Perspectives on Community Practices: Living and Learning in Community

Conference proceedings, ESREA 2015

Edited by
Sabina Jelenc Krašovec and **Damijan Štefanc**

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Adult learning and wellbeing: Between body politics and the body politic

Introduction

This paper was stimulated by the experience of the Scottish referendum and our intention to research the role of adult learning in the process of political engagement in Scotland. With the sharp increase in voting figures for the referendum (turnout 85%), there has been a public celebration of the revitalisation of individual civic participation and of civic society. A growing body of research is investigating the reasons for, processes and outcomes of this revitalisation. (e.g. Crowther, 2014; Carvalho, 2015[1]; Centre on Constitutional Change, 2014[2]). Respondents to an initial questionnaire by Crowther reported feelings of enjoyment associated with engagement, and grief - not at the referendum result but in the subsequent loss of purposive participation. There has been a particular interest in how people became re-engaged and informed their decision, and in the role of social media in this transformation of democracy. Community workers enthused by the signs of regrowth in political participation are asking what we can learn from this experience to nurture 'an active and engaged citizenship' (CLD Standards Council members' events, December 2014).

Arising from an initial literature review phase of our research, this paper engages with a variety of theoretical perspectives which could be applied to an analysis of the experience and to an exploration of the ways in which individual wellbeing, the wellbeing of civic society and adult learning are related.

Wellbeing is now an established preoccupation of education policy and its conceptual slipperiness lends it political appeal across a broad range of ideological

[1] http://www.dundee.ac.uk/news/2015/yes-and-no-voters-more-alike-than-you-might-think.php
[2] http://www.centreonconstitutionalchange.ac.uk/papers?field_tags_tid=40

interests. On the one hand, an explicit policy focus on wellbeing recognises that Gross Domestic Product is a poor proxy for life satisfaction: happiness and wellbeing diminish once individuals attain a certain level of material affluence (Layard, 2005). The concept of wellbeing can thus be marshalled to support ecological arguments around limits to growth and critiques of consumerism and alienated labour. Moreover, as Wilkinson and Pickett (2009) have famously shown, health and wellbeing (as measured by a number of different indicators) across all socio-economic categories diminishes the more unequally a country's income is distributed. Thus, wellbeing can also be marshalled to support arguments for social democracy, socialism and distributive justice.

On the other hand, wellbeing in political discourse can be interpreted as an integrated strategy to assess the mind and body as economic resources (Davies, 2011). By this reading, wellbeing is not the end in itself. Rather, it is a necessary but not sufficient precondition for the end of flexible capital accumulation. There are two faces to this. 'Demand-side' wellbeing is what we might name the ways in which the cultural critique of capitalism – of alienation, mass production, the loss of authenticity and individual autonomy – has, over the past few decades, become so easily assimilated into a wellbeing industry. 'Supply side' wellbeing recognises the need to integrate it into the very fabric of the work experience. Employees are enjoined to 'love' what they do; to have a 'passion' for serving, selling, manufacturing, etc. It follows that this employer commitment to wellbeing must be partly sincere, if for no other reason that emotionally exploited employees will eventually burn out and fail to appear to offer discerning customers the 'real thing'.

We could summarise all of this by saying that wellbeing serves different ideological functions. In the UK in the mid-1980s, wellbeing shifted from a concept primarily associated with the public good and the 'body politic', to something more akin to an individual state associated with the 'body individual' (Sointu 2005). Of course, these two ideas are not mutually exclusive. Since humans are at once organic, social and political beings, the wellbeing of the body individual and body politic presuppose one another. In what follows, we draw on the work of five canonical thinkers who each have something distinctive to contribute to how we might understand the ways in which adult learning might suture this relationship.

Amartya Sen's work on capabilities offers a liberal humanist framing of the relationship between adult learning and wellbeing. Habermas offers a less individualised rendering of this relationship, and his critique of 'lifeworld' colonization is useful for theorising the ways in which wellbeing is currently being ripped from its roots in communities and enfolded into regimes of calculation. David Harvey's 'revolutionary humanism' is suspicious of liberal individualism but also of Habermas's idealism. Harvey's 'revolutionary humanist' conception of wellbeing remains wed to a materialist analysis of the contradictions of capital itself. Foucault's analysis of 'governmentality' under neoliberalism is useful for thinking about the relationship between institutional power and the body politics of daily life. Finally, Deleuze moves closer to a post-humanist materialism that asks serious questions about the subject of wellbeing and the limits of the concept of the nation state as body politic in relation to adult learning. It is our hope that these impressionistic accounts might act as stimuli to different ways of thinking about the relationship between wellbeing and adult learning in the context of political re-engagement.

Wellbeing and adult learning through Sen

The Capabilities Approach (CA) (Sen,1999) is an increasingly influential challenge to approaches that measure the quality of life in a nation by GDP. In Sen's view, capabilities act as the crucial hinge between resources and human achievements' since the equal distribution of resources need not lead to equal capability to utilise them for wellbeing (ibid.). Whilst the CA is centrally concerned with inquiry into what is a life lived well, Sen also recognises that subjective wellbeing resulting from the application of mere *abilities* may be curtailed by a number of objective factors beyond individual agency, such the degree of political freedom one has to express oneself (ibid.).

Sen links the wellbeing of individuals *and* the body politic to the expansion of individual capabilities, understood as the substantive freedoms to choose a life one values. This is a liberal humanist model in which individual agency and choice remain paramount. Personal freedoms enhance the ability of people to help themselves and also to influence the world. Capabilities to participate in social and political life are intrinsically valuable – 'even a very rich person who is prevented from speaking freely or from participating in public debate is *deprived* of something she has reason to value' (ibid., p. 36). Sociopolitical participation and education are both intrinsically valuable capabilities and fertile since they foster the expansion of all capabilities (ibid., p.294).

Adult learning contributes to the wellbeing of the individual by helping them to choose well and, in promoting informed political participation, it is also instrumental in enhancing the hearing people get. Sen's model recognises individuals as agentic and 'responsible' -'democracy cannot survive without civic virtue' (ibid, p.155). Notions of responsibility and civic virtue imply commitment to shared values; the formation of which emerge through educative processes.

Sen (1999, pp. 189 -203) uses the example of women's rights to illustrate the interrelationships between wellbeing, agency and learning. Describing a shift from a welfarist focus on the wellbeing of women to an emphasis on the role of women's agency, Sen demonstrates how respect for women's wellbeing is influenced by such factors as women's secure access to paid employment, property rights and education. Freedom to access roles outside of the home, including education, lead to adult learning which in turn leads to increased agency. Increased agency demands greater respect both in familial relations but also in society as women are empowered to participate in social and political processes. The influence of their voice in political process leads to distinctive formulations of social problems and solutions in which their agency is recognised, resulting in the development of both individual capabilities and wellbeing at the level of the society. Through the CA, adult learning might be perceived as a muscle which flexes between the wellbeing of the body individual and the body politic, encouraging the expansion of each in relationship with one another.

Wellbeing and adult learning through Habermas

A primary claim made by proponents of the CA is that whilst material poverty can be relative, capabilities are universal. Habermas, like Sen, aims at a universalistic humanism, but locates the wellbeing of the body politic firmly within the domain of intersubjective reason and social learning. This marks an important difference from Sen's liberal individualism. Habermas's work is centrally concerned with the wellbeing of the body politic and he has most powerfully articulated this through the paradigmatic

contradiction between the lifeworld and the systemworld. Habermas theorised social movements as 'learning processes through which latently available structures of rationality are transposed into social practice – so in the end they find an institutional embodiment' (Habermas, 1979, p. 125). For him, the smothering of cultural resources in everyday life was an epoch defining concern. Roughly speaking, the systemworld is the state-market nexus, and is driven by the 'functional rationality' of commodification and bureaucratisation. On the other hand, the lifeworld consists of public (work, education, leisure) and private (e.g. family) spheres of everyday life, where reason becomes 'communicative rationality', driven by normative, ethical and aesthetic concerns (Edwards, 2008).

Habermas's diagnosis on the wellbeing of the body politic is that it is systemically undermined by modernity's lopsided learning capacity dominated by instrumental reason. Society's 'technical institutions…dominate the normative and aesthetic institutions, resulting in our society's one-sided and limited learning capacity' (Brulle, 1995, p. 319).

Habermas arguably helps us to see how, in the contemporary context of wellbeing, the systemworld/lifeworld distinction is raised to the level of an absolute contradiction. Wellbeing scientists and the so-called 'psycho'- and 'neuro-economists' continue to generate ever more metrics and indicators that measure, monitor and aggregate individual wellbeing. Against this backdrop, it is easy to see how the very lifeworld qualities that make wellbeing attractive to policy makers in the first place (community, social connection, authentic relationships and dialogue spaces) are hollowed to a husk as the vampiric tendencies of the systemworld reduce wellbeing to a closed esoteric world of technocratic expertise employed to govern efficiently. Since citizens are increasingly impelled to participate in such measurement practices at work and home, this contradiction helps us to understand the role of learning in suturing the relationship between the health of the body politic and the body individual because when an individual's finite cognitive and emotional energies are consumed in everyday life by instrumental reason, their ability to use these in the development and reproduction of lifeworld resources has an equally draining effect on the wellbeing of the body politic.

Wellbeing and adult learning through Harvey

David Harvey's (2014) 'revolutionary humanism' shares two important features with Habermas's humanism:

- Its universalistic aspirations.
- An analysis of the relationship between wellbeing and adult learning must be anchored to a properly dialectical analysis of contradictions.

From this point onwards, the discrepancies are more notable than the similarities. For Harvey (2006, p. 82), to accept the neo-Kantian notion of an infinite approach towards some kind of uncontaminated 'lifeworld' space 'entails abandoning everything Marx taught us regarding the principles of historical materialist enquiry'. The human desire for happiness and wellbeing plays a central role in his recent arguments for 'revolutionary humanism'. Harvey begins with an analysis of 'alienation' that acts as a powerful critique of Habermas's linguistic rationalism. Firstly, when one is alienated from one's labour, s/he

is asked to 'trust that capitalism is the best system to generate wealth and well-being for all' (Harvey 2014, p. 267). However, within an economic system which facilitates the private accumulation of money power, the individual is (at a structural level) impelled to increase their needs, so as to 'rationally consume' in line with the increased accumulation of money (Harvey, 20104, p. 270). The result is that 'idea of a stable good life and of good living according to modest requirements is displaced by an insatiable desire for gaining more and yet more money power in order to command more and yet more consumer goods' (p. 270). Stoic attitudes and wellbeing through community learning and participation then become mere prescriptions for the losers in this game.

Harvey's materialist analysis of the necessity of the productive consumption of space and time is useful in understanding adult learning and wellbeing, since new demand must constantly be created for the realisation of capital. Since capitalist space-time must be, above all, productive of exchange value, the wellbeing of the body politic must naturally suffer as individuals are alienated from one another and their own labour. Even as free-time is increased through efficiency gains, workers are alienated from its potential to engage in collective activities that might contribute to the wellbeing of the body politic.

Arguably, the liberal idealism of both Sen and Habermas is revealed through this way of thinking: in other words, rational discourse and democratic adult learning has a material basis. The kind of learning that might emerge through various forms of collective community action is not valued unless brought into the sphere of market exchange (which Sen particularly would like to defend). As new time-saving technologies are developed, more uses must be invented for them in order to re-impose time and attentional discipline on bodies that might otherwise use it to learn collectively for a better world and a healthy body politic. The complexity of contemporary life creates an economy of attention, which is a finite physiological resource. Thus, rational discourse in the lifeworld cannot be the privileged domain of emancipatory learning in the absence of praxis that addresses these material dynamics. If the wellbeing of the body individual is held in check through time poverty (a notably gendered phenomenon), and ensnarement in the rhythmic 'pseudo-activity' of daily life at work and home (getting lost in emails, checking Facebook, even answering the never ending roll of petitions) then the wellbeing of the body politic arguably suffers (Harvey, 2014, p. 279).

Wellbeing and adult learning through Foucault

Foucault provides an alternative way of analysing the relationship between the individual and the state which redefines the scope of the political. The objective of his work was 'to create a history of the different modes by which, in our culture, human beings are made subjects (Foucault, 1982, p.777). His work details a shift in mechanisms of governing populations from sovereign power to what he called governmentality:

> "Governmentality is a conceptual architecture of the modern liberal state and all its strategies, techniques and procedures as they act upon the human body and social behaviour through the many and varied capillaries of power." (Ball, 2013, p. 600)

Within governmentality, power is both individualising and totalising (Foucault, 1982, p.782); no longer repressive but productive, governmentality produces particular kinds of subjects and realities and amongst the techniques of power are those of disciplining - 'the way a human being turns himself into a subject' (Foucault 1982, p. 778):

> "The human beings to be governed were now conceived as individuals who are to be active in their own government." (Rose, 1996, p. 331)

Foucault's writing on governmentality is particularly useful in thinking about the mediating role of lifelong learning between body politics and institutional power since 'there is no more effective form of hegemonic social control than that achieved by a way of learning that is self-motivated, self-regulated and self-policed' (Griffin, 1999, p. 449).

Wellbeing can also be understood as a technology of the self in which individuals self-regulate to maintain themselves as economic resources (Wright, 2013). The purpose of this form of power is to maintain the state itself (Allen, 1998, p.184). The body politic is maintained by the self surveillance of the body of individuals (Hindess, 1998, pp. 50-61). Disciplining power is often present in practices that are usually thought of as democratic and participatory (Brookfield, 2005, p. 129).

Critics of Foucault focus on the apparent pessimism of his views of disciplinary power as removing the possibility of freedom. Certainly the above perspective might dispute the positive discourses of autonomy which surrounded the Scottish referendum. Increased voter participation was due, it is argued, to the fact that each vote counted (Crowther, 2013). Individuals reported an increase in their personal well-being as a result of their participation (ibid). Although this increase in well-being could be understood as the satisfaction flowing from efficient self-regulation (Brookfield, 2005, p.140), an alternative view might draw upon Foucault's later work in which he concerns himself with power exercised as resistance and the autonomy of the individual through work on the self 'requiring the use of moral and intellectual capacities to determine a course of action' (Moss, 1998, p.154)

In the constant flow of power, there are cracks where resistance redirects the flow and for Foucault an important space for political struggle and contestation is in the consideration of governmentality and the techniques of government (Allen, 1998, p.193). As Ball (2013, p.130) suggests, '[e]mpowerment and obligation go hand in hand'. A Foucaultian analysis might then consider adult learning ambivalently as both a technology of the self through which citizens are compelled to attend to their wellbeing as part of a larger living body politic and as the autonomous work of exercising power as resistance.

Wellbeing and adult learning through Deleuze

With Sen's CA, we began with an essentially liberal humanist framing and progressed through a Habermasian (more collective yet essential liberal humanist) frame towards Harvey's Marxian 'revolutionary humanism'. Then we moved on to Foucault who has controversially (but not without reason) been lumped in with the Continental 'anti-humanist' tradition, in the sense that he regarded the human as a passing historical category. Particularly for the Foucault of the *Order of Things*, the 'human' was a decentred product of institutional and discursive practices that exceeded individuals' intentions, thus challenging the 'existentialist privileging of subjectivity and the subjective formation of experience' (May, 2013, p. 11). Through this lens, humans govern their own bodily wellbeing as the willing functionaries of a larger body politic. For Deleuze, the wellbeing of the body individual or politic cannot simply be explained away as the aggregation of its constituent parts, since emergent wholes have properties and capacities that exceed these

parts. Moreover, the wellbeing of bodies cannot be explained away by structuralist analysis, since it struggles to account for change and contingency. Deleuzian ontology allows us to see that bodies may be have enduring properties and may exist as larger populations of bodies with similar properties, but that these properties are historically contingent 'all the way down'. The simultaneously ontological and political proposition is that bodies always have the capacity to be otherwise.

Deleuze doesn't ignore questions of wellbeing. Rather, he relocates wellbeing in assemblages of matter, thus opening up the radical possibility of a posthuman rendering of the relationship between adult learning and wellbeing. The Deleuzian notion of 'assemblage' provides us with an anti-essentialist materialism, through which (drawing on his reading of Spinoza) wellbeing can be recast as 'joyous affect' (Deleuze, 1988). Learning becomes a fundamentally practical, yet experimental, encounter through which multiple bodies are thrown into external relations with one another with the intention of mutually increasing the capacity to affect and be affected. Body politics are machinic assemblages, such that 'body politics' dissolve into (are contingent upon) the distributed agency of human and non-human others.

As Hardt and Negri (2004) realised, this poses a fundamental challenge to nation state politics, since the wellbeing of individual bodies increasingly depends on the mobilisation of singularities ('Multitudes') not really 'against' anything in the sense that they form part of a dialectical unity of opposites, but *for* themselves. Within this immanentist approach, politics becomes more tentative, more experimental, more modest, but more ill-defined. In the words of Deleuze (2009 [1968], p. 241), 'learning', if it is to be worthy of the name 'tears us apart' and 'demands the very transformation of our body and our language'. Wellbeing cannot, in a sense, be known *a priori* through Deleuze simply because its subject is not known *a priori.* Learning and political wellbeing is about understanding the degrees of freedom that one has to act. Of course, at worst, such a way of thinking completely fails to provide any basis for identifying what forms of 'becoming' are desirable and what forms of becoming are pernicious with respect to our embodied limitations.

Moving on to the conclusion, one thing that can be said for Deleuze is that wellbeing is connected to learning through *desire* – the desire for a productive and creative encounter. If applied to this essay itself, we might argue that it is not a choice of either/or (Habermas or Sen, Foucault and Harvey etc.) Learning itself is bricolage: what happens when we assemble these perspectives through the very act of dialogue and writing?

Discussion: "and, and, and…"

In the spirit of postmodern research (Stronach and MacLure, 1997) which emphasises simultaneity - all possible interpretations are available at the same time - we have explored five distinct perspectives. Each perspective illuminates certain aspects; each has lacunae. Brought together as additional rather than alternative perspectives they perhaps help us to acknowledge ambiguities, tensions and complexity and adult learning as an inherently ambivalent process.

An analysis of the referendum experience drawing on Sen might focus on the autodidactic processes of learning undertaken by individuals. In the 5 weeks prior to the vote there were over 10 million Facebook exchanges relating to the referendum[3], whilst

[3] http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-scotland-29202729

some 750 publicly accessible web pages were set up and devoted to the topic. Learning for democracy was also happening offline:

> "Night after night, in public halls and housing schemes, communities and trade unions, debate has been joined in an open and democratic spirit of enquiry." (Ferguson, 2014[4])

In terms of the Capabilities Approach, the growth of freedom to learn, undoubtedly enabled by new technologies, contributed to growth in the capabilities of participation. Scottish society as a whole experienced development as individual freedoms flourished. The virtuous cycle is completed by the growth in individual freedoms which might flow from a government influenced by greater participation.

What this does not address so well is why people were drawn to learning and participation. In research carried out by Dundee University respondents spoke of their sense of obligation:

> "We saw Yes and No voters reporting they felt a duty to investigate the facts rationally before making up their minds..." [5]

Following Foucault, then, we might see the adult learning undertaken by individuals to inform themselves to participate in the referendum decision as self-discipline:

> "Activism and responsibility have now become …. part of the obligation of the …. biological citizen. Such a citizen is obliged to inform himself" (Rose and Novas, 2004, cited in Ball, 2013, p. 130)

As Lemke (2000, cited in Ball, 2013, p.132) suggests, neoliberalism '…aspires to construct a responsible and moral individual …whose moral quality is based on the fact that they rationally assess the costs and benefits of a certain act'. The social media in which much of the discussion circulated might be understood to function as a panopticon (Brookfield, 2005, pp.134- 136) in which individuals performed the obligations of an active citizen under constant surveillance of the normalising gaze.

However, not all learning was individual and a view with Habermas might focus on the proliferation of grassroots organisations such as Common Weal [6], Radical Independence Campaign [7] and National Collective [8]. Social movements emerge from 'legitimacy crises', though which the 'resources' of the lifeworld are marshalled to reason against the irrationality of systemworld logics in particular contexts.

The experience of the learning undertaken within grassroots organisations might be understood as such contestation where it led, for example, to critiques of the structure and process of the referendum or national broadcasting[9]. The proliferation of groups which proposed alternative visions of government in opposition to the prevailing regime of rationality might itself be seen as countering the individuation of governmentality. As cracks opened up, as Foucault might say, individuals used the facilities of social networking to analyse techniques of government, sometimes using humour to create fissures in the fabric of taken-for-granted political process (see for example Bella

[4] http://www.redpepper.org.uk/win-or-lose-the-scottish-people/
[5] http://www.dundee.ac.uk/news/2015/yes-and-no-voters-more-alike-than-you-might-think.php
[6] http://www.allofusfirst.org/
[7] http://radicalindependence.org/
[8] http://nationalcollective.com/
[9] http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-scotland-29196912

Caledonia[10]; Wings over Scotland[11]; youtube: Scottish Independence: Darth Vader Music Chases Labour MPs Around Glasgow[12]).

As McAlpine highlights, online and offline, the ability of lay-persons to understand and articulate relatively complex ideas which had previously been the preserve of 'experts' was evident.

> "We are the most informed citizens in the world right now…Kids can talk you through the details of the Shengen arrangement. Most of us can run you through the constitutional position of the Bank of England's Monetary Policy Unit." (McAlpine, 2014[13])

It is arguable, however, whether being informed about the operation of capital is evidence of enquiry into the contradictions of capital (Harvey, 2014). The perception of the financial risks of independence was considered to be a deciding factor for many voters[14]; the imperatives of capital accumulation were rarely questioned even by the yes campaign. Perhaps then, there was little that was 'revolutionary' in the process.

The discourse of community politics which emerged, however, might be interpreted as evidence of more tentative, more experimental, more modest Deleuzian politics driven by a desire for change. The strapline of Common Weal – 'all of us first' promotes a philosophy of a different kind of Scotland in which democracy is local and diverse. Since in Deleuzian philosophy nothing is fixed, everything can change, even those elements of the assemblages that wield state and/or corporate power can theoretically be deterritorialised into tools for liberation and progressive politics in which social groups organise *themselves.* Are the activists involved in revisioning Scotland freeing *lines of flight*?

Given that we have played with the idea of body politics and the body politic, we might end with Delueze and Guttarri's concept of the Body without Organs. To build a healthy Body without Organs:

> "Lodge yourself on a stratum, experiment with the opportunities it offers find an advantageous place on it, find potential movements of deterritorialization, possible lines of flight, experience them, produce flow conjunctions here and there, try out continua of intensities segment by segment, have a small plot of new land at all times. It is through a meticulous relation with the strata that one succeeds in freeing lines of flight, causing conjugated flows to pass and escape and bringing forth continuous intensities for a BwO." (Deleuze & Guattari, 1980/1987, p. 161)

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Building a world unfit to live in: The deception, distraction and disavowal of the fetish

Introduction: Education and the local/global

The early stages of the 21st Century do not provide a very optimistic outlook regarding the impact of human activity on the non-human world. Although there are some detractors most commentators would, either in the present or comparatively near future, acknowledge both the local and global degradation of natural environments. Global examples would include the impact of climate change, peak oil (and other fossil fuel) extraction and the rapidly increasing shift towards hydraulic fracturing to obtain natural gas and exploitation of oil sand reserves. While, from a more 'local', English context, wild flower meadows have declined by 98% since the onset of industrialisation, only 2% of native woodland remains and despite mounting scientific evidence and opposition from veterinary groups, the UK government continues a policy to shoot badgers in an attempt to reduce the incidence of Bovine TB, particularly in dairy cattle. This depressing roll-call of at best, ineffective stewardship or at worst a conscious rejection of the impact of human activities, solicits an answer to the deceptively difficult question – 'Why are so many, doing so little to change what is a potentially apocalyptic outlook?'

This paper explores what the 'local' and global represent if indeed they can be represented as a clear dichotomy and how decisions are made at these levels. As a consequence the focus shall be on both education and the local/global. The process of and potential sites for learning and decision-making, in particular the role of 'formal' education and then wider 'informal' arenas for public debate will be discussed. It will be noted how the global influence of neo-liberal agendas has led to a commodification of formal educational settings and ultimately more public spaces. Which, despite the rhetoric of market force driven improvement agendas, accountability and imposed standards, these educational spaces are now less likely to be able to support the sustained and difficult thinking that is required to solve complex problems. Including, issues of

environmental degradation and potentially catastrophic climate change. The second point of departure is to consider the notion of 'local' and global and to question the relationship between these two apparently disparate sites of human agency, learning and world making within the context of the policy to cull badgers in England by shooting them. The impact of small local acts where individual agency is subsumed in a culture of market forces on global events and vice versa will also be questioned.

The fetish

I shall consider the sites and process of education alongside identifying actions within the local and global by using notions of (the) fetish from both Marx and Freud. Such a stance will enable complex problems, like the impact of human activity on the environment, to be interrogated from the micro perspective of the individual alongside the macro of wider social and political structures. I develop Marx's notion of the commodity fetish, where human-made products, take on their own, often beguiling agency. In particular, the concept of the commodity fetish is extended to include the human-made product of formal education which will be discussed in the light of an ever increasing separation between humans and the non-human world – itself also a local/global issue. Additionally, Freud's conception of the fetish, one that deals with the anxiety inherent in real or fantasised loss, shall be presented so that the construction of human commodities, the subsequent emerging fetish and disruption to thinking are located within a framework of unconscious defences that seek to protect the individual from overwhelming anxiety. It is at this nexus of separation that the fetish is manifest, where it deceives, distracts and incites disavowal. Therefore, obfuscating the relationship between; producer and consumer, human and non-human, education and learning, learning and non-learning and local and global.

This paper will highlight the influence of the fetish that has led to humans building worlds unfit to live in by considering the origins and nature of the fetish and subsequently how the consequence of fetishised behaviour leads to outcomes such as the policy decision to cull badgers. Instrumental in this discussion are the works of; Berger (1967), who concludes that human made products develop their own logic that are then imposed on human activity, Marx's (1867) theorising of the commodity fetish that deceives by conflating the distinction between use and exchange value and Freud's (1927) re-visiting of his theory of fetishism, where he now considers the fetish outside of sexual activity and in the context of dealing with separation and loss in everyday life.

Origin and nature of fetish: A macro deception – human world making

In *The Sacred Canopy*, Berger (1967) makes the distinction between open and closed-worlds and how this is related to the capacity and predilection for humans to design and make products. One of the differences that distinguish humans from animals is that humans are born into what Berger (1967) defines as an 'open-world'. This is in contrast to non-human animals born ready to survive into a 'closed-world'; badgers, hedgehogs or even snails do not have to manipulate their external world beyond an evolutionary determined ecology. In contrast, humans are born premature and need to spend a considerable proportion of the lifespan 'learning' how to survive in human society. Additionally, humans are in a continual process of constructing their world in

order to ensure their continued dominance and survival. The human world is therefore 'open' and likely to change as a consequence of humans making physical and non-physical products. The paradox that Berger exposes is that there is a sting in the tail to this entire human endeavour; for just as human-made products do indeed construct an ever-changing world, these products also contain their own logic, a consideration of which, may begin to explain the origin of the fetish. The contention is that the products of human world construction 'turn' on their creators and enforce their own logic on subsequent human activity.

The continual process of human world building has led to new products and thought processes that in turn, require more world construction. For example, in human history, fuel was needed for fires to keep warm in temperatures that evolution has not adapted them to survive in. It is not beyond imagination (and no doubt empirical findings) that very early humans began to source wood to keep fires burning. This led to the development of flint axes, metal axes, chain saws and industrial forest clearance and an additional host of human activities that involved fire. The unforeseen consequence of this activity could be that humans are now inhabiting ecosystems that evolution has not 'designed' them for and in doing so begun to upset the delicate structure of the extant ecology; trees are felled at a rate that normal tree reproduction and growth rates cannot compensate for the loss, areas of 'wild' land are now given over to farming trees that now has an impact on soil quality and erosion. Although hypothetical, the story could be expanded without being fanciful. The key message is that physical and non-physical human products are deceptive and do not just support the task they were designed for but in an 'open-world' the internal logic of these products influence and determine future human action and subsequent world making.

A macro distraction - use value and exchange value

The work of Berger offered an insight into the deceptive nature of human products, based on the need for humans to be continually involved in world construction. Almost 100 years before *The Sacred Canopy,* Marx (18??) also alluded to the confusing and distracting nature of human made commodities and termed the notion of the 'commodity fetish'. In *Capital*, Marx identifies two value systems, those of 'use' and 'exchange'. The use value is the matter-of-fact physicality and usefulness of a commodity for example, a metal axe is simply a piece of wood and metal that can be used to chop wood. The exchange value is unknown until the maker of the axe exchanges this product, the wood and metal thing, for money or other products. It is in the conversion from use value to exchange value that Marx articulates his understanding of how and why commodities distract their human owners and become the site of fetishized behaviours.

The site of the distraction does not necessarily have to be a physical product as Harvey (2003) argues that hardware, software and organisational forms can all become fetishised commodities. Although the fetish may have various origins the outcome, where the exchange value subsumes the use value is strikingly similar. When considering the axe, the use value of the metal and wood effectively becomes hidden, along with the labour that went into the sourcing and production of the metal, carving of the wood and the final construction of the axe, in favour of an exchange value that exceeds the use value. For Marx, the nature of the fetish is exposed in a market economy where it hides from awareness the exploitation of social relations involved in commodity production. Marx does not provide a micro, or individual explanation as to the distracting shape shifting

ability of commodities, he simply acknowledges that this is the result of capitalist processes where the exchange value supplants the use value. Billig (1999) contends that, unknowingly, Marx's notion of the commodity fetish has an 'implicit psychology'. The next section considers Freud's (1927) understanding of fetish and provides a possible psycho-social mechanism to explain how this implicit psychology inherent within inanimate products can distract individuals and result in the exchange value exorcising the use value from awareness.

A micro disavowal - dealing with separation and loss

The fetish is a provocative and well known feature of Freudian psychology bound up in immediate assumptions relating to sexual activity and this is where Freud first introduces the idea of the fetish (Freud, 1903). The presentation of fetishised behaviours in the clinical space at first surprised Freud but later (1927) he considered the role of the fetish in everyday life and this movement in his thinking provides an opportunity to consider how the fetish operates at an individual level. The sexual fetish has its origins (in males) after becoming aware that females do not possess a phallus which leads to an assumed fear of castration. By Freud's 1927 paper 'Fetishism' his ideas now align alongside dealing with loss in a wider social world and not just of castration. Grounded in a fear of loss the fetish develops as a refusal to perceive unacceptable reality and therefore the ego splits to support the possibility of maintaining two contrasting views. A state of mind referred to as 'disavowal'.

Using the concept of disavowal it becomes possible to consider how individuals are able to hold, what can be perceived as perverse thoughts and actions where unrealistic and conflicting thoughts can be held by a split ego. Freud provides the example of a son who continues to think about and act as though his dead father were still alive. These behaviours are unsustainable and such is the level of anxiety associated with the fear of losing a loved one they are held onto. The 'Freudian' fetish therefore has its origin in a fear of losing a loving object and to avoid the anxiety associated with this, the unconscious defences enable conflicting thoughts to be held onto.

This paper began by highlighting examples of environmental mismanagement and questioned how this situation has arisen. The platform that has been set out enables this complex issue to be discussed in the context of both Marx and Freud's understanding of fetishized human responses. The next section will argue why education settings and the 'local' have become sites of the fetish and further suggest what the consequences and outcomes are for human learning and building a local (and global) world that is fit to live in.

The fetishisation of education

Education as a fetish – the macro

That education processes and structures are products of human world-making is beyond doubt but these products have taken on a new significance within the recent neo-liberal climate of accountability, league tables and paying for higher education (in England). Ball (2004) famously declared that education was 'for sale' and accordingly now a commodity functioning within a market economy; and as Harvey (2003) considered

hardware, software and organisational forms to be sites of the fetish, so, on a macro scale education can be conceived as a commodity fetish. This results in the concomitant conflation between use value and exchange value while hiding from awareness the exploitation of social relations. In the context of education it can be argued that individuals' experience of learning has shifted from one that requires relationships to support difficult thinking and sustained effort to one that assumes learning is the result of attendance, completion of tests or scanning Google pages.

Education as a fetish - the micro

The places and spaces where formal and informal learning occur have all the characteristics that would indicate the development of a fetish and the resulting fetishized behaviours. The consequence of being born into an 'open-world' has required humans to continually construct and control their environment: acts which are inherently about learning and result in the continual separation from the non-human world. Using Berger's (1967) principles of human world construction and the ensuing unintended conflict caused by the internal logic of physical and non-physical products, education can be regarded as an historical and continued separation between the learner and teacher as well as the human and non-human world. As humans have evolved and become increasingly social the 'original' sites of learning represented by (m)other/infant or close family relationships have been developed into social and cultural spaces such as formal education settings. The observation to be made here is that the evolution of learning spaces represents separation from close relationships with others and the non-human world and therefore engendering feelings of loss. Thus setting up the conditions for Freud's psychoanalytic view that the fetish has its origin in dealing with loss and the need to manage this by holding and acting on conflicting views. The consequence of which will be discussed later but it is the process of world-making that leads to the consideration of Marx's commodity fetish.

The fetishisation of the 'local'

'Local' as a fetish –the macro

Marx's understanding of the commodity fetish suggests that exchange values are made more visible than use values and that some form of exploitation is hidden from awareness. In the context of the local and global, the idea of localism hides from reality the features discussed above; that these two world views cannot be separated. What becomes obscured from experience is the inter-relationship between the local and global and in doing so conceals the huge dependency of the local on the global. For example, the vital jobs provided by supermarkets, the resources required to manufacture the electronica used to mount social media campaigns and the wealth created through exploitative international money markets.

‘Local’ as a fetish – the micro

The fetishisation of the ‘local’ is exposed by the very notion of the local and global being characterised as two distinct entities. Carpenter (2014) applies Marx’s understanding of the commodity fetish to justify her claim that localism represents a fetish but within her rationale there are elements of a Freudian fetish. The idea of the local is idealised and often yearned for alongside a sense that the non-local is lacking and not as good as local, for example, bread from a Farmer’s market is more nutritious/better than bread from a supermarket. Carpenter sees the folly in the illusion that the local and global can considered as opposite and separated; they are one of the same things as the global is enacted within the local. This unrealistic notion that considers the local and global as distinct from each other is the outcome of the fetish as the local and global must always be considered as inextricably linked.

By taking a far ranging, micro and macro, interpretation of the origin, nature and consequence of the fetish it has been possible to identify how; the products of human world-making have their own logic that *deceives* from their original function, commodities hide from awareness use value and create a *distraction* that focusses on exchange value and finally how individuals *disavow* reality and seem willing to cling onto opposing and unrealistic opinions. In general the fetish can be seen to obfuscate the social relations between producer/consumer, human/non-human, education/learning, learning/non-learning, use value/exchange value and local/global. It will be through the lenses of distraction, deception and disavowal that the outcomes of the education and local fetish (using the example of badger culling in England) may provide some insight into how worlds can be built unfit to live in.

Outcomes of the fetish

Deception

The commodification of formal education has developed a hegemonic acceptance as to how learning is perceived to take place. Certainly from the English perspective the widespread application of a ‘levels’-based curriculum with associated high-stakes testing, inspection by offices of the government and publication of performance league tables; has led to learning being simplified into assumed logical stages where the source of motivation for learners and teachers is linked to the results of audit. For numerous commentators (Biesta, 2013) this over technicised approach to education does not represent what human learning might actually involve and at its best might only go some way towards surface learning (Entwistle,). In fact the product of education has its own internal logic that creates a deception and precipitates human reactions that are further removed from what might be the relational sites of learning. On a simplistic level the result is to deceive learners into a shallow style of short-term goal focussed thinking that falls short of the difficult thinking required for deep learning.

The deception that shallow thinking is indicative of human learning and decision making can be exposed in the response of the UK government to cull badgers, only in England and at the same time this also illustrates the origin of the bifurcation between the local and global. The policy to shoot badgers to reduce the incidence of TB in dairy cattle is an example of ‘local’ action; although badgers are widespread only certain setts have been targeted for extermination. Such action results from simplistic thinking, in this case

that mobile large mammals like badgers can be considered within a very small geographical area. The deception inherent in the internal logic of a 'local' cull is that localised badgers are divorced from other 'quasi-local' badgers and that the destruction of badgers groups from these areas will reduce TB incidence in dairy cattle. The folly is for those who propose such actions to not consider; that the setts they destroy are part of a large, complex and inter-related ecosystem, the badgers shot are likely to be the old, ill and inexperienced animals and that successful TB eradication policy in other countries has been ignored.

Distraction

Audit based education process and structure has encouraged shallow thinking and a localised badger cull represents the operationalization of this policy and as a result humans have been deceived that shallow thinking can lead to appropriate learning and decision making, such that localised badgers culls can solve a problem that exists on a global scale. Aligned alongside the deceptive influence of the fetish is the ability to imbue products with magical powers that distract and hide from awareness the substitution of exchange value for use value. In the context of education and learning; schemes, curricula, testing, monitoring, observation and publication of performance league tables have all taken on magical powers of 'quick-fix' solutions. The surface learning and shallow thinking outlined above are deceptions that significant learning is taking place, while the increasingly technical approach to education distracts from the difficult nature of 'thoughtful thinking' and deep learning. The assumption is, for example, that a logical curriculum with associated testing *will* lead to significant learning. What is avoided is the considerable and complex nature of engaging learners in dealing with difficult knowledge.

The policy for the local culling of badgers is deceived into trying separate the local, 'quasi-local' and global within the context of well-known complex ecosystems. The distraction that results from the commodification of the local is centred on the premise that local action is good, while hiding from awareness the complex ecology of badgers and the politics of rural life. Shooting local badger setts distracts from having to grapple with difficult issues such as; the impact of human farming procedures on habitats established by millennia of evolution, providing adequate fencing to discourage badgers, monitoring the movement of dairy cattle and addressing well established negative views on badgers and their impact on humans. The political landscape of culling policy is one located within the right wing as centre and centre-left parties have repeatedly opposed such actions. Likewise the rural farming community vote is traditionally right wing. Badger culling could be viewed as a policy towards the rural community of appeasement and vote chasing and therefore distracts from the difficult conversations that could be had between local members of parliament and their electorate. The magical power is in the ability of localised shooting to solve a global problem of TB incidence in dairy cattle while maintaining a position of political power. What has occurred is that (local) politicians have substituted the use value of badgers (ie as animals part of an existing ecosystem disrupted by human farming practices) with the exchange value of badgers (ie a hard line on shooting badgers offers the possibility of being voted into a position of power). Of course, alongside this, is the impact of an approach to education that, unknowingly, supports shallow thinking and surface learning.

Disavowal

The impact of the fetish is to encourage disavowal as a response to dealing with the tension that results from a sense of separation or loss where there is a tension between reality and unconscious desire. The development of formal education practices have removed humans from original relational sites of learning and Howard-Jones (2015) makes the observation that human social and cultural development has outstripped the evolutionary ability of the brain to adapt to these changes. This disparity of development, the socio-cultural and the physical, has led to what Glendinning (1995) refers to as an 'untenable violation' that has in turn led to increased human anxiety and mental health. It was Freud's re-evaluation of the fetish that considered the defence of disavowal where feelings associated with the experience of loss and separation give rise to the ability to hold unrealistic and conflicting thoughts. In the context of education and learning this enables learners to inhabit a position where they perceive themselves to be knowledgeable and yet at the same time, unconsciously, to be disquieted by a sense of not knowing. For example, a student could obtain top marks for a test and yet also feel as though they did not deserve this and that there is still knowledge that they do not have. The converse can also apply to teachers ie that top test scores mean they were great practitioners and their students are geniuses, while sensing that test scores do not represent the full aspect of human learning.

The decision to cull badgers represents the potential impact of disavowal on human learning for decision have been made that do not reflect current well established knowledge. A whole host of evidence concludes that the policy to cull badgers will be unsuccessful and yet it remains on the statute books. Despite a government that continually calls for 'evidence-based' practice, those responsible for the decision to shoot badgers have been able to rationalise their conflicting (and assumingly unrealistic) thoughts. Cassidy (2012) notes that the decision might be rooted in deeply held cultural narratives and while this might be the case, the inability to engage in difficult and complex thinking is an indictment on how educational process have prepared the population to manage complex decision making.

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What we have learnt from the local community projects?[15]

Political transformation has caused many changes in social reality in Poland. Polish local communities, similarly to the communities in other countries, are directly subjected to „what's local" and „what's global". It means that the local communities are situated „between" the global socio-cultural and economic processes and the local social and socio-economic circumstances. The sole fact of an individual or a local community being a subject of transnational and international actions indicates the „politization" and „internationalization" of the social life (Giddens, 2007). For this reason Polish local communities undergo processes such as, among others, growing social inequality and social polarization (Krajewska, 2011) which are also related to the relatively high level of unemployment rate in some regions of the country (according to the Central Statistical Office of Poland unemployment rate reaches 28% in some regions of Poland). As a result, many supportive programs are dedicated to preventing social inequalities and promoting social cohesion in Poland. Many of them pertain to social activation, namely vocational activation. They are often co-financed by European Social Fund. Such kind of projects assume, in accordance with neoliberal premises and actual political-economic processes, that vocational activation of individual community members can improve the position of the whole community (Saad-Filho, Johnston, 2008).

In the article, we would like to focus on the results of these projects and lessons emerging from them. We believe that there is a question that needs to be asked: *how* to construct and carry out projects to assure fulfilling desired aims and tasks not only from the individual perspective but also from the local community perspective? This question, as we will try to present, arosed from rather unsatisfactory results of vocational activation projects' results. Our statements are based on research conducted in the years 2009-2014 and mostly constituted of the interviews. The analysis includes two vocational activation projects which were carried out at the turn of 2012 and 2013, accordingly. Each of the projects involved about 60 people in two respective age groups – under 25 and over 50

[15] Another analyses of these projects you can find in: A. Bilon, E. Kurantowicz, M. Noworolnik, *Community Development: (Un)Fulfilled Hopes for Social Equality in Poland* [in] M. Shaw, M. Mayo, *Class, Inequality and Community Development*, Policy Press (forthcoming). This text is partly based on previous descriptions.

years of age – regarded as the most vulnerable to social exclusion caused by joblessness[16]. The participants were residents of the 13 counties with the highest unemployment rate in the region.

The first group (Project A) included 50-plussers, i.e. those who remember living and working in the People's Republic of Poland (before 1989). The participants felt inadequately equipped and expendable on the labour market because their qualifications, vocational experience and acquired skills were of no use in the market economy. This created also a number of barriers which impeded full immersion in social life.

The second group (Project B) included people under 25 years of age, who did not live in the socialist system. The participants belonged to the NEET category (not in employment, education or training). As we could notice, the project participants, their life experiences and formed identities are a condensed projection of the problems confronted by local communities in which they live in the status of unemployed small-town residents without higher education. Life situations and experiences deprive the participants of a sense of agency in creating their biographies and entrap them within narrow patterns determined by membership in a particular social group, which precludes changing the social structure.

The projects aimed to prepare the participants for working in elderly care, thereby ushering them into the labour market and enhancing prospects for permanent employment. Apart from general goals relative to work activation, the projects pursued also particular objectives, such as overcoming psychological barriers caused by long or complete disengagement from the labour market, boosting self-esteem, etc. As part of the projects, the participants enrolled in vocational courses, used workshops in active job-seeking skills and labour-market navigation and had traineeships arranged for them to improve their vocational experience.

Firstly, we shall present the results of the projects and then interpret them in a broader contexts. As a theoretical framework of our analyses we will use the idea of politics by A. Giddens (2007): the emancipatory politics and life politics. As we believe, this idea allows us to show many dimensions of projects' results. For us it is necessary to stress that these results differ depending on the perspective of analyses, i.e. the perspective of individuals is often different from the perspective of local communities.

Figure 1 shows that only a small group of the project beneficiaries found employment in elderly care (11; 19) or in another job based on a labour contract (13), while many participants worked without a labour contract (20; 20). A substantial part (9; 19) resumed the former lifestyle.

As we can see, the projects' results were less than satisfying in terms of social and vocational activation. These results have provoked us to pose some questions: How can we interpret such kind of results? What is the significance of such projects for local communities development? What would be the factors of success in projects aiming at prevention of social inequalities through vocational activation? The complexity of these issues does not allow us to answer these questions without any doubts. On the contrary, we would like to stress some of the difficulties and indicate what is necessary to be taken into account when designing the projects for local communities.

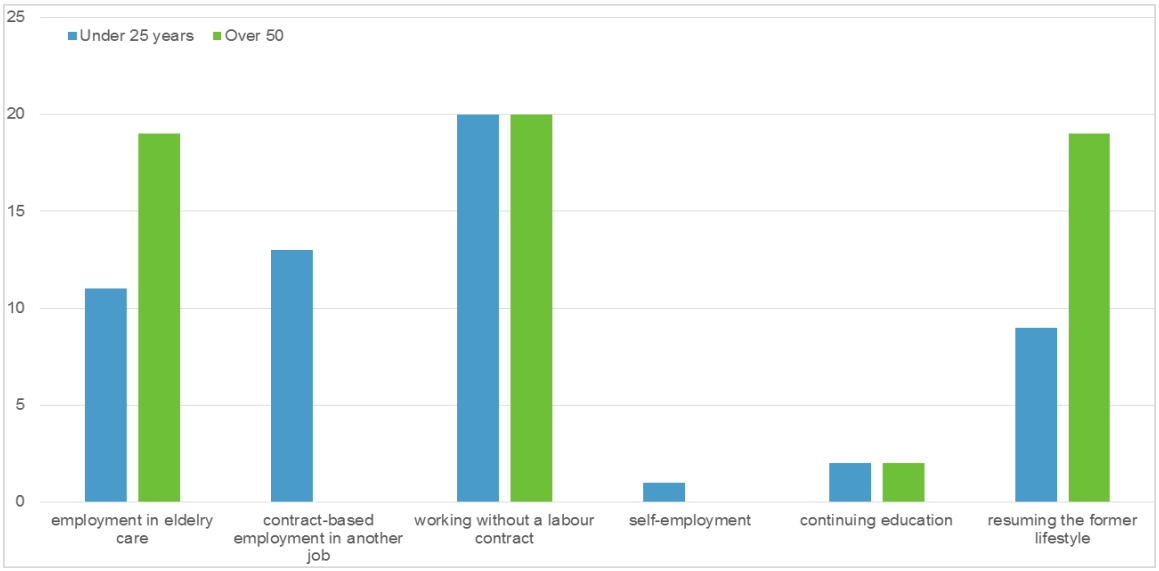

Figure 1: Occupational activity after the project (based on the project statistics)

Vocational activation projects and emancipatory politics

According to Giddens, the main aims of emancipation politics are justice, equality and participation (2007). Depending on political options, one of these three values is perceived as the most important to societies accordingly. In case of projects analyzed, we asked the following questions:

- Who should be emancipated through such projects: individuals or local communities?
- What is the nature of this emancipation: is it an emancipation "from" or "towards" something?
- Do projects like those contribute to the emancipation?

Making an effort to answer the first question, firstly we would like to stress that effectiveness of local community support programs cannot be simply brought down to what impact it had on the socio-economic situation of particular members of that community, improving life conditions of individuals do not necessarily have positive influence on the local community. We can notice that even if some beneficiaries do improved their lives conditions by for example work without the job contract or migration, their activities do not contribute to the economic growth of local communities and foster depopulation processes.

Another issue related to the question "who" should be emancipated is strongly connected to the power issues. The milestones here are varied dimensions of power, such us, to use the Gaventa's terms: places and spaces of power, types of power, tensions between powers etc. (Gaventa 2006). In case of projects analyzed, we could ask another questions: who decides on the beneficiaries profiles and projects objectives? Our research has shown that the issue of decision-making process and level of power on which decisions are made have an impact on the effectiveness of projects. If decisions are taken on European level without considering the local circumstances, projects can fail. This also happens when the cultural dimensions of societies are not taken into account. Even

though Poland is undeniably a rapidly aging society, elderly care is provided as a rule informally by kin (children, grandchildren, spouses) rather than by institutions, which is the case in many European countries. Elderly care is not recognised by society as a tolerably prestigious vocation and, additionally, other cultural factors forestall it being commonly acknowledged. These are one of the reasons why the labour market does not seem to accommodate elderly care professionals at equal pace.

The second question, as we think, is strongly related to the aims of the projects analysed. It seems as if these project assumed both kind of emancipations: emancipation from exclusion, poverty etc.; and emancipation towards social equality and sustainable development. Once again we would like to stress that assuming general objectives without considering local circumstances seems to be the simplification. As a result we can answer the third of our questions related to the contribution of such projects to the emancipation. Our research has shown that such projects not necessarily foster emancipation. Sometimes they can deepen the social inequalities and the individuals' sense of helplessness.

Vocational activation projects and the life politics

As Giddens claims, the life politics refers rather to the life-style than life-opportunities and chances (2007). It is related to the individuals' self-realization and decision-making processes. According to him, "life politics consists of the following aspects: 1.) political decisions flowing from freedom of choice and generative power (power as transformative capacity) 2.) Creation of morally justifiable forms of life that will promote self-actualization in the context of global interdependence 3.) Develops ethics concerning the issue "how should we live" in a post-traditional order" (Giddens 2007, p. 293). These aspects appoint our further analyses and narration.

As regards the freedom of choice, we would like to stress that for many of projects participants this freedom was rather an obligation than a privilege. The fact that they belonged to the group of unemployed people itself aroused often from their helplessness and indicated that they experienced some difficulties in answering the question: who should I be? They experienced many exclusion mechanisms not only before the participation in the project but also after the project. We identified some factors related to the exclusion mechanisms and testifying that the freedom of choice was limited to some extent. One of them was the age. If the older project beneficiaries (50-plussers) found it easier to secure employment in their trained vocation (19 of them did so), the younger participants (under 25 years of age) were less successful in getting an elderly care job (only 11 of them managed to find one). One reason for this disproportion was that potential employers considered the younger people to be inexperienced in care-provision, immature and, hence, ill-equipped for the job. Their youth induced suspicions about their lack of skills, irresponsibility or incompetence in care-provision. This, unfortunately, sapped their motivation and discouraged them from sustained effort of care-related job-seeking. Losing confidence in their capacities, many of them ultimately took jobs below or beyond their qualifications and training.

Another issue limiting the freedom of choice were gender-related factors. A substantial majority of the project beneficiaries were females because, as unemployment figures reveal, women face the greatest risk of exclusion. Still, there were a few men in each project (5 in the "under 25 group" and 11 in the "50-plus group"). It turned out that since the earlier elderly care preparation projects had not targeted males at all, the

training programmes had to be modified accordingly, for example in the unit of soft competences development (communication, self-presentation, etc.). However, the measures that prevented possible exclusion in the educational module were not applicable to practical traineeships. In the interview, the project coordinator in the host institution admitted that male trainees involved in nursing tasks were not favourably perceived in the care-giver role.

Form many of the project participants the social exclusion turned out to be a form of life and for such groups, participation in projects is just another learned strategy of coping alongside other ones, such as taking seasonal and odd jobs, engaging with the black economy, practising barter exchanges, soliciting loans from kin and neighbours, etc. Having functioned long in such a configuration, they see projects as another survival opportunity rather than a chance for a comprehensive re-construction their biographies through involvement in education and learning. This demonstrates that without considering contexts and meanings that project participants bring into the learning situation, some practices aimed at supporting the beneficiaries' participation in the project may actually contribute to consolidating their functioning schemata rather than promote their effective re-building.

For participants who completed the projects successfully, it was a kind of assistance in emancipation from pathological family relationships and gave them a chance to operate in new conditions and function independently. This resulted in an increased self-esteem and restored self-confidence. The meeting of psychological needs overlapped with fulfilment of social needs. For many participants, namely, associating with new people, making friends with them, building support networks (which encouraged, for example, going abroad or learning languages together) and a general revival of social bonding made up an added value, which they expressly indicated in evaluation surveys. It is worth noting that the mutual dependency of life politics and emancipatory politics cannot be omitted in the results analyses, especially if we consider the social exclusion as an oppressive conditions. The projects analysed were aimed at – inter alia – helping people to construct (and re-construct) their own biographies and narrations. Unfortunately, for many of them this has not happened.

The broader context

As our research on EU-funded projects' results shows, the community development in Poland, the battle against the exclusions as well striving for social cohesion seem to pose the aims that are difficult to achieve through such kind of projects in the present historical moment. In order to understand better the causes of projects fails we conducted desk-research containing the literature and other projects analyses. As a result, we distinguished a few Poland-specific challenges to vocational activation projects and community development:

- historically entrenched discrepancies among regions,
- precipitate transformation to the free-market economy without due attention to social protection measures (so-called economic shock therapy),
- adoption of the capitalist economy model without 'capitalists' being there (Eyal et al., 1998),

- growing social inequalities and dangerous mechanisms observable also in other countries: consolidation of social polarisation causing migration of the young and 'depopulation' of some local communities. Increasing social stratification and precariousness of the labour market frequently prompt decisions to emigrate for work to Western Europe, especially in rural areas and small and mid-sized towns (GUS, 2013),
- inadequate development of the community dimension of learning and, especially, sluggish implementation of the participatory model of local community called 'community as politics' by M. Shaw and I. Martin (Shaw, Martin, 2000; Martin, Shaw, 2006, pp 11-16),
- lack of coherent policies for creating and managing educational initiatives in communities (including bottom-up and regional undertakings as well as EU-sponsored projects implemented in local communities).

Mentioning these challenges allows us to think of the analysed projects' results carefully. It shows us that each of these projects is deeply anchored in particular social (local) circumstances. The position of Polish local communities was determined by historical development of the country which is presented in the figure 2. In each of distinguished periods local communities faced different problems and have different chances to develop. We mention this historical changes to stress the historical and cultural "legacy" that has an impact on the current position of local communities and success of projects. In our opinion, projects aimed at solving social problems such as unemployment, social inequalities etc. should take into account such conditionings if we are to make more progress in achieving the goals related to community development.

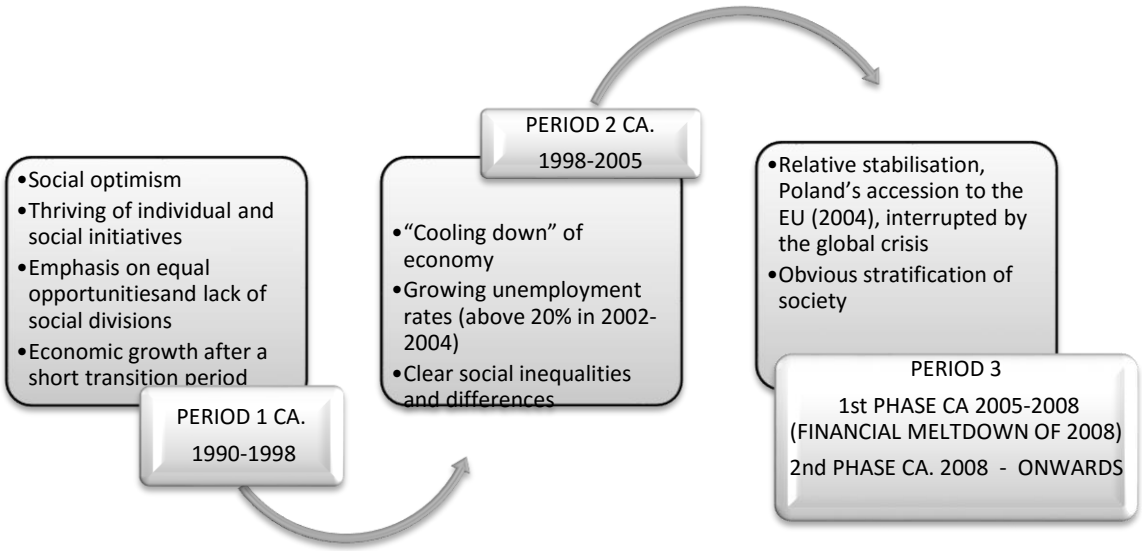

Figure 2: Turning points and periods of development in Poland after 1989 (based on Mikuła, 2004 and others)

Conclusions

In this section we will refer to the title of our paper. It will be a summary of our analyses. Our question was: what we have learnt from the local community projects?. We can distinguish a varied 'lessons' from these projects:

1. It is necessary to develop the educational dimensions of community development (Shaw, Martin, 2000) if projects are supposed to foster the life politics.
2. It is necessary to foster the participation model. If projects are designed without local communities they sometimes cannot correspond with the local needs.
3. The projects should not ignore the community-based, bottom up knowledge and values (Johnston, 2003).
4. Projects should promote the civic activity and not restrict the social capital development in local communities to purely institutional measures (instituting legal and organisational arrangements for non-governmental activities without reinforcing the citizens' engagement and participation).
5. Deep analysis of projects results shows that it is necessary to take into account many dimensions of social life (not only the individual level) and many social and societal contexts when we want to achieve our goals related to local communities. Long-term effects can be different from actual.
6. In Poland, many projects related to local communities is completed successfully (e.g. Opuszczone wsie ziemi klodzkiej. Czerwony Strumień and others). The special attention should be paid to the projects related to the social problems visible in many countries (e.g. poverty and unemployment). In case of these projects, the comprehensive social policy is needed.

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Slovenian practice as a contribution to the community learning conceptualisation

Introduction

Community learning is a dynamic process that takes place simultaneously on multiple levels – in the individual, in their social environment (e.g. neighbourhood or online community) and in the institutions in which these environments are embedded. One of the recent definitions of learning by Žagar and Kelava (2014) summarizes more sources and confirms that information, ideas and values are assimilated by interactive reflection and reconstruction. As the interactions with the natural environment are not included in this definition, we add this dimension and link community learning with the natural environment (e.g. Rodela, 2013).

Community learning is a locally specific process, following the concrete and specific current circumstances in the community, resulting from its developmental path. Developmental paths of diverse communities are different but they are all influenced by subsequent political and economic situations and by the culture, usually rooted in the natural environment. Nowadays one third of Slovenian population lives in the settlements of up to 400 inhabitants and there are more than 6,000 settlements (SURS, 2012). Such a landscape picture is a result of historical development, where survival was possible mostly by agricultural production and craft as well as by using financial resources from the relatives, working in vicinity (e.g. Trieste, Italy) or at remote locations (e.g. Alexandria in Egypt, Germany, USA). Local decision making autonomy, plasticised up to the Middle Ages, was cancelled by Napoleon, while decision making system in municipalities was taken over by different national states, once authorities of the land. Two movements started (national) self-awareness before AH empire collapsed. After the period of the world wars, market changes and subsequent undemocratic regimes, political realization of autonomy was only possible from the nineties on. Communities´ structure and functioning have changed substantially in this period: the structure has changed due to

migrations and decline in fertility rate, while the functioning has changed due to new production regimes (industry, services), urban lifestyle and media based, indirect communication. The formative processes in a community are therefore different from those in the past; we are weakly acquainted with them and with their result - »social application« of knowledge and related autonomy (Rotar, 2014, 35). The latter might be rare today (in material sense) but communities are still learning through symbolic constitution of community in specific (e.g. micro-local) language and with specific behavioural patterns.

Community learning is not new in Slovenian adult education (Findeisen, 1996, Ličen, 2001, Močnik, 2009) and is from its very beginning linked to development. However, up to now, dynamic and complex pattern of Slovenian communities´ changes and their relation to key resources and prosperity have not been studied systematically at all.

Therefore, we would like to contribute into the existent knowledge corpus a new perspective, the concepts of social learning and commons, related to empirical analysis of two large-scale local practices. Both perspectives are founded on the definition of community as a particular entity. Community is here defined by 1. Time-frame (past, present, future) and 2. Survival & welfare resources (Bogataj, 2014).

As individuals and communities in Slovenia do not act independently but within different institutions, it would be convenient to include institutional analysis and an insight into the coordination among the key institutions, their knowledge, policies and practice, but this might exceed our goals and options. However, a lively cooperation among the state and NGO structures in the period of Slovenian independence in the field of adult education is worth mentioning. Despite the fact that the goals of Slovenian AE have been changing (democratization, participation, LLL development), its humanistic orientation has generally remained the same. In 2008 the gap between limited resources and (despite white patches) relatively developed practices emerged. Besides other findings consequent reconsideration of the concept and institutional structure resulted in realization that the lowest administrative level is far from optimum functioning: in 2011 only 35 (16,6%) out of 211 interviewed municipalities took care of adult education, among which only 10 (i.e. less than 5%) to a full extent (Drofenik, 2011). Similarly, Močnik (2012) stated dissatisfaction with local AE offer with a third of interviewees out of app. 100 sample participants, while further 25% were not even able to evaluate it as they did not know that it exists. The final interpretation of these results opens up a dilemma: is it really poor needs satisfaction or just passive locals (Močnik, 2012)? The state support to study circles coordinated by SIAE, further referred to as $ŠK_{ACS}$ and understood as a form of community learning, is therefore important. This is the reason why we have chosen this form of learning as one of the model practices. Comparable forms of learning were looked for through action research based on European funds. They were soon found in the form of Commons, officially called agrarian commons (further referred to as AS). They have existed for several centuries, but are publicly marginalised for decades and are therefore unknown, without overall statistics and relying on case studies.

Both forms presented, $ŠK_{ACS}$ and AS, depend on the learning process, even though each one in its specific way. Both forms are essentially community based and operate on the micro-local level of organisation, in the local community, which is far lower than municipality. Our aim is to define the elements of community learning on the basis of our own practices. We will therefore compare these practices with one another and each practice also with the chosen theoretical consideration.

Literature overview

The development and the idea of community learning have already been presented to Slovenian audience by Močnik (2012) and later also Kump (2015). Both of them, with few exceptions, quote mostly the authors of anglo-saxon origin[17], responding to social changes due to resource crisis. Goals and visions presented there were similar, comparable and contextualized into certain periods of history. Their aims, criticism of »banking« system of education and support of the dialogue in non-formal and informal forms of learning remain important also recently due to their orientation into knowledge accessibility, participation revival and social cohesion (Jarvis, 2001 v Kump, 2015). Initiatives and practices of Eastern European countries in this regard are yet unknown.

