INTRODUCTION
TO ADULT EDUCATION

Iva Jedličková

INVESTICE DO ROZVOJE VZDĚLÁVÁNÍ

Icons in the text

Objectives
specification of educational purposes at the beginning of each chapter.

Workload
indicates how long it approximately takes to study the chapter.

Important keywords
is a list of important technical terms and the main concepts that a student should remember.

Note
contains supplementary, additional or less important pieces of information.

Study Questions
help a student check his/her comprehension of the study material.

Summary
presents a summary of the topic.

Recommended literature
is a list of sources used in the chapter that also serves to enhance the knowledge on a particular topic.

INTRODUCTION TO ADULT EDUCATION

Lecturer: Doc. PhDr. Iva Jedličková, CSc.
Contact: iva.jedlickova@uhk.cz

Rules of communication with the lecturer:

a) e-mail consultations (contact above)
b) individual consultations (see the website of the Department for the schedule)

Total workload:

a) full-time form of study: 1 lecture + 1 seminar per week
b) part-time form of study: 10 hours of lectures per semester/term

Credit evaluation of the subject: 3 credits
Type of subject: compulsory
Prerequisites and follow-up courses: none
Course completion: granting of credit

Subject objectives and knowledge and skills achieved in the course:

The course is designed as an introduction to the studies of Adult Education in theory and practice.
The learning objectives of the course are:
- to acquire the basic terminology needed for the understanding of principles of Adult Education and trends in Adult Education,
- to develop competencies for one's future participation in practice of current Adult Education as the lecturer, educator and organizer.

Subject content:

1. Theory of Adult Education – its basis; development of the andragogical science
2. Theory of Adult Education – current approaches to Andragogy, structure of Andragogy and position of Adult Education in the framework of Humanities
3. Theory of Adult Education – concept of andragogical research; national research, comparative international research and its results
4. The world of adult education – its developmental phases and current characteristics
5. Lifelong learning – concept and approaches. Learning society.
6. Lifelong learning in documents. Four pillars of lifelong learning.
7. Adult as a learner: concept and characteristics; educational needs of adults and barriers of adults in education
8. Educator and his role in the teaching/learning process

9. Current trends in Adult Education: senior education, grant support of Adult Education
10. Project in Adult Education: its structure and implementation steps

Basic Literature:

White Paper on Education and Training. Teaching and Learning towards the Learning Society. [online]
In: europa.eu/documents/comm/white_papers/pdf/com95_590_en.pdf

Delors, J. et al. *Learning: The Treasure Within. Report to UNESCO of the International Commission on Education for the Twenty-first Century.* 1st ed. Paris: UNESCO, 1996. 48 p. ISBN 92-3-103274-7

Götz, Klaus, Häfner, Peter. *Didactic organization of teaching and learning processes: a textbook for schools and adult education*. 1st ed. Frankfurt am Main, New York: Peter Lang, 2004. 200 s. ISBN 0-8204-6490-2

Pöggeler, Franz. *The state and adult education: historical and systematical aspects. Studies in pedagogy, andragogy and gerontology*. 1st ed. Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 1990. 486 p. ISBN 3-631-42011-0

The Strategy of Lifelong learning in the CR. 1st ed. Prague: Ministery of Education, Youth and Sports, 2007. 82 p. [online] Access: http://www.msmt.cz/areas-of-work/further-education/on-further-education-and-lifelong-learning/ Download: Strategy_LLL_eng_final.pdf

Recommended Literature:

Bron, Agnieszka (ed.) et al. *"Old" and "new" worlds of adult learning*. 1st ed. Wroclaw: Wydawnictwo Naukowe DSWE TWP, 2005. 535 p. ISBN 83-89518-29-5

Adamec, Petr, Kryštof, David (eds.). *Universities of the Third Age at Czech Universities*. 1st ed. Brno: University of Technology for the Association of Universities of the Third Age of ther Czech Republic, 2012. 44 p. ISBN 978-80-214-4627-4

Searching for the further literature for advanced study i sone of the tasks of students' individual work.

Course completion requirements:

a) Continuous assessment of study: active participation in seminar discussion
b) Individual tasks:
- seminar presentation + essay – printed paper on any of the subject´s topics
- reading of andragogical literature, the amount of which shall be specified in the first lecture of the subject
c) Test (60%)

ad b) Examples of topics for seminar presentations and essays:
- Grant support of adult education: example of good practice

- Andragogical research: example of an international comparative research

<u>Guide to the work with this study text:</u>

This study text covers the most of fundamental topics of the subject and provides the students an introduction into the theory and practice of Adult Education. The topics included in the subject content are as well the topics of individual lectures and the seminar activities.

It is expected that the text of each chapter is understood as a starting point to each topic (the workload is adequate to this introduction), and the student uses this introductional material as an inspiration for further – detailed – study.

In the above mentioned literature (the list of sources of the study text) and also in the list of sources at the end of each chapter, only those sources were included which were published in the English language and are accessible for any Czech (or Middle-European) student: they are in possession of the local libraries or are accessible on the internet. It means that the Czech literature is not included unless there is its English variant which is accessible to any student, of course.

Table of contents

Objectives

Learning objectives of this chapter are to gain a basic overview to the basis of the theory of adult education and to gain understanding to the development of andragogical thinking.

Workload

1 hour in order to achieve the basic understanding of subject matter

Important keywords

- Adult Education
- theory of Adult Education
- Andragogics
- development of Andragogics

1.1 Origins of Adult Education theory

In fact, the first thoughts concerning the education of adults go far back in the human history, to the greatest representatives of philosophical and pedagogical thinking in the period of Antiquity.

Even in that period, the arguments which supported the usefulness of education of adults were formulated together with the suggestions of how to implement it. However, it does not mean that the beginning of the theory of adult education is understood the same way today. The process of the theory formation in the field of adult education started much later and was rather complicated.

A German university teacher, Alexander Kapp, is considered as a „father of the andragogical science", in other words, the founder of the adult education theory. He was the first to formulate the concept of special science with the topic of education of adults and he was the first who used the name "Andragogik" in relation to this science. His fundamental work was "Die Andragogik oder die Bildung im männlichen Alter" (Andragogics or Education in adult age), the third chapter of the book „Platons Erziehungslehre, als Pädagogik für die Einzelnen und als Staatspädagogik", published in 1833.

The name of the new scientific field is composed of two Greek words: aner, andros (= man) and ago, agein (= lead) as an analogy to the word Paedagogik, Pedagogy. The importance of Kapp's work does not consist solely in the first use of the new name for a new scientific field, but in the defense of the usefulness and importance of the new field. However, the further development of the field was not simple. The greatest

complication arose as soon as in the beginning: Kapp's concept was strongly criticized and refused by a great authority of (not only) German educational theory, Johann Friedrich Herbart. He dissmissed the usefulness of and necessity for a new scientific field as wel as the idea that an adult ought to "be educated", and learn. The strong role of Herbart in the educational science of tha time was the reason that Kapp´s work with the new concept and his arguments were forgotten for many decades.

After nearly one hundred years, the name „Andragogik/Andragogics" was repeatly used by E. M. Rosenstock Huessy but more frequently, it was used from the middle of the 20th century on. Since the 1950s, a number of "andragogical" books have been published. That is why this period can be really characterized as the true time of the andragogical science development. The main authors of this period are for instance Heinrich Hanselmann (Switzerland), Mihailo Ogrizovic (Croatia), Tonko Tjarko Ten Have (Netherlands), Franz Pöggeler (Germany) etc. Geographical locations in the brackets show that the initiative in development of the new scientific discipline took place in various countries and thus has an international origin.

