A
S

Andragoške studije

Andragogical Studies

Sadržaj

Contents

Članci

Articles

Lana Konstantinović[1], Lazar Vujić[2], Majda Richer[3]

Multilevel Analysis of Just Transition Education[4]

Abstract: Contemporary global and EU policies place emphasis on green, digital and just transitions. In this context, adult education is directly affected, as national policies and practices focus on how adult learning and education can contribute to these transitions. At the same time, the EU's approach has prioritized economic growth and competitiveness, often reflecting a narrowed view of adult education. This exploratory paper seeks to provide insights into the practical implementation of just transition education, drawing on the evolution of adult education for sustainable development. The study examines 49 environmental education practices collected within the Just4All project, aiming to improve the position of various systematically disadvantaged groups. The practices were analyzed using thematic analysis, while being guided by a micro–meso–macro–mega systems framework and focusing on adult learning and education across multiple levels. The analysis identifies key themes and codes, as well as the main strengthening mechanisms and challenges and maps the interconnections across all levels. The findings reveal consistent patterns across interconnected micro, meso, macro and mega levels, distinguished by key actors, types of educational actions and intended aims. While policies tend to frame sustainability practices broadly, they nevertheless highlight learning processes as essential for achieving fair and effective transitions. Overall, the findings suggest that adult education within civil society organizations is a supporting mechanism enabling activism, raising awareness and fostering individual and community engagement in sustainability-related change.

Keywords: just transition, sustainability, adult learning and education, multilevel analysis, sustainable practices

[1] University of Belgrade, Serbia, https://orcid.org/0009-0002-3055-2626 (konstantinoviclana@gmail.com)

[2] University of Belgrade, Serbia, https://orcid.org/0009-0002-3970-0031 (lazarvujic1@gmail.com)

[3] Institute for Educational Research, Serbia, https://orcid.org/0009-0002-4689-038X (majda.richer@gmail.com)

Višeslojna analiza obrazovanja za pravednu tranziciju[5]

Apstrakt: Akcenat koji se u savremenim globalnim i politikama Evropske unije stavlja na zelenu, digitalnu i pravednu tranziciju utiče i na obrazovanje odraslih, budući da su nacionalne politike i prakse usmerene na to kako učenje i obrazovanje odraslih mogu da doprinesu ovim tranzicijama. EU se, međutim, pretežno usredsređuje na ekonomski rast i konkurentnost, često uz sužen pogled na obrazovanje odraslih. Ovaj istraživački rad ima za cilj da pruži uvid u praktičnu primenu obrazovanja za pravednu tranziciju, oslanjajući se na razvoj obrazovanja odraslih za održivi razvoj. Istraživanje obuhvata analizu 49 praksi ekološkog obrazovanja prikupljenih u okviru projekta Just4All, koje imaju za cilj unapređenje položaja različitih sistematski diskriminisanih grupa. Prakse smo proučili primenom metode tematske analize, uz oslanjanje na teorijski okvir mikro–mezo–makro–mega sistema, pri čemu smo se usredsredili na učenje i obrazovanje odraslih na više nivoa. Kao rezultat, identifikovane su ključne teme i kodovi, kao i glavni mehanizmi osnaživanja i izazovi, uz mapiranje međusobnih veza između svih nivoa analize. Nalazi ukazuju na dosledne obrasce kroz međusobno povezane mikro, mezo, makro i mega nivoe, koji se razlikuju prema ključnim akterima, vrstama obrazovnih aktivnosti i postavljenim ciljevima. Iako politike teže da postave široke okvire za prakse održivosti, one ipak ukazuju na to da su procesi učenja nužni za ostvarivanje pravičnih i delotvornih tranzicija. Nalazi sugerišu da je obrazovanje odraslih u organizacijama civilnog društva pozicionirano kao mehanizam podrške za omogućavanje aktivizma, jačanje svesti i individualnog i zajedničkog angažovanja u promenama povezanim sa održivošću.

Ključne reči: pravedna tranzicija, održivost, učenje i obrazovanje odraslih, višeslojna analiza, održive prakse

Introduction

The term "transition" is broadly used in many scientific disciplines to refer to a non-linear shift from one dynamic equilibrium to another (Loorbach et al., 2017, as cited in Pueyo & Leining, 2023). As pointed out by Pueyo and Leining (2023), transitions are described in social sciences as "systemic" (with multiple causes and at multiple levels), "radical" (disrupting existing modes of economic

and social activity) and "non-linear" (involving an abrupt move from one system state to another) (Scoones et al., 2015; Loorbach et al., 2017; Newell & Simms 2020, as cited in Pueyo & Leining, 2023). Transitions involve changes in socio-technical systems; they are not solely a matter of individual change, but depend fundamentally on holistic, systemic transformation. These systems provide us with basic services, such as food, energy, shelter, mobility and health, as well as the financial system and other institutions underpinning them. The sustainability transition aims towards collective environmental and social outcomes at the international, national and community levels. It has an increased emphasis on issues of the global commons, especially climate change and is driven by the realization that dominant systems of production, consumption and wealth accumulation are ecologically and socially destructive (Pueyo & Leining, 2023). The green transition needs to be strategically and consciously planned with social justice in mind in order not to exacerbate inequalities and cause further injustices toward already disadvantaged individuals, communities and regions. There has historically been unequal responsibility for climate change, with developed countries, as well as the wealthiest households, being the largest contributors (UNEP, 2023), while the burden of climate change falls disproportionately on developing countries and vulnerable population groups, who are most exposed to its impacts (ILO, 2018).

In recent years, EU policies have prioritized the concept of twin (green and digital) transition. Žiljak (2022) points out that EU education policies have been prioritizing digital and green transition, in particular, after the COVID-19 pandemic. EU adult education policies and the priorities they identify strongly affect national adult education policies and practices. The prominence of twin transition is evident in EU's Digital Education Action Plan (2021 – 2027), which highlights that "we need people to have latest advanced digital skills to support the twin digital and green transitions of society, public services and all parts of the economy" (European Commission, 2020, p. 9). The concept of just transition is also gaining relevance in EU policies. As defined in the Green Deal, "transition can only succeed if it is conducted in a fair and inclusive way" (European Commission, 2019, p. 16). Due to the EU's neoliberal approach and a narrowed view on education that comes with it (Popović, 2014), twin transition is largely framed within the growth paradigm, as corroborated even in the name of the Communication of the European Commission, labelled as "Towards a green, digital and resilient economy: our European Growth Model" (European Commission, 2022), which gives the central role to economy and growth. In light of criticisms of the EU, we adopt a perspective of justice in education that moves beyond addressing

the consequences of injustices through labor market skills and instead seeks to prevent the reproduction of the system producing the existing inequalities.

The roots of the concept of just transition are commonly traced to the United States and Canada in the 1970s, where environmental policies resulted in widespread job losses, which disproportionately affected ethnic minorities (Pueyo & Leining, 2023; Reitzenstein et al., 2018; Wang & Lo, 2021). The concept was later incorporated into the Paris Agreement, gaining broader recognition and spreading across regions and actors, including the EU. Reitzenstein et al. (2018) observe that the meaning of the concept slowly changed as it spread and now encompasses participation in decision-making, the equitable distribution of costs and benefits, compensation for past harms and environmental restoration. Today, just transition is broadly defined as ensuring that "no one is left behind or pushed behind in the transition to low-carbon and environmentally sustainable economies and societies" (UNCDP, 2023, p. 2). At the same time, just transition must be reconciled with considerations of climate justice, equity, resilience and the impacts of climate change (Reitzenstein et al., 2018). Just transition needs to be reconciled with considerations around climate justice, equity, resilience and the impacts of climate change (Reitzenstein et al., 2018). With this analysis, we seek to contribute to a better and more comprehensive understanding of the key factors underpinning successful just transition education initiatives.

Education in the Context of Just Transition

As Smyth observes, from the earliest forms of human learning, education has been about developing the skills and knowledge necessary for survival, cooperation and living in balance with the environment. Over time, however, as societies grew and technologies advanced, the relationship between people and nature shifted toward control and exploitation (Smyth, 2006). This disconnection contributed to environmental crises that, by the late twentieth century, made education for the environment an urgent global concern. Initiatives, such as the Belgrade Charter and the Tbilisi Declaration, recognized that education must go beyond technical knowledge to foster values, awareness and practices preparing individuals to act responsibly within their ecological systems (Smyth, 2006).

In the early 2000s, a range of international initiatives brought increased visibility to the broader role of learning. Campaigns such as *Education for All*, the *United Nations Literacy Decade* and the *Millennium Development Goals* framed education primarily in terms of access, basic skills and gender equality (Orlović–Lovren, 2012). However, the specific contribution of adult education began to

be more clearly recognized with the launch of the UN *Decade of Education for Sustainable Development* (2005–2014) (UNESCO, 2009, as cited in Orlović– Lovren, 2012). While these campaigns have been criticized for their narrow neoliberal conception of adult education (Struckman, 2018, as cited in Elfert, 2019) and their limited attention to structural injustices (Ireland, 2018, as cited in Elfert, 2019), this shift nonetheless points to a more open space in which adult education is understood not merely as a support mechanism for employability or basic literacy, but as a distinct field capable of engaging with complex ecological challenges.

These policy developments in adult education for sustainable development have enabled framing adult education within the context of just transition. While earlier initiatives focused on broad environmental awareness and lifelong learning (Orlović – Lovren, 2012), later documents, such as ILO's *Guidelines for a just transition towards environmentally sustainable economies and societies for all* (2015), provide a framework that links sustainability with fairness, inclusion and dignity at work (ILO, 2015). ILO's Guidelines (2015) include economical and labor concerns highlighting the economic role adult learning and education can play in supporting a fair and inclusive transition. For example, greening economies is seen in the framework not just as an environmental necessity, but also as an opportunity to foster growth, create new and better jobs, reduce poverty and strengthen social justice (ILO, 2015). At the same time, the just transition framework calls for coordinated action that respects human rights, addresses inequalities and embeds equity into policies so that environmental sustainability becomes a catalyst for decent work and poverty eradication, rather than a source of exclusion (ILO, 2015). In this way, it foregrounds both the economic and the humanistic dimensions of adult education within just transition.

Three important dimensions of adult education have been identified in the context of justice. First, when it comes to systematically disadvantaged groups, it is essential to consider the learners' broader living conditions and understand the role of education. As Medić and Milošević point out, for many adults living in poverty, education is deprioritized in the face of immediate existential concerns (Medić & Milošević, 2008). Designing educational programs, therefore, requires a holistic understanding of the learners' lives, as well as reliance on partnerships with social support systems to address the gaps preventing education from becoming a relevant and attainable goal. Social services must act as a coordinated safety net: no single service is sufficient on its own; only an integrated and interrelated system of support can provide the foundation for sustained participation in education (Medić et al., 2010). Collaboration across sectors – between education systems and the wider social infrastructure – is thus indispensable for ensur-

ing that adults from disadvantaged backgrounds are both able and motivated to engage in learning.

Another critical prerequisite is the perceived value of education. For those facing difficult living conditions, education must deliver immediate, tangible benefits, projected into the near future, rather than appear as a distant, uncertain goal (Medić & Milošević, 2008). Education programs must be designed to respond to the lived realities of the learners and demonstrate relevance in their day-to-day lives.

Finally, in the context of dominant skills-focused approaches that reduce education to short-term training and labor-market skills development, it is important to emphasize the role of critical thinking as a goal of education. If education is to contribute to justice, it must not rely on reproducing the system and its existing inequalities. As Freire notes, critical thinking goes beyond reproducing the past and understanding the present, as a way of thinking beyond the immediate confines of one's experience and entering into a dialogue with history, imagining a future that would not merely reproduce the present (Freire, as cited in Giroux, 2010). In Freire's view, education based on justice goes beyond the learner's current experiences and supports them in understanding the historical and present injustices shaping their lives, empowering them to imagine and take action toward a different future (Freire, 2017).

Society faces many challenges in promoting a just transition to a low-carbon economy, a transition that does not create or exacerbate injustices. Notably, just transition can only be attained with new educational approaches that revolve around critical thinking and supporting agency, as well as structural and systemic support addressing barriers to participation in education. Therefore, the required educational transformation must be grounded in the principles of critical pedagogy and the dimensions of justice (Mauger, 2023), understood as systemic support and structural change, if it is to avoid reproducing existing inequalities and generating new ones.

We argue that adult learning and education (ALE) in just transition is not only about preparing workers for new labor market demands, but also about enabling individuals to participate in shaping fair and sustainable societies. By fostering dialogue, critical awareness and democratic participation, ALE ensures that vulnerable groups are not excluded from active engagement in society, that communities are empowered to take part in decision-making in social, as well as environmental responsible actions. Without such support and role of ALE, the promise of a truly just transition risks remaining only a policy vision, rather than a lived reality.

Methodology Framework

The micro-meso-macro framework offers a useful lens for analyzing and addressing the complex barriers faced by disadvantaged adult learners. Without understanding individual circumstances (micro), local community dynamics (meso) and the wider societal and institutional context (macro), it is impossible to design truly inclusive educational interventions. As Medić and Milošević note, context gives meaning to a program: it determines whether even the best-designed education initiatives will succeed or fail. The quality of an education program cannot be evaluated separately from the socio-cultural and institutional environment in which it is embedded (Medić & Milošević, 2008).

Not much research has been conducted in the field of education for just transition. Therefore, our research is explorative in nature, aiming to provide insight into the characteristics of environmental education initiatives that focus on social justice.

With this objective in mind, we apply thematic analysis to examine 49 environmental education practices aimed at improving the position of systematically disadvantaged groups, primarily migrants, adults with low levels of formal education and women. These practices were collected within the framework of the JUST4ALL project, in which six national, regional and global civil society organizations compiled examples of good practice in adult education in the context of just transition. Our analysis seeks to identify the key characteristics of just transition education across the micro, meso, macro and mega levels.

Boeren defines the micro level as related to individual learner who is the central agent in the participation process, the meso level as encompassing the role of education and training providers, their structural components and the macro level as related to countries, their education systems and policies (Boeren, 2017, pp. 164–166). In Dafni Kek Foundation's publication, the micro level focuses on the course, content and methods applied by the trainers and the needs of the learners, the meso level refers to the community level, encompassing ALE organizations, providers, projects, supporters of engagement and moderators of networks, while the macro level encompasses policies and systems (Dafni Kek, 2022, pp. 39–40). Lima & Guimaraes further conceptualize this framework, adding the mega level. They define the micro level as concerning small groups and interactions among individuals, the meso level as encompassing organizations, the macro level as concerning the state and the mega level as concerning international and supranational organizations (Lima & Guimaraes, 2011, p. 12). Adding the mega level is valuable, as the contemporary globally present neoliberal approach to adult education places the burden of participation on the individual learner,

neglecting the structural inequalities and responsibilities of various national and international actors.

Based on these definitions, we will perceive the micro level as the one focusing on the learners and their needs and the education process (methods and content); the meso level as comprising organizations and their interactions through networks, projects, coalitions, etc.; the macro level as encompassing the states and their policies; and the mega level as focusing on the international arena and policymaking within it.

Applying an adapted micro-meso-macro framework, Medić and Milošević explore the barriers faced by adults with low levels of formal education who re-entered education later in life. These barriers include: personal challenges, such as low confidence and internalized stereotypes; family-related obstacles, such as caregiving responsibilities; microsocial barriers, such as negative perceptions of education in their communities; and macrosocial barriers, such as unadapted curricula, discriminatory attitudes among educators and lack of tailored support. Many of these barriers, particularly those operating at the macro level and often originating there, are rooted in structural inequality and cannot be addressed without systemic, intersectoral action. In the context of just transition, these barriers may manifest differently from those observed in formal education settings. Nevertheless, addressing them requires a coordinated systemic response. The micro-meso-macro-mega approach remains valuable, as it centers the learners' lived realities and enables analysis of comprehensive cross-sectoral solutions, contextualized in broader national and international systemic inequalities. Our research examines the aspects of just transition education across these levels, focusing not only on the barriers and challenges related to participation in education at the micro, meso and macro levels, but also on strengthening mechanisms for improving just transition education and addressing these barriers at all these levels.

Guided by these findings, we believe that understanding individual circumstances (micro level), dynamics between partners (meso level) and the wider societal and institutional context (macro and mega levels) is crucial for designing truly just educational interventions.

Thematic Analysis

Thematic analysis is a method used to identify, analyze and report patterns (themes) within data. It enables the organization and description of data, as well as the interpretation of key aspects of the research topic (Boyatzis, 1998, as cited

in Braun & Clarke, 2006). The outcome of thematic analysis consists of themes and the codes that constitute them. A theme captures a salient aspect of the data in relation to the research question and represents a patterned response or meaning across the dataset. Codes identify specific features of the data (themes) that refer to "the most basic segment, or element, of the raw data or information that can be assessed in a meaningful way regarding the phenomenon" (Boyatzis, 1998, p. 63, as cited in Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 18).

Drawing on the analytical framework of micro, meso, macro and mega levels, our analysis focused on identifying themes present at all these levels. To provide a clear and systematic overview of the identified themes and their associated codes, we present the findings graphically in the form of a schematic representation (Figure 1).

Analysis

The objective of this paper was to apply thematic analysis to identify strengthening mechanisms and challenges of just transition adult education at the micro, meso, macro and mega levels, analyzing 49 best practices selected by national, European and global civil society organizations.

Micro Level

The micro level refers to learners and their perceptions of the educational context. We identified the following themes at this level: *Learners*, *Educational Approaches*, *Educational Aims*, *Needed Action* and *Individual Challenges*. The most frequent codes identified for the theme *Educational Aims* include: sustainability framework, environmental justice and green transition. As expected, the basis was sustainable, green, just, climate transition, but also adapting to European values and promoting active participation of learners in their immediate environment. The theme *Learners* is described mostly through codes that describe marginalized and disadvantaged groups, those most affected by climate change: women, the elderly, migrants, unemployed individuals and persons with disabilities. Other important codes regarding learners include professionals working with learners (volunteers, trainers, scholars, adult educators) and civil society (social workers, activists, policymakers, family members). We see an unbreakable connection between the micro – meso and macro levels: working with individuals

primarily to increase their competences as global citizens. The *Educational Approaches* theme is structured around five codes. First, discourse or the general theoretical approach in which the initiative is framed (formal learning, informal learning, novel forms of adult education, whole institution approach, hybrid approach). Second, methods capture how initiatives are organized and which activities (such as workshops, project-based learning, creative dance, group sessions, sustainable curricula and collaborative learning) are implemented. The third code concerns *aims*, defined as the objectives the initiatives seek to achieve, including soft-skills development, job readiness, strengthening local connections and protecting the rural environment. Fourth, *indicators of change* refer to measures used to assess whether these aims have been achieved; they include employment rates, safety measures, littering and pollution levels and access to healthcare. Finally, *results* denote the tangible outputs of the initiatives, including products, services or outcomes, such as clothing exchange schemes, environmentally friendly aprons, souvenirs, toolkits, books, articles, public debates and artworks.

The codes identified within the *Action* theme describe both what was concretely done – practice examples (eco-tourism, school mural painting, communal tree planting) and the factors that enabled these practices to produce tangible results. The practices include, for example, eco-tourism initiatives, school mural painting and communal tree planting and their key success factors (stakeholder engagement, involvement of active users of green spaces, empowerment of citizens to take action). . The initiatives were implemented either in schools or in broader communal spaces, targeting local communities. Empowering citizens to act emerged as the most frequent and significant success factor.

The Challenges theme is present at all levels. Importantly, examining how challenges manifest at different levels provides valuable insights for developing strategies to address them. At the micro level, there are *Individual Challenges* – cognitive and affective barriers, such as fear of not being able to understand the content, or feeling overwhelmed by discussions of climate change and its implications for everyday life and the future (as well as insufficient funding, lack of qualified tutors or lack of access to learning materials).

Meso Level

The meso level centers on partnerships and collaboration among various actors and sectors. Four key themes were identified at this level: Challenges, Actors Involved, Partnership Aims and Community Engagement. Within the *Com-*

munity Challenges theme, the identified codes include barriers originating at the macro level (political narratives and gender norms) that are addressed at the meso level and education participation barriers (housing and financial insecurity). Correspondingly, the theme *Partnership Aims* consists of three codes: addressing macro level barriers, reducing barriers to access education and mobilizing communities to engage with environmental issues. Efforts to identify and collaborate with partners willing to engage in politically sensitive topics and challenge traditional gender norms helped mitigate obstacles related to partnership formation. Barriers to educational access were addressed through intersectoral collaboration, which enabled a more comprehensive response to learners' diverse needs that limited participation in education. Community engagement was achieved through the use of public spaces as a way to support community action in the learners' immediate environments and through the application f artistic methods to challenge dominant narratives. Closely linked to partnership aims is the *Actors Involved* theme, which highlights the distinct roles played by different partners in advancing these aims. The key actors identified include researchers, environmental organizations, artists and local communities. These actors participated in different types of partnerships, such as scholarly and researcher networks, national and regional projects and collaboration with municipalities, social services, civil society, community centers and VET providers. Researchers contributed by identifying community needs and challenging dominant narratives, while collaboration between educational and non-educational organizations facilitated the removal of education participation barriers related to housing and financial constraints. *Community engagement* played an important role across practices, rendering just transition more relevant for learners by providing them with opportunities to work collectively on changing green public spaces. Public spaces functioned as sites for community learning about and participation in just transition. Participatory learning, learning through art and action research offered communities a way to practice change, such as through community tree planting and shared resource management. These creative partnerships were important in that they simultaneously provided immediate economic benefits for learners, making sustainability a more relevant issue for them.

The interaction between the meso and micro levels is evident, as partnerships and the actors involved influence the methods employed, the learners with access to education and the challenges they encounter. At the same time, partnerships address challenges originating at the macro level, such as political narratives

and gender norms. Although these challenges arise at the macro level, they are mediated and addressed at the meso level, shaping both the nature of partnerships and their aims.

Macro Level

At the macro level, *Advocacy* is a theme that emerges as a key mechanism for promoting green and digital skills, improving the quality of employment and influencing national policies toward systematic change (the most relevant codes include progressive policy shaping, systemic change and sustainable development advocacy). The analyzed practices also reveal that some *Governance* efforts focus on practical sustainable actions (the codes include tree planting, urban gardening and family-oriented green initiatives), reflecting the importance of empowering sustainable behavior through alignment with the learners' needs and living realities. This could be attributed to the fact that the practices originate from civil society organizations, which tend to endorse the connection between governance and learners. Across countries, strong alignment is evident amongst *National Policies*. This theme has a strongest presence on the macro level. Prevailing codes emphasize equality, social justice, active citizenship and community participation. Even though employability is one of the primary priorities of EU policies (Maksimović, 2011; Popović, 2014), the analyzed practices place a strong emphasis on active citizenship, typically treated as a secondary priority. The fact that this dimension is more prominent in the analyzed practices can be explained by the fact that they originate from civil society, which tend to prioritize more humanistic and justice-oriented dimensions of adult education. Similar alignment is visible in *policy recommendations*, which consistently call for stronger partnerships, clearer sustainability values and enhanced community involvement as means of reinforcing existing efforts. However, *Structural Challenges* remain pervasive; they include limited funding, institutional barriers, weak coordination and difficulties in the education sector. Despite these challenges, *Sustainability Practices* consistently emerge as a recurring theme in national policies, framed through a broad focus on institutional strengthening, social inclusion, economic resilience and environmental responsibility. The key codes include ethnic and gender equality, circular economy practices, policy and practice alignment, illustrating a shared commitment to building more sustainable and equitable systems.

Mega Level

At the mega level, the analysis highlights a unified global vision centered on embracing digital and green transition while ensuring equity, inclusion and visibility for all. The overarching goal is to create conditions where sustainability is promoted globally and across all levels: from governance and institutional structures to individual and community practices. The *Future Aims* theme covers the change requisite for successful transition (digital, economic, ecological actions and multi-level adaptation), human rights advocacy and worldwide promotion. The strong influence of *Global and EU Policies* is evident, with codes covering legislation, governance frameworks and funding mechanisms that support sustainable development (EU Green Deal, Just Transition Fund, DigiComp framework, etc.). The EU's regulatory and programmatic role is particularly prominent, as many of the analyzed countries either belong to the EU or align their strategies with its directives. Overall, the mega level findings emphasize focus on a globally coordinated approach to *Sustainability*, one that integrates technological advancement with environmental responsibility and social justice (the codes include socio-economic development, environmental sustainability and global change), ensuring that the green and digital transitions are not only efficient, but inclusive and fair as well. Most of the practices rely on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and their presence is evident in the identified codes. To conclude, analysis at the mega level indicates that the promotion of sustainability must be global in scope and operate across multiple levels of action, from governance structures to individual practices and community actions – micro, meso and macro level key notes are therefore essential to achieve the aims articulated at the mega level.

Results

The thematic analysis revealed a certain pattern amongst themes at different levels. Micro, meso and macro levels are described through the *actors* involved (learners at the micro level, community at the meso level and stakeholders engaged in advocacy and governance at the macro level). Across all three levels, the analysis also identifies corresponding forms of *action*—various approaches to adult education at the micro level, public and community-based learning at the meso level and advocacy and policy change at the macro level—along with their respective *aims* (fostering green everyday life at the micro level, motivat-

ing communities and mitigating barriers at the meso level and promoting active citizenship and policy change at the macro level). *Challenges* likewise manifest at each level: *individual challenges* at the micro level (cognitive and affective barriers faced by learners); *community challenges* at the meso level (partnerships and participation in education); and *structural challenges* at the macro level (financing, institutional and coordination difficulties). The mega level shows a different structure of analysis, but it is dependent on all previously described themes at the micro, meso and macro levels. Alignment with the SDGs and a global shift towards sustainability cannot be realized either without change at the individual, community and national levels, or without addressing the challenges identified at each of these levels.