Social learning focuses on how an individual is contextualised into networks and communities on diverse levels. This concept treats learning as a mechanism of adaptation to socio-ecological situations and development phases along institutional framing of certain environments (Rodela, 2013 idr.). Short-term, repeatable and measureable solution, needed by the politics, is relatively difficult to achieve when community is considered a key element. Therefore communities are seldom allowed to access decentralized rights over resources along decentralized responsibilities. Consequently, communities are weakened and the system is sub-optimal (Meinzen Dick, 2015). Along theories we should therefore allow practices to evolve, of course non-directive ones and their interdisciplinary research. The overview of authors in the field of social learning was done by Rodela (2013). She quote well-known names (Kolb and his experiential learning, transformative learning of Mezirow and Freires´ emancipatory learning). A particular role is given to Wenger (1991, communities of practices) and Argyris (in Smith, 2013; organizational learning) as those, who recognize a group and a community as crucial. These concepts have already been used as a frame of empirical analysis of Piran NGO, based on ŠKACS (Ličen, 2012, Tomšič, 2012). This analysis confirmed the active role in shaping of social structure of learning and its content (Tomšič, 2012, 99).

Social learning may also be regarded as a community resource to cope with changes, ecological ones (e.g. climate) or political ones (e.g. neo-liberalism). The principles, which differentiate long-lasting and resistant communities from short-lasting entities, have already been defined in the nineties (Ostrom, 1990). Studies of small and from natural-resources dependent communities all over the world radically refused the basic presumptions of economy (selfishness, competition) with rich evidence of cases of unselfish long-term functioning and cooperation of community members.

Preconditions of self-organization or community emergence were: communication, trust and reciprocity (Ostrom, 2005) and double response to disturbances: 1. to the new ecological situation (e.g. after earthquake, landslide, and flood), 2. Re-balancing of community[18]. In this context a lot of literature is dedicated to governance and resource management. Berkes et al. (2003) proved that static, one-level management of community is sub-optimal, while managing a network of different levels can be very unpredictable[19],

[17]Grundtvig (1783-1872), Coady (1882-1959), Lindeman (1888-1953), Horton (1905-1990), Freire (1921-1997)

[2]Example: the earthquake in a small community brings both, the adaptation of the members to a new situation and the questioning of the relations among community members in the changed circumstaces.

[19] Some countries insist on the assumption of economic rationality and therefore destroy the prerequisites of communication, trust and reciprocity and consequently resources (Berkes, 2015).

as not all these levels foster equality and democratic relations but they deliberately encourage inequality within different parts of community.

Slovenian examples of community learning, ŠK$_{ACS}$ and AS, are framed into that part of the concept, which calls for consensus on strategic use of resources, and always strives for their conservation (or even upgrade), because community is aware of its dependency on them. Our field work clearly showed this principle, cited explicitly[20]. Such communities were described by Agraval (2001), who cited their characteristics[21].

Formative processes of all communities are focused to relationships quality. Violation of rules or imbalance btw duties and benefits cause conflicts in all communities. However, conflicts once usually ended with social event, which was also true for Slovenia (Maček, 2013). A similar role of relations concern is attributed to (homogeneous) symbol system and compulsory participation in decision-making. The role of participation, equality and above all, communication, either horizontal (among participants) or vertical (with entities on different levels of hierarchy) is still important. Social cohesion, active participation and equal access are imperatives of Slovenian adult education (ReNPIO, 2012). Its strategic political direction from this respect has been supportive to community learning for more than two decades, when dialogue based ŠK$_{ACS}$ nationally coordinated and supported by EU projects, is considered. On the other hand, AS are not publicly promoted despite the fact that they have existed since the Middle Ages and are therefore »heavy learners« who have survived historical changes. They revive today (Bogataj and Krč, 2014), and not only in Slovenia (de Moor et al., 2002). However, only one third survived, compared to the end of 19th century (Volčič, 1895).

Methodological consideration

Community definition

According to Slovene Literary Language Dictionary (2000), a community is: » … more people linked with common characteristics, needs, goals ... «. Jeriček (2004) claims, that community is a social system, which defines itself as a community and is self-determined and self-sustained. In the frame of EPUO project we have developed a working definition, which links both statements and upgrades them: »a community is people, linked for a certain period of time, developing personal ties and identity, (historical memory and vision), with their own rules of functioning and resource management « (Bogataj and Pečar, 2013).

20 Rodman, 2013 *"…..we got land as a gift and we have to preserve it or upgrade it but never reduce its value."*

21 Basic elements of a resistant, long-lasting community are: equal operating norms, positive past experience (social capital), interdependence of members, independent choice of leaders, relatively homogenous interests, identities and characteristics of institutions and resources the community uses (Agraval, 2001).

Purpose and aim of analysis

We want to identify elements of community learning on the basis of two large-scale practices from Slovenia.

Methodology

The basic units of observation are ŠK$_{ACS}$ and AS. Their description is based on the following indicators: number of participants, duration of its functioning (years), integration into the local environment, sustainability of community learning effects. Theoretical criteria are taken from Agrawal, 2001: equal operating norms, positive past experience (social capital), interdependence of members, independent choice of leaders and relatively homogenous interests and identities.

Data sources were quite different. ŠK$_{ACS}$ rely on references referring to methodological aspects of their monitoring. The list of data gathered in the annual report is given in Bogataj (2013)[22]. Spatial distribution of practices is not random as ŠK$_{ACS}$ finances positively discriminate marginal target groups and locations with weak response. Our assumption was that the state recognition of ŠK$_{ACS}$ is a pre-condition for their functioning, but not their essential element as:

- material base of ŠK$_{ACS}$ is weak, it oscillates and is locally accessible with a certain delay,
- share of those who practice ŠK$_{ACS}$ but do not document it is relatively stable,
- this was reported by the participants in the last decade evaluations.

We were looking for additional reasons for ŠK$_{ACS}$ vitality and, at the same time, because of the predominant female role in ŠK$_{ACS,}$ for practices, where more men would participate. We have found AS and performed action research through different phases. The second phase was focused on the field observations and literature. The third phase of action research was a comparison of AS in Slovenia with other European states, more precisely with the Alpine region (Gatto and Bogataj, 2015). The fourth phase has been going on since 2013 and is partly connected to the LLLWeek and EPUO project.

We analysed primary and secondary sources for both forms with a particular attention on longitudinal studies. Data on AS were mostly in archives, bachelor theses, legislative documents, and media. Oral sources proved to be most important, which has already been noted by some authors (Manfreda, 2007).

[22] The ŠK$_{ACS}$ considered are those that comply with the documentation criteria (5-12 participants, 60% attendance). The uniform monitoring form (e-form since 2008) includes information about contractor, place, contents, participant structure, course of ŠK$_{ACS}$ and their effects. There is a series of the above mentioned data covering the period of more than twenty years; however, the analysis results have shown that the annual number of study circles is at least 10% higher, as all circles do not meet the above mentioned criteria.

Results

The case of AS

There is no systematic overview on AS in Slovenia. They are officially presented as NGOs and not as economic or legal subjects that they used to be and would like to become again. Register is out of date; trials of its update (Petek in Urbanc, 2007, Premrl, 2013) have not provided the final picture yet, as new Commons emerge, calling for registration. Case studies confirm a uniform model of functioning across Slovenia and an interesting terminological variety related to it.

The first researchers who studied the issue systematically were Marjan Britovšek (1964) and Sergij Vilfan (1972, 1980). Once predominantly »grazing communities« have turned into forest ones, so Europe has introduced a new term - *forest commons*. Slovenia uses at least seven terms for the same community structure and functioning: in Gorenjska region »*gmajna*« is used, (ger. Gemeinde, Gemeinshaft), which directly links community with its resources; in Primorska region »*komun«* or *»komunela«* (it. comunella – small community) is used, and also »*sose(d)ska«* and »*srenja, sopašnik«* and *»skupnina«.* The latter is very similar to Commons (Hardin, 1968, Ostrom 1990). Joint ownerships of the land and its management according to tradition, as well as intentional care for community preservation, are typical characteristics of AS. The state and dimensions of AS in Slovenia are given in Table 1.

Indicator	*Quantity*
Official number of AS	638
Average size of land / AS (ha) (min-max)	150 (1-2,500)
Minimum and maximum number of AS members	3 – 513

Table 1: Formal number of AS in Slovenia and their dimensions

The key element of community is its functioning rules. Equity of their members is important from the perspective of shared responsibility for resources, therefore the members are complementary and not equal. The emphasis is more on justice than on equity (i.e. accessibility of resources, sharing benefits from resources). Head of community is selected either cyclically by lot or is elected to honorary status for two comparative advantages over others: he/she is able to manage resources the way they do not decrease and he/she is capable of equitable distribution of benefits. In addition to equity, the principle of full consensus was the key principle when major interventions in the resources occurred (sales, purchase, change), the principle which is said to be a key obstacle to the active management of the available resources. This rule has changed over the centuries; the community has also changed and – as already cited – the nature of resources. Unfortunately the structure of AS members is not known but their alignment with Ostrom principles has been confirmed (Gatto and Bogataj, 2015).

The case of $šk_{acs}$

In the period from 1993 to May 2015 there were more than 3500 $ŠK_{ACS}$ documented (in the nineties about ten a year, in the last few years app. 250 a year). This means over

41.000 participants' altogether and app. 2800 participants a year in the last few years. Description of ŠK$_{ACS}$ is given from many perspectives: the competences of mentors are given in Bogataj et al. (2012) and Možina (2014), the age structure of participants is given in Cepin (2012) and Lajovic (2015), while the topics analysis can be found in Dolžan Eržen, 2012 and locations analysis on http://sk.acs.si/index.php?id=86. Spatial dispersion of ŠK$_{ACS}$ is remarkable (http://sk.acs.si/index.php?id=86), which means app. 90 different places a year in the last few years.

Their functioning starts with planning of the learning process (location, pace, complexity) which is left to the participants, led by a trained mentor, who is responsible for compliance of the process with the main ŠK$_{ACS}$ principles and for its documentation. Participant structure is stable when gender is regarded (¾ are women). Age structure is colourful: in the period 2008-2011, 689 ŠK$_{ACS}$ were performed and 67, 8 % of participants belonged to two generations, while 21, 8% belonged to three generations (Cepin, 2012). Similarly in the period 2007 – 2014 (n=1668 ŠK$_{ACS}$ with 14.000 participants): the middle and the elder generations accounted for 41, 9 %, while all three generations accounted for 20, 6 % of all cases. Only three ŠK$_{ACS}$ (0%) linked the youngest and the eldest generations.

From the perspective of positive discrimination of vulnerable groups, it is crucial that ŠK$_{ACS}$ include on average one fifth of such participants annually (22% in 2014). The annual survey (e.g. for 2014) has shown that mentors defined one third of participants with special needs (people after head injuries, disability pensioners, persons with mental disorders, etc.), others are determined by the following criteria: women, the elderly, migrants, people living in rural areas, educated young people.

AS and ŠK$_{ACS}$ are not legal entities or economic subject. The matching of ŠK$_{ACS}$ principles to those stated by Ostrom is only partial, as ŠK$_{ACS}$ do not possess material goods. Compliance with these theoretical principles can be observed particularly in terms of collective action, mutual supervision and management of resources, although the latter are almost a hundred times smaller in ŠK$_{ACS}$ and mostly originate from the state budget. In contrast to AS, the state recognizes and even encourages the study circles.

Descriptive indicator	ŠK$_{ACS}$	AS
Group size (number of participants)	5-12	3 – 513
Duration of its functioning (number of years)	0 – 7	>200
Integration into the local environment	Different	Different
sustainability of community learning effects	Yes, for app. 60%	Yes, for app.80%

Table 2: Comparison of descriptive features for ŠK$_{ACS}$ and AS

From the descriptive perspective the structures are not similar. However, the culture of their collective action is pretty the same. They both pursue positive goals (development, learning) in a positive atmosphere for the positive future and the future generations (many action targets in ŠK$_{ACS}$ have explicitly declared objective of »intergenerational transmission«). A more uniform comparison uses different criteria to define the (long-living) communities (Table 3), which also shows different origins and institutional state of cases.

Reference	Indicators	ŠK$_{ACS}$	AS
Bogataj and Pečar, 2013	Long-term linked people …	✓	✓
	.. particular relationships and identity developed through personal contacts (historical memory, vision) …	✓	✓
	Rules of functioning and resource management	✓	✓
Agrawal, 2001	Equal operating norms	✓	✓
	Positive past experience (social capital)	✓	✓
	Interdependence of members	/*	Partly
	Independent choice of leaders	/	✓
	Relatively homogenous interests and identities	Partly	Partly

Table 3: Compliance of cases with two types of criteria to define communities
**only from the learning perspective*

Discusssion

In Slovenia, spontaneous and non-institutionalised learning without mediator has always been provided by primary communities like families and locations. Slovenian landscape offers an abundance of locally specific forms of community action, but they are poorly analysed. Therefore it would be logical and possible to link them into a network of state-recognized examples of good practices.

Slovenian examples and new theoretical perspectives were used to draw attention to new entities - communities and community learning. The literature analysis and comparison of indicators did not show important divergence of main community elements despite relatively different cases selected into observation, but their origin, duration of functioning and resource base showed significant differences.

Slovenian strategic documents enable and support this kind of learning, even if relatively weakly. Therefore, they are understood as state-of-the-art and beneficial for the national community on a long-term basis. They enable systematic attention to ties among people, which is Slovenian weakness, compared to other EU countries (Hoskins, 2010). Therefore further adaptation to external pressures may become poor and so does the relative stability of internal rules of community functioning. In our opinion these processes provide the frame for strength and potential of adult education. ŠK$_{ACS}$ practice shows that non-formal learning may be understood as a shelter of spontaneous learning (Rotar, 2014).

The role of a new entity, the community, is therefore not only in new understanding of accessibility (i.e. of knowledge to all, not only to the privileged ones), which Trubar wanted to achieve already in the16th century by his translation of The Bible into the Slovenian language, and is centuries later confirmed by the UNESCO initiative, but also in paying more attention to that role of learning, which is still among the weakest in Slovenia

(Delors, 1996, Hoskins et al., 2010) – learning to live together in peace and understanding and to respect each other. Besides the land-based traditional communities new ones emerge (e.g. urban gardens, local editions, self-sustained municipalities like Šentrupert) and same principles are traced in virtual communities (e.g. wiki, linux). However, it si worth to notice that none of them is profit based.

Conclusions

New theoretical frames used and up to now poorly known cases of community learning presented bring only some elements into comparision with state supported adult education practices. Conventional theories of learning or resource economics may therefore borrow from each other and open up new perspectives. Considering relationships among individuals (trust, cooperation, empathy, reputation) is crucial for both. These relations can only develop gradually and with a common response to social and bio-physical challenges. It is therefore not a surprise that »big bang« developmental measures (huge investments into the poor) proved unsuccesfull. Step by step, adaptive and stable investments into locally specific practices, their national coordination and collective acion including practitioners may be a more suitable approach (Meinzen Dick, 2015) as it is based on a dialogue and takes into consideration (micro)-local culture.

A community is above all practice, a form of sense and an autonomous entity, where action is common and voluntary. Communication and the dialogue among members of a community is a continuous process of adaptation, negotiaion, response and pulsing – from an individual towards common good (and not the opposite direction). Common consensus on strategic resource use is always relatively conservative as a community is aware that it will need resources also in the future. Exclusion (e.g. racial, ideological, status, etc.) cannot be traced in this process, rather vice versa. When common resource is land, like in case of AS, the basic responsibility of members is to keep it lasting, so they periodically limit its use (growing season, population pulsing). But even if common resource is money, in case of ŠKACS, processes and relationship is not substantially different. The community being AS or ŠKACS, is changing but remaining an entity through time, despite variations in structure or learning topic. Development is in this context not understood as growth but above all as a quality change, achieved by learning.

ŠKACS and AS progress with comparable learning steps: they collect and reflect ideas, trying to put them into practice. By considering them new insights and findings emerged to better understand community learning in Slovenia. We expect the revival of the link with the past and the future therefore our suggestion is to continue support of practice, upgrade its research, last but not least to fill the gap we have in realization of this learning role.

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Knowing their place: Women's feminist and gendered understandings and adult education work in public museums in Canada and Britain

Although there is relatively little research in the area, a few feminist museums scholars have drawn attention to the negative implications of the 'feminisation' of public museums, highlighting the plight of women frequently passed over for leadership positions, or in precarious employment arrangements (e.g. Glaser & Zenetou, 1994; Ellis, 2002). Yet others have found that women as critical to the life of these institutions, and in 2006, feminist museum researcher Malt suggested:

> "As more women enter the museum profession…they are using their influence as instruments of change to put forward issues of women's equality in museum programmes, displays, and publications and thus ultimately help shape the future image and status of women." (Malt 2006, p. 115)

As a feminist adult educator and researcher, these stances peaked my curiosity and begged the question: What is the gendered/feminist awareness of museum adult educators, curators and community practitioners [23] and what are the pedagogical, institutional and social implications of this? Although often reduced to mere conservers and preservers of objects or artworks, UNESCO (1997) and Taylor and Parrish (2010) reminded us public museums are first and foremost educational institutions, providing a plethora of informal and nonformal activities to literally thousands of adults. As the social and cultural fabrics of communities fray under the onslaught of political neo-conservatism and/or economic neoliberalism, public museums have been charged with becoming more pedagogically and socially responsible and responsive, for better or worse. A growing number of scholars are therefore, beginning to position them as critical, albeit not unproblematic, public engagement and pedagogical sites (e.g. Barrett, 2010; Mayo, 2012; Nightingale & Sandell, 2012; Steedman, 2012).

[23] I use all these terms as they reflect the roles and titles of the women employed to do the pedagogical work both within and beyond the institutions.

The two things frequently left unacknowledged in the literature on museum change and public pedagogy, are the facts that neo-conservatism and neo-liberalism have major gender implications that we need to address (Walby, 2011), and those tasked with being the public face and initiators of change are the adult educators and community practitioners who are predominantly women. Consequently, there are few studies in this area and my study aimed to begin to fill this gap. I used a feminist approach to explore how women adult educators, curators and community practitioners in Canada and Britain, two socially, culturally and politically similar countries, understood, identified with, and took up gender and feminism in their work and the implications of this.

A focus on women within the public arts and culture sector required for me that it be grounded in feminist theory, and I do this in the first section of this paper. I then situate the study by tracing some of the historical challenges that have shaped women's experiences and practices within museums. Following this, I describe the methodology and methods used, summarise my findings and conclude with a discussion of their implications for gender, social, and institutional, change within the museum sector, and for feminist adult education.

The feminist lens

Museums have for the most part been viewed by the general public – and I would also argue adult educators - as static, elitist, silencing, sexist and otherwise exclusionary institutions. However, as noted above, there has been a more recent push for change. Public museums have been challenged by governments and scholars to become more socially inclusive, to re-orientate their educational and institutional practices towards greater social or ecological responsibility, justice and human rights (e.g. Janes, 2009; Hooper-Greenfield, 2007; Mayo, 2012; Nightingale & Sandell, 2012). Hewison (2014) calls this a movement towards the betterment of the many, not merely the few, but he argues government imposed 'wealth-creation' mandates have made this an overwhelming failure, although Nightingale & Sandell's (2012) edited volume suggested this is not entirely the case.

Feminist theory provided an important critical lens for this study, as it enabled me to consider how gender issues, and feminist thought/pedagogy, are understood and enacted by the women practitioners working both within and beyond the institutional walls of museums. Hein (1993) and Batliwala (2013) reminded us experience is always gendered, but according to feminist museum scholar McTavish (2008), "the articulation of gender within museums has at best been considered a secondary concern" (p. 93). My scan of the contemporary literature shows that a focus on women or gender is seldom part of the new social responsibility and inclusion demands – or even their critiques (e.g. Hewison) - although it is occasionally listed as one of the issues requiring attention. But misogyny and violence against women are increasing in societies around the world (e.g. Manicom & Walters, 2012; Walby, 2011), poignantly manifest in the former Governor General of Canada, Michelle Jean's characterisation of current Canadian culture as 'a culture of rape' (Clover, Butterwick & Collins, In Press). Indeed, Walby (2011) reminded us that despite the gains of the feminist movement, many gendered regimes remain in tact in institutions and society, and neoliberalism poses new challenges. She also suggests, however, that feminism is alive and well, although within institutions it has taken on characteristics that are different from normative protest/critique/movement views of the past. She also suggests feminist discourse and practice have moved beyond 'equality for

women', towards the more inclusive 'in the interests of women.' And feminist adult educators continue to argue that more needs to be done to ensure that adult educators and practitioners push for greater gender justice and equity (e.g. Manicom & Walters, 2012).

The socio-gendered terrain

My study is situated within the gendered terrains of museums as they have emerged and grown since the late 18th century. Although "women have been central to the founding and maintenance of museums and art galleries for the past 150 years" (Whitelaw, 2012a, p. 76), they are all but absence in official written museum histories. For this reason, McTavish (2008, p. 95) noted being "deeply surprised" when, during her museum archival study in New Brunswick, she came across an excerpt about women's participation through the Ladies Auxiliary of the Natural History Society, mentioned occasionally in meeting minutes between 1862-1932. Most often, mention of women came in the form of acknowledgements for the provision of refreshments. Although numerous reports spoke of museum "events such as the annual *Conversazioni* to which the general public as well as dignitaries were invited to hear talks given by male members of the society" (McTavish, 2008, p.95), it appeared women's contributions were more confined to the 'domestic' tasks. Yet McTavish cautions we should not underestimate the value of "both cake and housekeeping skills", which she showed "funded the educational and social activities…and provided the public face of the institution" (p. 95). Whitelaw (2012a, 2012b), McTavish (2008) and Glaser & Zenetou, 1994 suggest the bulk of women's contributions to museums were collective and therefore, relatively anonymous. The lack of documentation, as well as how their roles around these cultural organisations were framed, has served to greatly understate the significance of women's financial, scholarly and pedagogical contributions.

But there are studies that have uncovered a "more substantial presence of these women" (McTavish, 2008, p. 95) revealed through accession records detailing donations, or in the form of a lecture series sponsored and delivered by women, although its contents were never stated. Taylor's (1994) research illustrates how at times, women carved out leadership roles for themselves as curators and directors. Terry (2013) explored women's connection to the Dundurn Castle heritage site in the first half of the 20th century, illuminating "a host of women working as curators and administrators to establish the site" (p. 47). Whitelaw (2012a, p.76) recounts a story of the leadership of Maud Bowman, who founded and managed a major Art Gallery in Edmonton. As noted in the introduction, Malt's (2006) study illustrated how women curators were using their influence to highlight women's issues through exhibitions and other fora.

In spite of the contributions of women, scholars acknowledge the professionalisation of museums and galleries starting from the 1930's saw a concurrent masculinisation of the field. Women, while seen as suitable for museum fund-raising or even on occasion, interpretation, "were not seen as potential directors of institutions of any size or influence" (Whitelaw, 2012a, p.78). For example, when Dundurn Castle became a national heritage site in 1967, a paid male director was voted in to relieve the leadership and curatorial duties of a 'Mrs. Metcalfe', even though she had fulfilled the role voluntarily for several years. An article in the local Hamilton newspaper applauded the move, arguing "men were needed to supervise business-related affairs to maintain Dundurn's high standards as a museum and historical monument so that women might

look after the historical research, tours, displays and other items associated with the domestic – and therefore more suitable – realm of the house itself" (in Terry, 2013, p. 56). In another study it was shown that women were only "able to manage collections with a degree of freedom because of McGill University's ambivalence about the value of the museum" (Young cited in McTavish, 2008, p. 93). As the stature of these institutions increased, women's work and voluntary contributions became more domesticated and side lined. Further,

> "when the women recognised male authority, conducted bake sales, or participated in collecting and labelling natural history specimens, they were welcomed…When the 'ladies' attempted, however, to become full members or to thwart male supervision, their position on the margins of the organisation was reaffirmed" (McTavish, 2008, p. 99).

Archival reports of the minutes of meetings kept by men frequently portray the women associate members "as modest, hardworking, and even servile", yet women's own minutes oftentimes demonstrate a group "impatient, ambitious, and longing to pursue goals not entirely in keeping with the original aims" (p. 100). Some feminist museum historians also note strong connections between women's struggles for institutional equity in museums and art galleries, and their greater involvement in the public sphere and in struggles for social reform (e.g. McTavish, 2008; Terry, 2013). For example, a member of the Women's Auxiliary named Emma Fiske also served as the president of the Women's Enfranchisement Association from 1898 to 1914 (McTavish, 2008). Others have uncovered sponsored lecture series aimed to underscore "the often neglected experience of women in minority communities" (Merriman, 2007, p. 351). Intended contributions of these activities were to identify "tracks of gender discrimination [and to] monitor its movement in our countries, our communities, and in our homes and finally banish it" (Abrams, 2002, p.127). I must acknowledged here, however, that the women involved in the museum sector, or at least those written about, were usually white, and/or upper class. But scholars illustrate importantly, how by their very nature of deep conservatism, museums all but ignored the suffragette and feminist movements (Glaser & Zenetou, 1994).

What is also all but missing from studies of women in museums is a focus on education. Taylor (1994) does allude to women's roles as educators, but like Tippett (1990), she only briefly acknowledges how women fought for a broader, cultural education for both children and the general public. Having raised the issue of education, it is important to acknowledge that its provision to the general public was mostly "perceived as lacking both in substance and stature" (Chobot & Chobot, 1990, p.56). There is continuing evidence of this sentiment as well as the fact that education and learning units or departments have been, and continue to be, made up almost exclusively of women (Clover, Sanford & Dogus, 2013; Ellis, 2002; Steedman, 2012).

Feminist adult educators remind us that although women's education work has made important contributions to the lives of women, and society as whole it has not been well represented in the field (e.g. Manicom & Walters, 2012). Perhaps more problematically studies suggest women educators themselves are not necessarily taking up gender or feminist issues, and they worry about the implications. Indeed, a common refrain is that "women have already attained equality so feminism is no longer needed" (Taber & Gouthro, 2006, p.59), making it easy to forget how problematic social constructions continue to inform understandings and roles of women and the impact this has on bringing about substantive gender or social change (Smith, 2005). For McTavish (2008) an examination of the differing dynamics around gender in museums adds one

more layer to our understandings of the challenges we face in terms of bringing about radical gender and social change. This is where my study begins.

Research methodology and design

My study used a feminist, cross-national approach to explore how women adult educators, curators and community practitioners in Canada and Britain understood, self-identified, and/or took up gender and feminist issues through their work. Feminist research places women at the centre of the enquiry and honours their experiences and ways of knowing. It provides an opportunity for women to reflect upon their lives and issues that affect them and other women, and the gendered nature of society and/or institutions (Hess-Bider & Leavy, 2007). A cross-national approach was employed because it develops new understandings within the present very global, interdependent world in which we live, drawing attention to similarities of challenges based in practice, policy and/or ideology (Hantrais, 2009). Further, as Walby (2011) reminded us, women's issues are not locally isolated, but global in nature and therefore, it is important to think them through in a more a global way.

Thirty-four women adult educators, curators or community practitioners in small, large and medium-sized public museums in major urban areas of Ontario, British Columbia, England Scotland and Wales, although this latter is under-represented, took part in the study. The sites were selected because they had departments, units, or sometimes just one person focussed on adult education and learning. Much of the pedagogical work of these institutions, particularly in Canada, centre on children, families and school visits. Structured individual interviews were used to provide a space for women's individual reflections; focus groups were used to encourage dialogue and discussion (Reinhart, 1992). I also used journaling and observations as I took part in a variety of nonformal education activities. Interview and focus group questions probed into women's educational backgrounds, feminist identifications, and their knowledge and understanding of feminist and gender issues. Others explored their practices in terms of gender consciousness and social change, as well as institutional structures and supports. Interviews were transcribed and coded for common patterns, phrases and themes as well as anomalies. All names are pseudonyms and no institutions are identified, although country differences are sometimes noted if relevant.

Findings

Gender, adult education and women's educational backgrounds

The most common academic backgrounds for the participants were art history or anthropology, although six did have certificates, a Master degree or another form of nonformal training in adult, popular education, popular theatre and participatory research. It did not occur to participants that some pedagogical preparation would assist them in their work, particularly in meeting the new social mandates and working with diverse audiences. Those with the more socially-orientated adult education or community engagement, theatre or research skills were, not surprisingly, taking up complex social issues, and at times women's issues, or facilitating dynamic and challenging workshops, and I will return to this shortly.

None of the participants spoke of any substantial feminist or gendered focus in their formal university courses or preparation. As Judy put it, "the artists, the writings, the history, they were really all about and by men. I guess I wondered where the women were, but I did not question it, nor did anyone else." Indeed, this 'unquestioning' was a refrain. Yet in all the nonformal pedagogical events I took part in, and the participants confirmed this was true of formal education, the majority of students or learners were women. However, there was a certain level of unconsciousness about this: "I am not sure about the higher number of women participating in this educational event or on such events in general…I guess it is there [the gender imbalance] but it is not something I have given a lot of thought to" (Mira).

Feminism – no way but sort of!

When I asked the women if they self-identified as feminists or if their work used a feminist lens, responses were naïve or negative but also, complex. Jordan, for example, was unclear what the term 'feminism meant: "Well, we focus on relations with family, school and children. Is that what you mean by feminist?" This response is not surprising given her the above findings vis-à-vis gender and feminism. A number of younger participants (under 35) shied away from what one called an "unnecessary 'label'" or were concerned about calling themselves a feminist might do to their image: "I don't think any one of my colleagues have described themselves as 'a feminist' but I suppose we may have some feminist ideals. [But] we don't use the term. I suppose it has a lot of negative connotations, doesn't it" (Sharon). Other comments went something like "I turned my back on radical feminism many years ago" (Silvia), although as the interview progressed and we talked about feminist issues, she did exclaim that she needed "to go back to being a radical feminist!" Belinda was more concessional, arguing "being a female, perhaps I do take a feminist approach even though I am not aware of it and I am trying to be objective." Feminism was equated with radicalness, and perhaps more importantly, bias. Public museums have tended to portray themselves as neutral, although we all know they are anything but. They have taken sides in terms of whose knowledge and stories count, and as feminists have noted, those have been, and continue to be, very masculine (e.g. Malt, 2006). Denise, who had worked in a gallery in Canada but was then working in Britain, argued a stance against feminism had not been true in the past: "This is a change from the 1970's when some women entered the field... as a feminist radical project…to take on the sexist nature of the gallery and to extend a critique to our educational processes."

When I asked the participants to talk about their pedagogical understandings as women, explanations came in the form of frequently taken-for-granted differences regarding the strengths and requirements of genders. Participants spoke about how women had better communication and social skills, of how they were more caring and nurturing and they saw this as foundational to being a good educator and working with diverse populations such as seniors and those with mental illness. Janice took this gendered differencing to task, aligning it with class and in particular and problematic "civilising' mission" of the institution that has been done through gender and will not go away there remains a very problematic 'elevating the poor' discourse that comes up when women equate themselves as servants and care-givers."

And yet the comments above are not simply negative. There were those continual notations of having 'feminist ideals', suggesting they were not anti-feminist. But Batliwala (2104) called this enjoying the privileges feminists fought for without getting your hands

dirty.

Institutional gendered awareness

Few of the participants were unconscious of the implications of gender institutionally, and they articulated this in diverse ways. For Motoyo, the gender make-up of the leadership had made a significant difference in terms of adult education and learning:

> I think we had a woman's way of seeing before, an emphasis on inter-action and learning, and a real sense of respect for the people who come through this door or to whom we were reaching out. We flourished. Now we are under, well constrained, within a very male vision of construction – the bricks and mortar kind of stuff. I realise I am stereotyping, but it is the best way I can explain the deflation of the department – through gender.

Hilda put forward this fascinating gendered, political analogy of her institution:

> You asked me earlier about politics [in the Gallery] and let me make the link with women. You can think of the art gallery like parliament. The CEO is the Prime Minister; then you have the administrators who are the cabinet ministers. The curators are the House of Lords and education, well, we are the House of Commons! And that is where you find the women.

Khadija suggested women tended to be attracted to the abundance of freelance work museums offer, and speculated that it afforded them flexibility. But feminist scholars take this to idea task, arguing it is a hallmark of 'feminised' work and simply means employers do not have to provide social and health benefits or pensions (Ryan, 2006). And in fact, Christine acknowledged this in our interview: "I also think it [the overrepresentation of women in museum and gallery education] may be related to salary as this is low paid work."

Feminist and other pedagogical acts of change

A number of adult educators and curators did self-identify as feminists and spoke in diverse ways about its importance. For Janice, "[There are] those of us who made claims to feminist histories and feminist activism as the reason why we came into gallery education." Clara was concerned that the lack of understanding about feminism was tantamount to "an erasure of the history of feminist struggle" in the arts and cultural sector, and described what she saw as a "weird backlash of a younger-ish generation." However, she felt there was a resurgence in interest "within contemporary art around feminism that allows for a different conversation to take place in the educational arena. I mean, you cannot ignore who these artists are and what they are saying through their art and be a good educator now can you?" Laurie suggested "without a feminist vision or commitment, museum educators simply maintain the status quo."

Gender consciousness and commitment to feminist education and community development was in evidence across the two countries. Hilda, spoke about being "aware of the importance of women's issues and highlighting those and putting women strongly on the agenda in my education programmes." Lisa in Britain provided an example of a specific educational activity that included a collaboration with a women's organisation:

"there were forty-two women from Sierra Leone, and there was some wonderful work delivered in that venue with the [Women's group]. International Women's Day is big for us. There are a lot of passionate women here." In Canada, Lorna spoke about her work using the historical painter Emily Carr to talk about the challenges for women but also, their courage:

> One of the main things I want to get across…is that no woman was doing [what Emily did], not even men were going north in a canoe by themselves, and as a woman, in 1920, are you kidding me? No way women were allowed to do things like that…I want [people] to get a sense…that she was blazing a trail for women, but that she was not supported.

While gender and women were not necessarily their focus, all participants, but particularly those with adult/popular education and participatory research training articulated a passionate social vision of education and learning, and showed a commitment to reaching out to and working with diverse populations. Lydia felt her pedagogical outreach work was "about getting people to feel they can walk in [to the gallery] and not only learn something socially relevant...but also know that they are entitled to be in that space, that it belongs to them. " Others facilitated anti-racist theatre workshops or conversations across religious differences and intolerances; others used video as a tool of participatory research with immigrant groups being displaced by gentrification. These women work with asylum seekers, wade into the fray of divisive environmental issues, or focus on LGBT youth because "homophobia is on the rise and we need to find ways to deal with this. Our whole gallery is about identity – about how we portray ourselves and are seen by others. It makes sense we take on this issue" (Leanne).

Discussion and conclusions

To my mind, and given what I have uncovered, there is need to be concerned that museums do not demand that all of their educators and community practitioners have backgrounds or preparation and training in adult and popular theatre education and/or participatory research. If they did, the pedagogical work would be substantively enhanced. Having said this, we need to recognise that an agenda of social change and inclusion may be more important to governments, albeit as Hewison (2014) reminded us this can be very misguided, and to critical and feminist scholars, than it is to these institutions themselves.

Fleming (2002) suggests the entry of more women than ever into museum education is enabling them "to be far more community orientated than ever before" (p. 220). This is evidenced in the plethora of adult education activities the women share with me that focussed on diverse and marginalised populations and put some form of justice and change at the centre. However, the more general lack of understanding of the importance of feminism and raising women's issues, particularly given prevalent amongst the younger women, is discouraging in a world where gender inequity is still prevalent (Manicom & Walters, 2011).

The lower status assigned to education in these institutions has not gone away, although the gender of the leadership can make a difference (but not a guarantee). And the feminine discourse of nurturing and caring employed is unlikely to bring about a change anytime soon. Let me be clear that I am not saying women should not care, but simply that this positioning is not moving things forward in an academic and intellectual

environment. But whether consciously or not, women in museums are applying a feminist lens when it comes to articulating gendered authority. Whether or not this enables them to see and better work with these relations with different groups can only be answered with further study.

Many of the participants did see themselves as feminists, and worked to address women's issues. It is something that gave them the courage to take incredible pedagogical risks. As feminist adult educators, they are siting directly in the fiery seat of gender change. But others took important but different risks, such as naming hetero-normatively, or facilitating dialogue between ethnic or religious groups with timeless animosities. While not aimed directly at women they are targeting problematic relationships and issues, which would be reflected in the lives of women in those communities. Perhaps we need to see this as part of 'the future of feminism' (Walby, 2011).

There is more to say, but let me conclude on a note about feminist research. In ever interview the women commented on how important it was to have the opportunity to think about gender, to talk about feminism and to ponder the implications for women of their pedagogical practice. I have sown some seeds I hope to watch grow and flower. But I acknowledge this work is not easy in the suspicious, naïve and outright anti-feminist/women climate of today, and much more encouragement of women like this, and research, needs to be done.

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Learning in community through mobile storytelling and location-based games

Introduction

We believe that mobile gaming and in particular mobile storytelling fits well with the demands in modern community learning. In this paper we present a digital storytelling system and describe how it can be used in learning scenarios involving both educational institutions and learner communities. We define three basic settings – which we call learning cases – and describe how they have been addressed in recent projects.

During the last decade we gained experience in mobile gaming in research and development. We carried out projects with industry partners such as Deutsche Telekom and Ravensburger AG (as cited in Schmatz et al., 2009) as well as with several research partners in the fields of education, user interface design and gaming experience (cf. Knecht et al., 2011). We developed a fast sportive multiplayer game – Mister X Mobile – which we currently overhaul and extend towards a multiplayer engine. Furthermore we developed a system for mobile storytelling – GeoQuest – we focus on in this paper.

Why do we believe that mobile gaming and storytelling is particularly useful for community learning?

Locality: Mobile games can focus on the space their authors and consumers live in and provide a virtual layer to the real environment. Mobile stories can show particular views on the neighborhood with respect to history, events, individual context or future visions. As already shown by Klopfer (2008) such a focus on the real environment enhances the educational efficiency.

Low threshold: Smartphones and even tablets are widespread and offer a convenient way to consume and create media at any place, at any time, and share it easily with others.

In particular younger people can be addressed well via smartphone apps connected with social media.

Participativeness: Open authoring systems enable everybody to take part in the role of consumer and creator. Anybody can create his or her own story and publish it to a mobile app that allows everybody to consume it on-site.

Although the notion of community learning is not sharply defined, the goals and achievements of non-institutional approaches toward education and social development within communities have been widely recognized and have received international attention as a research area. Due to the desired and necessary interconnection of community learning with local culture and initiative there is a great variety in educational community practices. Still many approaches share similar purposes and methodologies. For instance, typically the activities are developed using participatory methods such as dialogue techniques, and informal methods of creativity elicitation, knowledge acquisition and distribution play an important role. Also, quite typically we find inclusive learning in groups (as well as individually) and addressing all ages as common themes of community practices.

In this paper we present localized storytelling and learning practices through mainly outdoor mobile gaming where our research pattern basically follows the digital storytelling approach by Joe Lambert, co-founder of the Center for Digital Storytelling (CDS) at UC Berkeley, California (cf. Lambert, 2013). Over the past years we have gathered experience in the development and application of gaming-style spheres of learning in various social settings. While our focus here is to give a fair introduction and appraisal of GeoQuest (along EduQuest) as authoring system and serious game platform, we shall also mention practical examples and perspectives of future work.

Mobile storytelling with geoquest

By the term mobile storytelling we mean a system that delivers stories to handheld devices and advances the stories according to the user's mobility. Examples are *city tours* that guide the user along a certain way and tell him the story whenever he reaches specific locations or *museum guides* that accompany their users through an exhibition and provide additional information about exhibits as the user approaches them. However, more playful settings are also imaginable in terms of location-based adventures where the player discovers his environment and uncovers the story through interaction with its surroundings.

In this paper we focus on GeoQuest but there are diverse systems for mobile storytelling available currently, e.g. Actionbound or ARIS Games. GeoQuest is currently being developed as an interdisciplinary research project where other software engineers, pedagogues and social workers cooperate with us. In the context of GeoQuest we call stories and games *quests*.

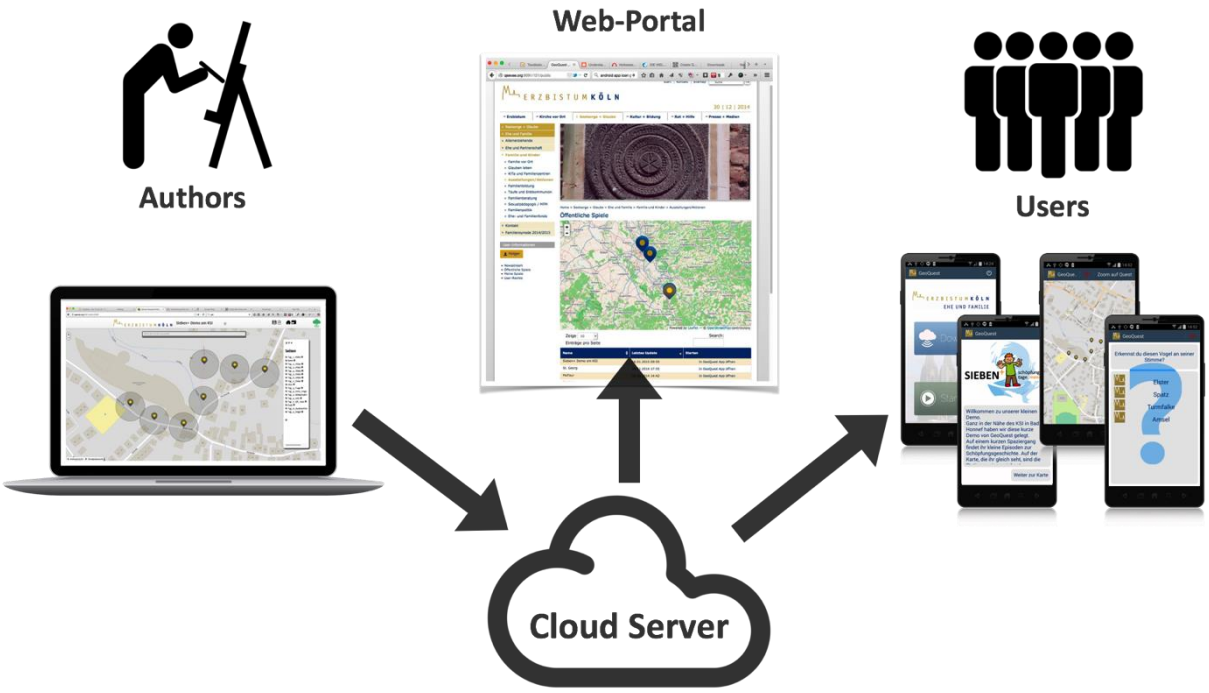

Figure 1: Overall architecture of the storytelling system GeoQuest.

The editor allows authors to create their quests, upload media etc. and publish their work. All quests are stored on a cloud server. Players primarily use mobile apps to access the quests. Figure 1 gives an overview on the system architecture. It illustrates the additional option to publish quests on a Web-Portal.

Quests are made up of predefined pages (cf. Fig. 2a) presenting media such as text, images, video and audio files. Furthermore, there are interactive pages for asking questions, scanning QR codes, taking images or recording audio. Beside the pages a quest can contain locators which are defined by GPS coordinates.

The course of a story is driven by events and actions. Events are for example the start of the quest, entering a certain location, selecting a given answer or the result of a QR code scan. Possible actions (cf. Fig. 2b) are showing a page, showing a simple message, playing audio files, manipulating the set of locations, or even doing complex computations in the background. The quest authors define what actions will be triggered by which event.

For example a quest could emulate a multi-stage geocache by defining a chain of locators, each triggering the start of a page with the according media. Hence, the story is told while the player reaches or finds the subsequent locations. Pages can also be interactive and e.g. ask questions, take pictures or audio records and upload them to a quest-specific webpage. For indoor tours QR codes or other barcodes can be used as locators.

Whenever a page is started or ended, a location is reached or left, an interaction is performed (either successful or not) an event is issued which the game authors can use to perform different actions. This way more complex game logic can be realized, like using virtual items such as collecting a key before opening a treasure chest, or providing a whole network of storylines instead of just one linear narration.

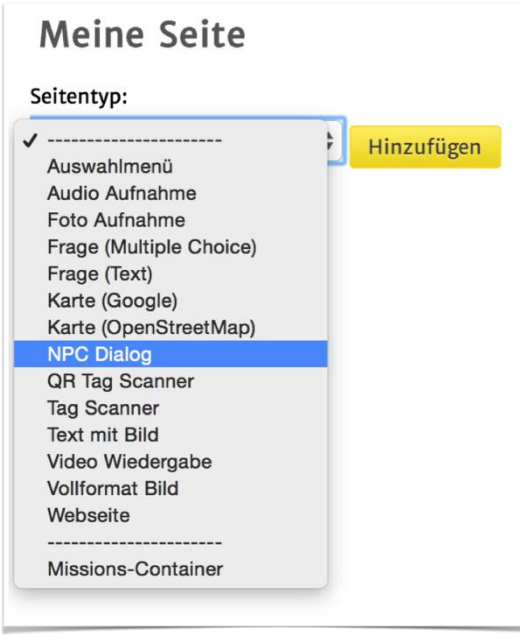

Figure 2a: Selecting a page type in the editor.

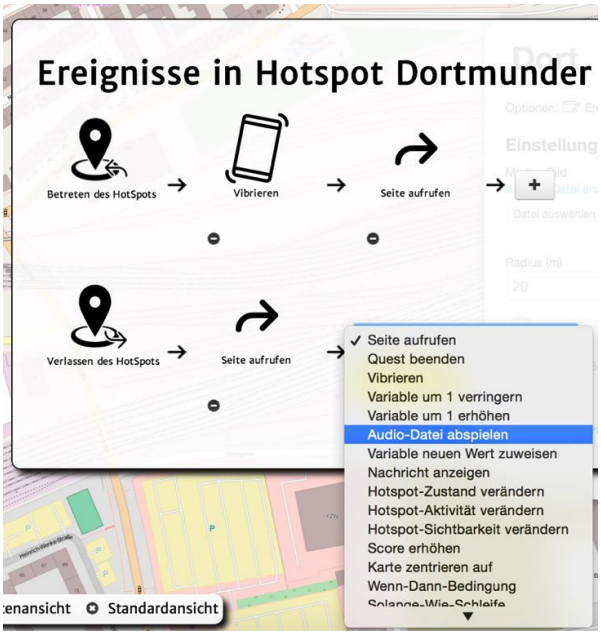

Figure 2b: Selecting an action in the editor.

Learning cases: consuming, creating, developing together

We see three learning cases for mobile storytelling: *consume*, *create*, and *develop* a story. We illustrate these different cases based on recent projects we carry out together with partners.

Consuming a prefabricated story can teach certain topics, e.g. historic connections, physical facts, or practical know-how. Possible benefits are:

- learn in place
- use personal device, enabling to keep the information afterwards
- provide multimedia
- include interactive features

Creating one's own story provides a holistic learning situation addressing many different competences as for example:

- source finding and interpretation
- story design
- media competence
- technical realization

The resulting story might not be the focus but merely a motivation for and demonstrator of the work the group has achieved.

Developing a story involves both its creation and consumption in an iterative feedback process thus providing additional learning options like:

- reflection & analysis
- communication & feedback
- systematization of work flows
- democratic decision making

These learning cases are rather different in practice and we see much more educational potential in the creation and development of a quest than in consuming it. But regardless of what you focus on, both processes are intrinsically connected by the tool-product relation. And the least the product can do for the creational process is motivating the participants to finish it and show it to others.

Furthermore, having a product, i.e. the quest, in mind and the consumers, i.e. the players, involved will probably increase the intensity of the learning experience. First, it steps up the pressure, since the quest will be published and perceived by external users; second, it reduces the space of options, since not everything that is possible, is likely appreciated by the audience. On the other hand, the feedback from external "customers" will be particularly motivating for many learners and a valuable and rewarding response.

Mobile storytelling for community learning in action

This section illustrates the learning cases by presenting some concrete projects that we carried out with our partners recently.

"Dr. Kim on the run" is a quest that we created together with StattReisen Bonn - an independent and politically active organizer of city tours. This quest enhances a guided tour about a financial scandal in the city of Bonn where a criminal project contractor has peculated millions of Euros on a large construction project. Here many different groups of people, like local politicians, bankers, craftsmen etc. were concerned. The scandal was well known in the city and lots of rumors had been circulating about its backgrounds. Figure 3 shows some impressions of the tour.

Figure 3: "Dr. Kim on the Run" – A political mobile story.

The participants used GeoQuest to gather virtual cues, documents, and recordings of fictitious phone calls when they strolled in small groups through the area. Each group of participants had previously chosen a certain role, e.g. a banker or a craftsperson, and received appropriate clues during their tour. At the end of the tour the organizers had prepared a mock-up tribunal and played a trial with an actor giving the role of the district attorney. The participants now took part in that played trial and argued using the gathered evidences and clues about how to proceed.

This example shows how even consuming prefabricated quests can encourage discussions among citizens and thus support community learning.

"RadioRanzen" (German invented word meaning "radio satchel" which is related to the fictitious non-player character) is a completely different way to apply GeoQuest in an educational context which is done together with Q3 (Quartier für Medien und Bildung) – a media education institution (cf. Dietsch, 2015). This time, a group of adolescents who run a non-commercial radio station prepared a museum exhibition on the history and meaning of the radio for modern society. They used GeoQuest to create an interactive gamified museum guide specifically designed for children. In the quest the children should help a non-player character to find his lost radio frequencies. To do so, they had to solve some puzzles, interact with some exhibits and even perform some interviews with other visitors of the museum – taking the recordings directly with the quest app. During their tour through the exhibition they gathered scores which were posted to a website where they could later on see how they performed. Figure 4 shows some impression of the tour.

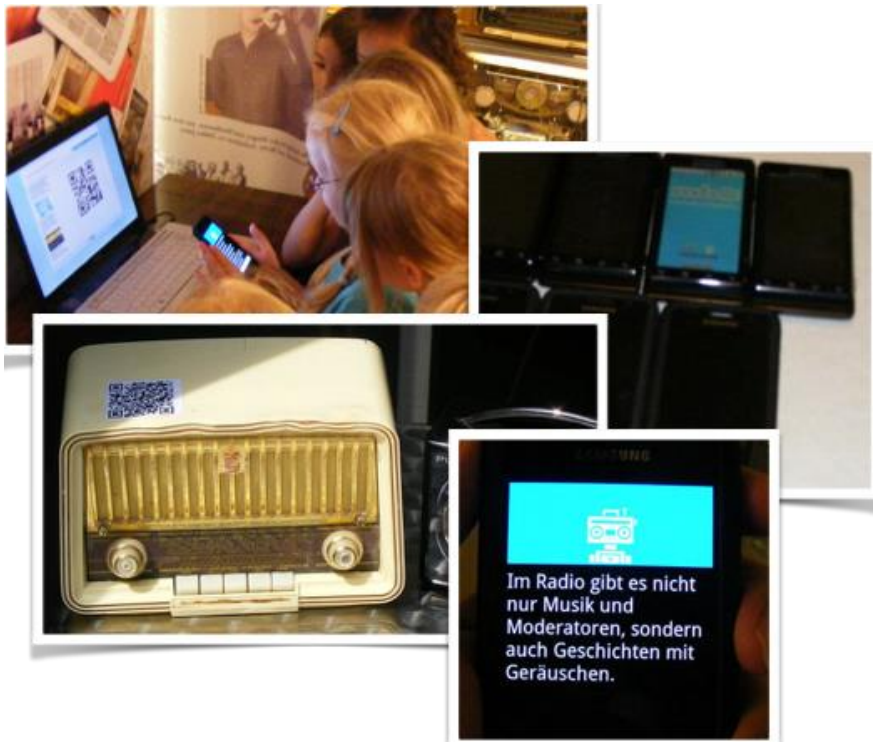

Figure 4: "RadioRanzen" – A museum guide from adolescents for kids.

In this scenario two separate learning effects have been exploited: first, the young people running the radio station learned a lot about creating a museum guide, telling a little story and generating suspense. Creating the tour also helped them to analyze their exhibition and enhance many details. Second, the children visiting the exhibition liked the electronic interactive tour guide a lot and - we are quite confident about that – spent more attention to the exhibits, so that they might have learned more than they would have without the quest.

"How grandpa played": Together with the German Red Cross we are currently creating a quest intended to encourage and foster communication between grandfathers and their grandchildren. The idea is that the quest works like a frame story asking both the grandfathers and the grandchildren to fill out their respective parts in terms of interviewing each other. For example the app offers certain topics e.g. "My favorite toy" or ", "How I go to school" etc. Then each of the players may choose or enter a short answer, take a photo and interview one another about their personal opinion. In the end they retrieve a little multimedia album as souvenir.

In the background there is a group of active grandpas who extend the app via the web-based editor and provide new topics over time. This way the app can evolve and incorporate feedback from users.

Further applications: we are currently working together with diverse educational and social institutions on different projects which are related to community learning. *WikiCultureCity* aims to start a bottom-up ecosystem for sightseeing, cultural and touristic information.

The Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Cologne is using GeoQuest for religious topics and tours in their diocese.

Together with the University of Education in Karlsruhe we are starting EduQuest – a version of GeoQuest which will provide further education-specific functionality.

One important feature that allows us to support so many different projects with one tool is that GeoQuest can be used as a white labeling system and be visually completely integrated into existing websites (cf. Fig. 1 and Fig. 5). Hence each of our partners can have its own branded app accessing only the data his own authors have entered in his own editor. Furthermore, we can create specific editors for special game types, for example a simple editor for entering new frame stories in the example *"How grandpa played".*

Current state and perspectives

We hope to see more communities consuming, creating, and developing quests in the future. Let us therefore finally summarize what makes us confident that mobile gaming and in particular mobile storytelling offers a high potential for community learning.
Organizational enablers:

- Public access: Diverse systems for mobile storytelling allow for open public access (e.g. ARIS Games (ARIS Games, 2015), ActionBound (ActionBound, 2015), GeoQuest has planned a public version for autumn 2015).
- Apparent role of educational institutions: GeoQuest is a white labeling system and supports separated web-portals and mobile apps for individual institutions. This is shown in figure 5 for the Karlsruhe University of Education.

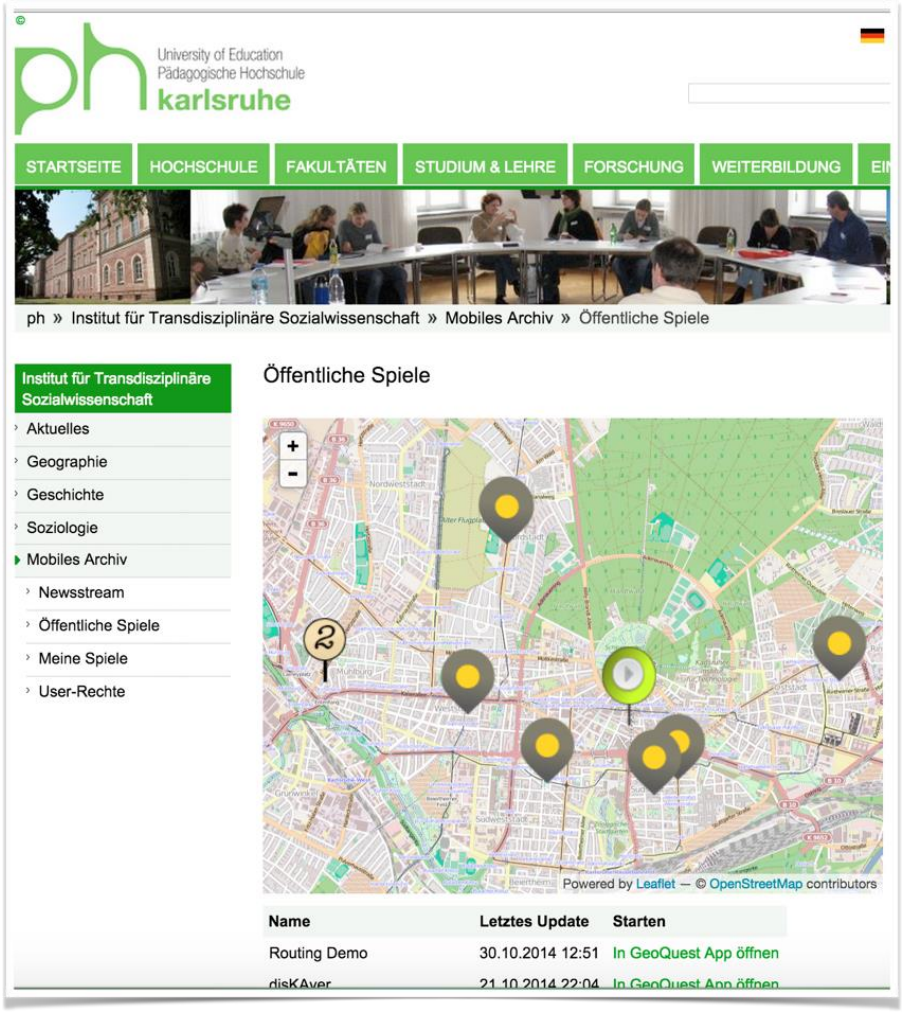

Figure 5: GeoQuest Web-Portal integrated in partner website.

Technical enablers:

- Low threshold to play: smartphones are already widespread; systems as GeoQuest and ActionBound support at least iOS and Android.
- Low threshold to create: most systems provide a web-based editor that is useable on any platform – even on tablet computers.
- Ease to use: some systems offer a very simple web-based editor (e.g. ActionBound) that makes it very easy to start with creating mobile stories.

Valuable and engaging contents:

- Location-based stories allow local topics to be told and discussed directly on the spot
- Elements of gamification can increase motivation and encourage participation.
- The genre of newsgames (cf. Bogost et al. 2010) seems a suitable model for creating education games: it brings together journalistic principles and game creation.
- Comprehensive options: some systems comprise a powerful feature set and enable to create a wide range of mobile stories and games (e.g. ARIS Games, GeoQuest).

Furthermore, we are currently developing EduQuest (on the base of GeoQuest) to address particular needs for authoring games and storytelling in the context of education. We cooperate with the Karlsruhe University of Education and the Remscheid Academy to enhance the system and offer trainings for multipliers.

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Community building as forum and arena

Field analysis of adult education and youth work in Flanders

It is human nature to get together, to form groups and to learn. This shows very cleary in the numbers: in Flanders: more than 50% of the population participates yearly at least once in some practice of non-formal adult education [24] (http://www.fov.be/boekstaven). Participation in youth work practices is just as high (Sinnaeve, Van Nuffel & Schillemans, 2004; Agentschap Sociaal-Cultureel Werk voor jongeren en volwassenen, s.d.).

This field of socio-cultural practices is not just very much alive, it's also changing (Larock et al., 2005). Both on supralocal and local level, a whole range of new practices take shape, some practices disappear and yet other practices undergo a complete transformation (Holvoet, 2012; www.fov.be).

Wanting to grasp the changes in these practices and the meaning of this altering reality, we conducted a 'Field Analysis' in 2013 and 2014, focusing on different new, traditional, informal, institutionalised,… adult education practices and what kind of dynamics these practices accomplish in their local contexts. Socio-cultural practices in Flanders denote youth work practices as well as adult education practices and community work practices.

We wanted to know if there were any differences between the way traditional adult education practices often linked to the old social movements and this newer type of practices. Do they have another vision on community? Another vision on community building? And: what do these entail for the way the community worker thinks he should do as a professional? So, in this paper we would like to focus on the role some of these

[24] In Flanders there's a distinct difference between formal and non-formal adult education. Formal adult education is regulated by the Ministry of Education. The practices of non-formal and informal adult education, that are linked to civil society organisations, are regulated by the Ministry of Culture. In Flanders we speak about socio-cultural organisations when referring to the world of non-formal and informal adult education.

practices take on, as mediator in community development and as advocate for local groups and their interests and the implications this has for the way the community worker sees his or her role as a professional.

Socio-spatial approach as theoretical and methodological framework

First we will, however, clarify the used theoretical and methodological framework, as it has had major implications on the way this research was conducted. We based our framework on a socio-spatial approach (Spatschek, 2012; Spatschek & Wolf-Ostermann, 2009; Böhnisch & Münchmeier, 1987, 1990) and created a multi-layered research design for this project.

The socio-spatial approach starts from the viewpoint that socio-cultural practices co-construct society and that they are meaningful for groups and individuals in a specific context. The different meanings, how they were constructed and how they relate to certain social developments are key aspects in this approach.

It takes into account both objective, material and the subjective aspects of a certain 'reality', including the interaction between these aspects. It is important to see how physical elements of a context or situation have an influence on the meanings that arise in that context or situation. Moreover, the relation between space, practices and individuals is not a one way street. Social acts and social practices are influenced by the space in which they operate and at the same time they also influence that same space (Steel, Van Eeghem, Verschelden & Dekeyrel, 2012; De Visscher, De Brauwere & Verschelden, 2013; Steel, De Visscher, De Brauwere & Verschelden, 2014). Social spaces aren't simple, static containers, they are relational and ever-changing and there is a distinct difference between a certain geographical place and the social spaces linked to it. This socio-spatial perspective also allows us to link personal concerns to social issues. Its focus on a social and historical understanding of a certain situation allows us to problematize existing definitions and viewpoints, through which our own professional interventions can be viewed from a different perspective.

We translated this approach in a multi-layered methodology which makes it possible to research the relations between a certain context, the practices that are shaped within that space, the relevant agents, the different meanings that are constructed.

