth learning.

The conference was marked by a strong sense of care and conviviality – a conscious attempt to create a democratic ethos at the event – and an equally strong sense of urgency about supporting active citizenship and democratic renewal. Reflecting on this conference participants discussed the need to work in a truly interdisciplinary and methodologically innovative way that connects researchers to the public. It is therefore fitting that part of the conference programme involved city walks to better understand grassroots arts and activist initiatives in Belgrade and that throughout the conference there were massive demonstrations in the city directly related to democracy and human flourishing.

Fergal Finnegan, Diana Holmqvist, Maja Maksimović
Active Democratic Citizenship and Adult Learning Network

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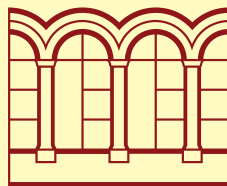
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