Learners
(marginalized groups)
Educational approach
 (novel forms of adult education, sustainable curriculum, collaborative learning)
Educational aims (environmental justice, sustainable everydaily life)
Needed action
(stakeholder enaggement, empowered citizens)
Individual challenges
 (trust issues, overwhelming topics, lack of educators)

Actors involved
(researchers, ecological organizations, artists and communities)
Communal engagement
 (public spaces, participatory learning, artistic and creative partnerships)
Partnership aims
(addressing partnership barriers and education access barriers, motivate communities to engage with environmental issues)
Community challenges
(political narratives, gender norms, and housing and finansial insecurity)

Advocacy
(systemic change, sustainable evelopemnt advocacy, progressive policy shaping)
Governance efforts
(city gardening and family oriented green initiatives)
National policies
(equality, social justice, active citizenship and community participation)
Structural challenges
(limited funding, institutional barriers, weak coordination and education sector difficulties)
Sustainability practices
(circular economy, policy and practice alignment)

Future aims
(digital, economic, ecological actions and multi-level adaptation, human rights advocacy, worldwide promotion)
Global and EU policies
(legislation, governance frameworks, funding)
Sustainability
(socio-economic development, environmental sustainability and global change, SDG)

Figure 1. Main identified themes and codes at the micro, meso, macro and mega levels
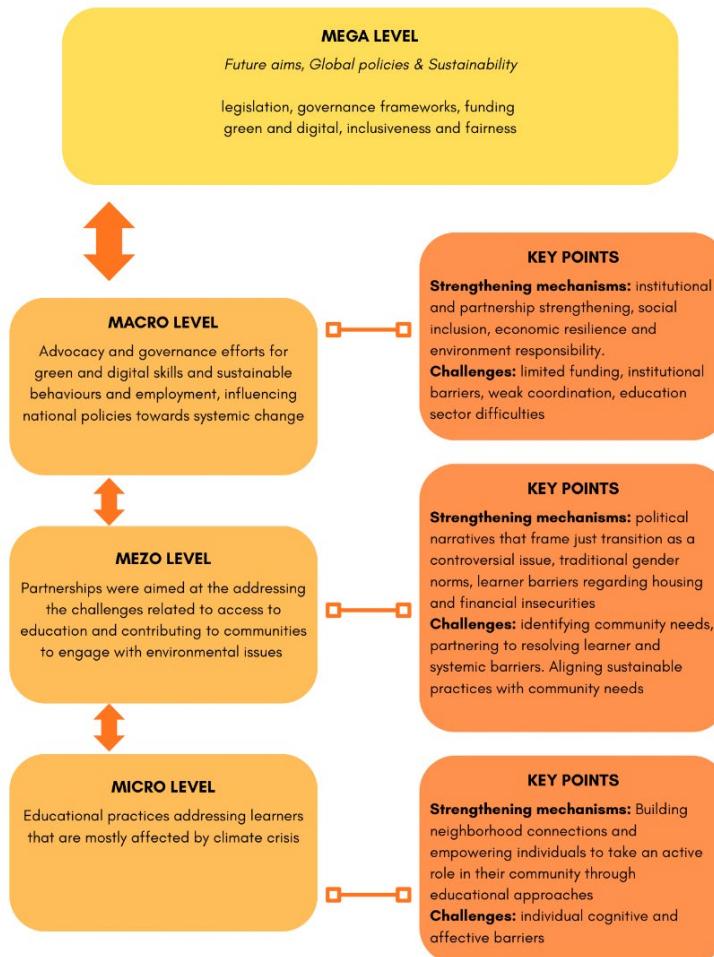
Figure 2. Key points; strengthening mechanisms and challenges at the micro, meso and macro levels

The following four main aspects were extracted at all levels – actors, actions, aims and challenges – through the primary thematic analysis, which consisted of identifying various themes and codes. These findings provided us with a deeper understanding of interaction between the key aspects at all levels. Figure 2 provides a concise overview of the micro, meso and macro levels, highlighting the strengthening mechanisms and challenges identified at each level on the basis of the thematic analysis. The interactions among these levels suggest that

successful transitions can be deliberately designed and guided from above (top-down), while also emerging organically from below (bottom-up). Crucially, the findings indicate that an effective just transition requires a combination of both approaches.

Discussion and Conclusion

This paper analyzed just transition practices using thematic analysis, guided by a micro–meso–macro–mega systems framework. The analysis identified key themes and codes, as well as the main challenges and strengthening mechanisms at each level (micro, meso, macro and mega) and mapped the interconnections among these levels.

As Reitzenstein et al. (2018) emphasize, dialogue with all stakeholders, together with clear political guidance and commitment, is essential for providing planning certainty, adequate social measures and a just transition for workers, affected communities and investors. Accordingly, in examining the key elements of successful just transition practices, this study considers all analytical levels – learners at the micro level, stakeholders at the meso level and political guidance at the macro level – as well as the interactions between them. Only through such a holistic approach can just transition be realized in a manner that is both socially just and economically viable. Climate ambition and just transition should therefore not be framed as an either/or choice. Rather, governments bear responsibility for shaping change by offering citizens greater certainty about the transition while protecting them from the most severe impacts of climate change (Reitzenstein et al.,2018).

The micro level describes educational practices addressing learners who are most affected by the climate crisis. At this level, the emphasis is on individual learners – their cognitive and affective barriers such as fear of being unable to understand the content or feeling overwhelmed by discussions of the impacts of climate change on their everyday lives and futures. These constitute the key identified challenges. The main strengthening mechanisms include building trust between learners and educators, fostering neighborhood connections and empowering individuals to engage in their communities through educational approaches.

The meso level focuses on partnerships and the importance of community engagement. Partnership challenges addressed at this level include gender, controversial political narratives on just transition and the learners' housing and financial insecurity. Strengthening mechanisms include identifying community

needs and aligning sustainable practices with them, in order to address the learners' issues and secure their active participation. A direct connection to the micro level key points can be observed here.

The macro level focuses on green and digital advocacy and governance efforts influencing national policies towards systemic change. Structural challenges include limited funding and weak coordination among institutions responsible for building a system of educational support for just transition. Strengthening mechanisms aim at institutional and partnership strengthening.

The mega level interacts with all other levels and provides general future aims, global policies and sustainability actions of the system as a whole. Both the challenges and strengthening mechanisms at this level relate to legislation, governance frameworks and funding. The analysis reveals that strengthening mechanisms and challenges identified at the micro, meso and macro levels are reflected in inclusive green actions at the mega level.

In conclusion, there is no perfect blueprint for a just transition that can be applied across sectors and regions. Transitions are challenging and real-world processes of change will never be ideal. Early planning, stakeholder involvement and political and financial commitment can, however, significantly mitigate risks and create new opportunities.

In reality, green transitions are not driven by a single actor or narrative; rather, they converge, compete with and reinforce each other (Newell & Simms 2020, as cited in Pueyo & Leining, 2023). Transitions are therefore polycentric and multi-dimensional. Building alliances between these actors is central to move the transition forward (Pueyo & Leining, 2023).

Successful transitions can be designed and guided from above (top-down), but they can also emerge organically from below (bottom-up): an important conclusion is that a combination of both approaches is necessary.

Although this paper examines a limited number of practices, it seeks to conceptualize the importance of adult education as an emerging narrative in just transition and provide insight into the new practices that are arising in this field.

While policies tend to frame sustainability practices broadly, as seen at the macro level when discussing their impact on different practices (such as institutional strengthening, social inclusion, economic resilience and environmental responsibility), they nonetheless point to learning processes as necessary for achieving fair and effective transitions.

The findings suggest that adult education in civil society organizations is positioned as a supporting mechanism for enabling activism, awareness-building and individual and community engagement in sustainability-related changes.

This positioning reflects a more holistic understanding of adult education, extending beyond the preparation of adults for the labor market. Such a holistic approach is also evident in how barriers to participation are addressed. While the neoliberal approach shifts responsibility for participation to the individual, the practices analyzed here demonstrate how civil society organizations and their partners address contextual participation barriers at the meso and macro levels, with a view to making education accessible for different groups. Therefore, civil society organizations have the potential to position adult education for just transition in a more holistic and humanistic manner, countering the narrow neoliberal views of adult education.

References

Boeren, E. (2017). Understanding adult lifelong learning participation as a layered problem. *Studies in Continuing Education*, *39*(2), 161–175. https://eprints.gla.ac.uk/197451/1/197451.pdf

Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative research in psychology*, *3*(2), 77–101. https://doi.org/10.1191/1478088706qp063oa

Dafni Kek – Adult Education and Research Centre & Association of Austrian Adult Education Centres (2022). *Democracy and Bildung*. Bildung project: Building Inclusive Lifelong Learning Systems by Developing a European Understanding of Bildung for the Next Generations. https://eaea.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/05/Democracy-and-Bildung.pdf

Elfert, M. (2019). Lifelong learning in Sustainable Development Goal 4: What does it mean for UNESCO's rights-based approach to adult learning and education? *International Review of Education*, *65*, 537 – 556. https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s11159–019–09788-z.

European Commission. (2019). *The European Green Deal*. Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the European Council, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions. https://eur-lex.europa.eu/resource.html?uri=cellar:b828d165–1c22–11ea-8c1f-01aa75ed71a1.0002.02/DOC_1&format=PDF

European Commission. (2020). *Digital Education Action Plan 2021–2027. Resetting education and training for the digital age*. Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions. https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=CELEX:52020DC0624

European Commission. (2022). *Towards a green, digital and resilient economy: our European Growth Model*. Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the European Council, the Council, the European Economic and Social

Committee and the Committee of the Regions. https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A52022DC0083&qid=1655798743597

Freire, P. (2017). *Pedagogija obespravljenih*. Eduka.

Giroux, H. (2010). Rethinking Education as the Practice of Freedom: Paulo Freire and the promise of critical pedagogy. *Policy Futures in Education, 8*(6), 715–721. https://doi.org/10.2304/pfie.2010.8.6.715

ILO. (2015). *Guidelines for a just transition towards environmentally sustainable economies and societies for all*. ILO. https://www.ilo.org/publications/guidelines-just-transition-towards-environmentally-sustainable-economies

ILO. (2018). *Just Transition towards environmentally sustainable economies and societies for all.* https://www.ilo.org/sites/default/files/wcmsp5/groups/public/%40ed_dialogue/%40actrav/documents/publication/wcms_647648.pdf

Lima, L. C., & Guimarães, P. (2011). *European Strategies of Lifelong Learning: A Critical Introduction.* Opladen & Farmington Hills: Barbara Budrich Publisher. https://www.pedocs.de/volltexte/2013/8283/pdf/Lima_Guimaraes_2011_European_Strategies_in_Lifelong_Learning.pdf

Maksimović, M. (2011). Politika doživotnog učenja u Evropi: EU, Škotska, Danska i Srbija. *Andragoške studije, 1*, 47–70.

Mauger, R. (2023). Finding a needle in a haystack? Identifying degrowth-compatible provisions in EU energy law for a just transition to net-zero by 2050. *Journal of Energy & Natural Resources Law*, *41*(2), 175–193. https://doi.org/10.1080/02646811.2023.2187549

Medić, S., Brkić, M., Vlaović Vasiljević, D., Vulević, D., Mihić, M., & Obradović, V. (2010). *Strateško upravljanje integralnom socijalnom zaštitom u lokalnoj zajednici.* Stalna konferencija gradova i opština.

Medić, S., & Milošević, Z. (2008). Obrazovanje odraslih u funkciji redukcije posledica siromaštva na decu. In Gašić-Pavišić, S. & Joksimović, S. (ed.) *Obrazovanje i siromaštvo u zemljama tranzicije*. Institut za pedagoška istraživanja.

Orlović – Lovren, V. (2012). Koncept održivog razvoja i doživotnog učenja – dva okvira za jedan pogled na obrazovanje odraslih. *Andragoške studije*, *1*, 9–21.

Popović, K. (2014). *Evropska i globalna politika obrazovanja odraslih – koncepti, paradigme i pristupi.* Institut za pedagogiju i andragogiju Filozofskog fakulteta Univerziteta u Beogradu.

Pueyo, A., & Leining, C. (2023). *Just transition processes: from theory to practice*. Motu economic and public policy research. https://www.motu.nz/assets/Documents/our-research/Environment/Just-transition-processes-From-theory-to-practice-FINAL.pdf

Reitzenstein, A., Tollmann, J., Popp, R., Bergamaschi, L., & Dimsdale, T. (2018). *A Just Transition for All or Just a Transition.* Discussion paper. E3G. https://www.euki.de/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/DiscussionPaper_GlobalJustTransition_E3G_November2018_final-1.pdf

Smyth, J. C. (2006). Environment and education: a view of changing scene. *Environmental Education Research,* 12 (3–4), 247–264.

UNCDP. (2023). *Just transition.* CDP input on 2023 ECOSOC theme (Accelerating the recovery from the coronavirus disease (Covid-19 and the full implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development at all levels). https://www.un.org/development/desa/dpad/wp-content/uploads/sites/45/CDP-excerpt-2023–1.pdf

UNEP. (2023). *Keeping the promise.* Annual Report 2023. https://www.greenpolicyplatform.org/sites/default/files/downloads/resource/UNEP_Annual_Report_2023.pdf

Wang, X., & Lo, K. (2021). Just transition: A conceptual review. *Energy Research & Social Science, 82,* 1–11, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.erss.2021.102291

Žiljak, T. (2022). Ciljevi europskih politika obrazovanja odraslih u vrijeme pandemije COVID-19. *"Obrazovanje odraslih" – Časopis za obrazovanje odraslih i kulturu, 21*(2), 79–98. https://doi.org/10.53617/issn2744–2047.2021.21.2.79

Borut Mikulec[1], Sami Ul Haq[2], Aidai Salmorbekova[3],
Muhammad Muhammad El-Gambo[4], Muhammad Inuwa Shu'aib[5]

Development of Adult Education Systems in Kyrgyzstan, Nigeria and Pakistan

Abstract: This paper examines the existence and development of adult education (AE) systems in three developing countries: Kyrgyzstan, Nigeria and Pakistan. Conceptually, it draws on research on adult learning systems (ALSs), which assesses the extent to which governance, provision and financing of AE have evolved in each country. Empirically, the study involves a comparative analysis of the three countries, analysing similarities and differences between their AE policies, key actors shaping AE systems, available AE and the main challenges involved in establishing AE systems. The findings indicate that AE systems in the countries under review remain highly unsystematic and fragmented, characterised by low levels of adult participation in AE provision. Nonetheless, the analysis also reveals that progress has been made over the past 15 years, particularly through the adoption of policies, programmes and forms of provision providing organised AE opportunities.

Keywords: adult education systems, adult learning systems, Kyrgyzstan, Nigeria, Pakistan

Razvoj sistema obrazovanja odraslih u Kirgistanu, Nigeriji i Pakistanu

Apstrakt: U ovom radu se ispituju postojanje i razvoj sistema obrazovanja odraslih u tri zemlje u razvoju: Kirgistanu, Nigeriji i Pakistanu. Rad se na konceptualnom nivou oslanja na istraživanja sistema učenja odraslih u kojima se procenjuje u kojoj su meri upravljanje, obezbeđivanje i finansiranje programa obrazovanja odraslih razvijeni u svakoj od ovih

1 University of Ljubljana, Slovenia, https://orcid.org/0000-0002-4500-3091 (borut.mikulec@ff.uni-lj.si)

2 University of Padova, Italy, https://orcid.org/0009-0000-7372-2854 (samiul.haq@studenti.unipd.it)

3 University of Pecs, Hungary, https://orcid.org/0009-0004-6559-8821 (aidai.salmorbekova@gmail.com)

4 Bayero University, Nigeria, https://orcid.org/0009-0005-0207-2125 (mgmelgambo@gmail.com)

5 Bayero University, Nigeria, https://orcid.org/0009-0003-1090-0213 (muhdshadow@gmail.com)

zemalja. Na empirijskom nivou je sprovedena uporedna analiza tri zemlje, pri čemu se razmatraju sličnosti i razlike među njihovim politikama obrazovanja odraslih, ključnim akterima koji oblikuju ove sisteme, dostupnim ponudama obrazovanja odraslih i glavnim izazovima u uspostavljanju sistema obrazovanja odraslih. Nalazi ukazuju na to da su sistemi obrazovanja odraslih u posmatranim zemljama i dalje u velikoj meri neujednačeni i fragmentisani, te da ih odlikuje nizak nivo učešća odraslih u programima obrazovanja odraslih. Ipak, analiza takođe pokazuje da je tokom poslednjih 15 godina ostvaren napredak, naročito putem usvajanja politika, programa i oblika obrazovanja koji obezbeđuju organizovane mogućnosti za obrazovanje odraslih.

Ključne reči: sistemi obrazovanja odraslih, sistemi učenja odraslih, Kirgistan, Nigerija, Pakistan

Introduction

In his book *Political Economy of Adult Learning Systems,* Richard Desjardins (2017) states that adult learning systems (ALSs) consist of various organised learning opportunities (both formal and non-formal) available to adults, together with the associated structures and social partners that shape the organisation and governance of adult education (AE). Over the last 30 years, organised forms of AE have increased, although this trend is more pronounced in some countries than in others. Countries that have developed advanced ALSs view AE as a tool for managing economic and social development. Desjardins identifies modernisation and globalisation processes, the rise of the knowledge economy and neoliberalism as the principal forces shaping the evolution of ALSs since World War Two.

However, the existence of AE structures underpinning ALS is by no means self-evident. The ALSs are characterised by the fact that they are unsystematic (Kalenda, 2024) and located at the intersection of multiple national systems: (a) the education and training system, which provides, inter alia, second-chance education, adult higher education and adult vocational education; (b) the labour market and employment system, which provides opportunities for personnel training and human resource development (i.e. non-formal vocational education and training (VET)) for job-related reasons by employers and trade unions, as well as active labour market programmes by the state; (c) welfare state and other social policies including, inter alia, various social benefits for socially disadvantaged groups in general and immigrant integration programmes in particular (Desjardins, 2017; Desjardins & Kalenda, 2025).

Furthermore, the coordination of ALSs between the state, the market and civil society is supported by different regimes, which means that successful coordination between the state and social partners is crucial for successful ALS

governance. Such coordination may occur at the political level (e.g. alignment of agendas among stakeholders) or at the operational level (e.g. coordination of implementation and management). Overall, the level of ALS development reflects the extent to which governance, provision and financing of AE have progressed in each country (Desjardins, 2017; Desjardins & Ioannidou, 2020).

While ALSs in developed countries have been extensively researched (e.g. Desjardins, 2017; Desjardins & Kalenda, 2025; Kalenda, 2024; Schemmann et al., 2020), less is known about the existence, development and coordination of AE systems in developing countries. This paper seeks to deepen understanding of AE systems in three developing countries – Kyrgyzstan, Nigeria and Pakistan – with different histories, welfare regimes and governance structures. To this end, the paper addresses the following research question: How are AE systems being shaped in Kyrgyzstan, Nigeria and Pakistan?

The paper is structured as follows. It first presents the conceptual framework and outlines the methodological approach. It then provides an analysis of AE systems in Kyrgyzstan, Nigeria and Pakistan in accordance with the objectives of the study. The final section discusses the identified similarities and differences and presents the main findings.

Conceptual Framework

As ALS lies at the intersection of various national systems (education, labour market, social welfare), successful coordination between the state (government and ministries) and social partners is key for effective ALS coordination (Desjardins, 2017; cf. UNESCO, 2022) as well as for increased adult participation in lifelong learning (LLL) activities.

Building on Esping-Andersen's typology of welfare state regimes and Hall and Soskice's typology of varieties of capitalism and drawing on analyses of AE structures and their perceived economic and social outcomes across country case studies, Desjardins (2017) develops a typology of ALSs in some of the most advanced economies (cf. Desjardins & Ioannidou, 2020). According to this framework, coordination within ALSs among the state, the market and civil society is supported by three predominant regimes: the market-, state– and stakeholder-led regimes. However, some countries cannot be categorised under a single dominant model (e.g. Austria, Finland and the Netherlands) or any of them due to their unique historical development (e.g. Asian countries) (Desjardins, 2017). (1) The *market-led regime* operates according to the rules of market competition and is strongly influenced by neoliberal ideology, which favours those who

are economically privileged, thereby increasing economic inequalities. Countries that typically fall under this regime include Australia, Canada, the United States, New Zealand, Ireland, the United Kingdom, Japan and Switzerland. (2) In the *state-led regime*, the state plays a key role in managing economic, social and cultural policies and can direct both the supply of and demand for skills towards the achievement of centrally defined goals. Countries that fall under this regime include the small Asian "tiger" economies (Hong Kong, Taiwan, Singapore, South Korea) and China. (3) In the *stakeholders-led regime*, interest groups co-operate beyond market mechanisms to achieve better results (corporatism). The focus is on the coordination of social and industrial relations, with non-market coordination primarily complementing the prevailing market-based coordination. Countries that fall under this regime include Italy, Japan, France, Germany, Switzerland, Austria, the Netherlands, Belgium and Luxembourg. Nevertheless, some countries support a high level of market activity, complemented by agreements between stakeholders and a stronger role of the state in the coordination of society, especially in the distribution of social spending, which allows for a higher level of social security. In this context, Desjardins identifies the (4) *state-led regime with a high degree of stakeholder involvement*, characterised by low levels of income inequality and significant investment in education throughout life. Countries that fall under this regime include Austria, Belgium, the Netherlands, Denmark, Norway, Sweden and Finland (Desjardins, 2017, pp. 26–30).

To facilitate cross-national comparison of ALSs, Desjardins (2017) classifies the major forms of structured AE provision into four categories. (I) *Adult Basic Education* (ABE) and *Adult General Education (*AGE), including basic skills provision, comprise forms of education leading to basic education (ISCED levels 1 and 2) and general secondary education (ISCED level 3). In high-income countries, these forms are typically regarded as formal AE, whereas in most low– and middle-income countries, basic skills programmes are generally considered non-formal AE. (II) *Adult Higher Education* (AHE) is typically classified as formal AE and may be either integrated within, or separate from, the regular higher education system. It is often linked to continuing education for professionals (ISCED 5a), with many programmes also having a vocational orientation and being delivered by vocational colleges or polytechnics (ISCED levels 5a and 5b). (III*) Adult Vocational Education* (AVE) (including continuing education, technical education and workplace learning) encompasses a wide range of formal (ISCED levels 3b, 3c, 4, 5b and 5c) and non-formal programmes, depending on the national context. In some cases, non-formal provision can lead to formal recognition. (IV) *Adult Liberal Education* (ALiE), including popular education, typically covers provision related to sports, hobbies and other leisure-oriented

activities. Although generally non-formal, such provision may be linked to basic skills training and, in certain contexts, may also lead to formal recognition (Desjardins, 2017, pp. 19–20).

In addition to the structural elements underpinning ALSs, Schemmann with associates (2020) emphasise the role of organisations as key actors shaping ALSs. Drawing on a multi-level understanding of AE and the multi-level governance model of AE developed by Schrader (2010), the authors identify a range of actors operating across five interconnected levels. At the micro level, the focus is on the teaching–learning process, with teachers and learners serving as the principal actors. The second level, situated at the meso level, involves adult education organisations acting as collective entities. The third level, also at the meso level, encompasses the immediate institutional environment of AE organisations, including chambers, provider associations, accreditation agencies, statistical offices and research institutes. At the macro level, state actors – such as central governments, federal states and municipalities – play a central role through regulation of adult education and the allocation of financial resources. Finally, the mega level comprises international actors, including the European Union (EU), the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the World Bank, which provide policies and financial resources for funding projects and programmes.

Finally, countries with a high level of adult participation in LLL and a well-distributed level of AE have developed the most effective ALSs. Several key features of effective ALSs have been identified by Desjardins (2017; Desjardins & Ioannidou, 2020). The first key factor is the level of resources allocated to adult education. In this regard, the state plays a crucial role by shaping public policies and engaging social partners to support the development of opportunities and the provision of AE (e.g. the Nordic countries, which have the highest LLL participation rates, also allocate the most resources to ALS). The second factor is the comprehensive understanding of AE (i.e. the integration of different formal and non-formal education programmes at vocational, upper-secondary and higher education levels) and the distribution of responsibilities among various stakeholders (e.g., countries with high LLL participation typically demonstrate strong involvement of social partners in AE governance and policy formulation). The third factor concerns the active development of AE policies, including analysing the conditions, needs, interests and mutual understanding among the relevant actors. Outreach and targeting are crucial in this respect, especially for adults with low or no qualifications. AE provision must be flexible, supportive of all forms of learning and education and based on the recognition of prior learning

(RPL). The fourth factor is an effective labour market policy that can be linked to organised AE and is designed to promote employment (e.g. by offering publicly supported training programmes or formal employability programmes with public support for the unemployed). Finally, effective ALSs include flexible and diverse forms of AE (e.g. addressing the needs of adult learners) that can also be linked to the formal education system, which is primarily designed for young people. However, the creation of parallel education pathways exclusively for adults, while meeting labour market demands, can also lead to lower-status qualifications and contribute to stigmatisation (Desjardins, 2017, pp. 246–252; Desjardins & Ioannidou, 2020, pp. 158–162).

Methodology

For a comparative empirical analysis of AE systems, we selected Kyrgyzstan, Nigeria and Pakistan: two Asian countries (one in central and one in south Asia) and one African country. All three are developing countries in the Global South and member states of UNESCO, the World Bank and the International Labour Organization (ILO). These countries have different histories, welfare regimes and governance structures. Overall, AE is less regulated and receives less attention than other parts of the education system (e.g., K-12 or higher education) in all three countries. The responsibilities for AE legal regulation, the public recognition of its providers and their basic funding in Kyrgyzstan rest within the state, whereas, in Nigeria and Pakistan, it is shared between the central government and the states (Nigeria) or local governments (provinces in Pakistan). It is difficult to assign the countries under study to a single dominant governance model by applying Desjardins' (2017) typology of coordination among the state, the market and civil society within ALSs. Nevertheless, Kyrgyzstan and Nigeria most closely resemble a stakeholder-led regime, reflecting the prominent role of non-government organisations (NGOs) and donor agencies in AE (albeit with stronger corporate involvement in Nygeria) and the weak implementation capacity of state policy and funding, while Pakistan aligns more closely with a state-led regime with high stakeholder involvement, characterised by a division of roles whereby the state sets AE policy frameworks while NGOs and donor organisations play a central role in implementation.