The research consisted of two parts. Firstly, we explored and researched 5 selected[25] areas. We collected demographic, historical, socio-economic,… data to get a read on the area. In these context sketches we also analysed the local policies and mapped the different socio-cultural practices and places. We also conducted interviews and physically explored the areas to get to know the meanings and the way the neighbourhoods were used. Based on these sketches we selected practices for further analyses, that were typical for that area. We made so called 'portraits' of these 46 socio-cultural practices, focusing on their rationale, their embedding in the local context and the meaning-making processes in and around these practices.

[25] Sampling occurred in three steps. In a first step 5 different spatial areas were selected. Within each area we selected either two or three neighbourhoods and small towns, based on demographical and income data. After the first part of the research, we selected 46 socio-cultural practices in these neighbourhoods which we analysed more in depth.

Rabot: neighbourhood and practices

For this paper we will draw only from our findings in one specific neighbourhood, namely Rabot-Blaisantvest, in Ghent. This part of Ghent has a very specific history, as 19th century working-class neighbourhood, with currently a lot of ethnic-cultural diversity and a range of city renewal projects. In this context we see numerous new adult education, youth work and community work practices rise, which combine aspects of adult education, community development, care, economy,… to meet the challenges posed to the people living in this neighbourhood.

Rabot-Blaisantvest is barely a square kilometre, but it accommodates almost 8.300 inhabitants and an ever increasing number of users, like students, shoppers, visitors of the courthouse, commuters,… It has a very specific history that still has influence on the way life is organised in the area. This neighbourhood was planned and built during the 19th century in function of the textile industry. The factory owners built small, low quality houses for their labourers. Many rural residents left for the city in search of a new job and a new, better life. They settled at the outskirts of the city. In the case of Rabot, there was also an explicit catholic objective. By placing the church in the middle, both literally and metaphorically, the catholic party (politicians and employers) tried to ensure their own influence on the working class. The idea of community was one based on homogeneity of a shared culture, shared values and shared practices. This community was also built through a network of associational life encompassing almost all aspects of life. It was also an anti-urban ideology of community since the city was seen as the meeting place of strangers.

In the 1960s, as the textile industry went into crisis, new waves of migration initiated, mainly from southern countries, with the Turkish rural residents as main migrant group. During the decline of the textile industry, this flourishing (catholic) socio-cultural life gradually disappeared. Yet a whole new range of practices sprung to life and developed gradually new ideas and practices about community and community building. The last factory in Rabot eventually closed in the early 2000s. The only remains are two classified gas tanks and a vast, empty area in the heart of Rabot – since 2006 known as 'The Site', which entails a project of temporary use (cf. infra) (www.rabotsite.be).

Even now, Rabot still functions as an arrival neighbourhood, for an increasingly diverse group of people: asylum seekers, refugees and all kinds of migrants. Rabot is the most diverse neighbourhood in Ghent: over half of the people have roots outside of Flanders and the diversity is still increasing. Its character as arrival neighbourhood – with cheap, bad housing, informal economies, ethnic coloured networks,… – creates a lot of movements in and out of the neighbourhood. Refugees and new migrants end up here, parts of the original Turkish immigrants have moved to better neighbourhoods or even to the suburban area around Ghent, yet they still use Rabot, e.g. for shopping. A lot of global changes and complexities become most apparent in this type of neighbourhoods, that are much more than the unlivable problem areas they're usually referred as (Maly et al., 2014, p. 16).

Currently a lot of renewal projects are carried out, to 'upgrade' the neighbourhood. One of the biggest projects is 'Bridges to Rabot', called like this because of its aim to physically and socially reconnect Rabot to the rest of the city (Debruyne & Oosterlynck, 2009, 2011). Some groups fear gentrification effects, to the detriment of the underprivileged groups in Rabot, which has led to different kinds of socio-cultural and community arts practices critiquing the projects (cf. Allemeersch, 2014; Staes, 2012).

The practices that flourish in Rabot are from a very different order than traditional adult education or youth work practices, outside of formal recognition (De Haene et al., 2014). They're concerned with local issues and problems, which can be broadly thematised as 'liveability'. We see youth practices tailored and adjusted to accommodate the local needs, we see artistic projects that incorporate social and economic goals, there are practices that combine a social and a spiritual/religious orientation and there are a lot of small groups of neighbours who come together to address certain local issues (De Haene e.a., 2015).

The biggest strength of these practices is their connectedness, to the neighbourhood and to each other. What's grown on the city field is used in the social restaurant and sold at the social grocery store, but can only be bought with the local community currency. Another very important characteristic in all these practices is their bottom-up development and connection with meanings and perspectives of the participants and inhabitants.

Practices in Rabot

This dynamic of new, innovative and community-oriented practices has had a major boost when one of the old industrial sites became the temporary playground for local projects and practices. As part of the aforementioned city renewal project, one of the last industrial sites in Rabot was demolished to be replaced with a new housing project, called Tondelier. The grounds had to be remediated which would take a couple of years. Suddenly there was a huge open space in a very densily built area, so local practices like Community Development Ghent and Rocsa (a community arts project) saw an opportunity to change the empty space into a place for the neighbourhood: The Site was born.

The main aim was to create an extra public space, which facilitates encounters between inhabitants and users of Rabot (Vande Velde, 2013). They also wanted to create more participation for the inhabitants and experimented with different forms of participation and policy signalling.

One of the first projects established on The Site, were the little community gardens. They're still a huge success, because they respond very well to the needs and skills of the large group Turkish and Bulgarian migrants. Through gardening, encounters were established between groups that usually do not (like to) meet. It created cultural exchange, cross-linking of social ties between diverse groups and more commitment to each other and the neighbourhood.

Rocsa organised different community arts projects on the Site in co-operation with artists and neighbours, like Rabot Beach, a petting zoo, a soccer field and a square for large events.

On the Site a lot of social issues became visible. One of the organisations that had a container on site, only used it once in a fortnight. In the meantime homeless people and asylum seekers used it as shelter. The housing issues of the neighbourhood suddenly seemed much more real, especially for local policy makers. Starting out as a temporary project, the question has risen how this success story can be permanently integrated in the neighbourhood.

The concrete floor of the factory, became 'The Site', a place for encounter, maintained and managed mainly by people living in Rabot. It became the catalyst for a whole range of new practices in the neighbourhood. So, the Site has become a place largely

maintained and managed by neighbours, supported by Community Development Ghent. These community workers have been establishing this kind of neighbourhood management by local inhabitants, on different places in Rabot. These projects mainly focus on community building and emancipation, through processes of coproduction and participation and always taking the capacities of the involved neighbourhood into account. The goal is to shape and maintain these spaces together. How the spaces are planned, managed,… is decided and executed in consultation with neighbours, local practices and city services.

Some of the projects initiated on The Site gradually found their way beyond the borders of the site. One of these projects is Made By Oya, a community arts textile lab. Rocsa noticed how a lot of visitors on the Site worked on and traded handicrafts and sewing and decided to use this in a project. The textile lab slowly became a separate project from the Site, and incorporated new techniques and experiments, next to the traditional sewing techniques. The goals are multiple: stimulating creativity, facilitating encounter and getting people to step out of their own comfort zones (Deceur, 2009). Emancipation, community building and empowerment are core concepts in their mission statement and they try to broaden both the participants' and the organisation's networks by collaborating with other local practices.

Even though they describe themselves as a community arts project and adult education, we see an important socio-economic (side)effect. The artwork is sold and profits go to the creator, thus realising a small, but sometimes necessary, extra income for the participants.

We've explained how The Site is an important catalyst for new practices, but there is another catalyst that influences many practices in Rabot and that has created an intense interconnectedness between these practices: The Torekes – the complementary community currency of Rabot (www.torekes.be), aimed at stimulating care for neighbourhood, neighbours and environment (Van Bouchaute et al., 2014). People can earn these Torekes through over 60 activities, like helping in the community centre, switching to green energy, giving soccer training to local youngsters, helping on the 'work-together-days' on The Site,… Every activity that improves the 'livibilaty' (cf. supra), is rewarded with Torekes. The community currency can be traded for certain services, like public transportation, purchases in local stores, meals at the social restaurant,… This way people don't just get to live in a pleasant neighbourhood, they are also involved in the creation and maintenance of that neighbourhood.

The Torekes have been very influencial for Rabot and its local practices, as it's established a short chain economics within Rabot and has thus strengthened the local economy (Vandenberghe et al., 2013). People with limited financial resources have been able to earn some extra highly necessary income.

The last practice in Rabot we would like to mention here is youth club Ergenekon. This practice is less connected to The Site and the Torekes, but is just as much intertwined with the neighbourhood itself. The youth club finds it origin in the need of local youngsters to have their own space within the neighbourhood (ergenekon.be). In the early 2000s there was no real meeting place for young people, so they decided to create one themselves.

Because of the precarious living conditions of many of the adolescents visiting the youth club, they decided to do more than just organise leisure activities. They want to stimulate the cultural and social development of the members, they provide tutoring sessions and there are certain facilities available in the youth, like access to internet, television and other media.

Discussion

So far, we've described the context of Rabot and some of its characteristic (adult education) practices, to show how people, practice and context are intertwined with each other and influence one another. In the last part of this paper we would like to address three more points. We want to focus on the idea of social mix and social mobility as a strategy for city renewal and the ideas of community and community building in this discussion. Secondly, we would like to shed light on a specific kind of professionalism that is practiced in this kind of settings. Lastly, we want to address how these practices take on their political role as practices of community development and in this way shed some light on the title of this paper.

Social mix or social mobility as a strategy for city renewal?

In Flanders the dominant strategy of many city planners, architects and policy makers to deal with neighbourhoods like Rabot has been to stimulate social mix, usually being interpreted as ethnic mix. Since the 1970s the spatial concentration of the unemployed, the poor and people from ethnic minorities in certain neighbourhoods, often in the periphery of the city, was dealt with by stimulating a social mix, meaning they stimulated middle and upper class families, especially families with young children to stay or to move to these neighbourhoods. We see similar dynamics and motives in the housing project planned on the Site.

Combatting social and ethnic segregation through the stimulation of an ethnic mix is the one single constant element in over 40 years of city development and urban renewal policies in Flanders (Oosterlynck et al., 2012: 117). With the majority of mayors in the bigger Flemish cities being social democrats, this policy usually has also a social motive lying underneath, namely the belief that this mix will result in a positive domino effect through the whole neighbourhood. One believed that poor people would profit from a life amidst the middle and upper classes: a diversification of networks, socialisation and acculturation effects upon the poor were expected as much as more social cohesion, less stigmatisation of the neighbourhood itself and so on.

There were also pragmatic and economic motives: when purchasing power is high, more stores and other services remain in the area. Some of these motives for a social mix go back as far as the industrial revolution and are well-known amongst community builders and adult educators. Yet a lot of empirical data shows a different reality. Moreover the situation and segregation dynamics in Flanders are not comparable with the situation in American cities or the French 'quartiers chaudes' (Loopmans, 2000). And this is in fact the case with many of the ideas behind the concept of the social mix: living in the same neighbourhood does not automatically amount to living together (Loopmans, JAARTAL). Moreover, in an era of internet, skype, satellite connections,… for many groups – the rich and poor alike – the most important networks aren't necessarily located within the immediate (territorial) vicinity.

When a social mix is realised there's almost certainly some form of gentrification: houses and living in these neighbourhood become more expensive, the informal economy is pushed away, just as the cheap housing facilities for the poor.

The journalist Doug Sanders describes in Arrival City (2011) another strategy for these neighbourhoods – not based on social mix but on social mobility. He describes how neighbourhoods and cities all over the world *can* function and quite often do function as a vehicle for social mobility and the formation of a new urban middle class. A crucial factor is the way in which policy makers develop a policy for these neighbourhoods.

What we found in Rabot can be described as a strategy for social – not individual – mobility of the neighbourhood and the people already living here. The practices we described earlier in this paper function as a forum for the people living in Rabot. They try to establish connections between the people and their living environment based upon a 'close reading' between the bricks and the people living there (De Visscher, De Brauwere & Verschelden, 2014). The community development practices and community art projects we found in Rabot were extremely sensitive to the contextual elements of Rabot: they connected to the needs, competencies and meaning making processes of the people living in the neighbourhood. When choosing to start the community garden project on 'the Site', priority was given to the people of Rabot and the community workers have tried to give a positive response to almost every question. The connection made between the classic handicrafts of the Turkish women, the textile history of Rabot itself and the way this is used in Made by Oya are but a few examples. The spatial qualities of 'the Site' as a space that is open to many possible readings and functions is also important. In addition, the complementary currency in Rabot creates local possibilities for the people to earn Torekes and to spend them locally, thus stimulating the local economy and strengthening local community life.

Many of these practices are hybrid practices, they are adult education, social economy, community building, community art,… all in one. Sharing practices, like repair cafés, social shops, give-away initiatives, community arts practices, an innovative social restaurant, cultural initiatives, ecological initiatives, all of them seem to occur now in a neighbourhood with a bad reputation and a non-existent (traditional) associational life, implying that the current 'sectoral' distinctions between education, economy, culture, social work, community work or youth work are no longer fitting, or usable for the (new) reality of certain neighbourhoods.

Especially through community art projects the needs, world view, competencies … of the people of Rabot were made visible in the city of Ghent, alternative visions and readings of the Rabot community in opposition to the Tondelierproject were made visible. As Oosterlynck & Schillebeeckx (2012) argue, the starting point of innovation in cities should not be the architectural needs, not the city planners' dreams or the economic needs of the creative classes, instead innovation should start from social development and a social agenda starting from the social needs and competencies of the people already living in Rabot. The initiators of The Site understood this very clearly and established, through new forms of participation and involvement of people living in Rabot, the adjustment of the number of houses in the Tondelierproject in favour of more green and public space.

We can construct also another view of community and community building underlying many of these new practices. They are not based on the idea of a homogeneity in one sense or another – be it values, religion. The diversity or even superdiversity (Maly, 2014) of the neighbourhood itself makes this simply impossible. The people in Rabot are simply accepted as the people of Rabot in all their diversities and the community workers do not start from a certain given concept of community to be realised in this neighbourhood – the neighbourhood as the mythical concept where community should happen or not, or can be constructed when a certain neighbourhood is poor through a sort of cocktail mixing of different ingredients. The idea of community is one that starts from

what is already there and starting from the needs, competenties, aspirations and interests of the people in the neigbourhood they react and construct practices like the community gardens, they make room for practices like the social shop, … they are thus not starting from an idea of community but from the practices of the people living in the neighbourhood. In these practices people meet each other in reality, they interact … This process of encounters, getting to know each other and learning about each other's needs and capabilities, the infrastructural and institutional conditions … is growing from the bottom up – and supported in a certain way by the professionals in the neighbourhood.

The role of the professional

The success of the Site and the established influence on Tondelier were only possible, because of the specific role the community workers took on. One of the community workers in Rabot explained how a project like The Site needs more than just the availability of infrastructure. There has to be a driving force to keep the project up and running, which at the same time does not have full 'content' control. In this view the professional has a facilitating, supportive role to enable people to take and elaborate own initiatives. There has to be sufficient openness to give new ideas and initiatives a place, which works very well on the Site. Because the project is never considered finished, but is seen as ever evolving, the questions and ideas of the neighbours have space to grow and develop.

This view on professional intervention puts serious question marks to the popular principle that (social work) interventions should always be temporary. Policy makers often argue that social professionals should try to accomplish that people, inhabitants, no longer need professionals to sustain or realise interventions, in this case community building initiatives. What we see in the community workers in Rabot however is an advocacy for permanent professional support in community building. Professionalism is seen here as an open form of professionalism, not aimed at developing or creating practices or interventions as such, but aimed at supporting, facilitating and connecting different practices, so they can strengthen each other. The Site is connected to many other practices in Rabot. This connection is strengthened further by the Torekes. It is precisely in this connecting potentiality that the strength of the community currency lies.

We want to stress the importance of learning to read an environment – many community workers are focused on interventions, but a proper and sound analysis of the context in which they work can also incite not intervening. Each neighbourhood has its own characteristics, making it necessary to 'mould' or 'adjust' social provisions, stores, networks, contacts,… accordingly (Maly et al., 2014). Community workers and adult educators thus need to be very sensitive to the context and the history of their working environment, bringing together objective as well as subjective data (as the socio-spatial paradigm suggests).

This kind of professionalism also entails policy signalling and policy support. The original renewal plans for Rabot have been adjusted, because of the activities and results of the Site. The community workers have been trying to voice the needs and desires of the inhabitants of Rabot and have been trying to enable inhabitants to voice their needs themselves. Of course the discussion about the exact meaning of what happened and still happens is an open question – a discussion that will continue and since the project of the Tondelier is only just starting the long term effects of this 'meeting-point ' or - maybe even

more apt - this arena in which a social mobility approach and a social mix approach will certainly mix in the reality of the neighbourhoods development remains very much open.

But, one of the most innovative aspects of The Site is the consistent attention for different kinds of participation. Within the context of community development this translates in an effort to realise both empowerment and more policy participation based on another idea of community through a network / networking of small scale practices.

On the Site, the community workers invented the concept of 'do-participation', creating a sense of co-ownership entails the realisation of a new kind of networklike commons, in which new initiatives can bloom and a bottom-up process of social mobility is realised (Oosterlynck et al., 2012).

At the same time, this requires a certain attitude from policy makers. They have to be open to the idea of dialogue and to the idea of different kinds of dialogue and participation.

Conclusion: community building, prefigurative action and politics.

This view on professionalism is related to a specific view on the political, that is apparent in all described practices. It is almost a truism to state that representative democracy is in crisis, that political parties and the classic social movements do not function as a bridge between the people and the political system as they used to do. So, it was not a coincidence that we found almost no traditional, strongly institutionalised adult education practices in Rabot. Many of these practices function in a way that is not relevant to the people living in Rabot.

At the same time, however we could determine the flourishing of another type of practices that are more fluid, more local, with a more open kind of 'membership', sometimes very temporary,… These practices do not have the same access to politics as the more traditional practices and they are often not interested in politics in the traditional sense – but they are nevertheless highly political in the Mouffian sense. These practices are not mainly about bringing together the voices of the people in the neighbourhood and advocating for their needs in a classical sense. These practices give in their day to day activities expression to what they are trying to establish. The means are thus in a certain way expressions of the ends. In this sense, they are also 'proleptic' (Yates, 2015) of another social and political order. One way of describing the political role and political importance of practices like the ones we studied in Rabot, is through the concept of prefigurative action. Even though this concept is mostly used in new social movement theory (Breines, 1989; Epstein, 1991; Yates, 2014) community work always has been inspired by similar ideas about direct democracy and participatory democracy. We think that the concept of prefiguration is very apt to describe the political meaning of what happens in and through the practices in Rabot and other marginalised neighbourhoods where a lot of social innovation processes are going on. We might not see an apparent dimension of protest or social movement, yet these practices and processes are very political in the aforementioned sense of the concept. They are a prefiguration of another political and social order in which people experience a full sense of citizenship. Through the practices we see a prefiguration of a more local, social and sustainable political order that points to an alternative for the neoliberal economical order and austerity politics. Even without a political consciousness, through this loose and interacting network of practices there is a suggestion of another way of relating to each other and to our environment.

What we've learnt from the practices in Rabot is how a permanent commitment to community building can inspire practices of adult education and social work. In Rabot bottom-up practices take an explicit and ongoing commitment to the most vulnerable citizens. In this kind of precarious neighbourhoods, social practices start explicitly from the everyday activities of people, more than in other kinds of areas. As we've argued above, these practices require a specific kind of professionalism, that gives space to the characteristics of people, practices and the neighbourhood itself. A copy paste approach doesn't work with this kind of practices in this kind of neighbourhoods. It requires a high sensitivity to the special and social dimensions of a space or practice.

In and through the hybrid practices of community building, people form diverse origins can meet and can get to know each other, a sense of co-ownership, shared responsibility and new commons is developed and new ways of creating solidarity and more sustainable alternatives get chances to grow and develop.

These practices are not concerned with applying theoretical knowledge in a practical situation. Instead they aim to realise a contextual use of sociological imagination starting from the everyday practices and needs of the people in the neighbourhood. This experimentation starts as an open process to which everybody can contribute, creating a collective learning process about how the practice can be constructed 'on the go', about how it can be based on learning through trial and error. Yet, the main normative ethos stays the priority of the needs of the people involved.

Many practices grow through trying out things, through discussions with the people involved about the many possible meanings acts can have for people involved. By participating in these practices, people get the opportunities and the tools to become more involved with each other and with the neighbourhood they live in. A sense of community and co-ownership is developed, practices of solidarity and practices of co-production grow. This sense of shared responsibility has a profound political meaning, because it breaks with the neoliberal ideas about collaborating only and as long as it serves their own private interests. It is a more substantial or idealistic view of real democracy in which people are considered as full citizens and politics has an intrinsic value in society.

The innovative community work practices we found in Rabot and in many other places in Flanders and Brussels – especially in the so—called marginal parts of the cities – all try to strengthen the voice but maybe even more so the practices through which the people living in these neighbourhoods make their life. Community workers try to enforce a forum for these people. However, amidst the dreams of architects, city-- planners, policy-makers and politicians and the economical 'necessities' of the 21st century it is more often an arena in which community workers and inhabitants have to continuously struggle to let their voice be heard and to count in the decision making processes.

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Crafting a job: Perspectives of autonomy and job security

Origins of the concept

The last 100 years of job scientific research have brought a considerable amount of theoretical and empirical knowledge about classic aspects (Taylor, 1911), motivational aspects (Hackman, & Oldham, 1976) and social aspects (Grant et al., 2007) of work.
Organizations today suffer strong competitive pressures from the outside and to survive it is necessary that their employees are energetic, committed and motivated in the work they do (Lu, Wang, Lu, Du, & Bakker, 2014); the psychological needs of workers are in fact met by the characteristics of their job (Grant, & Parker, 2009). The higher is the degree of compatibility between the characteristics of a person and those of the work, the higher will be the degree of job satisfaction (Kristof-Brown, Zimmermann, and Johnson, 2005). For this reason, the individual characteristics of persons are increasingly considered to illustrate the motivational dynamics and the impact on performance of workers. The performances of the workers are influenced also by a series of elements of context (Dierdorff, & Morgeson, 2007) and it is important to work on those for achieve best results.
Generally, an individual is oriented to choose a job that is prone to its own characteristics, but if this does not happen, situations arise where employees modify and personalize their work (Oldham, & Hackman, 2010). In this perspective, it was identified a new approach that allows you to point to a correspondence between personal characteristics of the workers and the context in which they are located: its name is job crafting (Grant, & Parker, 2009; Oldham, & Hackman, 2010). According to this theory, employees proactively shape their own job and the boundaries of their own cognitive and relational work (Wrzesniewski, & Dutton, 2001).
The "job crafting" term was introduced by Wrzesniewski and Dutton (2001) when they realized that employees fit the work they do to their own personal inclinations. The boundaries of the tasks, as well as the meanings of the same, in fact, are not always determined accurately (Wrzesniewski, & Dutton, 2001), so individuals have the ability to define and modify the styles of their work by acting as "job crafters" (p. 179): this

expression defines workers who take initiatives to change or modify certain aspects of their work to suit their personal characteristics (Berg et al, 2008; Wrzesniewski, & Dutton, 2001).
The expression "job crafting" was used to indicate the ability to shape, mold and redefine their work (Wrzesniewski, & Dutton, 2001); job crafters are individuals that, actively, should amend the psychological traits of their job altering borders and cognitive traits and changing the way resources are used and whether relational, changing the interactions of their work (Wrzesniewski, & Dutton, 2001). Job crafters act on these work variables and in this way they change borders, identity and meaning of his work: in this way are creating jobs other than those provided by the employer.
Job crafting is an activity that people voluntarily do to meet their needs and preferences in the workplace (Kira et al., 2010). It's a behavior that requires adaptation to the challenges and constraints imposed by an employer (Berg, Wrzesniewski, & Dutton, 2010) and it represents a strategic advantage for the employees and for the company itself (Van den Heuvel, Demerouti, Bakker, & Schaufeli, 2010). Job crafting is a technique that refers to a behavior directed to modify all aspects of general tasks, relationships and cognitive aspect of work (Wrzesniewski, & Dutton, 2001).
Then, job crafting is the "physical and cognitive changes that individuals implement in the tasks and in the relational boundaries of their work" (Wrzesniewski, & Dutton, 2001, p. 179). However, Wrzesniewski and Dutton (2001), in the definition of job crafting, have limited the application of this theory to the changes that workers can perform in their tasks of work, in labor relations and in knowledge. In recent years however this definition has been refined: job crafting is the change in the characteristics of the work on the physical, organizational and social aspects, in order to balance loads and work resources (Bakker, Tims, & Derks, 2012; Petrou, Demerouti, Peeters, Schaufeli, & Hetland, 2012; Tims, Bakker, & Derks, 2012). When employees mobilize resources through job crafting, they can create a work environment that meets their needs and that is more prone to their abilities (Tims, & Bakker, 2010). Happy employees are in fact more sensitive to the opportunities in their working environment, they are more open to their colleagues, more optimistic and confident; these attributes can produce better performance (Cropanzano, & Wright, 2001).
Prior to 2001 the research was concerned only with how to define the way you work; the concept was based on individual variables (Dubin, 1956; Lodahl, & Kejner,1965) such as expectations, values or other characteristics of the work (Griffin, 1987; Hackman, & Oldham, 1980). These were prospects that minimized the role that the worker covered in actively changing of his work through resources and relationships. Through job crafting it is finally able to change the meaning of work and the identity of the work itself: the meaning refers to the emotions that generates the task (Brief, & Nord, 1990), while the identity indicates how individuals identify themselves at work (Guild, 1999; Van Maanen, 1998). The identification with own work is a match that is created between how individuals define themselves and how they define their work (Pratt, 1998).
Job crafting is based on the axiom according to which the actions taken independently to model, edit, or redefine the nature of work are different than the agreements negotiated between an employee and a supervisor (Hornung, Rousseau, Glaser, Angerer, & Weigl, 2010). These are actions taken from the bottom (bottom-up) that generate greater commitment and higher performance (Tims, Bakker, & Derks, 2013) and that employers should strive to recognize in order to guide own behavior toward positive actions (Petrou et al., 2012).

Shapes and dimensions of job crafting

There are three different forms of job crafting (Wrzesniewski, & Dutton, 2001). The first form involves changes to the boundaries of the activities of the job; employees in this case affects number, scope or type of the activity and in this way it is created a different job. The second form of job crafting involves changing in the relationship of the work borders by changing the amount or the quality of the interaction with other workers (Gergen, 1994). Finally, the third embodiment occurs when employees alter the cognitive boundaries of own task, so they vary the way of interpreting a particular job.
Job crafting changes the meaning of the work by changing activities or relationships in order to allow employees to reformulate the scope of their job to live it and experience it in a different way (Tausky, 1995). It is primarily an individual level activity where the employee decides how and when to shape activities and interactions (Wrzesniewski, & Dutton, 2001). Rafaeli (1989) studied how different types of workers, such as cashiers in supermarkets, change the characteristics of their work by defining the level and type of service offered and by managing customer interactions (such as ignoring, rejecting, reacting or by involving customers in transactions).
Job crafting can be defined as the search for resources and challenges and the reduction of demands (Petrou et al., 2012; Tims et al., 2012):

- As for the search for resources, the theory of Hobfoll (2001) argues that human motivation is directed towards the accumulation of important resources for the protection of other valuable resources. The search for new resources makes their work more motivating and thus more resources are mobilized to cope with the demands of work (Tims, & Bakker, 2010). An example of research resources could be asking for advice to colleagues or supervisors or ask for feedback on work performance.
- The search for new challenges is based on the changes of the work demands and the different understanding of the "stress" word as a "barrier" or a "challenge" (Podsakoff, Lépine, & The Pine, 2007); if the stress factors (defined as an obstacle) in fact may have a negative impact on job satisfaction, the motivating factors of stress (defined as the challenge) can have positive implications. Workers with challenging assignments will be more committed to finding a solution.
- The reduction of the requests is a tendency to reduce the workload; it is an activity not shared by all scholars, as it did not always function with business objectives. Chun Chu and Choi (2005) suggest, however, that a reduction in demand could lead to positive results, given that it feeds feelings such as peace or feelings of rest that they tend to improve performance.

Petrou et al. (2012) have then expected these three fundamental dimensions for job crafting based on resources, challenges and demands. Resources lead intrinsic motivation, since that they meet human needs, or extrinsic, through the achievement of the objectives and the personal satisfaction (Bakker, & Demerouti, 2007); likewise, also stressors factors can improve employee motivation (Podsakoff et al., 2007) if properly managed. The authors also studied how individuals differ from each other to the extent that they change their jobs, as well as this "quantity" of crafting varies from day to day to a considerable extent.

Bipp, & Demerouti, (2014) conducted two studies on job crafting which confirmed how individual differences can represent the antecedents of job crafting. If job crafting refers to modifications of their job that are not controlled by employers, it is true, however, that they indirectly influence the way of crafting of its employees through how to manage the relationship work differently depending on the personality of dependent (Bipp, & Demerouti, 2014).
Some recent studies have also introduced other modifications to the standard model of job crafting proposed by Wrzesniewski and Dutton (2001): it is the case of the JD-R model (Demerouti, Bakker, Nachreiner, & Schaufeli, 2001; Bakker, & Demerouti, 2008) or the PJ fit model (Yu, 2009).
The JD-R model provides that all the characteristics of a job can be classified as required or as labor resources (Demerouti et al., 2001). The JD-R model offers a significant advantage in the study of the behavior of job crafting (Petrou et al., 2012), so the latter has been defined as the set of changes that employees spontaneously bring to their JD-R level; it is the way that you change the characteristics of your work to meet your own needs or to develop new skills (Tims et al., 2012).
The JD-R model allows you to focus on the specific characteristics of the job (Tims, Bakker, & Derks, 2012). Work in fact differs each other by demands and resources (Demerouti et al., 2001): "the requests relate to physical, psychological, social or organizational aspects that require a physical and cognitive effort"; "resources refer to physical, psychological, social or organizational aspects that are useful for achieving the objectives, that reduce the effort to get a job and that stimulate growth, learning and personal development" (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007, p. 312).
A second model is the one proposed by Yu (2009): these stated that a job that will inspire positive feelings could lead to a "fit", a connection between the work and the person (PJ Fit, ie Person-Job Fit). The PJ fit focuses on the correspondence between personal and professional work: these may be differentiated demands-abilities fit (DA), and needs-supplies fit (NS). Bakker (2010) has suggested that employees can create, by modeling, their place of work and in this way they can increase the perceptions of the PJ fit.
With job crafting there is a shaping of work that can stimulate abilities and needs in order to increase the PJ fit (Yu, 2009) and in order to make their job "on measure" (Wrzesniewski, & Dutton, 2001, p. 118) compared to its own characteristics. Job crafting means the changing of your job (Wrzesniewski, & Dutton, 2001) through a re-invention of the job to suit your needs (Greenhalgh, Robert MacFarlane, Bate, & Kyriakidou, 2004). Employees are better addressed changes to their work if the latter were chosen actively (Cunningham et al., 2002).
Job crafting plays an important role in mediating between the hard work and the changes of PJ fit; in proposing their model, Wrzesniewski and Dutton (2001) theorized that contextual factors may limit or generate opportunities perceived by the employee. In fact job crafting is a bottom-up process through which employees observe and modify its business and the relational boundaries of their jobs. Employees are not passive recipients of their environment, much less proactive employees, as expanding business and relational boundaries in order to create their own PJ fit (Yu, 2009).
People can carry out a job crafting activity in three different ways to improve the PJ fit (Yu, 2009): they can adapt their characteristics to those of the external environment, they can change the environment according to personal attributes or simultaneously they can edit both sides. As a result of job crafting, employees could increase their measure of PJ fit.

Reasons for crafting a job

Not all individuals are motivated to meet the needs of control, positive image and connection with their work; other individuals can meet these needs elsewhere in their lives (Caldwell, & O'Reilly, 1990). The reasons behind the action of job crafters generally are based on situations where employees are not satisfied with the work they do in the way it is conceived at that time, which is why they will implement changes in proportion to the sense of freedom or discretion that employees perceive (Wrzesniewski, & Dutton, 2001).

According to Wrzesniewski and Dutton (2001) there are many reasons, related to the actual design of the work, that push workers to implement practices of job crafting; the first two motivations regarding the interdependence of the tasks to be performed and the level of discretion and autonomy in the job. Interdependence is understood as "the extent to which the processes or resources with which the work is performed are related so that changes in the state of an element affecting the status of the other" (Scott, 1987, p. 214) . Employees who have a higher degree of interdependence will then limit a crafting of their activities. Another important factor to consider is the control of management, as the latter influences the degree of creativity in job crafting (Amabile, Hill, Hennessey, & Tighe, 1994). When jobs are clearly defined and controlled, therefore, the employees will have less opportunity to make job crafting (Wrzesniewski, & Dutton, 2001).

Other justification for doing job crafting derive from 3 individual needs (Wrzesniewski, & Dutton, 2001). The first need is to have a control over their work, to avoid of suffering it only (Braverman, 1974); it is a fundamental human variable, because people are always trying to keep control of the variables inside of one's life. The second need is due to the fact that employees are motivated to create an attractive image in their job (Steele, 1988): this need is addressed to themselves but also to other people; finally, the third need concerns the connection you have with your work (Baumeister, & Leary, 1995). Many of these changes are due to the desire for self-esteem and, in order to make sense of different and more attractive to their role (Gergen, & Gergen, 1988).

Employees, in performing job crafting, change their job according to their emotional state (Tims, & Bakker, 2010; Wrzesniewski, & Dutton, 2001) but, for this reason, most of the behaviors fluctuate over time and depend on conditions personal or situational: it is possible that some actions have been caused by a particular event and do not represent the regularity. According to some authors (Fisher, & Noble, 2004) These daily changes in behavior and individual experiences can turn into measurement errors regarding the dynamics of job crafting. However, the methodological advantage offered by interviews and surveys certainly reduces retrospectives distortions (Bolger et al., 2003). The research has not yet established when it comes to job crafting with reference to continuous change and lasting or occasional and daily (Oldham, & Hackman 2010). So organizational behavior and job crafting are often analyzed on a daily perspective (Petrou et al., 2012) in order to eliminate distortions of appeal, since it is often memory changes the real course of events (Bolger, Davis, & Rafaeli, 2003; Ohly, Sonnentag, Niessen, & Zapf, 2010). It is referred as "diary approaches" (literally "diary style approach") and it plans to measure every day the emotional state of employees and to study their actions (Petrou et al., 2012). Job crafting is then defined as a daily activity (Wrzesniewski, & Dutton, 2001) and a continue activity (Berg, Wrzesniewski, & Dutton, 2010).

Discussion and conclusion

Our study focused primarily on two of the most important antecedents of the job crafting theory, meaning the job autonomy and the job security. Through the administration of 26 qualitative interviews we concluded that the dynamics of job crafting are more affected by these antecedents already studied by Hackman and Oldham (1976) and Berg, Wrzesniewski, and Dutton (2010) in particular.

A first important antecedent of job crafting is autonomy. Hackman and Oldham (1976) defined autonomy as the extent to which a job allows an employee to a time of freedom, of decision, of choice in daily activities. Self employees are those who will decide how to do their job and therefore they will be more committed and motivated than workers little self (Berg, & Dutton, 2008; Clegg, & Spencer, 2007; Tims, & Bakker, 2010).

Autonomy is also reflected in the independence from other workers in the performance of work tasks (Bakker et al., 2012): workers with greater interdependencies have more constraints and less freedom to make job crafting (Ghitulescu, 2006). Workers who experience instead a greater independence of the tasks in the workplace can more easily make changes to their duties as these changes will not affect the work of colleagues. High level of autonomy are also positively associated with the acquisition of new skills (Parker, 2000).

Autonomy can therefore be seen as an useful antecedent for the job crafting, as employees can change their working environment to suit their preferences, abilities and needs if provided with adequate independence (Grawitch, & Barber, 2009). Through job crafting you have the option of trying new motivation (Karasek, & Theorell, 1990), more development opportunities (Kauffeld, Jonas, & Frey, 2004) and individual growth (Martin, Salanova, & Peiro, 2007) in stand-alone environments.

Still, within the dynamics of job crafting are also part of the safety of the workplace, as insecurity greatly influences attitudes and behaviors of employees (Sverke, & Hellgren, 2002): in extremely insecure environments employees feel a strong need to change their business and relational boundaries to reduce uncertainty. Berg, Wrzesniewski, and Dutton (2010) have indeed argued that the contextual factors, including perceived problems in the workplace, can be overcome if experienced as challenges, as these may need to undertake greater efforts to achieve the objectives. So there is a positive relationship between work effort and changes in job crafting when you live insecure work situations (Lu, Wang, Lu, Du, & Bakker, 2014).

The modern work will be increasingly focused on the need to actively change tasks by employees, rather than remain anchored in top-down models of definition of work; workers become “free agents” that can change the way of thinking about their work (Bridges, 1994). Job crafting can generate important strategic advantages in the organizational context (Wrzesniewski, & Dutton, 2001).

Job crafting is not inherently a process good nor bad: it is a secret process that is done by all workers regarding any type of work (Petrou et al., 2012). While excessive crafting could lead levels with less effort and situations of role ambiguity, on the other hand, these attitudes can be read as proactive “coping” and creative problem solving skills. Job crafting is then a practice that should be encouraged and facilitated, because it is in line with organizational goals: it is in fact important that leaders promote personal initiative of employees to obtain the maximum potential workforce (Petrou et al., 2012).

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Building community learning together: Intergenerational spaces of experience

Ageing in progress: challenges and opportunities

The index of ageing in Italy is the highest among the European countries and our country is becoming a laboratory for observation where it is possible to develop innovative strategies of coexistence, aimed at increasing the quality of personal and social life. At 1st January 2014 there were about 13 million people over 65 in Italy and they accounted for 21.4% of the population (ISTAT, 2014) [26]. The analysis of the population age structure showed a progressive decrease in youth ranges 0-14 and adults 15-64 years; from 2002 to 2014 seniors over 65 increased from 18.7% at the current rate, while young people went from 14.2% to 13.9% and adults from 67.1% to 64.7%[27].

In Piedmont, the Italian region in which we are carrying out the project of action-research that will be presented, the number of seniors over 65 at 1st January 2014 was 24.1% of the regional population. Those over 65 were approximately one million and accounted for 24.9% of the population of the city of Turin[28], the city in which the various proposals outlined in the paper take place. The activities take into account the progressive ageing of the population and the diversity of situations of fragility and resources that characterize every life story.

This demographic change involves a variety of consequences in terms of economic and social system (Colozzi, 2012; Donati & Folgheraiter, 2009), among individuals,

[26] http://www.tuttitalia.it/statistiche/popolazione-eta-sesso-stato-civile-2014/. Last consultation 17.05.2015.

[27] http://www.tuttitalia.it/statistiche/indici-demografici-struttura-popolazione/. Last consultation 17.05.2015.

[28] http://www.tuttitalia.it/piemonte/72-torino/statistiche/indici-demografici-struttura-popolazione/. Last consultation 17.05.2015.

families, community and society, on the positive side and with different challenges regarding sustainability (UNFPA, 2012).

We have to deal with changes that may increase the risk of exclusion and inequality and we need new socio-economic and educational policies and approaches focused on interaction and on inter-generational relationships. With the current demographic composition, in fact, the risk of exclusion and marginalization is very strong: this is due to the continuous restructuring of family ties and social contexts that, in response to the frenzy of change, run into a segmentation that marginalizes the weakest groups and cannot adequately enhance their presence and resources.

In the local context, the greatest difficulties, in terms of assistance and social and educational services, emerge when it is necessary to develop specific and targeted interventions that reach all vulnerable people. To intervene more effectively, it is possible to awaken and revive a social solidarity made up of closeness and proximity between capabilities and supportive communities (Mosca & Baldascino, 2012) in a perspective of We(l)-share.

It is necessary to plan policies and measures to support the elderly and their families, with a sense of proximity, and to foster active citizenship and participation towards inclusive and cooperative open communities. We want to experiment innovative perspectives at the micro-social level where it is possible to achieve virtuous actions and understand how to generate a better quality of life for everyone (Deluigi, 2015).

We can aim at a movement of "WE" – we think, we hope, we care – to work alongside the institutional services and return dignity, value and active citizenship to the elderly, with specific attention to the younger generations. These last, in fact, are likely to lose the community core, which must always be restored in an intercultural environment like the heterogeneous current one (Zoletto, 2012).

It becomes more important than ever to create dialogue and continuity in an individual, relational and social path of memory, of life and project (yesterday-today-tomorrow). Promoting education and training proposals in this perspective means joint spaces of consultation and dialogue, in the testing of taking care of themselves, of others and of the community, to throw up new perspectives of social policies and future educational interventions.

Our contribution aims to investigate some ways of learning together how to promote democratic spaces, active ageing and community. The research focuses on understanding how it is possible to guarantee the elderly a better quality of life through shared experiences and intergenerational dialogue, to improve social cohesion. Learning and living together can counter isolation and ageism and fight inequality and social fragmentation. So it is important to rediscover our resources/competences to relate with others, experiencing social innovation towards *a society for all ages* (United Nations, 2002).

To discover and strengthen cooperation between generations we have structured and proposed educational and community initiatives that, through the use of different languages, have made those involved protagonists of shared experiences. Creating and living community occasions helps to get out of the logic of individualism to support social cohesion as a factor of inclusion. The perspective of active ageing and of intergenerational dialogue are mutually intertwined and in the meeting of identities able to put into dialogue their own needs and abilities.

The needs identified in the context and the overt and tacit skills formed the first design platform on which to decline the structure of a community itinerary aiming to

create social innovation and redefine the role (not residual) of social actors as community members.

The action-research project that we are presenting aims to restructure the terms of participation in social life and its construction of supportive communities in which every person can develop a greater degree of autonomy, responsibility and freedom, in an intergenerational key (Baschiera & al., 2014).

The field research and socio-psycho-pedagogical reflections ongoing in recent years show a lot of challenges concerning longevity (Butler, 2009; Hamblin, 2013; Pratt, 2010; Principi, 2014; United Nations, 2011) and we take into account some of them as premises of our project:

- The need of the elderly to remain in their own homes, postponing possible institutionalization following a serious loss of autonomy. This requires greater access to institutional services and further spread of services of respite (relief) and accompaniment / support for home care;
- The need for economic assistance to increase more modest incomes compared to the high cost of living;
- The need for services that promote socialization and help sustain the human and social capital that accompanies ageing, through the maintenance of home care and social networks;
- In the face of an objectively "fragile" ageing population it highlighted the presence of elderly people over 65 who show their active participation in social life, to be given space, listening and answers.

From global to local, we tried to better understand these needs with professional operators who work in the educational field to grasp the peculiarities and specificities of the life places and contextualize the methods to be implemented, in relation to emerging needs, wishes and expectations. Having an open dialogue with those working in the social context, setting up forums of reflection and inter-professional and inter-disciplinary design proposals allows us to make the chosen methodologies coherent and appropriate.

This made it possible to expand the reflection and calibrate the concreteness of reality, creating a whole system of intervention, aimed at promoting active ageing and intergenerational dialogue. The contribution of each profession and the people who shared their ideas increased attention to this issue, developing the strategies proposed in the continuous virtuous circle of theory-practice.

A pedagogical overview between networks and participation

Education can implement opportunities in which everyone can express themselves in a perspective of cooperation. We need to improve the sense of trust in each other through welcoming and free places and meetings, and not only occasionally. Some social -projects could become a start-up for community development, but we must think of a bottom-up educational design, involving all the social actors.

Participatory planning includes the activation of local resources and requires a good nucleus of coordination to become mediator of emerging needs, possible resistance to change and conflictuality. One of the strategies to increase inclusive experience is the

transverse nature of the proposals: it means not implementing a direct response to a specific need, but rather paying attention to the widespread phenomenon of ageing as an essential element of the complex social and community context.

This approach is crucial to understanding the totality of the circumstances in which we act and trigger a virtuous spiral and inclusion between generations, thinking not so much of differences in age, but equality of citizenship. The attention to the exploitation of resources and personal skills of young people and the elderly enhances the processes of Life Long Learning and Life Wide Learning, not only in terms of new learning concepts, but also through formal and non-formal shared experience.

Social animation is a dynamic approach (Branca, 2008; Pollo & Gillet, 2004) that can stimulate citizenship relations, reciprocity and mutuality, but we have to design the possibility of participation based on people's interests, needs, dreams and resources. It is important to promote actions which experience an open community where everybody can become involved. To start this process, educators must be present in everyday life, ready to listen and take care of the context's instances, co-planning occasions to free everyone's life projectuality in a sharing community view.

Through this style of education it is possible to co-build a network of dialogue and develop diffuse empowerment (Deluigi, 2010, 69-76) intercepting at least three perspectives summarized in Table 1:

Dialogic networks and diffuse empowerment		
Mobilising a dimension that chooses to become social and involved	*Awareness, restitution, activation between personal and social*	*Pro-active and pro-social ties oriented to the common good*
Building of a network: - Examining ways to motivate people to take an interest in general-communitarian issues and in the ability to share the skills learned within the social dimension - Creating links between learned and previous knowledge to attribute value to the experience - Providing links that are able to connect different dimensions of experience, perceptions of needs and possibilities of integrated social action - Taking into account the high variability that a network can have	*Promotion of empowerment:* - Control, as the ability to have power to influence the choices; - Critical awareness of the learning mechanisms underlying the allocation of power and decision-making processes, especially with regard to the dynamics of the resources used; - Participation as action to achieve desired goals - Empowering communities and empowered communities In the first case the community offers individuals the opportunity to act on their own to improve their quality of life; in the second case, through different internal organizations, the community can become a pole of influence on the quality of collective life.	*Construction of social capital:* - It is based on the relation shared between more people taking cooperative attitudes at different levels; - Mutual trust contributes to the promotion of widespread solidarity; - Enhance and give expression to the power of social networks and community resources; - Discover and exploit resources that may belong to individuals or collectives and weave paths that take place at various levels to promote a bottom up well-being, to enrich socio-political reflection and generate more coherent perspectives experienced in relation to the context of reference.

Table 1. Promotion and development of dialogic networks and diffuse empowerment

In the participatory processes highlighted in Table 1, the experiential element becomes a focal point. In the experience we discuss together, we learn cooperatively, designing new hypotheses and paths; all members of the group carry out activities and share successes and failures. In community experiences there is the time to build alliances and to develop intergenerational hypothesis of local co-belonging and co-responsibility. The promotion and consolidation of solidarity ties can arise in receptive contexts, ready to put into question the roles, the skills and the dynamics of the components of the community and the relationships that grow over time.

In fact, other essential elements to animate paths of participation are the local-cultural roots and the close connection with the territory. This means stimulating and supporting dialogue and cooperation between services, formal institutions and non-formal reality: places that more and more should and can establish communication to support a good quality of life in the everyday context. The citizens, young and elderly, can contribute to the renewal of the cohesion of social structures, just as long as there is a cooperative shared logic.

It is necessary that there be more "contamination" between public and private spaces, open and closed places, formal and informal suggestions. This will make it easier to circulate ideas, optimize the resources available, to respond to needs in an integrated way, to define new lines of action. The boundaries of this social configuration must become more porous so that people can pass through easily and feel free and able to participate more and more openly in community life. This movement results in the loss of rigidity of identity and role and it is vital to rebuild new crossing slopes, a sense of belonging and investment by a truly active citizenship (Hoskins, 2006; Mortari, 2008; Ripamonti, 2005).

Providing opportunities for socialization, aggregation and exchange between generations, through collective interventions, means creating a viable and sustainable model of coexistence in a city context. The dialogue between formal and informal agencies/places is intended to promote well-being through a vast and complex network of relationships of help, support, discovery and exploitation of the social context resources. In this way, it is possible to create the social cultural and relationship capital, in the direction of "we care", awakening the sense of community and the bonds of citizenship. Promoting social innovation and developing local creativity means dealing with global needs and declining responses and suggestions in specific and communicable ways. It is therefore important to develop transferable and sustainable hypotheses and proposals, co-constructing social innovation, starting with the needs recognition and the resource mapping. In reference to participation in society and its construction of supportive communities in which to develop autonomy, responsibility and freedom, we propose some guidelines in an intergenerational key in Table 2.

Reciprocity focuses on protagonism and human fulfilment of each person involved, not just seeing the limit, but also the possible. (Baars & al., 2014; Walker, 2014)	The learning, knowledge and activities implemented cooperatively can deploy personal skills and those shared, feeding, thus, the personal and social capital. (Phillipson, 2013; Tanner, 2010)	Solidarity can be implemented through the involvement of many actors who will experience an active participation in the construction of a shared well-being. (Börsch-Supan & al., 2013; Saraceno, 2008)

Table 2. Co-design and participate actively in the social context

Active ageing and intergenerational dialogue: an Italian experience

The structure of the project we will present was born from the recognition of the needs and resources at the macro and micro level, also thanks to the establishment of a multidisciplinary team that, through the sharing of expertise and experience in the field, was able to focus on the processes illustrated above and realize the assets still ongoing.

We assumed the role of scientific supervision, accompanying the project in its early stages of development through assessment tools and monitoring of quality and quantity that could collect feedback from experts and professionals involved, as well as youth and elderly who participated. The establishment of a mixed équipe can facilitate and convey the "educative we" that sustains the identity of the operator/professional and generates a sense of belonging within the working group that discusses and shares activities, actions, objectives and reasons for the cooperative work (Milani, 2013, 195-196).

This structure and approach allowed us to initiate an open and multi-perspective dialogue to better understand how to implement the theoretical logic of intervention. In this direction, we can generate a co-action that comes from shared thought: a planning act that becomes education, experience, life stories that interconnect and rebuild social fabric.

The research design was to understand the methodologies useful to develop an inclusive society, by means of active communities focused on active ageing and intergenerational dialogue (Deluigi, 2014; 2014a). The role of the researcher/supervisor is to support the work teams and to track the patterns of inclusion-interaction implemented and the meaningful swivels of the participatory processes. At the end of the project we will be able to track and retrace some pedagogical and educational trajectories useful to make the proposals already implemented replicable and sustainable.

The two-year Italian project: "*If young knew and elder could. Testing of strategies for active ageing and solidarity between generations to be realized in Turin area*" is funded by the Department for Family Policies of the Presidency of the Council of Ministers, directed to the elderly and young people of the Piedmont region. The multi-professional team was composed of a social coordinator, a pedagogical supervisor/researcher, some educators, psychologists, co-dancers, performers and volunteers. They reflect and implement languages/actions useful to increase solidarity and active citizenship by learning together.

The purpose of the planning is to "support the psycho-physical autonomy of older persons and promote participation in society, through the testing of an intervention model focused on intergenerational dialogue, providing for the construction of significant places and times aimed at building mutual solidarity between young and elderly. Continued growth, the changing identity, the sharing of personal skills, as part of the proposed activities, will help to consolidate and strengthen the structure of co-built community" (from the project text). The logic of community activation emerges in the will to build reciprocity in the life places in which elderly and young people spend their time.

The project was launched in February 2014 and is being realized in three operating locations in Turin. The first reality is a social housing "that intends to respond innovatively to the housing needs of their residents, as a new model of coexistence replicable in other contexts. This approach addresses both the response to the housing problems and relations of proximity and neighbourhood, emphasizing the promotion of solidarity between generations through mutual support and participation in social

activities" [29]. The building consists of 30 apartments where there are elderly people alone or in pairs, families composed of mothers with children who are minors and some families that deal with the management's housing and mediation with the inhabitants. On the ground floor there are the common rooms and an Elderly Space open to all the older people of the district. The peculiarities of this place are: the multi-generationality, territoriality, the community and the assumption of responsibility.

The other two realities are Salesian youth centres: the San Luigi oratory and the Rebaudengo oratory[30]. The Salesian oratories have always been spaces of connection between the playground and the territory; they are places where young people can gather for leisure activities, sports and training and to spend time with friends. In each centre there is a team composed of educators and volunteers who deal daily with the organization and coordination of educative proposals. These two centres, both multicultural and active in the social field for several years, were involved in the project "*If young knew and elder could*" because they have inside space and time dedicated to the elderly; partly there are integrations with young people but, for the most part, these are parallel activities.

The challenge of active ageing and intergenerational meeting was set, first of all, within the reality of the project because this hypothesis has developed in operational contexts on several fronts but not always focused on solidarity between the generations. The idea was to create an innovative social movement through methodologies, which we will cover shortly, contextualized in the different realities that, with their particular characteristics, are community spaces in which to experiment paths of intergenerational citizenship.

The initiative is shared between public/private institutions to encourage different community forms through several activities: Co.dance – community dance; Palestra di Vita – bio-psycho-socio-educative methods; intergenerational autobiographical laboratory and volunteer experiences. The project aims to test paths of active ageing and intergenerational activities using different languages of self-knowledge and expression with others and Table 3 shows a summary of the proposals/methodologies being developed and implemented.

CO.DANCE	PALESTRA DI VITA	INTERGENERATIONAL AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL LABORATORY	VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCES
Co.dance is an activity of social and multi-generational dance: it aims to build together across generations a dance performance that has social and knowledge value, exchange between generations and knowledge of self and others through the body. It lasted for nine months,	Palestra di Vita is a polyvalent method, bio-psycho-socio-educative, to improve the quality of life of older people and their carers. Activities take place for a period of 12 months (still ongoing), involving about forty elderly for each location project.	Intergenerational autobiographical laboratory is a proposal that can bring out the wealth of experience and knowledge gained over the years and which can be a treasure for the young, but also to rework and spread this knowledge. Activities are in progress and will last	Volunteer Experiences are activities of active solidarity between generations with coaching of the elderly to young people. They will be realized in the last phase of the project for six months and will involve fifteen elders in every location.

[29] http://www.condominiosolidale.org/2013/cose/il-progetto/. Last consultation 17.05.2015.

[30] https://sanluigitorino.wordpress.com/; http://www.rebaoratorio.org/ Last consultation 17.05.2015.

from the first phase of the project, and involved about sixty elderly and twenty young people for each location.	(associazione "Il Laboratorio", 2003; aa.vv., 2006; Piumetti, 2014)	six months involving ten young and ten elders in every laboratory (one for each centre involved). (Demetrio, 1995; 1998)	(Barbabella & al., 2011; Principi & al., 2014)
THE METHODOLOGY HAS BEEN CHOSEN FOR:			
Stimulating meeting, creativity and expression with the body and performance, telling the spaces of everyday life. The meeting between performers, young people, artists, elderly, workers and inhabitants of the area has created workshops, installations and performances to conclude with a dance event in which the community is rediscovered and renewed. The dance community is a practice that focuses on the body in relation and takes the form of ethical and aesthetic experience open to everyone especially those in fragile contexts where it is necessary to create or re-create vital ties to the life of the person in the community.	Supporting the elderly in the discovery and development of their skills to cope with one's life in a positive relational and facilitating climate. Within Palestra di Vita, this involves a comprehensive set of specific interventions: education for mental and physical health; mental training; gentle exercise; animation with songs, games, music, moments of conviviality; forms of mutual help.	Allowing people to show themselves/know each other and take care of themselves. The autobiographical work will be developed in a laboratory in which the elderly and young people can freely, with the guidance of a facilitator operator, proceed to open up a progressive understanding of themselves. At the end of the activities we will publish the intergenerational co-produced texts.	Nourishing solidarity and alliance between generations. With the elderly who have participated in previous activities volunteer experiences will be organized to be carried out at Salesian centres within sports activities, educational support or school recovery. This will materialize solidarity made up of relationships, skills and abilities that can be shared in a mutual way.
Status in May 2015: activity ended	Status in May 2015: ongoing activity	Status in May 2015: ongoing activity	Status in May 2015: ongoing activity

Table 3. Methodologies used in the project

Expected results and new perspectives: Growing community dynamics

The project includes the indicators to evaluate the expected results and, at this point of activity, our attention will focus more on the elements that have already emerged and been achieved and critical issues *in itinere*. It seems significant to dwell on the ongoing progress because this allows us, on the one hand, to operate term evaluation and, secondly, to redesign new perspectives for the future.

The first set of results described in the project, summarized below, discuss the current status of the project concerning the elderly who, at the end of the activity will have:

- developed a sense of personal responsibility towards their own mental and physical health – an element recognized in the activity of Co.dance in implementing movements and postures that restored more awareness to the participants and in the activity of Palestra di Vita where seniors are compared to each other, with the conductor and with experts on these issues;
- -acquired specific skills to stimulate and take care of the mind and body during the ageing process – results in progress; with Co.dance and Palestra di Vita proposals, the elderly have experienced in space with themselves and with others, among peers and with other generations. This made it possible to cope with more changes of ageing between limitations and possibilities;
- recovered their own life story by identifying the positive elements present, supporting the psychological dimensions of continuity and identity – an element that partially emerged in both proposals made so far, and more specifically that of the autobiography;
- developed a sense of solidarity with the new generations, increasing the participation in society and the sense of personal self-efficacy – an element that partially emerged in Co.dance, especially for young/elderly contacts established and for the realization of the performance achieved together at the end of the path;
- increased ability to plan daily activities, find new purposes and verify the trend – in progress.

In parallel young people and the community of reference may:

- experience sharing space and activities – a characteristic that featured one of the phases of the Co.dance workshop and which will be given more space in the last two methods of the project;
- enhance the capacity and skills to implement the individual and collective human and social capital on the territory – an element recognized transversely in all the proposals developed and in development;
- increase the projectuality of new forms of coexistence – an element to be evaluated at the end of the project, also depending on the sustainability of this;
- develop intergenerational reciprocity towards the construction of a We-Community – an element to be evaluated at the end of the project, also depending on the sustainability of this.

Now we have finished the first year and the challenge is to understand how it is possible to power greater self-awareness and the desire to create meaningful places of meeting and participation. The project therefore aims to support empowerment of local communities, active citizenship, fighting isolation with inclusive context.

Currently we have some other significant results to discuss (beyond those provided by the project):

1. the difficulty of engaging people in a social innovation and bottom-up vision where the activities are not entirely fixed, with the need to build trust and define together the sense of the experience;
2. a variable involvement as the community's movement and change depends on the territory's needs/skills, and the intervention's evaluation/modification, observing what happens ongoing;
3. the need to deconstruct stereotypes between young/old, and so have the opportunity to review their own identity in a dialogue between self and others, autonomy and common projects.

The evidence gathered and the problems that emerged up to now allow us to observe the prospects of progress in active ageing and intergenerational dialogue that influence and reinforce each other, opening up new possibilities of proximity and inclusion. Between innovation, consolidation and sustainability, we want to emphasize the importance of developing community projects to start up new models of coexistence based on reciprocity experienced in daily life and on a solidarity built thanks to the links established in the experience.

Evaluating this perspective means focusing on the conscious participation of social actors (individual and collective), supporting and creating times and places in which to live their lives actively for themselves and with others. Awakening the community means imagining flexible and plural forms of memberships, interactions that link the subjects in terms of needs, weaknesses, opportunities and resources and the desire to track down the relationship that determines the strength and consistency of social structures.

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Challenges in the co-construction of knowledge: A global study on strengthening structures for community university research partnerships

Introduction

The sharing of knowledge between universities and their communities has been a prominent feature of the field of adult education in Europe since the establishment of the extra-mural division of Cambridge University in 1873. The Extra-mural tradition has found counterparts in most of the universities of Europe as Continuing Education, Extension services and so forth.

The most recent developments in higher education and community engagement have taken different organisational forms. Science Shops have proliferated in European universities, inspired by the Dutch examples from the 1970s. Community University Partnership Programmes have been initiated in England. Offices of Community Based Research have surfaced in Canada and elsewhere.

The UNESCO Chair in Community Based Research and Social Responsibility in Higher Education, a chair shared between Rajesh Tandon at PRIA in India and Budd Hall at the University of Victoria initiated a global study with the support of the International Development Research Centre on facilitative structures used by universities and community groups to create and support effective community based participatory research partnerships.

The many discourses of the engaged university

The literature on community-university engagement is vast and diverse. Nonetheless, a closer look at the literature reveals many significant gaps, disconnects and even contradictions. Facer et al argue that these gaps contribute to engagement's struggles as an emerging field of theory and practice because of a lack of a coherent knowledge base upon which to draw (2012). Engagement spans many disciplines, institutions and contexts. Language is often vague and various discourses exist which do not interact with each other because of differences in terminology (Facer et al 2012; Hall and Tandon 2014). In practice commonality exists between the various sub-genres of outreach, community service, service-learning, community engagement, civic engagement, community-based research and community-university research partnerships. Although some overlap in intentions does clearly exist, these various discourses do implicitly carry different theories of change for making an impact in the world. Outreach, service and service learning frequently focus on volunteerism and charitable action (GUNi, 2014). Community engagement tends to have a community development focus, while civic engagement frequently frames engagement as way of moulding university students into active citizens. Community-based research and community-university research partnerships focus more on the role of academics and the knowledge production capacities of universities as a means to creating social and structural change.

These different, embedded theories of change about why and how universities should engage result consequently in different conceptualizations of how to institutionalize engagement within university structures and processes. For the service-focused genres, student-oriented programs, which enable student service with marginal group, are sufficient as infrastructure. Service-learning and civic engagement anticipate institutionalization at a deeper level which impacts course design, classroom pedagogy and available fields of study (Tapia et al 2005; Bertomeu et al 2010; Butin and Seider 2012; Tandon & Hok Ka Ma, 2014). Discourses, which focus on research as a core component of engagement, posit that institutionalization should challenge and transform how universities produce knowledge, inasmuch reassessing the very question of 'what is a university for' (Watson 2005).