1.2 Comment on terminology

In the study text, the two variants of the name for the new scientific field have been used so far: theory of adult education and Andragogy/Andragogics (in connection with Kapp´s concept and the concept of his followers). Within these approaches, both the terms have the same meaning.

It must be mentioned that Andragogy, as an English equivalent of original Kapp´s term for the new scientific field, was not accepted "all over the world". In the English speaking milieu of Humanities the description "adult education" is more frequently used than "andragogy".

There are sources which treat both the formulations, i.e. Adult Education and Andragogy, as synonyms. Currently, there is a certain difference in opinions, which implies that the concepts are not exact synonyms. Adult Education is the right term for the educational practice, the "world of educational opportunities for adults", the world of adult learning; the term does not include the theoretical basis for the development of this part of educational practice which is connected to the basic and applied research activities etc.
That is why in this text, as the variant of "Andragogy", the term "theory of adult education" is used. In the following chapters of this study material, both variants will be used (of course not accidentally, but with good reasons).

The concepts of andragogical science are in development nowadays, too. In the past – after the clarification of the sense and importance of andragogical science – first of all T. T. ten Have tried to work out the various approaches to the subject matter of andragogical science (like in the difference between "Andragogy" and "Andrology").

Note

It is necessary to mention that the subject "Introduction to Adult Education" does not cover all the topics important for the future engagement of students in the andragogical practice. Further topics and principles of educational process, including the methods and other tools of instruction, are the subject matter of the following course: Didactics of Andragogy (Instruction of adults).

Study questions

▪ *Formulate your own attitude to the terms "Adult Education", "theory of adult education" and "Andragogy" as the names for the scientific fields dealing with the topics concerning learning and education in the adult age.*

▪ *Can you name other contributors to the development of andragogical thinking (i.e. sociologists, psychologists etc.)?*

Summary

This unit tried to describe the beginning of the andragogical science and to explain its complicated development: Alexander Kapp´s work, the refusal of this idea by J. F. Herbart in the 19th century, and later the contributors to the andragogical theory of the 20th century. In relation to the differences in the use of term for the andragogical science even in the present time, the terminological explanation was included.

Literature

Pöggeler, Franz. *The state and adult education: historical and systematical aspects. Studies in pedagogy, andragogy and gerontology*. 1st ed. Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 1990. 486 p. ISBN 3-631-42011-0

2 Theory of Adult Education – current concept(s)

Objectives

Learning objectives of this chapter are to get to know the current approaches in the theory of Adult Education, its structure and subbranches.

Workload

1 hour in order to achieve the basic understanding of subject matter

Basic terminology

- theory of Adult Education
- Integral Andragogy
- structure of Andragogy

2.1 Current concepts of Andragogy

As was mentioned in relation to the concept of andragogical science, a widely understood education of adults is the key issue of this field, although the educational process of adults is viewed in a relatively wide framework of other Humanities, first of all Psychology and Sociology.

In the Middle-European approach to Andragogy, the object of the field is defined as „all processes and relations concerning the learning and education of adults: the complete substantiality of education of adults, i.e. organized learning, its social and economical context, and the self-regulated and cooperative learning (compare this definition with the definition in the glossary of Andragogy written by Jan Průcha and Jaroslav Veteška in 2012, p. 33f. – this reference is exceptionally related to a non-English source).

There is another interesting contribution of Czech andragogical thinking to the concept of andragogical science, namely the concept of the so-called Integral Andragogy. The author of this concept was Vladimír Jochmann. According to his definition, the andragogical science ought to be understood as a wide multidisciplinary scientific field and its object is the universal and all-round care of adults. Except for the education of adults, Integral Andragogy also includes (or integrates) Personal Management, Social Work and Social Care, Gerontology, counselling etc.

2.2 Structure of andragogy

As it is evident in all the scientific fields, the andragogical science is developing toward its structuring as well. As the result of this structuring process, the following subbranches of Andragogy were formed:
- General Andragogy
- History of Andragogy (or History of andragogical theory and practice),
- Comparative Andragogy
- Methodology of Adult Education.

The last mentioned Methodology of Adult Education is the most elaborated subbranch of Andragogy. It is also considered as the key andragogical branch. Other subbranches of Andragogy are rather less elaborated in the Middle-European region.

Other subbranches of Andragogy have been gradually emerging; first of all, the applied andragogical branches. The object of their interest is a particular part of educational practice with adults. One of the most elaborated and developed applied andragogical branches which is called Gerontagogy deals with the specific features of senior education.

Note
The two different aproaches towards the object of andragogy were described; however, the presented structure of the field does not cover both the concepts of Andragogy. The structure relates to the traditional concept of Andragogy; the structuring of the so-called Integral Andragogy is different.

Study questions

- *Try to formulate several concrete topics of the above mentioned (see the section 2.2) subbranches of Andragogy. Use your experience from related Humanities.*

- *Is the understanding of Gerontagogy as an applied andragogical branch the only possible understanding of it? Do you know any other approaches toward the relation between Andragogy and Gerontagogy?*

Summary

This chapter was focused on the current concepts of Andragogy, i.e. the approaches toward the object of andragogical science. Two approaches were named – the concept of Andragogy as the scientific field dealing with all the processes and relations concerning the learning and education of adults, and the concept of the so-called Integral Andragogy as a wide multidisciplinary

field of science. The usual structure of Andragogy, with such andragogical subbranches as General Andragogy, History of Andragogy, Comparative Andragogy and Methodology of Andragogy, was presented.

Literature

Pöggeler, Franz. *The state and adult education: historical and systematical aspects. Studies in pedagogy, andragogy and gerontology*. 1st ed. Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 1990. 486 p. ISBN 3-631-42011-0

3   Theory of Adult Education: andragogical research

Objectives

The aim of the chapter is to introduce the problems of possibilities and limits of research in andragogical topics.

Workload

1 hour in order to achieve the basic understanding of subject matter

Basic terminology

- andragogical research
- basic research
- applied research
- quantitative and qualitative research strategy

3.1 Approaches in andragogical research

Research activities belong to the important activities carried out in all the fields of science; they are the so-called part and parcel of the theory development, and are helpful for the practice. Of course, in the field of Adult Education, social practice and andragogical theory, there are many important topics which should be searched and clarified.

At the beginning, let us stress out that the Methodology of Andragogy is not as elaborated as it is in Social Science (Humanities). The reason for that can be seen in the rather young history of the andragogical science in comparison with related Social Sciences. Therefore, the reason for this situation is by no means the low interest of theorists (and those who are working in practice of Adult Education, too) in investigating the principles and rules of adult teaching and learning, and related topics. Also, the reason is by no means the lack of important (needed, useful) topics which need to be researched. There are andragogical themes both in the basic and applied research: research activities carried out in the framework of the basic research are those activities which develop the theory and thus enhance the scientific field, and activities of applied research investigate the problems which arose in the andragogical practice. Expectations towards the andragogical research concern the new contributions to andragogical theory and andragogical practice.

As the starting point of all research activites, the object of the research ought to be formulated and, of course, the research method, procedures, steps and tools have to be specified.