The comparative analysis involved juxtaposing the three country cases following Egetenmeyer's (2020) proposed steps of descriptive and analytical juxtaposition – namely data collection, identification of common features and analytical interpretation. To guide the comparison, four analytical categories were developed:

(a) policies (educational, labour market and social); (b) actors shaping adult education (AE) systems at the mega, macro and meso levels; (c) available provision, including ABE, AGE, AHE, AVE and ALiE; and (d) key challenges related to the establishment AE systems. The analysis focuses primarily on contemporary developments in AE systems over the past 15 years, while also acknowledging important historical initiatives in adult education predating the turn of the millennium. With regard to source selection, the study draws on official national AE policy documents, official data and country reports produced by governments and international organisations, as well as peer-reviewed scientific and professional journal articles on adult education in the three countries. This multi-source approach was adopted to enhance the reliability and objectivity of the comparisons made.

Kyrgyzstan

With a population of over 7 million, Kyrgyzstan is a low– to middle-income developing country located in Central Asia. Its economy relies primarily on agriculture, labour remittances (which accounted for approximately 32% of the GDP in 2022) and the extractive industry. In 2023, 30% of the population was classified as poor and without labour remittances. Governance remains largely centralised, although efforts toward decentralisation have been underway since the early 2000s (Asian Development Bank, 2015). After it gained independence in 1991, the country experienced a sharp decline in Soviet-era educational institutions as public funding collapsed and vocational education and training (VET) systems deteriorated. A series of reforms have been introduced since 2010 to rebuild AE, including the adoption of the National Education Development Strategy in 2013 and the 2019 Law on Education, which underpins the Education System Development Programme for 2021–2040. During this period, AE has focused on workforce development, digital literacy and rural inclusion, with substantial support from international partners such as the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) and DVV International.

Policies

Kyrgyzstan has taken steps to strengthen AE with its education policy measures, but major challenges remain. The National Qualification System Concept 2019, developed jointly by the Ministry of Education and Science (MoES) and the Ministry of Labour and Social Development (MoLSD), aims to establish national

and sectoral qualification frameworks, recognition standards and assessment systems by 2025. However, the lack of a functioning RPL system and a weak legal framework continue to constrain the development of AE. The National Education Development Strategy 2021–2040 emphasises LLL as a fundamental principle that extends beyond formal schooling to encompass adults through continuous skill development, as well as the professionalisation of adult educators; there is, however, a lack of institutional mechanisms to implement this goal. DVV International has been addressing these gaps in collaboration with national partners by supporting non-formal education, especially in rural areas. The key initiatives include Curriculum GlobALE and the EU-funded CHANCE project, which has been offering VET to people in prison (DVV International: Central Asia, 2019). The National Education Development Strategy also underlines the importance of non-formal education in providing marginalised groups with skills relevant to the labour market. The Strategy classifies AE within formal and non-formal education, but it does not explicitly recognise AE as a distinct pillar tailored to the needs of non-traditional learners.

Kyrgyzstan has implemented labour market policies aimed at improving access to VET and promoting employment through AE programmes. VET institutions in Kyrgyzstan are closely aligned with the labour market policy under the National Employment Policy 2020 and offer VET for the unemployed, continuing education for adults, retraining programmes for skilled workers, intermediate-level training through secondary VET and basic training through primary VET (European Training Foundation, 2021). In addition, AE centres contribute to labour market policy objectives through participation in migration-oriented programmes. These centres support local job creation to reduce economic migration by offering training in income generation, agriculture and crafts in rural areas. For those preparing for migration, mainly to Russia, the centres also offer preparatory courses in the Russian language, civil rights and relevant legislation. An important social policy measure – the National Concept for Social Protection of the Population of the Kyrgyz Republic 2021–2040 – emphasises rural development and inclusion. DVV International has worked with local governments and institutions to help transform public libraries in rural areas into community learning centres. These centres address the learning needs of underserved populations, while promoting community engagement (DVV International: Central Asia, 2021). In addition, the Institute for the Third Age, established in 2022, provides AE opportunities for older adults, including courses in reading, computer literacy and traditional crafts. This initiative aligns with broader social policy objectives related to active ageing, intergenerational learning and the reduction of social isolation among older people.

Actors

At the mega level, international organisations, including UNESCO, DVV International, GIZ, the EU, the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank, set the strategic direction and support policy development in AE (European Training Foundation, 2021). DVV International, active in Kyrgyzstan since 2002, has been strengthening professional training and promoting inclusive programmes through partnerships with local actors. The national government agencies play a central role at the macro level. The MoES is responsible for secondary, vocational and non-formal education. Supporting institutions, such as the Agency for Basic Vocational Education and the Kyrgyz Academy of Education, contribute to curriculum development and teacher training. The MoLSD is responsible for job placement and retraining of adults and manages digital platforms such as Tunduk and Zanyatost.kg, which provide training resources and labour market information. Several institutions run AE programmes at the meso level. Universities offer in-service, modular and short-cycle professional development courses aimed at reskilling and upskilling adults. VET colleges and lycées under the MoES and private vocational centres offer basic and secondary vocational education, as well as continuing education and retraining programmes for adults (European Training Foundation, 2021). These providers often work with the Public Employment Services (PES), coordinated by the MoLSD, to provide short-term vocational training for unemployed adults[6]. In addition, more than 1,000 adult education centres, primarily funded by NGOs or learners, offer a variety of training opportunities. Public libraries and regional learning centres have been providing non-formal education in crafts, digital literacy and life skills since 2022, with targeted initiatives for older adults (DVV International: Central Asia, 2021). NGOs and associations, such as the Kyrgyz Adult Education Association (KAEA), focus on supporting vulnerable populations and frequently partner with municipalities to implement local training initiatives.

Provision

AE programmes are designed to support LLL and are mainly offered outside the formal education system. These programmes include: (a) ABE programmes that take place outside the formal education system and offer adult literacy skills under the national programme "Education for All"; (b) AHE programmes that include study programmes offered by higher education institutions, often aimed

---

[6] See: https://zanyatost.kg/Page/PageShow/1016.

at mature students who wish to complete or continue their higher education through part-time learning and short-term professional programmes; (c) AVE programmes that are provided by a combination of state institutions – including VET colleges and lyceums run by the MoES (which offer primary, secondary and retraining programmes) and public employment services (which offer short-term training for unemployed adults) – and private VET providers, such as vocational centres offering training in IT, accounting and trades; (d) ALiE institutions, such as music and art schools and other learning centres that offer specialised liberal education; (e) individual teaching activities where learning is tailored to the individuals' personal needs and supports their professional development and personal growth.

Challenges

Despite the above initiatives, significant structural challenges have been undermining AE in Kyrgyzstan. Government funding primarily favours the formal education sector, leaving non-formal AE dependent on external donors (DVV International: Central Asia, 2021). The lack of a functioning RPL system, combined with fragmented governance and limited outreach to low-skilled adults, limits access and inclusion. These problems are exacerbated by socio-economic inequalities, especially between urban and rural areas. Kyrgyzstan ranks 117th on the United Nations Human Capital Index, indicating persistent educational inequalities. OECD data show that literacy, numeracy and digital problem-solving skills are low among adults, with around 60% at or below the lowest proficiency levels (OECD, 2019). These deficits have been impeding economic transformation, especially as Kyrgyzstan seeks to develop its digital and green economy. Without comprehensive policy reforms and greater investment, the country risks entrenching existing social divides and undermining its human capital development (Asian Development Bank, 2015).

Nigeria

Nigeria's population was estimated at 234.6 million in 2025. The country's economy and system of governance have undergone significant changes since 1980, shaped by periods of military rule, democratic transition and economic reform. Nigeria remains a developing country with an economy that is heavily dependent on oil exports. Despite ongoing efforts toward economic diversification and

structural reform, persistent challenges, including weak institutions, inflation, unemployment, widespread poverty and poor infrastructure, continue to undermine sustainable development, as well as the education system and AE.

AE policy initiatives in Nigeria have been developed since the 1980s with the aim of improving literacy rates and expanding access to education. The National Mass Literacy Campaign, launched in 1982, sought to address widespread adult illiteracy by promoting functional literacy and numeracy skills as a means of enhancing productivity and supporting national development. This initiative responded to an urgent need for adult education, as policy intervention was essential to mainstream AE in line with UNESCO's *Education for All* objectives (Kazeem & Oduaran, 2006). Nigeria's education landscape has witnessed both progress and persistent challenges over the past 15 years. The Universal Basic Education (UBE) programme, introduced in the early 2000s, has continued to shape education policy, aiming to provide free and compulsory education for all children, while also incorporating elements of adult literacy provision. However, as Ayantunji (2019) observes, the strong emphasis on primary education has often overshadowed adult literacy initiatives. As a result, concerns have been raised regarding the adequacy and relevance of AE provision, particularly given that Nigeria continues to record one of the highest adult illiteracy rates globally, with approximately 37% of adults unable to read or write.

Policies

The National Policy on Education, introduced in 1977 and revised several times, provides the framework for formal and non-formal education in Nigeria and emphasises AE as an essential tool for national development with the aim of improving the level of literacy, vocational skills and LLL opportunities for adults[7]. In addition, the National Literacy Policy 2006, formulated by the National Commission for Mass Literacy, Adult and Non-Formal Education, aims to reduce adult illiteracy rates and improve access to LLL. It targets vulnerable groups, such as women, the rural population and the elderly, and focuses on basic literacy and numeracy skills.

The Nigerian government introduced the National Employment Policy 2001 to create an enabling environment for job creation, employment sustainability and skills development. The policy promotes a combination of formal education and technical/vocational skills, often provided through AE programmes.

---

[7] See: https://education.gov.ng/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/NATIONAL-POLICY-ON-EDUCATION.pdf.

The policy improves the employability of adults and encourages entrepreneurship by aligning AE with labour market demands. The National Skills Development Policy 2013 focuses on equipping the Nigerian workforce with skills relevant to both domestic and global labour markets. The policy emphasises adult education as a key mechanism for upskilling adults, particularly through technical and VET. It supports adult learners in acquiring market-relevant competencies aimed at improving productivity, employability and economic participation.

The National Social Protection Policy 2016 seeks to reduce poverty and inequality by providing social safety nets for vulnerable populations. By prioritising AE as a tool for poverty reduction and social inclusion, particularly through initiatives such as the National Poverty Eradication Programme, the policy promotes AE programmes aimed at empowering adults, especially in rural and underserved communities. In addition, the Nigerian government has acknowledged the role of adult education in advancing gender equality and social inclusion. Policies such as the National Gender Equality Policy 2006, along with initiatives led by institutions including the National Commission for Women, focus on expanding access to AE for women and marginalised groups in order to address gender disparities in education and employment.

Actors

At the mega level, international organisations such as UNESCO and the World Bank provide policy guidance and technical assistance (Inuwa et al., 2023). The Commonwealth, a voluntary association of 56 independent and equal countries, also contributes through scholarships and various forms of technical support. At the macro level, a range of ministries, agencies and state government authorities act as key stakeholders. These include the Federal Ministry of Education, which is responsible for the design, coordination and implementation of AE programmes; the Ministry of Information and National Orientation, which oversees programme design, mass campaigns and awareness-raising initiatives; the Ministry of Humanitarian Affairs and Poverty Alleviation, which manages rehabilitation programmes and empowerment initiatives; the Ministry of Labour and Employment, which is charged with job creation and addressing skills gaps to promote sustainable employment; and the Ministry of Youth and Development, which seeks to create alternative pathways for young people to secure employment and achieve self-sustaining livelihoods. The State Agency for Mass Education is responsible for policy formulation, project design, implementation, service delivery, management and coordination, while the Department of Community and

Social Development oversees the coordination and implementation of AE programmes across learning centres in all clusters. At the meso level, courses for adults are provided by a diverse range of actors, including literacy centres, NGOs, community-based organisations, religious institutions, trade unions, corporate organisations (such as the MTN Foundation and the Dangote Group).

Provision

The ABE and AGE programmes in Nigeria include non-formal basic skills and remedial courses, such as reading, writing, basic computer skills and functional literacy. AHE provision includes university courses, including "traditional" (B.Ed, B.A.(Ed), M.Ed, PhD) and open distance learning programmes. In addition, Colleges of Education and Polytechnics are responsible for awarding the national Certificates in Education, National Diplomas and the Higher National Diplomas. AVE encompasses a broad range of public and private non-formal skills acquisition programmes (e.g. tailoring, carpentry, soap making), initiatives such as the N-Power programme for unemployed individuals (providing skills training) and informal apprenticeship programmes (e.g., tailoring and automobile mechanics), while the National Directorate of Employment offers mobile learning programmes aimed at equipping adults with employment skills. ALiE is coordinated by the National Orientation Agency and implemented through community-based awareness and education campaigns, which seek to promote civic responsibility, national values and social cohesion among adult citizens.

Challenges

The level of funding allocated to adult education is one of the major challenges facing the AE system in Nigeria. Inadequate financing, poor infrastructure and equipment and insufficient human resources continue to constrain effective provision (Oboqua & Aniekwu, 2022). In addition, limited coordination and engagement at both the federal and state levels have contributed to weak policy implementation, overlapping institutional responsibilities and low stakeholder involvement in AE. Consequently, consultative mechanisms remain underdeveloped and stakeholder participation in policy formulation limited, reflecting a lack of comprehensive understanding of AE in the country. Furthermore, the Nigerian labour market is characterised by high levels of unemployment and underemployment, particularly among young people and adults without formal

qualifications. Although AE programmes should improve workforce skills and increase employability, empirical studies point to a mismatch between the skills provided through AE initiatives and labour market demands (Okojie, 2021). For example, while many AE programmes continue to prioritise basic literacy and traditional vocational skills, the rapidly evolving technological landscape requires more advanced and specialised training.

Pakistan

The Islamic Republic of Pakistan is a developing country in South Asia. Its population was estimated at 241.5 million in 2023, while its GDP stood at USD 338.37 billion the same year. Although the country has historically been more centralised due to strong federal control and military influence, its system of governance combines centralised and decentralised structures, particularly following efforts toward decentralisation renewed in 2010. An estimated 22.8 million children aged between 5 and 16 do not attend school[8]. The adult literacy rate stood at 58% in 2019, indicating that approximately 42% of the adult population is illiterate, with pronounced gender disparities[9]. As a result, Pakistan continues to record one of the highest adult illiteracy rates globally. AE in Pakistan seeks to address the learning needs of adults through formal, non-formal and informal learning pathways, with a focus on improving literacy, vocational skills and overall capabilities (Noreen & Iqbal, 2025).

Policies

The 2017–2025 National Education Policy places strong emphasis on literacy, LLL and non-formal basic education as key means of expanding learning opportunities for adults. In particular, it prioritises literacy programmes for adults aged 16 to 25 with the aim of increasing national literacy rates. The policy also focuses on strengthening basic, functional and skills-based literacy provision and utilises religious education institutions (i.e. madrassas) and community centres as venues for adult literacy programmes. The policy promotes non-formal education as an alternative learning pathway for adults outside the formal school system, with the aim of improving literacy, supporting LLL and enhancing workforce

---

[8] See: https://www.thenews.com.pk/print/1198109-role-of-ngos-and-international-organisations-in-enhancing-literacy-in-pakistan.

[9] See: https://www.statista.com/statistics/572781/literacy-rate-in-pakistan/.

development (Government of Pakistan, 2017). To improve opportunities for AE, literacy and non-formal basic education were also given top priority in Pakistan's 2009–2015 National Education Policy and its predecessors, e.g. the National Education Policy of 1998–2010 – through formalised adult literacy programmes and universal basic education initiatives. These policies have sought to widen access to LLL opportunities for all, in line with Pakistan's international commitments, including Education for All and the Millennium Development Goals (Government of Pakistan, 2009).

Pakistan has a comprehensive set of labour laws designed to protect the rights and welfare of workers. Legislation, such as the Workers Children (Education) Ordinance 1972, the Minimum Wages Ordinance 1961 and the Payment of Wages Act 1936, strengthens the welfare of workers by guaranteeing fair compensation and educational support for their children. In addition, the Apprenticeship Ordinance 1962 deals with vocational training and skill development. Finally, the Punjab Industrial Relations Act 2010 and the Industrial Relations Act 2012 regulate labour relations and dispute resolution procedures and aim to promote disciplined and law-abiding workplaces[10]. Furthermore, the Directorate of Workers' Education, operating under the Ministry of Overseas Pakistanis and Human Resource Development, provides computer classes and English language courses for workers and their children, thereby promoting LLL and skill development among workers. Finally, Pakistan's National Labour Policy 2010 places strong emphasis on improving the technical education and skill development of the workforce. It emphasises the value of education and training of workers through a variety of programmes (e.g. technical courses, apprenticeships and trainings in modern technologies) and seeks to improve the skills of both current and future workers by focusing on skills aligned with industry needs (Government of Pakistan, 2009, 2017).

As a conservative Muslim society, Pakistan lacks a specific social policy related to AE. However, its Constitution guarantees the rights of indigenous and marginalised communities to provide them with educational opportunities and preserve their identity and the country is on its way to introducing policies aimed at reducing (gender) inequalities and promoting social inclusion.

Actors

At the mega level, international organisations, such as UNESCO, the World Bank, the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), the Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID) and the Canadian International

---

[10] See: https://www.usemultiplier.com/pakistan/employment-laws.

Development Agency (CIDA), contribute to education and skills development in Pakistan by providing funding and engaging in policy advocacy through partnerships at national and provincial levels. In addition, the EU and the Asian Development Bank offer loans and grants to support education sector reforms. At the macro level, the Ministry of Federal Education and Professional Training, the National Vocational and Technical Training Commission and the National Commission for Human Development provide educational opportunities for adults[11]. At the meso level, organisations such as the National Commission for Human Development and the Citizens Foundation have established 170,190 adult literacy centres and 50 community learning centres across the country to impart basic literacy and numeracy skills[12]. Allama Iqbal Open University serves as a major provider of distance education to reach learners who lack access to conventional schooling, offering vocational and continuing education programmes, as well as undergraduate and postgraduate degrees. This provision is further complemented by private professional organisations and corporate training initiatives aimed at workforce development (such as those offered by PTCL, Engro and Nestlé), as well as fee-based online learning platforms (e.g. DigiSkills, Coursera).

Provision

ABE and AGE offer basic literacy, numeracy and language courses for adults between 15 and 45 years of age, a lower secondary school programme for girls with particular focus on gender equality, educational technology and life skills, especially in the context of the Covid-19 pandemic, as well as courses leading to upper-secondary school qualifications. Under the AHE, Allama Iqbal Open University offers Bachelor's degrees in more than fifty disciplines, a wide range of master's and doctoral degrees through part-time and distance learning modes, as well as general certificate courses and postgraduate diplomas in more than twenty programme areas. The Virtual University of Pakistan also delivers higher education nationwide through online platforms and satellite television. AVE in Pakistan offers a range of programmes, including one– or two-year secondary level skills certificates and diplomas, informal industry-based apprenticeship schemes and programmes linked to secondary and post-secondary levels. Within the country's broader skills development strategy, digital literacy and entrepreneurship education are key priorities, supported by government initiatives such as DigiSkills.pk, which offers free online courses. Finally, the Seeta Majeed School of Liberal

---

[11] See: https://ophrd.gov.pk/Detail/OTUwNzhiNTktMDBiYS00M2E5LTg5MWYtOGUwZjUyMWI0OTc3.
[12] See: https://nchd.org.pk/Detail/ZjBmMWJhNzUtYjU1YS00YzMwLWJmYTUtYzg5ZWIxZjk0MGE3.

Arts and Social Sciences, which prepares students to engage with contemporary cultural, economic, political and institutional issues, offers ALiE through an interdisciplinary approach that integrates the liberal arts and social sciences[13].

Challenges

Pakistan's education sector lacks efficiency. The quality of higher education and AE depends on several factors, including infrastructure, teaching staff, research capacity, as well as monitoring, evaluation and curricula (Ahsan, 2019). Pakistan's AE system is, in particular, constrained by lack of funds, underutilisation of resources, unstable policies and a centralised structure that often neglects the actual needs of the local population (Sain & Babiera II, 2023). Addressing these challenges requires targeted policy interventions aimed at poverty reduction through stronger alignment with labour market demands and increased investment in social sector development to expand educational opportunities (Nasir, 2001), as about 10% of urban Pakistani women from low-income populations are employed, compared to about one-third of their rural counterparts.

Comparison and Interpretation

This paper examined AE systems situated at the intersection of multiple national systems and characterised by a high degree of fragmentation in three selected developing countries. Based on the analysis, several key findings can be identified.

In all three countries, AE does not constitute a policy priority for governments and remains significantly underfunded compared to education for children and young people. Consequently, and in contrast to industrialised countries (Desjardins, 2017; Desjardins & Kalenda, 2025; Kalenda, 2024), AE systems in the countries studied play a limited role in steering economic and social development. Instead, they remain highly unsystematic and fragmented and are characterised by low levels of adult participation in AE provision, despite substantial population-level demand for education and for literacy, vocational and civic skills development.

Nevertheless, the analysis also indicates that progress has been made in all three countries over the past 15 years. This progress is reflected in the adoption of policies, programmes and forms of provision that have expanded organised AE opportunities for adults.

---

[13] See: www.bnu.edu.pk/slass.

Among the education, labour market and social policies shaping ALSs (Desjardins, 2017; Desjardins & Kalenda, 2025), education policy is the dominant policy forming the AE system in all three countries, providing adults with access to AE opportunities and to some extent aligning AE with social and economic development (e.g. labour force skills development, reducing illiteracy among the adult population). Labour market policies also play an important role in shaping AE in all three countries; they seek to reduce adult unemployment rates, develop workforce skills and promote employability through AE programmes. Social policies constitute a more limited but still relevant influence on AE systems in the analysed countries. In developing-country contexts, welfare state measures tend to be targeted rather than universal and are generally more limited and fragmented than those found in advanced economies (ILO, 2021). Nevertheless, social benefits aimed at socially disadvantaged groups are evident in both Kyrgyzstan and Nigeria. In Kyrgyzstan, such measures primarily target migrants, rural populations and the elderly, while, in Nigeria, they focus on rural populations and women, with the aim of reducing gender inequality.

Given that a wide range of organisations play a key role in shaping ALSs (Schemmann et al., 2020), this study examined the relevant actors in all three countries, who are active at different levels (Schrader, 2010). At the mega level, several international organisations support AE development through a range of instruments – including discursive dissemination, standard-setting, funding, co-ordination and technical assistance (Jakobi, 2009) – with particular focus on literacy, VET and LLL. Across all three countries, UNESCO has been promoting LLL and adult literacy through the Education for All initiative, while the World Bank has provided funding for projects related to VET reform and skills development. Other international and donor organisations also play prominent roles: for example, DVV International actively supports adult education in Kyrgyzstan, the Commonwealth undertakes similar activities in Nigeria and various bilateral and multilateral development agencies are involved in AE provision in Pakistan. This pattern highlights a strong reliance on donor funding for adult education across all three countries, while public funding by national governments remains limited (cf. UNESCO, 2022). At the macro level, government ministries, national agencies and subnational authorities in all three countries are responsible for setting policies and regulations for AE and hold decision-making power over the (non-) allocation of public financial resources. At the meso level, AE provision is delivered by a diverse set of actors, including NGOs, community-based organisations, adult literacy centres, universities and various VET institutions, all of which provide courses that promote literacy, skills development and LLL.

In Nigeria and Pakistan, however, the religious and socio-cultural contexts give religious institutions a particularly visible role as AE providers. Corporate organisations in both countries also play a visible role as providers of AE.

Among the forms of structured AE provision worldwide identified by Desjardins (2017), all four categories – ABE and AGE, AHE, AVE and ALiE – are present in all three countries, albeit to varying degrees. Of these four, ALiE is least developed in all three countries, reflecting a broader global trend (cf. UNESCO, 2022). In Nigeria and Pakistan, high adult illiteracy rates have led to a strong emphasis on ABE – primarily basic literacy programmes classified as non-formal AE – and on VET initiatives aimed at workforce development, which are frequently supported by projects and programmes funded by international and donor organisations. In contrast, the focus in Kyrgyzstan is primarily on VET to address unemployment and labour market needs, as well as labour migration to Russia. AHE programmes integrated into regular higher education are available in all three countries; however, their uptake among adults remains limited due to high costs and inflexible institutional structures.

While Desjardins and others (2017; Desjardins & Ioannidou, 2020; Desjardins & Kalenda, 2025) argue that effective ALSs require stable funding, a comprehensive understanding of AE, coordinated policies with active stakeholder participation, labour market policies linked to organised AE and flexible and diverse forms of AE, the analysis indicates that all three countries face major challenges in achieving these goals. First, AE is significantly underfunded in all three countries, which means that the state does not allocate sufficient resources to AE and does not recognise it as a priority, but relies on funding from international and donor organisations, which comes with its own risks. Second, the comprehensiveness of AE remains low in all three countries, due to fragmented education, labour market and social policies, poorly coordinated AE governance and an uneven distribution of responsibilities among the various actors involved in AE. In addition, AE is poorly integrated into the countries' development strategies and is not recognised as a key driver of national priorities, despite stated ambitions to drive the digital and green economy in Kyrgyzstan, promote industrial growth in Nigeria and reduce poverty in Pakistan. Third, although initiatives targeting vulnerable adult groups exist in all three countries, the overall flexibility of learning provision remains limited. as there are no operational systems for RPL, while socio-economic and geographical inequalities limit access to AE. Fourth, although there are labour market policies related to organised AE in all three countries, evidence suggests a persistent mismatch between the supply of adult education provision and labour market demand.