Knowledge democracy through knowledge co-generation

We have been drawn to the discourse of knowledge democracy in thinking through the issues of community university research partnerships. Appadurai notes that "there is the sense that social exclusion is ever more tied to epistemic exclusion and concern that the discourses of expertise are setting the rules for global transaction even in the most progressive parts of the international system have left ordinary people outside and behind"(2000:2). De Sousa Santos (2007, 2014) and Visvanathan (2009) write about the need for cognitive justice and for epistemologies of the South. De Sousa Santos goes so far to say that the dominant western knowledge systems have perpetuated an epoch of 'epistemicide', killing off excluded, subaltern and Southern knowledges. Shultz and Kajner argue that "the scholarship of engagement requires an epistemology that enables going beyond the 'expert' model to one of 'collaboration'" (2013:14). Even 'northern' scholars have noted these inequities. Watson et al note "There is a serious asymmetry in the power, influence and resulting priorities of the North and South" (2011: 240). This

call for democratization of knowledge is even clearer within African universities, where "institutions of learning in the former colonies continue to be used by the political North to promote their agenda of subjugation, which is meant to obliterate the knowledge that Africa can identify with" (Modise and Mosweunyane, 50).

We argue that community-based research and community-based research partnerships are a key mechanism for addressing the inequities in academic knowledge production. We have created, and are still creating, a situation in social science research which effectively denies recognition of the knowledge-generating abilities innate to every human being in the world. In our search for techniques for adding to the body of knowledge, we have lost sight of objectives of our work: people. Science is not a bag of tricks that one learns by being trained to remove oneself even farther from reality. We have created an illusion and we have come to believe in it-namely, that only those with sophisticated techniques can create knowledge. This should remind all social scientists of the crucial need not to forget that, whatever they do, they must keep a steady eye on their own values. This is specially so of participatory research workers (Hall, 2002). A transition to the participatory approach requires some basic attitudes on the part of the researcher or the activist, as the case may be. If he practices participation in his own work, it is much more likely that he will be able to facilitate participation of the people in various research efforts (Tandon, 2002).

Organisation of the study

The study was carried out through two main methods, an internet based global survey of both universities and civil society organisations and a series of national case studies written by persons based in the region, but following a common framework for ease of comparative analysis. The country case studies included national policies, examples of community university partnership structures, and examples of work with civil society organisations. Countries included in the case studies were of two types. Some countries were seen to have strong national policy frameworks for community university engagement or community university research partnerships. Other case studies came from countries that were seen to be in transition. It should be noted that the field of community university engagement is fast moving and considerable progress has been made by countries in the later category. The countries included: Ireland, India, USA, Canada, United Kingdom, Netherlands, Uganda, South Africa, Indonesia, Brazil, Argentina and Jordan.

Survey results

1. While there is obviously no common term across all languages, it is noteworthy that community based (CBR) and community based participatory research (CBPR) has have emerged in many parts of the world as a common way of naming these kinds of knowledge partnerships. A strong interest in the provision of training in these fields is a key finding.
2. We have been surprised that at least amongst the respondents to this survey, that some kinds of facilitative research partnership structures have been in place for a longer time and across a wider range of HEIs than we had previously thought.
3. In spite of extensive efforts in translating our survey and making use of various networks, data from the global South, with the exception of India and South Africa, has been very

hard to obtain. There is much more work needed and more creative and effective ways to be found to dig deeper into these parts of the world.

4. Consensus would seem to be developing around the need for institutional investment in the creation of some kinds of facilitative structures if CBR or CBPR is to be 'mainstreamed'.
5. There is strong evidence suggesting that the 'knowledge cultures' of civil society organisations and HEIs are very different. The uses of knowledge, the kinds of knowledge needed, methods used, links to social change and advocacy are understood and practiced very differently. These differences need to become more transparent if deeper partnerships are to become effective.
6. There is, we suggest, an emerging contradiction between professed commitment to co-construction of knowledge and partnerships with communities, and the actual practice of origins of projects, sharing of resources and building of community capacities. A significant finding is that less than 15per cent of the research questions or projects originated at the CSO or community level.
7. Linked to this is the relative apathy in CSO and Community organisations about continued efforts to partner with HEIs, the difficulties entailed, and the frustrations of past experiences in moving the practice beyond the rhetoric. There is an expressed need for building community capacity to play equitable roles in the research partnerships
8. Finally, in part because our survey did not contain language around these dimensions, the lack of a discourse around what some call knowledge democracy, attention to excluded or marginalized knowledge leaves us with further work to do in this critical area.

Community university research partnership structures

In Argentina, at the *Universidad Catolica de Cordoba (UCC),* outreach activities institutionalized with the creation of the Area of University Social Responsibility (AUSR), depending on Vice-Rector of Mission and Responsibility. In 2011, the Area acquired a higher organizational status, being transformed into the Secretary of University Outreach & Social Responsibility (SUOSR), depending on the Academic Vice-Rector. Thus, social function at UCC is equated in terms of organizational hierarchy and relevance to teaching, training and research functions, already consolidated in the university. SUOSR promotes training workshops for designing and outreach projects within the UCC, teacher-training seminars for raising awareness about S-L, and methodological training. Along with the Research Secretary, SUOSR has also established an evaluation system to assess the relevance of S-L projects submitted by faculty members. The *Universidad Nacional de General Sarmiento (UNGS)*, in order to promote CURP activities has institutionalized a service Centre intentionally designed to connect students, faculty members, and a variety of stakeholders through the management, promotion and dissemination of local and regional development projects. The Centre depends on the Rector office.

In Brazil, Community University Engagement activities at the *University of Sao Paulo* are coordinated by the Office of the Dean of Culture and University Extension, under the Vice-Chancellor's Office. Its objective is to foster community university engagements through research and outreach. This office has the directive to organize, strengthen and regulate community-oriented activities within all faculties. Under this office the Technological Incubator for Popular Enterprises (ITCP-USP) was created in 1998, with the mandate to promote solidarity economy. ITCP encourages and supports community enterprises in various economic activities such as food production, clothing and tailoring,

urban agriculture, production of cleaning and hygiene products, services and technical assistance in data processing, among many other fields. The Office of the Dean of Culture and University Extension, in association with ITCP coordinates Community university engagement activities. Different faculties, such as the Faculty of Architecture and Urbanism, Faculty of Education etc, undertake joint projects between the community and the university. The *The Federal University of Rio de Janeiro* (UFRJ) in Brazil has a strong institutional commitment to civic engagement with a central office of the Dean of extension reporting to the VP for academic affairs. The office develops policies, evaluates programs, and provides funding for civic engagement initiatives in the university. CUE activities at UFRJ take the form of department/faculty imitated joint projects with the community. Herein, the Graduate Faculty of Engineering (COPPE), and the Technological Incubator of Popular Co-operatives, founded by it has been carrying out a number of significant projects in this regard.

In Canada, at the University of Victoria (UVic), CURPs are institutionalized with the creation of the Office of the Community Based Research (OCBR), which enjoys an important institutional status within the university. Additionally, a new research centre, the Institute for studies and innovation in Community-University Engagement (ISICUE), plays the role of a 'think-tank' to extend the work of OCBR, nurture innovation in community based research and to study community engagement. At the *Universite du Quebec a Montreal (UQAM)* in Canada*,* The Service Aux Collectivities (SAC) builds capacities for community CURPs that addresses concerns brought by the communities. Additionally, a Board of Community Services is also established, as part of the mandate of SAC. SAC promotes, co-ordinates and facilitates training and research activities to be carried out by the faculty members in collaboration with NGOs. The Board of Community Services provides recommendations on community university engagement and evaluates research and training projects that are presented for institutional support.

In India, the *Bhagat Phool Singh Mahila Vishwavidyalaya (BPSMV)* has institutionalized community engagement initiatives through a formally operational structure, known as the 'Centre for Society University Interface & Research (CSUIR)'. It functions as an independent and stand-alone unit in the university. The Centre offers a number of add-on courses, which add to the skills and employability of the students, who in turn act as anchors in the process of societal development. The component of 'research' is clearly found to be inbuilt in the course on 'Folk Medicine'. This course is based on the premise that indigenous knowledge residing within the communities is valuable and needs to be properly documented. Therefore, '*this knowledge which can be used for the well-being of the people is tapped by the students going into the communities and documenting indigenous medicines and methods of treatment to ailments. They are often herbs/plant based effective remedies known to village women. Here, the latter function as teachers to the students who come to them to learn about the traditional system of medicine and the associated treatment methodology. This therefore, becomes to a reversal of knowledge flow and helps in preserving the indigenous knowledge in a documented form.'*

The Directorate of Research manages community Engagement in the University of Indonesia and Community Engagement operated under the co-ordination of Vice Rector for Research, Development, and Industrial Co-operation. This sub-directorate is a specialized institution managing community engagement activities. The Directorate co-ordinates activities such as consultation services, trainings, workshops, seminars, applied research, and/or the organization of courses, along with encouraging innovative and creative attitudes. Along with this, the Institute manages Community engagement at the University of Gadjah Mada for Research and Community Engagement (founded in 2006).

It is under the co-ordination of Vice Rector for Research and Community Engagement. Some of the activities under the institute include the KKN programme, which serves as the means for transformation of knowledge into skill and trains the students to use their creativity for providing innovative solutions to social problems. The basis of the programme is co-creation, win-win solution, co-finance, sustainability and flexibility.

At the *Queen's University* in Ireland, Community engagement activities take place under the banner of Science Shops, based within Academic and Students Affairs Unit. It functions as a separate, independent entity, within the university. Science shop works with civil society organizations to develop research projects based on their research needs, which are suitable for students within the university, to carry out as part of their degree programs. The community engagements at the *Dublin Institute of Technology (DIT)* programs are coordinated by the Directorate of Student Services, part of the university's Access and Civic Engagement office. The Students Learning with Communities Programme supports community based learning, or service learning, as well as community based research, which focuses on research output.

In Netherlands, at the *University of Groningen*, among various outreach structures, co-operative research with and for community organizations are taken care of by Science Shops at six different faculties: Mathematics & Natural Sciences; Economics & Business Management; Languages, Culture & Communication; Educational Studies; Medicine & Public Health and Applied Philosophy. The Science Shop coordinates various community based research projects, in addition to organizing public lectures and science cafes. Likewise, in the *Wageningen University* as well, the key provision to enable community based research within the university is the Science Shop. The Science Shop co-ordinates community based research projects, which are carried out in association with the students, supervisors and paid researchers. *'The Science Shop works with Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) to develop research projects based on their research needs which are suitable for students within the university to carry out as part of their degree programmes. Its projects are therefore examples of co-created research, with community organisations bringing their specific needs and knowledge, and students bringing their research training and skills. Organisations typically receive a piece of research that they do not have the resources to carry out, whilst students get the experience of doing a piece of research in a real life situation which benefits both their learning and their career development.'*

In South Africa, the *University of Cape Town's* Senate's Social Responsiveness Committee (chaired by the deputy vice-chancellor, and inclusive of senate and faculty representatives, representatives from key support departments and students), is responsible for promoting and strengthening Social Responsibility (SR) at UCT. The Social Responsiveness Committee generates new knowledge, promotes knowledge integration and application of an academic scholarly/professional expertise for intentional public purpose/benefit. Another South African University, Rhodes University's current policy on community engagement is carried forward by the Community Engagement Management Committee, chaired by the Deputy Vice Chancellor: Academic , Students and Community Engagement and includes broad representation from each faculty, students and staff, the Director, community engagement as well as external CE partners/NGOs, among others. The *Rhodes University* Community Engagement Directorate (RUCE) was established as a separate entity, reporting directly to the deputy vice-chancellor in 2009. The community engagement management committee meets quarterly and plays a planning and monitoring function for community engagement at Rhodes. RUCE's role is to support community engagement as a core responsibility of the university by developing a CE

strategy and coordinating, facilitating and quality assuring CE activities. It also encourages and supports service learning/outreach programmes, volunteerism, student leadership development and various kinds of partnership between the university and the external partners.

At the *Gulu University* in Uganda, community university engagement functions, termed as 'Community Outreach Services', is placed under the Dean of Student's Office, who is responsible for the implementation of planned activities. The Dean is expected to form an Outreach Services Committee, which formulates the CUE policy under the guidance of Deputy Vice Chancellor Academic Affairs. The Committee is also responsible for developing quality assurance criteria for assessing CUE activities in the University. Community Outreach Services undertaken at the university has a number of objectives. The most important among such objectives is the development and strengthening of community outreach programmes. In relation to the same, the university promotes traditional conflict resolution, training of trainers in peace building and conflict transformation. Also, CUE activities form a part of the commitment of the academic staff's efforts in fulfilling the third mission of the university. For this, the staff engages in a number of community outreach projects, such as Community Outreach peace Project (COPP), Capacity Building for Local Government project, Epilepsy Project etc.

Although the *University of Wisconsin-Madison* in USA, has no formal office for community engagement, or other centralized support structure, it has developed multiple unique centres across campus with a focus on community based learning (CBL) or CBR that supports faculty and graduate students. The Wisconsin Collaborative Network facilitates relationships amongst educators, researchers, education leaders, and community members to collaboratively create new pathways for innovative teaching and learning practices. CCHE builds lasting partnerships and engaged university and community partners in collaborative teaching, research, and service initiatives to improve health equities in underserved communities of Wisconsin. Another US University, the *Loyola University*, has instituted a Centre for Urban Research and Learning (CURL) an innovative, non-traditional, collaborative university-community research centre housed within the university. In association with community leaders/organizations, CURL completes research, starting from its conceptualization, to research design, data collection/analysis, report writing and dissemination.

Importance of networks and networking

In Canada, there are four national networks that support CBR efforts. They are, '*Research Impact,* founded by York University and the University of Victoria and based at York University with a focus on knowledge mobilization, *the Community Engaged Scholarship Partnership* based at Guelph University that works on university policies such as career advancement, credit for work in the community, etc, *the Canadian Alliance for Community Service Learning* based at Carleton University linking community and university groups working with student's experiential learning in community, and *Community Based Research Canada(CBRC)* based at the University of Victoria and the Centre for CBR in Kitchener Waterloo linking universities and community groups to expand and strengthen investment, quality and impact in the field. CBRC, in particular, has been playing a coordinating, convening and enabling role in harnessing research resources and assets to facilitate and build collaborative relationships. It also organized biennial gatherings of national CBR community, what are called as the Community

University Expositions or CU Expos. '*CU Expos are the places where good practices are shared, new funders met, project ideas tried out, good work celebrated and individual learning flourishes. It is a wonderfully creative space where the arts, Indigenous ceremonies, spoken word and more are found.* Its impact can be adjudged from the statement that *'without CU Expo there would be no CUE movement in Canada'.*

In Indonesia, many faculty members who often run a community engagement program, have lately realized that there is need to provide the program further momentum, through interaction and networking with others from different universities. In line with the same, in July 2011, five Regional FlipMas founded FlipMas Indonesia. The word FlipMas (Forum Layanan Ipteks bagi Masyarakat) is a forum for community engagement practitioners in Indonesia. Currently, there is 27 Regional Flipmas founded. UI is the secretariate for FlipMas Region Jakarta, Depok, Bogor, Tangerang & Bekasi. In November 2014, University of Indonesia also coorganized the 2nd Asia Engage Regional Conference. It served as an international forum for scientists, delegation from ASEAN universities, lecturers, and community engagement practitioners in a collaborative environment to present and discuss issues relating to community empowerment in ASEAN, Asia and beyond. Such platforms for knowledge sharing played a very important role in furthering the cause of community engagement and providing it with further momentum. As regards monitoring mechanisms, evaluation processes for such programs are an integral process of community engagement initiatives in Indonesia. Every year, the university conducts monitoring and evaluation programs during 'site-visits'. Herein, the university representatives would take feedback from the community, the feedback was discussed with the reviewers and the program evaluated accordingly. Such effective monitoring mechanisms played an important role in establishing the credibility of such CE activities amongst the community, leading it to greater success.

In India, although a monitoring mechanism which can fix accountability on Universities, for ensuring community engagement is missing, one of the latest initiatives at the policy level looks to somewhat streamline this process in the academic circles. The Ministry of Human Resources Development has come up with a scheme on *National University Rankings* for the HEIs in India, with an objective to incentivize the respective HEIs. This innovative scheme on rankings will include a University's social contribution and its social responsibility as a crucial parameter that will ultimately decide its respective rank, at the national level. The basic idea behind this innovative ranking system is an attempt to devise more relevant rankings, and moving away from the usual focus on international students/research collaborations, and publications.

Although the legal framework in Netherlands does not provide for monitoring mechanisms, the universities are expected to come up with indicators to measure their '*valorization'*, a term used to '*denote creation of added value from research, be it economic or societal. They should justify about 2.5% of their budget based on these indicators*.' In 2016, this exercise should have been tested and implemented broadly. In the coalition agreement that the Dutch association of universities (VSNU) has signed with Deputy Minister of Research Zijlstra in December 2012, it was agreed that universities will develop indicators that can be used to measure effort/input and results/impact of valorization. The framework 'valorization indicators' describes the process by which the Dutch universities develop a set of indicators for valorization of research (both economic and societal value-creation). The idea is that the universities take responsibility to develop these indicators, in the coming years, in an open and experimental development form. This will help to make "impact" measurable and can give legitimization and even incentives to engagement. In the assessment of research, 'societal impact' (economic or

non-monetary) is a criterion. Engagement can help create and demonstrate this impact, as a result of which, scores of individual programs are influenced.

In South Africa, new regulations for annual institutional reporting for the universities, published in June 2014, require the university councils to report on 'how a public higher education institution has both positively and negatively impacted on the economic life of the community in which it operated", whereby some of the substantive matters to be included in the report would the "*inclusivity of stakeholders; innovation, fairness, and collaboration; [and] social transformation*". In addition, included in the reporting of university management is a provision to report on "*relationships with the community, both academic and service*".

It is clear that national or provincial networks on research partnerships and promotion of CBPR methodology in research can stimulate greater mutuality between communities and HEIs in designing and conducting research. Such networks act as platforms for influencing the practices of individual HEIs, thereby generating a pressure for, and providing exemplars of, good practices in co-construction of knowledge in research partnerships.

Conclusions

A study of this nature, which purports to provide a look into the state of institutionalisation of community based research at a global level, is hard to summarize. Institutional change, particularly institutional change within higher education institutions is often described more common to the movement of glaciers than that of fast flowing rivers. And while, if you take part in meetings of the various national and global networks promoting aspects of community or public engagement, you may have the idea that change is happening everywhere, the reality on the ground, on the campuses, in the communities and in the classrooms is different. So based on the evidence generated through our survey and case studies, what can we say?

National policies

The positioning of HE within national systems as well as the history of a given HEI makes a substantial difference to readiness to move into engagement strategies. The fact that the UK government as created a structure to encourage public engagement in HE, the NCCPE, clearly makes a difference. The recent decision by the University Grants Commission in India to allocate significant funds to the creation of a new generation of Centres for Community University Engagement is another example. Put simply When national policy creates formal expectations to promote CE, HEIs tend to show greater readiness; earmarked funding for CE further facilitates CE by HEIs.

Although it may seem obvious, evidence from our study shows that top leadership of Ministries and HEIs can have huge impacts on the promotion of CUE in general, and research partnerships in particular.

Higher education institutions

The culture of the academy and the dominant political economy of knowledge production within HEIs continues to denigrate community knowledge and practitioner expertise. The old question of 'whose knowledge counts?' remains answered by a vast majority of academics and many in authority as being those forms of knowledge assembled by disciplinary scholars in time tested methods. Methodological heterogeneity is certainly growing, but While inspirational stories and practices exist in all parts of the world and amongst all the countries that we have studied, the sheer weight of dominant approaches to knowledge generation and collaboration means that we are at the beginning of a lengthy period of questioning and reform. Widespread systematisation of practitioner knowledge and sensitisation of next generation of researchers can make a difference

We have found that even when engagement is highlighted as part of the mandate of the HEIs, it is only rarely that research is explicitly mandated as a part of CE; earmarked research funding for CURP is rarer, but can make a crucial difference in readiness amongst HEIs to build CURPs

Within the institutions, we have found that the middle level leadership—Deans, Chairs, Unit Heads and Centre Directors, play critical roles. They are the persons who mediate between the academic staff and students and the higher levels of administration. Their openess to change, their leadership and support, when available can make a remarkable difference. The professoriate, the lecturers , the research leaders and research staff are at the heart of the engaged scholarship process. And while the academic mode of production may still be more restrictive than we advocate, nearly every department, research centre, HEI that we know of has a few persons who are on the cutting edge of CURPs. Providing visibility for them is an excellent way to accelerate change.

While a preponderance of change drivers may come from governmental or funding circles or from within the organisational culture of HEIs themselves, we feel that community and civil society organisations have a right to call on the research related and other resources of the HEIs that are located within their

Monitoring of results and impacts of CE (and CURP) is typically from the lens of the community; impacts on the HEI (its faculty, students, administrators, pedagogy, curriculum, research methodology etc) are rarely analysed, documented and reported in public domains

Formal boundary-spanning structures in HEIs—dedicated to build linkages and partnerships—are essential; however, co-governance of such structures is not a common practice today

Long-term commitment to CE and CURP is required to institutionalise such practices as a part of the institutional cultures of HEIs; support for such 5-10 year partnerships is critical

Investing in CB of students and faculty at HEIs (and in community and civil society) to learn about partnerships and CBPR methodologies is critically missing, and needs to be made if CURPs have to make mutually beneficial impacts in society

Community and civil society

Even when reporting and monitoring mechanisms exist within HEIs and with funding agencies and government departments, accountability to communities and reporting to civil society is not a common practice at all.

Networks of civil society, and independent capacities in CBPR in civil society, can make enormous difference to the quality of partnerships and engagements in co-production of knowledge; however, such networks and institutions do not exist very widely today

In general, civil society has shied away from demanding greater responsiveness and accountability from HEIs and the system of higher education in various countries around the world; mobilisation of civil society's 'eyes, ears, and voice' on higher education system is urgently required for CE to work for larger public good

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Exploring intergenerational learning in indigenous textiles

Background

My recent inquiry, *Intergenerational Learning in Indigenous Textile Communities of Practice* provided lessons for intergenerational, informal learning that crossed borders of race, place, time, gender, and epistemological understandings. It was an interdisciplinary project that explored informal adult learning and textile production in two Indigenous contexts – one in Southern Chile and the other in Northern Saskatchewan, Canada. Throughout the research, lessons about community-based informal learning, research, and practice evolved.

The research process was informed and scrutinized through critical Indigenous methodologies that suggested attention to relationships and positions of difference/power (Denzin, Lincoln, & Smith, 2008). The process involved working with collaborators, relational networks, elders, community coordinators, and the community of practice. Together the collaborators and study participants informed several study questions, including the following: How is learning structured and passed on to subsequent generations within the Community of Practice?

Framing the study around the concept of *communities of practice*, that is, communities involved in textile practices – in this case, beading and weaving, was a way to explore knowledge transmission, sharing, and change between generations of people in distinct communities. A Community of Practice is "formed by people who engage in a process of collective learning in a shared domain" (Wenger, 2006, p.1) and it is a situated site of learning where people are linked by a sense of belonging, meaning, identity and practice, and it is a good site for research on informal learning because of its stability (Lave and Wenger, 1991). The study also worked on the premise that art is taking place in what Mary Pratt (1991) calls "the contact zone," that is, the "social spaces where cultures meet, clash, and grapple with each other, often in contexts of highly asymmetrical

relations of power, such as colonialism, slavery, or their aftermaths as they are lived out in many parts of the world today" (Pratt, 1991, p. 34).

The interdisciplinary study set out to understand how intergenerational learning and knowledge sharing about textiles work to sustain families, communities, and cultural identities. Other benefits included a validation of the work women engaged in and in at least one location, the women decided to form a local beading group which continued to meet informally after the study was complete. Most importantly, the outcomes were intended to validate the knowledge of the study participants in ways that are respectful and culturally relevant because they include processes of engaging in co-creation of knowledge or reciprocal work. In this way, community ownership over the results was viewed as an integral part of this process.

Study methodology

Important to the study was the use of arts-based symbols and story-telling circles which were designed to unite the individuals with the collective and the researcher with participants. This was done by having the beaders/weavers meet together, sitting in a circle with items related to beading/weaving – their own and other symbolic pieces – placed in the centre of the circle. The use of symbol-based learning and story circle focus groups aimed to privilege oral tradition and story-based learning which is premised on the reciprocal relationship between the teller and listener (Chilisa, 2012; Lavallée, 2009). The symbols could be described as a way to envoke "blood memory", which may also be referred to as bone memory (Lavallée, 2009; Henderson, 2000). Blood memory asserts that extended kinship passes on teachings and cultural practices, including rituals and ceremonies, from generation to generation (Henderson, 2000). Memory thus engages with a profound body of Indigenous knowledge, one that relates to learning through storytelling. Lavallée (2009) uses Anishnaabe symbol-based reflection as part of an arts-based research approach that emphasizes story-telling and community engagement. This method encourages participants to identify, represent, and engage through creative approaches that connect with memory, personal narratives, and collective history.

While recruitment was not specific to women, only women volunteered to participate. The methodologies included using artifacts to draw out memories and stories of intergenerational learning. The story-circle focus groups in particular, involved working through images and stories of participants. Specifically, symbol-based learning and story circle focus groups emphasized oral traditions and learning based on senses, including the visual, aural, and tactile (Bourdieu, 1999; see also dé Ishtar, 2005; Silko, 1990). In the circle, the participants would each respond to a study question by taking turns speaking and then letting the next person, sitting to their left, take their turn speaking. Often one of the speakers would point to or pick up and item from the centre of the circle which signified some aspect of their story – it was as if they were trying to prove the truth in the telling or the visual power associated with the memory. It this was in this action that the arts-based symbols became parts of the story and the "blood memory."

Data gathering and research stories

The research data was gathered between 2012 and 2014 in both Canada and Chile.

Saskatchewan

The first story circle group took place at Wanuskewin Heritage Park, an Indigenous World Heritage site, in 2012. There were 14 participants in that circle (twice as many as expected) aged 24 to 95 years and representing Metis, Cree and Dene ancestry. Most participants were originally from Northern (Indian) reserves in Saskatchewan. The session was opened by an elder and then participant consent forms were described in simple English. Translation was available at all times and three participants chose to speak in Cree, dispersed with English.

The participants were asked in advance to bring samples of their beading work or past work so that it could be shared with others in the group – part of the informal learning that the research offered; also part of community-building and gathering of "tools" for the story-telling pedagogies. Time was built in for eating together, sharing knowledge informally, and responding to the research questions. The informal sharing was considered part of the research process and part of relationship building.

A second focus group was held at a youth cultural centre, White Buffalo Lodge. The sites of both the focus groups were important for the comfort or the study participants and situating the learning context. One study participant was also interviewed after the focus groups had taken place – she had been reluctant to participate in the group.

Chile

A research collaborator at the Universidad de la Frontera, in Temuco, Chile assisted with finding communities to work with. Because of *relational networks* I had already built in Chile doing previous work with the Mapuche, I was also able to find additional communities of practice. In total we worked with 17 study participants in Chile. Three of these communities were ones where the study participants had always worked with sheep, wool and producing weaving. The other community, Tirua, had a larger number of women weaving in it, but the research collaborators pointed out, after the data analysis was complete, that weaving was not traditionally done in that community. Weaving in Tirua had been recommended by an outside religious group as a way to generate economic activity among the women. I point this out as it may have influenced results.

Most of the participants in these four communities were not familiar with the other communities. The meetings in individual communities were followed by a larger (focus group) gathering wherein two-three women from each of the four communities came together. There was time built in for socializing, eating, and learning from each other. The second, large focus group was held at a museum in Temuco, so that women would have the opportunity to attend an exhibit. A translator for Maputhugun-Spanish was also present.

Significant to the study were the stories generated by the participants – two of those stories, one from Chile and one from Saskatchewan, are shared here.

Angela[31]: A Mapuche story from Chile

Angela, an elder or Mapuche ancestry, sits at the head of her dining table with her two adult daughters at her sides. She invites the research team to sit with her. One of the daughters passes the traditional local drink, *mate*, around the table, and we all share the mate through the same straw, as well as an invite to eat some fresh, home-made baking. We introduce ourselves, and we start to talk. Angela is relaxed and content. Her long, grey hair is pulled back in a braid. She speaks softly but with authority to her daughters in *Mapudugún*.

Angela used to be a weaver until her sight started to deteriorate and then an arm injury permanently impeded her ability to weave. She still enjoys, however, separating and spinning the wool, which her daughters then dye and weave. When asked about her identity she describes herself as the owner of the house, a mother of eight children, all women (and some weavers), and as a long-term widow. She talks with pride about how all her daughters are independent and how they learned to look after each other after Angela's husband died.

Angela learned how to weave from her mother, when she was 22 or 23 years old. As a child, she watched her mother and other elder women before she started weaving herself. She says that women used to weave more back then because "they did not need as much money as they do nowadays". They used to make their own blankets, and other household items and clothing that now they can buy. She also remembers Mapuche women wearing the traditional handmade *chamales*, which they now use only on special occasions, as industrial clothing has become the standard.

She describes the lengthy process of weaving, from looking after the sheep from which they get the wool, to spinning the wool and setting the loom. She talks about how she and her daughters used to make and mix coloring dyes from natural roots and plants, to apply to the wool and textiles. She recounts with a nostalgic delight how her daughters learned about weaving and dying, by playfully participating in the different steps of the weaving process. She laughs in complicity with her daughters as they share some funny anecdotes about their everyday childhood games and sisterly competitions involving the spinning of the wool, the *khuso*.

Angela explains that she taught her daughters to weave because a woman who knows how to weave earns respect from her community. She tells us that in the past, Mapuche women had to know how to weave in order to get married. According to Angela, men used to respect and value women who wove. They were considered knowledgeable, and the weaving was used through trade to provide for the family. In a matter-of-fact way, she acknowledges the global economy affected this lifestyle. Then she goes on to talk about weaving designs.

Throughout the conversation, Angela struggles to find the right words in Spanish, mixing her discussion with *Mapudugún*. She talks about how the designs she learned from her mother have changed since she learned how to weave, and talks with pride about her oldest daughters, Magdalena, who lives in Santiago, who weaves on demand using patterns and designs that customers ask for and which are different from the traditional ones. She mentions one grandchild and how this grandchild, like other younger Mapuche people, are losing their language, *Mapudugún*, because of Spanish and now English, which are taught in the school system. One of her daughters jokes about Angela's habit of getting attached to her yarns and keeping them for a long time and we all laugh together.

[31] Names used in the stories have been changed to protect the identity of the study participants.

Betty: A Cree from Saskatchewan

Betty shared childhood memories of beading and tanning hides (hides later used for beading) with her mother, sister and grandmother. Betty's earliest memories are sensory and she described how her mother and sister did most of the work that goes into tanning hides. "My mother was the one that actually used to do hides. I didn't like doing hides at all. I used to clean up the house, tear the house up inside out, but my sister used to help scrape the hides and…take the meat off the hides. The only thing I used to do was I used pull the hides with my mother… I guess home to me was the smell of hide. Every time you could smell that piece of hide it actually made, it was comforting because you knew you were home".

Betty recalls her grandmother's beading, ever present on the kitchen table and that she always wondered at how her grandmothers managed everything. "Because not only did they do hides, they made moccasins, they were so multiply skilled. They'd be cooking bannock, cooking soup, and doing their hides and then, they'd be making their moccasins… and they still cleaned the house. So they did a lot of things at the same time".

Betty made her first pair of baby moccasins when she was twelve years old, but says she was motivated to learn how to bead when she started making another craft - dreamcatchers. "It was always a challenge… learning to bead something original, different was important… I made a beaded medicine wheel that probably took me a whole year to do and mainly because it was kind of like healing therapy." Betty researched every part of the medicine wheel to pass it on to her Auntie because according to Betty, "Auntie was having a hard time because we lost my Dad. My Dad was her rock and so I had to send her something special to make sure that she understood it wasn't the end of the world. So I guess in every piece of, it's not just beading that makes everything… It's a part of making… it's a piece of art. It expresses you. It expresses how you feel."

Study results

The inquiry with isolated Indigenous communities, demonstrated a perspective where local and global boundaries can be described as blurred and yet, interconnected. The participants in the study included people who identify as *Mapuche*, Cree, Dene and *Métis* identities living within Canada and Chile. Their ages ranged from 22-95 years. In addition to lessons on how knowledge is transmitted between generations, the study provided valuable lessons in the resilience of Indigenous communities to discrimination, in addition to creative, perhaps unintentional, resistance to the demands of globalization.

Findings from Saskatchewan

I was concerned with how the context of globalization created spaces for resistance, that is, how Indigenous peoples simultaneously resist neo-liberalism through cultural practices that defy the marketplace and which connect culture, communities and identities. This was illustrated, for example, by the story of Debbie's beadwork on the jacket she bought at a garage sale. During a focus group she said: "It's not just a sense of living, it's a part of making, it's a piece of art. It expresses how you feel, it expresses what you are doing at the time." The symbols on the jacket Debbie beaded represent the identity and culture of the owner who is Metis. The jacket was also borrowed and worn by the President of the Metis Nation when he appeared before the Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission – both as a symbol of pride and identity, but also perhaps a suggestion of resistance to the lack of empathy from the Canadian government towards Indigenous people living around abandoned uranium mines. Similarly in both Chile and Canada the textile articles produced are used for trade or barter rather than cash. This was especially true among the older study participants and in communities where beading and weaving were less tied to economics. Resistance and defiance for global politics were also witnessed in expressions of pride from the Indigenous women of both Chile and Canada in their narratives. Many however, then lamented when their children left reserve or traditional communities for urban centres because they felt the cycle of intergenerational learning in textiles and languages was more likely to be disrupted.

Important learnings garnered from the Canadian context of beading were also that beading is primarily learned inter-generationally and when participants said, "I learned it on my own," they almost always then went on to describe how they learned by observing a family member at work or they said, "I watched my granny and my mother and then one day they handed me the beads." Observation, then, was the most common learning pedagogy.

The various aspects of hide preparation seemed to be primarily a skill of older generations and older participants were more likely to speak about the whole process (including killing, tanning, etc.), not just the act of beading. The older learners always started their stories by explaining something about the hunt or the tanning of the hides; the younger learners generally spoke only about the act of beading. This finding may suggest a shift in Indigenous epistemological understandings as learning in the way expressed by the youth did not emphasize an interconnectedness with the process involving the land, the animals, etc.

There was a strong desire to share the knowledge, especially within the family and community of the beaders. Women spoke about how their sons and other male family members were also involved in the process. The practice of having men involved in beading seemed to be *normative*.

The meaning associated with beading varied, with identity strongly expressed and economic rewards, other than trading or bartering, less obvious. The study participants predominantly spoke about trading beaded items *outside* of the global marketplace. This was considered a traditional form of sharing items and perhaps, unintentionally, it can be considered a form of resistance or resilience to external pressures of the marketplace. According to the literature (Robertson & Farrell Racette 2009; Blady, 1997), there is a common thread connecting beading and Aboriginal art; it is living, adaptive, resilient and remains rooted in tradition. Blady (1997) concludes:

> "The adaptability, perseverance and ingenuity of the Metis people is seen in the elaborate and delicate beadwork they produced...The floral beadwork of the Metis is not only refined and understated in its aesthetic characteristics, but also as a medium of cultural expression and unity." (Ibid, p. 142-143).

Findings from Southern Chile

Weaving was perceived as something a Mapuche woman should know and the weaving products were made for themselves and their families (most notably their sons). Several felt that the youth do not care about weaving anymore, because weaving is not an easy task and there are more chances to find employment that might be easier for them. Weaving also perceived as a way in which women could make money because women have control over the money from weaving. They contrasted this with weaving in past generations that was done as a source of bartering.

Rural migration and globalization are having a major impact on younger generations. When children leave the community to pursue formal education intergenerational learning is disrupted. Weaving is not perceived as part of school curriculum and the women say that children are more concerned with technology and making money, not returning to their Mapuche communities. In the past, many of them did not continue school because they were highly discriminated against by other students.

The women spoke with pride about weaving as the greatest heritage they have from their mother or grandmother and said it defines their sense of culture and pride. They believe that the main reason why Mapuche stopped wearing *chamal* was to avoid discrimination and because buying industrial clothing was easier. Study participants also noted that a renewal of Indigeniety and interest in Indigenous lives from non-Indigenous communities made it easier to continue weaving.

The pedagogy of learning is changing. Like the beaders in Saskatchewan, the participants said they all learned by watching and practicing until they perfected their craft. Women noted that they were supervised, but had no formal classes. They expressed that this is changing – younger generations talked about learning through workshops and continuing education – for example, at the university.

Reflections on findings

The study provided lessons in working between and within Indigenous communities and suggested challenges for adult educators in the ways younger generations interpreted cultural knowledge. The results also demonstrated ways in which epistemological understandings create different approaches to being in the world. For example, the dominant view of the participants was that the textile work represented cultural identity and social relationships – particularly inter-familiar.

Among other things, the research demonstrated how textile work was integrated into the lives and well-being of the learners and their communities. Conversely, the implications for intergenerational learning when youth were taken away from the community, primarily to attend school or educational institutions, was noticed. Removing the youth interrupted the informal learning cycle associated with the textile production and created ruptures in the kinds of values and meanings anticipated. Explicit in the

results, was the role of intergenerational learning in the sharing of contextual and cultural knowledge.

Interestingly and unexpectedly, the validation of this work through the research led to increased involvement of community members in the practice. A key component of the Indigenous research methodologies applied was working with study participants to decide how the knowledge generated would be shared with the public. This resulted in an art exhibition and a publication. Critical reflection on the process illustrated how this complicated the work of the researcher, but ensured more equitable distribution of power in the research process. Important to the study was how the symbol-based story-telling groups with artifacts, community relational networks, and active participation of the research participants decided how the results would be shared.

Expecting the unexpected: Sharing the results

The research mobilization phase of the project involved having the study participants determine how they wanted to share the results of the research to a wider audience. In Saskatchewan, Canada this included an art gallery exhibit of beading; in Chile efforts to write a book. Several unexpected outcomes surfaced in the process.

The exhibition in Saskatchewan involved approaching several art and craft galleries. Fortunately, a Northern public art gallery was able to accommodate the exhibit. In addition to exposing the work of the Indigenous women to a wider audience – academic, community-based, collectors, artists and the public- the exhibit became a source of pride for the women. This was, however, my first time curating an art exhibit.

Engaging in a research practice that involves non-Indigenous researchers building relationships and collaborations that value and highlight Indigenous lived experiences is challenging and takes personal commitment beyond the scope of traditional Western academic paradigms. Such a commitment includes building relationships with Indigenous people and communities, developing ethical and appropriate frameworks, and learning and implementing postcolonial methodologies. I have been doing this throughout my adult life in various forms – from teaching Native Studies to living with a Metis partner. Attributes of inter-cultural, intergenerational practices are seldom straight-forward or linear. Further, they are often challenged by Euro-western thoughts and practices. For example, when the research participants in Canada expressed interest in sharing results of the research through an exhibition, not only was there a challenge in how to organize such an event, but the participants' relationship with the art gallery was non-existent and comfort levels in entering the gallery, as well as putting their goods on display, was fraught with unexpected tensions. Ten days prior to the exhibition opening, for example, I still did not have any goods to put on display. Since I also had no experience curating an art show, this put me under considerable stress. To get the items for the exhibition I had to drive to reserve communities as far as four hours by vehicle, meet people in the parking lot of Tim Horton's (a frequented coffee shop), and contact various family members. Although this was at times onerous, and I questioned my own motivation in doing this, it also allowed me to attend feasts and develop new relationships in Indigenous communities. These relationships translated into unexpected results such as meeting Band Chiefs at the exhibit, requests for photos from governing bodies of the Indigenous communities (Band and Council), and new personal friendships.

Individuals who experienced negative encounters with researchers further challenged me in several communities. In particular, signing the ethical consent forms was

viewed as suspicious. Working with local, community coordinators in this regard was very helpful as the explanations for doing the research became a role they took on. There was at least one instance were a family member refused to participate, but sat in on the story circle to observe. On another occasion, an elder questioned why I said that children under eighteen could not participate as this is contrary to their cultural ways of operating. Again, deferring to the community coordinator avoided embarrassment for me in the situation. Albeit thought-provoking, such experiences are also humbling as they remind the Western researcher of multiple ways knowledge is shared and understood and this puts power dynamics into question. Western, colonial values and institutional norms are thus challenged.

In Chile the women who participated in the study asked for a book to be produced. The collaborators had their own agendas and delays meant that although they were committed to writing the book, the dynamics were local. These encounters do not always meet the need of the funders or academic schedules. They are however, part of understanding a decolonizing methodology and situated knowledges. The exercise of deconstructing ways in which borders both construct limitless complexities, but also weave possibilities for interconnections, stretched my initial assumptions. Most importantly, however is the way in which the study provided entries for new ways of imagining intergenerational learning based on mutuality, well-being, decolonizing practices and holistic understandings. Notably, these were understandings that braided together the head, the heart, and the hands, and demonstrated how love, learning and practice worked together in Indigenous textile production.

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Public open spaces as venues for learning in community: Two case studies from Slovenia

Theoretical introduction

Public open spaces are everyday arenas where people share experiences beyond their immediate circle of friends, family and age group. We argue that people co-create these spaces with their initiatives, ideas, actions and solidarity, and among those activities, informal learning has important role, although it is often hindered and unconscious.

The meaning of public open space for participation and learning in community

Harvey (2011, p. 173-174) defines public open spaces in three ways: as an absolute space, which is unchangeable and static, in a social sense exclusive space of private property; secondly, as relative space, which is defined as the space of processes and movement and is measured by distances in this space; and thirdly, as relational space, where processes form their own space and time (concept of 'spacetime'). For this paper relational space is important, because it's a 'nobody's land', created by everybody included, and where identity becomes open, changeable, multiple and indefinite. Harvey believes that space is defined by human practice, relating to space. Conflicts among different groups arise in absolute space and time, but relations among them are becoming real in non-material relational spacetime, where they meet. For understanding active involvement in public spaces and for the matter of learning in those spaces we can also use Lefebvre's understandings of public space as 'spaces of representation' (space as we experience) (Lefebvre, 2013, p. 54-55; p. 60-69). What Lefebvre calls 'spaces of representation', is connected to the way people live in spaces (Lefebvre, 2013, p. 61; Harvey, 2011, p. 181).

Areas traditionally deemed as public open spaces are high streets, street markets, parks, playgrounds and allotments, which provide the necessary bandwidth for the flow of information between people. They are spaces where people can learn who they live with, what others do and sometimes, if the space is open enough, what they think and dream of. The 'public sphere' is different from the private domain of 'love, friendship and personal connection' and from the market domain of 'buying and selling' (Marquand, 2004 in Biesta and Cowell, 2012, p. 49). Kohn (2004) 'upgrades' the dichotomy of public open spaces and private, controlled spaces (homes, company offices) by developing the idea of social spaces, which mix aspects of public and private spaces (shopping centres, arts centres, car boot sales, markets etc.). In a social space (still privately owned) people are encouraged to congregate and interact, but this space is open to different limits and regulations.

Many different authors talk about the importance of public space for local inhabitants due to many different reasons. Arendt (1996) speaks about public space as a condition of politics and as a space which enable political. Public space as a common world gathers human beings, and at the same time, prevents their mutual shattering. Biesta (2012) talks about public places as those where things can be done without the need for anyone to give permission. It is the domain 'where strangers encounter each other as equal partners in the common life of the society' and where they, by sharing experiences with people beyond their immediate circle of friends, family and work colleagues on a daily basis, collectively define what the public interest is to be (Mean & Tims, 2005, p. 16).

Findings from phenomenological and ethnomethodological research help in understanding learning processes through communication in public (open) spaces. In ethnomethodology, social structures, cultural meanings and values are understood as products of social interaction and conversation. Arendt (1996) defines it as un-institutionalized freedom and a kind of communicative action, happening through speaking. Also, Habermas set the question of communication as the core of the theoretical model of society, which is based on the theory of communicative action; he connects the individual observer, actor and speaker, with other observers, actors and speakers in the field of intersubjectivity. This offers an understanding of the nature of intersubjectivity, with which participants' interaction with one another explains their mutual interpretations of social situations (Habermas, 1989; 2001, xi). Individual is actually not isolated, but initially involved in interpersonal relations, in which he/she is defined as a personality and actively participates as a subject. Public space is in this sense an inner space where people follow their interests ('inter-est') and which disappears no earlier than when people, who restore it, disappear, and activities, which define the space, stop (Arendt, 1996, p. 189, p. 210-211). Public open spaces, filled with diverse people and uncontrolled events, therefore provide communicative and learning experiences, forcing us to move beyond the self and consider the plight of the other. Defence of public space in the name of the social good it provides through fostering mutual cooperation and learning, exchange of ideas and knowledge, is in our opinion crucial; we can agree that public open space is a forum for social and personal change, a 'transitional space' (Bourgeois, 2002; Wildemeersch, 2012). It is a system of relations, arising from acting, speaking and learning; as Torres (2013, p. 62) ascertains, through public space, people fight for recognition, social justice, the spirit of solidarity, and individual and collective well-being; they defend the principle of citizenship education and learning instead of the principle of consumerism.

The learning process in public spaces is a possibility for self-reflection, perspective transformation and a chance to address community problems by using the public space

as a free environment for struggles against all forms of regulation and control. Educational environments in educational institutions emphasise the notion of power, prescribed goals and authoritarian relations (Torres, 2013, p. 26), but learning in public spaces is the opposite: emancipatory, democratic, civic and bottom-up. Public spaces, as compared to traditional (structured, regulated) learning environments, are changeable, open and created through discussion and formed by people involved in public spaces, which suits many older people. Learning is unpredictable, multi-layered, and in a sense, more demanding, because the course and its results are dependent on a participant's skills to perform it; but it is natural, experiential and based on the problems of the participant. Therefore such learning: a) can have an extremely important emancipating role; c) can encourage adults to retain control over their own lives and possibilities; d) can be empowering, transformative, liberating and transitional (Torres, 2013; McLaren, 2000; etc.); e) has the potential to be an activity for development of critical consciousness (Freire, 1970; 1994), contributing to empowerment of community members. To be a part of the speaking and acting process in public spaces, one has to have will, desire and certain skills, which can be learned only through the democratic process itself. Learning experiences in a public space are not always comfortable or joyful; they could be defined by hesitation, disjunction, discontinuity and conflict between participants (Wildemersch, 2012).

Skills of interaction with others are most needed for negotiations and conducting dialogue; they enable translation of private issues/interests into public/common concerns. In the neighbourhood we mix and we learn from and through this diversity. Learning in a public space could be defined by theories of transformative learning, which implies personality changes, changes in the organisation of the self and restructuring of learning and living patterns (Illeris, 2009, p. 14). Mezirow (1997) stress that transformative learning can take several forms involving either objective or subjective reframing. It is rooted in the way human beings communicate and is a common learning experience, which involves learning to make "our own interpretations rather than act on the purposes, beliefs, judgments, and feelings of others" (Mezirow, 1997, p. 5). In the opinion of Mezirow, this is one of the most important goals of adult education. As mentioned, trusting social context, which enables the dialogue and reflective discourse, is needed (Mezirow, 2000); if circumstances are favourable, these goals could be realised by learning in public open spaces. Such learning gives us a voice, and consequently, construct the meaning of the world for ourselves (Dirkx, 1998). This could be, by definition, at the core of learning in public spaces, which is open, unstructured, free space.

In this paper we analyse the use of, co-creation of and learning in two public spaces in different towns of Slovenia: public space in community Tabor, located in one of the quarters in Slovenia's capital city Ljubljana, and a small community, namely a street, in coastal Slovenian town Izola. We analyse differences and similarities among both selected public spaces regarding: i) users/participants of both public spaces (according to age, social, cultural, economic status, etc); ii) the origin of initiatives for actions and/or organization of activities; iii) kind of actions, initiatives, events, which are happening; iv) relations between participants in public space; v) environmental influence on the 'atmosphere' in public space; vi) the role of acting, speaking and learning and the perception of it by participants in public spaces.

Research and findings

Methodology

For analysing two different public spaces and activities of participants in those public spaces, we have conducted the ethnomethodological research. According to general idea, developed by Garfinkel, we've at the first step observed and analysed everyday activities to find out how people make sense of 'potentially ad hoc collocations of scenic features that make up everyday situated activities' (Garfinkel, 1996 in Freebody & Freiberg, 2011, p. 80). Our observation was focused on living and learning in two public spaces: community Tabor, located in one of the quarters in Slovenia's capital city Ljubljana and a street (defined, bordered public space) in a coastal town Izola. We based our supposition on the premise, that social life is the outcome of the common work of members of a society, as they engage in and work alone or with others to make sense of their everyday activities with and for others (Muršič, 2011). Our research started with observation with intervention in two selected public spaces, which was direct, unexpected ethnographic observation. We as researchers were a part of a public space and we've observed life, actions, communication, learning, and cooperation of participants in selected public spaces. After this research phase we've conducted non-structured interviews with initiators of activities in selected public open spaces in Ljubljana and in Izola. In Tabor we've conducted interviews with two of initiators of activities in the neighbourhood, and in Izola with two active participants in the public space.

The observation lasted the whole year 2014-15, but the interviews were conducted in April and May 2015. We've conducted 2 interviews in each selected public open space.

Short descriptions of selected public spaces

Tabor (Ljubljana)

The neighbourhood Tabor is one of the town quarters in Ljubljana. There was a tendency of decline of the community momentum in the neighbourhood. Tabor Cultural Quarter Association (Društvo kulturna četrt Tabor – KČT) was established on March 1st 2001 for fostering culture, education and sports activities for local population, to take care of sustainable development and spatial problems of the neighbourhood, but mainly for fostering connections and participation between individuals and organizations in the neighbourhood Tabor. In the year 2012 more organization joined the Tabor initiative and they act in the frame of Tabor Cultural Quarter Association. KČT and other organizations are using cultural content to connect the neighbourhood, which many of local residents considered to be transient and grey. The initiators of KČT activities don't see the neighbourhood as degraded place which needs urgent intervention, but they recognize it as a space for manoeuvre which can still be improved. Individuals with their own specific background and experiences have already started to plan solutions for problems which the local population consider to be critical and in need of improvement. For this sake many different projects were initiated. With the help of spatial intervention and numerous happenings, Park Tabor gained back its vivid life form.

Ljubljana Street (Izola)

Ljubljana Street is located in the old Mediterranean town of Izola which lies on the south-west shore of the Gulf of Trieste, where the genuine traditions of fishing and winemaking, mysterious traces of the past, and the welcoming character of the locals merge together to form an unforgettable mosaic of experiences. Association of Izola people on this street organizes a number of activities, events and exhibitions aimed at locals, random walkers and tourists. Association of Izola people ensures a gallery called Plac Izolanov, which lies in the Ljubljana Street. The gallery is a small but valuable space, which is actually "an extension of the street with a roof" and where various exhibitions and other performances take place. Also locals help in managing and taking care for several exhibitions, who are at the same time in a nearby bar. Many cultural and social events are happening on the Ljubljana Street called "Largo pr" Spini". At this point throughout the year hosts free live concerts. Ljubljana Street is also well-known for its street garden with many types of basil. That is why several regular visitors come to the old town which is served with interesting information about the basilica. Each year Association of Izola people organizes traditional "Bazilikjada". The visitors can taste a variety of dishes with the addition of basil, prepared by local chefs and caterers. This year will be held on the seventh Bazilikjada, which is becoming one of the most recognizable ethno-culinary events in Izola.

Findings and discussion

Initiatives for the activities in selected public spaces – Tabor (Ljubljana) and Ljubljanska Street (Izola)

The initiative of revitalization of Tabor neighbourhood in Ljubljana has come from a non-profit cultural organization Bunker, who have made a sociological research and conducted focus groups with community members in order to find out the needs and wishes of inhabitants for revitalization of their neighbourhood. Inspired by the sense of social responsibility they invited other cultural, art and educational organizations located in Tabor neighbourhood with the aim of discussing what can be done to revitalize the neighbourhood. Bunker has also made above mentioned sociological research and on the basis of analysing the focus groups, they found out that the identity of Tabor neighbourhood is being lost. Based on the research results, the responsibility for organizing different kinds of events has been divided among those locally based organizations. Bunker from the very start of the initiative wanted to transfer the organization from themselves to other local organizations like ProstoRož who has eventually coordinated bigger events like garage sales. They have also been organizing activities, kept informing and made frequent contacts with neighbours. Afterwards ProstoRož has transferred most of the Tabor neighbourhood events to Sports society Tabor which is also located in the neighbourhood and is the owner of park Tabor.

Unlike Tabor neighbourhood in Ljubljana, the initiative of revitalization of Ljubljana Street in Izola has come from the neighbours themselves. Those are the neighbours who are active and willing to do something socially valuable. They have spontaneously gathered themselves in an informal way and started to organize different self-initiated activities. They have formed a small community where everybody knows each other. The main initiators were mostly cultural workers, intellectuals, musicians, who have created

a critical mass and consequently included other neighbours. When asked about advice for other individuals, who would like to revitalize their street or neighbourhood, they simply state:

> *„Go to the nearest café for some coffee and simply talk about your street/neighbourhood. The greatest value of life is living in community."*

Activities and performers of activities in selected open spaces

The initiators of activities in Tabor, NGO Zavod Bunker, have found out that the main need of neighbourhood members is based on deficiency of public, green spaces, but among others were lack of parking places, wish to have a swimming pool, bicycle tracks etc. Community members missed activities that would make their neighbourhood alive. One of the initiators of revitalization of Tabor neighbourhood emphasizes:

> *„Bunker cannot solve all the problems and grant all the wishes, so we asked ourselves a question: „Which are the problems that we can solve? A couple of them came quickly clear to us, like deficiency of green surfaces. So together with another association (KUD Obrat) we started a project „Beyond the Construction Site", community garden for temporal use of land."*

We can see that the initiative for revitalisation came from the organization, but was based on needs and wishes of community members.

Unlike Tabor neighbourhood, the Ljubljana Street in a small seaside town Izola had a decades old tradition in the sense of the following saying: *„each for himself"*. The change started to occur when immigrants from Bosnia came to Izola in search for employment a few decades ago and brought with them their authentic culture of socializing with neighbours. The initiators of activities in Ljubljana Street in Izola moved from other parts of Slovenia to Izola and were welcomed by above described neighbourhood's hospitality. A group of cultural workers started with initiatives to bring more life to Ljubljana Street and revitalize it with various activities**.** They generally live up to this social outlook:

> *„We as human beings have a need for socializing with others. As people, we need other people to comfort us, help us when in need. „*

The initiators of activities did not need to make a thorough research in order to find out the needs of their neighbours. They listened to their needs and observed them on a daily basis. They talked to each other in such a way that it's spontaneous so that everyone can express themselves if they feel the need to.

Currently, neighbourhood Tabor is a revitalized space; it has become more vivid, people socialize and connect more**.** The motivation of initiators for continuous work in the social field is expressed in the following quote:

> *„It is important that people become aware that we could easily be self-organized and engage socially."*

Izola on the other hand has been experiencing immigration during last few years. People have come to the conclusion that if they come to Izola, they can quickly develop their social network and contacts with others. People find other likeminded people. As a

result, visitors keep coming back to socialize and nurture friendships. They describe this immigration phenomenon with the following metaphor:

> *„As you know, just like the river does not stop in strait but continues to flow, in the same way people don't stick around and connect with others an inconvenient place, but the space where the river spreads, consequently it moves slower. It is the same with people who slow down their speed of movement and enjoy spontaneity in a comfortable environment."*

There are many activities happening throughout the year in Tabor neighbourhood (Ljubljana) and Ljubljana Street in Izola as a result of initiatives to revitalize open public spaces. The activities of Tabor neighbourhood are as follows: slackline, fencing, yoga, thai chi, movies projection, free concerts, garage sales, and a celebration of the international „Day of the Neighbour". „Day of the neighbour" is organized in such a way that neighbours who want to „open their doors" and organize activities for other neighbours, for example: photo exhibition, cooking dinner for others, planting flowers, working with clay, reading poetry etc. There are more than 30 activities happening in the neighbourhood Tabor during celebration of „Day of the Neighbour".

As mentioned before, there are also many activities organized in Izola, on Ljubljana Street. Some of these activities are organized with the aim of celebrating different thematic events such as: Holiday of coffee bars, Briscoliad (the game of cards), 'Šalšijada' (making tomato sauce in large amounts, on the street), competition in making 'golaž' (spicy meal originated from Hungary), various concerts, photo, art and other exhibitions, lectures, storytelling for children, making tea in public, tombola (Bingo)... The most developed happening is the „Holiday of Basil". The organizers buy more than 25 different kinds of basil. The neighbours plant them in pots and put them out in Ljubljana street. Many different people participate in the event where they cook more than 50 different kinds of basil dishes. The event is public and passers-by are free to taste the dishes.

The performers of different activities in Tabor neighbourhood (Ljubljana) in some cases are hired professionals like musicians and technicians. In most of the cases the activities like yoga, poetry reading, thai chi etc., are neighbours themselves who practice certain kind of activity on an individual basis and they want to share it with other neighbours. Those activities have been initiated and inspired by cultural and educational associations like Zavod Bunker with the aim to revitalize the public open space of the neighbourhood Tabor. Unlike the activities in Tabor neighbourhood, activities in Ljubljana Street (Izola) are being performed by the initiators themselves. Similar to Tabor neighbourhood, different famous Slovenian musicians participate in the events. The organizers of Ljubljana Street events emphasize**:**

> *„Everybody takes care of the activities they know and are good at",*

like the association „Silk path" who cooks food from different parts of the world on a monthly basis and shares it with neighbours and passers-by.

One of the important points to stress in connection with all of the above mentioned interventions in public open spaces of Tabor neighbourhood and Ljubljanska street in Izola, are consequential changes in architecture. There have been small interventions in the architectural shape of public space of Tabor neighbourhood like partial regulation of traffic arrangement, painting one of Tabor streets together with local kindergarten children, and a community garden project „Beyond a Construction Site" which allows neighbours to temporarily use the land for planting. Unlike the architectural interventions in Tabor Neighbourhood in Ljubljana, the authorities of Izola in 2014 wanted to remove

all of the basil pots and build concrete sinks in exchange. The idea of the authorities was to make 'super modern' project. The Ljubljana Street neighbours have been successful in rejecting and putting a stop to this intervention unlike other neighbours of the nearby streets of Izola who had no such will and intention. The Ljubljana Street neighbours emphasize their point using these words**:**

> *„It would be strange for us, as those sharp shapes of concrete sinks do not suit the street which has an old domestic, Mediterranean spirit. It is not necessary for every public space to be 'super modern'."*

Participation in selected public spaces

The participants of different activities performed in Tabor neighbourhood Ljubljana are not just local residents but also people who come from different parts of Ljubljana. Those participants are heterogeneous group which include older people from a local home for the elderly, local kindergartens, passers-by and people who have intentionally come to attend some of the events. Similar to Tabor neighbourhood, the participants who attend Ljubljana Street events are diverse. Izola is known to be interculturally rich as 12 different cultures live there. Ljubljana Street events' participants are also neighbours from surrounding areas, children, but also some famous Slovenians frequently join.

Informing about happenings and activities in Tabor and Ljubljana Street

The events in Tabor neighbourhood Ljubljana are being communicated to neighbours through the use of various channels: distributing flyers and written invitations, e-mail, Facebook and Newsletter. The local organizations are being informed via regular meetings. The effective ways of informing were: board with information on events located in park Tabor (the central area of happenings), zoetrope (spinning wheel with written copies of event programme in it). Most of the time informing neighbours is being done by spreading information from mouth to mouth which also applies to Ljubljana Street. On Ljubljana Street, informing is being done also through the local magazine Mandrač, tourist agency and online.

Problems and barriers in the process of conducting activities

The significant barrier for the entire Tabor neighbourhood is that is has a negative connotation because of the vicinity of methadone center and Metelkova City, an autonomous social centre of Ljubljana. After partying in Metelkova, people regularly come to park Tabor and organize their own after parties. The local residents are sceptical because of this negative connotation as they are worried in case some spatial interventions in park Tabor would consequently invite even more drug addicts to come. The organizers of Tabor events faced some of the problems with financiers and legal owner of park Tabor especially during the first period of their initiatives. One of the specific problems was illiteracy connected with political and bureaucratic system which would slow down the process of events realization.

When comparing problems and barriers of organizing events in neighbourhood Tabor and Ljubljana Street in Izola there is a difference; in Izola they had no bigger

barriers as their only responsibility towards the local authorities is to care for the order and cleanliness of the public space of Ljubljana Street.

Financial support and cooperation with local authorities

The organizers of neighbourhood Tabor events and their other long-term projects are being financially supported by local, national and European funds. They also combine volunteer work when organizing various cleaning and work activities. Local authorities support their work also financially. For example, the mayor of Ljubljana funded building of children's playground. This has been a sign of a positive cooperation with Ljubljana local authorities, but besides this positive intervention from the side of local authority, the initiators claim that the local government has been generally unresponsive, as year after year, they are receiving less and less funds for their activities.

Unlike activities in Tabor, Ljubljana Street activities in Izola did not have a regular flow of funds from local financiers until they have founded a Society of Izola Residents in 2002. The local authorities have been funding them since. The amount of funds has been helping them to cover some basic expenses (ex. travel expenses for some performers). An interesting interaction with local authorities happened when the authorities wanted to install stone benches (before mentioned „concrete sinks") which were a part of 'urban renovation' of Izola. The socially active residents of Ljubljana Street have gathered more than 320 signatures against „urban renovation" initiative and consequently stopped the project being performed on Ljubljana Street. The neighbours emphasize:

> *„Politics often suggests some activities to be performed on Ljubljana street with the aim to become profit-oriented tourist events. We don't want it and we don't support it."*

Influences of experiences and knowledge, gathered in selected public spaces, on wider society

The organizers of Tabor neighbourhood events such as ProstoRož, educate other groups of people like students, individuals and groups who are active in their local environment and would like to change it somehow but they don't know exactly how. ProstoRož with the intention to activate and motivate such groups and individuals transfers their knowledge based on gathered experience during organization of initiatives in Tabor neighbourhood. They also connect with foreign organizations that have similar aim in their local environments in order to learn from each other. Zavod Bunker, the initiator of Tabor events emphasizes in this regard:

> *„Education is a side effect of the fact that we want to offer cultural content and make it publicly accessible. We organize lectures, conferences in the area of art and education."*

The initiators of Ljubljana Street events in Izola (unlike Tabor events initiators) have a smaller range of effect on wider society which is visible in connecting with neighbours of a street nearby to Ljubljana Street and supporting each other's events as well as motivating people from surrounding areas of Izola to participate in their activities and products on Ljubljana Street events.