The following topics are considered as the key topics for research which supports and initiates the development of andragogical theory:
- the research of the andragogical science's subject matter in connection with its position in the classification system of science, and its relation to other scientific fields,
- the approaches to the various forms of Andragogy structure,
- possibilities and limits of research tools used in investigating the andragogical reality,
- social (and other) determinants of the educational process in the adult age,
- efficacy (as the possibility to learn) of adults and its determinants,
- objectives of teaching/learning of adults,
- the role of adult education and adult learning in the framework of lifelong learning,
- educational needs and barriers in the adult age,
- social aspects of education in the adult age.

In connection with the practice of Adult Education, there are notably the following trends, further investigation of which is required:
- the relation between learning opportunities and the need for further professional education and training,
- the attitudes of particular target groups (sub-groups) of adults towards learning opportunities (in relation to the age, socio-professional characteristics, SES, former study history etc.),
- accessibility of educational opportunities in the relation to the characteristics of regions,
- potential role of media in the education of adults,
- possible contribution of new methods and forms of Adult Education,
- the attitude of adults towards the citizenship education, etc.

Similarly to research in other social sciences, the concrete form of research is the result of following crucial steps: researcher first determines the research problemm then formulates the aim of the research, then – in connection with the aim – the researcher selects the research strategy (quantitative strategy, qualitative strategy or the mixed research design) and, finally, the research methods.

3.2   Examples of andragogical research

The first large andragogical research which is probably the most known andragogical research of all times was the research of docility of adults, carried out by Edward Lee Thorndike in the first half of the 20th century.
In the 1920s, the American psychologist Thorndike (1874-1949) investigated the efficacy of adults – the mechanisms and results of learning of adults, and their relation to the age. He revealed that the learning ability of adults is not determined by the age as much as expected, but also by other factors. The chance of adults for successful learning is good enough during the whole period of adulthood.

Even today, the results of Thorndike´s research belong to the strongest arguments in the current discussions concerning the possibilities of adult education.

Of course, current andragogical research activities are also very interesting and importatnt. There are other two researches of bigger importance which should not be omitted: the Czech example of a large research carried out in the recent years and one international example.

The Czech research named "Adult Education in Various Stages of the Life Cycle: Priorities, Opportunities and Possibilities of Development" was carried out from 2004 till 2008 by the research team of the Department of Educational Sciences (Faculty of Arts, Masaryk University in Brno) lead by Milada Rabušicová. In the framework of this research, a wide range of research topics was investigated, such as professional training of adults, Citizenship Education of adults, Environmental Education of adults, education of seniors, Family Education of adults etc. Together with the theoretical and methodological chapters, the report of research results belongs to the most important contributions to the analysis of current andragogical practice and its theoretical background.

Another example of a worthy current andragogical research is the international contribution titled „Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies" (PIAAC), which was carried out by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) in the period from 2010 till 2013. In this research, 33 countries (including the Czech Republic) took part. The respondents were in the age from 16 to 65. The research object included three domains of competencies of adults: literacy and reading components, numeracy and problem solving in technology-rich environments. In the second part of the research, the participants were asked about the intensity and frequency of using important skills at their workplace (concrete categories of skills: cognitive skills, interaction and social skills, physical skills, learning skills). The third part of this research – background questionnaire – brought useful facts concerning the factors which have (or could have) the influence on development and use of the skills.

As it was an international research, its results are important not only for the individual participating countries and their educational policy, but also as the source for international comparison and also for the discussion about the multinational educational strategy. (Compare for example in: http://www.oecd.org/site/piaac/mainelementsofthesurveyofadultskills.htm or in other information sources)

Study questions

▪ *Find in andragogical monographies or other publications an example of applied andragogical research and assess its aim, methods and results.*

▪ *In the published outcomes of the research „Adult Education in Various Stages of the Life Cycle: Priorities, Opportunities and Possibilities of Development", choose one of the presented researches and study the research procedure and its results.*

▪ *Use the electronical information sources to look up the results of the international research of competencies of adults (PIAAC) of any concrete country and their comparison with other participating countries.*

Summary

This unit brought basic information on the andragogical research: general characteristics and the importance of research for andragogical theory and practice, main topics of basic research and topics of applied research. In the second part, three examples of andragogical researches are presented: E. L. Thorndike´s research of learning ability of adults and its relation to age, research "Adult Education in Various Stages of the Life Cycle: Priorities, Opportunities and Possibilities of Development" of Masaryk University and research „Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies" (PIAAC) of OECD.

Literature

OECD Skills Surveys. About the Survey of Adult Skills (PIAAC). [on-line]. Access: http://www.oecd.org/site/piaac/mainelementsofthesurveyofadultskills.html).[30-06-2014].

Pöggeler, Franz. *The state and adult education: historical and systematical aspects. Studies in pedagogy, andragogy and gerontology*. 1st ed. Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 1990. 486 p. ISBN 3-631-42011-0

4 The world of Adult Education – its development and current characteristics

Objectives

The aim of the chapter is to show the development of adult education in the middle Europe and to characterize the current world of adult education with its developmental trends.

Workload

1 hour in order to achieve the basic understanding of subject matter

Important keywords

- history of Adult Education
- current educational practice
- abundance and variety of Adult Education
- openness of Adult Education
- dynamics of Adult Education

4.1 Brief history of Adult Education

The idea of education of adults is not young at all, and several examples of it can be found throughout several centuries; until the end of the 18th century, there were only particular activities which were carried out for a short or limited time, mostly in small areas, did not comprise the appropriate sample representing the whole adult population, but only a part etc. There were practically no systematical educational opportunities for adult population.

The end of the 18th century and the beginning of the 19th century can be characterized as a real milestone in the development of Adult Education: from that time on, we can speak about "the world of education of adults", i.e. about educational activities which were created for adults (especially and only for the adults), for the wide adult population (i.e. not for the limited number of adults), and which have the needed continuity. From this time on, we can speak about the continuous development of Adult Education.

Note

The time specification of this first milestone of Adult Education is relatively wide, of course, because it is connected to the historical development of individual parts of

the world; there were differences among countries or parts of the world at that time. There were several reasons related to the overall development of a great part of the world, which – together – contributed to the usefulness and the necessity of starting Adult Education in a wide range. One of the strongest reasons for Adult Education was the economic situation of that time, i.e. the development towards more difficult factory production was connected to the necessity of more "educated" workers etc.

The whole 19th century brought an intensive development of Adult Education –not only in European countries. This development can be described in several "developmental areas", such as:
- social-oriented educational activities,
- ethnic-oriented educational activities,
- cultural/educational activities.

There is a plenty of interesting examples of educational events for adults in the cultural history of European countries during the 19th century.

The 20th century brought new features into the education of adults. One of the most important are for example the first legislative initiatives, i.e. first law concerning (and supporting, of course) the education of adults. Another important new aspect was the formation of state initiatives in Adult Education which are, in fact, connected to the legislative steps.

As a good example of the history of adult educational practice during the first half of the 20th century, the Adult Education in the former Czechoslovakia is usually mentioned: state initiatives in the Citizenship Education (Citizenship Education courses, Citizenship Education Act from 1919, systems of professional training in firms, foundation of Masaryk´s Education Institute as the coordinating center for adult education in the whole republic etc.).

4.2 Characteristics of current adult education practice

Current practice of adult education („the world of adult education") has several outstanding features, too. These features have no connection with any particular part of the world, no relation to cultural, historical or social and political context – they are in effect global.

The strongest features of the current educational practice are its abundance, great variety, openness and its dynamism.