Conclusion

This paper examined AE systems situated at the interface of multiple national systems and characterised by a high degree of fragmentation in three selected developing countries, a field in which empirical research remains limited. Drawing on research on ALSs in developed countries – which illustrates the extent to which governance, provision and financing of AE have evolved – we find that, in the countries studied, adult education is less regulated and receives significantly less policy attention than other segments of the education system; AE systems are unsystematic and fragmented and characterised by low levels of participation in AE provision. At the same time, progress has been made over the past 15 years through the adoption of education, labour market and social policies, as well as through the expansion of programmes and provision, particularly ABE and AVE, but to a lesser extent AHE and ALiE, which provide organised AE opportunities for adults. However, to improve the AE systems in developing countries, the challenges of funding, governance, stakeholder cooperation and flexibility of AE need to be addressed and AE needs to be more closely aligned with the countries' economic and social priorities.

References

Ahsan, N. (2019). *Challenges for higher education in Pakistan.* https://www.pakistangul-feconomist.com/2019/01/21/challenges-for-higher-education-system-in-paki-stan/

Asian Development Bank. (2015). *Assessment of Higher Education: Kyrgyz Republic.* https://www.adb.org/documents/assessment-higher-education-kyrgyz-republic

Ayantunji, M. M. (2019). Adult Education in Nigeria: Issues, Perspectives And Challenges. *International Council for Education, Research and Training*, *1*(2), 172–187.

Desjardins, R. (2017). *Political economy of adult learning systems. Comparative study of strategies, policies and constraints.* Bloomsbury.

Desjardins, R., & Ioannidou, A. (2020). The political economy of adult learning systems – some institutional features that promote adult learning participation. *Zeitschrift für Weiterbildungsforschung*, *43*(2), 143–168. https://doi.org/10.1007/s40955–020–00159-y

Desjardins, R., & Kalenda, J. (Eds.). (2025). *A Modern Guide to Adult Learning Systems.* Elgar Modern Guides.

DVV International: Central Asia. (2019). *Curriculum GlobALE (CG).* https://www.dvv-international-central-asia.org/kyrgyzstan/projects/project/curriculum-globale-cg

DVV International: Central Asia. (2021). *Promotion of AE support on National and Local levels and diversification of educational offers*. https://www.dvv-international-central-asia.org/kyrgyzstan/projects/project/promotion-of-ae-support-on-national-al-and-local-levels-and-diversification-of-educational-offers

Egetenmeyer, R. (2020). Comparative Adult and Continuing Education: A Guiding Essay. In R. Egetenmeyer, V. Boffo, & S. Kröner (Eds.), *International and Comparative Studies in Adult and Continuing Education* (pp. 17–30). Firenze University Press.

European Training Foundation. (2021). *Policies for human capital development in Kyrgyzstan*. https://www.etf.europa.eu/lt/publications-and-resources/publications/trp-assessment-reports/kyrgyzstan-2020?page=7

Government of Pakistan. (2009). *National education policy, 2009*. Ministry of Education.

Government of Pakistan. (2017). *National education policy, 2017*. Ministry of Education.

ILO. (2021). *World Social Protection Report 2020–22: Social protection at the crossroads – in pursuit of a better future*. https://capacity4dev.europa.eu/library/ilo-2021-world-social-protection-report-2020–2022_en

Inuwa, B. B., Mancarella, D., Rigoni, P., Isaac Olatunji, T., Breitschwerdt, L., & Mikulec, B. (2023). Adult Education and Citizenship Education in Global Times: Policy Provisions and Programme Deliveries in Italy and Nigeria. In L. Breitschwerdt, J. Schwarz, & S. Schmidt-Lauff (Eds.), *Comparative Research in Adult Education Global Perspectives on Participation, Sustainability and Digitalisation* (pp. 31–49). wbv Publikation.

Jakobi, A. P. (2009). *International Organizations and Lifelong Learning: from Global Agendas to Policy Diffusion*. Pelgrave Macmillan.

Kalenda, J. (2024). *Formation of Adult Learning Systems in Central Europe*. Springer.

Kazeem, K., & Oduaran, A. (2006). Universal Basic Education in Nigeria: Adult Literacy Practice and Policy Reform Needs. *Journal of Adult and Continuing Education*, *12*(1), 4–18.

Nasir, Z. M. (2001). *Poverty and Labour Market Linkages in Pakistan*. https://file.pide.org.pk/pdfpideresearch/mimap-07-poverty-and-labour-market-linkages-in-pakistan.pdf

Noreen, S., & Iqbal, Z. (2025). Adult participation in basic literacy programs in Pakistan: challenges and practical steps for policy administrators. *International Journal of Lifelong Education*. https://doi.org/10.1080/02601370.2025.2464660

Oboqua, E. D., & Aniekwu, R. O. (2022). The availability of physical and human resources on the implementation of adult education programmes in Cross River State, Nigeria. *British Journal of Education, 10*(4), 58–68.

Okojie, V. O. (2021). Addressing the mismatch between adult education and the labour market in Nigeria. *Journal of Education and Work*, 34(2), 185–199.

OECD. (2019). The *OECD Survey of Adult Skills (PIAAC): Results from the 2018 round*. OECD Publishing. https://doi.org/10.1787/19939019

Schemmann, M., Herbrechter, D., & Engels, M. (2020). Researching the political economy of adult learning systems. Theoretical amendments and empirical findings. *Zeitschrift für Weiterbildungsforschung, 43*(2), 259–273. https://doi.org/10.1007/s40955–020–00163–2

Schrader, J. (2010). Governance in Adult and Further Education: Unified Germany as a Case Study. *European Education, 41*(4), 41–64. https://doi.org/10.2753/EUE1056–4934410403

Sain, Z. H., & Babiera II, R. M. (2023). Navigating Educational Challenges in Pakistan: Unravelling Issues and Proposing Remedies. *International Journal of Integrative Sciences, 2*(12), 2117–2126. https://doi.org/10.55927/ijis.v2i12.7485

UNESCO. (2022). *5 Global Report on Adult Learning and Education*. UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning.

Katarina Popović[1], Miomir Despotović[2], Maja Maksimović[3]

Beyond the Iron Curtain: The Contribution of Yugoslavian Authors to Adult Education

Abstract: In the post-war political landscape, divided by the Iron Curtain, Yugoslavia emerged as an exceptional entity, positioning itself between the East and West as a leader of the Non-Aligned Movement. The country's geopolitical standing, coupled with its involvement in global political affairs and high international regard, propelled Yugoslavia to the forefront of the burgeoning field of adult education. Yugoslavia's active engagement with international bodies such as the United Nations, UNESCO, Council of Europe, and within the Non-Aligned Movement advocated for adult education and literacy, facilitated the dissemination and popularisation of adult education concepts worldwide. Positioned strategically amidst the Iron Curtain, Yugoslavia served as a conduit for the spread of andragogy both to Eastern and Western countries, as well as to regions beyond, including Africa and Asia. This catalyzed the establishment of academic chairs and institutional units dedicated to adult education across diverse political and economic contexts. This research examined the contributions of Yugoslavian authors and intellectuals to the field of adult education through three primary lenses: The establishment of adult education as a scientific discipline, including the conceptualization and foundational frameworks of andragogy; Their role in advancing adult education research and scholarship; The international engagement of Yugoslavian authors through participation in UNESCO and other global initiatives aimed at promoting adult education on a worldwide scale. Prominent figures such as Borivoj Samolovčev, Mihajlo Ogrizović, Dušan Savićević, Ana Krajnc, Ašer Deleon, and Nikša Nikola Šoljan will be analysed for their significant contributions. The study will explore factors contributing to their achievements within the specific political and economic context of Yugoslavia, as well as their enduring impact on the evolution of adult education theory and practice. Utilizing a historical methodology, this research employed biographical analysis, examination of contemporary publications in both English and the national languages of Yugoslavia, and scrutiny of international journals, where the authors have contributed. Additionally, insights gleaned from interviews will complement textual analysis, offering first-source data and a nuanced under-

1 University of Belgrade, Serbia, https://orcid.org/0000-0001-7664-8880 (kpopovic@f.bg.ac.rs)

2 University of Belgrade, Serbia, https://orcid.org/0009-0004-4278-4592 (miomirdespotovic@gmail.com)

3 University of Belgrade, Serbia, https://orcid.org/0000-0002-0980-9098 (mmaksimo@f.bg.ac.rs)

standing of the scholarly contributions and legacies of these influential figures in the field of adult education.

Keywords: Yugoslavia, adult education, andragogy, Non-Aligned Movement, UNESCO, internationalization of education

Iza Gvozdene zavese: doprinos jugoslovenskih autora obrazovanju odraslih

Apstrakt: U posleratnom političkom pejzažu, podeljenom Gvozdenom zavesom, Jugoslavija se pojavila kao izuzetan akter, pozicionirajući se između Istoka i Zapada kao jedan od predvodnika Pokreta nesvrstanih. Geopolitički položaj zemlje, zajedno sa njenim aktivnim učešćem u globalnim političkim tokovima i visokim međunarodnim ugledom, doprineo je da Jugoslavija zauzme istaknuto mesto u razvoju oblasti obrazovanja odraslih. Aktivno angažovanje Jugoslavije u međunarodnim organizacijama kao što su Ujedinjene nacije, UNESCO i Savet Evrope, kao i u okviru Pokreta nesvrstanih, podsticalo je razvoj obrazovanja odraslih i pismenosti, te omogućilo širenje i popularizaciju koncepata obrazovanja odraslih širom sveta. Strateški pozicionirana duž Gvozdene zavese, Jugoslavija je delovala kao svojevrsni most u prenošenju andragoških ideja kako ka istočnim i zapadnim zemljama, tako i ka regionima izvan Evrope, uključujući Afriku i Aziju. Ovi procesi doprineli su osnivanju katedri i institucionalnih jedinica posvećenih obrazovanju odraslih u različitim političkim i ekonomskim kontekstima. Istraživanje razmatra doprinose jugoslovenskih autora i intelektualaca oblasti obrazovanja odraslih kroz tri ključne perspektive: utemeljenje obrazovanja odraslih kao naučne discipline, uključujući konceptualizaciju i teorijske osnove andragogije; njihov doprinos razvoju istraživanja i naučne produkcije u oblasti obrazovanja odraslih; i međunarodni angažman jugoslovenskih autora kroz učešće u aktivnostima UNESCO-a i drugih globalnih inicijativa usmerenih na promociju obrazovanja odraslih na svetskom nivou. Posebna pažnja posvećena je analizi doprinosa istaknutih autora kao što su Borivoj Samolovčev, Mihajlo Ogrizović, Dušan Savićević, Ana Krajnc, Ašer Deleon i Nikša Nikola Šoljan. Studija ispituje faktore koji su omogućili njihove naučne i profesionalne domete u specifičnom političkom i ekonomskom kontekstu Jugoslavije, kao i njihov trajni uticaj na razvoj teorije i prakse obrazovanja odraslih. Upotrebom istorijske metodologije, istraživanje obuhvata biografsku analizu, analizu savremenih publikacija na engleskom i nacionalnim jezicima Jugoslavije, kao i pregled međunarodnih časopisa u kojima su autori objavljivali svoje radove. Dodatno, uvidi dobijeni kroz intervjue dopunjuju analizu pisanih izvora, pružajući neposredne podatke i dublje razumevanje naučnog doprinosa i nasleđa ovih značajnih aktera u oblasti obrazovanja odraslih.

Ključne reči: Jugoslavija, obrazovanje odraslih, andragogija, Pokret nesvrstanih, UNESCO, internacionalizacija obrazovanja

The development of adult education has been shaped by a variety of intellectual, political, and social forces, with each period in history influencing its progression in different ways. In the post-war era, Yugoslavia occupied a unique position between the East and West, fostering a space where ideas and practices from both sides of the ideological divide could converge. Although the Iron Curtain no longer exists, misunderstandings between educational traditions emerging from the Euro-centric Global North and those shaped in Eastern European and post-Soviet contexts persist, making it crucial to critically reassess past developments and achievements beyond simplified East–West binaries and irrespective of the ideological frameworks in which they were formed.

Yugoslavia's geopolitical position and its active role in the Non-Aligned Movement enabled its scholars to contribute to global discussions on adult education, both within their own borders and beyond. These intellectuals played a key role in shaping adult education as both a scientific discipline and a field of practice, offering insights that bridged divides and advanced the global discourse on lifelong learning.

This article seeks to examine the contributions of Yugoslavia[4] and its scholars to the development of adult education, focusing on four key dimensions:

– *System development – establishing an adult education system in Yugoslavia*: Their role in creating institutional frameworks and ensuring inclusive educational opportunities within the country.
– *Scientific foundations – founding adult education as a scientific discipline:* Contributions to the conceptualisation of andragogy, foundational theories, and advancements in research and academic work.
– *Professionalisation of adult education*: Efforts to define and develop adult education as a distinct field of practice and expertise.
– *International engagemen*t: Active participation in global initiatives and organizations, including UNESCO, to promote adult education worldwide.

This research employs a historical methodology to examine the contributions of Yugoslav scholars to the development of adult education. The historical approach allows for the analysis of the socio-political and intellectual contexts in which these contributions occurred, as well as the broader historical developments that influenced the field. This methodology involves not only the exami-

---

[4] Today commonly referred to as the 'former Yugoslavia' or 'ex-Yugoslavia'; however, for brevity, this text will use the term 'Yugoslavia'. Although adult education was equally widespread in other Yugoslav republics, such as Macedonia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Montenegro, and scholars from these federal units made significant contributions to its development, they are not included in this analysis due to space limitations.

nation of primary and secondary sources but also the analysis of contemporary publications, including those in English and the national languages of Yugoslavia.

In addition to historical analysis, a biographical approach is integral to understanding the professional trajectories of the scholars involved. By examining academic careers and intellectual pursuits of a few key figures, this research aims to uncover their contributions to the national and international field of adult education and highlight how their ideas resonated with international trends, within the framework of Yugoslavia's unique political and ideological landscape.

Between East and West: Politics, Economy, and Ideology in Yugoslavia

The development of adult education in Yugoslavia cannot be fully understood without considering the broader geopolitical and ideological context. Positioned between East and West, Yugoslavia maintained autonomy that allowed it to engage with diverse educational philosophies and policy models. While the Cold War divided the world into rigid ideological camps, Yugoslavia's unique path fostered intellectual exchange and innovation.

To fully grasp the significance of these contributions, it is essential to first examine the political, economic, and ideological context that shaped Yugoslavia's position on the global stage.

Global Political Landscape: The Formation of the Iron Curtain

After the end of the Second World War in 1945, the global political landscape was polarised into two opposing blocs. The Western bloc, under the leadership of the United States, was characterized by a democratic political system, a capitalist economic model, and a liberal ideology, while the Eastern Bloc, dominated by the Soviet Union, embraced collective ownership, a centrally planned economy, and tone-party rule. By 1947, the division culminated in the emergence of a protracted geopolitical and ideological struggle, known as the Cold War (1947–1991). Winston Churchill famously described this division in his speech at Westminster College in 1946: "From Stettin in the Baltic to Trieste in the Adriatic, an iron curtain has descended across the continent" (Churchill, 1946). The Iron Curtain became the defining symbol of the Cold War, representing not only physical separation but also deep ideological, political, and economic rifts

between East and West. On one side of the curtain were the democratic and capitalist countries of the Western Bloc, while on the other side were the communist states of the Eastern Bloc (Brager, 2004; Gaddis, 2005).

The ideological rift between capitalism and communism became the driving force behind geopolitical strategies, fostering a climate of mistrust and competition. This bipolar order shaped also global relations through military alliances, economic aid strategies, and ideological propaganda. At the same time, the Cold War gave rise to landmark events such as the Berlin Airlift, the Korean War, and the Cuban Missile Crisis, each of which underscored the fragility of global peace during this era (Cumings, 2011; Gaddis, 2005; Munton, & Welch, 2011). The division of Germany into East and West, symbolized by the Berlin Wall erected in 1961, became a tangible representation of the broader conflict, highlighting the human cost of ideological and political discord.

Yugoslavia's Political Position

Yugoslavia refers to three successive states that existed from 1918 to 2003. As a unified state of South Slavs, the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes was established in 1918, and in 1929, it was renamed the Kingdom of Yugoslavia. This state lasted until 1941, when it was occupied and divided by the Axis powers during World War II. In 1945, the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia was founded. It consisted of six federal units (republics) and two autonomous provinces, with a high degree of autonomy, so Yugoslavia's governance relied on federalism to accommodate its multi-ethnic population.

Initially aligned with the Soviet Union, Yugoslavia under Josip Broz Tito played a unique role in the emerging global order. Tito's communist partisans had liberated and revitalised the country without significant Soviet aid, granting Yugoslavia a degree of independence uncommon among communist states which were fully controlled by the Communist party of the Soviet Union. Further on, ideological and strategic differences between Tito and Stalin culminated in the 1948 split, formalised when Yugoslavia was expelled from the Cominform (Communist Information Bureau – Agency of international communism founded under Soviet auspices in 1947). This break, known as the Tito-Stalin Split, was a defining moment for Yugoslav foreign and domestic policy (Rajak, 2013).

Following the split, Yugoslavia sought Western economic aid and aligned with the United States and its allies to resist Soviet pressure. The Washington Declaration of 1950, marked a significant shift, as the US provided financial and

military aid to Yugoslavia. Despite this cooperation, Tito remained committed to preserving Yugoslavia's sovereignty and avoiding full alignment with either bloc, advocating a 'third path' that prioritised non-alignment and a unique form of socialism distinct from both the Soviet model. Khrushchev's comment describing Yugoslavia as a 'Trojan horse of American imperialism' in 1958 reflected lingering distrust within the Eastern Bloc (Ramet, 2002). This pragmatic approach laid the foundation for Yugoslavia's policy of neutrality and non-alignment in global politics (Stopic et al., 2025).

Yugoslavia's unique position in the Cold War era distinguished it from other Eastern European countries tightly controlled by the Soviet Union. It enabled the country to establish strong political, economic, and cultural ties with countries in Africa, Asia, and Latin America. At the same time, it maintained open economic, cultural, and political relations with the West, ensuring access to Western technologies, capital, and cultural influences. This unique position allowed Yugoslavia to act as a bridge between East and West, as well as between developed and developing countries.

The Cold War defined international relations during this period, with superpower rivalry shaping geopolitical developments. The decolonisation movement gained momentum, as African and Asian nations achieved independence from European colonial powers. Yugoslavia, a founding member of the UN and key international organizations like the IMF (IMF, 2024), World Bank, GATT, and OSCE, played an active role in these developments.

Yugoslavia was involved in the founding of UNESCO, which emerged from the Conference of Allied Ministers of Education (CAME) during World War II. UNESCO's founding conference, called by the British and French governments, took place in November 1945 in London with delegates from 44 countries, including three Eastern European states from the Soviet bloc – Czechoslovakia, Poland, and Yugoslavia (Elfert, 2018; Popović, 2014).

A cornerstone of Yugoslavia's foreign policy was its leadership in the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM), which aimed to offer developing countries a platform for asserting their interests outside the Cold War blocs. Founded in 1961 (Kardelj, 1976; Rajak, 2013), NAM was spearheaded by Tito (Yugoslavia), Nehru (India) and Nasser (Egypt). Yugoslavia hosted the first NAM conference in Belgrade (Kardelj, 1976; Rajak, 2013; Stubbs, 2023), reinforcing its position as a bridge between East and West, advocating for equitable global governance and decolonisation. Through NAM and UNESCO, Yugoslavia advanced global education initiatives, particularly in adult literacy, vocational training, and social equity. Its policies of self-management and workers' education influenced inter-

national debates on economic development and its impact on educational access and equality. Scholarships and training programs for students from non-aligned countries further demonstrated its commitment to educational cooperation and strengthening the Global South.

It is no coincidence that the UNESCO General Assembly was held in Belgrade in 1980 (Valderrama, 1995). As described by Popovic (2014), "The aspirations of the then-leader of the Non-Aligned Movement aligned with those of UNESCO, fostering the further expansion of the lifelong learning concept, aimed at personal and social development, progress, and the promotion of peace and understanding among nations" (p. 51).

Economic Experiment and Self-management

Yugoslavia successfully maintained a balance between the countries of real socialism with closed economies and Western capitalist states with open markets, developing a semi-market economic model. One of the key features of Yugoslav socialism was its unique system of workers' management – socialist *self-management*. Inspired by Marxist ideas of worker control over the means of production, it blended socialism with market mechanisms, Workers' councils, elected by employees, made key decisions on operations, investments, and profit distribution, allowing limited competition and private entrepreneurship alongside the state-controlled economy. Self-management also prioritized education as a means of empowerment. Political, vocational, and adult education programs were established to train educators, develop curricula, and promote lifelong learning as a pillar of economic and social development.

For a time, this model boosted productivity and innovation, leading to high living standards compared to Eastern European neighbours. By the 1960s and 1970s, Yugoslavia became one of the more prosperous socialist states. Even later, in 1990, in terms of gross social product, Yugoslavia ranked 25th globally in 1990, with estimates suggesting that by 2000 it could have risen to become one of the world's 20 largest economic powers (Đukić, 1995).

However, regional inequalities and inefficient coordination exposed systemic weaknesses. Growing reliance on foreign loans to sustain growth led to mounting debt and economic crisis in the 1980s. After the country's dissolution, self-managed enterprises were privatised or liquidated, marking the end of this distinctive system.

Creating Adult Education System in Yugoslavia

Literacy and Early Adult Education Efforts

In the immediate post-war period, adult education was strongly focused on eradicating illiteracy and promoting gender equality. These efforts were fundamental to building a modern socialist society, considering that 50% of the population aged nine and older had no formal education (SZSa, 1949, p. 250).

To address this, massive literacy campaigns such as "Literacy for All" (1947–1951) were launched (Bondžić, 2010; Dimić, 1988; Petranović, 1988; Samolovčev, 1987). These campaigns were organized by ministries of education, trade unions, schools, cultural institutions, and volunteers. Over 630,000 people in Serbia alone became literate between 1945 and 1948 (SZS, 1949, p. 259).

Literacy was seen as crucial for:

–   Socio-cultural transformation (adoption of new cultural patterns, values, and norms),
–   Economic development (increasing productivity and employment), and
–   Ideological influence (ensuring access to written ideological content and propaganda messages).

Despite its political prioritization and the mobilization of resources, these campaigns did not meet expectations. The 1953 census revealed that the illiteracy rate remained at 25.4%, similar to 1948 (Bondžić, 2010). Nevertheless, these efforts promoted adult education, challenged prejudices that learning was only for children, and laid the foundation for a culture of lifelong learning.

Women's Education and Social Transformation

The socialist government actively promoted women's emancipation as part of its broader goal of creating a "classless society". This included the formal recognition of women's political and human rights – such as the right to vote and work – as well as social rights (like maternity leave, child care leave, and the right to abortion; Burcar, 2020).

Education was seen as a prerequisite for achieving these rights, leading to significant societal investment in women's education. However, to prevent independent political mobilization, the Communist Party treated women's education as part of general education policy, avoiding the creation of specific institutional

structures to address their unique needs. While the socialist state actively promoted women's emancipation through legal and economic measures, it distanced itself from feminism as an independent movement. Yugoslav feminism, however, emerged from within this framework, shaped by both socialist structures and engagement with Western feminist ideas. Rather than being purely an external import, it developed as a hybrid model – both influenced by socialism and critical of its limitations regarding gender equality (Zaharijević, 2017).

While progress was uneven and faced societal resistance, this period saw substantial advancements in women's participation in public life, education, and employment. Despite later political and economic upheavals – including the civil war, dissolution of Yugoslavia, and entrenched patriarchal norms – this legacy of women's education remained influential.

Vocational and Workers' Education

From the 1960s onward, adult education shifted towards vocational and technical training in response to rapid industrialization. Education for workers, with a strong ideological basis, became central, as lifelong learning and workers' education were perceived as integral to the self-management system (Šuvar, 1982).

Although all education adhered to socialist ideology, adult education – due to its practical and work-based nature – was less ideologically rigid than the school system. The ideological character was primarily reflected in overarching political goals, as defined by the Communist Party. In the period following World War II, a series of documents on adult education were adopted in Yugoslavia, indicating both socio-political and professional interest in adult education while reflecting a specific political agenda and adult education policy (see in: Despotović & Popović, 2014). However, beyond the obligatory ideological declarations, education programs developed dynamically and adapted to real-life needs.

Workers' universities emerged as key institutions, educating members of workers' councils and employees. The first was founded in Belgrade in 1952, and by 1979, Yugoslavia had 230 such universities (Despotović, 1986). These institutions offered vocational training, political education, and general learning, creating a remarkable network that integrated education with governance and industry.

The establishment of the Conference of Workers' and People's Universities of Yugoslavia in 1961 helped coordinate and enhance these efforts. However, with the dissolution of Yugoslavia in the early 1990s, both the Conference and most of these universities ceased to exist.

Institutionalisation of Lifelong Learning

In 1970, the *Resolution of the Federal Assembly on the Development of Education and Training on a Self-Management Basis* (Savezna skupština, 1970) introduced key reforms, including:

–   The de-etatization of education,
–   The establishment of lifelong learning as a national strategy,
–   The integration of education and work—a concept later reintroduced as "dual education" in post-Yugoslav countries.

According to the Resolution, adult education was to be realized through:

–   Traditional educational institutions,
–   Work-based learning,
–   "Return" or "recurrent" education (Savezna skupština, 1970; Krajnc, 1989; Samolovčev, 1987).