Conclusion

The observation and analyses of two different public spaces gave as interesting findings. Our argument that people co-create public spaces with their initiatives, ideas, actions and solidarity could be confirmed with our research. Selected researched public spaces could be defined as relational spaces (Harvey, 2011); we've found out that although initiators of activities were in one case different association, rooted in community, and in the other local people themselves, most of the activities were conducted by people, living in selected communities/public spaces. They were main creators, fighters and negotiators in community activities. We've found out that in bigger communities, public spaces are more difficult to revitalize only by initiatives of local inhabitants, but this is the case in Ljubljana Street, which is namely a very active public open space, although only a street. The findings show that people need community activities and are willing to participate in them, but they sometimes need a push or a launch to become active participants in public space. As we supposed, learning is something which is hindered and is not very often mentioned; but it is inevitable that from the project, going on in both public open spaces, results would not be possible without constant informal or at least incidental learning. In organized activities they mention also education for wider public as important part of cohabiting.

We can confirm that selected public spaces played a vital role in the social life of communities. However, the discussion on importance of preservation of the public space, resistance against marketization and privatization of the space, came into the front also in our research. Through words and actions of our 'co-speakers' it is clear, that actors in the public space should keep a distance from the market, the state, avoid institutionalized ways of thinking about learning and education, and somehow preserve the critical stance towards political and economic influences; they have to show moral responsibility and political commitment to create a sphere of public debate, as also Torres (2013, p. 79) suggested. These ideas are close to the theories on the role of public intellectuals, who advocate autonomous learning, self-organisation of learning and open learning (Hall, 2012).

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Adult learning festival, a global initiative in the regional prism

Introduction

Research questions pose themselves from the very name of UNESCOs initiative: "The Festival of Adult Education" which, even at a glance, denotes a theoretical syncretism. We can interpret Festivals as folkloristic manifestations, organized forms of cultural diffusion or even as tourism products.

The rare studies of this area did not focus on the terminological and theoretical consistency but were rather directed at the comparative and action-oriented research aimed at practice improvements. The paper of Roger Morris (1999) from Australia „Adult Learners` Week, Australia and Slovenia: A First attempt at comparison" was presented at the conference of the International Society For Comparative Adult Education in 1998 and it presented the results of a comparative analysis of the published material from Australian and Slovenian Adult Learning Festival which was inspired by the British experience. Among the Andragogical Studies published by the Institute for Pedagogy and Andragogy of the Faculty of Philosophy in Belgrade is the paper „Adult Learning Festivals – Celebration of learning – Many reasons and even more ways" by Aleksandra Pejatović. This work presented Festival descriptions from several countries and also identified the strategies for the development of Festivals' concept regardless of the background in which they were to be realized. Other studies of this area were done by organizations which realized festivals activities and were aimed at their practical improvements.

This short overview of the Adult Learning Festival studies up to date show the scientific community's lack of interest in this subject. The need for more thorough comparative studies of this phenomenon has been pointed out continuously. Today, after nearly two decades of this manifestation, we can also talk about the necessity of a historical approach to this subject.

Theoretical framework

Getz (2010) points to the scientific journal „Festival Management and Event Tourism“ which, in research sense, meant the observation of the Festival from a new perspective and also the establishment of a new area in event management as well as the event management profession. Goldblatt (2002) sees the beginning of a *new era* in special events organization. The multidisciplinary nature of this area is highlighted by the definition in which event management is treated as a profession which deals in gatherings for the purpose of celebration, education and marketing, in celebrations of life cycle events (for example a wedding), in organizing fairs and gatherings for the purpose of continuous improvement (conferences, trainings, social activism and edutainment) and, finally, in raising public awareness of certain products, events and problems (Goldblatt, 2002). For the purposes of this paper, the following elements of event management have been operationalized more thoroughly: organizational and program structure, leadership and media promotion techniques.

Program structure of the Adult Learning Festival is comprised of a functionally organized group of program formats for adult education and cultural diffusion of a specific subject aimed at a specific target audience. In the book „Planing programs for adult learners: A Practical Guide“ program format purports a way in which educational activities are structured and organized. The authors Rosemary Caffarella i Sandra Ratcliff Daffron (2013) list five categories of program format used in adult education: individual learning, learning in small and large groups, distance learning and learning within a community, while pointing out that an individual program format can belong to several categories at the same time. Cultural diffusion formats had to be added to this categorization, bearing in mind that one of the goals of Adult Learning Festival is to generate and promote the culture of learning. Conversely, culture itself is spread through the process of learning. In their book „Culture, management, animation, marketing“ (2011), Milena Dragićević Šešić and Branimir Stojković define cultural diffusion formats by the following criteria: basic, complex and mass media formats.

Organizational structure of a Festival represents a formal system of tasks and reports on the conditions that coordinate and motivate organization members in such a way that enables them to work together on achieving organization goals. This definition clearly implies the need to take the mission and the vision of an organization as well as the types of organizational structure into consideration. The following types of organizational structure are listed in literature: The Simple Structure (a private organization): The authority is centralised in one person, hierarchy is flat, only several rules exist depending on the wishes and the personality of the founder and owner. This type of organization has low work specialization. The Functional Structure: a formally organized group with similar work qualifications. The authority is centralized in one person, the hierarchy is horizontal (top-down), rules and tasks are clear and elaborated. The Divisional Structure: Organization is divided into semi-autonomous units which all still answer to the central authority. Hierarchy is horizontal and the rules are defined separately for each individual unit. The Matrix Structure is a combination of a functional and divisional organizational chain. Team-Based Structure is less hierarchical and used to improve horizontal relations and solve problems. The Network Structure: Organization is connected with independent organizations which function together as one single organization. Hierarchy is decentralized and work division is specialized in specific systems (Williams, Kinicki 2010, page 252).

Based on these definitions of the organizational structure types it is clear that we can identify the types based on the characteristics of authority, types of hierarchy and the type of work division (tasks and responsibilities).

Defining organizational structure also implicates the defining of the term "leadership" which can be described as a process in which an individual influences a group of persons in order to accomplish a common goal (Northouse, 2013, page 5). Researching leadership in adult education identified the following leader qualities: cooperative and caring about efficient interpersonal relationships, energetic, dedicated, ethical and consistent, intellectually active and adjustable (Caffarella, Fleming, 2000). Scientific literature on event management identifies the following leader qualities: integrity, self confidence, cooperation, problem solving, communication skills and a vision (Goldblatt, 2002, page 148). The debate on whether leadership is an inherent or learned trait is still ongoing. In this paper we are taking a stance that inherited or partially inherited traits will not turn into leadership competence without practice and learning, considering that many competences (knowledge and skills) can be developed only through learning and practice (Alibabić, 2008, page 257).

Aside from describing the listed elements, it was also necessary to determine which techniques were used for Adult Learning Festivals promotion. Literature on event management identifies five media promotion techniques: advertising (printed and electronic media), transportation media (buses, train, etc.), special promotion materials (key chains, cups, calendars and other products), outdoor media (billboards) and public relations (informing the media and the target audience about the event, urging them to support the program). Public relations activities also include the design, print and distribution of media packages, creation of radio and television statements and even the organization of the event itself: cross-promotional activities regarding efficient resource allocation and identifying and incorporating marketing partners into the campaign (for example sponsorships), organizing street promotions which serve to present exceptional skills for the purposes of promoting a certain event or product (for example, making the largest pizza in public) and finally, sending the invitations.

Methodological framework

This paper made the comparative analysis of Adult Learning Festivals in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH), Slovenia and Serbia with the focus on the following research question: which are the common characteristics of Adult Learning Festivals in BiH, Slovenia and Serbia regarding organizational and program structure, leadership and media promotion techniques? In order to answer the question, the researcher compared the characteristics of the Festivals in the selected countries as well as tested the independence of the Festivals in relation to the demographic characteristics (number of citizens, unemployment rates, adult learning participation rates), to the Adult Learning Festivals funding in the region (sources of financing) and to the years of Festival realization. A related hypothesis was that Adult Learning Festival is an independent organizational format with specific structure and characteristics.

In order to make the research results applicable in practice, Festivals in BiH and Slovenia have been compared to Adult Learning Festivals in Serbia. The sample was intentional and was defined by following criteria: regional perspective, comparison with an EU example (Slovenia), with an example outside of EU, and the inclusion in the UNESCO's initiative from 2001. It was also necessary to acknowledge the historical perspective of the Festival so the analysis includes the data from 2001, 2008 and 2013.

Data sources for this paper came from archival documents of the organizations involved in this research (festival programs and reports, promotional material and press

clipping archives) as well as from interviews with Festival organizers using the in-depth interview technique.

Data analysis and interpretation

The analysis will begin with a descriptive comparative overview of the demographical characteristics of the selected countries in which Adult Learning Festivals were held. The territory and the number of citizens in the three countries differ but all the three countries have one common demographic factor: population ageing. BiH and Serbia share a high unemployment rate while Slovenia is currently attempting to curb the rise of its moderate (relative to BiH and Serbia) unemployment rate. BiH and Serbia also share low participation rates in adult learning while Slovenia is working to prevent the moderate fall of its own adult learning participation rate which is among the highest adult learning participation rates in Europe.

Looking back at the beginnings of Adult Learning Festivals in three observed countries, we are faced with the problem of differing terminologies as well as the different history of this manifestation. "Teden vseživljenskega učenja" in Slovenia has been held annually since 1996 and the practice continues to this very day. "Festival cjeloživotnog učenja" in BiH was held from 2000 to 2010 and the "Festival obrazovanja odraslih" in Serbia was held from 2001 to 2005 and re-established in 2012.

At a glance it seems as if we are trying to compare the incomparable but it is precisely those differences that can lead us to the answer to this research's question: to identify a similar set of characteristics of a complex organizational form. Jost Reischmann (2004) encourages researchers to compare both similarities and differences both within and between various systems.

Festival management

Managing all festivals in the observed countries is being done by an organization whose purpose often doubles as that of a national coordinator and within which a festival organizing team is being formed. This team is comprised of several individuals specialized in and responsible for specific activities such as media campaign, finances management, organizing competitions and so on. A national coordinator is heading this body. Aside from this operational body some form of a national council or a national board also exists, comprised of the representatives of all interested parties, representatives of the local and national coordinators and sometimes also including various delegates of the state. The role of this national board is advisory. In certain circumstances, foreign experts may also be included in festival organization, again with an advisory role. Organizing activities on a local level is left to regional coordinators who act under the received guidelines and have the freedom to independently realize the planned events, head the media campaign etc.

Management structure underwent some changes in both BiH and Serbia: where in the beginning the structure was similar to the Slovenian model, as the number of activities and the financial and international support for the Festival gradually dropped, the management structure was reduced to the festival organization team, often comprised of the members of the management board of the organization that realized the activities. The common characteristic in all three instances is the creation of a partner network which the potential for further growth, especially after realizing the first successful campaign

and when it becomes clear that a very wide range of activities is adequate for this type of manifestation. Local coordinators are given general guidelines and support and are being provided with the promotional materials.

The impression is that cooperation with the national coordination board is founded on trust, respect for local differences, collegial cooperation and mutual learning. It is precisely these principles that the new management paradigm of the late 20th and early 21st century rests upon. Social norms such as solidarity, flexibility and harmonization of conflicts became crucial for growth and development. It is those organizations that are based on knowledge and self-governing teams that are replacing the old hierarchical relationships and rigid rules (Snow, 1997, page 73). Managing learning festivals in this fashion is not only manifesting this type of management approach but is also a learning experience from year to year, thus leading to further improvements of the existing model. In order for a manifestation this large to succeed it needs managers who are willing to both learn and share their knowledge and findings.

Based on the data obtained via interviews, insistence on task division based on the area of specialization of team members has been noted. Also, noted was the insistence on hierarchy decentralization and on authority placement in all organizations based on the commitment to the realization of lifelong learning philosophy. These characteristics beyond doubt point to the network structure of organization when it comes to Adult Learning Festivals. On the other hand, lowering the amount of activities and their sporadic realization lead to temporary creation of teams within a given organization tasked with raising the awareness of the importance of adult education and learning (in case of BiH and Serbia). Lastly, we see that organizational structure of Adult Learning Festivals also depends on the available financial resources which was specifically pointed out by the colleagues from BiH.

Festival program

The common characteristic of all festival programs in BiH, Slovenia and Serbia is an almost identical structure comprised of three crucial segments: professional gatherings, ceremonies (openings, closings, reward ceremonies, etc.) and education fairs or markets. This specificity found through the analysis of the announced activities in festival brochures, catalogues and event calendars pertains to the simultaneous use of program format and cultural diffusion.

The Festivals open with plays, concerts and video presentations while workshops, educational institutions presentations and professional debates are being held simultaneously. Often, however, the program forms of education and cultural diffusion are intertwined depending on the goals of given activities. For example a play is a program form frequently used for the realization of festival activities. However, this program form can also be a cultural diffusion activity, aimed at a larger group or a didactical method used with smaller groups who can then present the results of their work to a wider audience.

The “Open Doors Day”, one of the typical program forms in Festival structure was not easy to define using the existing classifications. “Open Doors Day” is a more traditional-like program form used for a thorough presentation of the organization to the interested parties, whether they wish to learn more about the management aspects or to establish some form of cooperation. In a way, this program form is not only contributing to the transparency of operations but also has some performative characteristics since on

that day the novelties in every part of the organization are being shown to the public and all accomplishments are being presented with pride and are celebrated. The connection with celebrating adult education and learning is obvious.

The analysis has shown that the program structure of Adult Learning Festivals mainly consists of the following program forms: studying in large and small groups. Program forms belonging to the category of learning within a community are largely determined by the Festival theme (for example, Volunteer work, "European Citizen Year", "Learning City" and so on).

It is evident that the Festivals have a common program structure. Some deviations have been observed in BiH and Serbia regarding the number of realized activities when, due to inconsistent funding, the number of activities dropped and began a shift towards virtual space.

Festival leaders

Interviews with the national coordinators of regional Festivals have shown that they view their role as primarily operational and are not associating too many leadership attributes with it. The focus kept getting shifted towards recognition and education of the leaders as well as cooperation between them. It has been pointed out that the Festivals depend on local community activities and that it is necessary that the idea of lifelong learning reaches every individual. It has been further pointed out that his can only be achieved with the help of active and charismatic individuals who not only know their community but whose station and advocacy in the community inspire and motivate others.

Adult education leadership traits defined in literature are mainly recognized as general leadership skills with some of them being pointed out as especially significant for Festival activities coordinators. Active, dedicated and charismatic are the key traits of a leader while the ability to motivate, negotiate, resolve conflicts and organize things are the key skills they must posses. Finally, when comparing these results with the set of event manager skills it is obvious that in this case traits are being held in higher regard than the skills.

This finding underlines the andragogical perspective of leadership in which leaders are *created* with respect to the inherent or inherited *leadership potential.* The importance of education, learning and practice is extremely significant in this case (Alibabić 2008, page 257). An already earned and established leadership position within a community can be easily built upon by learning and sensitizing to the topic of adult education. When considering leadership, one of the specifics of the national festival coordinators is the ability to recognize local community leaders who believe in and live the philosophy of lifelong learning. The presented data point to earned, rather than inherited, leadership in the area of adult education (Fleming, Caffarella 2000; Northouse 2013).

When it comes to Adult Learning Festivals we can definitely speak of decentralization of power and hierarchy and the positioning of leaders within communities. This is especially notable in Slovenia where the local learning circles leaders are not only recognized as leaders in adult education, but also in the community as such. In Serbia and BiH those are the managers of educational organizations, cultural institutions and NGO representatives.

The examples of Adult Learning Festival leaders bring us to the idea that leadership position can be obtained and secured by belief in education and the desire to use it to

change and improve the community. The idea that by educating one self, educating others and by inspiring others to change and improve one can gain a leadership position not only in education but in general is one of the resulting hypotheses of this research.

For now we can only preliminarily name this phenomenon as 'group leadership' which pertains to the transfer of leadership position to the entire community, concept and system plan. On one hand, we belong to a very diverse professional group with a strong idea that we can improve individuals, communities and systems through education. On the other hand, we have groups whose lives were changed by education and groups to whom education is essential in order to continue living with dignity. Each individual took on a leadership role when they decided to go into education-related profession. Medical doctors are in a similar position although they often seem much more personal in their relationship with their patients. However, they cannot grow and develop without a scientific community; without an insight into the social position of a group they are treating they cannot approach the problem in a holistic manner.

This type of leadership has been described in literature as the need to seek out new modalities and to observe the problem on a systematic level: the so-called *balcony perspective,* as Heifetz names it (Collins-Nakai, 2006). The balcony perspective metaphor leads us to conclude that regardless of how national coordinators of Adult Learning Festivals see themselves they do, in fact, have a leadership position. This certainly does not take away from the leadership of the regional and local coordinators but rather, it points to certain specific aspects or the need to define a new kind of leadership, compatible with a net organization structure. This especially holds true when it comes to running complex program forms such as Adult Learning Festivals.

Festival promotion

All Festival promotional activities in the region have several characteristics in common. Considering that festivals are characterized by promotion campaigns, media-related activities are a key to organizing this manifestation.

Coordination took place on the national and local levels simultaneously and was synchronized. Slovenian Institute for Adult Education is organizing a national press convention each year, preparing promotional materials and media press releases, while local coordinators communicate with the local media. In BiH and Serbia, national media coordinator organized the campaign and synchronized all media-related activities with local coordinators. In 2002 in Serbia there was a media coordinator in every region. The analysis of Festivals' media activities identified two important areas: public relations and promotion.

Public relations incorporated publishing texts about the festival in both printed and electronic media, attending radio and TV shows, preparing video and audio materials (TV telop (BiH), radio jingles, music videos, promotional videos, short documentaries (BiH)), organizing press conferences, publishing brochures and journals about the Festival (Slovenia and BiH), publishing all relevant information on web portals and social networks (Slovenia, Serbia since 2012) and publishing video testimonies and messages by adult learners (education ambassadors in Slovenia).

Promotional activities meant preparing and distributing posters, brochures, Festival programs, fliers, invitations and special promotional materials (bookmarks, pens, balloons, badges etc.). Concerts, spectacles, performances and public performances with

the intent of raising public awareness were held during the opening ceremonies and throughout the duration of the Festivals.

The specific feature of Adult Learning Festival promotion in the region is creativity in materials production, non-commercial character of promotional videos and resourcefulness in using social networks and alternative means of promotion for the purpose of minimizing the expenses.

Festival funding

Research into funding of Adult Learning Festivals in the region yielded two main approaches: strategic and continuous funding by the state in Slovenia and project-based funding in BiH and Serbia.

Securing state support of the Festival implies the existence of political will, the existence of legislatives pertaining to adult education and a good level of cooperation with EU. Since 2012. Slovenia is getting additional funding thanks to the goal-accomplishing program „European Agenda for Adult Learning". Using these funds, Slovenia improved their Festival program by organizing seven "Learning Parade" in the entire country. Frequent changes in state administration and political turmoil make lobbying for the continuous state support for the festival difficult in BiH. Legislatives that support the promotion of lifelong learning currently exist in Serbia but their application is slow and inconsistent.

Analysis results demonstrate that funding affects the scale, program and viability of the Festival. Promotion and integration of lifelong learning culture is a long-term process and cannot be funded via project-based funding. On the other hand, this research could not identify any alternatives to state-based funding of the Festival which could be supplemented by project-based one. The very idea of all-around promotion of lifelong learning through an international festival movement came out of a project whose goal was to initiate and aid this activity on a global level. Key words are "initiate" and "aid". Considering that the Festival is an activity of national importance and that it's realized on state level, it is necessary to secure both the support of the national media and the independent managing of this complex program form, neither of which cannot be achieved without continuous funding.

This fact is best illustrated with examples from BiH and Serbia where forming the Festival managing bodies was project-based funded for only a few years, after which the managing bodies began falling apart, losing autonomy and were eventually disbanded as project-based funding focus shifted in other directions. Project-based funding did strengthen the organizational capacities of the Festival in the region and afforded a chance to present the benefits of a funded activity to the national boards. It also allowed for a better negotiation position by establishing a functional organizational structure. However, since continuous funding was not secured, the positive effects started fading away.

Due to their promotion of lifelong learning culture and adult learning initiatives the Festivals must be supported systematically while the promotion of adult education and learning can be realized through various projects. Adult education and learning promotion would have to be, and often is, an integral part of the projects dealing with adult education.

Conclusions

Going back to the Festival analysis in BiH, Slovenia and Serbia we can see that they all have some common features. The differences appear only with the emergence of funding problems which in turn influence the organizational structure. The means and the scale of funding is directly related to the Festival scale and with the level of management decentralization. The examples of BiH and Serbia demonstrate that funding the Festival from a single source and without state support is not a viable concept. It is most important that the Festival gains a national character and to achieve a national consensus on the need for its existence. Therefore, we cannot label funding as *conditio sine qua non* but as a national consensus. Reducing the coordinators' network to the Festival organization team and shifting towards team management is making the character of this manifestation more that of a specific promotional campaign and less that of a national activity which continuously creates and initiates new participants in lifelong learning culture.

Leadership is a characteristic that best describes the Festival spirit. National coordinators in the region do not see themselves as leaders even though they are ones, but are rather shifting that position towards the regional and local coordinators who inspire and motivate their communities through their charisma, achievements and contacts. We could conclude that we are dealing with a special multilevel perception of leadership position in organizing Adult Learning Festivals and that the most important thing is belonging to the community of those who, in some way or another, deal with adult education.

Finally, we can point out that Adult Learning Festivals are a specific program form which combines the elements of a media campaign, cultural diffusion and education in a specific way. Considering that these types of manifestations are non-profit in character it is necessary to secure strategical support for their realization. The most important thing is that the Festivals celebrate all the positive aspects of education, the joy of learning, the new brave participants, continuous partnerships and the belonging to an international family that is changing the world through education. Sometimes it is enough to call yourself a "festival" until you survive and overcome the initial phase of the promotional campaign.

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Third age education and participation of older people in the local community

Relationship between older people and the local community. The local community belongs to older people.

Progress has brought a significant prolongation of the third age to human life. Demographers claim that centenaries have been one the two fastest growing age groups in the world in recent decades, the second being - the young will be pleased to hear - young millionaires, aged 25 to 30. If we look at the data for Slovenia we will see that the number of centenarians in 1995 was twenty nine, but in 2013 it has risen to two hundred and twenty four, an almost eightfold increase (Statistical Yearbook of Republic of Slovenia, 1995; Statistical Yearbook of Republic of Slovenia, 2013).

Today the third age lasts between 30 and 40 years. It has special features and characteristics, special principles and rules (Krajnc, 1992). Most of these are still being studied, since the reality is changing continuously.

The local community is the only community older people truly belong to. The family nest has been abandoned - the children now have their own families Widowhood and single person households are common. Once retired, older people lose touch with their former work communities. As is the case with all other individuals, psychic and social equilibrium of older people depends on how well they get integrated into a new social community.

It could be said that before retirement people tend to have too little time for the local community, but after retirement they realize it is the only community they can actually join and be part of. In the neighbourhood, in the local community, in the place where they live they will be able to make new social contacts and develop more permanent interpersonal relations. This will give rise to regular ritual meetings, chats over coffee at a neighbour's place, offers of help with transportation, interest- based gathering of horticulturalists and garden owners, joint actions for renovation of local monuments, participation in cultural clubs or initiation of new cultural activities, cleaning campaigns, organization of grandchildren's care etc. All this adds value to the locality in which they

live, for which the middle-aged adults and the youngest generations have no time and, therefore, no interest.

In Slovenia third age education saw its beginnings in the eighties of the previous century, in a social environment that differed from todays. At that time practically everybody was working, the younger generations were attending schools and preparing themselves for a career, which they later pursued Life went on at a regular pace and it was older people who actually left an imprint on their home town. This was especially visible in smaller places. The young and the middle-aged population would leave for school or work every morning, whereas older people stayed behind and were closely connected - in good and bad - with their home town. That is why they felt the need and wish to effect changes and improvements. As they were closely connected to the place in which they lived, their local community, they understood what projects were most important and should be prioritized.

The youngest identified with the social community of the school, the middle-aged with their job and company. This type of towns used to be referred to as "bedroom communities", since the majority of people would return home from work only in the evening. The rhythm of social interaction was monotonous and repetitive. Roads were crowded during rush hours in the morning when people were going to work and school and again towards the evening when they were coming home. During the day the town belonged to older people. Here they satisfied their primary psycho-social needs, creating interpersonal relationships. They depended psychologically and socially on the local community. Consequently, the older generation developed a greater sensitivity for the requirements and events of the local community,

Today the observations made 30 years go when we were working on the conception of third age education in Slovenia are still fairly valid, although we are in the process of transition from an industrial into a information society. The social behaviour patterns have undergone substantive changes. There are changes in family life, there is unemployment, new forms of work, and the educational process is prolonged to include the tertiary level. New types of more dispersed work are appearing, followed by more individualized forms of socializing in the public throughout the day.

The space where one can look for and get gainful employment has expanded internationally - to other European countries and beyond. It is similar with young people's educational possibilities; they are marked by multiculturalism and globalization. If in the past people would be going to work to the nearest factory and the children to the nearest school, today many go far from home. It has become quite common that many are absent the whole week and return home only for weekends. Therefore, we could say that in the present social situation the local community and locality also belong to older people, as was the case in the past, perhaps even more so.

There are many cases showing how study circles organized by Third Age Universities have responded – to the needs of local development through education and other activities. They reveal different types of cooperation between older people and the local community. The ethnological study circle of a Slovenian Third Age University, for instance, included research education into its activities. They investigated the many chapels that used to be built in their rural region (date of erection, votive intention, authors of the paintings and sculptures, investors etc.). They explored a new aspect of the local history and produced an extensive publication. It is now being used in regular university studies because it is the only existing study of this particular locality. The study circle's work has brought local inhabitants, schools and the tourists visiting the region a new cultural benefit.

Let me give you another example - the study circles (historical, ethnological, photography, film-making) from one of the Slovenian Third Age Universities, which operates in a region where hop production has been the main industry since the 19th century. The members have studied and explained hop production, the pride of the place, from many different angles. They have presented their newly gained knowledge in publication as well as through pictorial and film presentation. In the past hop pickers used to pour into this place from more distant, poorer neighbouring regions. The young women would often become local brides and stayed in the place for good. They influenced the culinary tradition and the mixing of cultures and rituals. The film they produced, showing modern mechanical hop production, illustrates the economic development of this industry and indicates future trends, which must interest all generations.

Equally well-received were the study circles dealing with interpersonal relations, psychology, child care and education. The members of Third Age University undertook day care of school children during holidays while their parents were working so as not to leave the children unsupervised at home. They prepared a programme of games, excursions, cultural and sports activities and thus gave a structure to the children's free time. In this way this Third Age University gained some social power and became a major social subject in the community. The parents, children and the study circle members shared the satisfaction. Their knowledge was enhanced through active participation and had a positive impact on their self-image and self-confidence, which tends to falter and shrink after retirement.

Le me give you another illustration of older people's involvement in the local community. A stone-cutting study circle working within a folk high schools has connected people of different generations in the community. The First World War anniversary was approaching when this group decided to rebuild a monument dedicated to a young officer, a Hungarian Hussar fighting for the Austrian Empire, who was after the enemy's victory brutally murdered and cut into pieces by Napoleon's soldiers. When later the territory came again under the Austrian Empire, a big symbolic monument was erected in his honour and remained there for the next 150 years until the Italian occupation following the First World War. When fascists destroyed the monument, the local people hid its parts in their gardens because they saw it as their own cultural heritage. The members of the stone-cutting circle went for help to the regional museum and so a faithful replica of the original monument was created. The members of the circle devoted all their free time to this task. They contacted the Ministry of Defence and they sent the honour guard to the opening ceremony. Through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs they established cooperation with the Hungarian Embassy, which also supported their efforts by providing the Hungarian honour guard in traditional Hussar uniforms for the occasion. Apart from this, there were other pressing details to be taken care of, such as purchase of stones of the right size, transportation, provision of the crane to raise the monument, liaison with local authorities, preparation of the programme for the celebration, invitations and posters, public campaign. Schools now arrange excursions to the monument, where children can learn a lot about their history. The study circle has also issued a publication to explain the historic significance of the monument.

The members have developed strong bonds, feelings of belonging and self-confirmation, which each of them experience in their own way. The town has acquired an additional cultural and historic value, which all inhabitants are proud of. The achievement of the study circle has become the achievement of the whole community. Intergenerational cooperation can begin when social exclusion of older people is overcome and each individual in the society has a mission; when different generations

operate on the principle of complementarity. Divided responsibilities bring enrichment and a higher quality of co-existence to all generations in the community.

The premises underlying the conception of third age education at the Slovenian Third Age University

Since its beginnings the aim of the Slovenian Third Age University has been putting education in the service of the people. Besides learning objectives, all educational activities should lead to real life activities and the satisfaction of personal and societal needs. Third age education thus has three main goals: acquisition of new knowledge (educational goal), application of the knowledge through active involvement (action goal) for the benefit of the individual and the community (community goal). Adults do not learn like children - »accumulating knowledge for later life«. Adults want to know because they know exactly where and how they will be needing and using this knowledge (Krajnc, 2007).

When planning third age education in our institution, we had in mind three basic goals, described in the work by R. Kidd as education for being, becoming and belonging (Kidd, R., 1973). People need education and knowledge for their existence and it should circulate among them. In the process of education they become somebody they have not been before. They use their potential for full self-realization. By acquiring personal views and values they choose who they are and who they wish to belong to in the society. People gain knowledge partly in the interaction with other people and in interpersonal relationships. A high level of primary learning motivation in older adults makes their education effective and opens up possibilities for practical application of the knowledge acquired through specific activities (Krajnc & Ličen, 2002, pp. 34-40).

Apart from specifying the general goals of adult education, we included into our concept the specific goals for third age education. The acquired knowledge should help to prevent older people's social exclusion, contribute to their active ageing, and stimulate new activities (cultural, social and economic) in the local community. This is a precondition for intergenerational cooperation and a joint social action of all generations.

In our conception third age education and related activities are seen in the context of the local community. The practice has confirmed this orientation. Action oriented education and connections with the local development are a vital aspect of third age education in that they give the participants the possibility to actually use the newly obtained knowledge in their environment. Without the connections with the local community it would not be possible to realize the fundamental societal and individual goals of third age education, overcoming social exclusion, intergenerational cooperation and active ageing.

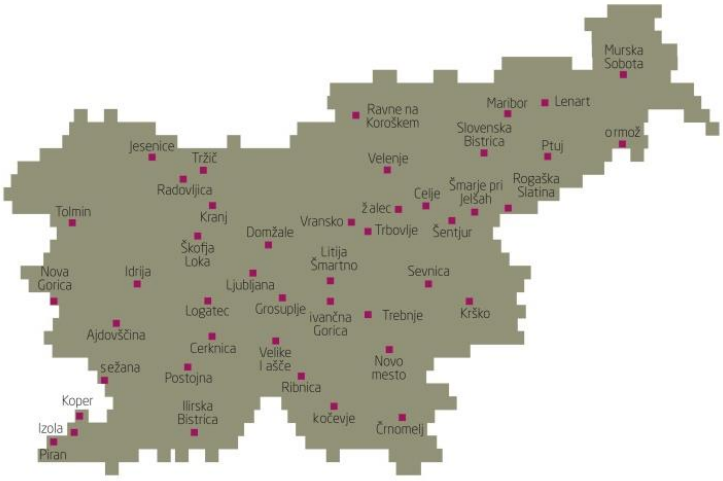
Training of Third Age University mentors and staff

The importance of training of the future mentors and leaders of Third Age Universities has always been well understood by the promoters of third-age education, starting with the first experimental study group in 1984. Continuous education of professionals working in adult education remains one of our main goals. Thirty years ago when we were beginning to develop a network of Third Age Universities in Slovenia we introduced two-month training for the future mentors and local leaders of these

organizations (school year 1985/86). Invited to participate in the training programme were also the local communities' personnel. Among the participants were pedagogues, psychologists, directors of homes for older people, physiotherapists, journalists, teachers, social workers, etc. (Krajnc, 1992).

The training programme was designed by the Department of Pedagogy and Andragogy of the University of Ljubljana. It dealt with social, economic and psychological changes experienced by people after retirement, andragogy and andragogical didactics, psycho-dynamics of small groups, sociology of the local community and the development of the concept of the Third Age University of Ljubljana, its establishment (Pierre Vellas, Toulouse, France) and specificity of the Slovenian model. This provided a professional foundation for expansion of the Third Age University network. Involved in this training programme were 44 professionals. There was a great deal of public interest for the education of older people and we did not have the facilities to accept all applicants for the course.

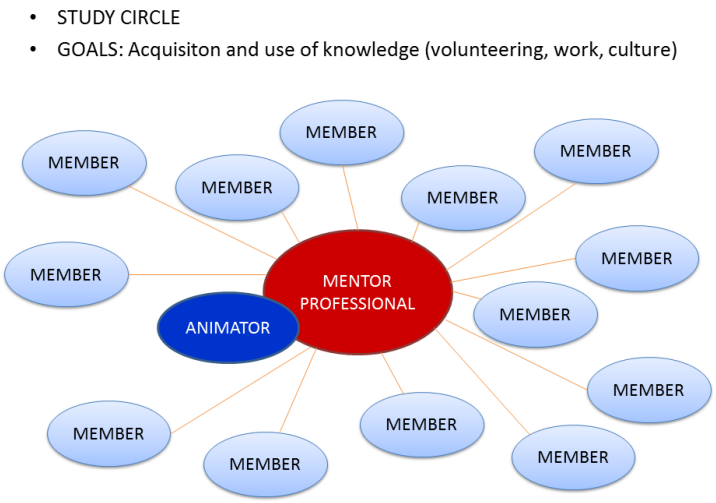
The training programme paid a lot of attention to the cooperation of Third Age Universities with the local community. We elaborated local propositions to serve as a starting point for the education and activities of older people. Several areas of interest were suggested: cultural heritage, natural heritage, major local institutions (companies, schools, galleries, museums, local clubs, etc.) and »important local personalities«. The participants themselves made choices for their locality. The local authorities' plans could not be used as they were not enough concrete and specific. The future Third Age University leaders obtained here ideas for the educational programmes of individual study circles, recruited future mentors and thus opened up the way to the education and activities of the elderly. In this way the Third Age University grew roots in the local community and became a significant social factor in the local environment.



Picture 1: Network of Slovenian Third Age Universities

Third Age Universities around Slovenia (today fifty altogether) differ considerably in view of their local conditions. By attending courses and consultations, with an exchange of experience the leaders can improve their programmes and gain ideas for new forms of cooperation with the local environment. The framework for their activities is the uniform Third Age University model with study circles, mentors and animators, which actually represents one of the most democratic forms of adult education. The mentor is responsible for the implementation of the study programme, whereas the animator (one

of the participants) takes care that the study circle's work is in tune with the local community and that the members are informed on current events. He or she investigates the possibilities for the use of the knowledge gained in the community. The mentor's and animator's tasks are clearly divided, with each of them assuming part of the responsibility for the work of the whole group. All members of the circle are involved in the activities connected with their education.



Picture 2: Model of study groups at the Slovenian Third Age University

In 2009 the Council of the Slovenian Third Age University ruled that all new mentors needed introductory training to learn about the characteristics of the third age, older adults' education and the basic concept of work. Within specific projects we managed to issue several professional publications, some of them in the electronic form. The Slovenian Third Age University also produces an electronic-news bulletin, which reaches practically every single student in the network and other institutions. Devoted particularly to the mentors of study circles is the electronic publication entitled Mentor in Znanje (The Mentor and Knowledge).

Several European projects, for instance the Norwegian Financial Mechanism fund, and the projects sponsored by the national Ministries have helped us to systematically foster practical application of older people's knowledge in their local environment. We have organized participation of cultural animators in museums and hospitals, gardening volunteers in botanical gardens, film creators in preparation of short films on active ageing, animators working on holiday programmes for children, narrators, leaders of workshops for young people with brain injuries, herbalists, environmental activists etc. Once a new action area is identified in the local community, we devote it our full attention so that our members can make the transition from acquisition of knowledge to its use in practice.

Picture 3: Forms of older people's participation in the local community

The highest level of training has been an 80-hour specialization of mentors for third age education, sponsored by the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport. It was held in three Slovenian regions and performed in cooperation with the andragogues from the Faculty of Arts of the University of Ljubljana and didactical experts from the Faculty of Pedagogy of the University of Maribor. Our intention is to gradually upgrade this programme into a regular undergraduate study, comparable to the pre-school study programme (for nursery school teachers). Third age education, covering a period of 30 - 40 years, requires a special professional profile. The long-living society and the changes in the ways of life have brought about the need for this new type of profession. This entails overcoming social stereotypes concerning ageing and old people, which in the past may have had some substance, but have ceased to be valid (Krajnc & Ličen, 2002, pp. 34-40).

The conditions in which Third Age Universities work differ greatly from place to place, depending on the attitudes of local authorities. In some places the University is an important subject, enjoying local support, in others local authorities ignore them, thus blocking their own development. Once the society stops seeing education of older people as an unnecessary expense, the social status of the elderly and third age education will improve. We must be future-oriented and work for the good of people, the local and broader social community. We often feel that we are swimming against the current. Consoling is the thought of a Swedish colleague who said: »Only dead fish swim with the current.«

Education and activities in later life contribute to the development of the local community

In an ageing society the elderly are the most numerous social group. This vast number of people should not dwell on the margins of society, resigned to spending their free time aimlessly, without any benefit for themselves or society. The elderly are becoming increasingly aware that they can retain or obtain an active role in society only if they keep developing and being active.

»As is the case with other people, the elderly can get reintegrated in the society only by being active. Research into the retirees' experience shows that deprived of their previous power and social status they do not want to return to work with their former employers; they no longer belong to the employees' community. However, they will get integrated successfully into new social groups if they join them on the basis of new activities« (Šantej, 2005, pp. 17).

The study circle of the Third Age University is a form of community education and life, into which older adults bring their knowledge and experience. They »put« it all together under the mentor's guidance, choose a topic of learning, roughly define their goals, find the resources and engage in a joint study. The responsibility for learning and other activities is in the hands of the mentor and the members of the study circle. Learning gets transformed into activities, aiming at an improvement of the life in the community (Findeisen & Šantej, 2013, pp. 9). Education is not an end in itself. Older people learn in order to effect changes, on themselves and in the community.

Third age universities can contribute a great deal to local development. The communities supporting civil initiatives, with a high number of activist groups, are likely to develop faster and will not end up on the brink of society. Informal education of older people is very valuable for this type of work and for social mobilization since it tends to respond quicker to the needs of the local community.

According to Carl Gustav Jung retirement brings a »cultural afternoon«, the time when the importance of material goods diminishes and one can devote one's time to one's inner needs, feelings, relations, culture and community. »Older people are interpreters of culture«, he argues. »Education and culture are mechanisms enabling the elderly and other social groups to change the world around them - the world they can adapt to better and change easier by means of knowledge and culture. This will also bring them a better understanding of themselves and others« (Findeisen, 2010, pp. 2).

Types and forms of the active participation of the Slovenian Third Age University's members in the local community

A survey of the forms and types of activities of our older students in their local communities show that around 65 % are involved in various activities in the local community; some of them regularly, some of them only occasionally. The data was collected from reports, programmes and announcements about local activities and events, prepared by the Universities in the network (archives of the Slovenian Third Age University).

The most older students (55.4 %) are involved in the activities connected with local history, culture and folk traditions. Some take up research and investigation of local history and cultural and ethnological heritage; others work in museums and galleries as cultural mediators. This type of activities comprise also public presentations of research

findings, organization of exhibitions and other public events, issuing of monographs and manuals, making of films on the chosen research topics, local theatre performances and other manifestations of amateur culture.

Next in frequency are various forms of intergenerational liaison and cooperation (17.4 %), intergenerational festivals, preparation of holiday activities for children, storytelling in nursery schools, organization of workshops for the young, etc.

Following are the activities in the field of natural sciences and environmental protection (16.2 %), e.g. gardening volunteers in the botanical gardens, herb ology study circles with publications on medical herbs and their effects, organization of cleaning campaigns, etc.

Then comes involvement in various humanitarian activities (11 %), such as cooperation with UNICEF (rag doll project, preparation of exhibitions and sales) and hospital volunteers.

Other types and forms of older people's involvement in the local community are occasional or isolated events, with a lower rate of participation.

Types and forms of older students' participation in the local community (in %)	
local history research, study of cultural, ethnological and industrial heritage, mediating in culture in museums and galleries	55.4
intergenerational cooperation	17.4
activities in the field of natural sciences, sustainable local economy	14.2
humanitarian activities, support for self-sufficiently and independency of older people	11.0
other	2.0
total	100.00

Table 1: Types and forms of older students' participation in the local community

Festival of knowledge and culture in later life as an example of community practise

Older people possess knowledge, pragmatic or experiential knowledge, and knowledge about relationships. Older people belong to several cultures simultaneously: the culture of the past and culture of the present, their views are important for anticipation of the future. In addition, there is no active ageing without cultural bridges between generations. These were the basic assumptions on which the Slovenian Third Age University based its International Festival of Knowledge and Culture in Later Life, a festival that has become both an important *community practice* and *a community of practice.* It involves learning as participation in the practice of social communities thus establishing both individual and social identity.

The participants of the festival (members of Slovenian Third Age Universities, associations of pensioners, members of non-governmental organizations from other countries) have established first, a common field (culture and knowledge), inspiring them to participate and to give meaning to their activities, secondly, a community, functioning as a social fabric in their learning and thirdly, the practice itself, i.e. the International Festival of Knowledge and Culture in Later Life.

The Festival of Knowledge and Culture in Later Life grew within the Slovenian Third Age Universities' network after 2011, when the number of member-organizations had risen to 45 and they became present in practically all major places in Slovenia. We saw the Festival as a possibility for the Universities in the network and other organizations

dealing with older people to present to the wider public the results of their learning and creativity in culture and other fields. The various study activities in these institutions have resulted in numerous admirable achievements, supporting the development of their communities and bonding their generation to their environment.

For the Slovenian Third Age University the festival is an opportunity to establish connections, get to know one another, compare achievements in the local environment, learn about good practices in intergenerational and other types of participation in the local community. The festival enhances the older generation's visibility through their public appearances and connects them with other generations.

The aim of the Festival is decentralization of the Slovenian Third Age network. In order to enhance involvement with the local environment, it is always held in a different Slovenian region.

The first festival of this kind was held in Škofja Loka, in the north-western part of the country in 2011. On this occasion the members of different Third Age Universities presented their various achievements: the local theatre called Žar, a study on the Ter Valley (Terska dolina) based on the investigation of the life of Slovenes living in Italy, the culinary tradition in a former mining community. One of the organizations set up a small library, which features significantly in the local cultural life.

The second festival took place in Nova Gorica, the south-western coastal region of Slovenia in 2013. The regional organization here showed the results of their investigations, research and learning, such as the study of local dialects, research into the life of the women from Šavrinija (an area in the Slovenian Istria), who used to collect eggs from the farms in the region and sell them in towns, especially Trieste; a study of the life of the Slovenian women called Aleksandrinke, who in the 19th century used to emigrate to Egypt to serve as maids and nurses, connections and joint cultural activities with the Slovenian communities in Italy and the Italian community in Slovenia.

This year (2015) the Festival has brought together the Third Age Universities of the eastern part of the country in Velenje. One of the organizations has set up a brass band, a nice contribution to local cultural life; another presented their study on local castles and the possible contribution they could make to local cultural and tourist development. We were introduced to a non-governmental organization from Bosnia, connecting older people by means of cultural and humanitarian activities, and the international activities of the Third Age University from Zagreb, Croatia. The University from Ljubljana showed several short films on the topic of active ageing, produced within the European CINAGE project.

With time the Festival has gained greater prominence, as shows this year's honorary sponsorship by the President of the Republic. As a rule the event is accompanied by a prominent public campaign aimed at increasing the awareness of both professionals and lay persons on the importance of third age education and active participation of the elderly in the local and broader communities.

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Older people's learning for understanding and interpreting local architecture and urban environment and stimulating cultural tourism

Introduction

Drawing upon a variety of sources - members of learning groups and local environment- learning in community, community education etc. seem to be more in tune with post modern knowledge society than structured, linear formal education. Knowledge, experiential knowledge and culture are put together to collectively construct and reconstruct new knowledge. Such knowledge concerns and supports individuals, groups of individuals and local community. The case of the study circle *Squares, Streets and Buildings Around Us* illustrates it.

Theoretical background

A number of concepts and theories supported the initial designing and delivery of the programme *Squares, Streets and Buildings Around Us*

(1) Older people and later life were best approached through the *activity theory* (Havighurst, 1969). Activity theory suggests that successful ageing takes place when older people remain active and maintain social interactions. There is a positive relationship between activity and life satisfaction.

(2) Architecture and urban environment have been discussed on the basis of the theory of cultural heritage by Krstić (2010, pp. 19-21). Architectural heritage is composed of single monuments, towns and villages, it is a testimony of civilisation and its important developmental phases. Krstić's premises are that architectural heritage is a testimonial of the wholeness of life of a nation and country and of the past. Being an authentic testimony

of societies and times, it is also an expression and testimony of historical continuity, as well as the future of its past.

Architectural cultural heritage was further studied mostly with reference to legal texts, European Charter of Architectural Heritage (1975 to quote just one of them:

The European architectural heritage consists not only of our most important monuments: it also includes groups of lesser buildings in our old towns and characteristic villages in their natural or man made settings.

The past as embodied in the architectural heritage provides the sort of environment indispensable to a balanced and complete life.

The architectural heritage is a capital of irreplaceable spiritual, cultural, social and economic value.

The structure of historic centres and sites is conducive to a harmonious social balance. The architectural heritage has an important part to play in education.

(3) Cultural tourism is a leisure time activity therefore reference was made to the theory of accidental versus serious leisure time. (Roberts, 1981; Stebbins, 2000). Serious leisure time and its formats make it possible for older people to overcome themselves, to construct their identity. Serious leisure time develops a feeling that one directs oneself and it betters one's social integration in society. Stebbins (2000) describes serious leisure time as reasonable and purposeful activity. Shields (1997) says serious leisure activities have a tempo, rhythm and develop in a well defined direction.

(4) Development and delivery of the programme *Squares, Streets and Buildings Around Us* dwells upon different theories among which the French *Theory of socio-cultural animation* by Nicolas de Condorcet, André Malraux and Paul Besnard (Besnard, 1980; Findeisen, 1995).

Socio- cultural animation provides access to culture and knowledge for all social groups, thus increasing their social power. It is a reaction to social changes or an anticipation of the changes to come.

In the discourse of Andrė Malraux, writer and the first French minister of culture, art and cultural heritage are not given in their own right, but have to be acquired, reached, internalised.

Culture and knowledge spread by actors of socio-cultural animation have both individual and social transformative role, historic role, a role of transmitters of universal values, a role of those who tie up social communities and struggle against social inequality. Socio-cultural animation are also actions led by individual actors who have formed a group, having set up the content as well as social and eventually economic goals of their action.

Socio-cultural animation is also a sector of social life. Its actors pursue goals like: modification of standpoints and interpersonal relationships by being active in public media and by using non-directive learning methods.

Finally, socio-cultural animation is a cluster of methods based on the understanding of the others, establishing equal relationships, abolishing heirachical relationships in group. Members of the group decide on how their learning process and their doings will develop, thus changing themselves and their environment.

Older people and modifications of later life

Only three decades ago, in former Yugoslavia of which Slovenia was a constituent part, in the socialist times, when the State was largely co - responsible for shaping citizens' life, and meeting their needs, old age seemed to be role less. After retirement few older people were enabled to go on with their creative life: artists, researchers, translators. (Krajnc, 1999). The majority of older people were socially speaking idle retirees with lower income and limited possibilities to construct themselves and community. There was top down organised collective leisure time and entertainment, which could not be labelled as serious leisure time - construction of both oneself and community (Stebbins,1992; Shields, 1997; Rojek, 2000). Of course one could volunteer but volunteering was also organised top down and not vice versa. There was practically no education for older people, except rather well developed animation activities in nursing homes and occasional public medical lectures.

In today's knowledge based society and market economy older people's position has been changing in most European countries. Moreover, in knowledge based society learning and knowledge are required for all activities (Lyotard, 2003), older people's activities being no exception to the rule.

Once termed *the third age of life* (after the Greek poet Hesiodos) it is now called *time between work, retirement and old age* stressing the new dynamic character of the time following the end of professional work. Though older people get retired, they can reactivate themselves or take on new social roles more in tune with contemporary social developments. Due to new cultural organisation of ages (Guillemard,1986) and new social stratification, older people are gaining also new, unprecedented social roles. Consequently, the importance of their learning and education has been increasing. They are invited to both learn and contribute towards local development upgrading simultaneously their *cultural* and *creative capita*l as well as *local capacity*. The study circle *Squares, Streets and Buildings Around Us* at Slovenian Third Age University is meant to cultivate older people's' competencies of understanding and interpreting local architecture and urban environment and to enable older people to contribute to cultural tourism in their locality.

Defining cultural tourism

Cultural tourism concerns broadening horizons and knowledge and concerns the desire to experience emotions, when face to face with cultural heritage and the territory where cultural heritage is located (Origet du Clouzeau, 2007).

At first sight cultural tourism seems to be a pleonasm, since in the past each tourist traveling was of cultural nature. It was exclusively meant to broaden horizons, facing one's own with foreign cultures. Cultural tourists used to be well off young people sent abroad by their parents. In addition to that, cultural tourists were philosophers and writers who, while travelling, wrote down their impressions, comparing their own culture with foreing cultures and civlisations, their own way of thinking with other people's way of thinking. To illustrate this point, let us quote Michel de Montaingne:

> "Travelling is a valuable activity. Spirit is active all the time, eager to see unknown and new things. There is hardly a school of life surpassing travelling" can be read in Journal of Montaigne's Travels in Italy by way of Switzerland and Germany in 1580 and 1581." (translated by M.K.)

Thus cultural tourism means acquiring knowledge. It is a school of life. Typical of cultural tourism is the tourists' will to return from a journey enriched and different. Therefore cultural travelling cannot be accidental, on the contrary, it has to be carefully planned. Knowledge is mostly acquired before, during and after the travelling. By no means cultural tourism can be mere consuming of impressions. In contrast it requires cooperation of tourists and hosts.

Barretto (2000) argues that cultural tourism is a type of tourism wittnessing the existence of attractive, valuable and authentic aspects of life, societies, culture. Therefore cultural tourism is necessarily linked with knowledge and gaining knowledge on both sides; on the side of tourists and on the side of hosts. Cultural tourism meets two human needs: the need to be mobile in a given space, and the need for symbolic expression. (Malinowski, 1945).

Further, Lyotard (2003) emphasises that the post modern times are subordinated to constant changes and searching for what can not be reached. Cultural tourism seems to be an expression of this. It is not based on data, on the conratry it is based on live relationships, experience in a given context and time, experience that can always be upgraded or clearly transformed. Cultural tourists expect that their travelling will help them meet other people and their ways of life. Cultural tourists visit sacral buildings, museums, archeological excavations, thematic museums, memory sites, fotresses, eco-museums, parcs, festivals and other events. Most interested are they in classified cultural monuments; buildings, monuments, parts of buildings (staircases, balconies), public cultural heritage (town halls, court palaces). They are also attracted to memorial sites.

Squares, streets and buildings around us - from study programme to study circle

The study circle, learning in community, reciprocal and mutual learning going on under this title, have proven to be a constant source of innovative topics, action research, publications, exhibitions, projects etc. More importantly, this kind of older people's *learning in community* was made public through planned public campaigning: a number of educational and cultural events, newspaper articles, TV and radio programmes, conferences, Slovenian Third Age University electronic news, newsletters and webpages of different international educational networks. *Learning in community and community education can be effective only when they produce changes not only on individual level but also on the level of community.* To this end permanent public campaigning is needed.

Squares, Streets and Buildings Around Us was later incorporated into the European project *Personal Town Tours* or vice versa, whose participants were collecting and exchanging stories about their towns, shaping them into thematic tours, tailored tours with guides revealing their own or their peers' stories in relation to buildings and urban environment.

Three years ago *Squares, Streets and Buildings Around Us* was established at Slovenian Third Age University as one of the fifty-six educational programmes. Ever since members of this study group/study circle have been sharpening their view of the

Ljubljana's characteristics and have been building their competency of reflecting their personal experience of the urban environment in general. At the same time, urban environment has been approached as a mix of built structures, historic, cultural and social elements. The study contents have been delivered and/or jointly constructed by all members during weekly meetings in the lecture room and in the town. Members of the group never stop thinking about their environment and exchanging their findings. One might say that they live as "architects and town planners". These study meetings quickly yielded a number of new projects.

The study programme *Squares, Streets and Buildings Around Us* was basically designed by one of the authors of this paper to visually present the rich contents Ljubljana has to offer to its townspeople. But there was also her wish to enable the members of the study group to overcome the usual user's perception of the built environment and to consider- in addition- how town planners and/or architects perceive the same built environment.

On the basis of single examples from their own town - which is never known and studied enough- the participants have been exercising their competency of analysing the conception of urban environment, thus getting insights which helped them discover their own and in the same way also other towns. Reflection about their personal experience of urban environment has become unavoidable. A permanent two-way process between the observer and the observed object was set up. *The programme dwells upon studying examples of built environment, slowly creating a bridge towards the kind of abstract thinking and understanding that are typical of architectural designing and urban planning.*

One of the projects shaped in this study circle was a two-year European project *Personal Town Tours,* closely related to the contents , methods and goals of the *Squares, Streets and Buildings Around Us* study programme. A small study group of nine members designed and put into practice three thematic architectural itineraries through Ljubljana. Moreover, they organised an international conference and finally they published a somehow different architectural guide. Different, because it introduces the reader to architecture by means of architectural description and analysis of architectural heritage, with photos taken by one of the members, with interpretation of buildings based on the collected individual memories and impressions of older urban space users.

Kevin Lynch argues that the image of environment is a result of a two-way process going on between the observer and what is observed. Shapes and interconnections are offered, the observer selects, categorises, classifies them and gives them meaning according to his or her current interests and goals. (Lynch, 1960). When engaged in his or her everyday ways, the observer is mostly occupied with his or her urgent activities, getting to work, waiting for a bus at the bus stop, etc. Since these activities are urgent and unavoidable, the environment does not impact him or her. Once engaged in their routinized ways, the users act in their usual way, excluding the majority of their sensorial perceptions. Quite opposite is their behaviour in foreign towns. They perceive colour, light, the silhouette of the castle in the background, they feel the pattern of the pavement, they smell streets etc. Most of the times they start classifying these impressions only when they get back to their hotel or at later home. By that time many information are lost and a their narrative related to them is composed with difficulty.

One of the initial aims of the *Squares, Streets and Buildings Around Us* study circle was that members would learn to observe the town as architects and urban planners do. So far, members of the study circle have delineated several own research topics: "The importance of having water in town" "Senses and perceptions of towns", "Co-habitation

of traditional ambients and new interventions into urban environment". " Ruins in architecture and architecture of ruins".

Moreover, over last years Ljubljana has undergone substantial changes. Its cultural and technical roots are important for preserving its identity and unity, which calls for a different and active role of its older townspeople. On one hand these are interpreters of culture and tradition and on the other hand without new knowledge, they might feel the many changes to be aggressive and could not understand them.

Started as an educational programme to be delivered, *Squares, Streets and Buildings Around Us* ended up in a true study circle, true learning in community, where time, experience, knowledge, culture are put together and new knowledge is being constructed together by all members. Concepts and principles of socio-cultural animation are being applied. Whatever the study circle does, is accompanied by appearing in public.

From learning in community towards cultural tourism

Cultural tourism is dependent on the tourists' cultural capital and consequent tourists' expectations. The study circle *Squares, Streets and Buildings Around Us* published a guide based on the research done by the members of the study circle. Three thematic itineraries had been collectively shaped and researched combining the members' individual culture, the knowledge study circle members internalized through their studies, their newly acquired perception of the town, "through the eyes of urban planners and architects" and through collecting personal stories and impressions about architecture and urban environment. The guide has become a basis for guiding specific groups of tourists through the town, mostly foreign visitors to Slovenian Third Age University.

The collected narratives build the bridge between professional data and feelings about the town which is a start for creating a basis for more structured and goal oriented cultural tourism. In the end this could turn into an economic activity, a good example of the today's phenomenon of economisation of culture and culturalisation of economy.

Conclusion

It can be concluded that a structured older adult education programme can be slowly, even spontaneously changed into learning in community with the prevailing learning methods such as study circle, project learning, action research, reciprocal and mutual learning, It has been empirically proven that learning in community is best when closely connected with local environment drawing upon its resources and bettering it through outputs and outcomes of collective learning. Turning learning in community into both public and economic activity has an important impact on the individual and social identity of older learners and the identity of local community.

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Significance of music activity of elderly people for their individual development and integration of local community *Exemplified by a small town*

Introduction

Modern Western societies cope with growing demographic problems. Decreasing number of births and deaths poses new challenges related to social life organisation and its quality. In traditional cultures, adulthood used to be perceived as the crowning of one's life: elderly people were treated with respect, reverence and care. It was believed that elderly people should "reject" the external world and focus on the spiritual aspect of their existence (Giddens 2012). In today's reality, elderly people do not always encounter acceptance of younger society members. Ageism, manifested by various forms of discrimination and lower income (in comparison to the rest of the society) and loneliness related to, e.g., widowhood (Giddens, 2012), result in decreased level of life quality of elderly people. Fortunately, this is not a rule: there are more and more initiatives and institutions that focus on activation of seniors on a macro-, micro and meso-scale. These activities aim at developing personality of elderly people via stimulating various competences. Elderly people are perceived in terms of social capital (Putnam 2008) and cultural capital (Bourdieu, Passeron, 1990), whereas the network of relations in which they participate is a development factor for local communities.

The article discusses the music activity of elderly people in the "Warmianki" folk ensemble from the point of individual development of ensemble members and the perspective of local community integration.

Social and cultural capital of local environment

The term social capital is a category which cannot be confined to clear-cut definitions and interpretations. Lynda J. Hanifan was the first to refer to it. According to

her, social capital consists of mutual positive relations among people in a specific community. Entering into such relations has, on the one hand, positive impact on the functioning of individuals (offers support, feeling of affiliation) and on the other, increases the conditions of existence of a community (Putnam, 2008). James Coleman (1990) understood social capital more broadly: according to him, it consists of specific standards, values, sanctions and obligations inseparably linked to performance of specific social roles. Robert Putnam (2008) also attached significance to common standards and values, claiming that they are an important element determining the character of mutual relations among individuals and organisations. Such relations should be characterised by authentic reciprocity and trust (Putnam 1995). Francis Fukuyama also refers to the category of trust in the context of social capital. According to him, social capital is a capacity that results from popularisation of trust in the entire nation and in smaller social groups (Fukuyama 1997).

During analysis of social capital types, R. Putnam (2008) indicated that they may be divided according to various types of networks functioning in specific groups: repeated, intensive, multi-stranded or episodic, single-stranded and anonymous. The most important task, according to this author, is division of social capital into inclusive capital – focused on activities oriented inside, with a tendency to strengthen excluding identities and homogenous groups and exclusive capital, encompassing people from various groups, e.g. civic rights movements or ecumenical religious organisations (Putnam 2008).

C. Offe points out to two important elements of social capital. The first of them is "interest", manifested in directing attention to social, material and political situation of a given group. The second element constitutes the ability to associate, resulting, in consequence, in involvement in activities within more or less formalised structures (Theiss 2006). Involvement requires individual persons to have active orientation aimed at resetting the hitherto social code (Etzioni, 2012). Efficient change of this code should, according to Putnam (1995), be initiated by endogenous factors on the level of a local community, which is capable of recognising its needs and potential. They are characterised by greater efficiency for mobilisation and collective actions (Serega 2004).

The efficiency of initiatives undertaken by local communities is influenced by the fact that they are characterised by a network of individual and intense ties. All of this makes them an optimum space for building social capital. However, this process may be disrupted by globalisation, which blurs traditional dimensions of locality, such as: territory, identity and interdependence determining the group's unity. Direct social ties are also weakened (e.g. neighbourly ties) and the world created by the mass media acquires more and more significance (Winiarski 2006). As Bauman (2000) wrote, in today's globalised reality:

locality is a sign of social deprivation and degradation (…). The public space, where meaning is created and negotiated, is beyond reach of the local existence and due to this, locality relies more and more on sense-creative and interpretative activities, over which it has no control.

However, the control may be regained and maintained, according to A. Etzioni (2012), by people being active and by uniting in undertaking various initiatives, by transforming individual energy into public energy, by searching for new and efficient methods of focusing this energy on activities benefitting local communities.

The key for development of social capital is the cultural capital of individuals. Sztompka (1994) defines this capital in the categories of cultural competences, i.e. skills necessary for full use of institutions, various organisational forms, manners of life. This is also the ability to use three axial structures of the modern Western communities, i.e. free

market, democracy and open intellectual and artistic circulation. Obviously, such competences are, in reference to given individual and environments, varied by undertaking various activities which could lead to optimum development of both individual members of specific communities and the entire local community. Examples of such activities include initiatives aimed at elderly people activation.