By the phrase "abundance of current Adult Education" is meant the large quantity. The large quantity from several points of view refers to the fact that there were never:
- so many educational opportunities for adults, as they are at the beginning of the 21st century,
- so numerous educational offers for adults,
- so many adult participants of education,
- so many institutions working in the field of Adult Education, as they are at the beginning of the 21st century.

By the great variety in current Adult Education is from several perspectives meant the following:
- variety in the characteristics of the target groups of educational offer,
- variety of the topics in Adult Education,
- variety of educational tools, for example educational forms and methods,
- variety in types and characteristics of educational institutions.

Openness of the Adult Education as an important value is often a topic for discussion: The world of Adult Education ought to be open but generally, it does not apply. By the openness, the wide accessibility of educational opportunities is meant. This (needed) wide accessibility of education for adults is not obvious, although its high quantity has been already mentioned. It is not the same, though: a high number of educational opportunities do not guarantee that those who are interested in participation can actually take part in them. Various obstacles can appear, such as organizational obstacles: time of the course for an adult is not suitable, employees have limited time, long distance to the educational institution, or other types of obstacles, e.g. conditions for the participation in education (entrance conditions etc.)

The last mentioned characteristic feature of the current Adult Education is its dynamism which concerns the whole world even more than other features. The educational practice is constantly in movement and development: former traditional topics of Adult Education are not required and offered anymore, new educational institutions appear (while other disappear); similar development applies to the educational methods and forms etc.

Following chapters of this study material bring the examples of these current features of Adult Education.

Study questions

- *Concerning the history of Adult Education: Try to find other reasons of the beginning of real education for adults at the end of 18th and the beginning of the 19th century.*

- *How do you understand the ethnic-oriented educational activities as one of main developmental areas in the 19th century? Try to characterize its substance and its reasons. Do you know any examples of such educational activities (from historical documents etc.)?*

- *Search the information sources for the examples of systems of professional training in firms in Czechoslovakia before World War II.*

- *Search more data concerning the Masaryk´s Educational Institute and its activities before in the 1930s.*

- *Try to confirm (or to falsify) the assertion of high quantity and variety of current Adult Education. Collect all accessible examples of education possibilities for the adults in your town (region) during one week and then analyse the offers.*

- *Use the results (collecting of educational examples) and consider whether the information concerning educational offers is accessible enough (whether the search was simple or difficult).*

- *How could be the current situation concerning the legal basis of Adult Education assessed? (Choose either the situation in the Czech Republic or in any other European or non-European country.)*

Summary

Adult educational practice has more than 200 years long history: at the turn of the 19th century, based on important social and economic development of that time, the educational activities designed for adults were created and carried out for the first time in such a wide extent, and have been carried out as continuous activities till today.
Current practice of Adult Education is distinguished by several strong features: high quantity, variety, openness and dynamism.

Literature

Pöggeler, Franz. *The state and adult education: historical and systematical aspects. Studies in pedagogy, andragogy and gerontology*. 1st ed. Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 1990. 486 p. ISBN 3-631-42011-0

Bron, Agnieszka (ed.) et al. *"Old" and "new" worlds of adult learning*. 1st ed. Wroclaw: Wydawnictwo Naukowe DSWE TWP, 2005. 535 p. ISBN 83-89518-29-5

5   Lifelong learning – concepts and attitudes

Objectives

The aim of this chapter is to introduce the topic of lifelong learning, its substance and main social and educational context, including the important documents which deal with the fundamental aspects of lifelong learning.

Workload

1 hour in order to achieve the basic understanding of subject matter

Important keywords

- lifelong learning
- learning society

5.1   Development of idea of lifelong learning

The idea of lifelong learning has a rather long tradition; in no case, it may be understood as a new phenomenon of the end of the 20th century and the beginning of the 21st century (although nowadays, the importance given to lifelong learning is much higher than ever before). The most important representative of educational theory in the history of education was John Amos Comenius – from all his contributions to creation and development of educational thinking, it is necessary to cite his understanding of connection between life and learning:

If, in each hour, a man could learn a single fragment of some branch of knowledge, a single rule of some mechanical art, a single pleasing story or proverb (the acquisition of which would require no effort), what a vast stock of learning he might lay by. Seneca is therefore right when he says: "Life is long, if we know how to use it." It is consequently of importance that we understand the art of making the very best use of our lives.

The assertion that education and learning in the childhood and young age and their results cannot be enough for all the life of a human being was repeated by many representatives of educational theory. Some of them have – in connection with the idea of "insufficiency" of school education – even critical attitude towards the schools and school systems. Of course, it is a topic for discussion: is this fact enough to have the critical opinion towards schools?

There is also another perspective concerning the fact that the education in childhood is insufficient and incomplete for the life. The situation is understood as a natural result of the dynamic development of the human society. No school (or school system) can know, respect and also meet the future demands on competencies of school leavers. That is why education and learning during all the life ought to be the natural component of our life during the whole adulthood.

Lifelong learning belongs to the most important characteristic features of the current, so-called learning, society. That is why it ought to be the topic of the national and multinational educational policy documents and also a natural part of leisure time activities of adults.

At the beginning of the 21st century, the amount of leisure time of people was relatively high in comparison to the leisure time of people in previous centuries. It has increased significantly, of course – the main reason for this surely positive situation is the development of individual branches of science, economy and, first of all, the technologies in all the fields of human activity, not only production.

Adult education can profit from the above mentioned development and increasing amount of leisure time of adults. This higher amount of time which is really „free for one's use", e.g. is not connected to earning the means for one's living and the living of one's family, the time is completely at one's disposal, for realization of one's individual needs and interests. Using this free time just for personal development, for the participation in educational opportunities and learning seems to be the natural solution.

That is why it ought to be the interest of educational theory and practice, to investigate this topic, to describe and to characterize the wider context of understanding (or misunderstanding) leisure time as a good chance for learning activities.

5.2   Current society as learning society

At the beginning, the current society and its fundamental features from the point of view of lifelong learning have to be mentioned.

Current society has really many attributes, and so there are many perspectives on these characteristics: first of all, current society as the information or knowledge society belongs to the most often mentioned attributes. Just the opportunities of searching, finding and using the amount of information concerning all possible topics of (not only) current world have an immediate relation to learning engagement of adults. It is no wonder that a relatively new attribute of current society has been the so-called learning society (compare with European Commission, 1995).

The fundamental question seems tobe whether it is possible to characterize the current society as the learning society. If not, is the current world on the way towards learning society?
What are in fact the most important features of a learning society (with the possibility of general occurrence all around the world)?

The above mentioned features are the following:
- Learning society is such society where the learning opportunities are open for all individuals.
- Learning society is such society where the citizens are motivated to participate in learning activities provided by institutions and influenced by public meaning.
- Learning society is such society where the results of learning are accepted and recognized.
- Learning society is such society where learning success is understood as an important positive value.

Concerning these characteristics of a learning society, it must be stated that the level of real learning society has not been reached yet by most countries of the current world, although there are some „examples of good practice", of course.

Study questions

- *Find other quotations of important pedagogues concerning the idea of education/learning during the whole life.*

- *Collect arguments for discussion about the term „learning society". Give examples of how the requirements to become the learning society can be particularly fulfilled. Can your country be characterized as the learning society?*

- *In your opinion, is the idea of lifelong learning a utopia, a necessity or an evident and natural situation?*

- *Schools are not able to guarantee the students' complete preparation for life – what can they do in order to form positive attitudes of their leavers toward lifelong learning? If you have a positive experience, what did your school do for it? In the case you do not have a positive experience, what would you suggest?*

Summary

Lifelong learning is one of the features which characterize the current society. The idea of lifelong learning is not new, but nowadays it is understood (more than before) as a natural part of the life. In relation to the importance of lifelong learning in the current society, it is called as the learning society. The main features of the learning society are: the openness of learning opportunities for all the citizens, motivation and support of citizens in learning activities, acceptation and recognition of learning results, and understanding of the learning success as an important value.