This expansion of adult education led to a broader institutional framework, with non-formal education flourishing in companies, cultural centres, libraries, museums, and clubs (Šoljan et al., 1985). Ideological education also remained significant, with institutions such as centers for Marxist education and self-management schools continuing to play a role (Samolovčev, 1963; Mrmak 1978). Despite its dominance, the practical link between education and labour persisted, influencing later educational reforms in the region.

Following Yugoslavia's dissolution, the institutional network of adult education collapsed. Yet its legacy – particularly in vocational training – endures, as the integration of education and work has not only persisted but evolved into widely accepted and advanced educational practices. Stripped of its socialist-era terminology, its core principles, organizational frameworks, and methods – such as work-based learning, on-the-job training, retraining, and aligning education with industry needs – remain highly relevant today.

One of its main pillars, ideological/Marxist/socialist education, was almost entirely erased from history after the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989. Today, little remains of it, aside from an emphasis on a well-rounded personality, which aligns with contemporary notions of holistic education.

Beyond vocational training, Yugoslavia's legacy in adult education also includes an early adoption of lifelong learning strategies, a strong commitment to women's right to education and work, and a broad vision of comprehensive education.

Science and Research

Foundations and Early Development

Although socialist ideology shaped and limited both the practice and scientific thought on education, it also contributed to its development. According to Marxist philosophy, continuous and comprehensive personal development was a central tenet, and lifelong learning became a widely accepted postulate. The demand for constant development of the 'revolutionary consciousness of the working class' led to an emphasis on intellectual, moral, physical, practical, and aesthetic (artistic) education. The slogan of a 'revolution that never ends' was seen as a call for education that never stops, reinforcing the idea that learning – particularly adult learning – should be perpetual and all-encompassing

> Although the education system for children and youth was highly ideologized, state control over schools and curricula in Yugoslavia was not as strict as in other socialist countries. This allowed for cultural and intellectual openness to the experiences of other countries, and education held a high position in the value system of the people. As a result, a strong educational boom emerged, which was embraced and supported by people from all social classes. (Popović – Ceković, 1993, p. 226)

Yugoslav scholars quickly responded to global trends in adult education, integrating them with educational traditions from the first half of the 20th century. Given the historical context, as early as the 1950s, numerous articles on enlightenment, literacy, and ideological education within the antifascist partisan movement during World War II were published. Then, a growing body of research in the field began to take shape. In 1958, Zvonarević published *The Application of psychology in adult education*, opening new topics and contributing to the development of adult education as a distinct field. By 1966, 50 monographs on adult education and learning had been published (Mrmak, 1969). Among these, Mihajlo Ogrizović, a professor at the University of Zagreb, published *Osnovni problemi andragogije* (Fundamentals of Andragogy, 1956) and *Osnovni problemi penološke andragogije* (Fundamentals of Penological Andragogy, 1956a) – both appearing ten years before Malcolm Knowles introduced the term *andragogy* to American discourse.

The peak of the early stage of adult education theory development in Yugoslavia was marked by the extensive collective monograph *Osnovi andragogije* (Fundamentals of Andragogy) (Grupa autora, 1966), written by 13 authors from

all Yugoslav republics. Spanning over 800 pages, it presents the most significant overview of the main concepts, theories and practical issues and achievements in adult education, or andragogy. The book is structured into five main chapters, covering a wide range of topics, including: andragogy as a scientific discipline, the adult education system, the adult learner in the learning process, the organisation and implementation of adult education (including methods), and self-organized education.

The significance of this publication was recognized internationally. The American journal Adult Education (No. 3–4, 1967) published a review by J. Kulich, highlighting its contributions (Savićević, 2011). Even today, *Osnovi andragogije* could be considered a significant research and publishing endeavour even by today's standards, reflecting the all-encompassing and systematic approach of Yugoslav scholars.

One of the good indicators of intensive academic engagement in Yugoslavia was the development of a specialised adult education journal. In 1954, the journal *Narodno sveučilište* (People's University) was founded in Zagreb, later renamed *Obrazovanje odraslih* (Adult Education) in 1959, and finally *Andragogija* (Andragogy) in 1969. The journal was published until 1991[5] and had a broad Yugoslav scope, focusing on:

–   Theoretical and empirical research,
–   Historical-comparative studies,
–   Adult education policy and practice.

Published five times a year as a double issue, it included sections such as: *From the practice of adult education*, *Institutions*, *Organizations and associations*, *Foreign countries*, *Chronicle*, *Bibliography*, and *Reviews*.

The institutionalisation of research came in the seventies. In 1978, the Institute for Pedagogy and Andragogy was founded as a separate research unit within the Faculty of Philosophy in Belgrade: "Striving to overcome positivist empiricism and day-to-day political pragmatism in shaping educational policies, the Institute particularly fosters action research and strategies that simultaneously drive the transformation of educational practices and the development of pedagogical and andragogical knowledge"(Mihaljčić, 1998, p.184).

In the post-Yugoslav period, influenced by European trends yet building on the experiences of the Yugoslav era, Slovenia and Croatia established research centres dedicated to the study of adult education.

---

[5] After the breakup of Yugoslavia, three journals were established: *Andragogical Studies* in Serbia (1994), *Studies in Adult Education and Learning* in Slovenia (1996), and *The Andragogical Gazette* in Croatia (1998).

International Presence

Internationally, Yugoslav adult education scholarship gained recognition. Jindra Kulich's bibliographic compilations provide a systematic overview of Yugoslav contributions to adult education. In Adult Education in Continental Europe: An Annotated Bibliography of English-Language Materials, 1945–1969 (Kulich, 1971), he documented 40 entries directly related to Yugoslavia, including collected volumes, journal articles and studies. The earliest entry dates back to 1946; six are UNESCO publications or included in UNESCO reports, one is published by the IBE, and one article appeared in The International Review of Education (IRE) (Deleon, 1963). The topics covered in these texts reflect, on the one hand, the highly developed practice of adult education and, on the other, a wide range of research interests and dynamic scholarly activity. The topics covered range from the history of adult education, literacy, and financing, to workers' universities, vocational training, correspondence education, media in adult learning, etc. (Deleon, 1963, p. 206–214).

Even for a shorter period (1970–1974), Kulich's second Annotated bibliography (Kulich, 1975) identified 17 Yugoslav entries.

Several publications in English indicate the extensive interest from both academic and professional circles in Yugoslav experiences. These include the UNESCO monograph *Adult Education in Yugoslavia* (1962), and the 1985 anthology *Adult Education in Yugoslav Society*, co-published by the National Commission for UNESCO and the Union of Yugoslav Adult Educators' Societies (Šoljan et al., 1985). A selective bibliography for 1968–1984 (pp. 287–307), included 115 English-language titles while a Serbo-Croatian bibliography (1954–1984) listed 223 publications, with abstracts translated into English. Additionally, it includes a Directory of Adult Education institutions and societies (6 faculties and research institutions, 8 adult educators' societies, 8 associations of people's and workers' universities at the regional level and 11 at the provincial) – also in English, even with full postal addresses. Finally, the volume includes a Glossary (pp. 308–314).

This extensive bibliographic documentation underscores not only the global interest in Yugoslav adult education research but also Yugoslavia's active engagement with international discussions and their efforts to present Yugoslav experiences on the global stage.

Scientific Relevance

Although framed within the ideological discourse of Yugoslav Marxism and socialism (see Popović – Ceković, 1993) education remained open to international influences. Despite ideological constraints, Yugoslav scholars engaged with global discussions, particularly in the field of lifelong learning, which aligned with the country's self-management philosophy and emphasized permanent education as a means of fostering economic and social progress.

Evidence of this engagement includes following publications:

– Povratno obrazovanje (Recurrent Education), (Savićević, 1975),
– Recurrent Education in Yugoslavia (Šoljan, 1981),
– Lifelong and Recurrent Education (Filipović, 1987).

These works aligned closely with OECD discussions on lifelong learning and labor market adaptation. Paul Lengrand's (1970) *Introduction à l'éducation permanente* was translated and published in Yugoslavia as early as 1976, further demonstrating this early commitment. Almost simultaneously, Filipović (1971) published a seminal, nearly 300-page work on permanent education, followed by an article in International Review of Education (Filipović, 1974) discussing lifelong education in Yugoslavia – another concept that strongly resonated with Yugoslav scholars.

Most of the studies and articles by Yugoslav authors from this period reference and analyse the works of the most prominent global figures in the field of adult education (see, for example, Samolovčev, Krajnc, Savićević), major theoretical concepts, and dominant educational practices (experiences from the UK, Sweden, the USA, etc.).

Yugoslav scholars also contributed extensively to prestigious international journals, UNESCO publications, ICAE's journal *Convergence*, with Savićević serving on the Editorial Board since 1967 (ICAE, n.d.; Savićević, 2011).

Notably, many of their publications anticipated contemporary developments in education. Below are a few key examples:

– V. Andrilović (1973) examined programmatic learning, foreshadowing computer-assisted education;
– Samolovčev (1987) reported on the use of computers in education;
– Grupa autora (1966) and Krajnc (1981) explored distance learning, while Pongrac (1987) studied the potential of correspondence education – both laying the groundwork for online learning;

–   Work-based education, a dominant theme of the time, was closely linked to industrial development and aligned with what is now defined as on-the-job training. Yugoslav scholars emphasised the strong ideological connection between the world of work and education, viewing worker education as essential for industrial progress. A notable example is Matijević's (1984) *Učimo uz rad* (Learning through work), which highlighted professional development within this framework – an issue that remains highly relevant today;

–   The role of media in adult education was extensively explored, particularly the use of radio and television (Grupa autora, 1966; Špan, 1980);

–   Self-education (Mrmak, 1975; Prodanović, 1973).

These studies illustrate that Yugoslav scholars were not only engaged in policy discussions in their time but also actively participated in global discussions on education, helping to adapt international paradigms to the national context – an approach that remains relevant today.

On Andragogy and Its Role

The dominant influence of the German academic tradition in shaping scientific disciplines in Serbia also extended to education. Consequently, the concept of andragogy, first introduced in 1833 by A. Kapp, later used in the Weimar Republic in twenties (E. Ronenstock, 1924), and revitalized in Switzerland (H. Hanselmann, 1951 – *Andragogy: Nature, Possibilities and Boundaries of Adult Education*) and Germany (F. Pöggeler, 1957 – Einführung in die Andragogik / *Introduction to Andragogy*), found fertile ground in Yugoslavia.

During the 1960s, extensive academic debates in Yugoslavia examined the status of andragogy within the broader field of education. The central question was whether andragogy constituted an independent scientific discipline or merely a subfield of pedagogy. Early advocates of andragogy as a distinct science focused on adult education and learning, included Ogrizović (1956; 1959) and Samolovčev (1963). Other prominent researchers, such as V. Andrilović, M. Matijević, N. Pastuović, and S. Pongrac, contributed to this discourse. The establishment of andragogy as an academic field in Belgrade gained recognition, with Dušan Savićević (1961) emerging as one of its leading figures (Govekar, 2024, p. 55). These debates on andragogy's disciplinary status closely parallel discussions in the United States three decades later (Davenport & Davenport, 1985; Elias, 1979; McKenzie, 1977, 1979; Pratt, 1988).

The international recognition of this term in the USA can be attributed to the Yugoslav andragogue Dušan Savićević, who introduced Malcolm Knowles to the concept during his study visit to the USA. Malcolm Knowles, a prominent adult learning educator and a key figure in the field of adult education in the USA, is renowned for his work on andragogy, self-directed learning, and informal adult education. "Knowles formulated his approach after his and Savićević's longstanding discussions on andragogy, following their mutual correspondence and exchange of andragogical sources" (Henschke, n.d.-a, p. 73).[6]

Knowles was the first scholar in the U.S. to publicly advocate for andragogy as a distinct scientific discipline, presenting his arguments at the 1966 national convention of the American Association for Adult Education (Savićević, 2006, p. 57). Since then, over 170 doctoral dissertations have been defended on andragogy in the United States (Cooper & Henschke, 2001).

The Yugoslav scholars who contributed to this field conceptualized andragogy broadly, defining it as "the discipline that studies adult education and learning in all its forms" (Savićević, 1999, p. 92). Their work addressed all levels and domains of adult education, encompassing what would later be categorized as formal, non-formal education, and informal learning. The significance of this conceptual development was reflected in international discussions, including the journal Convergence, which in 1968 published a correction of the term from androgogy to andragogy and described it as "the theory of adult education, increasingly recognized as a new discipline in university programs" (Savićević, 2006, p. 59).

Similarly, Ana Krajnc (1979) emphasized that andragogy, as a relatively young discipline, gradually became independent from pedagogy while remaining within the broader science of education and subject to shared principles governing both fields (p. 15). More importantly, these conceptual efforts around *andragogy* stimulated academic engagement, leading to the publication of numerous books and journals, the establishment of research institutions, and the organization of scholarly conferences. The field also benefited from historical analyses, comparative studies of adult education systems worldwide, and the adoption of diverse research methodologies.

---

[6] Knowles himself described how Savićević introduced him to the concept: "...in 1967, I had an experience that made it all come together. A Yugoslavian adult educator, Dušan Savićević, participated in a summer session I was conducting at Boston University. At the end of it, he came up to me with his eyes sparkling and said, 'Malcolm, you are preaching and practicing andragogy.' I replied, 'Whatagogy?' because I had never heard the term before. He explained that the term had been coined by a teacher in a German grammar school, Alexander Kapp, in 1833..." (Knowles, 1989, p. 79). However, this event seems to have occurred earlier, as evidenced by Sopher (2003) in her dissertation at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. Despite differences in the understanding and definition of andragogy, Knowles expanded the concept in the USA, and Savićević contributed to its further dissemination worldwide.

In Croatia, efforts to preserve andragogy as a scientific discipline owe much to Professor Nikola Pastuović, who published *Obrazovni ciklus* (Educational cycle) in 1978) and who published Obrazovni ciklus (Educational Cycle) in 1978 and dedicated years to establishing andragogy as a multidisciplinary science (Pastuović, 1999, 2008).

While the term andragogy is now less commonly used, its role in shaping adult education remains undeniable. The extensive body of work by Yugoslav scholars – such as Ogrizović (1956; 1959; 1963), Grupa autora (1966), Krajnc (1976), Samolovčev & Muradbegović (1979), Samolovčev, 1981), and Andrilović with associated (1985) – is significant not merely for its terminology but for its foundational contribution to the scientific study of adult education (for example the seminal works of Andrilović, 1976: *How adult learns*, and Savićević, 1983: *Man and lifelong learning*). These works advanced subfields such as industrial andragogy, military andragogy, social andragogy, family andragogy, correctional education (penological andragogy), leisure time andragogy, and gerontagogy (education for older adults), thereby expanding the scope of adult education and increasing the number of areas subjected to academic research and scientific rigor. Furthermore, they contributed to the growing recognition of lifelong learning as a fundamental concept in education policy and practice.

Ultimately, the terminological debates surrounding andragogy are secondary to the substantive advancements the field generated. The systematic and comprehensive approach to adult education that emerged from these discussions not only shaped its academic institutionalization but also aligned with broader international trends, fostering the development of research, theory, and professionalisation.

Professionalisation of Adult Education

Yugoslav scholars were among the first to systematically address the preparation of professionals for adult education, both through theoretical inquiry and the development of practical training programs.

A significant step toward professionalisation occurred in 1958 with the establishment of the Summer School for Andragogues, initially organized under the auspices of the Union of People's and Workers' Universities of Croatia and, from 1973, as part of the Andragogy Center in Zagreb. Over time, this initiative expanded into both summer and winter schools, serving as platforms for the initial and continuing education of adult educators. These schools not only provided specialized training but also facilitated professional networking, attracting

andragogues from across Yugoslavia and beyond (Ogrizović & Sučić, 1983). Held in Poreč and Crikvenica (Summer School) and Samobor (Winter School), their programs encompassed lectures, seminars, courses, conferences, and discussions. By 1983, more than 500 programs had been conducted, involving approximately 13.000 participants and nearly 500 lecturers – 200 of whom were international experts, including UNESCO representatives (Andrilović et al., 1985; Ogrizović & Sučić, 1983). The schools became a focal point for the exchange of knowledge, theoretical debates, and the advancement of research in andragogy.

The growing significance of adult education in Yugoslavia led to the establishment of republic-based andragogical societies during the 1960s. In June 1968, these societies were unified into the *Union of Andragogical Societies of Yugoslavia*, aimed at fostering professional collaboration, advancing theoretical and practical knowledge, and strengthening the position of adult education within the broader educational and political framework. Modeled after Soviet professional associations, the Union operated through national congresses held every four years, each dedicated to a specific theme, culminating in comprehensive proceedings on the topics:

- I Congress (Zagreb, 1969): Contemporary andragogical theory and practice (*Kongres andragoga Jugoslavije, 1969*).
- II Congress (Budva, 1973): Achievements and development paths of andragogical theory and practice in Yugoslavia (*Kongres andragoga Jugoslavije, 1973*).
- III Congress (Skopje, 1980): The andragogical function of workers' self-management organizations: A factor for the development of productivity, income, and self-management (*Kongres andragoga Jugoslavije, 1980*).
- IV Congress (Belgrade, 1985): Adult education in socio-economic development (*Kongres andragoga Jugoslavije, 1985*).
- V Congress (Banja Vrućica, 1990): Andragogical science and practice in the face of the third millennium (*Kongres andragoga Jugoslavije, 1990*).

These congresses (Kongres andragoga Jugoslavije, 1969, 1973, 1980, 1985, 1990) functioned as a kind of Yugoslav CONFINTEA conferences – they played a dual role: they provided a platform for summarising achievements and defining strategic directions for adult education while simultaneously serving as instruments of ideological and political alignment. Since all major policy decisions in education had to conform to the principles of socialist society, adult education, like other fields, was subject to political oversight.

Yugoslavia presented a distinctive example of partnership between policy, practice, and research, as well as collaboration between organisations and individuals. In examining the professionalisation of adult education in the former Yugoslavia, Ovesni (2018) found that "the *Federation of Workers and National Universities*, as a union of adult educators, and andragogical societies, as professional associations, made a significant contribution to the process of professionalization in the field of AEL. They were also the generators of valuable professional knowledge" (p. 31).

A revealing example of the specific ideological and academic positioning of Yugoslav andragogy can be found in the proceedings of the First congress of andragogues of Yugoslavia, presented by Prof. Borivoj Samolovčev. The cited references in the main report were predominantly from West Germany and the United States, with only one reference from Eastern Europe (Rihta et al., Civilization at a Crossroads, Bratislava). This illustrates the unique character of Yugoslav andragogy – structured within a socialist system yet intellectually oriented toward Western scholarly influences.

The professionalisation of adult education culminated in the establishment of university-level programs dedicated to the education of adult educators and researchers. A major milestone in this process was the introduction of specialized study programs in adult education, which laid the foundation for the formal training of andragogical professionals. As early as the 1950s, lectures on various aspects of adult education were introduced at major Yugoslav universities, it was introduced as an independent scholarly discipline at the university level in 1956 and then the discipline spread to all major universities in all Yugoslav republics, in Zagreb, Novi Sad, Belgrade, Ljubljana, Sarajevo, Skopje.

At the Faculty of Philosophy, University of Belgrade, the first specialisation in Adult education theory and methodology was introduced within the Department of Pedagogy in 1961/62 under the leadership of T. Prodanović. A decisive moment occurred in 1979, when Dušan Savićević established the Department of Andragogy at the University of Belgrade, creating a fully independent academic program in andragogy. This included a four-year undergraduate curriculum, a three-year master's program, and doctoral studies in the field.

By 2017, 594 students had graduated from the Study Group for Andragogy, with 37 master's theses, 30 master's papers, and eight specialist papers defended, along with 26 doctoral dissertations, marking the institutionalisation of andragogy as a distinct discipline (Faculty of Philosophy, University of Belgrade, 2022)[7]

---

[7] Continuing to develop and expand to this day, the Department for Andragogy has around 20 scholars with academic expertise exclusively in adult education and offers a distinctive four-year BA program in adult education, as well as MA and PhD programs.

In Slovenia, Ana Krajnc began lecturing adult education in 1972/73 at the Department of Pedagogy, University of Ljubljana, with the primary objective to educate skilled professionals for adult education (Krajnc, 2011). Andragogy was established as one of the streams of pedagogy studies in 1976/77, and when the department had introduced two specialized chairs: the Chair in Comparative Andragogy and the Chair in General Industrial Andragogy (Govekar Okoliš, 2024).[8]

In Croatia, at the University of Zagreb, at the Faculty of Philosophy, Mihailo Ogrizović taught adult education courses from 1950, and andragogy in the 1970s (Mihajlo Ogrizović and Nikola Nikša Šoljan), and in the 80s and beginning of the 90s, students were able to participate in an andragogy module to earn a specialisation in the field of adult education. At the University of Rijeka, Silvije Pongrac established the Chair of Andragogy within the Department of Pedagogy (Mikulec & Govekar Okoliš, 2024). Despite significant advancements in adult education, Croatia did not achieve full professionalisation of the field or establish a dedicated andragogy program. Instead, andragogy remained a subdiscipline of pedagogy, leading to its marginalisation – particularly in the 1990s, when it was reduced to a single subject within pedagogy studies (Pastuović, 2022).

Shaping International Dialogue: Events and Exchanges

Owing to Yugoslavia's unique political position and the early engagement of its scholars in adult education, the country played an active role in shaping international developments in the field. Yugoslav experts participated in academic bodies, working groups, and commissions, contributed to international conferences, conducted collaborative research, and maintained close ties with leading figures in European and global adult education. Through these efforts, Yugoslavia became an integral part of broader trends in adult education.

Interestingly, a UNESCO conference on the social sciences of leisure was held in Portorož, Yugoslavia, in June 1960, marking the conclusion of the first stage of an international comparative study conducted by the International Study Group on the Social Sciences of Leisure, under the auspices of the UNESCO Institute for Education (Elfert, 2018).

Another example of this engagement was the International Conference on Adult Education Systems, held in Opatija in November 1964 under UNESCO auspices. Organised by the Yugoslav National Commission for UNESCO alongside major educational and labour institutions, the conference gathered repre-

---

[8] It became an an independent study programme in 1992.

sentatives from both Western and Eastern Europe as well as Africa (Savićević, 2006). Among them was Paul Lengrand, who praised Yugoslavia's achievements and specifically noted that he would share the proposals presented at the conference[9] with his UNESCO colleagues to strengthen international collaboration and direct further research in adult education (Savićević, 2006, p. 38).

Yugoslavia continued to play a significant role in UNESCO's global adult education initiatives. Although it contributed to preparations for the Third World Conference on Adult Education (Tokyo, 1972), political inertia prevented an official delegation from attending, despite efforts by the Union of Yugoslav Andragogical Societies[10]. However, Yugoslavia actively participated in CONFINTEA IV (Paris, 1985) with a delegation of leading scholars (Dervišbegović, Mikašinović, Savićević, Krajnc, Samolovčev, Babić, Šoljan, Špan, Jelenc). The official platform, drafted by Dušan Savićević and approved by the Commission for Foreign Relations, positioned Yugoslavia as one of 14 vice-presidents of the conference, with its experts leading multiple working groups (Savićević, 2006).

The last major UNESCO-affiliated event in which Yugoslavia took part was the World Conference *Education for All* (Jomtien, 1990), preceded by the European Consultative Conference (Council of Europe, Strasbourg, 1989).

Beyond UNESCO, Yugoslavia engaged in international collaborations across different political blocs. It hosted major conferences such as the International Symposium of Andragogists (in Poreč, 1972) and co-organized events with the Council of Europe, including the 1991 colloquium on adult education for the elderly. Scholars from all Yugoslav republics were active in global academic exchanges, attending conferences in Germany, Italy, the UK, and the USA, delivering guest lectures, and participating in research projects. At the same time, Yugoslavia hosted renowned adult education scholars, including Alan Knox, Peter Jarvis, Paul Bélanger, and Franz Pöggeler, and welcomed delegations such as the English Workers' Educational Association (WEA) in 1960 and a group of US professors in 1965, interested in Yugoslav andragogical models (Savićević, 2006).

---

[9] This conference served as an important opportunity to present Yugoslav theories and practices of adult education to the international community. Given the context of the "Cold War," the observations made were particularly significant. Speiser remarked: "It seems to me that what we now need, and what is already being done in some areas of the natural sciences, is to develop an international approach, international teamwork. The time has come to focus on adult education. I see that in some countries there are signs of this work, while in others, there are no such signs, so the sciences from one country, another, and a third could be connected, and people could work together. As you, Mr. President, said, this task should be entrusted to UNESCO, and it is a task for all experts working on education in Europe and other parts of the world" (Speiser, 1965, p. 287).

[10] Even a questionnaire sent by UNESCO on adult education went unanswered. This neglect of adult education in international forums was a consequence of the socio-political turmoil that affected Yugoslav society at the time (Savićević, 2006, p. 149).

As a member of the Non-Aligned Movement, Yugoslavia also sent a delegation to the International Conference of Non-Aligned and Developing Countries on Eradicating Illiteracy (North Korea, 1986), attended by 60 delegates from 35 countries, including a UNESCO representative (Savićević, 2006).

A particularly noteworthy recognition of Yugoslav adult education came from C. O. Houle, who, in a letter of recommendation for D. Savićević (written on 12 April 1967), wrote: "The countries with the longest and most sustainable tradition of adult education as a discipline are the USA, Canada, the UK, and Yugoslavia. It is also true that other countries have their own models, such as Denmark's folk high schools, but a broader consideration of adult education as a fully developed discipline is primarily characteristic of these four countries I have mentioned." (Savićević, 2006, p. 103–104).

Outstanding Contributors to Adult Education

Dušan Savićević

Among the leading figures in Yugoslav and international adult education, Dušan Savićević stands out as a key architect of andragogy as a scientific discipline and its professionalisation. His impact is widely recognized, with John Henschke describing him as "a towering figure working, researching, and publishing in andragogy for more than half a century", highlighting his contributions to mass media, self-directed learning, and comparative studies, spaning decades of research, theoretical elaboration, and institutional engagement, (Henschke, 2015, 2021).