Activation of elderly people

Ageing sets a lot of challenges and dilemmas before people in the age of late maturity. According to E. Erikson (2002), at this moment of development, a man has to deal with a crisis referring to the opposition: integrity of "I" vs. despair. The positive solution of this crisis leads, in the author's opinion, to approval and affirmation of one's life. Otherwise, such person is disappointed with their existence and draws a negative balance. On the other hand, according to R. Peck, everybody has to solve problems related to retirement, loss of physical fitness and awareness of inevitable death (Birch, Malim 1998).

Obviously, elderly people assume different stances in the face of these dilemmas. As indicated by S. Reichard, these may include: constructive stance – activity-oriented; dependant stance: expectation of care from others in spite of relevant fitness; defensive stance – refusal to accept help from others, even though it is objectively necessary; hostile stance – blaming others for one's situation; self-destructive stance – hostility to oneself (Bromley 1969). When analysing stances of elderly people toward ageing, one can also look at them from the perspective of theory of disengagement and activity. In line with the disengagement theory, elderly people may gradually isolate from the society and lock themselves in their individual internal world; on the other hand, according to the activity theory – they may remain adapted, productive and active by finding and pursuing substitute forms of activity (Birch, Malim, 1998).

Therefore, activity is the key category determining the quality of human life (Zych 1999). The concept of life quality is analysed in two aspects: objective and subjective. The objective stance refers to the evaluation of the level of life, condition of the natural environment and organisation principles of social reality (Pakula 2010 p. 475), whereas the subjective stance refers to individual evaluation of life satisfaction, including: health condition, material standing, social functioning, emotionality, sexuality, possibility of pursuing one's interests and prospects for the future (Blachnio 2000 p. 23).

Activities undertaken by elderly people may have various functions. These are: adaptive (adjustment of elderly people to functioning in a new social situation); integrative (better adjustment in a group); compensatory (levelling deficiencies in other areas of activity, e.g. professional); educational (development of intellectual competences); recreational and entertaining (Mandrzejewska-Smol 2010, p. 463).

Elderly people may be active in multiple dimensions: at home and within family (e.g. taking care of grandchildren), social activity (local community activities), educational (participation in language and IT courses), religious (participation in ceremonies), recreational (tourism, sport) and cultural (making use of cultural institutions, active participation in creation of culture) (Mandrzejewska-Smol 2010, pp. 463-464).

One form of activating elderly people is organisation of amateur music ensembles. The role of music in people's life was the object of philosophical reflection, today, it is analysed from the perspective of music psychology, medicine or music therapy. Musical activity may also have an educational dimension, forming a part of broadly understood

education through art (Read 1976). Active contact with music gives satisfaction, develops creative potential, shapes sensitivity and develops communication skills on the semantic (sung texts) and behavioural level (playing instruments). Thanks to music, people may express their emotions and the manner of looking at the world. Art – according to H. Read (1976) – uplifts, stimulates imagination, frees, maintains and coordinates all types of perception, at the same time efficiently training intellectual and emotional competences. This has special significance for elderly people as their intellectual capacity (memory, learning processes, attention, reaction time and thinking) clearly decreases during ageing (Birch, Malim 1998). Music activity also has a social dimension; participation in rehearsals and concerts is an opportunity for establishing new acquaintances, building and maintaining relations with other people. This helps individuals and groups discover their potential, as well as create and strengthen personal interactions and stimulate expression (Kamper-Kubanska 2010).

Study methodology

Study objective: to become acquainted, to describe and to analyse the functioning of the "Warmianki" folk music ensemble from the point of view of elderly people activation (definite majority of ensemble members) and building of social capital of the local environment.

Research problems were formulated as follows:

- What is the importance of music activity for the ensemble members?
- What competences are developed by membership in the ensemble?
- Does the cultural management conducted as part of the ensemble's activity contribute to integration and promotion of the local community? If yes, in which degree?

The study was a quality study. Individual case method was used to analyse the examined phenomena in their actual context as it is an important determinant of the examined reality (Cohen, Manion, Morrison 2007, p. 253). Adoption of a holistic perspective of study search is also important with the assumption that human existence is fulfilled within specific systems, which constitute something more than loosely tied elements (Nisbet, Watt, 1984 p. 78). The presented study is characterised by phenomenological approach, aimed at acquaintance with human experiences as they are, via setting the interpreted reality in the context of values (Miles, Huberman 2000). The author primarily wished to examine subjective opinions and meanings assigned by individual respondents to specific elements and events in the reality surrounding them. The argument in favour of such methodological approach was a conviction that "acquired experiences are (…) well-adjusted to recognition of meanings which people assign to events, processes and structures of their lives" (Miles, Huberman 2000, p. 10).

The project also included field studies (Babbie, 2003), enabling better understanding of human behaviour and stances in the natural environment. Non-participating observation (during concerts) and open participating observation (during rehearsals) was used (Babbie, 2003). Descriptions and interpretations of the respondents' world were obtained during 3 partially structured interviews (Kvale 2010), along with a focused group interview, aimed at provoking the respondents to express opinions regarding the discussed issue (Kvale 2010). Interviews were analysed in line

with the bricolage approach, which assumes use of ad hoc techniques (Kvale 2010 p. 187). These techniques rely on perceiving similarities, grouping, making comparisons and contrasts, noticing relations among variables (Kvale 2010, Miles Huberman 2000, pp. 252-253). The study was conducted between 2014 and 2015. The collected empirical material was very extensive and – on account of limited volume of the publication – only most important conclusions regarding the discussed issue are going to be presented.

Study area and respondents' characteristics

The study was conducted in Milakowo – a small town in Warmia (north-eastern Poland), one of the most beautiful areas in the country. Numerous forests, lakes and clear air make it a popular destination for tourists from Poland and abroad. It is also an area with rich and turbulent history. It was initially inhabited by Prussian tribes; since the 16th century it was the Polish fee. From the end of the 18th century – as a result of Poland's partition – Warmia was a part of Prussia. It was incorporated within the Polish borders in 1945 (Kruk 2003). Ethnic inhabitants of Warmia fled away from the approaching front line; Poles who, pursuant to the Yalta Treaty, had to leave the areas of pre-war eastern Poland, were resettled in their place. Apart from Poles, settlers from central Poland also came to Warmia, along with Ukrainians ousted by the new authorities from the south of the country. In consequence, a peculiar conglomerate of people was created with different traditions, customs, languages, religions and many years had to pass for them to integrate deeper (Poniedzialek 2011).

Currently, Warmia is facing many social and economic problems. After social and political transformations in 1989, state owned farms were liquated and majority of factories were closed. In consequence, people in the region are fighting with highest unemployment in the country and lowest gross income per capita (Central Statistical Office of Poland, 2015). In effect, the region is perceived as underdeveloped, impoverished and without perspectives. Young people emigrate to better developed regions of Poland or abroad. In particular, villages and small towns are becoming depopulated – the balance of internal and external emigration is negative (Central Statistical Office of Poland, 2014).

Milakowo is a small Warmia town. Its traditions go back to the beginnings of the 14th century. In 2013, it was inhabited by 5,692 persons. Current demographic tendencies are worrying: low birth rate (it dropped from 5.3% in 2007 to 0.7% in 2013: Milakowo Town Office). Unemployment reaches 19% of registered persons, with unemployment in Poland on the level of 11.7% (Central Statistical Office of Poland 2015a). In spite of such unfavourable indices, Milakowo constitutes a relatively efficiently functioning community. A kindergarten, a primary school and a middle school perform educational functions. Cultural life focuses around the local Cultural Centre. It has a small concert hall and a municipal library. The Centre organises music courses, fine art classes, IT and foreign language courses. The town also has an amphitheatre, where local events are organised; there is a sports club, a fire brigade and associations supporting local initiatives in the area of education, culture, social assistance and development of regional identity (Town Office in Milakowo, 2014). Elderly people (849 persons/ 15% in post-productive age according to the Central Statistical Office of Poland 2014) have Senior's Club in the Cultural Centre and folk ensemble "Warmianki."

The ensemble was established in 1974. After a break in operation (1980's: social and political transformations in Poland, financing problems with), the ensemble was

reactivated by former members in 1996 and has been the "music showcase" of the town. It participated in numerous Polish and foreign competitions, harvest festivals and concerts. It regularly performs in Milakowo. Ensemble members are elderly and retired persons, mostly women. The repertoire includes traditional Warmia songs and folk dances. The instruments of the ensemble include: accordion, violin, double bass, drum and the so-called devil's fiddle (Milakowo Cultural Centre, 2015). The ensemble members perform in original folk outfits, which include blue coats, white trousers and hay hats (for men) and long skirts, white aprons and sophistically embroidered white and golden bonnets. The rehearsals take place once a week.

Study sample included 7 respondents: Lila (aged 63, in the ensemble since 1998; former school administration worker), Irena (aged 72, in the ensemble since 2002, former Commune Cooperative worker), Witek (aged 64, accordion player, in the ensemble since 1999), Jurek (aged 61, ensemble manager for 12 years, violin player, former music teacher). Other persons who took part in the study: Zbyszek (aged 66, former director of the Cultural Centre in Milakowo, currently local councillor and social activist) and Izabela (aged 48, well known author of children's books who grew up in Milakowo; her grandparents were members of the ensemble from the very beginning of its existence). All persons (excluding Izabela) are retired. The study participants agreed to leave their names unchanged.

Study results

Importance of music activity

According to the study, participation in the ensemble has great significance for the respondents.

Lila: Because of the ensemble, we are on the move. Rehearsals, concerts: this is our life. Without it, we would just sit in front of television or gossip with the neighbours. If we get a prize somewhere, you feel that you are still worth something.

Janka: This has always required a lot of effort. I often had to leave household chores and go to a rehearsal; but without it, we would not succeed. I wanted to perform as a child and I still do. It makes you more cheerful; you want to live; you stop complaining and you are happy when the performance goes well. You have a reason to live. Besides, you are not alone.

Witek: Sometimes you wish you could get a break from playing, but what can you do? A must is a must. For me, this is an escape from troubles; this is my hobby; I have always played, I like it. I am happy when I can play. If I did not do it, what would be left? There is nothing else to do here.

Irena: I like doing it, but I am tired. I have health problems and I remained involved as long as I could. Now, I am thinking about resigning. I have had enough: maybe I can do something else; I like travelling; recently, I got back from the USA – maybe I can go there again?

According to the analysis of the collected material, the significance of music activity of respondents can be characterised in the following categories: an attractive form of spending free time, an alternative for everyday monotony and duties, a source of good frame of mind and vital strength, a source of self-confidence and sense of life.

Membership in ensemble vs. development of members' competences

Witek: I have to learn a lot. I do not know notes, so my wife records what I have to play at a rehearsal and I learn it by heart. I have learnt patience; it is better to be well-prepared and avoid stress at a concert.

Janka: We have to learn all texts by heart. Our boss does not even want us performing with sheets of paper. Sometimes, there is a lot to learn, but we manage.

Irena: Dances are difficult to learn: the sequence of steps. There is also signing. I cannot play any instrument, but I can sing. We rehearse a lot, you have to be systematic and punctual; the boss does not like it when we let it go. Sometimes, we get angry when something goes wrong, sometimes one person advises the other… We argue a bit, but the atmosphere is very good. (…) We take care of our outfits ourselves; they were very expensive – but you have to look good, this is what the jury pays attention to at competitions.

Lila: We travel a lot around Poland, we went abroad. You get to know new places and people. I am no longer stressed by performances, I know I have to do it and that's it (…). Sometimes, we would like to sing something different than folk songs, something more entertaining, but the boss does not let us; he says we have to keep proper level.

Jurek (boss): I think that during rehearsals and performances they learn a lot. They get to know new compositions, Warmia folklore; their signing has improved; however, dancing is not ideal. We need a choreographer who would set it all right. I think that they also learn being on stage, dealing with stress, expressing their emotions and being open. Sometimes, I do not recognize them – they are so vivacious. They are really intent on doing this, even though I know that learning new repertoire is not easy. Relations in the ensemble are good; but this required some learning, because everybody is different and everybody has their own problems and better and worse days. They are constantly learning how to be together and they feel responsible for one another.

When analysing the impact of the ensemble on selected competences of persons, it is possible to indicate cognitive development (learning new repertoire, getting to know the tradition, new places), social development (taking care of good relations among ensemble members, getting to know new people, responsibility for the ensemble), emotional development (dealing with stress, expressing emotions on stage, ability to mobilise oneself).

Activity of ensemble vs. integration and promotion of local community

Lila: We perform in our town frequently. A lot of people come to see us. They listen to us and they can sing and dance too. People need it. We know they like it.

Irena: Everybody says that we are the town's showcase; everybody praises us, but the local authorities are not really interested. This is definitely related to money. We often have to finance our trips. The trips are great, we can sing together in the bus; we always stop along the way and organise picnics.

Witek: The local authorities would like us to perform as often as possible and this is what we do. People like it; we all meet in the amphitheatre, church or the cultural centre. We sing for many people. But the authorities do not take interest in us. Sometimes I think that they wish we stopped performing, so that they could assign the subsidy for something else. I wish they could organise some auditions for the ensemble; I wish they advertised us – we only count upon ourselves.

Zbyszek: The ensemble plays an important role in the local community. Milakowo is associated with "Warmianki." This is our showcase. The ensemble represents Milakowo in contests, participates in festivals and events around Poland and abroad. Many people come to see us. They can have fun, laugh and spend time together. The ensemble often visits schools, meets with children and young people, presents and promotes Warmia folklore – this is very important.

Izabela (writer): Speaking from a perspective of a person who was raised in Milakowo and now lives somewhere else and visits the place sporadically, it seems that the ensemble determines the community's identity. The ensemble members have always actively participated in local cultural initiatives; they created a feeling of community and affiliation; they were convinced about the importance of their activities for others. I know that the ensemble is experiencing problems related to finances and recruitment of new members; I have also heard that four persons recently applied – there is hope that the situation will improve, because I cannot imagine Milakowo without "Warmianki."

According to the respondents, the ensemble's activities are inseparably linked to the local community; they contribute to its promotion and integration, even though the ensemble members are not happy about limited involvement of local authorities.

Discussion

Conclusions presented above should not be generalised. It is also necessary to remember that they refer to the Polish environment, yet may be a starting point for further searches and discussions regarding stimulation for local communities in other countries.

According to analysis of collected data, music activity of the ensemble members is related to development of a number of competences: social, emotional and cognitive. Obviously, not all competences are developed in a uniform or optimum manner, but it seems that for the respondents music activity has great significance. It is an attractive manner of spending free time, a source of numerous positive experiences and reflections.

Via their activity, they fulfil their needs of affiliation, respect and self-fulfilment. Regular rehearsals and learning new repertoire improve memory, attention and thinking. They have to be systematic and take care of their physical fitness, as singing, dancing and playing instruments require agility. Entering into new interpersonal relations is also important. All of this contributes to improvement of quality of life, subjectivity, frame of mind and offers a possibility of self-development (Blachnio 2002). Sense of life is also an important category in analysis of the respondents' music activity which, according to C. Rogers and K. Goldstein, is related to self-fulfilment and realisation of one's potential (Zając 2002). An important result of such activity may also be development of the feeling of coherence of individual persons. According to the concept of A. Antonovsky (1997), it consists of three components: understanding the reality (cognitive component), controllability, manifested in conviction that man may actively influence one's own and other's lives (instrumental component) and meaningfulness, i.e. conviction that it is worth accepting challenges brought by everyday reality (emotional and motivational component). The activity of "Warmianki" is also important for integration and promotion of the local community. The ensemble members are involved in local cultural, folklore and educational initiatives. The attitude of local authorities to the ensemble is a problem, along with understanding its role, needs, financial and organisational support. The questions regarding efficiency of undertaken activation measures, their popularisation and inclusion of greater number of people in them remain open. Issues related to financing such initiatives, building their social image and supporting them are important; in Polish reality a lot is to be done in this respect (even though there are changes for the better).

Conclusion

On the basis of the conducted study, one can assume that music activity of persons involved in the "Warmianki" ensemble brings numerous benefits from the point of view of development of selected competences of ensemble members, instilling sense in their life (Adler 1986). The operation of the ensemble forms a part of the process of building social capital of the local environment, a capital with clearly exclusive character (Putnam 2008). The discussed issue still requires numerous analyses, yet it seems that the reality surrounding us may only be changed efficiently by an active society (Etzioni 2012).

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Down to the river.
Recovering people's memories and identities.

That sends me down to the river
Though I know the river is dry
That sends me down to the river tonight
Down to the river
(Bruce Springsteen, The River)

Introduction

The main aim of this paper is to describe an ongoing research to recover the memory of the River Guadalquivir where it passes through a village called Coria del Río, 12 km. from the city of Seville in the south of Spain. One of the goals of this research is to edify a museum about the river and its influence on people's daily life. As well, the museum is an instrument of learning and teaching, addressed not only to the elderly but also to the younger generation, in order to explain what the role of the River was historically, and perhaps still is, for the village. To that end the research also aspires to create teaching materials addressed to both young people and adults in primary, secondary or adult education schools.

For now, the first initiative is an exposition focused on the crafts and the river – projected for the end of this year 2015. At present time a series of interviews are being made in order to reclaim people's experiences in relation to the river. To develop this paper I am going to focus on the interviews and specifically in some aspects directly related to crafts, trade, identity, etc. After this I will present very provisional conclusions.

Craft, identity and culture

We are living in a society in an unstoppable process of globalisation. Local identities are confronted by the mainstream of modernisation processes and the pressures to change some traditional ways of life and work for more competitive ways. I have previously studied these processes of change in the case of fishing activities (Lucio-Villegas & Fragoso, 2005). Two powerful concepts were used in this research: Social Change and Transition. I would like to return to the latter. As Godelier (1987) states, societies in transition are the ones that face increasing difficulties (both external and internal) in reproducing traditional social and economical relations. I have a special interest in the dimensions that can fight back modernisation in its components of the loss of cultural identities and traditions, because they give particular meaning to certain actions in a community. Either this concept of transition or the concept of Social Change can allow us to consider the loss of cultural identities that communities – and the people living in them - are suffering in relation to their way of life and the productive system associated to.

An important part of this identity - as I affirmed above - is related to production, and one of the first things that modernisation processes have done is to eliminate older production systems by considering them obsolete. By doing so they have thrown the crafts and some forms of trade to a kind of marginal niche – in some ways devoted to tourism and attractions.

But this craftwork is an important part of the people's everyday life. It confirms their identity and is based on their experience derived from their relationships with others and with the surrounding environment. Experience could be considered as one of the dimensions of adult education. It is, in some ways, the result - and the process - through which an individual organises knowledge and shares it with others. Experience from a Freirean perspective is related to problem-posing education, and it is the source for organising the processes of teaching and learning. Experience could be considered the matter from codifications that emerge at the moment to say the word and the world (Lucio-Villegas, 2015).

An important issue here is to reflect on the relation between adult education, identities, work and crafts. Here I quote Ettore Gelpi and Richard Sennett.

According to Gelpi (1990):

> "The relationships between work and society are not only of economic and social nature. The lack of identity of a community, a country or several countries has consequences concerning the content and the quality of the work." (p. 17)

There is, Gelpi adds, an essential cultural dimension in reflecting on the work. Deriving from it, Gelpi reflects on the cultures of work, trying to define identities and bonds that people organise around work. As Sennett (2010) states, relationships between craftsmen and communities are inseparable. In fact, Sennett adds "in the traditional world of the ancient potter or doctor, it was the community who defined the pattern of a good work" (2010, p. 38). In short, it seems that these relations among culture, identity, community life are always present in organising a part of the quotidian life of people and the production system.

It is a fact that the organisation of work has been changed. "The time of production is fragmentary and very diverse and the quality of the work varies in regard to the content, the development and the aim" (Gelpi, 2004, p. 111). This new organisation throws out

some of the characteristics of the craft and the craftsmen such as: the innovation that introduces changes in the final product; the innovation, and the creativity to adapt the final result to the taste and necessities of the communities where the craftsmen work and live

On the other hand, Sennett (2000) had studied changes in people's daily lives produced by this new organisation of work. Some of these are: the impossibility to organise a career derived from the constant mobility that means 'never for a long time'. People are living in a constant state of unpredictability when it comes to organising their own career and life.

Furthermore, the new organisation of work brings – among other things – the loss of people's experience.

> "All men [sic] have lacked their history even though is evident that a part of their work's cultures is not only still alive but it is essential for production and identity." (Gelpi, 2004, p. 46)

The last point that I want to stress is Sennett's argument related to the loss of the crafts' pride. Craftsmen are lost in the maelstrom of the new organisation of the work. Some comments on it to close this framework.

According to Sennett (2010) craftsmen are people "devoted to doing their best for the simple fact of doing it well" (p. 32). Doing good work is the primordial identity of craftsmen. This means a specific way of organising the work, the learning and teaching of the work, and life. A job well done means "curiosity, research and learn from the uncertainty" (Sennett, 2010, p. 66).

The work of craftsmen challenges us to think about the work itself and about its organisation – and also how to learn it – in a very different way far from the mainstream defined by Lifelong Learning practices and policies characterised by skill, competences and competiveness. Later on I will present some analytical categories, emerging from the interviews that can help us in this reflection.

Brief description of the context

Coria del Río is a village 12 km from Seville, the forth most populated city in Spain. At present time Coria del Río has 30208 inhabitants (Junta de Andalucía, 2015). Even the village is now a dormitory town - due to the expansion of the nearest great city – its history and the history of its production system and the culture associated with it is closely linked to the River. In fact, around 800 BC the village was on the shore of the River Guadalquivir, but today it is around 40 km away. Another important historical event related to the River and the history of Coria del Río is the so called *Hasekura Expedition,* which in the 17th Century brought Japanese people to the village. This event is still celebrated today and some bonds have been created with Japan – specifically with the city of Sendai.

The traditional production system was based on fishing activities, pottery, the fabrication of bricks, shipbuilding, etc. All of these activities are closely related to the River and defined a cultural identity almost lost today.

Coria del Río, as I affirmed above, is a dormitory town, where only few brick factories are operating, and a marginal population live from fishing activities.

The project and the research team

When I was trying to describe the project and the research team I have realized the difficulties in exploring some aspects of both. I will briefly explain some notes to define first the project and then the research team.

First of all, the major goal of the project could be defined as such: to recover the people's memories of their own territory. This memory should enable young people to know and understand their roots and the history of the place. I can also add two more goals: a) To recover and systematise the experiences of people living in the village that are related to the River, and b) To elaborate teaching materials that enable both young people and adults at school to reflect on their shared experiences. In the specific case of young people the project stresses the importance of linking these teaching materials to the history of the place.

At present time the research team is working on recovering and systematising the experience by doing non structured interviews. The criterion to select people to interview has been related to age: the older people that can give a framework of the history, changes and situation of the River. A second criteria is related to interviewing people working – or who have worked – in crafts linked to the River such as: fishermen, sailor, potters, shipbuilders, etc. At present time we have 9 interviews at an average of 50 minutes each. Some interviews were taped in both audio and video and others only in audio. There is not a balance in gender terms and this could be considered as an important matter. In a previous research on fishing places I have stressed the important role of the women in fishing villages (Lucio-Villegas, 2006).

The project – research and action – aspires to become participative. A previous one called *Coria del Río Educative City* can be considered one of the roots of the actual project. This took place in the end of the 1990s and from it several different projects arose.

In 2013 an event called *Building Rivers from Popular Education* was organised. This event re-joined people involved in the previous project, and other people coming from social movements. From here, the project to recover the memories and traditional crafts related to the river began.

The research team is composed of people coming from diverse backgrounds: retired adult education teachers, civil servants working in the City Hall, people coming from Social Movements, from the university or the adult education school.

To finish this section it is important to stress that the diversity of people holding the research team is, at the same time, a richness and a disadvantage. Some branches have derived from the original project and some troubles have appeared during the first year of the research. We have dealt with these problems thanks to a very slow process of dialogue and by a participatory approach.

Findings: The listening

At present time, the research project, as I explained in the previous point, is focused on two different issues. On the one hand, interviews are being analysed in a preliminary way to systematise some categories that allow us to classify not only the interviews but also to organise other diverse materials such as pictures, artefacts, etc.

Additionally, an exposition on the crafts associated with the River is being prepared for October this year. In this paper I am going to focus on the first task.

Deriving from this it is possible to reflect on the relationship between the river and people's identities. I have called it "the listening phase" because listening is the first moment in the Thematic Research drawn on by Freire (1970). In this direction, the research team have considered that the first moment of the research must also be the moment of recovering people's stories and memories. By doing so it is also possible to look for the thread for organising future explorations.

In short, I am going to present the first four categories that can be extracted from the interviews conducted until now.

The spoken work

In the very beginning of 'The Age of Revolution' (Spanish edition,) the historian Eric Hobsbawm explained how this time of profound changes in western societies can be also remembered for new words that appeared and today are common in our languages. Words such as: industry, railways, working-class, etc.

The traditional crafts in Coria del Rio have a number of specific words for designating some tasks. For instance, the owner of a brick factory explains the reason for calling the mud "fish".

> *[The mud] was shared in boards where it was cut with an 'esteron'. [a kind of big box to recover and transport fish] This 'esteron' was the same used to extract the fish from the boats and this is the reason that the mud [extracted from the river] is called "fish".*

These kinds of expressions are being lost. "*Are things lost with time?*" wondered another person in an interview.

Thinking in terms of crafts it is possible to find the similar situations. An example could be the word 'barranquero', which referred to men that knew how to cut, making the holes and extracting the mud from ravines near the river. The loss of this craft is also the loss of this word and, in other cases, to the contrary.

According to Gelpi, (2008) there is a problem of diversity and we have lost languages and expressions and this means, among other things, that there is a homogenisation of the language which means a homogenisation of thoughts. It is also coherent with Labov's works (1987) which demonstrate that the use of the language in some specific contexts can also change the language.

Crafts of our fathers

In traditional societies, crafts are transmitted in familial networks "*that have been acquired from fathers to sons, you know?"* This process also establishes close relationships between different crafts. "*I started to work as a carpenter with my uncle"* a fisherman explained. In these familial conditions the learning of a craft is a hard process without salary:

> *My father took me out [of school] to learn the craft with my uncle, without earning anything and I told my father 'Dad, I work more than my cousins and much more than everyone but I don't earn anything.'*

There also was confusion between the role of father and the role of boss - which we can consider different in our societies: "*I went to work with my father. My father was the master and I was the sailor"*.

Other individuals tried to escape from this situation with specialised training. "*I got the diploma of second naval mechanics"*. It seems that this enabled people to get out from the pressures of family relationships, but it can also be considered as one of the reasons for the death of the village and the birth of the city as I will present in the next category.
To conclude this, it is also important to stress that the craft linked to family relationships means also the loss of traditional crafts.

> *Look! There is my son [...] with me is the end [the son is coming] he is an industrial engineer, and doesn't want to know anything about it.*

Cosmopolitism: The death of the village, the birth of the city

In 'What is Globalisation' (Spanish edition, 1998) Ulrich Beck talks about cosmopolitism as one of the characteristics of globalisation processes. Cosmopolitism is related to, among other things, the ease of changing the place of residence, moving from one place to another. In the case of Coria del Rio, cosmopolitism can be situated between the end of the 1950s and the beginning of the 1960s and it is related to the construction of an important shipyard in the city of Seville.

> *The Gutierrez Perez neighbourhood was born from this, was it not? This is in relation to economic grow and dormitory towns, right?*

This cosmopolitism is also related to the accreditation of some skills and competences as valid diplomas for moving to a more ample labour market, as we have seen above. *I left the river and went to Cadiz*, explained a person who specialised in naval mechanics,

> *I was in Iran, then I was in Israel too, with dredging too, I have been in France, and in Morocco.*

It can be considered that there was a kind of crafts' brain - mainly bound to the shipyard, but also to other places - that could be one of the reasons for the death of the traditional village, and the traditional society - based on a local economy focused on the river - and the birth of a dormitory town where the traditional identity is under threat.

This River brings us

In 'The River that brings us' (2003) the novelist Jose Luis Sampedro tells the history of timber men that transported timber in the River Tajo in the 1950s. For these men the River was their life and the edification of a weir - at that moment one of the biggest in all of Europe - meant the end of their work. From then on, the timber would be transported by railway or by trucks on roads.

In Coria del Río, the River is responsible for some contradictory feelings. On the one hand it was one of the main sources of richness and work: brick, pottery, agriculture, fishing activities, shipbuilding. But, on the other, people usually turn their backs on the river because it is a mysterious place causing diseases, death,

> *Here started a physical border. From here to down the river it was the march [...] of the mosquito diseases.*

And fear. A lot of children were prohibited from taking a bath in the River

> *Sure! Of course, you had a sure beating.... If your father knew that you had gone to the river to take a bath, if a friend [of the father] saw you [taking a bath and told him] 'I saw your son in the river' the beating was certain. .*

In the end, this seems to be a kind of reverential fear of the river, the river overflowed almost every winter

> *Here you have your thirty cows in winter and then an overflow came, and when you could get there [to the place where the cows were] there were no more cows.*

Conclusions

From this preliminary work a few conclusions could be presented.

First at all are the contradictory feelings that people face in regards to the river. The river is the source of life but, at the same time, it is a dangerous place and it is better not to go there. In some ways it could be affirmed that the production system is dissociated from the quotidian life. The view of the River more as an enemy than as a source of work and richness could explain the reason why the inhabitants abandoned their lives on the river.

A second matter could be related to modernisation processes. It seems that some of the most profound changes that the village suffered are related to the shift from a rural society to an industrial and urban one. The incorporation of craftsmen to work in the shipyard in Seville and in other jobs around the world was a possibility for people to position themselves in more secure jobs, increasing their salary and, in economic terms, to improve their quality of life. Now, the life in a globalised world is present in the community life and in this time of economic crisis, to have a job has become one of the most important things in people's life.

The challenge here is to determine how to preserve a traditional production system while simultaneously guaranteeing both jobs and quality of life. And this happens in a globalised world that seems to have hung over the past of this community as would an overflow of the river.

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Fulfilment of artistic leisure-time interests during Senior University classes

Introduction

Adult education at the Senior Universities that operate in Poland is not formal education, i.e., according to Eduard C. Lindeman (see Knowles, Holton, Swanson, 2009), it is the opposite of conventional education. Among the adult teaching-learning approaches and theories discussed in andragogy books (ibidem), the most appropriate for late adult education seems the humanistic psychology approach, whose main representatives are, among others, Abraham H. Maslow and Carl Rogers. At the top of Maslow's hierarchy of needs is self-actualisation, understood as the process of actualising potential skills linked with doing good for others (Maslow, 1990). Particularly important in the process of education of people in retirement age is what Rogers observes: there are elements of the actualisation of potential skills in every human in every age and almost every situation, provided a human undertakes some kind of activity (Rogers, 1982). He perceives the adult educator as a facilitator of the learning process (Knowles et al., 2009), who, by creating an atmosphere of acceptance and authenticity, helps every member of a learning group reveal their strengths, strengthen their aspirations and be a co-learner. Such an approach is closer to Howard Gardner's theory of multiple intelligences (1999), according to which human intelligences develop and may reveal themselves at different points in life. It is worth noting that he believes that the cultural context plays a major role in developing an individual profile of intelligences. The need for so-called late adult education is noted by many authors and although their respective views have different ideological or philosophical backgrounds, such as those of Komeński and Bauman, the idea of learning remains the same. Artistic activities undertaken within the framework of classes organised by various adult care and education institutions are one of the forms of learning and self-actualisation of seniors.

In this paper, Senior Universities are understood as a certain cultural context for the learning of people in retirement age, including for the development of their skills and interests. Due to my personal interest in artistic education, the goal of this paper will be

to present, based on a survey, the role of the university in developing artistic interests as seen by university participants.

Defining old age

More than three centuries ago, Jan Amos Komeński (1973) called old age "the school of old age", which is in line with his concept of treating life as a school. He divided this period into three grades, or stages of life:

I. *Those who enter into old age and review their duties (completed and pending).*

II. *Those, who have already entered into advanced old age and hurry to finish the work that remains to be done.*

III. *Those who are decrepit and expect nothing but death (Komeński, 1973, p. 269).*

Komeński does not specify the age spans for the respective stages of old age, as if expecting that the development of medicine and other sciences associated with medicine will significantly prolong human life, compared to his own time. Old age is usually considered to begin at 60 for women and at 65 for men, which until recently was also the retirement age. Currently, in Poland, the retirement age is being extended to reach a target of 67 years for both men and women. Aging is an individual process, and according to gerontologists, the advancement of old age is determined by biological age, mental age and social age, which do not necessarily coincide with chronological age (see Leszczyńska-Rejchert, 2010). Old age is a heterogeneous period consisting of various phases, of which the following three, depending on age, are mentioned the most often: the 1st phase, called retirement age (60-70 years), is when a person is able to fulfil plans that were impossible to fulfil because of previous professional duties and when one still feels fully capable physically and mentally; the 2nd phase, called the great age or beautiful age (70-80 years), is when health concerns and the burden of years limit the dynamics of extending the former phase; and, the 3rd phase, loss of autonomy, also called the phase of dependence (after 80 years), during which age is a process rather than a stage, the basic challenge is the struggle against a loss of bonds. A dependent old person who has been pulled into the logic of medical care risks becoming more and more detached from their history and original identity (ibidem). Regardless of the division into phases or subgroups of old age, Senior Universities include people who have finished their professional career and who wish to maintain an active lifestyle.

The activity of senior universities: goals and forms

The first Polish university, modelled on the French organisation established in 1973 by Pierre Vellas in Toulouse, was opened on 12 November 1975 in Warsaw at Centrum Medycznego Kształcenia Podyplomowego (Medical Post-Graduate Education Centre) on the initiative of Prof. Halina Szwarc. Its statutory goals were in line with the idea of the precursor of Senior Universities. They were as follows:

- including seniors into the lifelong education system,
- stimulating mental and physical activity of people in old age,
- conducting scientific research focusing on seniors, developing methods of further education and introducing preventive measures (Lubryczyńska, 2007).

On the other hand, every university has its own statute that specifies its goals as adjusted to the needs of local participants. For example, the goals of the statute of the Senior University in Olsztyn, listed in § 4, are as follows:

1. Organising educational, health-related, cultural, artistic and tourist activities for elderly and disabled people.
2. Inclusion of the elderly and disabled in the lifelong education system by stimulating personal development as well as intellectual and physical fitness.
3. Social activation and improving the quality of life of the elderly and disabled.
4. Dissemination of preventive gerontology.
5. Creating conditions for aging well (Olsztyn, 2015).

These goals are achieved by various activities, including various art classes, such as painting classes, choir, photography classes, literature classes and movement and dance classes. Lectures and classes for participants of Senior University are given by carefully selected staff: academic teachers, former academic teachers and professionals in various fields of science and art. The Senior University in Olsztyn offers a rich variety of classes. For example, language courses offered include English, French, German, Italian and Russian. The most popular languages are English and German. Seniors may also learn to use the computer. Computer courses are a chance for seniors to become acquainted with new technologies and interpersonal communication methods using new technologies.

Developing artistic interests as a form of education through art

Art performs numerous functions in human life and is an indispensable element of humanistic education. What is art? According to Władysław Tatarkiewicz, the meaning of this term has changed over the ages and *it inherited two functions from the 18th century: art is creating beauty, and art is imitating* (Tatarkiewicz 1988, p. 40). Given the multiple definitions of art and their variations, I suggest resigning from defining the term and assuming that art is "human activity rather than a creation of nature". It is a *conscious* act, rather than an impulse or coincidence (ibidem, p. 50). Thus, according to Tatarkiewicz, art is intentional and it may be a realisation of the need to preserve the reality, to give shape or to express oneself. Education for art and education through art are the key concepts of aesthetic education, whose main propagator in post-war Poland was Irena Wojnar. In the 21st century, when the world is becoming dominated by, as Wojnar calls it, persistent consumption and an egoistic life philosophy, it (education for and through art) acquires a special significance and becomes of key importance – *if we desire to defend the*

humanistic manhood and sublime "human tissue" defined by the Paideia tradition (Wojnar, 2000, pp. 171-172). Art creates a human and a human creates art. Education through art is the first and essential step towards self-education and self-instruction and, in turn, towards self-actualisation. Education through art is also a factor of the general human development and an element of satisfying various needs. According to Wojnar, the educational (instructional) role of the art is manifested by:

a) the "purifying" effect of aesthetic emotions;

b) a deepening of the culture of living together by developing various unselfish social bonds on both the level of fiction and in relations between real people;

c) an increasing mental flexibility and sensitivity through artistic multiplication of the reality;

d) an exciting effect of images of reality and certain artistic visions associated with the course of social matters;

e) *a shaping of a creative attitude to the world, but also in those recipients who have an active attitude towards certain types of works of art* (Wojnar, 1997, p. 108).

Education through art has in itself intrinsic value and it might seem that, because of that, there is no need to justify its presence in education, especially for adults in later life. However, it is worth striving to solidify its position as a full-fledged area of adult education available to all, regardless of place of residence, financial status or social background. In this paper, I understand the term "education (instruction) through art" dichotomously (pragmatically) as a form of artistic education, that is, practical activities undertaken by an individual in various artistic areas as well as enabling an individual to receive art, or, more broadly, his or her own culture and the culture of others (people, societies, ethnic or national groups). Such a pragmatic perception of art originates from John Dewey's theory of *learning through doing* and excludes any discussion about what is more important in education: practice or perception. According to Dewey's approach, aesthetic experience combined with artistic activity, or experience as he calls it, is: (1) a social rather than individual experience; (2) a part of daily life rather than transcendence; (3) integral with artistic activities rather than a matter of an artistic "object" or unappreciated thing; (4) a matter of the quality of interaction in a context rather than a universal property of every object (thing); and (5) is represented in nature rather than in an abstract way (Westerlund 2003).

Artistic classes for the elderly at Senior Universities are tailored to their needs and possibilities of the participants so that they can experience self-actualisation and success. Below is presented the survey I conducted among the participants of the Senior University in Olsztyn.

Method

In March and April of 2015, a survey was conducted among participants of art classes at the Senior University and Jarocka Senior Academy in Olsztyn, Poland. The selection of the study sample was intentional: the respondents were all participants in art classes who volunteered for the survey. The method was a guided interview conducted by means of a questionnaire. Apart from data concerning age, sex and length of participation in classes, questions were open-ended. According to Dariusz Kubinowski (2010), such a method of data collection may be called an open-ended questionnaire.

The *goal* of the survey was to collect, in a short period of time, extensive empirical material that would answer the following questions:

1. *What is the role of the Senior University in developing artistic interests according to the University participants?*
2. *How do the respondents perceive the development of their artistic interests and what guides them in their selection?*
3. *According to the respondents, what are the benefits of art classes for their individual development?*

In order to find answers to the problems analysed by the survey, the following five open-ended questions were asked in the survey:

1. *What do you think about the possibilities to develop your interests during the classes offered by the Senior University?*
2. *Why did you choose this type of classes?*
3. *Do you participate in the classes/workshops because of your previous interests or did your participation in various classes offered by Senior University reveal your interests? Please describe.*
4. *Please describe the benefits of participation in this type of classes for yourself and for others.*
5. *What would you like to add concerning the development of your interest at the Senior University?*

Questionnaires were distributed during art classes, such as choir, craft or painting.

Characteristics of the study group

The questionnaire was answered by 71 people: 63 women and 8 men. The study group was divided into three age subgroups:

I. 54 - 69 years - this subgroup consisted of 48 people (44 women and 4 men).

II. 70 - 80 years - this subgroup consisted of 20 people (16 women and 4 men).

III. 80 plus years - this subgroup consisted of 3 people (3 women).

The respondents were also divided into 4 subgroups depending on the length of their participation in the Senior University:

I. Up to 2 years - 6 people (5 women and 1 man).

II. 2 to 5 years - 29 people (23 women and 6 men).

III. More than 5 years - 36 people (35 women and 1 man).

The respondents were also grouped according to the category(ies) of the art classes they attended. Since some respondents declared they attend more than one class, the total number does not equal 71.

I. Music classes (choir or vocal and instrumental band) - 34 people (31 women and 3 men).

II. Painting group - 19 people (18 women and 1 man).

III. Art workshops (crafts, floral designing, photography) 23 (only women).

IV. Literary classes (cabaret, recitation, theatre) - 11 people (10 women and 1 man).

V. Dancing and movement classes - 9 people (6 women and 3 men).

Data analysis

The content of the questionnaires was analysed and the analysis began with substantive coding, which consisted of *the labelling of fragments of empirical material in order to specify a given subject matter area of the studies* (Kubinowski, 2010). The selective subtype of coding was used, i.e., only factors relevant to the central category in the study project were labelled. The process helped determine certain categories that reflected the problems listed above and covered by the survey.

I. *The role of the Senior University in developing participants' interests, according to the participants.* Relevant data were searched in answers to questions 1 and 5 in the questionnaire (as above). The following three categories were defined:

1) *evaluation* - this category included direct evaluation, e.g., limited, or expressed by words that reflected the level of satisfaction, such as:

- *Limited* (woman, aged 67);
- *I think that in my case they are limited, apart from the ones that I mentioned* (man, aged 67);
- *The possibilities are huge, tailored to every individual participant* (woman, aged 64);
- *Initiative worth the order of a smile. Only good sides, contacts with people, language classes and an idea for life after professional activity* (woman, aged 54)
- *The Senior University offers many different classes. Everyone will find something for himself or herself. The classes are very well and professionally managed* (woman, aged 59, length of participation 2 to 5 years)

2) *self-actualisation* - some responses were laconic, others more elaborate and described the participants' emotions, such as:

- *Actualisation of oneself and one's own passions* (woman, aged 71, length of participation more than 5 years);
- *"To each his own" - I realise myself through my interests* (woman, aged 67, length of participation more than 5 years);
- *The possibility to realise myself and my own interests is great. I can develop myself in the choir* (man, aged 78, length of participation 2 to 5 years);
- *All the classes that I participate in give me a lot of pleasure and satisfaction. I like poetry very much and recitation helps me realise myself. Although I am not an artist, I enrolled to the crafts group. There, I saw the great beauty people have in their hearts* (woman, aged 76, length of participation 2 to 5 years);
- *the Senior University helps me make my dreams come true, inspires me and teaches me new techniques* (woman, aged 70, length of participation more than 5 years).
- *cognitive values, stimulation of general development* - some participants only listed the classes that stimulated their development, others described them in more detail or expressed their wishes, for example:

- *The offer is very broad: 1) art classes, 2) lectures on various topics, 3) sports classes (swimming pool), trekking, 4) travelling in Poland and abroad, 5) French classes* (woman, aged 75, length of participation more than 5 years);

- *You can always learn something more. The selection of art classes, nice and easy (though not always), and pleasant is the opposite of what I have always done in my adult life (higher education - Technical University in Łódź)* (woman, aged 70, length of participation less than 1 year).;

- *The University plays a major educational role – Wednesday lectures hosting renowned lecturers deepen our knowledge of various topics. The selection of interest groups offered by the University enriches and diversifies the life of participants, while meetings with friends are a source of great joy* (woman, aged 70, length of participation 2 to 5 years);

- *I would like to learn to play a musical instrument (the guitar, flute or drums). I wish the conditions in the rooms where we practice* (playing musical instruments - note from the author M.S.) *were more comfortable. But all in all, I am happy that I can participate in these classes* (woman, aged 60, length of participation 2 to 5 years).

As the above quotations suggest (as well as other responses not quoted here), the participants appreciate the art classes and other activities offered, for example, lectures or trips, although some of them think that the conditions should be improved or the offer should be extended. The above categories could be even more detailed, but it seems that if they were too detailed it would not be possible to have a broader look at the problem of the contribution of the Senior University to developing the participants' interests, although overgeneralization is not entirely legitimised here, nor is it the purpose of this study.

II. The second analysed problem was the motivation for *selecting a given kind (kinds) of art classes. The answer to this question was sought in responses to questions 3 and 4 of the questionnaire.* The following categories of motivation were defined as a result of the analysis:

1) *Previous passions and interests* - a vast majority of participants (42 people) cited this as their motivation. Some respondents noted they could finally develop their interests, after a long break, during classes at the Senior University. Below are some of the responses:

- *It is my passion. I am passionate about what I do, I inherited painting from my father and singing has accompanied me since childhood. It was only when I retired that I could start painting* (woman, aged 67, length of participation more than 5 years);

- *This is me, there are verses and pictures in me. When I was very young, I attended classes at a house of culture* (woman, aged 66, length of participation more than 5 years);

- *As I (finally) have time now, I can fulfil my dreams and develop my interests. Painting has always been my passion, but I was self-taught and painted only occasionally* (woman, aged 54, length of participation less than 1 year);

- *Memories – interests from school days. I used to work as an MC in a band* (woman, aged 64, length of participation 2-5 years);

- *I like being in the company of musicians. When I was young, I used to play in an orchestra (man, aged 68, length of participation 1-2 years);*

- *I have always been interested in crafts – with different intensity in different periods of life. It is a good change and relaxing* (woman, aged 66, length of participation more than 5 years).

2) *Cognitive curiosity and the desire to develop oneself* – inspired by the offer of the Senior University – below, I quote some of the typical answers in this category:

- *I have been doing all sorts of trifles all my life and once I retired I thought I could just as well learn something new* (woman, aged 70, length of participation more than 5 years);

- *Out of curiosity. I wanted to see what these classes looked like and if this is something I wanted to be in. I wasn't interested in drawing or painting before. Neither is it the result of a selection from among other offers addressed to seniors. It was a one-time "slip up", but for a good 10 years* (woman, aged 65, length of participation more than 5 years);

- *I had been thinking about trying myself at painting for a long time. Also, I needed colleagues. I have been attending the classes for more than a year. Those were my first steps in painting. Participation in classes stimulated me to work* (woman, aged 75, length of participation more than 5 years);

- *"I have discovered talent" at the Senior University* (woman, aged 64, length of participation 2 to 5 years).

3) *Personal and social reasons, escaping loneliness* - this factor is mentioned in the last of the quoted responses. Below are some more examples:

- *I met a group of nice people who have similar (poetic) interests* (man, aged 77, length of participation more than 5 years).

- *All this is to have a reason to go out. I am a conscientious person and each time I go out of the house, I accomplish some weekly plan. It is also fulfilment and happiness for me* (woman, aged 76, length of participation 2-5 years);

- *When I am in these classes, I forget about my problems and worries. I have met a group of very kind and friendly people with whom I can talk about my problems* (woman, aged 63, length of participation 2 to 5 years);

- *Participation in the Senior University classes gives me a lot of satisfaction – it deepens my knowledge in a comprehensive way. Gives a chance to befriend many people (in Poland and abroad)* (woman, aged 82, length of participation more than 5 years).

As we can see, different motives sometimes coincide. The respondents emphasise both the possibility to develop and the possibility to meet interesting people, start friendships and share opinions.

III. Another problem was the question of *benefits for personal development and the development of others as seen by the participants of the Senior University.* As a matter of fact, it is a question of the possibility of self-actualisation, that is, satisfying the need that stands at the top of the hierarchy of needs. The answer to this question was sought in responses to question 4 of the questionnaire. Analysis of that made it possible to determine the following categories:

1) *Personal development, self-actualisation* - the respondents notice some benefits for themselves and for others:

- *Frequent encounters with poetry stimulate my personal development in this area* (man, aged 71, length of participation more than 5 years);

- *Higher self-esteem (*woman, aged 64, length of participation 2-5 years);

- *Inspires to work, dissemination of the Academy's achievements encourages seniors to actively participate in social life* (man, aged 74, length of participation 2 to 5 years);

- *I usually make some knick-knacks that I like to give to people. Giving is an important stage and not always an easy one, we do not always like to share. The nicest recipients are children, or other seniors* (woman, aged 70, length of participation less than 1 year);

- *Well-being and self-actualisation, being perceived in a family as a person who "wants to want" rather than an oldie who moans and groans only and who you have to look after* (woman, aged 72, length of participation more than 5 years);
- *Meeting others at classes, self-actualisation, discovering oneself at different angles, satisfaction with achievements, the feeling of belonging to the society, admiration of others, fulfilment of dream*s (woman, aged 63, length of participation 2 to 5 years).

2) *Contact with others* - sample responses:

- *The benefits for me are multiple ... Contact with others who are often of ill health enrich me and, more importantly, is a joy to lonely people who need all kinds of help, but mainly the company of another person* (woman, aged 82, length of participation more than 5 years);
- *Discovering your own possibilities, but also getting to know other people and houses – meeting others, making friends – overall high satisfaction with participation in the academy* (man, aged 63, length of duration 2 to 5 years);
- *A chance to be in a group of people sharing the same interests, using the experience of others, sharing your own experience, professional, very friendly and kind, supervision of Mr. Tadeusz B., professor of fine arts at the University of Warmia and Mazury* (woman, aged 69, length of participation 2 to 5 years);
- *The advantage for me is that I can realise myself by giving pleasure to others and to myself, which makes it possible for me to be among people* (man, aged 67, length of participation 2 to 5 years).

3) *Cognitive and educational benefits* - the respondents highlight the possibility to acquire new skills and deepen their knowledge, such as:

- *I am interested in new craft techniques, this gives me a lot of pleasure* (woman, aged 67, length of participation 1 to 2 years);
- *I can acquire knowledge and learn from others here* (woman, aged 60, length of participation 1 to 2 years);
- *I develop my interests* (woman, aged 64, length of participation more than 5 years);
- *Learning new literary texts and songs, using your voice in the right way, developing musical hearing, overcoming stage fright* (woman, aged 66, length of participation 2 to 5 years).

Some responses are difficult to classify to any of the above categories and there are too few of them to form a separate category. For example:

- *Family and friends receive my handmade gifts. It gives me a lot of satisfaction if they like them* (woman, aged 67, length of participation more than 5 years);
- *The most important benefits are integrating with the environment and filling up your free time* (woman, aged 70, length of participation more than 5 years).

Several participants join the social benefits with filling up their free time.

Discussion

The survey conducted among the participants of the Senior University give in-depth insight into an elderly person and his or her needs. According to the questionnaires, old age pensioners may develop their interests during classes offered by the Senior University. Some of them admit to discovering talents, others emphasise the fact that it is only now, when they are retired, that they can focus on developing the talents that have been slumbering in them since their youth, taking advantage of the professional support offered during university classes. Some have much higher expectations than others and expect a broader offer than is currently available, which, according to them, is limited. However, these are only a few cases. Thus, it can be concluded that the survey, based on an open-ended questionnaire, revealed answers to the questions asked. The role of the Senior University in developing interests concentrates on the following three categories: the participant's focus on *assessment*, emphasising *self-actualisation* and *cognitive benefits and overall development.* Responses concerning motivation were also grouped into three categories: the first concerns *previous passions and interests*, the second *cognitive curiosity and willingness for personal development*, and the third is a combination of *personal and social factors and escape from loneliness.* Responses concerning the third problem – benefits for personal development or the development of others associated with participation in Senior University were grouped into three categories: *personal development and self-actualisation*, *contact with others* and *cognitive and educational benefits*. The analysis of the open-ended questionnaires gives insight into something more than what the respondents were asked about. It provides knowledge about their dreams and desires as well as their needs to, for example, be a star, e.g., quotes such as *I like acting, I like singing solo*, or the need to be praised and appreciated, e.g., *I like it when others like my work, when we perform in Poland or abroad, when I take part in vernissages*, etc.

Summary

Although qualitative studies do not serve the purpose of confirming a theory but rather create new theories, it is worth commenting on what others have already researched or predicted in their theories. It seems that for many participants, Senior University is a place of self-actualisation, which means fulfilment of the need that stands at the top of Maslow's hierarchy of needs. Also, although this was not expressly stated by the respondents, it can be interpreted from their responses that, apart from developing their interests or maybe thanks to developing their interests, they undergo some kind of therapy, where the moderators of workshops – in most cases current or former academic teachers and professional artists – play the role of facilitators, as Rogers calls them. It would be worth analysing the collected empirical material more thoroughly, for example, in order to find a larger number of meanings hidden in the responses. However, a researcher always has to make a choice and is left with a feeling of insufficiency and perhaps motivation for further research. I would like to conclude with the words of one of the Senior University participants whom I asked at the *vernissage* of a painting group about her previous experience with and interest in art. I was charmed by her answer: *I am a simple woman. I have never been interested in painting but, you know, thanks to these workshops I now look at the world and nature in a different way. Now, when I walk on the street, I notice the shade of leaves ...*

Art is indeed creating beauty, also the beauty in a human.

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The capacity for reciprocal learning between law students and the community within communities of practice

Introduction

In today's society, engaged citizens are "tackling public challenges through active citizen involvement in broad partnerships with professionals and officials" (Boyte, 2005, para. 2) where citizens are working together and investing in their community. These citizens can be described as informed, responsible, and conscious of the diversity of needs, political and policy implications, and critically reflecting on society to look beyond the individual (Boland, 2012; Brookfield, 2005). Meanwhile, students exposed to such engagement may have transformative experiences which lead to an individually "deeper understanding and capacity for empathy" where they begin to "question and change the circumstances, conditions, values or beliefs which are at the root of community needs" (Boland, 2012, p. 3). Professional schools, such as law, have the capacity to cultivate deeper learning and social consciousness in intentional spaces, such as communities of practice, between law students and community members (Wenger, 2000).

Adult education is central to creating the conditions for democratic participation. Through both formal and informal education, adults learn how to knowledgeably use tools such as discourse and critical reflection to engage in their communities (Boland, 2013; Brookfield, 2005; Wenger, 2000). Yet, some people allow themselves to separate from democracy, perhaps failing to engage because they perceive it as directly impacting their daily lives (Brookfield, 2005). As adults become complacent in both their personal and professional lives, they can fail to notice how such complacency lays the path for various forms of oppression to grow (Brookfield, 2005). Adults who are continuously engaged help ensure continuance of a democracy serving societal needs (Boland, 2013; Brookfield, 2005).

A reciprocal relationship between law students and community members can benefit all by fostering deliberate conversations, accentuating multiple perspectives, and

viewing current political agendas through a critical lens. Using communicative dialogue (Habermas, 1989) as a frame for critical reflection within communities of practice (Wenger, 2000), law students and community members can engage in communicative action to help foster critical learning and reflection (Dewey, 1897; 1916); and, in return, leading to increased social action. This paper presents the idea of communities of practice as a place for engagement (Wenger, 2000) between students and community members where they can participate in deeper learning through the critical discussion and reflection of societal issues. Critical reflection appears a more viable tool for social justice when adults convene in a mutual, respectful communicative space of dialogue (Habermas, 1989; Wenger, 2000). The informal or formal convening of law students in communities of practice with invested citizens would allow for all members to be engaged, increase their knowledge, broaden their perspectives, and critically reflect to better serve the public good (Wenger, 2000). It would be a space for reciprocal learning.

Theoretical framework

Communicative action

Discourse is intended to be substantial and open, regarding all perspectives with respect to the benefit of others. It is from such discourse that the value commitments, ethics, and morality of society emerge (Habermas, 1989). Communicative action is grounded in a procedural view of rationality (Erikson & Weigard, 2003; Habermas, 1989). The dominant view of the theory has been depicted as "communication through linguistic utterances [that] may be regarded as 'speech acts'" (Erikson & Weigard, 2003, p. 4). The action of one is dependent upon how that actor interprets and evaluates the speech act of the other whereby focusing on the interpretation rather than the conclusion. The end result is not central; instead it is the manner in which the conclusion is reached. As discussed by Erikson and Weigard (2003), the conclusions are always open to change. If the conclusion is not sufficient, through reflection, critique, and dialogue, it can be changed or adjusted to better meet the need.

Communicative action can be perceived as a process which legitimizes democracy (Erikson and Weigard, 2003; Habermas, 1989). Democratic legitimacy is established through public dialogue where political questions can be discussed and critiqued (Erikson and Weigard, 2003). Habermas (1989) referred to this concept of dialogue as the public sphere, explicating this concept emerged in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries when society became interested in the political questions relevant to them. Political authority was once tasked with the education of the citizenry (Erikson and Weigard, 2003; Habermas, 1989). Some scholars feel it has evolved into a tool of manipulation where the political sphere no longer retains its critical functionality, now consumed by power-based politics steered by interest groups, money, and political marketing (Erikson and Weigard, 2003). They have hypothesized "power and strategic interests play the leading part in the coordination of political processes today, not dialogic, communicative action" (Erikson and Weigard, 2003, p. 8).

Reflexive learning in adult education is a form of learning requiring a person to learn as well as reflect with criticality (Dewey, 1897; 1916; Habermas, 1996). A person immersed in communicative action can become familiar with questioning and challenging; this does not stall dialogue but rather serves to encourage the consideration of different perspectives (Habermas, 1996). Reflexive learning can serve to increase an

adult's communicative abilities, which is a vital component for the promotion of democracy (Habermas, 1996). Moreover, communicative power is grounded in public discourse (Brookfield, 2005; Eriksen & Weigard, 2003; Habermas, 1989); thereby, granting citizens the ability to control the systems through communicative action (Eriksen & Weigard, 2003; Habermas, 1989). The public sphere allows for safe spaces within civil society to argue and critique the current issues and problems. The better arguments will prevail, and these binding decisions are converted into the law since any law that cannot be rationally debated in the public sphere may be considered illegitimate (Eriksen & Weigard, 2003). This concept can be described as: "human rights facilitate the exercise of popular sovereignty through the institutionalization of communication forms which ensure legitimate legislation by guaranteeing the protection of individual liberty, equality, and participation" (Eriksen and Weigard, 2003, p. 156).

Communities of practice

The idea of the public sphere (Habermas, 1989) as a place of communicative action can be seen in Wenger's (2000) concept of community of practice. The concept of community of practice [CoP] has been advocated as a means of promoting and constructing intellectual capital within a system (in this context, within a community) (O'Donnell, Porter, McGuire, Garavan, Heffernan, & Cleary, 2003). Communities of practice have been described as a "social fabric of learning" dedicated to the preservation and creation of knowledge (Hara, 2001, p. 2). Within a CoP, members will forgo organizational boundaries and hierarchy to reflect upon and socially construct meaning about an issue or event (O'Donnell et al, 2003; Wenger, 2000). Communities of practice are spaces of dialogue and learning in which members can convene in a safe, neutral environment. These communities engage in an environment of co-inquiry and co-construction of knowledge without the intrusion of authority or hierarchy (Wenger, 2000). Within CoP's, members are bound by a collective understanding of the space, a relationship of mutuality and respect, and a shared language and history (Wenger, 2000). Members of these learning environments benefit from the scholarship of engagement shared social values, and atmosphere of continued learning (Wenger, 2000).

O'Donnell et al (2009) utilized Habermas' (1989) theory of communicative action to frame their concept of community of practice. The premise is to allow for a communicative space which can bring practical issues into dialogue without influence of power, money, or economic forces (O'Donnell et al, 2009; Wenger, 2000). Groups have the opportunity to focus on issues and needs within their system. The members can engage in critical thinking and reflection, framed by morality and social consciousness, to discuss the best means of solving the problems affecting their community. Intrusion of hierarchy, management, politics and power negatively impact the process (O'Donnell et al, 2009; Wenger, 2000).

Educators can help create "intentional environments" so students and community members can experience "meaningful leadership learning …comprised of education, experience, and reflection" (Guthrie & Thompson, 2010, p. 50). There are five attributes of a community of practice which can be utilized to intentionally create such spaces of learning: 1) group of practitioners; 2) development of a shared meaning; 3) informal networks; 4) supportive culture and trust; and 5) engagement in knowledge building (Hara, 2000). The creation of democratic learning spaces can serve as a means to cultivate the idea of engaged citizenship in both students and adults (Gouthro, 2007). Through a

devotion to lifelong learning, adult educators can create such spaces for democratic learning and dialogue which focus on the importance of an active and inclusive citizenship that can foster engagement within education and society (Gouthro, 2007). It has been posited, "lifelong learning is linked with developing an active and engaged citizenship, through what many critical theorists term deliberative democracy" (Guthro, 2007, p. 3).

Such an educative space of experiential learning could be achieved with a community of practice which would serve as a bridge between the lifeworld (community) and systems (government and market). Professionals working in the public interest and community members would have the opportunity to participate in dialogue free of the power and politics of the systems. The law students become part of the community of practice, supplementing the dialogue with theorectical views of law, value commitments, and social justice. Each member of the CoP has the potential to add important and different perspectives to the discussion. Current issues can be viewed from the different lens of each actor in a space void of any power and hierarchy (O'Donnell et al, 2009).

The second benefit of the CoP is civic engagement and the legitimization of democracy (O'Donnell et al, 2009; Wenger, 2000). The law students have the opportunity to become engaged in the community through practicing lawyers, community members, and public organizations. The students can learn about the diverse nature of public interest, the clients, various actors, and the community. Through open and reflexive discussion, the students see how all parts of the system function together to best serve the clients and community (O'Donnell et al, 2009; Wenger, 2000). This interaction and discussion allows the students to gain a deeper understanding about the system; an understanding difficult to convey in a classroom setting (Hara, 2001). Moreover, they grow in this knowledge prior to entering the profession; thus, students are better prepared to work with the community and toward social justice upon graduation (Hara, 2001).

Benefits to law students

Professionals, such as lawyers, not only work to serve those in society, but rather create and strengthen the "social networks of meaning and connection in people's lives" (Sullivan, 2013, para. 4). These professionals are in a position of not only providing needed services to the citizenry, but also educating the citizenry about social engagement, civic responsibility, and the meanings and purposes of democracy as they have the opportunity to touch the lives of citizens (Sullivan, 2013). Engagement can be perpetuated not only through formal education but through the informal networks of those working in the community. Professionals have the ability to be moral agents; moreover, the professionals working in public service and the public view are central to the profession's contribution to the social environment and a healthy society (Colby & Sullivan, 2008; Sullivan, 2013).