Literature

White Paper on Education and Training. Teaching and Learning towards the Learning Society. [online]
In: europa.eu/documents/comm/white_papers/pdf/com95_590_en.pdf

Delors, J. et al. *Learning: The Treasure Within. Report to UNESCO of the International Commission on Education for the Twenty-first Century.* 1st ed. Paris: UNESCO, 1996. 48 p. ISBN 92-3-103274-7

6 Lifelong learning in documents

Objectives

The aim of this chapter is to introduce the important documents which deal with the most fundamental aspects of lifelong learning.

Workload

1 hour in order to achieve the basic understanding of subject matter

Important keywords

- lifelong learning
- formal, nonformal and informal learning
- four pillars of lifelong learning

6.1 International documents concerning lifelong learning

In the last decades of the 20th century, the idea of lifelong learning became more than once the topic of a number of documents, e.g. UNESCO documents, EC documents etc. Examples of such documents since the 1990s:

- *Learning – the treasure within* (UNESCO),
- *White Paper on Education and Training* (EC),
- *Lifelong learning for all* (OECD) etc.

The concept of lifelong learning was elaborated and changed in these documents (as well as during the experts´ discussions). For example, the term *lifelong education* became *lifelong learning*, obviously with the stress on the necessary individual learning activity instead of passive acceptance of teacher´s educational work.
Concerning the acceptance of lifelong learning as a characteristic feature of life in current society (e.g. society going towards the attribute learning), the objectives of lifelong learning must be set.

Also, in the case of objectives of lifelong learning, there were different approaches in the last decades: the so-called *four pillars of education* were designed as the base for further discussions concerning the objectives of lifelong learning. The four pillars of education (nowadays, the preferred term is the "pillars of lifelong learning") were published in the „*Delors Commission Report*", precisely the *Report to UNESCO of the International Commission on Education for the Twenty-first Century*, which was issued under the (poetic) title *Learning: the treasure within* in 1996.

The four pillars of education (learning) are in fact the following main objectives:
- learning to know,
- learning to do,
- learning to live together,
- learning to be (UNESCO, 1996) .

Although the arguments in support of the understanding of sense and goals of lifelong learning by Jacques Delors and his expert team are valid nowadays, too, the current approach aims to describe the purpose of lifelong learning in more detail, from the point of view of both the individuals and the society.

The particular and more precise values of lifelong learning are, therefore, the continual and wide development of individual´s personality, gaining new skills and competencies for (not only) effective employability on one hand, and the provision of support to active citizens and social inclusion on the other hand. These values are the essential values for the positive life situation of the individual as well as for the positive state of the whole society. Lifelong learning opportunities ought to be understood as an important means of getting closer to these values.

There are three basic categories of purposeful learning activities which were mentioned for the first time in the document *A Memorandum on Lifelong Learning* by the European Commission (2000). The categories are:
- formal learning,
- non-formal learning,
- informal learning.

Formal learning takes place in educational and training institutions and leads to recognized diplomas and qualifications. Non-formal learning takes place alongside the mainstream systems of education and training and does not typically lead to formalized certificates. Informal learning is a natural accompaniment to everyday life. Unlike the formal and non-formal learning, the informal learning is not necessarily intentional learning, and so may well not be recognized even by the individuals themselves as contributing to their knowledge and skills (compare: European Commission; 2000)

There are at least two main topics, which must be mentioned together in connection with the non-formal and informal learning as the leisure time activities of adults:
- the attitudes of adults towards learning activities in their leisure time,
- the accessibility of learning opportunities to adults.

Both aspects will be mentioned in connection with the characteristics of an adult learner. It must be highlighted that both the aspects have their relation to the social background in the context of utilization of educational opportunities by adults.

6.2   Lifelong learning in national documents

The idea of lifelong learning has been accepted not only by the world (or European) experts on educational policy, but also by the national authorities. In the last

decades, national documents elaborating the issue of lifelong learning and the learning society were created and published in many countries. The author teams usually consist of experts from the ministries of education, higher education institutions, politicians and educational policy makers.

In the case of the Czech Republic which will serve as an example for the discussion, at least two important documents which concern the topic lifelong learning should be mentioned:
- The National Programme for the Development of Education in the Czech Republic (2001),
- The Strategy of Lifelong learning in the Czech Republic (2007).
Both documents are available in the English translation.

The first document, "National Programme for the Development of Education in the Czech Republic", has the character of (in other countries usual) "White Paper". In the Czech Republic, it was the first document of this type. It brings a complex view on the fundamental topics of educational practice – its background, the educational system and its necessary development; objectives of education and the curriculum. In the framework of this detailed analysis and report, the topic of lifelong learning is included. Besides the general issues, the fourth chapter deals with the Adult Education and its particular fields of study: adult education in schools (including the higher education institutions), vocational education and professional training (including retraining), education satisfying the individual interests and Civic Education. Also, the last chapter of the document, which includes conclusions, is important for the topic of our interest – especially the part named "Implementation of (the document) Lifelong Learning for All etc.

The second document, The Strategy of Lifelong Learning in the Czech Republic, published in 2007, is even of more important than the National Programme – White Paper. It reflects all the new impulses from the recent development in the field of lifelong learning in the world, social aspects of lifelong learning, and the multinational and international documents concerning the topic as well. The document provides the basic terminology concerning the lifelong learning and characteristics of strategic documents. The following two important chapters contain the analytical part (the analysis of current situation in lifelong learning development) and strategic part which presents the vision of lifelong learning, main strategic goals and measures for the promotion of the development of lifelong learning in the Czech Republic.

Study questions

- *Find the conceptual national document or documents concerning the lifelong learning in your country or any other country which might be considered as a good example for other countries.*

- *Give an example of the concrete topic of Adult Education (need not be only professional training but, for example, Citizenship Education) and explain the sense of four pillars of lifelong learning.*

- *Both international and national documents concerning the lifelong learning should be either the impulses for, or results of, the educational policy. What steps do you recommend to the state (or world) institutions to take in order to implement these impulses and results into social (and educational) practice.*

Summary

Numerous documents of world institutions (and of national institutions, too) deal with the lifelong learning and with the movements towards the learning society. In this context, the lifelong learning is understood as the complex of formal learning, nonformal learning and informal learning. The formation of the so-called four pillars of lifelong education emphasize its aims, i.e. learning to know, learning to do, learning to live together and learning to be.

Literature

White Paper on Education and Training. Teaching and Learning towards the Learning Society. [online]
In: europa.eu/documents/comm/white_papers/pdf/com95_590_en.pdf

Delors, J. et al. *Learning: The Treasure Within. Report to UNESCO of the International Commission on Education for the Twenty-first Century.* 1st ed. Paris: UNESCO, 1996. 48 p. ISBN 92-3-103274-7

The Strategy of Lifelong learning in the CR. 1st ed. Prague: Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports, 2007. 82 p. [online] Access: http://www.msmt.cz/areas-of-work/further-education/on-further-education-and-lifelong-learning/ Download: Strategy_LLL_eng_final.pdf

National Programme for the Development of Education in the Czech Republic. White Paper. 1st ed. Prague: Institute for Information on Education, 2001. 104 p. ISBN 80-211-0413-9

Objectives

This chapter provides the basic characteristics of an average adult learner as he/she is understood by the andragogical theory and practice, i.e. in relation to the achievement of the learning outcomes.