Savićević was the founder of the first independent andragogy program at the University of Belgrade and an associated research institute while also serving as a relentless advocate for adult education worldwide. His work extended beyond Europe, reaching Latin America, China, and India. He conducted study visits and lectures across the Nordic countries, the UK, the USA (Chicago, Boston, Syracuse, Wisconsin, Los Angeles, Berkeley, Columbia University), and Canada (Vancouver, Toronto, Montreal). This exchange was mutual – he both introduced Yugoslav experiences abroad and integrated global developments into the Yugoslav context. His intellectual network included leading scholars such as A. Charters, M. Knowles, C. O. Houle, A. Knox, J. Kulich, and R. Kidd (Savićević, 2006).

A defining moment in his career was the First International Conference on Comparative Adult Education (Reischmann, 1966), which marked a turning point in comparative adult education studies. There, he presented the National

Report for Yugoslavia, later included in the Exeter Papers (Reischmann, 2021; Savićević, 2011). He also participated in the 7th General Conference of the International Federation for Workers' Education (in Milan, 1965), the Conference of the American Association for Adult Education in the USA, the National Association of Public Schools for Adult Education Conference, and the International Conference Learning How to Learn (in DeKalb, USA, 1987).

From 1967, he became a member of the Executive Committee of the International Congress for Adult Education (ICUAE), and from 1970, he served as its president. In this role, he actively shaped numerous processes in international adult education, influencing key events, networking, and policy developments.

He played a pivotal role in the founding consultations of ICAE (International Council for Adult Education) and was invited by R. Kidd to join its board in 1972 (ICAE, n.d.). He was also involved in ESTREA (European Society for Teaching and Research in Adult Education) and later supported the establishment of ESREA (European Society for Research on the Education of Adults) and the launch of the European Journal for Adult Education.

His engagement with UNESCO was particularly significant, beginning with his early visits to Paris. At the 1970 ICUAE Conference in Montreal, he proposed the creation of an international center for adult education information and expert positions to support university departments in developing countries. These proposals were integrated into the conference declaration, which also called for a global adult education conference. Later, he collaborated with Asher Deleon (head of UNESCO's Adult Education Department) and Paul Bertelsen in planning regional conferences for Europe, Africa, Asia, and Latin America, as well as professional seminars, symposia, and comparative research publications. Under his influence, the UNESCO Institute for Education in Hamburg further strengthened its role as a center for comparative adult education studies, expanding its engagement in international research and policy development (Savićević, 2006).

At the 16th UNESCO General Conference (1970), representing Yugoslavia and ICUAE, he proposed the creation of an International Institute for Comparative Studies in Adult Education. As UNESCO budget-related proposals had to be submitted by a member state, Yugoslavia formally introduced his initiative, which was supported by Germany, Norway, France, and several Arab and African countries. This led to an expert meeting on comparative adult education research (1972) and the development of European comparative studies on adult education systems and research methodologies (Savićević, 2006). Over two decades, he participated in UNESCO activities as a consultant, document contributor, and speaker at major conferences, emphasizing that his academic work and teaching

at the University of Belgrade actively and continuously promoted UNESCO's mission (Savićević, 2006).

Although Yugoslavia was not an OECD member, it actively engaged in international education policy, and Savićević contributed to OECD/CERI projects on adult and continuing education for nearly two decades (Savićević, 2006). He authored a few hundred publications, laying the foundations for specific areas of adult education research. Some of his works are translated to English (for example, Savićević, 1968, 1968a, 1981, 1991a, 1991b, 2008), with potentially more.

> "He had learned how to live within a restrictive system, but he did not allow himself to be controlled by it" (Henschke, 2021).

Ana Krajnc

Ana Krajnc played a pivotal role in establishing andragogy as a scientific discipline, defining its theoretical foundations and integrating it into both academic and professional frameworks. She was instrumental in distinguishing andragogy from pedagogy, emphasizing its autonomy as a field of study while highlighting its connection to broader educational sciences. In *Izobraževanje ob delu* (Education at Work), she systematically outlined andragogy's theoretical framework, positioning it as an essential component of lifelong learning and detailing its key research domains, including comparative studies, didactics, the history of adult education, and the sociocultural dimensions of learning.

Ana Krajnc, *la grande dame* of Yugoslav, Slovenian, and global andragogy (Popović, 2018) played a crucial role in the establishment of andragogy as a scientific discipline. As Govekar Okoliš (2024) notes, "The most important figure in the emergence and establishment of andragogy as a scientific discipline was Ana Krajnc, who was a prominent advocate of adult education" (p. 69). Her contributions extended beyond national developments and played a key role in shaping the international discourse on adult education.

In 1967, Krajnc joined the first international comparative empirical study, Adult Education, Social Mobility, and Social Participation (1967–1972), as a researcher at the Institute of Sociology and coordinator for Slovenia. The study was conducted in cooperation with Hamilton University in Canada and involved experts from the United States, Poland, Czechoslovakia, and the Netherlands. The findings were later incorporated into her doctoral dissertation, with parts published in 1973 by the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (OISE) under the title Adult Education and Social Participation (Krajnc, 1973).

From 1976 to 1988, the results of this research were further integrated into the UNESCO project The Systems of Adult Education in Europe (Krajnc, 2011), which produced a country-by-country analysis of adult education systems. This large-scale comparative study provided a systematic foundation for developing the first andragogical textbooks in Slovenia, many of which Krajnc authored between 1976 and 1982. As Govekar Okoliš (2024) highlights, "This research served as the basis for the first textbooks on andragogy, which were written by Ana Krajnc (1976, 1977, 1978a, 1978b, 1982) and Jože Valentinčič (1973, 1983)" (p. 70).

Alongside her contributions to the UNESCO project, Krajnc was at the forefront of institutionalizing andragogy as an academic discipline at the University of Ljubljana, where she designed and introduced courses such as Theory of Adult Education, Comparative Andragogy, and Andragogical Didactics. By 1976, andragogy had been formally recognised as a distinct academic specialization, offering structured education in general andragogy, andragogical didactics, and later, industrial andragogy – which contributed to a more systematic and research-driven approach to the field.

Krajnc was also among the earliest researchers to explore distance education for adults, a concept that was still in its infancy at the time. Recognizing its potential for expanding access to learning, she examined how technology and alternative delivery methods could enhance participation in adult education beyond traditional classroom settings. Her pioneering work in this area anticipated many of the developments that would later define online and blended learning models.

Later in her career, she became a leading figure in education for older adults, both in theoretical research and practical implementation. She developed innovative programs that promoted active aging, intergenerational learning, and the role of lifelong education in enhancing the quality of life in later years. Her work significantly influenced the development of geragogical studies in Slovenia and provided a foundation for integrating aging populations into lifelong learning policies.

Beyond her academic and research contributions, Krajnc played an important role in shaping international discussions on adult education. As a member of the Executive Committee of the International Council for Adult Education (ICAE – ICAE, n.d.), she actively participated in global policy development, strategic planning, and research coordination, helping to align international adult education efforts with contemporary societal challenges. Her collaborations extended across Boston (Knowles), São Paulo (Freire), Prague (Škoda), Belgrade (Savićević), Rome (De Sanctis), Toronto (Kidd), Tübingen (Dohmen),

and Florence (Federighi), strengthening a comparative approach to adult education and positioning Slovenia within the broader European and global discourse (Govekar Okoliš, 2024).

Her continued engagement in UNESCO research projects, policy discussions, and professional networks further amplified her impact. By integrating comparative perspectives, promoting interdisciplinary collaboration, and contributing to foundational research, Krajnc helped establish adult education as a critical component of lifelong learning strategies. Through her extensive work in education policy, research, and academic institution-building, Krajnc reinforced the role of adult education within lifelong learning frameworks, particularly through her contributions to comparative research, policy development, and the advancement of several key subfields, such as education for older adults. She not only developed this field conceptually but also played a practical role in establishing a network of Universities of the Third Age. Her inspiration for this endeavor dates back to 1976 when she attended a lecture by Paul Lengrand, who introduced the concept of continuing education and the Universities of the Third Age (Govekar Okoliš, 2024).

Ašer Deleon

Of all Yugoslav authors, Ašer Deleon played the most significant role at UNESCO, where he worked for many years in the Adult Education and Literacy sector. Since 1963, he served as Director of UNESCO's Department of Adult Education and Youth Activities. A former Secretary of the Central Council of Yugoslav Trade Unions, Deleon had been a member of UNESCO's International Advisory Committee for Adult Education since 1953 and also worked as UNESCO's Adviser for Out-of-School Education to the Government of India.

As director of UNESCO's large-scale experimental literacy program, launched at the General Conference, Deleon initially focused on literacy issues (Deleon, 1968), later expanding his work to include workers' education (Deleon, 1963–64) and, eventually, the broader concept of lifelong education (Deleon, 1976). His contributions were instrumental in shaping UNESCO's literacy and adult education programs during the 1960s and 1970s.

A key aspect of his career was his role as Executive Secretary of the Faure Commission, responsible for preparing the landmark Faure Report on education for the 21st century (see his article on the Faure Report – Deleon, 1996). M. Elfert discusses Deleon's role, stating: "Asher Deleon, a national of Yugoslavia, held the position of secretary of the Commission, and he played a crucial role

in the organization of the work. Deleon was a friend of Paul Lengrand's and a man Lengrand greatly admired as 'one of the richest personalities I ever had the privilege to deal with' (Lengrand, 1994, p. 108; ME translation). Lengrand called him 'un communiste de bon aloi' ('the right kind of communist,' or a 'genuine communist'), who had done tremendous service to the UNESCO education sector (p. 109).

His own reflections on the process and the Report were later published (Deleon, 1974, 1976; Popović, 2014)

> "Deleon came from the Yugoslav trade union movement. Maheu appointed him to supervise the work of John Bowers on the fundamental education program, and Deleon went on to manage the EWLP. He was instrumental in shaping the concept of functional literacy, which underpinned the EWLP" (Jones, 1988, pp. 142, 148 as cited in Elfert, 2018, p. 113; Deleon, 1968).

Elfert (2018) further explains how Deleon played a diplomatic role in managing ideological tensions, particularly in de-escalating conflicts with the Soviet delegation, and in addressing criticisms of the report's political undertones. He was a strong advocate for the Faure Report, deliberately linking education to broader political, economic, and social issues, rather than treating it in isolation.

Years after the Faure Report, Deleon also served as Secretary of the McBride Commission, which in 1980 published the influential McBride Report *Many Voices, One World*, on communications and mass media. The report proposed the New World Communication and Information Order (NWCIO), a policy framework that sought to address global inequalities in media access and control. However, the report was fiercely criticized by the United States, which viewed it as an attack on press freedom. The political fallout over the report ultimately led to the withdrawal of the United States and the United Kingdom from UNESCO (Elfert, p. 120).

Concluding Remarks

Yugoslav scholars played a formative role in shaping adult education as a system, a scientific discipline, and a profession, positioning it within global discussions. Although rooted in a socialist and self-management ideology, their work reflected the broader political project of education as a tool for economic development, social mobility, and collective participation. Unlike in many other countries, where adult education remained more a practical endeavour, Yugoslav scholars system-

atically developed andragogy as a scientific discipline, integrating psychological, sociological, and economic perspectives.

At the same time, the professionalisation of adult education was pursued with remarkable intensity, ensuring that the field was not only conceptualized academically but also structured as a distinct area of expertise. The institutionalisation of study programmes, specialised training initiatives, and professional networks created a strong foundation for adult education, both nationally and internationally.

Yugoslav scholars were also deeply engaged in international discussions, particularly through UNESCO and other global initiatives. Their work in shaping comparative research, functional literacy programmes, and policies on lifelong learning left a lasting impact, influencing debates far beyond the country's borders. The intellectual and institutional contributions of figures such as Savićević, Krajnc, and Deleon demonstrate the extent to which Yugoslav expertise was recognized and sought after on the international stage.

Even after the dissolution of Yugoslavia and the wars of the 1990s, adult education in the post-Yugoslav states recovered more rapidly than it could be expected after the very troubled period. Despite political and economic challenges, these countries quickly reconnected with international networks, bodies and organisations, projects, and scholarly publications, reaffirming their place in global discussions on adult learning. "This challenging period can be regarded as an unintended experiment, demonstrating the possibility of nearly losing an adult education system within a country while preserving the intellectual rigor of scientific thought. In the context of Serbia, andragogy became a vital link between past achievements and the establishment of a new beginning" (Popović et al., 2024, p. 89). Upholding its core principles and holistic approach, andragogy played "a pivotal role in bridging the gap between the past and the present, leading to the revitalisation of adult education" (p. 85). This continued engagement serves as further evidence of the lasting legacy of Yugoslav scholarship in adult education, demonstrating the enduring influence of its institutions, research traditions, and intellectual contributions.[11]

Despite the dissolution of Yugoslavia, many of its scholars' foundational ideas continue to resonate in contemporary discussions on adult education. Their work on the scientific conceptualization of adult education and contributions

---

[11] "That small, confident, and dynamic andragogical community was part of a powerful global movement, with Yugoslav authors among its leading figures – they lectured on adult education around the world, collaborated with UNESCO and the Council of Europe, wrote and published extensively. This group of scholars made Yugoslav andragogy a globally recognized and influential phenomenon in science, policy, and practice, inspiring generations of students, who remain proud and deeply committed to the field." (Popović, 2018, 91).

to the establishment of the system remained within the ideological framework of communist, later socialist thought. Nevertheless, their commitment to a holistic, interdisciplinary, and socially engaged approach to adult learning remains relevant today, particularly in bridging ideological and systemic divides through scientific principles. By deepening our understanding of their legacy, this research highlights not only their historical significance but also their enduring impact on contemporary adult education debates.

References

Andrilović, V. (1973). *Osnovno opće obrazovanje odraslih i programirana nastava.* Školska knjiga.

Andrilović, V. (1976). *Kako odrastao čovjek uči.* Školska knjiga.

Andrilović, V., Matijević, M., Pastuović, N., Pongrac, S., & Špan, M. (1985). *Andragogija*. Školska knjiga.

Bondžić, D. (2010). Opismenjavanje u Jugoslaviji i Srbiji u periodu 1945–1950: nasleđe, ciljevi, tok, rezultati i nedostaci. *Andragoške studije*, *1*, 91–110.

Brager, L. B. (2004) *The Iron Curtain: The Cold War in Europe.* Chelsea House Pub.

Burcar, L. (2020). *Restauracija kapitalizma: repatrijarhalizacija društva*. Centar za ženske studije, Institut za etnologiju i folkloristiku.

Churchill, W. (1946, March 5). *The sinews of peace*. Westminster College. https://www.nato.int/docu/speech/1946/s460305a_e.htm

Cooper, M. K., & Henschke, J. H. (2001). Andragogija: osnovi teorije, istraživanja i praktičnog povezivanja. *Andragoške studije, 1*(2), 5–14.

Cumings, B. (2011). *The Korean War: A History.* Paperback.

Davenport, J., & Davenport, J. A. (1985). Andragogical-pedagogical orientations of adult learners: Research results and practice recommendations. *Lifelong Learning, 9*(1), 6–8.

Deleon, A. (1963–64). Basic trends in workers' education. *IRE, 9*, 301–307.

Deleon, A. (1968). A down-to-earth approach to literacy. *The UNESCO Courier: A Window Open on the World, 21*(4), 9–12.

Deleon, A. (1974). Reading and misreading *Learning to Be. Prospects, 4*(2), 181–188.

Deleon, A. (1976). *Lifelong education: A philosophy or strategy.* UNESCO Regional Office for Education in Asia.

Deleon, A. (1996, April). 'Learning to Be' in retrospect. *The UNESCO Courier*, 12–14.

Despotović, M. (1986). Institucionalni i programski razvoj radničkih univerziteta. *Andragogija*, *32*(4–6).

Despotović, M., & Popović, K. (2014). Strategije obrazovanja odraslih – želje, potrebe, mogućnosti i rezultati. In B. Knežić, A. Pejatović, & Z. Milošević (Eds.) *Institut za pedagogiju i andragogiju* (pp. 47–68).

Dimić, Lj. (1988). *Agitprop kultura, Agitprpovska faza kulture politike u Srbiji 1945–195.* Rad.

Đukić, P. (1995) *Iskušenja ekonomske politike*, Beograd, PS Grmeč–AD Privredni pregled.

Elfert, M. (2018). *UNESCO's utopia of lifelong learning: An intellectual history*. Routledge.

Elias, J. I. (1979). Andragogy revisited. *Adult Education*, *29*(4), 252–256.

Faculty of Philosophy, University of Belgrade, Department of Andragogy. (2017). *Internal records on student graduation and defended theses in andragogy*. Unpublished document.

Filipović, D. (1971). *Permanentno obrazovanje – suština i konsekvence*, Leskovac, Naša reč.

Filipović, D. (1974). Lifelong education in Yugoslavia. *International Review of Education, 20*(4), 525–532.

Filipović, M. (1987). Lifelong and recurrent education. In N. N. Šoljan (Ed.), *Adult education in Yugoslav society* (pp. 165–172-xx). Andragoški centar.

Gaddis, J. L. (2005). *The Cold War: A New History.* Penguin Press.

Govekar Okoliš, M. (2024). Development of adult education and andragogy in Slovenia. *Studies in Adult Education and Learning*, *30*(1), 53–85.

Grupa autora. (1966). *Osnovi andragogije.* Zavod za izdavanje udžbenika.

Hanselmann, H. H. (1951). Andragogik: Wesen, Möglichkeiten, Grenzen der Erwachsenenbildung [Andragogy: Nature, possibilities and boundaries of adult education]. Rotapfel Verlag.

Henschke, J. (2015). *Dušan M. Savićević – world's best andragogy researcher: Inspiration for my andragogical research perspective. Andragogical Studies, 2*(2), 39–68.

Henschke, J. (2021). *Facilitating Adult and Organizational Learning Through Andragogy: A History, Philosophy, and Major Themes*. Hershey, PA: IGI-Global.

Henschke, J. (n.d.-a). *Dušan M. Savićević – world's best andragogy researcher: Inspiration for my andragogical research perspective*. Retrieved from https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED613288.pdf

ICAE. (n.d.). *ICAE archives*. Internal records (K. Popović)

IMF. (2024). *Articles of agreement of the International Monetary Fund*. International Monetary Fund. https://www.state.gov/wp-content/uploads/2024/11/IMF-Status-Table-Turkiye-Update.pdf

Kardelj, E. (1976). *Istorijski koreni nesvrstavanja.* Komunist.

Knowles, M. S. (1989). *The making of an adult educator*. Jossey-Bass.

Kongres andragoga Jugoslavije (1969). Zagreb, Savez radničkih i narodnih sveučilišta Hrvatske.

Kongres andragoga Jugoslavije (1973). Suvremena andragoška teorija i praksa u Jugoslaviji, Beograd, Savez andragoških društava Jugoslavije.

Kongres andragoga Jugoslavije (1980). Andragoška funkcija organizacija udruženog rada: Faktor razvoja produktivnosti, dohodovnosti i samoupravljanja, Skopje, Savez andragoških društava Jugoslavije.

Kongres andragoga Jugoslavije (1985). Knj.1. Obrazovanje odraslih u društveno-ekonomskom razvoju. Zagreb, Andragoški centar.

Kongres andragoga Jugoslavije (1990). Andragoška nauka i praksa u susret trećem milenijumu, Zagreb, Andragoški centar.

Krajnc, A. (1973). *Educational values and social participation.* Ontario Institute for Studies in Education.

Krajnc, A. (1976). *Andragoški pogovori s predavatelji.* Zveza delavskih univerz Slovenije.

Krajnc, A. (1979). *Izobraževanje ob delu: Obča andragogika.* Dopisna delavska univerza.

Krajnc, A. (1981). *Metodika dopisnega izobraževanja.* Dopisna delavska univerza „Univerzum".

Krajnc, A. (1989). The possibilities of in-service and recurrent higher education. In N. N. Šoljan & H.-G. Schütze (Eds.), *Higher education and the world of work: An OECD/CERI-Yugoslav report* (pp. 67–76). Andragoški centar.

Krajnc, A. (2011). Študij andragogike in izobraževanje andragogov. *Andragoška spoznanja/ Studies in Adult Education and Learning*, *17*(2), 12–27.

Kulich, J. (1971). *Adult education in continental Europe: An annotated bibliography of English-language materials, 1945–1969.* Toronto: Department of Adult Education, Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, & Center for Continuing Education, University of British Columbia.

Kulich, J. (1975). *Adult education in continental Europe: An annotated bibliography of English-language materials, 1970–1974.* Vancouver: Centre for Continuing Education, University of British Columbia, & Department of Adult Education, Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, in association with the International Council for Adult Education.

Lengrand, P. (1976). *Uvod u permanentno obrazovanje.* Beogradski izdavačko-grafički zavod.

Lengrand, P. (1970). Introduction à l'éducation permanente. UNESCO

Matijević, M. (1984). *Učimo uz rad*. Birotehnika.

McKenzie, L. (1977). The issue of andragogy. *Adult Education*, 27(4), 225–224.

McKenzie, L. (1979). A response to Elias. *Adult Education*, 29(4), 256–261.

Mihaljčić, R. (Ed.). (1998). *Filozofski fakultet 1838 – 1998*. Filozofski fakultet.

Mikulec, B., & Govekar Okoliš, M. (2024). Editorial: Andragogy in Slovenia and other former Yugoslavian countries: Past, present, and future perspectives. *Andragoška spoznanja/Studies in Adult Education and Learning*, 30(1), 11–17.

Mrmak, I. (1969). Stanje naše andragoške teorije i metodološki problemi daljnjeg konstituisanja andragogije kao nauke. In I *Kongres andragoga Jugoslavije* (1968), *Savremena andragoška teorija i praksa u Jugoslaviji* (pp. 29–48). Savez narodnih i radničkih sveučilišta SRH.

Mrmak, I. (1975). *Samoobrazovanje.* Vojnoizdavački zavod.

Mrmak, I. (1978). *Prilozi marksističkom zasnivanju vaspitanja i obrazovanja.* Republički zavod za unapređivanje vaspitanja i obrazovanja.

Munton, D., & Welch, D. A. (2011). *The Cuban Missile Crisis: A Concise History.* Oxford University Press.

Ogrizović, M. (1956). *Osnovni problemi andragogije.* Savez narodnih sveučilišta Hrvatske.

Ogrizović, M. (1956a). *Osnovni problemi penološke andragogije.* Izdanje škole DSUP-NRH.

Ogrizović, M. (1959). *Problemi andragogije.* Savez narodnih sveučilišta Hrvatske.

Ogrizović, M. (1963). *Problemi andragogije.* Savez radničkih i narodnih univerziteta Hrvatske.

Ogrizović, M., & Sučić, S. (1983). *Dvadeset pet godina rada škole za andragoške kadrove.* Andragoški centar.

Ovesni, K. (2018). Professionalisation in the field of adult education and learning in the territory of former Yugoslavia. *Andragoška spoznanja/Studies in Adult Education and Learning, 24*(4), 19–36.

Pastuović, N. (1978). *Obrazovni ciklus.* Andragoški centar.

Pastuović, N. (1999). *Edukologija: integrativna znanost o sustavu cjeloživotnog obrazovanja i odgoja.* Znamen.

Pastuović, N. (2008). Razvoj znanosti o obrazovanju odraslih. *Andragoški glasnik, 21,* (2),109–117.

Pastuović, N. (2022). „Andragogija protiv pedagogije" – pedeset godina poslije: slučaj Hrvatska. *Napredak, 163*(1–2), 25–49.

Petranović, B. (1988). *Istorija Jugoslavije 1918–1988, Treća knjiga, Socijalistička Jugoslavija 1945–1988.* Rad.

Pöggeler, F. (1957). *Handbuch der Erwachsenenbildung, in 8 Bdn., Bd. 1, Erwachsenenbildung, Einführung in die Andragogik.* Ratingen: Henn Verlag.

Pongrac, S. (1987). Development in correspondence education. In N. Šoljan, M. Golubović, A. Krajnc, S. Bašić, & V. Ivir (Eds.), Adult education in Yugoslav society (pp. 419–425). Andragoški centar.

Popović – Ceković, K. (1993). Religiöse und marxistische Erziehung – Beispiel Jugoslawien. In F. J. Klehr (Ed.), *Christliche Erziehung in multikultureller Gesellschaft, Hohenheimer Protokolle 42* (pp. 219–229). Akademie der Diözese Rottenburg – Stuttgart.

Popović, K. (2014). Evropska i globalna politika obrazovanja odraslih – koncepti, paradigme i pristupi. Institut za pedagogiju i andragogiju Filozofskog fakulteta Univerziteta u Beogradu, Društvo za obrazovanje odraslih.

Popović, K. (2018). Ana Krajnc. In N. Ličen, D. Findeisen, & A. Šantej (Eds.), Liber amicorum: Človek mora biti dovolj drzen, da zagovarja svoje vrednote. Pripovedi o sodelovanju z Ano Krajnc, zaslužno profesorico Univerze v Ljubljani in predsednico Slovenske univerze za tretje življenjsko obdobje (pp. 91–92). Znanstvena založba Filozofske fakultete Univerze v Ljubljani.

Popović, K., Orlović Lovren, V., Pejatović, A., & Despotović, M. (2024). Andragogy – Dynamic past, challenging present, and uncertain future: The example of Serbia. *Andragoška spoznanja/Studies in Adult Education and Learning*, 2024, (1), 85–103.

Popović-Ceković, K. (1991). Ciljevi vaspitanja i obrazovanja odraslih kod jugoslovenskih autora. *Vaspitanje i obrazovanje, 2*, 3–15.