Law schools are tasked with creating the conditions for students to broaden their habits of mind while learning how to accommodate the quickly evolving environment in which they will practice (Sullivan, 2013). Students can be taught how to be positively engaged rather than practice with a detached, superior attitude toward the community (Sullivan, 2013). One criticism against legal education is professional training occurs "outside the context of daily practice" (Hara, 2001, p. 2). Sullivan (2013) explained professional students must learn how to relate to clients as "fellow citizens" where they

work together to "contribute to particular knowledge" and strive to improve the quality of life for others (para. 7).

Habermas' (1989) idea of the public sphere illustrates a place of engagement for both community members and law students to critically discuss and reflect upon the social issues confronting society. The concept of critical reflection used for social justice seems to be more viable when interested and invested members can convene in a communicative space (Brookfield, 2005; Habermas, 1989). The informal (or formal) convening of law students in communities of practice would allow for them to become engaged, increase their knowledge, broaden their perspectives, and critically reflect so they might better serve the public good in their professional lives (Wenger, 2000).

Colby and Sullivan (2008) call for five qualities in professional education that "make for a sustainable, life-long growth in professional competence and commitment" (p. 415). These qualities are: deep engagement; strong professional identity, habits of interpretation, habitual patterns of behavioral response to clients, and the capacity and inclination to contribute to the ethical quality of the profession (Colby & Sullivan, 2008). Legal education has an established pedagogy which can successfully train law students in legal analysis; however, this strength may no longer have the ability to meet the challenges of our time (Sullivan et al, 2007). Critics of legal education feel law schools need to increase their focus on the reflective, practical, and social justice aspect of lawyering (Colby & Sullivan, 2008; Sullivan, et al, 2007). Using communicative action as a framework (Habermas, 1989), we can create a space of dialogue, such as communities of practice (CoP) (Wenger, 2000), which can be supported with social justice and engagement to foster the growth of these qualities in law students.

Membership in learning spaces can assist with the transition from student to professional while strengthening the students' commitment, values, and ideals of professional responsibility (Colby and Sullivan, 2008). It is not known if forms of CoPs exist within or outside of law schools; however, law schools may be able to utilize this framework and support the conditions needed to encourage their formation or offer support to those already in existence. Communities are continuously evolving, and people must be able to effectively work together, communicate with each other, and respect those who might hold divergent ideals, political affiliations, and religious beliefs (Brookfield, 2005). In addition, through the use of both formal and informal learning, citizens not only gain the ability to knowledgeably participate in democracy, but such engagement, grounded in critical theory and social justice, becomes part of a new social construct that can be passed down to the next generation (Brookfield, 2005). Law students may benefit from learning how to engage in deliberate conversations with community members, viewing each person's perspective, as well as viewing all suggestions and current political agendas through a critical lens.

Benefits to community members

Adults can learn to reflect, discuss, and challenge the current status and political policies (Brookfield, 2005; Dewey, 1897; 1916). The actions of reflection, discussion, and challenge may first appear simple and inherent, but these actions are not to be taken blindly and ignorantly. Adult education is central to creating the conditions for democratic participation (Dewey, 1897; 1916). Through education, both formal and informal, adults learn how to knowledgeably use these tools to engage in their communities (Dewey, 1897; 1916). Reasoned communication and discourse are tools that enable democracy to

persevere (Brookfield, 2005). Citizens unable to analytically think, reflect, and revise are open to being misinformed and misled by others, including government leaders, lobbyists, and the media (Brookfield, 2005). Exposure to both informal and formal education can help expand the cognitive abilities of community members so they might develop the capacity to make better informed decisions about political activities and policy (Dewey, 1897; 1916). It is important to continuously expose adults to the civic and political demands of society, and a community of practice can serve as a forum for communicative action (O'Donnell et al, 2009; Wenger, 2000).

Lawyers and law students can contribute to informal adult learning and engagement by conveying social justice issues and explaining the societal consequences (Colby & Sullivan, 2008; Sarat & Scheingold, 2004). In professional practice, they have the ability and opportunity to impact the community and policy through litigation which can highlight issues of concern while informing both the public and political leaders (Sarat & Scheingold, 2004).

Contributions to society as a whole

The label of professional has been linked with the ideal of service to the public good, and Colby and Sullivan (2008) depict professionals as having "a commitment to serve the interests of clients and the welfare of society; bodies of specialized knowledge and skill; and procedures through which the professional community provides oversight" (p.405). One of the end goals of professional education is the "preparation of life-long learners" who uphold a desire of "continuing, self-directed improvement" (Colby & Sullivan, 2008, p.412). Both the lawyer and public they serve benefit when the professional commits to life-long learning post. One means of fostering the dedication to life-long learning is through social consciousness and engagement with the community (Colby & Sullivan, 2008).

As law students, they retain their idea of morality and value commitments, but once they enter practice, lawyers must confront the mediums of power, politics, and economic forces (Colby & Sullivan, 2008). Those in public service are subject to the ideologies of elected leaders, and politics inevitably influence the operation of public organizations. Economic forces are a factor as well, especially within a capitalist environment (Habermas, 1989). Communities of practice between law students and the community can serve as one vehicle to better understanding how to effectively work with others in the community to serve the needs of society while maneuvering the overarching bureaucratic structure and social inequalities of the system.

Citizens must have the ability to critically reflect while being actively engaged in society, a capacity of deeper learning which can be achieved through either formal or informal education (Dewey, 1897; 1916). Citizens can nurture the capacity of reflection on policies and government actions to ensure that all citizens are being considered as well as engage in deliberate dialogue with others. Just as Brookfield (2005) has grounded his teaching framework within critical theory, the use of critical pedagogy linked to scholarship of engagement and social justice can be one approach in which to challenge law students so they might learn to critically reflect rather than assuming the voice of authority is the only truth while stimulating the moral consciousness of the learners. With the creation of a community of practice, there is no person with a stronger voice than others. All participants enter the community as co-constructors of knowledge (Hara, 2001; O'Donnell et al, 2003; Wenger, 2000). Each participant has a voice, and all

perspectives can be critically discussed and reflected upon in the space (Hara, 2001; O'Donnell et al, 2003; Wenger, 2000). There is a relationship of mutual respect.

Such spaces further encourage the promulgation of social justice and democracy. Habermas (1989) felt that true democracy could only be realized within deliberate democratic discussions between citizens, a process which can help legitimize democracy (Erikson and Weigard, 2003; Habermas, 1986). There is an atmosphere of collaboration as "communicative action theory aims to explain or provide an understanding of a wide spectrum of social conditions" (Erikson and Weigel, 2003, p. 10). Habermas (1989) posits that democracy and change could only be attained through the collaborative speech acts of the citizens operating in the lifeworld. Thus, communicative action can be used as a means of framing social justice, scholarship of engagement, and critical theory in a type of community of practice for law students and community members in hopes the space will create the conditions to help foster a more engaged citizenship oriented toward social action.

Implications and suggestions for research

Mentorship and engagement is valued within American legal education, however, there are not established spaces of communicative action between law students and the community members (Colby & Sullivan, 2008; Hara, 2001; Sullivan, 2013). Each person has an opportunity to learn from each other in such spaces (O'Donnell et al, 2009; Wenger, 2000). Established communities of practice between law schools and their communities can provide deeper learning and critical reflection for all those involved (O'Donnell et al, 2009; Wenger, 2000).

Habermas's (1989) theory holds an opportunity for enhancing legal education. Law students are taught the theorectical principle behind the law. However, while they can analytically dissect a former case, they have neither thoroughly practiced critically reflecting on new issues nor contemplated how these new issues fit into the framework of the law (Colby & Sullivan, 2008; Sullivan, 2013). After the immersion into legal theory, students might need to learn how to re-engage and communicate with rationality and criticality. Also, due to a three-year law curriculum, it is difficult to impart the legal theorectical foundations while also integrating the many new, diverse problems within today's society.

This paper is suggesting research be conducted to first determine if informal communities of practice already exist in which law students and community members engage in communicative dialogue. Such research can inform the field of adult education as well as the specific field of legal education. Additionally, research can add to the concept of communities in practice as applied for reciprocal learning between the community members and those professional students who will be joining the community to promote social justice. Such research can investigate how adult educators can help support exiting CoPs so deeper learning might occur. Secondly, if such CoPs do not exist, how can adult educators create the conditions where law students and community members craft such spaces of engagement and learning? Further research should be conducted to determine what kinds of CoPs, if any, law students and community members participate in separately, and whether it is plausible to build from existing structures. As the author is writing from the American perspective, it would better inform the literature to include comparative research between law schools and communities on an international level.

Conclusions

People have always practiced collective learning, and "participating in these communities of practice is essential to [their] learning. It is at the very core of what makes us human beings capable of meaningful knowing" (Wenger, 2000, p. 229). Communicative action is the way in which citizens can deliberately discuss issues and problems, formulate solutions to benefit the whole, and transfer through laws to the systems (Habermas 1996; 1989). This form of speech is vital to the moral consciousness of society as it infers critical and reflective dialogue in a safe, neutral, power-free space in which all voices have the ability to be heard and considered (Habermas, 1989). Therefore, communicative action is a theorectical way in which social justice is perpetuated.

Boyte (2005) strongly advocated the use of adult education to revitalize active and participatory democracy. Adults may be inspired to become involved through various channels, such as higher education, community organizations, and community activities (Boyte, 2005), and communities of practice can be the scaffolding for engagement. Engaged citizens and law students can experience a heightened awareness of social issues; in return, they may experience an increased motivation to work for social change (Gouthro, 2007). More importantly, engaged lawyers are more apt to continue life-long learning which not only increases professional skills but benefits the citizenry they serve as well (Colby & Sullivan, 2008). Communities of practice can serve as a bridge between the formal education of law students and the informal education of adults (Hara, 2001). It can be a space for reciprocal learning as well as scaffolding for the conversion of formal knowledge to practical knowledge which can better serve the needs of society (Hara, 2001).

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The influence of European Community on adult education in the context of the Europeanization of education

Introduction: Globalisation and education

When studying globalisation we quickly realise that there is no single definition and interpretation of what globalisation means. Summarising the considerations of sociologically oriented authors, we may say that globalisation represents a growing interdependence in the economic, political, cultural, technological and other fields, to the point where all levels of human organisation are intertwined in a single system, resulting in an authentic restructuring of the organisation of society. Globalisation is a series of interconnected processes without a precisely determined centre of power, and a process that confronts society, the state and the individual with a range of risks (Bauman, 1998; Beck, 2000).

We can also understand globalisation as an essentially contradictory phenomenon. On the one hand it accelerates the democratisation of societies, while on the other it can impede it; it can have a homogenising effect on culture but it can also increase cultural heterogeneity; it can promote economic growth while at the same time increasing poverty and marginalisation; it can be top-down or bottom-up; on the one hand its effects are global, while on the other a certain part of the world has remained largely untouched by globalisation processes. We are therefore faced with a segmentation between "globalisation culture" and "the rest of the world", in other words with the conflictual and contradictory nature of globalisation processes (Borg & Mayo, 2008; Burbules & Torres, 2000; Ozga & Lingard, 2007).

Globalisation and the social, economic and political changes relating to it also have an impact on education policies and practices (e.g. Ball, Dworkin, & Vryonides, 2010; Burbules & Torres, 2000; Gur-Ze'ev & Roth, 2007). Changes are visible at the economic, political, cultural and other levels. It is important for us, as actors in education, to be aware of these changes, to identify them and critically analyse them, and also to respond to them (Holford & Milana, 2014; Robertson & Dale, 2009). There is no simple answer to the

question of how globalisation influences education policy and practice throughout the world, because the effects of globalisation on education are manifold and contradictory. On the one hand they can undermine the sovereignty of nation states, educational institutions and democratic decision-making, while on the other they offer possibilities for the democratisation of public spaces, active citizenship and spaces of potential transformation of individuals and groups. They can encourage instrumental, performative, measurable and (globally) applicable knowledge, or a "knowledge-based economy ", but via information and communication technologies, social movements and global networks, knowledge can also serve to empower individuals and groups and support various transgressive practices that have the potential to resist the established order (see Biesta, 2006; Usher & Edwards, 1994). Education, then, is an area where globalisation is actually "happening", with all its "good" and "bad" effects, tensions and paradoxes.

Authors who study the effects of globalisation on education point out that education policy has internationalised under globalisation processes and become a product of supranational political entities (EU) and international organisations (OECD, UNESCO, World Bank). Some view the latter as "neo-empires of knowledge in education" (Klerides, Kotthoff, & Pereyra, 2014) that are endeavouring to enforce precisely defined norms and values. Policymakers at the national and international levels are attempting to transform education systems with a range of themes, processes, strategies and discourses that are implemented through specific models (the Bologna reform), globally applicable knowledge (ALL, IALS, PISA, PIAAC), various tools (EQF, ECVET/ECTS, validation of non-formal and informal learning, key competences, learning outcomes, quality assurance mechanism, etc.) and various programmes of the World Bank and EU (Lifelong learning, Erasmus+) that provide financial support for the realisation of a variety of reforming activities in education.

In this way a "global education policy field" (Ozga & Lingard, 2007) is established, along with other education policy spaces such as the "European educational space" and "European education policy" (Dale, 2009; Nóvoa, 2010), which are situated between global pressures and local responses to them. Although educational practices are implemented at the "local" level, international organisations and supranational political entities construct the discourse of education as an object of policy that goes beyond the national level (Milana, 2012). Even so, Dale (2007) points out that the effects of globalisation on education are for the most part indirect rather than direct. Although globalisation represents a new set of rules, this does not mean that all states will interpret these rules in the same way.

Globalisation is not a homogeneous process but one that is associated with three distinct forms of regionalisation (in Europe, Asia and America), each with its own policies and mechanisms. This paper focuses on European policies and mechanisms, in particular on the political level of globalisation, where the policy area is increasingly determined not within isolated units, i.e. relatively autonomous states, but as the result of complex interactions at the supranational, international and national levels (Dale, 2007), and endeavours to demonstrate the emergence of a European education space and European education policy and their impact on national and local education policies, using analytical-interpretive method and the concept of Europeanisation as a theoretical reference.

Europeanization of education

The concept of Europeanisation first appeared in the 1980s in political studies literature and achieved greater recognition in the 1990s (particularly in the field of European studies), although it does not have a single, clear-cut definition (Klatt, 2014). Radaelli (2004) describes Europeanisation as a process involving the construction, diffusion and institutionalisation of formal and informal rules, procedures, policy paradigms, styles, "ways of doing things" and shared beliefs and norms which are first defined and consolidated in the EU policy process and then incorporated in the logic of domestic (national and subnational) discourse, political structures and public choices (p. 3).

As noted by Lawn & Grek (2012), Europeanisation represents the process of forming the EU; it is a political and network-based phenomenon and a specific element of globalisation. Europeanisation reflects the complexity of processes that includes, first, transnational flows and networks of people, ideas and practices across Europe, in which European, national and local actors are involved; secondly, the direct effects of EU policy that via the open method of coordination are reflected in the field of education in the establishment of benchmarks, quality indicators and the comparison of statistical data; and thirdly, the Europeanising effect of international institutions and globalisation. These processes do not represent a homogeneous Europe, but the Europe with shared characteristics (p. 8–9).

At the turn of the millennium discussions of Europeanisation began to encompass education. The majority of authors identify the Lisbon Strategy as a key turning point in the Europeanisation of education. Through it, the EU set itself a fundamental strategic objective for the coming decade: "to become the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy in the world" (e.g. Alexiadou, 2014; Dale, 2009; Lawn & Grek, 2012; Nóvoa, 2010; Pépin, 2007). With the Lisbon Strategy, for the first time in history, a direct call for the modernisation of education systems came from the highest level of the EU. The Lisbon Strategy identified knowledge and its updating through lifelong learning as a key factor in the future economic and social development of the EU. One consequence of this has been a greater connection of education policy with economic, social and employment policy; another has been more cooperation in education (Fredriksson, 2003; Pépin, 2007; Rasmussen, 2014). It follows from this that the Lisbon Strategy sees education as part of social, labour market and economic policy rather than as an independent "teleological" policy field (Dale, 2009).

We understand the Europeanisation of education as a process in which EU member states, together with the Commission, formulate a policy that is becoming "European". It is a multidirectional process that includes both top-down and bottom-up pressures and the participation of various actors in vertical and horizontal networks and institutions (Alexiadou, 2014). As noted by Klatt (2014), Europeanisation is a three-dimensional concept that includes the infiltration of the policies (rules) of member states at the EU level, the adaptation or transformation of the national policies of member states in accordance with EU policies, and the horizontal exchange of policies among networks of people, ideas and practices throughout Europe involving European, national and local actors.

Some authors (e.g. Nóvoa, 2010; Lawn & Grek, 2012) have pointed out that within this context a "European educational space" is being established that is in a constant process of formation and which exists alongside the traditions and practices of member states. It is being established through networks, flows and spaces that emphasise fluidity,

mobility and interconnection. A parallel to this concept can be found in the official documents of the Commission: the Bologna Declaration (1999) uses the expression "(common) European Higher Education Area", while the Bruges Communiqué (2010) refers to the "European education and training area". Other authors (e.g. Fredriksson, 2003; Rasmussen, 2009; Žiljak, 2008) have pointed out that within the context of the Europeanisation of education a "European education policy" that addresses the following common European issues (closely tied to the fundamental objective of the Lisbon Strategy) is being formulated: recognition of qualifications and learner and worker mobility, raising the quality of education and lifelong learning (with an emphasis on skills relevant to the labour market and validation of non-formal and informal learning). Both terms are employed in the literature to describe and explain the same processes and are used interchangeably. It is, however, also possible to distinguish between them. Dale (2009) points out that the European education area is established formally by the Maastricht Treaty, substantively by the Lisbon Strategy and the European social model, and historically by the educational initiatives that preceded the Lisbon Strategy, while European education policy is formulated by the open method of coordination, the Commission's directorate-generals (for education and culture, employment and social affairs, and research), the existing policies of member states and public-private partnership.

The Lisbon Strategy, which sets specific future objectives for education systems, states that these objectives can only be achieved at the Community level, since they are a response to common EU problems. The mechanism for achieving these objectives is represented by the open method of coordination (OMC) "as the means of spreading best practice and achieving greater convergence towards the main EU goals" (*Lisbon European Council*, 2000, Article 37). It is applied in the form of soft law via guidelines, indicators and benchmarks, mutual learning, expert opinions, statistical data, comparability of results, and so on. As a policy instrument it contains quantitative and qualitative instruments which member states use to exchange information on "best practices", leading to the formulation of national education policies in accordance with these practices. Above all the OMC encourages the discourse of the measurability of education and learning and functions in a manner that helps member states formulate education policies in a "commonly" agreed direction in a field in which (because of the principle of subsidiarity) the EU has no legal competences (Alexiadou, 2014, p. 127–128; Nordin, 2014, p. 145).

The first step in the implementation of the Lisbon Strategy in the field of education was the decision of the Council on the common objectives of the future development of EU policies in the field of education and training, adopted in 2001 in the document *The concrete future objectives of education systems*. The second step, in which the Commission and the Council established a detailed work programme on the basis of the common objectives, was a document adopted the following year called *Detailed work programme on the follow-up of the objectives of Education and training systems in Europe*. After the end of the ten-year period addressed by the Lisbon Strategy, the Commission also defined a strategy for the development of education and training for the next ten-year period in the 2009 document *Council conclusions of 12 May 2009 on a strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training*. The latter is part of the broader context of *Europe 2020: A strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth*, with which the Commission responded to the growing economic crisis in Europe in 2010.

European governance in education is based on the establishment of networks, standards and various political instruments (OMC, voluntary agreements, international agreements). Networks and standards represent soft governance for European education

policy – a form of governance "at a distance"; it takes place via the established EU institutions, networks, seminars, expert groups, associations and so on. Academics, public and private experts, representatives of international organisations, social partners, interest groups, associations, employers and others who are involved in various structures at the local, national and European levels are the key actors of governance for various education policies at the EU level (Lawn & Grek, 2012, p. 67–70). By this process, a European community is established being in a constant process of formation.

A good example of the use of the OMC, standards and the establishment of a European community is the *Recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council on the establishment of the European Qualifications Framework for Lifelong learning* (EQF), adopted in 2008. The latter established a corresponding network (EQF advisory group, EQF national coordination points), defined content, standards and objectives (the development of national qualifications frameworks in member states) and specified the mode of governance (OMC). This is a clear illustration of just how much influence the Europeanisation of education has on individual European states; before the adoption of the EQF in 2008, the only countries in Europe to have established a qualifications framework where the English-speaking countries and France; since the adoption of the EQF, in just a few years, 36 European countries have either already established or are in the process of establishing a national qualifications framework (NQF) (*Analysis and overview,* 2013)[32]. Since the EQF identified the concept of learning outcomes as the "magic formula" enabling the comparability of qualifications between different European systems and traditions, the latter is now being intensively introduced in all subsystems of education in European countries through implementation of NQFs.

A second example, related to the first, is represented by the *Council recommendation on the validation of non-formal and informal learning*, adopted in 2012. This, too, is based on the OMC and an established network (the EQF advisory group) and lays down standards and an objective, namely that by 2018 member states should have fully functional systems in place for validating non-formal and informal learning that will facilitate the obtaining of qualifications. The key to the establishment of effective validation systems is represented by learning outcomes and the connection of the system of validation of non-formal and informal learning with NQFs. Although it is still too soon to be able to evaluate the actual effect of the Recommendation on the establishment of validation systems in European countries, the latest available figures show that 33 European countries are rapidly preparing national validation strategies (*European inventory*, 2014).

European community shaping adult education policy

If on the one hand adult education is implemented at the national level, and national governments retain legislative powers in the regulation of the field, on the other hand the processes of globalisation and the Europeanisation of education mean that it is no longer possible to understand adult education merely as a national matter for individual European countries. Adult education is a reflection of complex relationships and dialogical tension between the supranational and national levels, as an exchange of policies among networks of people, ideas and practices across Europe, in which European, transnational, national and local actors are involved. In this context, the EU plays a

[32] At the global level 142 countries have prepared/implemented NQFs.

significant role in the Europeanisation of education, and one that is expressed particularly strongly in adult education. The EU has placed particular emphasis and importance on adult education and learning in the last decade (Holford & Milana, 2014; Holford, Milana, & Mohorčič Špolar, 2014; Klatt, 2014). With the Europeanisation of education, adult education has actually ceased to be a marginal discourse and become a central one, something that is most clearly expressed in the shift of focus from adult education to lifelong learning (for adults).

At the EU level, adult education as a policy area was relatively late to develop.[33] In 2000 the EU issued *A Memorandum on Lifelong Learning*, which threw open the debate on lifelong learning in Europe. That same year it established the Grundtvig programme, which provides financial support to activities linked to adult education, and also promoted these activities via the European structural funds. Despite this, the first important turning point for adult education did not come until 2006, when the Commission issued the document *Adult learning: It is never too late to learn*, which was followed a year later by the *Action Plan on Adult learning: It is always a good time to learn*. A year after that, these two documents paved the way for the *European Parliament resolution of 16 January 2008 on adult learning: it is never too late to learn* and the *Council conclusions of 22 May 2008 on adult learning.* These are the fundamental documents formulating European adult education policy in the Lisbon period. In the next ten-year period, which is tied to Europe 2020, the fundamental document may be considered to be the *Council Resolution on a renewed European agenda to adult learning*, adopted in 2011.

Having analysed these documents, we have come to the conclusion that European adult education policy (re-)formulates the understanding of adult education at four levels (at least): a) at the level of the purpose that is ascribed to adult education; b) at the level of the construction of valuable knowledge; c) at the level of the governance of adult education; and d) at the level of the formation of desirable forms of subjectivity.

- Adult education is part of a broader economic, social and employment policy and plays a key role in addressing the socio-economic, demographic, environmental, technological and other "challenges" facing the European community. It is ascribed a significant role in the achievement of the Europe 2020 objectives since it is seen as enabling greater productivity, competitiveness and entrepreneurship. For this reason adult education is becoming a political priority in the EU and represents a fundamental part of lifelong learning policy, within the context of which the emphasis has moved from adult education to adult (lifelong) learning; this should pave the way to a "knowledge society", the competitiveness of the European economy and greater employability. Although the promotion of personal development, social cohesion and active citizenship are also highlighted as goals within adult education (goals which have substituted the historical commitment of adult education to democracy, social justice and emancipation), these always appear in the background of the fundamental objective of competitiveness and employability, or as a function of the achievement of this objective; "adult empowerment" thus means above all the acquisition of the "right" skills and competences required by the European economy and society in changed socio-economic circumstances.

[33] For a more detailed account of the development of European adult education policy before and after the Lisbon Strategy, see e.g. Rasmussen (2014).

- Knowledge is expressed in the conception of a knowledge-based economy, or in the provision of the skills that are essential in order to promote the growth and competitiveness on which the productivity of Europe depends. Knowledge is understood as an investment and a strength that can ensure the "right" skills for the economy in altered social circumstances. The emphasis is on knowledge that can be measured, for which reason references to knowledge alternate with the concept of "learning outcomes", which are designed to ensure that adults have the skills and competences necessary for the European labour market.

- The new form of governance (OMC) that has been implemented in the field of adult education in the European community aims to improve the coordination of policies and guide reforms to the adult education system in member states through the use of soft law. It functions by helping member states formulate their own policies in a "commonly" agreed direction and enables the transfer of policies from the European level to the national level. It operates via established networks, seminars and expert groups in which various interest groups participate and formulate adult education "policy" on the basis of statistical data and comparable standards.

- The Europeanisation of adult education is endeavouring to establish a new form of subjectivity; flexible subject that is capable of adapting rapidly to a flexible labour market, precarious forms of employment, growing cultural diversity and lifelong learning. Lifelong learning, which emphasises constant learning – learning to update skills, to find employment, etc. – and changes the individual in the direction of desired forms of the self – flexible workers and learning adults, self-actualised individuals, active citizens, etc. – endeavours to optimise the individual's economic, psychological and social potentials in order to produce "subjects who know", which is how it defines the "normal" learner, the good worker, the active citizen. Conversely, the individual who rejects lifelong learning – as a participant in education, worker or citizen – is labelled "deviant". When lifelong learning is connected to the individual responsibility of the individual, the prescribed subjectivity of the "European citizen" is also established; a European citizen is a person who participates in lifelong learning, since this represents European order, the order of learning.

A number of critical reflections may be directed towards a European adult education policy conceived in this manner. Such a policy places in the foreground a view of education that is above all instrumental (Biesta, 2006), where adult education is understood as an instrument for the achievement of specific predetermined outcomes and objectives; education is an instrument for the inclusion of adults in a precisely defined order, i.e. the social order of competitiveness, stability and success, and for the establishment of predetermined subjectivities of adults, i.e. good workers, citizens and lifelong learners. In such a concept of adult education, which is designed to increase the productivity of adults and maximise their skills, we recognise above all the realisation of the concept of "governmentality" (Foucault, 2007; see also e.g. Fejes & Nicoll, 2014; Simons & Masschelein, 2006; Usher & Edwards, 1994). Such a conception of adult education also represents a clear departure from the humanistic tradition of education in Europe, in which education has value in itself and knowledge is understood as a value, and leads above all to a "colonisation of the educational world" (Habermas, 1984; see also e.g. Deakin Crick & Joldersma, 2007; Fleming, 2010), in which the language game of

performativity and efficiency (Lyotard, 1984; see also e.g. Usher & Edwards, 2007) has prevailed. The danger of such a discourse, which reduces knowledge to a single criterion of financial and technological efficiency, is that it affords no room for the acquisition of knowledge that does not only have instrumental value but is essential for the broader intellectual, aesthetic, moral and social development of the adult, either at the personal or community level. In this way, within the universum of possible knowledge, value is only ascribed to specific knowledge and a specific form of organisation, with the result that this knowledge is legitimised as "official knowledge" (Apple, 2000).

Conclusion

In this article we have shown that globalisation processes have had a powerful impact on the field of education; education policy has internationalised and become a product of supranational political entities and international organisations, which has led to the establishing of a global and a European space of education policy. We have highlighted the fact that adult education policy is formulated on the basis of complex relationships and dialogical tension between the supranational and national levels, as an exchange of policies, ideas and practices involving European, transnational, national and local actors. The result is a European adult education policy that encourages, above all, an instrumental view of knowledge and education in which there is no room for the development of knowledge that does not have merely economic value, and where the potential of adult education for broader intellectual, aesthetic, moral and social development is ignored. How member states will “interpret” and implement European adult education policy nevertheless remains a matter for individual European countries.

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Applied theatre, gender consciousness and transformative learning

This paper describes a concrete experience of applied theatre: the design and implementation of theatre workshops for two groups of women, university students and women unemployed. The fact that women continue to face multiple forms of discrimination as human beings, citizens and professionals justified the need for alternative training instruments (the *Empowerment Labs*) focused in the amplification of power sense, freedom and action that allow the formulation of individual and collective strategies of denunciation and overcoming. In the core of the approach a fundamental question: can the theatre raise consciousness and empowerment in the context of gender equality?

Methodologically the approach combines pedagogical influences of authors such as Paulo Freire, Peter Jarvis, Jack Mezirow or Peter Alheit. Freire's pedagogy is a major influence of theatre practices aimed at raising critical awareness and encouraging personal and social engagement as it catalyses a creative basis of discussion, analysis and action on political and social problems. As the case of gender (un)equality awareness. On the other hand, and adopting the perspective that "personal is political", the *Empowerment Labs* also invest in the "transformative" nature of learning. That is, the belief that the experiential learning gives way to the construction of self (Jarvis) and also the critical consciousness, by the individual, about him/herself and about the surrounding reality (Mezirow).

Personal is political

Despite some significant advances in reducing inequalities between women and men, still lingering "male dominance" remains as a "difficult issue", in the words of Pierre Bourdieu (1998). Today, women have a growing participation in economic and political life, and they see recognized their equal status in institutional and legal terms. However in the XXI century it is women, from different social classes, ethnicities, ages and nationalities, which continue to be the main victims of discrimination and inequality. Discrimination is characterized as a behaviour influenced by prejudice or attitudes (generally negative), not justified by personal experience but by stereotypes assimilated through different media (Macedo & Amaral, 2005).

Feminist movements have been focusing their efforts in both the fight for equality and the deconstruction of the category of "woman". This last objective has been carefully worked because all gender stereotypes and ideologies tend to imprison both men and women even if in different ways (Nogueira, 2005). It is possible to distinguish here two tendencies: equality approaches that mainly fight the masculine domination and established the question as a political priority; on the other side, approaches more focused in the difference by strengthening feminine identity and woman specificities, as well as different ways to see and act upon the world.

Under this project we are particularly interested in this "second wave" of the feminism(s), aimed at creating new "significant places" and the affirmation of new notions of self, gender and sexual difference, allied to creativity, art and performance (Pollock, 1996). This new "significant places" have changed the relationship between the individual and the social, between the public and the private. The slogan "personal is political" works here as key expression of these movements in the sense of Simone de Beauvoir´s *The Second Sex* that establishes women individual experiences as a social and political process.

One of the ways to express the concerns of the feminist demands has been artistic and social activism with theatre representing a major role. Since the seventies of the last century that feminist theatre and performance has been important in the expression of the cultural and aesthetical concerns of the feminist movement (Carlson, 1997). Many of the plays created by feminist companies in the late 1970s, for example, were devised collaboratively, rather than scripted by a playwright and it offered women the opportunity to practice theatre collaboratively and democratically (Aston, 2005).

The use of theatre in social and political causes has its roots in the political theatre of the XX century (for example the epic theatre, the *agitprop* and the radical street theatre). Another important influence is the pedagogies oriented to the democratization of the teaching-learning process (Nicholson, 2005). Among these we can highlight the relation between the writings of Paulo Freire in his *Pedagogia do Oprimido* (1972) with the work of the director Augusto Boal in the *Teatro do Oprimido.*

The concept of *applied theatre* (AT) (Prendergast & Saxton, 2009) or *applied drama/theatre* (Nicholson, 2005) appear as "portmanteau term" that covers diverse typologies such as educational drama, theatre in health education, development theatre, theatre in prisons, community theatre and memory theatre. All have in common to be an engaged, social and artistic phenomenon whose practices: do not fall within the institutional theater models, happen in non-conventional places and are organized to specific communities or social groups. The AT raises pedagogic issues like where the knowledge is located, what kind of knowledge we value and how to share the knowledge. From Nicholson perspective the knowledge is "embodied, culturally located and socially distributed" (2005, p. 39). The AT process asks for the physical and emotional

involvement of participants and therefore enhance the physical embodiment of learning ("embodied pedagogies"). At the same time that shares meanings and powers, and exposes new forms of social and cultural capital. To understand the relation between AT and pedagogy is important to be aware of the concept of psychosomatic learning. Not forgetting that AT is a cyclic model of learning that frames new questions and perspectives while in the course of the theatre practice and drives the participants to possible new meanings.

Consciousness-raising and empowerment

"[T]he arts enable the kind of distance and viewpoints that help participants to understand where they have positioned ourselves, the potential for change and perhaps, transformation will only occur through reflecting on what has happened in the safety of a metaphoric world that the theatre experience has created. (...) Within the richness created through reflection can always be found new ways of thinking about ourselves and the world (...) through the act of theatre" (Prendergast & Saxton, 2009, pp. 204-205). As mentioned, one of the strengths of a reflective approach by the theatre lies in the way it favors the interaction between the learner and the environment, hence incorporating the opportunity to experiment a wide range of possibilities. By rehearsing different viewing possibilities the individual is challenged to establish a critical relationship between the way he/she reads the world (from different points of view) and becomes aware of his/her own weaknesses and opportunities. If in the past (Monteiro, Gomes & Herculano, 2010) we defend the thesis that the reflective portfolio is an useful instrument for which each one of us experiments different positions in the landscape, exploring the environment (different perspectives) and controlling the consequences of our decisions, it is now hypothesized that the practice of applied theatre can be as or more effective in this regard.

In turn, the alignment between the pedagogical vision of applied theatre presented by those who practice and theorized it (Nicholson, 2005; Kuppers, 2007; Prendergast & Saxton, 2009; Thompson, 2009) and perspectives on adult education transmitted by authors like Paulo Freire, Jack Mezirow, Peter Jarvis and Peter Alheit, is very noticeable. Specifically mentioned is the presence of common concerns around the perspective transformation and consciousness-raising, and its valuation as empowerment tools, particularly with regard to women.

Feminists have learned that efforts to empower adult women must include not only literacy training but also transformative education content through non-formal and informal learning (Stromquist, 2014). And that the gain of control over one's own life demands a previous critical consciousness about the sources and nature of inequalities and exploitation. Freire defines it as the experience of conscientization: "Often learners are unaware of being oppressed; they internalize the values of the oppressors. Freire has shown how to help them understand how they have traditionally misread their situation so that some kind of appropriate social action is possible. This 'deconstruction' of reified frames of reference often must precede action on one's own behalf." (Mezirow, 1997, p. 62).

Also the cited author, Jack Mezirow, advocates that transformative learning begins with a critical reflection or critical self-reflection on assumptions (critical assessment of the sources, nature and consequences of our habits of mind), our own and those of the others. This subjective approach becomes a priority since we are facing increasingly "ill-structured problems" (Merriënboer & Stoyanov, 2008) which are determined by the new

societal challenges and defy our ability to understand the world: the dynamics of uncertainty and the combination of multi-contextual influences; the existence of alternative and often conflicting approaches; the lack of a clear-cut problem solving procedure; no agreement on what can be accepted as an appropriate solution, and a solution that may not always be recognizable as such.

In this process, the authors insist on an important condition, that lifelong learning cannot be limited to its 'psychological' dimension, the one that "is concerned with people's inner subjective world of thought and feeling, combined with sensitivity to their outer world of social relationships set in a context of wider structural relationships set in a context of wider structural inequalities" (West, 2006, p. 39). It should also consider a collective and dialogical dimension, the one that connects personal troubles with public issues (Sutherland & Crowther, 2006) and feeds the communicative learning. If to Mezirow the main purpose of communicative discourse is to arrive at the "best judgment" by confronting one's frame of reference with the widest range of relevant experience and points of view possible, according to Alheit & Dausien (2006) reflexive learning processes (or biographical learning) do not exclusively take place 'inside' the individual, but also comprise biographical setting up of networks and social processes, of collective knowledge and collective practices.

Objectives and methodology

The *Empowerment Labs* were part of NÓS (meaning US in portuguese), a major project of social and artistic intervention developed by Quarta Parede (a performative arts association) in collaboration with Beira Interior University and with the support of the IEFP - Portuguese Employment and Training Institute. The project was funded by the Active Citizenship Program/EEA Grants 2013/14 which in Portugal was managed by Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation. The framework context is the difficult social and economic situation Portugal has been living in recent years and the way it has worsen women situation meaning more discrimination and injustice with a focus on employment situation. This problems are particularly concerning in the inner country were employment opportunities are more rare/scarce. The approach proposed was innovative because it based in the cross collaboration of the performance arts with social sciences focusing in the problems raised by women unemployment. As a whole, the project aimed to i) improve empowerment, resilience and transformation of direct participants – university students and unemployed women, ii) promote innovative forms of minimizing the impact of women unemployment and iii) to raise gender equality awareness among the general population.

Divided in two editions according to the two different groups of participants the *Empowerment Labs* was an initiative of non-formal education based on a multidisciplinary process of knowledge and soft skills development for the future involvement in the public realm and labour market of women with major gender awareness. With Theatre workshop as the central core the Labs aimed to establish itself as a place of creation, training and change, where artistic expression and creativity emerge as tools to promote meaningful relationships (within the self and with others) and opportunities for participation and empowerment (Johnston, 2005). Each Lab was composed by three conceptual chorus: Theatre, Gender Equality and Employability. The three components are inner articulated and were conducted by a team of specialists from performance art,

psychology and sociology. The driving idea of the laboratory was to establish a dialogic relationship among the components of the laboratory (Sales Oliveira, 2014).

The methodological approach of the *Empowerment Labs* was a process of action research with an applied participant and experimental laboratorial practice, with the theatre as privileged pedagogical instrument. Two characteristics are associated with this methodology that combines research with social intervention (Monteiro, 1995): on one hand, action-research approach reflects a collective process that involves as subjects of investigation and intervention both the researchers and the social groups; on the other hand, is a process that aims simultaneously to fulfil three articulated objectives, namely, the production of new knowledge through research procedures, the modification of social reality as a result of innovative practices and the promotion of "social learning" through the involvement of different stakeholders in dynamic skills training.

In order to organize a documented research-action portfolio of the theatre workshop that compiled: the sessions planning, photos, videos, monitor's field diary, participants' texts, evaluation instruments and materials produced in the sessions. All these materials represented vital methodological tools for the workshops, to promote the reflection with the participants and also to inform the dissemination instruments such as the documentary and the blog.

Procedure and dynamics

In both Labs the in-person sessions lasted four months and happened once a week for a period of two hours and thirty minutes. Each laboratory began with a presentation session followed by two sessions of gender equality awareness led by a sociologist and a psychologist. The theatre workshop monitor was responsible for the theoretical research and practical frameworks to guide the artistic processes of group involvement around the main topics of gender equality focusing on labour issues, empowerment and feminisms. The theatre monitor together with the sociologist revised the syllabus outlined for theatre workshop, considering the first contacts with the group of participants and the gender equality sessions. It also took place an additional Gender equality session and two employability sessions led by IEFP professionals.

The Lab1 was developed with a group of 13 women aged between 19 and 29 years from different UBI courses of the 1st cycle and 2nd cycle - Sociology, Pharmaceutical Sciences, Entrepreneurship and Social Work, Psychology, Communication Sciences and Fashion Design. In Lab2 the group was made up of women aged between 27 and 48 years with education levels between secondary school and the 2nd cycle of higher education and a with a period of unemployment between three months and four years.

In the two Labs the theatre workshop developed in an open environment centred both in the participants' characteristics and the group dynamics. Gender equality functioned as a unifying theme with a focus on work and employment questions but using the theatre practice as a tool for the development of critical thought and soft skills. It was promoted the alliance between learnings, theatre symbolic languages and the experiences of sensitivity, emotion and corporeality, in the sense of the *embodied pedagogies* (Nicholson, 2005). The expected impact was to exercise the bodily responses, sensations and aesthetical pleasure in order to generate in the women a sense of aliveness that prompts their desire to connect and engage (with others or ideas) (Thompson, 2009). For this purpose the theatre workshop was organized in four different units: i) self-presentation ii) collective corporeality iii) dramaturgy of gender equality and iv)

collective creation process. Each unit corresponded to three workshop sessions. In each session there was a subject that creates thematic coherence to all practices, from the warm-up exercises to the core exercises of expression, creativity and *improvisational* theatre. Some examples: "Gender stereotypes", "Power inequalities", "Power and participation of women and men", "Work-family balance", "Future perspectives" (Lab1) and "From me to the world" (Lab2). The subjects were initially presented to the participants through the use of literary works (novels and poetry), newspaper articles and scientific papers. The same subjects were posteriorly transformed into theatrical exercises and symbolic performances. With these resources and practices we were able to promote the critical reflection and the development of personal and reflexive visions of the world among the participants. It also created the conditions for the final step of each lab which was the collective creation of a performance object to be presented to the community.

The *Empowerment Labs* dissemination products were the blog, the final presentations and related videos and the documentary video. Both public presentations happened in the Spring of 2014 in the Teatro das Beiras/Covilhã auditorium. These presentations were crucial moments that allowed participants to present all the personal and collective achievements of the Labs. Each public presentation was a collective sharing of the most significant insights and experiences and the creation of public community spaces of gender equality debate. The public feedback – in each presentation was promoted the debate with the audience – was empowering to the process of self-esteem and confidence development.

The Labs were subjected to internal evaluation, mainly through individual surveys and group discussions. The evaluation process tried to highlight the personal perceptions of the experience, the perceived impacts and the self-assessment of knowledge and skills. An overall assessment of the aspects most mentioned by participants as positive results of this experience highlighted the dimensions of "strengthening the personal and social well-being", "development of a critical thinking", "development of the expressive capabilities and creativity" and "development of social participation skills":

> Making us more aware of this reality, this training has made us more critical, more analytical, more thoughtful and more aware of these issues we live with daily. I believe that in a future insertion in the labour market and employment context, I will often remember me of the contents we have explored and discussed, and then ... I will be a member with more potential to demonstrate activity in moral change and social ethics. (*F., age 19, Lab1*)

> Yes, it was an asset for my personal life since the Empowerment Lab2 served me to "open" to the world and be more secure in what I do and say, and of course gave me more personal and intellectual stability, I would say, more peace of mind. (*D., age 27, Lab2*)

Concluding remarks

In his theory of transformative learning Mezirow assumes the influence of Jurgen Habermas (namely the important distinction between instrumental and communicative learning) and makes use of this philosopher's specific ideal conditions for human discourse to define what he considers to be the "optimal conditions for adult learning and education": a) to have accurate and complete information; b) to be free of coercion, distorting self-deception or immobilizing anxiety; c) to be open to alternative points of view; d) to be able to understand, to weight evidence and to assess arguments objectively; e) to be able to become aware of the context and critically reflect on assumptions, including their own; f) to have equal opportunity to participate in the various roles of the discourse; g) to have a test of validity until new perspectives, evidence or argument are encountered and validated through discourse as yielding a better judgment (Mezirow, 2006, pp. 25-26)

When we confront the experience of Empowerment Labs with the above conditions our critical analysis (also supported by the testimonies of the women involved) is that the AT offered privileged circumstances for it development and optimization. Besides being able to facilitate access to information, critical understanding of reality and active participation, this learning approach particularly favours the absence of coercion because the theatrical practice resulted from a collaborative work in which dialogue was horizontal and each participant exercised the right to creative freedom. Even if, when facing the demands of embodied language and public expression, women have occasionally faced emotional states of immobilizing anxiety. With regard to the openness to alternative points of view, theatre (as an exercise of gesture and word par excellence) emerges as a privileged universe to feel "the power of artistic practice to imagine new ways of seeing our places in the world "(Kuppers & Robertson, 2007, p. 152) and also to create new places in the world.

However our critical analysis also leads to two constraint findings. A first and very practical is connected with the attendance and punctuality of participants. It was notorious the difficulty of these women to maintain their commitment to the complete process of the *Empowerment Labs*. University students justified nonattendances with academic obligations or illness. Unemployed women justified their absences with the demand for employment and family responsibilities. There have also been some withdrawals of participants because they started academic internships, found employment or integrated vocational training programs. In a society that greatly values the direct and immediate link between action and results, it is not easy to ensure long term commitments that do not translate into immediate and / or visible results. Also because this was a project that favours logics of communicative learning that are far from the mainstream, which is directed to employability and the acquisition of key competencies valued by the market. The problem of attendance was discussed by project team all making it clear that it is important to find alternatives to overcome such constraints in the future.

On the other hand, several authors have criticized the limits of transformative approach (Imel, 1998; Purcell, 2006; Kitchenham, 2008) on the grounds that it does not adequately contemplate a dimension of individual and collective action facing social transformation. Other authors use the dichotomy empowerment *versus* emancipation (Inglis, 1997; Wildemeersch & Olesen, 2012), as argument to advocate that "an individualist attitude towards empowerment and freedom" (Shor & Freire, 1987, p. 109)

it is not enough by itself to move from personal transformation to social and political transformation.

In response to those critical analyses pointing out that transformative theories of learning are found unsatisfactory because they only can help in the first step of political change emancipatory education, the one that leads to personal transformation, the most valuable argument is that personal conscience is a vital part for social action. And educators must beware of placing learners in a vacuum by making them aware of the need for collective change without helping them to acquire the information and skills needed to take part of it (Mezirow, 1997). Such an option and priority appear to be in line with the most important features of the AT as alternative learning and training instruments.

Second, the concept of empowerment is multidimensional, demanding not only the raise of one's awareness of exploitation, but also the development of skills and strategies to engage in political action (Stromquist, 2014). It is in this sense that feminist movements have advocated empowerment while "female investment in access to and exercise of power" (Macedo & Amaral, 2005), aimed at eliminating power relations based on male dominance, the defence of freedom and the respect for human diversity (Catalá, 2009).

Finally, the association between AT, embodied pedagogies and transformative learning promotes a "shift in focus from effects to affects" (Thompson, 2009) by which some limitations may be introduced, but from other point of view it also (re)opens new potentialities. "By failing to recognise affect – bodily responses, sensations and aesthetic pleasure – much of the power of performance can be missed" (idem: 7). Beyond social utility and social impact, "[a]rtistic experience and practice are here best understood for their capacity to agitate at the level of sensation, and it is this force that propels a demand to know more." (idem: 121). The stimulation of affect can be envisaged as an asset that predisposes the participant to thought and to be engaged, to resist and be committed to change.

Yet, when finalizing the *Empowerment Labs* we had the clear perception that it was just a step towards a larger project. The Labs explored the development of learning abilities that have an impact on the lives of participants and also allow them to become active agents of social change. But that will not be enough to generate significant social change, particularly with regard to the place(s) and role(s) of women in today's society. We tend to agree with A. B. Ryan (2001), when he mentions that for any meaningful social change to occur learning starts with individual self-reflection and transformation that must at some juncture connect with the collective spheres. And requires expanding debate beyond the walls of the *Empowerment Labs*, for which the public presentations were a first step.

Finally, in assessing the abstract of this communication, a question was raised by evaluators: "Would it be possible to claim that the exact 'shift in focus from effects to affects' may actually contribute to ever greater gender inequality?" Answering this question, we believe that an approach that is oriented towards non-formal learning and is based on the principle of free choice does not promote at the social level (or in objective terms) a greater gender inequality. However it's admissible, and we had this awareness during the course of the Labs, the acquisition of a critical consciousness of inequalities, which so far were only partly revealed to these women, may cause them some disturbing feelings. Whose effects can be reflected in the relationship these women will henceforth establish with those closest (within families and in relation to its role in this context, in relation to men) and with society in general and the values that govern it. But this observation leads us to an essential question: what is worth for women and for society, the maintenance of a cloak of silence over inequalities still in force, in the name of a certain

social peace and the belief that time it is the best solution and equality will eventually happen, or that society faces the hassle of a reality that is slow to resolve itself, which objectively affects the rights and opportunities of women?

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School as the socio-cultural center of the local community

Introduction

Slovenian society has been preserving a specific model of social organization, rooted in the communal form, for a long time. The local school and the church were the most important intertwining elements. Throughout history, primary school has had an important role in developing and promoting literacy (Vidmar, 2012); in Slovenia this has been combined with the (indirect) fostering of national awareness. Additionally, it has always been the center of the cultural and social life of the community. Functioning as a socio-cultural center of the local community, the school greatly surpassed its primary role of educating children.

The process of urbanization that reached rural areas as well as the secularization of lifestyles brought about very interesting changes to the previously expanded function of local schools. In the research study we conducted in 2014 and 2015 we examined how schools today perceive the need for collaboration and participation in their local environments. We found that, either weekly or monthly, 75% of schools in some way cooperate with local community organizations. At the same time schools and communities expressed the wish and the need for collaboration. Quantitative data did not show any significant difference between schools of different sizes and in different localities. These very encouraging results could be pointing to potentially unified patterns of collaboration between school and local community.

In spite of encouraging results we should take into account the fact that collaboration between schools and the community may expose various problems, obstacles and challenges that communities tackle in different ways. Some international research studies demonstrate that in addition to objective obstacles (such as time and money), other, non-material obstacles must also be considered. Thus Canadian researchers Deslandes, Rousseau, and Royer (2002, p. 32) identified five groups of obstacles to a more intensive collaboration between schools and communities:

- a lack of time and resources;
- cultural, linguistic and educational differences;
- a lack of external support for collaboration, for instance from employers, administrative bodies and politicians;
- schools' organization that does not encourage collaboration and traditional models of school practice that restrict themselves to a limited number of families;
- insufficient qualification and a lack of information related to collaboration.

The quantitative analysis which we started with does not give a full answer to such or similar questions. Therefore, we decided for further analysis in order to obtain school educators' clearer views and opinions. With their help we acquired a more in-depth picture and, most of all, the answers to the questions about what is in the background, what actual forms and dilemmas occur in the establishment of contacts and mutual enrichment between schools and their social environments. Consequently, we decided for a qualitative approach, with the help of which we can present primary school educators' and expert practitioners' experiences and opinions and thus identify various and far from uniform practices of collaboration between schools and their social environments.

Our starting assumption was that in Slovenia there co-exist different traditions and local particularities that help to condition the relationship between schools and the environment. This, however, cannot be demonstrated if we do not describe the participants' direct and daily experiences in establishing mutual ties and collaboration in schools and local communities. This assumption justified the use of the qualitative methodological approach.

Formulating the problem and key discussion issues in the focus group

To gain an insight into the developments we decided to organize a focus-group discussion. We selected this approach, because we believe that direct discussion with participants allows for the most direct insight into the views and considerations dominating Slovenian schools. We hoped this would help us to understand the situation better. Of course, we renounced the possibilities for generalization, which such an approach disables.

We planned discussion in three topic sections, namely:

- *Schools as the socio-cultural centers of local communities*: we examined if and how the discussion participants understand the school's position in the community. But primarily we were interested in whether schools have preserved the role in traditional environments and how the role is assumed, if at all, in non-traditional, new urban and suburban environments.
- *Mutual expectations of schools and their social environments*, including parents, teachers and organizations working in the environment, were planned as the topic of the second section. We looked into what the participants believe communities expect from schools and how they see their role in the functioning of their communities.
- The third section focused on the *obstacles and problems* arising from the relationships between communities and schools. Yet, our emphasis was not on financial or time

obstacles, but more on administrative obstacles, especially those stemming from people's opinions and ideas. We inquired specifically about any potential risks for schools' fundamental mission. It should not be forgotten that education is the school's first task. Nevertheless, schools do not function in isolation, but always as part, and sometimes as the heart of the local community.

The main goal, then, was to exchange experiences and to reflect upon them within each of the topic section. The aim, having finished discussions and done the analyses, was to formulate adequate suggestions and recommendation on developing further collaboration and on where changes in future development processes can be expected.

Research methodology

In this part of the research study the focus-group method was used, which is a research tool that gives a "voice" to the research participants by giving them an opportunity to define what is relevant and important to understand their experience (Liamputtong, 2011, p. 4). The participants are chosen because they are able to provide valuable contributions to the research questions. The discussion among participants provides researchers with an opportunity to hear issues which may not emerge from their interaction with researchers alone. The interaction among participants themselves leads to more emphasis being laid on the points of view of participants than those of researchers (Gaiser, 2008).

Data collection and analysis

The focus group was conducted in January 2015. We invited the educators, particularly school counselors, who participated in the conference Days of Pedagogy and Andragogy on the topic of Learning and Education in the Community (see Učenje in izobraževanje v skupnosti, 2015), which was held at that time at the Faculty of Arts, University of Ljubljana. There were 16 participating educators, 6 from primary schools, one from a preschool, three from the Institute of the Republic of Slovenia for Vocational Education and Training, two from the Faculty of Arts, one from the Slovenian Institute for Adult Education, an independent expert and two participants from other /institutions.

The participants were informed on how the focus group would develop, and the group was chaired by a member of the research team. The participants' discussions were time-limited, and the complete, two-hour debate was recorded.

The collected data were first transcribed and then analyzed through a qualitative procedure. We segmented the text into code units, and each unit was labelled with a code. When the coding was complete, we summarized the prevalence of codes and compared relationships between one or more codes. A more detailed and systematic qualitative analysis (Mesec, 1998) of the transcripts would certainly be possible, but we avoided a more meticulous dissection of the text so as to maintain the authenticity of the statements and to make full use of the focus-group method. The advantage of the latter is precisely that it allows for experts' opinions to be presented as fully as possible (Klemenčič & Hlebec, 2007).

Below we present a table that lists pre-determined basic problem sections, followed by coded core categories and, in the third column, each core category's subcategories. The participants in the focus group were ascribed numbers from 1 to 16, and the numbers are given when quoting them. In the presentation we focus on the three problem sections (school as a social and cultural center of the community, participants' expectations regarding collaboration between school and the community, and the obstacles encountered during the collaboration) and we emphasize only the aspects that are important to understand the significance of schools for the functioning of the community.

Problem section	*Core categories of the section*	*Subcategories*
SOCIAL AND CULTURAL CENTER OF THE COMMUNITY	SMALL COMMUNITY	big and small schools branch schools
	INTELLECTUAL CENTER	cultural events suburban traditional environment
	LOCAL IDENTITY	awareness professional life personal contacts sense of belonging
EXPECTATIONS	PARENTS	
	ORGANIZATIONS	
OBSTACLES	BUREAUCRATIC AND POLITICAL	
	MENTALITY	
	DANGERS	

Presentation of results

Urbanization may have changed the classical structure of the village with a school, a church, a fire station and a restaurant, but the question remains if primary schools still exert any influence on the community, still affect the formation and functioning of the local community and its social structuring.

The debate in the focus group showed that actual practices regarding collaboration between the community and schools are very diverse. In fact, a great diversity of opinion raises the question about the concept, about the understanding of the process of collaboration. That is why a more detailed analysis of the various forms, contacts, mutual expectations and activities is required.

School as the social and cultural center of the community

In accordance with our initial finding – that situations differ significantly – we first paid attention to the part of the discussion that illustrates the differences the participants ascribed to the size of the community. We expected differences regarding schools' functions as social and cultural centers of the community to occur primarily between big and small communities. And, indeed, we got the expected response to the question about how schools fulfil the function of the cultural and social center:

> *I believe that schools, especially non-urban schools, still often are the center; but as you said at the start, I think that urban schools, I'm talking about primary schools, are no longer, having forgotten about this part, but they needn't have or they could return back to it. (10)*

Needless to say, not all the inhabitants of a community are equally notable participants in the collaboration. We usually give priority to children's parents and their close relatives, but a participant in the focus group thought this was not necessarily true, especially in small communities:

> *Yes, grandmothers, grandfathers are more connected, yes. But we have elderly inhabitants who are also invited and elections and such like. They are invited, but of course they also network a bit, so some do come, but not many. Mostly it is, obviously, parents or relatives. But it's hard to define. It's a small place and then it is loads of them. Suburbia, but they still rely on the school pretty much, but it's also true it's very much related to children, yes. (3)*

Big and small schools

Our quantitative empirical analysis showed no significant differences between big and small schools regarding their collaboration with the social environment, at least as far as the scope, content and expectations are concerned. But when we addressed the issue of school sizes and collaboration with the local community during the focus group, it became obvious that there are differences in specific situations, although they cannot be registered by a general questionnaire.

The following consideration draws attention to the differences between small and big schools:

> *Big schools have fewer contacts ..., a big system works differently from a smaller system and, actually, it is logical it also needs fewer of them, it has other advantages from the viewpoint of resources, efficiency; we know that massive should mean efficient, but our cultural environment has never been massive and so this criterion brings troubles. (4)*

Although it is not always and necessarily true but, as a rule, small schools are situated in small communities; in urban areas schools are generally bigger. It means that school sizes and environments together create social contexts; here, we would like to lay special emphasis on branch schools.

Branch schools

To understand the significance of branch schools in Slovenia, let us consider some data. According to the Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia, there were 328 branch schools in 2014 (Osnovnošolsko izobraževanje, 2015) whereas the Education, Science and Culture Trade Union of Slovenia notes that four years previously there had been 349. Jelen states that "branch schools account for 46% of primary schools in Slovenia, but they include only 2.45% of students. They predominantly have four grades. They are typified by combined, multi-grade classes". (Jelen, 2010, p. 56) Bearing these figures in mind, it may seem understandable that in their 2011 report (Priporočila OECD ..., 2011) the OECD recommend that Slovenia should close down smaller, especially branch schools (see also Smrt podružnicam, živelo šolstvo, 2011). And at first it may be argued that economic reasons and financial efficiency do not justify the great expenses that such schools incur.

The data and the ever-present dilemmas about the *raison d'être* of branch schools stimulated the participants in the focus group to spend some more time on debating the issue, although that was not originally planned. The participants' views were surprisingly unanimous, presenting branch schools in a completely new role which should be taken into consideration when making economic analyses and reflecting upon the existing network of schools in Slovenia. They, namely, have direct implications for the significance of schools in the local community.

The first participant drew attention to the importance of branch schools to tackling the decrease in the population, that is, the shift in depopulation trends in some smaller places:

> *It* [closing down branch schools] *may have been a trend three decades ago, but today they're moving back because of cheaper rents, real estates – that is to the places where they once used to be, where the basic infrastructure is. I wanted to stress the radicalism, there is certain radicalism in what schools mean for the community and for whether today the community survives or doesn't survive. (1)*

Attempts at maintaining branch schools often unite local inhabitants, principals and local community leaders who are aware of the importance of the school to the community and its identity.

> *Principals of schools with more branch schools, perhaps a mayor here or there, who did everything to keep branch schools at the edges of their school districts or municipalities today see that their efforts have paid off; they were aware of the key role of schools as social and cultural centers. They knew that a place or a hamlet or a hill would die out without a school. (1)*

Branch schools also offer space for social and cultural life in less secluded areas, a life which would not exist without them. The next participant highlighted the importance of branch schools in suburban environments without tradition or a classical village structure:

> *We have a branch school, a suburban school in an environment without a cultural home from the times when they liked building them so much, big halls, so that the school is used for cultural events, too. So I think our school works on collaboration with the local community, with these cultural events ..., but I wanted to emphasize that this is a space where local people come, because they have no other, and the school is meant for it, as well. (3)*

Although branch schools may have weaknesses, we can conclude that the participants believe they can, as a rule, contribute to the opening and widening of the

community, depending of course on the teachers and schools' atmosphere. Children with special needs are also expected to feel homier in small branch schools, but they must, certainly, be provided with adequate treatment and professional assistance. Thus, we agree with the participant saying that

> *branch schools already perform the role of, say, a sort of social, cultural and other centers (1),*

but it is important to emphasize that due to a smaller number of educators and, especially, support services in such schools, care for quality and adequate expertise is particularly important. Therefore, these should be given special attention.

Expectations – what does the community expect from schools?

The relationship dynamics between schools and communities rests upon objective circumstances described and commented on by the participants in the focus group. In addition to objective circumstances, there are always the dimensions of expectations and relationships which are partly or wholly subjective in nature. This is obvious from our analysis so far, but it was also given special focus during our focus-group discussion.

Parents' expectations

Parents' expectations from the school are often ambivalent. On the one hand, they expect that the school's program will offer a lot of knowledge and enable the child's optimum development. On the other hand, they look for opportunities to include children in the activities provided by the local community, not directly related to the school.

This dilemma opens up a space for collaboration and enrichment, and calls for new considerations. Schools can react indifferently to parents' expectations, but they can also be a factor and promoter in children's participation in extracurricular activities, thus allowing parents the opportunities for their children's development with the help and support from schools:

> *We're trying, we're not always successful, we're criticized for wrong decisions, when judged by what some people expect, we also often distribute evaluation questionnaires ... I didn't take time for it for many years, but now I do, and I'm very sad when there's no feedback, I prefer criticism saying it was bad, it was not good, so that I can start to think about it, improve it and do something about it. A lot can be done. (2)*

This, then, is the question about whether schools should initiate children's participation in extra activities and then monitor and lead it, whether they should be the motor of development outside of their mandatory programs, too. Interestingly, a focus-group participant noted that parents always expect positive effects of schools in the community:

> *But people, whether they are aware of it or not, expect that there will be some effect, that there will be some development, that the community will progress. Not that children will be educated and then leave. These are tough responses and great expectations. (4)*

These effects are not self-evident, especially not if parents are not attracted by schools and if they cannot – or do not strive to – offer opportunities and help in their children's development. Parents' collaboration thus becomes crucial, parents are the means through which schools open into the community and create for themselves either a central or marginal role.