Workload

1 hour in order to achieve the basic understanding of subject matter

Important keywords

- adult learner
- learning style
- educational needs of adults
- specific features of adult learner

7.1 Adult as andragogical topic

The approach to an adult from the point of view of andragogical theory and practice is the key topic for the creation of educational opportunities and realization of courses and other educational events.

At the beginning, it must be emphasized that the andragogical theory (and practice, too) approaches to the adult person differently than it is known from other scientific fields or branches. Within the andragogical understanding, an adult person is by no means a person who achieved a particular age (for instance, the age of 18 years). The explanation is quite simple: there is no important change in people and their educational or study career connected to the above mentioned age (as well as any other age); there are other milestones in their educational career.

If it is useful or even necessary for the educational purposes to distinguish a child (a pupil in traditional understanding) and an adult, this differentiation lies in the characteristics of personal development and the features of a mature individual, in the social (or socio-economic) characteristics of adulthood, and also in the learning outcomes of present educational career.

From the perspective of Andragogy, a person is considered as adult when:
- one has reached the biological, psychological and socio-economical maturity,
- one makes one's own living (or is able to do it), and is, therefore, economically independent,

- one has finished his/her first educational career and entered the labour market.

This definition of an adult person implies that the possible age specification would have a rather wide range. In relation to the finishing of the first educational career connected to finishing of professional training and possible entering the labour market, this characteristics can concern a person as soon as in the age of 17, although the majority of population achieves this milestone later (not only in the Middle Europe, but in the major part of the world).

7.2 Educational needs of adults

After the clarification of the concept of an adult person (and an adult learner), the next question arises: why the adults learn and why they should learnt.

In the chapter 4, concerning the topic of lifelong learning, the arguments for the necessity of lifelong learning were presented: knowledge and skills gained in the childhood and youth do not suffice for the whole life. Although this opinion has been accepted by the majority of adult population, in most cases they have a rather narrow point of view: most people understand the necessity of lifelong learning only in relation to their professional use – gaining, maintaining and enhancing their work skills. This most frequent (and of course very important) reason for taking the educational opportunities which are created for adults and offered to them, should not, however, be the only reason for it.

The identification and analysis of educational needs of adults has become a problem which needs to be investigated especially in the context of the professional training of employees. However, the educational needs of adults should be generally looked into from a wider perspective; at least, the three following aspects:
- the educational needs from the point of view of an adult person,
- the educational needs from the point of view of a firm or institution,
- the educational needs from the point of view of the society.

The key educational needs are the needs of an individual (an adult himself decides to participate in educational opportunities or not to participate at all). These educational needs are not understood in a narrow sense related to the professional engagement; they concern all life situations in which an adult might feel the the lack of knowledge and skills, and the necessity to gain new ones. Such an adult aspires to change the current state and to achieve new competencies.

The identification of educational needs should be the important starting point for the creation of educational opportunities in particular place or region, within the wider understanding; that is why it is the topic of interest of educational institutions, the authors of educational policy, and andragogical researches.

7.3 Specific features of adult learner

In the process of planning, creating and carrying out of the educational events, every author, organizer and educator soon recognizes that an adult learner is quite different participant of educational process than a child in the role of a pupil.

The specific characteristic features of an adult person in the role of a learner which influence his/her efficiency in learning, and thus should be identified and respected during the preparation and implementation of the educational process, are the following:

- An adult person is a mature personality with a clear value orientation – he/she knows what his/her life roles are, what he/she wants to achieve, and that all of this influences his/her attitudes toward learning opportunities.
- An adult learner has his/her own learning style and learning strategy – the steps he/she makes during the learning process prove efficient and that is why he/she makes them repeatly in other learning situations.
- An adult person is engaged in his/her professional, family and citizen life and fulfils related roles, which may help him/her in decisions to participate in the next educational events, or cycles.

This basic list is meant as a starting point for further additions – for instance, the topic of health of an adult was not mentioned yet; health state can influence either the starting of further education or effective participation in it. There are great differences between individual adults, of course. All the above mentioned characteristics are expressed positively but the opposite variants exist as well.

Study questions

- *In the section concerning educational needs of adults, the needs were specified which relate to professional carreer. Name the examples of other educational needs of adults which do not relate to professional engagement.*

- *Which educational needs of adults there are from the point of view of the society?*

- *Use psychological literature to find more information about the learning styles, and the typology of learning styles.*

- *Is it true that the adult learners have fully developed learning style? Where (and when) can they get to know about the learning style?*

- *Besides the educational needs of adults, the barriers in adult education are of great importance, too. Find the examples of such barriers in the context of the specific characteristics of adult learners.*

- *Name other specific characteristics of adult learner which were not mentioned in the list above (5.3) and which can influence the attitudes of adults toward their participation in education and their success in education.*

Summary

An adult learner is a key topic of andragogical theory and practice. The approach to an adult learner is based on the definition of an adult from the point of view of Andragogy. Definition aspect of an adult learner in the context of Adult Education is not the age, but biological, psychological and socio-economic maturity, finishing of the first educational career with professional training, and possibility to function in the world of work.

Educational needs of adults are related to the motivation of adults to enter the world of education again, after finishing the first educational carrear. That is why the topic of educational needs is often discussed in the theory and in the practice. These needs ought to be understood not only in relation to work and profession, although this relation is felt as the strongest one.

There are some speficic characteristics of an adult learner, which distinguish him from a child as a pupil and which are valid – in various intensities and various results, of course – for the whole adult population. The most often mentioned ones are the personal maturity with a clear value orientation, fully developed learning style and professional (and other) engagement.

Literature

Bron, Agnieszka (ed.) et al. *"Old" and "new" worlds of adult learning*. 1st ed. Wroclaw: Wydawnictwo Naukowe DSWE TWP, 2005. 535 p. ISBN 83-89518-29-5

8 Educator and his role in teaching/learning process

Objectives

Learning objectives of this chapter are to introduce the characteristics of an educator as the person involved in the process of education, the substance of his role and educator´s competencies.

Workload

1 hour in order to achieve the basic understanding of subject matter

Important keywords

- educator of adults
- lecturer, instructor, tutor
- demands on educator
- cooperation of the organizer
  with the educator

8.1 Educator of adults

Educator means "the person involved" in the educational process of adults. In fact, his/her role of the participant of the educational process has a different nature than the role of learners as the participants of the process. Although the educator is a traditional participant in the process of education of adults, too, the approaches to the role are currently quite different and the differences can be characterized from several points of view.

One of the differences is connected with the opinion that the educator is not the necessary participant of the educational process any more, because there are new forms and methods in the Adult Education (and in the education, generally). The role of the educator is weakening and in the connection with increasing accent given to the learning activity (meant as "self-learning activity") of a learner, the direct educational impact of the educator will be more and more reduced.

Even in the traditional approach to the educational process, there are differences concerning the educator´s role, for instance, related to the designation of the educator. This situation is not, of course, identical in different language environments (and the wide cultural-social-educational context).