Pratt, D. D. (1988). Andragogy as a relational construct. *Adult Education Quarterly, 38*(3).

Prodanović, T. (1973). Čovjek i samoobrazovanje. Svjetlost.

Rajak, S. (2013). *Yugoslavia and the Soviet Union in the Early Cold War: Reconciliation, comradeship, confrontation, 1953–1957*. Routledge.

Ramet, S. (2002). *Balkan Babel: The Disintegration of Yugoslavia, From the Death of Tito to the Fall of Milošević*. Routledge.

Reischmann, J. (Ed.). (2021). *Essential readings in international and comparative adult education*. Ziel Verlag.

Rosenstock, E. (1924). *Andragogik*. Verlag der Arbeitgemeinschaft.

Samolovčev, B. (1963). *Obrazovanje odraslih u prošlosti i danas*. Znanje.

Samolovčev, B. (1981). *Osnovi na andragogijata*. Univerzitet „Kiril i Metodij".

Samolovčev, B. (1987). *Savremeni tokovi u obrazovanju odraslih*. Misao.

Samolovčev, B., & Muradbegović, H. (1979). *Opšta andragogija*. Veselin Masleša.

Savezna Skupština Jugoslavije. (1970). *Rezolucija o razvoju vaspitanja i obrazovanja na samoupravnoj osnovi*. Službeni list SFRJ, br. 5.

Savićević, D. (1961). *Primjena metoda u obrazovanju odraslih*. Savez narodnog sveučilišta Hrvatske.

Savićević, D. (1968). *The System of Adult Education in Yugoslavia*. Syracuse University Press.

Savićević, D. (1968a). *Training Adult Educationists in Yugoslavia. Convergence*, *1*(1).

Savićević, D. (1975). *Povratno obrazovanje*. BIGZ.

Savićević, D. (1981). *Comparing Adult Education Worldwide*, Chapter: *Adult Education Systems in European Socialist Countries: Similarities and Differences*, 37–90.

Savićević, D. (1983). *Čovjek i doživotno obrazovanje*. Republički zavod za unapređenje školstva.

Savićević, D. (1991a). *Adult Education: From Practice to Theory Building*. Peter Lang.

Savićević, D. (1991b). *Modern Conception of Andragogy: A European Framework. Studies in the Education of Adults*, *3*(2).

Savićević, D. (1999). *Understanding andragogy in Europe and America: Comparing and contrasting*. In J. Reischmann, M. Bron, & Z. Jelenc (Eds.), *Comparative adult education 1998: The contribution of ISCAE to an emerging field of study* (pp. 97–119). Slovenian Institute for Adult Education.

Savićević, D. (2008). *Convergence or divergence of ideas on andragogy in different countries. International Journal of Lifelong Education*, 27(4), 361–378.

Savićević, D. (2011). *Andragoške ideje u međunarodnim okvirima*. Institut za pedagogiju i andragogiju Filozofskog fakulteta u Beogradu i Društvo za obrazovanje odraslih.

Savićević, D. M. (2006). *Andragoške ideje u međunarodnim okvirima*. Institut za pedagogiju i andragogiju; Društvo za obrazovanje odraslih.

Sopher, M. J. (2003). *An Historical Biography of Malcolm S. Knowles: The Remaking of an Adult Educator* (Unpublished doctoral dissertation). University of Wisconsin-Madison, Department of Continuing, Adult and Vocational Education. Retrieved from https://profiles.umsl.edu/ws/portalfiles/portal/39841206/fulltext.pdf

Speiser, W. (1965). *Diskusija*. In D. Savićević (Ed.), *Sistem obrazovanja odraslih*. SNRS.

Stopic, Z., Niebuhr, R., & Pickus, D. (2025). *Yugoslavia, Nonalignment and Cold War Globalism: Tito's International Rise, Celebrity and Fall*. Routledge.

Stubbs, P. (Ed.). (2023). *Socialist Yugoslavia and the Non-Aligned Movement: Social, Cultural, Political, and Economic Imaginaries*. McGill-Queen's University Press.

SZS. (1949). *Statistički godišnjak za 1949. godinu*. FNRJ, Savezni zavod za statistiku.

SZSa. (1949). *Statistički godišnjak za 1953. godinu*. FNRJ Savezni zavod za statistiku.

Šoljan, N. (1981). *Povratno obrazovanje i promjene u politici i sistemu obrazovanja*. Zavod za pedagogiju Filozofskog fakulteta Sveučilišta.

Šoljan, N., Golubović, M., Krajnc, A., Bašić, S., & Ivir, V. (1985). *Adult education in Yugoslav society*. Andragoški centar.

Špan, M. (1980). *Model multimedijskog obrazovanja za samoupravljanje*. Birotehnika.

Šuvar, S. (1982). *Vizija i stvarnost u socijalističkom preobražaju obrazovanja*. Sveučilište u Osijeku – Pedagoški fakultet.

Valderrama, F. (1995). *A history of UNESCO*. UNESCO Publishing.

Zaharijević, A. (2017). The strange case of Yugoslav feminism: Feminism and socialism in 'the East'. *Authors, Montenegrin Journal for Social Sciences*, *1*(2), 135–156.

Zvonarević, M. (1958). *Primjena psihologije u obrazovanju odraslih*. Savez narodnih sveučilišta NR Hrvatske. 105 str. Biblioteka Obrazovanje odraslih.

Mojca Leskovec[1], Nina Tušek[2]

Teaching Foreign Languages to Older Adults: The Development of Geragogical Foreign- -Language Didactics in Slovenia

Abstract: Older adults frequently participate in non-formal foreign-language programmes. Despite the wide range of courses offered by various institutions in Slovenia, it remains unclear whether the specific characteristics, learning needs and potential obstacles of older learners are adequately considered in course design and implementation. The review of literature reveals lack of both quantitative and qualitative research on the motives and barriers influencing older adults' participation in language courses, both in the Slovenian and the wider European contexts. This paper aims to address the gap between the diverse educational offerings available and the actual needs of older learners. Drawing on pluralistic approaches to languages and cultures, as well as on the principles of foreign-language teaching in the post-method era, whilst taking into account the target group's educational needs in light of the emerging field of geragogical foreign-language didactics, we propose a set of guidelines to enhance the quality and effectiveness of language teaching for older adults.

Keywords: foreign languages, education of older adults, teaching older adults, geragogical didactics

Podučavanje starijih osoba stranim jezicima: razvoj geragogijske didaktike stranih jezika u Sloveniji

Apstrakt: Starije osobe često učestvuju u neformalnim programima učenja stranih jezika. Uprkos širokoj ponudi kurseva koje nude različite institucije u Sloveniji, i dalje nije dovoljno jasno da li se prilikom osmišljavanja i realizacije nastave u dovoljnoj meri uzimaju

[1] University of Ljubljana, Slovenia, https://orcid.org/0009-0008-4683-5747 (mojca.leskovec@ff.uni-lj.si)

[2] University of Ljubljana, Slovenia, https://orcid.org/0009-0000-5327-4820 (nina.tusek@ff.uni-lj.si)

u obzir specifične karakteristike, obrazovne potrebe i potencijalne prepreke sa kojima se suočavaju stariji polaznici. Pregled literature ukazuje na nedostatak kako kvantitativnih, tako i kvalitativnih istraživanja motiva i barijera koji utiču na pohađanje kurseva stranih jezika od strane starijih osoba, kako u slovenačkom, tako i u širem evropskom kontekstu. Ovaj rad ima za cilj da doprinese prevazilaženju jaza između raznovrsne obrazovne ponude i stvarnih potreba starijih polaznika. Polazeći od pluralističkih pristupa jezicima i kulturama, kao i od načela nastave stranih jezika u postmetodskoj eri, te uzimajući u obzir obrazovne potrebe ciljne grupe u svetlu razvoja geragogijske didaktike stranih jezika, u radu predlažemo skup smernica za unapređenje kvaliteta i efikasnosti nastave stranih jezika namenjene starijim osobama.

Ključne reči: strani jezici, obrazovanje starijih osoba, podučavanje starijih osoba, didaktički pristupi u obrazovanju starijih

Introduction

Learning foreign languages is one of the most popular areas of education among older adults,[3] as evidenced by the schedules of various educational institutions in Slovenia, including Universities of the Third Age, day activity centres, adult education centres and the Faculty of Active Wisdom at the University of Ljubljana. The belief prevails that older adults have reduced abilities to learn foreign languages. However, in accordance with the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) (Council of Europe, 2011), the goal of language education is not merely to achieve balanced mastery of individual languages, but also to develop a language repertoire in which all linguistic competences have their place. Previously acquired knowledge and experiences are therefore not negligible factors in foreign-language learning; on the contrary, they contribute significantly to its effectiveness. An individual's communicative competence is built upon their cumulative linguistic knowledge and experience. Since these are typically rich and diverse among older adults, it is important to actively incorporate them into foreign-language teaching for this target group. Research on the use of pluralistic approaches in language education has so far focused mainly on primary and secondary education.

     The aim of this paper is to address part of the gap between the wide range of educational offerings in foreign languages and the understanding of the actual educational needs of older adults. Drawing on a review of the literature, this paper outlines the key motives and barriers shaping older adults' participation in foreign-language courses, critically examines pedagogical approaches used with

---

[3] In this chapter, older adults are defined as individuals over the age of 65 who are no longer part of the active workforce.

this group and proposes a set of guidelines for high-quality instruction grounded in the emerging field of geragogical foreign-language didactics.

Foreign-Language Learning among Older Adults

Older adults often include participation in non-formal educational programmes among their leisure activities. Foreign-language learning is frequently one of their choices. The various factors that influence an older adult's decision to participate in an educational programme include their gender, age, level of education, attitude toward learning, as well as motives and barriers, which will be the focus of the following discussion (Chang & Lin, 2011).

Motives for Participation in Language Courses

Understanding the motives that lead older adults to participate in educational programmes is essential for educators, given that these motives, together with the learners' needs, beliefs and values, inform the selection of appropriate strategies for planning educational provision (Findsen & Formosa, 2011, p. 118). According to Krajnc (2016), older adults typically cite personal interest as the main reason for engaging in such educational programmes.

Findsen and Formosa (2011, p. 120) summarise Houle's typology of adult learning motives, categorising learners into three groups: the first includes goal-oriented learners who view learning merely as a means to achieve a final objective; the second comprises those motivated by the activity itself, including social interaction and the learning process; and the third includes those motivated by the acquisition of knowledge, skill development and personal growth.

Research has identified certain dominant motives for older adults' participation in educational programmes, including language courses. These motives include, notably, learning driven by personal interest, which determines the relevance of an educational programme to an individual's needs, a factor that educational programme planners should consider (Duay & Bryan, 2008). Another notable motive is participation for social inclusion within the programme, highlighting the importance of maintaining or establishing social connections among older adults (Åberg, 2016; Boulton-Lewis & Buys, 2015). Findsen and McCullough (2007) also note that life transitions in older age can act as a motivational factor.

Beyond general motives for participation in educational programmes, specific motives for attending language courses warrant attention. Within the

European research context, a study in Poland explored foreign-language learning among older adults. Klimczak-Pawlak and Kossakowska-Pisarek (2018) included 54 participants in an English course, aged 50 to 59, who, while not strictly categorised as older adults, were undergoing the transition to later adulthood and retirement. The study identified their key motives for learning English through questionnaires and semi-structured interviews. The participants highlighted the necessity of acquiring active English skills, although only a small share (6%) explicitly mentioned practical use during travel. Another important motive was communication with family and relatives abroad, alongside maintaining activity and cognitive alertness. The authors also note the social pressure arising from the ubiquitous presence of English in society (Klimczak-Pawlak & Kossakowska-Pisarek, 2018, p. 259).

In Slovenia, early research on older adults' motives for language-course participation includes the study by Zavrl and Radovan (2016, p. 13), which identifies love of the language, travel, active leisure, general interest in learning and communication in the target language as key motives for learning Spanish. Miklič (2018, p. 62) likewise highlights the importance of acquiring new knowledge, enhancing existing skills and maintaining cognitive function. Lah and Lamy-Joswiak (2025, pp. 190, 196) report that participants in French courses at the Faculty of Active Wisdom at the University of Ljubljana enrolled primarily due to a desire to renew and extend their knowledge, interest in languages and culture, social connections and family ties abroad, confirming that intrinsic motivation is central among older learners.

Overall, research indicates that older adults predominantly pursue courses out of personal interest, fascination with the language and culture, the need for active communication in a foreign language and the desire to maintain an active lifestyle and/or cognitive function. The programme planners must, however, also consider the barriers that discourage participation. Limited research, dating back only to the previous decade, highlights the scarcity of data in the field of geragogical foreign-language education in Slovenia and underscores the need for further study and development, as language courses are widely offered by various providers of educational programmes for older adults in Slovenia.

Barriers to Participation in Language Courses

As noted, older adults' decisions to participate in educational programmes are shaped by a range of factors, among which educational barriers play a particularly important role, as they may discourage participation altogether. The most

frequently identified barriers are situational in nature and include economic, social, locational and family-related factors. Older adults are less likely to enrol in educational programmes if they are coping with the loss of a loved one, have a low income, live far from the place where the programme is offered, or lack time (Kump & Jelenc Krašovec, 2010; Tam, 2016; Wang et al., 2016). Loneliness can further reduce older adults' willingness to participate, as they are more inclined to engage in new activities in the company of friends, partners or acquaintances and are less likely to join unfamiliar activities on their own (Hu, 2023, p. 49).

In addition to situational barriers, dispositional barriers also play a significant role. They are rooted in negative prior educational experiences in formal or non-formal settings, as well as in beliefs about one's own (in)ability to learn later in life (Kump & Jelenc Krašovec, 2010, p. 26). Another characteristic barrier for this group is the presence of chronic health conditions, as highlighted in Hu's qualitative study (2023, p. 46).

Finally, institutional barriers are those over which programme providers have complete control. These include ensuring adequate accessibility of programme locations, adapted schedules and the appropriate selection of teaching methods and content (Kump & Jelenc Krašovec, 2010, p. 26). Hu (2023, p. 50) adds that some providers do not even assess the needs of older adults, which is fundamental for programme planning. Even a high-quality programme will not be attended if information about it does not reach the target group, a finding supported by Menéndez et al. (2018, p. 602), who note in a systematic review of higher-education offerings for older adults that many studies highlight the lack of information available to the intended participants. The information gap reflects a mismatch between the diverse educational offerings available and the understanding of older adults' needs and barriers. Effective communication requires a good understanding of the target group's characteristics, expectations and potential obstacles, enabling appropriate message adaptation and choice of communication channels.

Owing to the limited number of studies examining barriers to older adults' participation in language courses, it remains difficult to fully identify the factors that hinder their engagement, despite clear evidence that such barriers exist. Hubenthal (2004) explored barriers to learning English as a second language among older Russian migrants living in the United States. The qualitative study included ten participants over 64, seven of whom were women. The study identified several barriers specific to older learners, including memory-related difficulties and the perception that language learning requires greater effort at an older age, even though the participants believed that learning a new language later in life was still possible (Hubenthal, 2004, pp. 115–116). Given the study's focus on

migrants, feelings of shame also emerged as a significant barrier, as participants perceived their language progress as insufficient. This often led to frustration when attempting to construct more complex sentences or engage in conversations with native speakers and ultimately influenced their willingness to participate in English language courses.

Health issues, whether acute or chronic, affecting either the learners themselves or their close relatives, can further discourage continued participation in language learning (Hubenthal, 2004, p. 116). Hubenthal also notes that course proximity and accessibility were not adequately adapted to the needs and preferences of older adults.

Role of the Foreign-Language Educator through the Eyes of Older Adults

The role of the educator for older adults is crucial in the field of geragogical foreign-language education, which has only begun to develop in recent years in the Slovenian academic context. Duay and Bryan (2008, p. 1078) highlight the importance of the educator in a qualitative study examining the characteristics of the educational experience valued by older adults when participating in educational programmes. One of the key co-creators of the learning experience is the educator, who, according to older adults, should be enthusiastic, professional, open-minded, recognise the value of older adults' experiences, use simple expressions and create a pleasant atmosphere within the group (Duay & Bryan, 2008, pp. 1076–1079). Duay and Bryan (2008) observed that older learners favour educational environments that differ from traditional school settings with fixed deadlines and rigid expectations, since their engagement in learning is motivated mainly by personal interests.

Grotek (2018, pp. 131–132) also investigated the characteristics of foreign-language educators for older adults in a qualitative study involving 87 participants enrolled in language courses in Katowice. Over 90% of the participants were women, aged between 58 and 83, who attended language courses between three and five years (Grotek, 2018). Grotek (2018, p. 133) categorises the desired educator characteristics into five groups. The participants emphasised (1) the educator's professional competence in preparing learners for clear communication in the target language. Older adults in the study preferred focus on active language use, including speaking and/or listening comprehension and correct pronunciation, while grammar knowledge ranked lower on their priority list (Grotek, 2018, p. 135). As mentioned, social engagement and the importance of

well-being within the group is one of older adults' motives for participating in educational programmes. The participants accordingly identified (2) creation of a pleasant and relaxed group atmosphere as another essential skill of the foreign-language educator (Grotek, 2018, p. 136). They also highlighted select personal qualities, such as friendliness, empathy, patience and calmness. Even when a learning group includes participants with considerable differences in language proficiency, learners emphasise that it is the educator's responsibility to identify points of connection that foster group cohesion. Participants in the study also highlighted the importance of (3) a diverse range of tasks, learning materials and resources that accommodate memory-related difficulties and allow for repeated practice. Learning topics should be connected to everyday life and personal interests, while both materials and instructional delivery should be adapted to the specific needs of the group (e.g. increased repetition, slower speech and the use of larger fonts) (Grotek, 2018, p. 137). Acknowledging age-related changes in memory, the participants expressed a preference for opportunities for (4) repeated practice, including through homework and emphasised (5) the importance of feedback. They also noted that formal assessment can provoke stress and negative emotions, wherefore the educator should provide constructive feedback in alternative ways (Grotek, 2018, pp. 138–141). Therefore, the educator's role is to reduce anxiety and strengthen the older adults' sense of self-efficacy in language learning, an aspect that may have been undermined by earlier negative educational experiences or by beliefs about declining learning abilities in later life.

Foreign-Language Teaching for Older Adults

Pluralistic Approaches to Languages and Cultures

The reference framework for pluralistic approaches to languages and cultures defines them as didactic approaches that incorporate several (i.e. more than one) varieties of languages or cultures in pedagogical/learning activities (Council of Europe, 2017, p. 14). Pluralistic approaches thus stand in contrast to communicative didactic approaches, which consider only one language or culture, treat it in isolation and prohibit translation or the incidental use of the first language when teaching additional languages (Council of Europe, 2017, p. 14). However, if the goal of language education, according to the CEFR, is not merely balanced mastery of individual languages but to develop a language repertoire in which all linguistic competences have their place (Council of Europe, 2011), then pluralistic approaches are essential in foreign-language teaching.

The numerous and diverse prior experiences and already developed learning strategies of older adults are cited by many authors as an advantage in language learning (see Grein, 2013; Grotjahn, 2016; Miklič, 2018; Stiel, 2011). It is precisely on these prior experiences of learners that tertiary-language didactics is built. According to Hufeisen (2003, p. 9), previously acquired experiences allow the teaching of a second foreign language to begin at a higher level, enabling faster progression and more challenging content. Transfer applies to both knowledge and skills, as well as to learning strategies. However, as Miklič (2018, p. 58) notes, a problem may occur when a strategy in the foreign-language learning process proves less useful. Adult learners' educational biographies can also pose challenges in terms of routines and strategies. Vogt (2016, p. 203) notes, for instance, that a learner's phonetic inventory can make the acquisition of new sounds more difficult.

Drawing on Baltes and Baltes, Berndt (2004, p. 28) highlights the principle of selection, optimisation and compensation (SOC), which enables individuals to minimise losses and maximise gains. Choosing specific areas of activity (selection) and transferring and acquiring certain abilities (compensation) leads to successful functioning and learning in older age (Berndt, 2004).

Principles of Foreign-Language Teaching in the Post-Method Era

Grein (2013, p. 23) notes that the use of unfamiliar teaching methods is more challenging for older adult learners and that the principles of modern foreign-language teaching are often unfamiliar to them. Stiel (2011, p. 33) observes that today's generations of older adults learned foreign languages during their schooling using the grammar-translation method and therefore expect teacher-centred instruction, frontal teaching, numerous grammar exercises and individual work – practices that are contrary to the goal of communicative competence. Nevertheless, a study by Miklič (2018, p. 63) among participants of the University of the Third Age in Ljubljana showed that the desire to improve communicative competence is also a priority for older adults.

In the contemporary, post-method[4] era, teaching is guided by didactic-methodical principles. As Klippel (2016, p. 315) notes, there is no consensus in general or foreign-language didactics regarding the definition, type or number of didactic-methodical or methodical-didactic principles, as these depend on the

---

[4] Funk (2012, p. 299) points out that although this commonly used term may not be the most precise, it reflects the actual situation in the field of language teaching and language-education research, as the era of macro-methodological approaches has come to an end.

prevailing didactic concepts and guidelines and have evolved throughout the history of education. Key didactic-methodical principles of contemporary teaching include competence orientation, action orientation, learner autonomy and authenticity (Klippel, 2016, pp. 317–319). Grotjahn and Kleppin (2013, p. 26) additionally highlight promotion of autonomous learning, learner-centredness, interaction, intercultural and plurilingual orientation and task-based approaches.

One of the didactic-methodical principles of modern foreign-language teaching is its plurilingual orientation, which involves building on the learners' existing communicative and linguistic experiences. Most learners have previously studied a foreign language, which can help them recognise certain structures of the target language more quickly and infer word meanings (Goethe-Institut, 2013). Modern foreign-language teaching thus opens the way for pluralistic approaches.

Tertiary-language didactics also relies on this principle, using the learners' prior knowledge and experiences for further learning, with transfer occurring at three levels: (1) knowledge of language teaching and learning, (2) knowledge of foreign-language learning strategies, and (3) knowledge of language, culture and forms of behaviour and communication (Pilypaitytė, 2013, p. 147). Its key principles – which must, of course, be adapted to the specific characteristics of each learning group – are summarised by Neuner (2003, pp. 27–32) as cognitive learning, understanding as the foundation of learning, content and text orientation and economisation of the learning process. Cognitive learning is defined as the development of declarative and procedural knowledge, including the comparison, discussion and conscious activation of all linguistic knowledge and prior language-learning experiences of learners. Cognitive procedures familiar from the grammar-translation method are therefore welcomed in tertiary-language didactics.

Further, in line with the CEFR postulate, action orientation is a central didactic-methodical principle of contemporary foreign-language teaching. According to this principle, teaching prepares learners for language use, simulating it in the classroom or course by offering authentic language situations and materials (Goethe-Institut, 2013). Action-oriented teaching emphasises the learners' activities and personal responsibility, providing relevant (experimental) engagement in authentic situations with real objectives, albeit with structure and preparation but less direct guidance (Roche, 2016, p. 469). The CEFR defines its approach as action-oriented because it considers language users and learners as "social agents", i.e. members of society who must perform specific tasks under the given circumstances, in a particular environment and within a concrete field of action (Council of Europe, 2011, p. 31). Closely related is the contemporary didactic-methodical principle of task orientation, where learners primarily engage with

tasks that are connected to their lives or introduce future language tasks; new vocabulary and grammatical rules may play a role in this context, but are not the focus of attention (Goethe-Institut, 2013).

The Four-Strands Model

How, then, can seemingly contradictory principles – cognitive learning and plurilingual orientation, as well as action orientation and task orientation – be reconciled? A solution is offered by the Four-Strands Model, which, instead of the traditional four skills of reading, writing, speaking and listening (with vocabulary and grammar as separate components), introduces four learning domains: work with meaningful content (learning through listening, reading and watching recordings), work with language forms (learning focused on linguistic forms), meaningful expression (learning through oral and written expression) and fluency training (in oral and written expression, listening, reading and watching recordings). Learning activities across an entire course or academic year should cover all four domains equally to ensure balanced competence development (Funk et al., 2014, p. 23).[5] As Funk et al. (2014) emphasise, the available time should be spent on activities that learners should later be able to perform independently, since reading is learned through reading, speaking through speaking and fluent expression in a language can only be achieved through practice.

Guidelines for Teaching Older Adults Foreign Languages

Berndt emphasises the following principles that educators should observe when working with older adults in foreign-language teaching (Berndt, 2004, pp. 29–34):

- Learner-centredness, considering the learners' conditions, needs, experiences and expectations;
- Autonomy, which requires teaching learners how to learn, enabling them to find their own learning paths;
- Explicit repetition;
- Clarity (structuring content and lessons, as well as error correction);
- Slowness; and
- Choice (of skills and topics).

---

[5] As Funk (2012, p. 303) notes, the model is not intended for the sequential application of classroom procedures following the clockwise direction.

Learner-centredness and the promotion of autonomous learning are established didactic-methodical principles of contemporary teaching, while multilingual didactics and tertiary-language didactics make targeted use of the learners' existing knowledge and prior experiences. Given the older adults' typically ample and diverse prior experiences and knowledge, as well as their learning characteristics, educational needs and barriers and considering the modern didactic-methodical principles of action orientation and task orientation, geragogical foreign-language didactics should be founded on the principles of tertiary-language didactics. The Four-Strands Model offers a way to simultaneously implement cognitive learning (as a principle of tertiary-language didactics) and plurilingual orientation, action orientation and task orientation (as contemporary didactic-methodical principles) through its four domains: work with meaningful content, work with language forms, meaningful expression and fluency training (Funk et al., 2014). Based on these concepts, we propose the following guidelines for teaching older adults foreign languages (they will be refined through further research):

1. Before starting instruction with an older adult group, administer a questionnaire on their prior knowledge or create learning biographies or language profiles during one of the first joint meetings.
2. Consider potential barriers for older adults, especially hearing and vision difficulties; ensure proper lighting and acoustics, clear audio recordings and, for written materials, use sans-serif fonts of appropriate size with increased line spacing.
3. Effective foreign-language teaching for older adults involves engaging cognitive processes while also providing sufficient repetition to support automatisation.
4. Introduce situations that confirm learning success (e.g., initial vocabulary learning connected to both the target and previously learned languages; new structures practiced initially in a protected mode to avoid errors).
5. Allocate sufficient time for each activity in the lesson, avoiding time pressure.
6. Frequently employ collaborative teaching methods, such as pair and group work, to encourage interaction among the learners.
7. Allow the learners to participate in the selection of topics and contents, facilitating their co-design of the programme.
8. Sensitise educators planning to work with older adults to the characteristics, learning motivations, barriers and advantages of this target group.