The practice of Adult Education shows other "differences among educators": some of them are educators in their everyday professional life, some of them are educators

only occasionally or once in a long time. The "occasional educators" are perceived by their professional colleagues or general public as the experts in their branch and field of work. That is why just they are often asked to be the educators of other adults (in the professional training or non-professional education), to bring new knowledge in the framework of their specialization to others.

Note

Regarding the last paragraph of the preceding text concerning the occasional lectures: as the alumni, you will be probably perceived as the experts in the problems of social deviation (generally or in particular topics, such as gambling, bullying etc.) and that is why you will be asked to carry out a lecture, a lecture cycle or a course on a certain topic, for the public or professional colleagues.

The most important conclusion concerns the substance of educator´s activity: regardless the differences, the substance of the educator´s role is the same: he/she is the person involved in the educational process, the one who iniciates and leads the knowledge acquisition, and helps the learners acquire the skills.

8.2 Educator´s competencies

In order to fulfil this important and responsible role in the educational process of adults, the educator must be versatile, and thus he/she must have the adequate competencies.

Competencies can be defined as a complex of conditions which are necessary for an individual in order to being able to carry out the teaching process and to achieve the teaching/learning objectives. The list of competencies can be understood as the standards of profession (or work position) of an educator of adults. Of course, these standards are not declared by any normative document. They can particularly differ in the educational practice, too. Nevertheless, they are time-tested and well-established, and the institution which wants to carry out the efficient educational events for adults should either search for the educators who fulfil this "list of requirements", or educate them itself.

According to the demands on the educators´ skills, the educator of adults should:
- be an expert in certain field,
- have an elementary psychological knowledge,
- have a knowledge in methodology and theory of instruction of adults,
- have a general cultural knowledge,
- have personal qualities appropriate for the educational work.

The skills in the list are not ordered according to their importance because they are understood as a complex of interconnected demands: first mentioned expert knowledge is indispensable, of course, but it does not suffice alone. Other requirements enhance the expert specialization and the educational work of an educator. Meeting these conditions is not so simple and it is complicated to prove them.

8.3 Adult educators in practice – cooperation of organizer with educators

In relation to the role of an educator of adults and also to the demands on his education and preparation for the educational work with adults, the question of the current situation in educational practice arises: Is it possible to meet all the above-mentioned demands within the long-term intensive quantitative development of adult education?

The answer is rather positive. In present times, a great numbers of educators with various specializations are needed, and so the situation is better than in the foregoing decade: established institutions of adult education cooperate with reliable and learned educators or create their own teams of educators and develop their competencies.

The cooperation of an organizer (or organization team) with educators does not only mean the formal relationship but a systematic procedure which includes several steps:
- choice of an educator,
- assignment of an educational activity to the educator,
- cooperation and organization support during the educational activity,
- common procedure within the evaluation process.

These steps are legitimate and well-tried in the educational practice, even though there is a great variety of educational activities, and the process of preparation can be therefore very diverse (single course, its cyclic version, long term educational activities, different forms and intensities of educator's engagement, different forms atc.), and thus influences the form of cooperation with the educator in concrete cases.

Study questions

- *How do you understand the weakening importance of the role of an educator in adult education? Can you give an example of such educational situations?*

- *Specify the demands on educator's psychological and methodological knowledge (use your own experience and knowledge).*

- *What is the sense of the demand on the educator's general cultural knowledge?*

- *Which are the adequate personal qualities (preconditions) for the educational work?*

- *Suggest, how can the organizer find out that the potential educator meets the requirements for the educational work with adults?*

- *Specify the forms of cooperation of the organizer with the educator during the educational activity and the process of its evaluation.*

Summary

Educator of adults is the person involved in the educational process, the sunstance of his role as the participant of this process is to initiate and lead the learning process, e.g. knowledge acquisition and skills acquiring of adult learners.

In relation to the importance of the role of the educator (although there are discussions concerning it, too), demands on the educator´s preparation are formulated, such as expertness, psychological knowledge, orientation in methodology and theory of instruction of adults, cultural overview and personal preconditions for the educational work.

For the practice of adult education the cooperation of the organizer and the educator is important. The work of an organizer with the educator starts with the choice of him (in the context of formulated demands) and continues in cooperation and organization support during the educational activity to the cooperation in the evaluation process during and at the end of educational activity.

Literature

Bron, Agnieszka (ed.) et al. *"Old" and "new" worlds of adult learning*. 1st ed. Wroclaw: Wydawnictwo Naukowe DSWE TWP, 2005. 535 p. ISBN 83-89518-29-5

9 Education of elderly as current trend in adult education

Objectives

This chapter explains the basic facts and relations concerning the education of the elderly – its concept and current trends.

Workload

1 hour in order to achieve the basic understanding of subject matter

Important keywords

- the third age
- approaches to the education of the elderly
- university of the third age

9.1 Approaches to education of elderly

In the context of current trends in adult education, as they were characterized in chapter 4, the high quantity of courses for adults was emphasized. This high quantity is – among others things – connected with a high number of participants in adult education activities and also with a new view on the participants. Learning is more than ever connected with the whole life of a person and finishes neither with the end of the first educational carreer, nor with the end of the professional carreer.

With the rising quality of life in the great part of the world, with higher amount of leisure time of adults, and with longer life-span generally, there is more space for the participation in educational activities. A rather new target group of the educational opportunities are the elderly. Longer life-span and the rising quality of life are the main reasons for the rising interest of the elderly in education.
The proportion of the elderly in the whole population is rising, too (nowadays, it is about 25%), which means a large target group. That is why the new types of educational activities are emerging, with respect to the educational needs and interests of the elderly.

Several topics concerning the educational activities of the elderly are discussed and further investigated. Such topics are:
- What are the educational needs and educational interests of the elderly?

- Is it useful to constitute the special educational activities for the elderly or is it better to create educational activities of such forms and types which are suitable and accessible for all, i.e. including seniors?
- Is the teaching/learning process of the elderly different from young adults?

etc.

9.2 Third Age Universities

Universities of the Third Age represent nowadays one of the strongest streams of the education of the elderly (but not the only stream).

The origins of this educational opportunity offered by higher-education institutions reach to the 1970s in France (Université de Toulouse, profesor Pierre Vellas as the initiator and author). The beginnings in the contemporary Czechoslovakia are represented by the lecture cycles organized since the academic year 1986/1987 at two Czech universities: the Charles University in Prague (Faculty of Medicine) and at the Palacký University in Olomouc (Faculty of Arts).

Since the beginning of 1990s, the development of university education of the elderly has been very intensive. Nowadays, every public higher education institution in the Czech Republic organizes its University of the Third Age (UTA). The number of participants rises constantly (more than 36000 in a year), the range of courses and subjects covers all branches of Humanities, Science, Technology etc. ("from A to Z, i.e. from astronomy to zoology"). Figures and other data can be found for example on the webpages of the Association of the Third Age Universities of the Czech Republic which is the non-profit organization comprising 34 members – public universities and/or faculties.

Study questions

- *Give examples of the educational needs and interests of the elderly. Do you know any reseach relevant to this topic?*

- *What is your opinion on the two above-mentioned possibilities of educational activities for the elderly: special (and separate?) educational activities just for the elderly or rather "comprehensive" education for all the adults, including the elderly?*

- *Why does the title University of the Third Age include „the third age"?*

- *Search for the detailed information on one particular University of the Third Age and characterize its organization, participants and educational offer.*

Summary

This chapter deals with one of the current trends of adult education – the development of the education of the elderly. At first the reasons of increasing number of the elderly interested in learning and education, after that important topics concerning education of the elderly were named.
As an important example of educational opportunities for the elderly in the world (and in the Czech Republic, too), the universities of the third age were presented, their origins and current state.