Conclusion

The limited number of studies on the motivations of older adults to participate in language courses in Slovenia, most of which were conducted in the previous decade, highlights the need for further research and development in this field, as language courses are among the most widely offered areas of education for older adults that are provided by various institutions. Literature review also indicates a lack of both quantitative and qualitative research on the motives and barriers of older adults with regard to enrolling in language courses across Europe. Psychological and sociological factors, which directly or indirectly influence older adults' participation in language courses, should not be overlooked and are equally important to explore in the Slovenian context. Relying on a review of selected sources, this paper aimed to address part of the gap between the diverse educational offerings available and awareness of the barriers and actual needs of older adults, specifically in relation to the planning and implementation of foreign-language teaching for this target group.

Since older adults typically possess rich and diverse prior knowledge and experiences, which significantly enhance the effectiveness of foreign-language learning, it is crucial to actively incorporate these resources into language instruction for this group. Multilingual and tertiary-language didactics rely on the learners' existing linguistic knowledge and experiences. When combined with an understanding of older adults' learning characteristics, educational needs and potential barriers, as well as with contemporary didactic and methodological principles such as action and task orientation, these approaches provide a strong foundation for the development of geragogical foreign-language didactics. Building on these insights, we have developed a set of guidelines for teaching older adults foreign languages, which will be further refined through future research.

The educator plays a central role in the geragogical didactics of foreign languages. As both the planner and facilitator of language programmes, the educator must be adequately prepared to work with older adults; this includes understanding their characteristics, learning motivations, barriers and the advantages of learning in later life. To achieve this, geragogical foreign-language didactics should be integrated into teacher education programmes for future language instructors, while practicing educators should have access to continuing professional development programmes tailored to this target group.

Despite the wide availability of language courses for older adults offered by various institutions in Slovenia, little is known about the (geragogical) didactic approaches employed by educators in these courses. Further research will contribute significantly to establishing comprehensive guidelines for the high-quality

teaching of older adults in light of the emerging geragogical didactics of foreign languages and will help address their educational needs more effectively within the available language courses.

References

Åberg, P. (2016). Nonformal learning and well-being among older adults: Links between participation in Swedish study circles, feelings of well-being and social aspects of learning. *Educational Gerontology*, *42*(6), 411–422. https://doi.org/10.1080/036 01277.2016.1139972

Berndt, A. (2004). Sprachenlernen im Alter. In R. Annas (Hrsg*.), Deutsch als Herausforderung: Fremdsprachenunterricht und Literatur in Forschung und Lehre: Festschrift für Rainer Kussler* (pp. 25–35). African Sun Media. https://books.google. si/books?hl=sl&lr=&id=f8cxAwAAQBAJ&oi=fnd&pg=PA25&dq=Sprachen lernen+bei+%C3%84lteren&ots=4BWIKRAVBC&sig=CAgBlCTC6jEqyk f6quJpNH9tOnI&redir_esc=y#v=onepage&q=Sprachenlernen%20bei%20 %C3%84lteren&f=false

Boulton-Lewis, G. M., & Buys, L. (2015). Learning Choices, Older Australians and Active Ageing. *Educational Gerontology*, *41*(11), 757–766. https://doi.org/10.108 0/03601277.2015.1039455

Chang, D. F., & Lin, S. P. (2011). Motivation to learn among older adults in Taiwan. *Educational Gerontology*, *37*(7), 574–592. https://doi. org/10.1080/03601271003715962

Council of Europe. (2011). Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment

Council of Europe. (2017). FREPA – A Framework of Reference for Pluralistic Approaches to Languages and Cultures: Competences and resources

Duay, D. L., & Bryan, V. C. (2008). Learning in later life: What seniors want in a learning experience. *Educational Gerontology*, *34*(12), 1070–1086. https://doi. org/10.1080/03601270802290177

Findsen, B., & Formosa, M. (2011). *Lifelong Learning in Later Life: A Handbook on Older Adult Learning*. Sense.

Findsen, B., & McCullough, S. (2007). Older Adults' Engagement with Further and Higher Education in the West of Scotland: Tracking Educational Journeys, Adult Education Research Conference. https://newprairiepress.org/aerc/2007/ papers/34/

Funk, H., Kuhn, C., Skiba, D., Spaniel-Weise, D., & Wicke, R. E. (2014). *Deutsch lehren lernen 4: Aufgaben, Übungen, Interaktion*. Goethe-Institut, Klett-Langenscheidt.

Goethe-Institut. (2013). *DLL: Didaktisch-methodische Prinzipien*. https://www.goethe.de/resources/files/pdf31/Unterrichtsprinzipien12.pdf

Grein, M. (2013). Fremdsprachenlernen im Alter. In E. Feigl-Bogenreiter (ed.), *Mehrsprachig statt einsilbig. Sprachenlernen bis ins hohe Alter* (pp. 5–29). Verband Österreichischer Volkshochschulen (= VÖV Edition Sprachen. 6). https://files.adult-education.at/uploads/brigitte_e/MEHRSPRACHIG_statt_EINSILBIG.pdf

Grotek, M. (2018). Student Needs and Expectations Concerning Foreign Language Teachers in Universities of the Third Age. In D. Gabryś´-Barker (ed.), *Third Age Learners of Foreign Languages* (pp. 127–144). Multilingual Matters.

Grotjahn, R. (2016). Alter. In E. Burwitz-Melzer, G. Mehlhorn, C. Riemer, K. Bausch & H. Krumm (ed.), *Handbuch Fremdsprachenunterricht* (pp. 250–254). A. Francke Verlag.

Grotjahn, R., & Kleppin, K. (2013). Handlungsorientierung, Kompetenzorientierung und weitere Prinzipien. In K. Ende, R. Grotjahn, K. Kleppin & I. Mohr (ed.), *Deutsch lehren lernen 6: Curriculare Vorgaben und Unterrichtsplanung* (pp. 26–32). Goethe-Institut, Langenscheidt.

Hu, H. M. (2023). A Qualitative Study on Why Older Adults May Be Reluctant to Participate in Learning Activities. *Journal of Adult and Continuing Education*, *30*(1), 39–55. https://doi.org/10.1177/14779714231191354

Hubenthal, W. (2004). Older Russian Immigrants' Experiences in Learning English: Motivation, Methods and Barriers. *Adult Basic Education*, *14*(2), 104–126.

Hufeisen, B. (2003). Kurze Einführung in die linguistische Basis. In B. Hufeisen in G. Neuner (ed.), *Mehrsprachigkeitskonzept – Tertiärsprachenlernen – Deutsch nach Englisch* (pp. 7–11). Europarat. https://www.ecml.at/Portals/1/documents/ECML-resources/TER-GE.pdf?ver=2018–04–17–153342–267

Klimczak-Pawlak, A., & Kossakowska-Pisarek, S. (2018). Language learning over 50 at the Open University in Poland: An exploratory study of needs and emotions. *Educational Gerontology*, *44*(4), 255–264.

Klippel, F. (2016). Didaktische und methodische Prinzipien der Vermittlung. In E. Burwitz-Melzer, G. Mehlhorn, C. Riemer, K. Bausch & H. Krumm (ed.), *Handbuch Fremdsprachenunterricht* (6. völlig überarbeitete und erweiterte Auflage) (pp. 315–320). A. Francke Verlag.

Krajnc, A. (2016). *Starejši se učimo: Izobraževanje starejših v teoriji in praksi*. Slovenska univerza za tretje življenjsko obdobje, združenje za izobraževanje in družbeno vključenost.

Kump, S., & Jelenc Krašovec, S. (2010). *Prestari za učenje?: vzorci izobraževanja in učenja starejših*. Znanstvena založba Filozofske fakultete.

Lah, M., & Lamy-Joswiak, A. (2025). Motivacija in učne strategije starejših pri tečajih francoščine kot tujega jezika. In N. Ličen, M. Furlan, M. Mezgec, D. Lahe & A. Štrancar (ed.), *Vedno radovedni: Izzivi in priložnosti za učenje starejših odraslih na univerzah* (pp. 187–200). Znanstvena založba Filozofske fakultete Univerze v Ljubljani.

Menéndez, S., Pérez-Padilla, J., & Maya, J. (2018). Empirical research of university programs for older people in Europe: a systematic review. *Educational Gerontology*, *44*(9), 595–607. https://doi.org/10.1080/03601277.2018.1518459

Miklič, T. (2018). Vidiki učenja tujih jezikov na univerzi za tretje življenjsko obdobje. *Andragoška spoznanja*, *24*(2), 57–75. https://doi.org/10.4312/as.24.2.57–75

Neuner, G. (2003). Mehrsprachigkeitskonzept und Tertiärsprachendidaktik. In B. Hufeisen & G. Neuner (ed.), *Mehrsprachigkeitskonzept – Tertiär sprachenlernen – Deutsch nach Englisch* (pp. 13–34). Europarat. https://www.ecml.at/Portals/1/documents/ECML-resources/TER-GE.pdf?%20ver=2018–04–17–153342–267

Pilypaitytė, L. (2013). Wie helfen andere Sprachen beim Deutschlernen? In S. Ballweg, S. Drumm, B. Hufeisen, J. Klippel & L. Pilypaitytė (Ed.), *Deutsch lehren lernen 2: Wie lernt man die Fremdsprache Deutsch?* (pp. 132–170). Goethe-Institut, Klett-Langenscheidt.

Roche, J. (2016). Kriterien für die Auswahl von Lernmaterialien und Medien. In E. Burwitz-Melzer, G. Mehlhorn, C. Riemer, K. Bausch & H. Krumm (Eds.), *Handbuch Fremdsprachenunterricht* (6. völlig überarbeitete und erweiterte Auflage) (pp. 466–471). A. Francke Verlag.

Stiel, J. (2011). Deutsch lernen im Alter. *Migration und soziale Arbeit*, *30*(1), 29–35.

Tam, M. (2016). Later life learning experiences: listening to the voices of Chinese elders in Hong Kong. *International Journal of Lifelong Education*, *35*(5), 569–585. https://doi.org/10.1080/02601370.2016.1224042

Vogt, K. (2016). Sprachen lernen und lehren in der Erwachsenenbildung: Curriculare Dimension. In E. Burwitz-Melzer, G. Mehlhorn, C. Riemer, K. Bausch & H. Krumm (Eds.), *Handbuch Fremdsprachenunterricht* (pp. 200–205). A. Francke Verlag.

Wang, R., De Dondera, L., De Backera, F., Shihuaa, L., Honghuia, P., Thomasa, V., Vanslambroucka, S., & Lombaertsa, K. (2016). Back to school in later life: Older Chinese adults' perspectives on learning participation barriers. *Educational Gerontology*, *42*(9), 646–659. https://doi.org/10.1080/03601277.2016.1205385

Zavrl, K., & Radovan, M. (2016). Tečaji španščine za starejše odrasle na univerzi za tretje življenjsko obdobje in v dnevnih centrih aktivnosti za starejše. *Andragoška spoznanja*, *22*(1), 7–20. https://doi.org/10.4312/as.22.1.7–20

Polemika, kritika

Polemics, review

Prikaz knjige:
Sloboda da biram: slobodno vreme i obrazovanje u odraslom dobu[1]

Knjiga *Sloboda da biram: slobodno vreme i obrazovanje u odraslom dobu*, u izdanju Univerziteta u Beogradu – Filozofskog fakulteta, sadrži 373 strane osnovnog teksta. Autorka, Tamara Nikolić, docentkinja na Odeljenju za pedagogiju i andragogiju Filozofskog fakulteta u Beogradu, donosi nove poglede u razvoju andragoške nauke i proučavanju slobodnog vremena, koje i dalje predstavlja ključnu temu u oblasti obrazovanja odraslih i budućnosti odnosa rada i dokolice, opresije i slobode, obrazovanja i učenja.

Sadržaj knjige podeljen je u četiri poglavlja:

1. Proučavanje slobodnog vremena sa andragoškog aspekta
2. Šta je slobodno vreme ili kako produbiti njegovo razumevanje?
3. Ko sam ja ili kako razumeti sebe u slobodnom vremenu?
4. Šta treba činiti ili kako preuzeti inicijativu u slobodnom vremenu?

U prvom delu teksta autorka prati istorijske korene slobodnog vremena u kontekstu andragogije. Ukazujući na konceptualne, sadržinske i metodološke specifičnosti ove oblasti, jasno pozicionira andragogiju slobodnog vremena kao naučnu disciplinu. Poglavlje se završava predlogom jednog integrativnog modela obrazovanja u slobodnom vremenu. Model podrazumeva tri ključne dimenzije: obrazovanje za slobodno vreme, obrazovanje u slobodnom vremenu i obrazovanje o slobodnom vremenu. Konačno, model daje prioritet samom procesu učenja kojim se osnažuju pojedinci da aktivno oblikuju svoje slobodno vreme kroz kreativnost, angažovanost i lični razvoj.

Drugo poglavlje posvećeno je sveobuhvatnom pregledu teorijskih i praktičnih dimenzija slobodnog vremena. Autorka posebnu pažnju posvećuje povezanosti slobodnog vremena i konzumerizma, nudeći kritičko-analitički okvir za

---

[1] Nikolić, T. (2025). *Sloboda da biram: slobodno vreme i obrazovanje u odraslom dobu*. Beograd: Univerzitet u Beogradu – Filozofski fakultet.

razmatranje oblikovanja slobodnog vremena u savremenom društvu iz filozofske, sociološke, antropološke i feminističke perspektive. Poseban fokus stavlja na andragoški pristup, koji slobodno vreme posmatra iz ugla obrazovanja odraslih, istražujući njegov transformativni potencijal kako za pojedinca, tako i za društvo u celini.

Treće poglavlje usmerava čitaoce na ključna pitanja andragoških dimenzija slobodnog vremena. Istražuju se koncepti poput iskustava slobodnog vremena, samoostvarivanja, odnosa slobodnog vremena i rada, značenja motivacije za angažovanje, kao i uloge refleksivnosti u slobodnovremenskom obrazovanju. Posebno mesto zauzima analiza odnosa vremena i slobode i njihovog uticaja na oblikovanje slobodnog vremena. Autorka poglavlje zaključuje predlogom da se slobodno vreme istražuje kroz igrovni pristup, pri čemu se obrazovanje odraslih sagledava kao otvoreni proces koji se ostvaruje kroz igru, imaginaciju i inovativnost.

Četvrto poglavlje istražuje slobodno vreme u kontekstu individualne i društvene transformacije kroz obrazovanje. U tom smislu, slobodno vreme nije samo individualna aktivnost, već i prostor društvene promene kojom se podstiče aktivno učešće, kritička refleksija i društveno odgovorna akcija.

Ova monografija u izdanju Univerziteta u Beogradu – Filozofskog fakulteta donosi studentima različitih disciplina sveobuhvatan i inovativan pogled na slobodno vreme u kontekstu obrazovanja odraslih. Knjiga je dragocena i za istraživače i praktičare iz različitih oblasti koji su zainteresovani za pitanja lične i društvene transformacije kroz razumevanje slobodnog vremena u kontekstu učenja i obrazovanja. Posebno je značajno što ova monografija pruža priliku čitaocima da se informišu o praktičnoj primeni predstavljenih teorija i pogleda na slobodno vreme, kako bi i sami mogli da budu angažovani u sopstvenom razvoju i procesu transformacije.

Knjiga zastupa stanovište koje podržava ideju suštinske promene perspektive, dajući slobodnom vremenu dublje i kompleksnije značenje od puke rekreacije i zabave. Čitanjem ove knjige ne upoznajete se samo sa ključnim pojmovima, teorijama i praksom slobodnog vremena u kontekstu obrazovanja odraslih, već dobijate priliku da preispitate sopstvene izbore i prakse, kao i da istražite mogućnosti za transformaciju svakodnevice, ali i ustaljenih profesionalnih praksi.

Nikola Koruga

Uputstvo za autore priloga

Dostavljanje radova

Časopis publikuje radove koji nisu ranije objavljeni na drugom mestu. Radovi se dostavljaju redakciji isključivo u elektronskoj formi, na e-adresu: ipa.as@f.bg.ac.rs.

Format teksta

Tekstovi se dostavljaju u Word formatu, u obimu od 25.000 do 60.000 slovnih znakova, latiničkim pismom. Uz to je neophodno dostaviti i apstrakt rada u obimu do 1.000 slovnih znakova, tri do pet ključnih reči, kao i najvažnije podatke o autoru/ki rada, u obimu do 250 slovnih znakova. Neophodno je navesti trenutnu poziciju na kojoj se autor/ka nalazi, tj. instituciju ili organizaciju u kojoj je zaposlen/a, godinu rođenja (koja se ne objavljuje, već služi u svrhe katalogizacije) i e-adresu. Ukoliko rad ima više autora, za svakog pojedinačnog autora/ku treba navesti sve prethodno pomenute podatke. Sem naslova, rad može sadržati i dva nivoa podnaslova, koji se ne numerišu. Za sva isticanja i naglašavanja u tekstu koristiti kurziv (italic), ne koristiti podvlačenja i druge forme naglašavanja. Slike, tabele i grafičke prikaze označiti odgovarajućim brojem (arapskim) i naslovom koji ih jasno objašnjava i dostaviti ih u formatu pogodnom za štampanje.

Jezik

Radovi se dostavljaju na srpskom, engleskom, nemačkom, hrvatskom, bošnjačkom i crnogorskom jeziku, a jezici objavljivanja su srpski (kao i hrvatski, bošnjački, crnogorski) i engleski. Za tekstove na srpskom jeziku uredništvo obezbeđuje prevod apstrakata na engleski, a za tekstove na engleskom prevod apstrakata na srpski jezik.

Citiranje i literatura

Pozive na literaturu treba davati u tekstu, u zagradama, a fusnote koristiti samo kada je neophodno, npr. za komentare i dopunski tekst. Pri citiranju izvora (štampanih i elektronskih) i u bibliografiji koristiti isključivo APA stil (APA Citation Style – American Psychological Association). Detaljnije u: Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, Seventh Edition (2020). Takođe videti na: http://www.apastyle.org/.

Na kraju rada navodi se spisak korišćene literature. Radovi se navode abecednim redom. Za tačnost citata i referenci odgovorni su autori.

Recenziranje

Rad recenziraju dva eksterna recenzenta. Recenzije su tajne. Recenzije se u propisanom formatu dostavljaju uredništvu. Na osnovu pozitivne recenzije urednici donose odluku o objavljivanju rada i o tome obaveštavaju autora/ku. O redosledu članaka u časopisu odlučuju urednici. Članci se razvrstavaju u sledeće kategorije: izvorni naučni radovi, pregledni radovi, stručni radovi. Časopis objavljuje i: prevode značajnih dokumenata (i, izuzetno, prevode članaka objavljenih na nekom drugom mestu), hronike, prikaze i kritike, intervjue i polemike, bibliografije i informacije o aktuelnim događanjima (skupovima, projektima, publikacijama) iz zemlje, regiona, Evrope i sveta.

Autorska prava

Notes for Contributors

Paper Submission

The journal publishes texts which haven't been published previously. Editorial Board receives only MS Word type electronic submissions sent to e-mail: ipa.as@f.bg.ac.rs.

Notes on style

All papers submitted should be between 25.000 and 60.000 characters (with spaces), in Latin letter. Abstract should also be submitted of no more than 1000 characters (with spaces), the title of the manuscript, as well as 3-5 keywords. Submissions should include: full name, institutional affiliation and position of the author; basic data on author (up to 250 characters with spaces) and the contact information, as well as the date of birth (will not be published, serve just for the catalogue). If there is more than one author, the information should be provided for each author. Articles should be structured using up to two levels of headings. Numbering should not be used in headings. Italic formatting is allowed for emphasizing. Bolding, underlining and other such formatting are not allowed. Figures, pictures and tables should be named and numbered by Arabic numerals, and supplied in a form suitable for reproduction.

Language

Serbian, English, German, Croatian, Bosnian and Montenegrinian languages are acceptable languages. Papers will be published in Serbian (as well as Croatian, Bosnian and Montenegrinian) and in English. For papers published in English additional abstract in Serbian will be provided by Editorial Board, while for papers published in Serbian additional abstract in English will be provided.

Quotations and References

References to literature should be placed in the text, within parentheses. It iss acceptable to use footnotes, however, it is recommended to use them only if necessary e.g. for comments and additional text. All quotations should be referenced using APA Citation Style (American Psychological Association). See: Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, Seventh Edition (2020). See also http://www.apastyle.org/.

References in APA style should be listed alphabetically at the end of the paper. It is the contributor's responsibility to ensure that all references and citations are correct.

Reviews

Submitted manuscripts are subject to peer review by two external reviewers at the discretion of the Editorial Board. Reviews are confidential (anonymous peer reviews). Papers which receive positive reviews are published, and authors are informed beforehand. The editors determine the order of articles. Reviewed articles are categorized as follows: original scientific articles, review articles, professional articles. The journal publishes also translation of relevant documents (or, exceptionally, translation of papers published elsewhere), chronicles, scientific reviews, polemics and interviews, bibliographies, information about current projects, events and publications in the national, European and global adult education and learning field.

Copyright

Lista recenzenata

dr Violeta Orlović Lovren
Univerzitet u Beogradu, Srbija

dr Edisa Kecap
Univerzitet u Beogradu, Srbija

dr Fergal Finnegan
Univerzitet Mejnut, Irska

dr Sanja Petkovska
Institut za kriminološka i sociološka istraživanja, Srbija

dr Antonia Batzoglou
Univerzitet u Londonu, Ujedinjeno Kraljevstvo

dr Dragan Bulatović
Univerzitet u Beogradu, Srbija

dr Sanja Đerasimović
Univerzitet u Eksiteru, Ujedinjeno Kraljevstvo

dr Hajdana Glomazić
Institut za kriminološka i sociološka istraživanja, Srbija

dr Barry Golding
Federativni univerzitet Australije, Australija

dr Maurice de Greef
Univerzitet Vrije u Briselu, Belgija

dr John Henschke
Univerzitet Lindenvud, Sjedinjene Američke Države

dr Joanna Ostrouch-Kamińska
Univerzitet Varmije i Mazurije u Olštinu, Poljska

dr George Koulaouzides
Helenski otvoreni univerzitet, Grčka

dr Milica Marušić
Institut za pedagoška istraživanja, Srbija

dr Miloš Milenković
Univerzitet u Beogradu, Srbija

dr Miljana Milojević
Univerzitet u Beogradu, Srbija

dr Alison Laurie Neilson
Univerzitet u Koimbri, Portugalija

dr Edmee Ollagnier
profesor u penziji, Univerzitet u Ženevi, Švajcarska

dr Goran Opačić
Univerzitet u Beogradu, Srbija

dr Ognjen Radonjić
Univerzitet u Beogradu, Srbija

dr Marko Radovan
Univerzitet u Ljubljani, Slovenija

dr Jost Reischmann
Univerzitet Bamberg, Nemačka

dr Maja Savić
Univerzitet u Beogradu, Srbija

dr Luiza Olim de Sousa
Severozapadni univerzitet u Počestfromu, Južna Afrika

Alan Tuckett
Univerzitet u Vulverhemptonu, Ujedinjeno Kraljevstvo

dr Zoran Velkovski
Univerzitet u Skoplju, Severna Makedonija

dr Ivan Nišavić
Institut za filozofiju i društvenu teoriju, Univerzitet u Beogradu

List of Reviewers

dr Violeta Orlović Lovren
University of Belgrade, Serbia

dr Edisa Kecap
University of Belgrade, Serbia

dr Fergal Finnegan
Maynooth University, Ireland

dr Sanja Petkovska
Institute of Criminological & Sociological Research, Serbia

dr Antonia Batzoglou
University of London, United Kingdom

dr Dragan Bulatović
University of Belgrade, Serbia

dr Sanja Djerasimović
University of Exeter, United Kingdom

dr Hajdana Glomazić
Institute of Criminological & Sociological Research, Serbia

dr Barry Golding
Federation University Australia, Australia

dr Maurice de Greef
Vrije Universiteit in Brussels, Belgium

dr John Henschke
Lindenwood University, United States of America

dr Joanna Ostrouch-Kamińska
University of Warmia and Mazury in Olsztyn, Poland

dr George Koulaouzides
Hellenic Open University, Greece

dr Milica Marušić
Institute for Educational Research, Serbia

dr Miloš Milenković
University of Belgrade, Serbia

dr Miljana Milojević
University of Belgrade, Serbia

dr Alison Laurie Neilson
University of Coimbra, Portugal

dr Edmee Ollagnier
ret. University of Geneva, Switzerland

dr Goran Opačić
University of Belgrade, Serbia

dr Ognjen Radonjić
University of Belgrade, Serbia

dr Marko Radovan
University of Ljubljana, Slovenia

dr Jost Reischmann
Bamberg University, Germany

dr Maja Savić
University of Belgrade, Serbia

dr Luiza Olim de Sousa
North-West University in Potchefstroom, South Africa

Alan Tuckett
University of Wolverhampton, United Kingdom

dr Zoran Velkovski
University of Skopje, North Macedonia

dr Ivan Nišavić
Institute for Philosophy and Social Theory, University of Belgrade

1838