Literature

Adamec, Petr, Kryštof, David (eds.). *Universities of the Third Age at Czech Universities*. 1st ed. Brno: University of Technology for the Association of Universities of the Third Age of ther Czech Republic, 2012. 44 p. ISBN 978-80-214-4627-4

10 Project of educational activity

Objectives

This chapter summarizes all important steps which are necessary to be taken during the planning and designing of an educational event. Acquisition of knowledge and skills gives the students needed preparation for project work in educational practice.

Workload

1 hour in order to achieve the basic understanding of subject matter

Important keywords

- educational project
- phases of project creation
- project structure
- financial plan
- costs of the educational activity

10.1 The creation of educational project

The preparation of an educational activity includes usually four phases. Although the educational activities are very different, the process of their preparation cannot be identic or similar. The four phases are well-tried in the educational practice and are important preconditions for the success of the educational activity.

The first phase of the preparation process is to map the current situation and the educational demand and supply in the particular place or region. Getting oriented in the demand and supply does not have to be grounded on one's own (physical and active) search – there are many information sources which can be used for the comparison of educational demand (concerning educational topics, target groups, learning objectives, sphere of education, its form and concept of learning outcomes) with the current supply. As soon as any local educational market shows any deficits, the opportunity to plan and prepare a new educational activity emerges.

The second phase in the preparation process is of fundamental importance. This key phase is the creation of the educational project. During this phase, all the substantial aspects of the planned educational activity must be clarified in order to be able – in the current educational context – to start the carrying out the educational project. That is why the creation of the educational project will be described in the separate part of this chapter.

The third phase is the phase of the carrying out the educational activity – it must not be the longest phase and – in case of the well-done project – it must not be the most demanding and difficult phase. It seems to be simple to take the ready project and follow the decided and planned aspects of the activity.

Within the educational practice, the fourth phase is not understood homogenously. In some cases – especially the long-term and certified educational activities – the great importance of this phase is emphasized. In other educational activities (short term activities, non-professional and non-certified courses etc.), this phase is underestimated. The phase comprises evaluation of the educational activity, and provides an important and useful feedback for all participating people – organizers, educators and adult learners. There are various possibilities of data sampling for such feedback information. In the case of short-term non-certificated activities, the form can be quite simple – surely these educational activities need an evaluation probe, too, at least a modest and quite small one.

10.2 Structure of educational project

At the beginning of the project´s structure designing, it is helpful to know that there are several possibilities how to do it; i.e. there are more variants of an educational event structure. The structure especially depends on the type of the educational event, the framework of adult education (in case of accredited courses, there are strict rules concerning the form of the course documentation), and the experience of the organizers, too – sometimes, the structure is subjected to the know-how of the particular educational institution.

Presented structure of an educational project is a tried (or well-tried) and time-tested general variant which can be used in various types of courses. It includes all the needed "decision steps" which have to be taken in the process of planning the educational event, although the order of these steps can differ.

The following list of steps and activities also includes the notes providing explanations or reminders relevant to particular steps. They should also function as the impulses for detailed consideration of the planned educational event.

Step	Note
Title of the course	must be understandable and unequivocal
Target group of education	specification of expected participants, their professional or educational characteristics; preconditions for participation
Learning objectives	key category connecting the educational topic with the target group: the definition of learning outcomes – knowledge and skills to be acquired by the participating learners; the formulation of learning objectives on which depends the concretization of all other project aspects

Number of participants	depends on the learning objectives: what is the right number of learners in order to achieve the learning outcomes?
Workload	depends on theformulation of learning objectives: what time amount is necessary in order to achieve the learning objectives – how many units/lessons and what structure is needed (study blocks, short-term or long-term, cyclic organization or separate units etc.)
Organization form of education	instructional category depending on learning objectives and number of learners
Placement	learning space – classroom, depends on learning objectives, number of learners and organizational form of education: what type of classroom and its equipment is needed for the concrete course?
Instructional content – its structure	a rather large part of the project: elaboration of the educational/instructional content into thesequence of topics or modules; it is recommendable to attach just into this sequence of topics the suitable educational tools
Educator/s	choice of an educator or educators in relation to the requirements on his/their expert specialization and other demands on educator´s preparation
Promotion of the course	decision concerning the form and amount of promotion and advertising of a course oriented on the target group and its educational needs; unsuitable chosen advertising either rises the costs of the course or complicates the implementation of the project
Course organization	after clearing all the aspects of the educational event it is necessary to concretize the proper organization of the course: the form of particular parts of the course, e.g. the organization of course opening, of the assistance to the educator/s during the course, and, of course the form of closing the course – testing the achievement

	of learning objectives, type of tests in the case of certificated outcome, form of feedback – evaluation of the course
Financial plan	indispensable part of the educational project: as the conclusion of the whole process of creating the educational project financial plan tests the implementability of the project in the practice: after summarizing of all costs items (and possible deduction with grant or sponsor support) the resulting amount ought to be divided by the planned number of participants and the result presents the participant´s fee

10.3 Implementation of project

As it was explained in the section 10.1, the project of an educational event represents the necessary way out for its future implementation, because all needed and important items were thought over and clarified during the project creation.

In fact, the same can be said in relation to next necessary steps before the beginning of the course, such as
- the choice of the educator/s and the organizer's work with him/them,
- the promotion of the course,
- classroom preparation, including its equipment, educational technology and teaching materials,
- communication with the participants of the course.

Especially the first three mentioned activities of the preparatory phase are identical with the implementation of related items of the project into practice. The only activity, which was not solved during the project creation, e.g. communication with the participants or the people who are interested in participation, must not be underestimated because it is needed in order to maintain the contact with the participants.

Next steps are related to the carrying out the course in the educational practice (most of them were mentioned in project): the course opening, support of the educator by the organizer, educational results and achievement of learning objectives assessment, general evaluation of the course.

Note

An important terminological note must be added: from this chapter, it should be clear that the term "educational project" was treated here in the sense of the original concept, e.g. the factual project, plan of an educational event (as it is usual in other

branches). Current educational practice often uses, however, the phrase "educational project" in another sense, as the synonym to the "educational action".

Study questions

- *Explain the importance of "learning objectives" and their specification in the process of planning and designing of a course. Provide the arguments and search for the examples of courses with similar title but different learning objectives (and thus different approach).*

- *Compare the various types of promotion of educational events with regard to the educational expectations of various target groups of adult education.*

- *Try to specify the costs of individual items in the financial plan of an educational event.*

- *How can the participant´s fee influence the attitude of an adult towards the educational opportunity? Is the participants´s fee a possible barrier in adult education?*

- *Suggest/Design the evaluation survey of the participant's/leaver's opinions on the educational event.*

Summary

In the process of preparing an educational event for adults it is necessary to make several needed steps – at first the mapping out the current situation in the educational demand and supply in the concrete place or region, followed by the creation of the educational project. This project creation includes decisions and concretizations of all important aspects needed for its successful implementation: educational objectives in relation to the educational topic, target group, organization form, time extension, instructional content and its structure, characteristics of educator/s, course promotion, financial plan, organization disposal, forms of finding achievement of educational results, evaluation procedure. The factual implementation of an educational event goes from the prepared project of the event.

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