It could be argued that parents' expectations are the consequence and result of schools' conscious orientation outward. The parents who are interested in children's development and better opportunities for them to participate in school-organized activities will respond if they get positive feedback that confirms their initial expectations. In the long term it means that even when their children leave compulsory education in the school, they will expect – as the quote above demonstrates – that the school will help the community to progress and attract young people after they have left school as well as before.

Organizations' expectations

Expectations of organizations in different school environments are very different. Renting out rooms, especially classrooms and gyms to local societies and adult education organizations for recreational, educational and sport purposes is, of course, the most widespread. The infrastructure that schools have is crucial for small communities to have such activities at all. Such instances, especially if the only interest is financial, can hardly be described as collaboration, as they are predominantly formalized relationships. However, we should not overlook informal meetings of the users with the school's educators and students who spend time in the school's vicinity after classes, especially in the outdoor playgrounds and school courtyards. Especially in smaller communities, where social cohesion is stronger, such informal contacts have greater significance to the development of informal groups and communication that integrates school space and, consequently, school as a whole into the local environment.

The possibilities that schools have, even if only infrastructure is concerned, are much greater than merely renting out spaces for recreation. Schools possess larger infrastructure which they can, or not, offer for various activities:

> *Schools have infrastructure, they have space which is more or less empty in the afternoons. Perhaps it would be very interesting to carry out a pilot project to use this school space for counseling centers to come to schools or for non-government experts from the wider community to provide various activities and so do something for children's and families' education and upbringing. It means that such contents would be realized in schools and adjusted to the needs of the local environment. (7)*

Based on the focus-group debate regarding mutual expectations of schools, parents and organizations in the community we conclude that it is a circular process. Expectations rise as a consequence of positive experiences that individual agents of collaboration gain. What is important is initiative, sometimes perseverance, and the recognition of the situations that can be developed, reaching a new quality. Parents in particular are a kind of bridge between schools and their social environments, so it is very important for educators to have someone to turn to; the latter can open up the space, raise expectations and adequately motivate for further content cooperation.

Conclusion

In this paper we present only those conclusions from the focus group that we find relevant to schools' influence on the functioning of the wider community. It seems there can be no universal model of collaboration between schools and communities. It is important to distinguish between schools in urban, suburban and village environments, and frequent emphasis in this text is also laid on schools' cultural and intellectual functions in smaller communities. It is particularly important to note branch schools. Although they include fewer children, they are of key importance from the aspects of demographic development, the life of smaller communities and the preservation of the traditional structure of the Slovenian social landscape.

Schools have many opportunities to take on a more active role as the cultural and social center of the community. In this, the parents of students are the group that is crucial to collaboration, mutual enrichment and, finally, the social and cultural integration and profile of the local community. The community's collaboration with schools is important for the preservation of the community's local identity, but the reverse is also true: the community gives schools identity. In this respect, the participants in the focus group emphasized the problems that could occur if such an identity meant imposing limits on the wider social and cultural environment into which and for which schools should socialize their students.

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Challenges and opportunities for adult learning in learning city – region developments in Pécs, Hungary. New perspectives for community development and co-operative learning

Global impacts on the learning city-region developments

The evolution of learning regions started right in 1972, when the OECD initiated a seven city project which it called *Educating Cities*. Vienna, Edinburgh, Kakegawa, Pittsburgh, Edmonton, Adelaide and Gothenburg would undertake to put education at the forefront of their strategies and policies with a view to developing economic performance. And that experience would then be translated into an example for other cities around the world. There have been many positive results from that project but perhaps it's a comment on the fate of all projects, or perhaps it's the nature of politics, that, in the 1990s, only in Gothenburg did the city officials even knew about the project 20 years later.

Surprisingly, it was in the early 1990s that things started to develop in a much broader (Longworth, 1999). Longworth labelled it the as *the age of innocence* – when researchers recognised that something was afoot but not quite what it was. A couple of accelerating conferences took place in the first half of the decade, both of them helping to push back the limits of knowledge and action. The Gothenburg gathering in 1992, also sponsored by OECD, was a follow-up from the *Educating Cities* project. It initiated the international association of educating cities, based in Kaunas, and now with a membership of more than 400 cities world-wide.

The Rome conference was organised by the *European Lifelong Learning Initiative* and the American Council for Education in 1996 and this, in its turn, created the *World Initiative on Lifelong Learning*. Sadly both ELLI and WILL are now defunct but they contributed a great deal to the advancement of learning city knowledge during the 1990s. ELLI was instrumental in developing some of the early *charters for learning regions* –

charters that spelled out the commitment of a region to improving learning opportunities and methodologies for all its inhabitants It looked like this – the basis for a widespread discussion on improving the local culture of learning. Cities as far apart as Adelaide, Halifax in Canada, Espoo in Finland and Dublin took this charter template and adapted it for their own use.

And then the middle of the decade came with the European year of Lifelong Learning in 1996 – it was taken very seriously by ELLI and most universities – perhaps because there was a funding stream attached to it – yet, its significance was unfortunately largely ignored by many of the organisations that matter - cities, regions and schools and business and industry and most of the population of Europe. In spite of this, there can be no doubt that the provenance of today's work on learning cities and regions lies in the early work on lifelong learning given an impetus by the European Year. And 1996 did lead to a renewed awareness of the importance of education and more particularly to the idea that a world of rapid political, economic, technological and environmental change in turn leads to rapid changes in the practice and delivery of education.

Most critical thinkers on education and learning understood that the late 20th century world of education and training in which teacher's wisdom was delivered top-down to those who were thought worthy of it was giving way to a much more open lifelong learning world of personal learning continuous throughout life, while most of the educational world was still immersed in its own version of the dark ages. Most of them believed that education was not available to all citizens but also with an imperative to persuade whole populations that learning is a good thing for their economic, social and intellectual health and well-being and for social stability in general. This was a 180 degree change of focus from top-down education delivery - to a bottom-up satisfaction of the needs and demands of the learner. Using the tools and techniques of lifelong learning such as personal learning plans.

Requirements audits, mentors, coaches and guides and access to electronic networks. The cynical view of course is that it hasn't lasted – that politicians, in their search for measurable indicators to persuade the voters that education is improving, would take the easy top-down utilitarian option – and so it has proved in some countries, but there are still some idealists lwho see learning cities and regions as the natural location for the practical application of lifelong learning, transforming it from a vague concept into a workable reality and who still think that it will be possible to see people of all ages indulging happily in – to quote the title of the Finnish National Lifelong Learning Policy Document – the joy of learning, what an excellent title for a Government paper.

Unfortunately, by ignoring a great number of excellent initiatives, the process moved on to *the age of experimentation.* In the later part of the 1990s National Learning City networks began to appear – firstly in the United Kingdom and followed later by those Finland and Sweden. The North European focus by the way reflects very much the centre of gravity of lifelong learning and learning city interest.

With several notable exceptions Southern, Central and Eastern Europe have taken much longer to embrace the very real benefits of creating learning cities and regions. In this new age of experimentation, Learning Region projects began to be funded – 16. one of them 'TELS Towards a European Learning Society ' developed what it called a Learning Cities Audit Tool and studied the performance of 80 European municipalities. In ten domains of learning activity from access to participation, from leadership to commitment, from wealth creation and employability to celebration and social inclusion.

Unsurprisingly, it found that the words 'Learning City and learning Region were not well known – indeed in more than two thirds of those 80 cities, they were completely

unknown – but the surprise is this – once the audit tool had been used and the concept had become known, a large number of them asked themselves why they were not more active in these domains, and became converts to the cause. Perhaps this was the first recorded use of an academic questionnaire as an evangelical tool. At this time too, there were conferences and learning city launches – places like Liverpool, Espoo, Edinburgh and Glasgow and several other cities, many of them in the UK came out, as it were. *Learning Festivals* celebrated the joy of learning in Glasgow and in Sapporo, Japan.

And so Europe drifted into the new millennium and what may be called *the age of advance* propelled principally by the European Commission's Lisbon agenda, which has put lifelong learning at the forefront of European policy. The development of learning cities and regions was one key strategy of that policy – and so the European policy paper on the local and regional dimension of lifelong learning was born in 2001. This important document was based on the results of TELS and written by Norman Longworth. The document clearly stated that 'Cities and regions in a globalized world cannot afford not to become learning cities and regions. It is a matter of prosperity, stability, employability and the personal development of all citizens' They were clear and forward looking words indeed, and a striking challenge to every local and regional authority that has read – them – which, because of the nature of information transmission, is unfortunately, very few.

But later, the OECD also geared up the process in 2001 with its learning regions project in 5 European regions – Jena in Germany, Oresund in Sweden and Denmark, Vienne in France, Kent in UK and Andalusia. Among its findings was the perhaps surprising statement that secondary education appears to be the most important for regional development and the more predictable one that there is a need to encourage creativity at all levels of education. And that's a theme that crops up time and time again in learning region folklore – *creativity, innovation, vision* at all levels of education - Would that it were so in reality.

CEDEFOP, the European Vocational Training Agency also joined in the party in 2001. The results of its own project between regions of Europe and USA urged regional management to develop a means by which educational and other organizations have a common purpose – each one learning from each other and each one learning with each other – in planning and implementing social and economic innovations. Those are significant words - because now we seemed to be making a real advance in our understanding of what a learning region is – cooperative, multi-faceted, creative, innovative, communicative, - different.

And despite the fact that many cities and regions are still well behind the mark, in the new millennium the movement to create learning cities and regions threatened to become an avalanche – as a couple of examples among many, Germany established around 76 learning regions, while every city, town and municipality in Victoria Australia became a learning entity. moreover, the Chinese government has now decreed that every large city in China should become a learning city by 2010 and beyond. Not too late from this, the IDEOPOLIS was born, described by Tom Cannon and his collaborators as ' A City or Region whose economy is driven by the creative search for, and the application of, new ideas, thinking and knowledge, and which is firmly rooted to the creative transfer of ideas, to opportunities, to innovation, and eventually to production.'

There are those words again – *creative, innovation, new ideas and thinking*. These initiatives moved most researchers into what might be called *the age of understanding* – and many of them finally thought they got it – or knew, or thought they knew - what being a learning region entails and, simultaneously, the number of European projects increased. From every part of the Commission – Learning Cities and Regions are now included in the

Framework research programmes and a lifelong learning element now has to be included in the vast majority of the Commission's Social and development Funding. There became a great need for tools and materials that would help cities and regions to get that understanding. Therefore, particular Socrates projects developed those learning tools for city and regional management and learning materials to help them propagate the message to others. And yet the OECD would have you believe that *all regions seek to sustain economic activity through various combinations of lifelong learning, innovation and creative uses of information and communication technologies.* (OECD, Learning Regions project – 2003). One can find more on learning cities and regions at www.eurolocal.info.

Some theoretical frames on learning and the learning economy

In order to promote an understanding of the concept of learning cities, learning regions, it is worth indicating that there are four major related but different impact for the idea itself. The first impact for the reconceptualisation of learning and learning economy (and indeed learning organizations) can be traced to what now must be seen as a seminal paper by Lundvall and Johnson (1994) on the *learning economy*. Its importance of different types of learning and the difference between codified and tacit learning is well articulated – something not new to those in the fields of education and adult learning. What is of special interest however in the paper by Lundvall and Johnson is the explicit connections made to economy. While *the role of learning in production and work is not new,* generally it was largely 'assumed' and occurred invisibly (Razavi, 1997). What Lundvall and Johnson (1994) and others (Edquist, 1997; OECD 2000) have identified and stressed *in newly emerging knowledge economy is that learning is now a fundamental process and resource.*

A second impact for learning cities, learning regions arrives from *the application of learning within and across organisations* (Senge, 1990). Economic geographers too, have underlined in what forms *the transfer and sharing of knowledge and ideas across informal networks within industry clusters* (sometimes referred to as collective learning) *seems to be a critical aspect of creativity and innovation* (Keeble et al., 1999).

Since innovation is a basic element in the knowledge economy, ways to promote, support and enhance innovation are important (Edquist, 1997). As for *case studies of technopoles and industrial complexes in Europe* (Cooke and Morgan, 1998), the United Kingdom (UK) and the USA and Canada (Wolfe and Gertler, 2001) there is growing evidence and awareness that *learning is the fundamental process at work in the new knowledge economy*. Far from a presumed and hidden force, it needs to be made explicit, strengthened and backed up.

Apart from matching clusters and communities of practice *the work of economic geographers signalled* a third important aspect for the conceptualisation of learning cities, learning regions – *the spatial context.* Florida (1995) set the idea of learning regions and others (Bokema et al, 2000) described as the basis of *regional innovation systems*. A very special idea was framed here that in particular locales learning, which was fostered and supported through *good learning infrastructure* (i.e. a regional innovation system) *enabled the locality to compete in a global economy.* This recognition of the regional scale provides *an important link to local economic development and the importance of learning, social capital and human capital in community development.* By setting this link, it is open, thereby, to move beyond a potentially narrowly defined regional innovation system which watches on on business and industry alone *to take a wider whole-of-community*

approach where increasingly learning and learning processes can be the vehicle to equip and empower whole communities (Amin, 1999). Allison (2001) has broadened the spheres of activities and influence for learning *to underline a learning communities approach to local economic development*. In this approach *an explicit link between learning initiatives, partnerships and governance, social capital and building local capacity together with capabilities and economic prosperity* is developed.

This lies at the centre of local economic development and several community case studies in urban and rural areas demonstrate how this approach may promote local economic development. Parallel to this special approach to local economic development is the work of scholars in the field of education research. Tooke (2000), for example, argues that the broader value of learning has been recognised by those who work in and focus on education, lifelong learning, adult and community education. Obviously, this scholarly tradition brings in *a timely and useful critique to the concept of learning regions provoking an effort to embrace wider social and community development issues.* The TELS (Towards a European Learning Society) Project (Longworth, 1999) and the UK Learning Towns Project (Yarnit, 2000) clearly present *four critical objectives for learning and learning initiatives which encompass (i) economic prosperity; (ii) social inclusion; (iii) sustainability; and (iv) governance.*

These objectives resemble with those most frequently indicated in local economic development strategies. It is the interrconnection of these *different dimensions of "learning" which result in a framework for a whole-of-community approach to learning cities, learning regions* to underline the economic and social life of communities in the global economy. In this *broader conceptualisation,* the scope of actions and *value of learning goes well beyond a limited definition of industry clusters and issues of competitiveness, innovation* (as important as these are). As the flow of learning initiatives by Yarnit (2000), Longworth (1999), Longworth and Franson (2001), Allison (2001) and others describe, learning makes its way through the community in many ways.

With each of these activities, the community may learn and develop sustainably. Learning enables communities to face change, adapt and transform on their own. *When the concept of learning cities, learning regions is understood in a broader framework, it opens up exciting potential and possibilities for many communities, particularly, when considered against reductionist narratives on exclusively economy-centred structure, by turning to more balanced models.*

European background of the Lifelong Learning Initiative

It is essential to look back upon the European starting steps in the theme of lifelong learning to have been influencing the scope of new roles for higher education. The first step towards lifelong learning within the context of the European Union was taken through the European Lifelong Learning Initiative (ELLI) in Rome in 1995, when researchers in education opened a public forum at a conference for promoting learning and the development of quality of content, process of education. (ELLI, 1995)

The emerging role of higher education institutions in the development of lifelong learning is obviously essential for making lifelong learning a reality as universities and colleges, since the late 1990s, contribute to the realisation of that initiative and Lisbon-goals, together with the aims of the *Education and training 2010* working programme. The latest document clearly pointed out the role of higher education. (EC, 2003) Also, the working programme was strongly attached to the goals outlined in the concrete future

objectives of the education and training systems of the member states of the European Union and reflected three strategic dymensions which explain the roles of higher education in developing lifelong learning:
These are:

1. The development of the quality and efficiency of the education and training systems within the European Union;
2. The development of opportunities and access to the education and training systems; (The two points are both reflected in the well-known *Bologna-process* to highlight the steps forward the European Area of Higher Education)
3. The development of forms external partnership of education and training systems. (This point was embedded into the framing of *learning cities and regions of lifelong learning* initiatives in and after 2001, namely, into the development of learning cities, regions and related good practice in some of the member states.)

The third point of the working programme explains that higher education, as part of the education and training system, must be open and act as a partner in local and regional partnerships to develop communities! The indicated points underline the initiative of the European Commission which, since 2002, has been supporting the establishment or change and modernisation of local and regional spaces of lifelong learning. The aim is so as to get formal, non-formal and informal learning closer to each other, referring to the partnership of public administration, higher education, chambers of commerce and industry, sectors of economy, culture and civic society by forming regions of lifelong learning (EC, 2002).

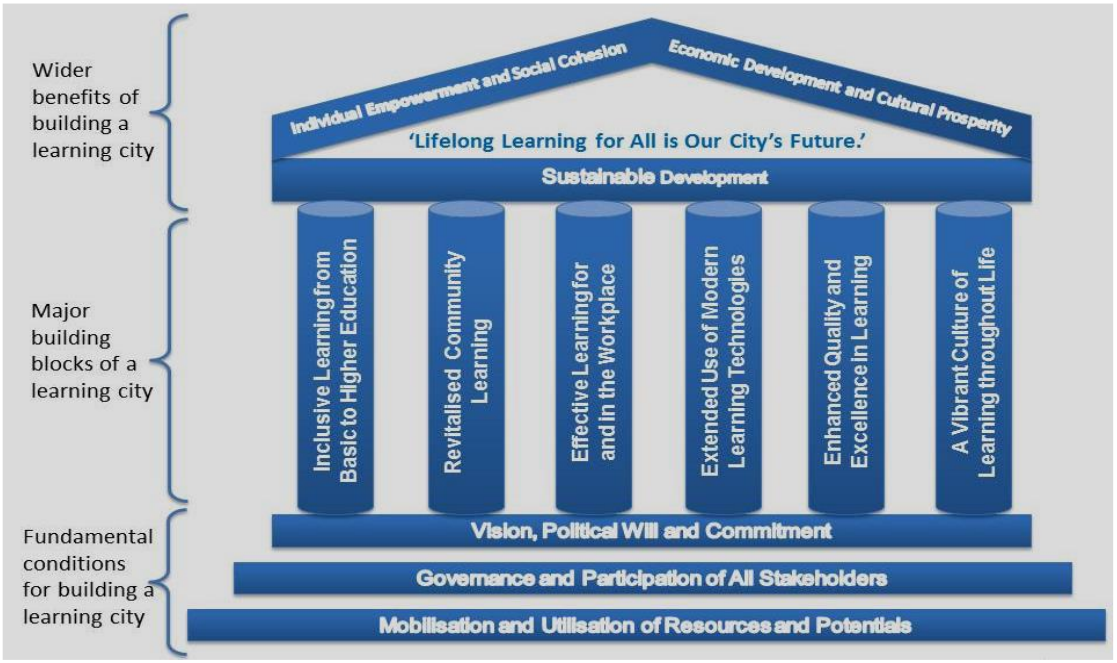
UNESCO's recent Global Learning City initiative

More than 1000 cities in the world have developed into or are building Learning/Educating cities. This obviously shows that the building of cities which put learning at the forefront of their policies and strategies has become a significant world-wide phenomenon. Cities rarely work in isolation and practical examples have reflected that those cities that are members of a dynamic network of local authorities at national, regional and international levels, have accelerated their growth and competitiveness as learning cities.

Most of these national, regional and international networks, while playing important roles in spreading the concept of learning cities, also have need of expertise networks or research organizations involved in developing tools and materials promoting and expanding the concept, and in establishing creative on-going working links between cities. There are also many cities still unaware or uncertain of the benefits that a truly global network of learning cities can bring to the development of lifelong learning and the learning society. For these reasons and more this initiative is timely.

As UNESCO's centre of excellence for promoting lifelong learning, and in response to Member States' call to adopt a more pragmatic and instrumental approach to building a learning society, the UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning (UIL) has recently proposed the establishment of the *UNESCO Global Learning Cities Network (UNESCO GLCN)* to enhance and accelerate the practice of lifelong learning in the world's conurbations.

The overall aim of the establishment of the UNESCO GLCN is to create a global platform to mobilise cities and demonstrate how to use their resources effectively in every sector to develop and enrich all their human potential for fostering lifelong personal growth, for developing equality and social justice, for maintaining harmonious social cohesion, and for creating sustainable prosperity. The UNESCO GLCN is intended to be a timely and innovative initiative to offer appropriate means by which cities can develop themselves into learning cities and create better environment – for themselves and for their citizens. (UNESCO, 2013)



Graphics 1: The Framework of the UNESCO Global Learning City Index. Source: www.uil.unesco.org

Local responses to global initiatives with the aim of community development: The Pécs Learning City-Region forum

Based on a decade-old international project partnership, to deal with the Learning City-Region model in cooperation with PASCAL Observatory, UNESCO Institute for LLL, the University of Pécs and its Faculty of Adult Education and HRD initiated, in 2013, the establishment of the Pécs Learning City Region Forum in order to develop a direct tool in certain areas of pedagogical/andragogical work targeting training trainers, educators and facilitators of learning. The project was incorporated into the project of the University of Pécs financed by the Hungarian Government's Social Renewal Operative Programme (TÁMOP 4.1.2.B – Developing T/Pedagógusfejlesztés) focusing on the Development of Teachers. Its so called K4 project sub-group decided to develop structural models for collecting and sharing good knowledge and experience for teachers, trainers, mentors and facilitators engaged in the promotion of quality learning and skills-development in formal, non-formal and informal settings.

Therefore, the Pécs Learning City-Region Forum started its activities in three majors fields by accelerating partnerships and dialogues:

– *Atypical/Non-formal Learning platform* (This platform tries to help cultural organisers, curators, managers be more successful with their educational

programmes organised for adults and also for school-teachers engaged in the development of cultural programmes for children) Such a collaborative frame involves more than 8 organisation/institutions and their representatives in order to identify innovative learning methods, tools, methodologies with atypical contexts.

- *School and Environment platform* (This platform supports dialogue amongst professionals developing specific environment-oriented programmes for local youth and their parents so as to become Nature-friendly, and conscious in protecting their environment. There is a specific focus to help school-teachers as adult learners building such orientations in the classroom and use available sources, programmes and curricula, etc. to achieve that goal based on collected best practises) Around nine member organisations/institutions work actively in the Forum through delegates, professional experts by providing platform-based exchange of ideas upon bringing closer school –pupils, their families to environment and environment-friendly, green thinking, actions and change-management with attention to interdisciplinary thinking and human behaviour.
- *Inclusion and Handicapped Situations platform*(This platform helps teachers to engage in collaborative actions providing dialogue to understand problems emerging from working with young children with learning difficulties, e.g. autists)

The three dimensions of the Forum's platform have enabled us to recognise *some key barriers to collect and share good practices* upon particular development works of partner organisations and institutions, which are:

- low levels of culture of mutual partnerships and collaborative actions to share experience and to develop professional skills, competence of educators/teachers, trainers and facilitators;
- limited time available for educators/teachers, trainers and facilitators to develop skills and share exchange knowledge, experience.
- small resources to constrain participation in programmes of the forum and, at the same time, heavy working load dominating majority of working time.

Choices for the development of learning in a learning city-region model:

- Growing interest amongst decision-makers and stakeholders so as to develop and maintain new and effective ways and methods for useful and problem-based knowledge transfer amongst institutions/organisations in the school sector, labour market, cultural organisations and institutions and other respected informal learning grounds and environments.
- European funds available through the European Social Fund for collaborative actions amongst educational, cultural and environmental organisations for raising participation and providing counselling for better performance in learning.
- Need for Common Identification of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats for learning city-region development.

– Necessary improvement of learning conditions and collaborative spaces for young people with learning difficulties through inclusive learning environment.

The main tool of the development of the Forum was organising platform sessions for collecting and sharing good knowledge, another key element is the website of the Forum where good practices are collected and documented for further distribution and developments in quality learning with key attempt for local and regional recognition and attention both by stakeholders, decision makers and by the local citizens.

Conclusions

The European adult learning initiatives may incorporate actions for inclusive and more tolerant community actions to involve individual and group work for development by collecting and sharing quality knowledge and skills which, I believe, is in the interest of city-region programmes to rise participation and performance both in economic production and social terrains. I do hope that dominant economic orientations will need a more sophisticated community vision by which stability, open society and development may be given priority in the locality of Pécs, Hungary with a strong attempt to develop community development in partnerships and dialogue based on collected and shared knowledge and experience. That is what the Learning City-Region Forum is for.

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The role of adult educators in fostering learning for community resilience

Introduction

Numerous analyses of modern society nowadays focus on one of largely recognized paradoxes of our times: the higher the level of modernization and development, the bigger the number of risks and probability of its consequences. As stated by the famous sociologist, Ulrich Beck, "the modern social production of goods is systematically followed by the social production of risks". (Beck, 2001, p. 31*)* Our technological power has its other side, increased vulnerability of the society. Reflecting upon effects of the massive human impact on the climate and ecosystems, Nobel Laureate Paul Crutzen coined in 2000 the term "*Anthropocene*", to mark the "Age of Man" as the new geological epoch in which we demonstrate our power and experience serious consequences (http://www.stockholmresilience.org).

Of course, not all of the risks are "produced" by humans, and not all of them can be avoided. However, as it has become part of everyday lives of all people, there is increasing necessity to build the resilience of all. In this process of developing people's capacities to face challenges and cope with risks, learning is naturally seen as one of the strongest mechanism. This need is increasing since it is being expressed by many people, no matter what part of the World or social class they belong to. While, on one hand we have observation on alienation and individualization as a reaction to the times of crises, on the other there is a theory on collective fear, or "solidarity out of fear" in the "risk society" (Beck, 2001), as something that relates to people from different classes, of different age, nationality, origin…

However, even distribution of risks and fear is not equal and just in the modern World. As pointed out by Daniel Faber, globalization enabled much more intensive economic and cultural exchange among people, but also contributed to exchange of 'ecological hazards', thus creating the World system of 'environmental justice', in which

rich countries with strong regulation in environmental protection field, export those hazards to less developed, "Global South" countries, with less strict regulations and weak capacities to manage risks caused by such hazards (according to: Pusic, 2014).

This results in yet another contribution to the continuing generation of inequalities among 'the rich and the poor', 'the south and the north', 'the east and the west', 'the developed' and 'the less developed' (Pejatović,2006, p. 47-54). Among many dichotomies of the modern World, one of the most obvious is "global" versus "local", no matter how much effort is being invested in overcoming that bridge. One of the reasons for this continuing gap might come from inappropriate "translation" of global strategies and policy instruments to 'local languages'. Analyzing characteristics of different government approaches in 15 EU countries in developing integrated strategies on sustainable development, climate change mitigation and adaptation, authors call for their "recalibration" towards communication, or for providing directions and raising awareness of people using policy instruments which are carefully adopted from global through national to local level; in that way it could stimulate political and social awareness and action of citizens (Cassado, Steurer, 2014**).**

Multidimensional links between natural disasters and social and economic development as well as unsustainable use of natural resources, have been recognized widely nowadays. Within the global process of consultations, initiated by the UN on future development, in which more than 1 million people from all around the World participated, Violence, Disaster and Education have been among the main thematic issues recognized in the Sustainable development Agenda (http://www.worldwewant2015.org/). These concerns and orientations are naturally being reflected in the most relevant strategies for DRR – International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (ISDR) and Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA) 2005-2015, as well as in ongoing processes of its harmonization with new development goals.

As the Decade of Education for Sustainable Development also ended on December 31, 2014, the consultation process on the follow-up Global Action Program of ESD (GAP ESD) has been performed as well. The overall goal of the GAP ESD is "…to generate and scale up action in all levels and areas of education and learning in order to accelerate progress towards sustainable development", and, for the sake of strengthening stakeholder commitment, particular focus directed at: 1) policy support, 2) whole institution approaches, 3) educators, 4) youth and 5) local communities. (UNESCO, 2013).

Along with the promotion of holistic perspective in development of the global policy, there are growing trends in integrating interdisciplinary approach in education curricula – from primary to university level. Introducing enviromental and sustainalbility as well as DRR issues in adult education curricula should strengthen capacities of professionals so as to further develop community resilience. Within the Department for Andragogy and Pedagogy, Faculty of Philosophy of University of Belgrade, there are two subjects introduced recently in the new Study program (effective from 2015/16). Within the undergraduate level, there is Environmental Adult Education, comprising issues of environmental education, community development, relations between policy and practice, as well as specific methodology used in research in the field. At doctoral level, there is Environmental Andragogy, providing a wide platform for studying environment as a network for learning, and approaching the local context as dynamic system of social, economic and environmental features, enabling learning and development in all their aspects. Both programs are naturally founded on the concept of sustainability, interrelating knowledge and methodology of different scientific disciplines, with the aim

of improving critical reflection of students on global and local challenges of the modern world from adult education perspective.

In order to help these community processes and apply locally tailored, bottom-up approach, professionals in adult education need to start from authentic specificities of the local environment, but also from better understanding of human perceptions, nature of risks and principles in developing community resilience in a wider – national and/or regional - context.

Risks, community resilience and education

In the World of dichotomies, in spite of global efforts directed towards sustainable development, people still tend to look at nature and society as two separated qualities of their surroundings. Until directly affected, they see potential risks as "faraway threats". This kind of reaction tends to be a universal side of human behavior, described by Giddens as the tendency "…that people do not act on an incrementally growing threat until it becomes visible, by which stage action may be too late" – a phenomenon known among authors as "the Giddens paradox" (according to Pusic, 2014, p. 320).

In the World of changes, however, it is necessary to face the changing nature of risks: its impacts became global, not personal or local anymore; also, it is not so visible, but often "hidden" in nuclear plants or labs. It is not easy to calculate its probability by knowing its history or tendencies existing in the past in one society: the center of risk awareness, claims Beck, exists in the future, not in the past (Beck, 2001, p. 51).

The future is unknown - therefore, our decisions always carry certain risks; in order to be reflexive and responsible, we need to learn how to take risks, reflect on it and think critically. One of the consequences of the "reflexive modernization" is that people learn all through their lives…"both reflexive and non-reflexive" (Jarvis, 2003, p. 30). Orientation towards future and critical thinking is among fundamental elements of concepts of lifelong learning and sustainability – both presenting the platform for developing adult education, not only in the field of DRR.

However, in reality, the focus in dealing with natural risks is still more on preparedness for the response when it happens than on the prevention. Following the "Giddens paradox", evidence shows today that "…pre-disaster learning will increasingly occur within a post-disaster environment." (Johnson, 2011, p. 47).

The main aim of disaster risk reduction today is developing community resilience. *Resilience* as a term is usually used to describe a set of capacities of individuals and communities to cope. Study of environmental risks and ecosystem capacities in relation to disaster prevention and reduction, resulted in series of definitions of resilience. One of it is found as quite applicable to our focus: *"Resilience, as applied to ecosystems, or to integrated systems of people and the natural environment, has three defining characteristics:*

- The amount of change the system can undergo and still retain the same controls on function and structure;
- The degree to which the system is capable of self-organization;
- The ability to build and increase the capacity for learning and adaptation" (http://www.resalliance.org).

The definition clearly underlines the role of learning as one of important mechanisms which strengthens capacities to overcome and manage risks, not only by people but by nature systems as well.

The focus of modern approach to development of community resilience is on the active role of the community in developing its own ability to cope and capacities at all the levels, rather than concentrating on its vulnerability, or waiting for someone else to help.

Disaster risk reduction is a wide concept, with a focus on prevention - sometimes (wrongly) identified with disaster management. It might be defined as "a systematic approach to identifying, assessing and reducing the risks of disaster" (http://practicalaction.org). Modern approach in working with communities starts from a point that disasters are not external, but depend on the capacity of communities to foresee potential risks and prepare accordingly for possibilities. It doesn't mean that community should live in fear; on the contrary, strengthening capacities will contribute to safety – prior to and after the hazards. Of course, it is not possible to prevent – especially natural – hazards, but it is possible to reduce their effects. As largely agreed today, there are no natural disasters, only natural hazards. "Risk is a function of the hazard, the exposure of people and assets to the hazard, and the conditions of vulnerability of population and assets exposed." (www.unisdr.org). These conditions are not static and depend on individual or institutional/community capacities to cope.

Community is often defined in territorial terms but, from the adult education perspective, it is naturally seen as the association of people sharing the same interests and characteristics, not only the same space.

Five priorities for action, defined by the Hyogo Framework of Action (www.unisdr.org), serve as the main standard in assessing community resilience and in planning actions towards its development. Its reevaluation, which is going on within the "post 2015" framework, also reflects the paradigm shift in definition of the main outcome, which should be described "…not only in terms of the reduction of loss, but rather in positive and aspirational terms, such as secure, healthy, wealthy and resilient nations and communities" (http://www.preventionweb.net).

Based on experience in implementation of the ISDR, groups of obstacles have been recognized in working with communities on building resilience; they seem to be universal – or common for majority of countries. They exist on the political level (tendency to deal with emergency management more than with disaster risk reduction, orientation towards sector and short-term, instead of holistic and long-term approach), in perceptions of community (disasters seen as "acts of God" instead of focusing on human and social responsibility and vulnerability) as well as in the academic approach (dominance of natural sciences, not social and humanistic approach and research base) (Ibid).

Having all that in mind, the approach of adult educators in building community resilience should be directed towards strengthening capacities for risk prevention, shifting the focus from the fear and vulnerability to readiness to face challenges and joint creation of 'enabling community'. Such efforts would necessarily be based on principles of sustainability and lifelong learning, oriented towards development of reflexivity and critical thinking of modern active citizens. It would also require strong competences of these professionals, needed to overcome the mentioned obstacles, contributing to "translation" or "transforming" of global level policy to local language and level of needs, in participatory way. Such a complex task needs solid support of the system – from the national down to the local level.

Needs assessment of education for DRR at local level in Serbia

The context

In accordance with global trends, there is a rapid increase in the number of disasters occurring in Serbia: while, between 1900 and 1940 there were 10 in ten years, in the 1980-1990 period there were 2000, and within the last decade of 20th century as many as 2800 recorded (Official Gazette of RS,86/11). Serbia is regularly subject to severe flooding, landslides, forest fires, and occasional earthquakes.

Unprecedented floods hit Serbian territory, as well as parts of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatia, in May 2014. Reports on recovery from floods show that more than 1.6 million people living in 38 cities and municipalities on the territory of Belgrade and central and western Serbia, have been seriously affected by the latest floods and landslides (RNA Report, 2104).

Among the main drivers of disaster risks related (not only) to the latest floods and landslides occurring in Serbia are exploitation and mismanagement of forests and agricultural land, as well as uncontrolled urbanization. Along with the recognition of the key role of local self -governments in prevention and response to disasters, reflected at the policy level, there is, in reality, still obvious lack of adequate infrastructure, finances, clear division of duties, followed by "...numerous problems caused by lack of training for harmonizing the logistics of complex activity at the local self-government level". (Stefanovic et al, USAID, 2009).

At the policy level, significant improvements were made in the first decade of the XXI century, by adopting key documents which regulate this area, and putting efforts in their harmonization with global strategies. The Law on Emergency Situation (2009, 2011, 2012) and the National Strategy for DRR Protection and Rescue in Emergency Situation (2011) present key documents, or the integrated framework for developing further plans and measures in the field. The *National Sustainable Development Strategy of Serbia* (2008), as well as the Strategy for Education for Sustainable Development (UNECE, 2005) and **t**he Strategy for the Development of Education in Serbia until 2020, make a noteworthy platform for integrating DRR in education at all levels in Serbia.

As defined by the Law on Emergency, and visible in practice, the National Training Center (NTC) of the Sector for Emergency Management (SEM), Ministry of Interior, plays a particularly important role not only in the in-house training of the SEM and the Ministry staff, but also in capacity development of other players in DRR, including local bodies and population. Apart from the efforts of the NTC, related to training, education, promotion of DRR (through publications, posters, etc.), other activities in the field are still ad hoc or project driven rather than permanent and strategically planned. A huge impact on capacity development and awareness raising in this arena has been made as a result of the USAID Preparedness, Planning and Economic Security project (PPES), realized between 2006-2011, with the goal to develop the capacity to plan and respond to crises and emergencies at the local and national levels of governance in Serbia (PPES, 2011).

Based on impressions of experts involved in field work during and after the latest floods (2014), and expressed in interviews performed for the sake of this study, it was obvious that efficiency of the response as well as decision making capacity in emergency situations were higher in municipalities which were trained and involved in the PPES in comparison to others. More recently, within its contribution to improvement of flood response at the local level and cooperation of stakeholders, the OSCE Mission to Serbia introduced the concept of Flood Risk Action Alliances in water management practices, as

a multi-stakeholder group tasked to address local environmental security concerns related to flood risk management.

The volume of the disaster and its consequences attracted not only national but international attention, which resulted in humanitarian support, as well as in number of project initiatives with the aim to strengthen capacities for prevention from potential future disasters, at national and local level in Serbia. One of such initiatives, led by UNDP Serbia, as a segment of the ENVSEC Project, concentrated on needs assessment for public education in DRR at the local level in Serbia. Beside the policy and institutional analysis, whose results were only mentioned above, empirical research was done, the methodology and main findings of which are briefly presented and discussed below.

The methodology

The "Needs assessment for public education on the local level in DRR in Serbia" study has been prepared within the UNDP work on the Project "Strengthening the capacities of Aarhus Centres in disaster risk reduction (DRR) in order to enhance awareness of local communities". The objective of the project is to contribute to the awareness raising in disaster risk reduction within the framework of ongoing local level risk management activities, using Aarhus Centres as a platform.

Aarhus Centres / Public Environmental Information Centres were established by OSCE to support implementation of the UNECE Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters (the "Aarhus Convention").

Considering the study scope and objectives, qualitative methodology approach has been applied and particular methods chosen, as follows: documentation analysis and collection of secondary data, interviews and survey for primary data collection, evaluation and synthesis of data collected. Although originally planned as desk research, the study methodology has been expanded by primary data collecting, in order to get insights from acknowledged experts from the national level, as well as from key actors of DRR at local level.

Two sets of instruments were developed for collecting of primary data in this research: the first, comprising 2 questionnaires for experts and representatives of Aarhus centres and, the second, created in the form of Protocol for semi-structured interviews with representatives of municipalities.

The municipalities were selected according to the following criteria:

- Consequences of the recent floods, torrents and landslides which occurred in Serbia (May/June 2014);
- General exposure to floods and landslides;
- Experience in prevention and response to emergency;
- Geographic distribution.

Eight experts, four representatives of Aarhus centres as well as four representatives of municipalities finally participated in survey/interviews. The research was performed in August 2014.

Quality analysis has been applied in processing of the data collected in this way.

The results overview and discussion

Experts, representatives of Aarhus centres (ACs) and of the selected municipalities, were asked for their opinion about the following: priority areas to work on DRR in the country; priority target groups; segment of DRR to focus on; methods of work and main initiators of programs and activities at local level. A few specific questions were additionally included in interviews with municipality representatives, due to their recent and direct experience with emergency situation, and results based on that part of research will be separately presented.

*Priority areas***:** Most of the respondents find that priority areas to work with in DRR awareness raising are those facing floods and landslides as most frequent/serious hazards. This is not surprising, since almost all municipalities in Serbia, as previously illustrated, are, historically and currently, under the risk of floods and landslides.

*Priority target groups***:** Prioritizing groups that should be targeted first of all by awareness raising campaigns and education, experts and ACs associates are in agreement in the following: families and civil protection trustees are two groups selected by most of the respondents (out of 7 options offered); in the third place, judging by the number of total choices done by experts and ACs, are journalists as priority group. Municipal representatives include farmers and generally, villagers, as priority group to work with.

Focus on segments of emergency management and DRR – starting from the concept of cyclic development of emergency management, from prevention through response, towards recovery and mitigation – to prevention again, respondents have been asked to select one or two segments (phases) to work on with local population. As expected, most of them from all groups have selected prevention and response as two of the most important dimensions of disaster preparedness to focus on.

Approach/strategy/methods of work in DRR awareness raising/education: based on choices made by both groups, the options offered have been ranked as follows:

1) Using the mass media
2) Training
3) Focus groups, meetings
4) Simulations
5) Study visits to the areas with developed practices of DRR
6) Transferring experiences from other regions (guest visitors - residents of other affected areas in-country or from abroad).

Main role in public awareness/education in DRR at the local level: most of respondents find that this role should primarily have state agencies responsible for disaster management, risk management and environmental management; while three out of seven experts think it should be first of all responsibility of expert and scientific institutions from national level in cooperation with the local branches, only one AC associate finds so. Municipal representatives emphasize the role of schools, representatives of governmental institutions in charge of education and health, as well as experts in risk management and psycho social support.

Based on these estimates, we may say that state agencies in charge of disaster management are seen by different sectors as the most responsible for DRR – not only at national, but also at the local level. It also seems that different groups recognize those

institutions/organizations which belong to their respective circle (professional or in terms of sector, area of work) as more responsible or adequate than others (for example, experts tend to choose experts organizations, while ACs opt for those from nongovernmental sector). The influence of the recent experience in emergency situation is obvious in estimates made by municipal representatives, stressing the role of education and health sector and need for psycho social support.

Three out of four municipalities involved in this research were seriously affected by floods and landslides last year. Respondents come from different sectors and play different roles in emergency prevention, response and recovery in their respective municipalities. However, all of them gained direct experience in dealing with an emergency – the latest and/or previous ones. Therefore for that group of respondents we included additional questions related to their recent experience and lessons learnt:

Particular issues that occurred during the last flooding and landslides in their places in terms of response and recovery:

- Lack of communication, strategic and timely approach to all citizens;
- Lack of adequate technical equipment (for communication and rescue teams);
- Lack of efficient coordination between local and national units in charge of emergency management;
- Lack of trained volunteers (for rescue and response);
- Lack of adequate capacities to cope with severe hazards at the local level.

The message to municipalities which do not have direct experience with emergencies, regarding the prevention and work on public awareness and education:

- To establish and train civil protection units;
- To make sure there is a civil protection trustee in every place;
- To establish and maintain efficient early warning system;
- To prepare a set of practical instructions for response to an emergency;
- To cooperate and develop partnerships.

The summary of the above presented answers of three groups of responders draws the following picture on needs and suggestions for potential areas of work, topics, and methods that should be considered, as well as priority target groups to work with in building community resilience:

- *priority areas to work in* should be those under the risk of floods, landslides and rural areas facing problems of fire and droughts;
- *three priority groups to work with* are families, civil protection trustees and journalists;
- *prevention and response* are two most important dimensions of disaster preparedness to focus on;
- *using the mass media, developing training programs, organizing focus groups and simulations* are some of the preferred methods in working on awareness raising and education in DRR;

– *the main role in DRR awareness raising/education at the local level should be taken by state agencies* responsible for disaster management, risk management and environmental management.

While the above summarized results show high level of agreement among experts, NGOs and municipal representatives, we might see that groups of experts' and AC's (NGO) responders, consider contribution of people from their particular circles as the most promising in building community resilience at local or national level, while municipals' would prefer state and expert agencies to take part in it.

Conclusions

Strategic and legal documents adopted in Serbia in the first decade of XXI century provide a solid basis for integrated emergency management and work on DRR in accordance with global policy and trends, shifting the focus from response to prevention. However, the system of prevention and response to emergencies still suffer from inherited fragmentation, centralized organization and lack of capacities, as a result of a long-term social, economic and political crisis and slow recovery of the previously well-established structure for civil protection and emergency management. In spite of national and international support, education activities at the local level are still neither permanent nor sufficient.

Obvious lack of capacities and need for education and awareness raising of citizens, as well as for training and professional improvement of professionals in the field, call for engagement of adult educators in development of "pre-disaster" programs, projects and initiatives. As it happens elsewhere, "post-disaster" initiatives in Serbia increase support, to non-formal education programs, mainly through internationally funded projects, as well as to integration of DRR issues into the formal education curriculum, at primary and secondary level.

Naturally, adult education professionals should be involved in improving the quality of education programs and implementing activities in this field. At the national level, there is an opportunity to get involved in needs analysis, designing programs and plan/implement the reform of the curricula for adult education at different levels, by introducing DRR – within sustainability – issues. Also, there is wide potential in cooperating with experts and state institutions from related fields, in order to jointly work on professional improvement of their staff or other professionals involved in DRR in the country. At the local level, there is a wide spectrum of potential activities as well: from training and capacity development of DMHs and other bodies in charge, through participatory action planning and implementation of locally driven or based activities with NGOs, governmental institutions, teachers and other interested stakeholders.

Those and similar strategic and operational activities would certainly contribute to bridging the gap between global, national and local level, in this "glocalization era", when responsibility of adult educators is driven by needs and rights of adults to improve quality of their lives (Hill,Clover,2003). Inclusion of DRR in the study programs of andragogy at university level, in the framework of sustainability issues, should contribute to increased capacity of future adult education professionals for, obviously strongly needed, development of community resilience.

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Sharing knowledge in community spaces: Mediating power and pedagogy through university service learning in South African contexts

Introduction

An important feature of the 'public good' element of higher education is the university's contribution to engaging with local communities, an activity which is traditionally associated with its third mission. The understanding of how universities 'engage' with the outside world, and who they engage with, has evolved over time. There are now many definitions of community engagement. For the purposes of this paper it is an endeavour by universities to contribute, through a partnership relationship, to the development needs of local and regional communities. Communities may be NGOs, community based organisations, a geographical location or institution. But there is an assumption that communities are locations of need and that community engagement is about enabling or 'doing good' in relation to a specific area of need (Hall, 2010). More recently much emphasis has been placed on the recognition that communities, however, defined, possess strengths, knowledge and other assets from which the university can also learn. Community engagement (CE), therefore is understood as a mutually beneficial and reciprocal relationship. Schuetze (2010, p. 25), for instance defines university CE as:

> "... the collaboration between institutions of higher education and their larger communities (local, regional/state, national, global) for the mutually beneficial exchange of partnership and reciprocity."

The extent to which such relationships are mutually beneficial or reciprocal has come under much scrutiny, particularly in relation to sharing of knowledge and power relations (for example, Camacho, 2004; Harris, Jones and Coutts, 2010). A further concern in South African contexts is that for universities to justify their contribution to CE it must also be understood as a scholarly activity (O'Brien, 2009). Service learning (SL), whereby

students work in communities as part of their assessed coursework, is one aspect of CE. It has been enshrined in post-apartheid South African policy (for example DoE, 1997; DoHET, 2013) as part of the nation's endeavour to redress the inequalities of the past and generate a sense of citizen responsibility amongst the minority population that are able to access higher education.

There is now a substantial body of literature on CE and its SL aspect. For the purposes of this paper, and its focus on power and pedagogy, only a brief review of relevant texts is outlined here. SL has been criticised for falling short of its aspirational goals for reciprocity and its limited capacity to effect real community change (Mahlomaholo and Matobako, 2006). Bender (2008) asserts that the desired mutual relationship requires substantial institutional cultural change while others (for example Erasmus, 2011) argue that SL must be community needs-led. The pedagogical philosophy for SL usually draws on Dewey, Schoen and Kolb (cited in Bender and Jordaan, 2007) with the expectation that an experiential, reflective approach to linking theory to practice will provide a social reality dimension to student learning. The focus, therefore, for universities, is to provide a practical element to the academic curriculum. This raises the question as to what extent the community participants are benefiting from the relationship and to what extent their community knowledge filters into the university curriculum itself. Hlengwa (2010, p. 1), for instance, questions the role of SL as a strategy for community engagement:

> "There are complexities which need to be considered regarding the potential of service-learning to bridge the gap between the university and society, and the extent to which it is the most appropriate pedagogic tool for this purpose."

Although other pedagogical theories have been applied to the SL experience, such as Hlengwa's (2010) discussion of Bernstein's theory of vertical and horizontal discourses, one of the most useful discussions on the contribution of community knowledge to academic learning emanates from Gibbons (2006) who discusses the concepts of mode 1 and mode 2 knowledge in relation to 'reliable' and 'socially robust' knowledge, respectively. The latter, he argues, is embedded in practice and has been tried and tested in real life situations. Community based knowledge, he suggests, can contribute to the construction of socially robust knowledge and therefore has direct usefulness to enhancing the university curriculum.

A related concern to the question of knowledge ownership is the thorny issue of how a university manages its power relationship with community organisations and individual participants. Camacho (2004) for instance refers to 'sites of power' (p. 13) where students engage directly with community members, but not necessarily as equal partners in addressing a community identified issue. Caister, Green and Worth (2011, p. 35) suggest that in order to disrupt the one-way flow of power in such situations, dialogue is an essential ingredient for renegotiating the 'multiple layers of involvement' in the CE/SL relationship.

It is this notion of dialogue that became a core feature of the community engagement project that is the subject of this paper. It has been combined with Heifetz's concept of adaptive leadership and assessed through Foucault's rendering of power/knowledge as a theoretical framework for examining the relationship between power and knowledge in the student-community interactions.

Theoretical framework: power, dialogue, adaptive leadership

According to Foucault (1980) power generates knowledge. Those with authority to know – such as the university – are discursively positioned to privilege certain forms of knowledge – which in university terms are discipline specific and ratified by the academy through institutional procedures and statements that rationalise and affirm what is legitimate knowledge. Community based knowledge is 'subjugated knowledge':

> "... a whole set of knowledges that have been disqualified as inadequate to their task or insufficiently elaborated ... located low down on the hierarchy, beneath the required level of cognition or scientificity ... it is through the re-appearance of ... these disqualified knowledges, that criticism performs its work" (1980, p. 82).

The potential for subjugated knowledge to contribute to a critical awareness among students on SL placements is often stated ideologically (Stellenbosch University, 2009, for example), but it is argued here that the experiential learning cycle that is promoted in SL is insufficient alone to maximise that potential. The role of dialogue is an essential element as a pedagogic tool but also as a mediating force for clarification and redistribution of power relations, particularly in community engagement relationships where there are often several communication layers between grass roots community members, their representatives, mediating NGOs, students and their lecturers (Preece, 2013). Dialogue has been advocated as a radical concept for empowerment by Freire (1972) whereby dialogue stimulates critical awareness that can lead to action for change. But the principal that we can all learn from each other through interaction and listening to each other is a pedagogical rationale that informs much adult education literature (Gravett, 2001). Dialogue and listening are the tools for facilitating learning as a shared endeavour. Gravett refers to dialogue as a 'process of negotiation' (p. 20), whereby meaning is constructed. Dialogue is a process of 'cooperative and reciprocal inquiry' (p. 22). Knowledge is co-constructed through reflection and making links with existing schema or understandings. New knowledge is thus created in context and is relevant to a particular set of purposes. The relationship is one of mutual respect and reasoning together. Trust and credibility, and a non-judgemental attitude, are the essential features of the relationship with facilitators and learners 'seeking out reality together' (Freire, 1972, p. 80). The extent to which students play the role of facilitators is questionable, but they enter the CE relationship as bearers of university knowledge and often have to familiarise themselves with the community environment 'with an attitude of understanding what they see' (ibid, p. 82) in order to contribute to the expressed community need. For SL students the community context also becomes their classroom and the community members may be facilitators as well as learners. The dialogic relationship therefore is multi-layered across several dimensions.

In the community engagement context Stephenson (2011) has referred to Heifetz's (1994) concept of adaptive leadership as a guiding framework for university-community interaction. By drawing on Heifetz, an organisational management theorist, Stephenson has, by implication, already interpreted the community-university relationship as one which is an unequal collaboration. The university takes the lead, but endeavours to involve the community in decision making and taking ownership over their own identified problems. This is a deliberate attempt to avoid imposing a university-led solution; rather the leadership process is identified by Heifetz as a dialogic one, whereby all participants clarify their competing goals and values in a collective endeavour to address the

community challenge. Adaptive leadership has been identified by Hartley and Bennington (2011) as a progressive response to complex problems which build on collaboration rather than a top down initiative. Although this process is not without its critiques (as identified in Preece, 2015), it provides a framework for recognising the complexity of university knowledge that may be 'reliable' but not necessarily 'socially robust' if it is applied in different contexts. Community participants must use their own knowledge as a resource to adapt and legitimate any form of knowledge that emanates from within the university via its students. The literature relating to adaptive leadership and dialogue emphasises the need to build trust, stresses the importance of listening to gain a deeper understanding of the environmental context and the need to work together to produce solutions that are mutually beneficial. In the SL relationship the SL ideology requires evidence of student learning and community benefit. From the adaptive leadership perspective this relationship also entails a sharing of knowledge through dialogue so that part of the community benefit is recognition of the community's contribution to knowledge creation. In this way, it is hoped, the power relationship becomes one in which all parties can take some ownership.

The case studies presented here are analysed in relation to what extent dialogue and power played a part in establishing a mutual working relationship and in contributing to the co-creation or sharing of knowledge. Within that relationship, there was a concerted effort on the part of the CE participants to encourage ongoing clarification of competing goals and values.

The SL project and its research methodology

During 2013 the University of KwaZulu-Natal in South Africa held a public meeting with academic staff and NGOs to discuss how students might work in partnership with local organisations on small scale (six to eight weeks) projects that could be undertaken by two or more students working together on a part time basis. The public meeting was the second phase of an action research project that had started a year earlier. At this meeting the findings of year one were presented, including some reported concerns about insufficient attention to communication with all participants. It was this finding that prompted a more theoretical focus that drew on adaptive leadership literature and the concept of dialogue as a pedagogical tool. 2013 became the second phase of the action research process. As such, the project followed Stringer's (2004, p. 4) definition of action research as a:

> "… participatory, democratic process concerned with developing practical knowing in the pursuit of worthwhile human purposes … to bring together action and reflection, theory and practice, in participation with others, in the pursuit of practical solutions …."

The NGOs were invited to provide a menu of projects or needs that required assistance. Some of the projects required specialist academic knowledge, such as library and information or media skills, others were multidisciplinary, such as working with a gay and lesbian organisation. SL students from Politics and Education disciplines were invited to choose from the menu of projects, while specialist students from other disciplines were invited to assist with projects requiring more specific skills. A total of 8 projects were undertaken, involving over 40 students. The amount of time spent on each

project ranged from 20 to 30 hours. Staff and students met with the NGO leaders, and in some cases with the grass roots community workers.

Each project became a 'case' (Rule & John, 2011). Research assistants were appointed to monitor the projects and interview participants on completion. The overall research objective was to explore how the participants interacted and to what extent the dialogue process enabled clarification of competing goals and values and shared contribution to knowledge. Interviews were conducted in the local language of isiZulu or English depending on the preferences of the respondents. All interviews were transcribed and translated into English if necessary.

The cases

One NGO requested assistance from two Library and Information Studies students to view and catalogue a variety of short videos that reflected different community issues. The students were required to work in the NGO offices and create an archiving system that could be used by the NGO staff on completion. This was case study 1 (CS1).

Case study 2 (CS2) was organised by a training organisation that worked in a peri-urban township with isiZulu speaking residents who had very limited formal schooling and lived in impoverished circumstances. The training organisation had trained local women as facilitators to run an early childhood development programme for pre-school age children at various locations in the township. Two students from the Education SL course met with the training organisation and local facilitators to discuss the kind of activities that would be expected. They were assigned to work with one facilitator once a week for a period of six weeks. The activities took place in a local resident's garden in the township.

The third case study (CS3) was initiated by an NGO that campaigns for greater awareness about gender issues. Five students (from the Education and Politics SL courses) volunteered to take part in the NGO's training programme over three Saturdays, so that they could then assist with running awareness raising workshops in community locations organised by the NGO. In this instance the students did not meet the NGO leaders until the first training day.

In CS1 two students were interviewed together, and two NGO staff were interviewed. In CS2 the two students, the facilitator and the local coordinator and two parents were interviewed respectively in pairs. In CS3 the two NGO leaders were interviewed together and the five students were interviewed collectively.

The analytical purpose of the case studies was explanatory (Yin, 2003) whereby the researchers attempted to explain what was happening in each project. But there was also a comparative element to the analysis in that data was analysed thematically across the cases, looking for patterns of responses in order to illuminate the themes that emerged. The three case studies selected here illustrate both differences and similarities of responses in relation to power, dialogue and knowledge sharing.

The findings

Power relations

The power dynamics in each case study varied, depending on whether the NGO leaders (who were mostly educated to degree level) were the main communication sources or whether the students had to engage at grass roots level with community members who had little formal education. It was evident from these three cases that in the initial dialogue of clarifying competing goals and values between students and NGO leaders the students allowed the locus of power to be in the hands of the NGO. So, for instance, the initial conversation between the film archiving NGO leaders (CS3) and the students was managed accordingly, whereby the students saw themselves as the learners, in spite of their technical knowledge:

> NGOL1: I would like to hear from you what your understanding is in terms of what you are going to be doing with PXXXX .....
> S1: mm, well [lecturer] told us about this opportunity to come learn here at PXXXX with regards to video footage ...
> NGOL1: Archiving, mmm, or not archiving as such but cataloguing,
> S1: mmm, cataloguing since we also deal with cataloguing and information…
> S1: Ja, so in our core modules ... we mainly deal with libraries and information storing ... We haven't done this thing practically,
> NGO1: ok, ok but you have a lot of theoretical knowledge.
> S1: ja theoretical knowledge.
> S2: aahh, S1 has already said we are information studies students, we saw that it is a great opportunity for us to learn because we have the theoretical knowledge that if we come here and participate we will get some experience ...
> NGOL1 ... So the project really ... is for you to catalogue these [films]. For you to watch what is there. …. and for you to go through them and watch them, to catalogue them ... Do you also understand the project to be something similar to that?
> S1: The cataloguing part, ja. But we didn't know about having to watch the actual video footage and having to identify
> NGOL1: Ja,ja. ... how do you feel about that now, now that you know? Are you still interested?
> S1: ja, we're interested
> S2: ja because we are willing to learn.

For the early child development project (CS2) a similar process was undertaken whereby the NGO clarified, in conjunction with the community based coordinator and facilitators, what was expected of the students. In this case, the facilitators spoke little, but gave some practical information about start and finish times and a start date was agreed. For CS1, this initial conversation took place between the lead researchers, but the students were only told second-hand from the researchers about the project. This missing communication loop later proved to be problematic and reinforced the need for dialogue between all participants right at the inception stage.

At grass roots level, the power dynamics changed. Considerations of territorialism and the need to avoid overpowering the community space came into play. So in CS2 while the students saw their role as contributing new ideas:

> I feel that we were there to assist the facilitators in … giving more ideas and help them teach the children... there might be something that we can contribute in the whole process of facilitating the children;

… they also had to manage those ideas so that it did not seem like they were taking over or denigrating the work of the community facilitator:

> If you want to intervene ... do it in a way that ... does not seem as if you are attacking them, in a way that 'we are here to learn'.

However, the apparently unequal relationship between students and community facilitators also created an unexpected new power dynamic between the facilitators and parents, whereby the facilitators were able to use the students' presence (representing the status of a university) as a means of legitimating their own practice in the community:

> Community coordinator: We also saw that what we are doing is important after all.... This thing was looked down upon here because it's still new;

> Facilitator: we were very happy to be with you guys and the kids also saw…. And I also saw that I am also important ... The kids and parents also saw that this is a legitimate thing and its real; maybe other parents saw it as something we were just saying for the sake of saying it.

In foucauldian terms, therefore, power is a relationship that can be both positive and negative, and one which all parties may choose to use. The university-community power differentials were recognised for their discursive possibilities and the participants in these case studies chose to manage them for mutual benefit.

The dialogic process, however, had to be learned. There were indications that in some cases it took time to build trust through dialogue and in other cases the absence of dialogue would impact on the extent to which the project could achieve its goals.

Dialogue

In CS3, as indicated in the above conversation, the project and its outcomes were achieved without apparent problems.

> The consultation between PXXXX and the university at the top level went well, in my view. It went so well that it even shows in the implementation. The things that were agreed on were those that were implemented (NGO leader).

This may have been partly because the task itself was one which relied on a particular technical expertise, but was also due to the initial clarification of competing goals and expectations.

In CS1, as stated previously, the clarification dialogue with students only occurred at the start of the first workshop, by which time students were not in a position to hold a separate conversation with the NGO leaders because they entered as co-participants of a larger workshop cohort of people:

> The setup of the project; it was planned by the university and the organisation; as the students we were just told on what to do and we were given like a schedule of where and how, we were not involved in the planning and organisation of everything. ..

This meant that competing targets (the university exam timetable vis a vis the NGO's timeframe for running their workshops) resulted in the students being unable to facilitate their own workshop in the community:

> When we had to find out when we were going for workshops it kind of clashed with everything because with the time we had to prepare for the paper and the reports and the exams were coming ...(student);

The dialogic process of trust building in CS2 required patience and good will from all layers in the partnership. When the students first tried to introduce new resources, they realised that the process of negotiation would take time:

> We didn't know how to do certain things with her [the facilitator] how do we engage with her in doing something because we took the plastics to her and said 'here are the plastics what should we do?' ... and she was like 'eish I don't know as well'

But during the course of the six weeks these same students learned that dialogue also required an effort to shift the power relationship to provide space for more equal communication:

> We learned ... that if we have something new and we have ideas that we want to implement there; inform her that okay, we are thinking of this, to do this, is it alright? So that the other person is in the loop ...

Ultimately the community facilitator also acknowledged that through dialogue that power relationship could be managed:

> I learned that if you are teaching each other we have to listen to each other and accept each other ... The main thing is to work together equally and in harmony … it was nice working with you, we worked well together, … we gained a lot from you that we didn't know.

The process of dialogue as a mediator of power emerged as a useful pedagogic tool for recognising subjugated knowledges and – if not co-creation – at least cooperation in the synergistic effect of using different forms of knowledge as a collective endeavour.

Knowledge sharing

In terms of whose knowledge counts as a social reality, perhaps the most important insight came from a student in CS1, whereby the engagement process was very much led by the NGO whose mission was to educate the public about sexuality issues:

> My experience is that the universities have always imposed this idea of 'we are the expert' approach. This time around I think it was different, they [the university] enabled the communities in this case the [NGO] to basically share their information with the university

> ... as opposed to what the university conventionally does [where] they go to the community, diagnose some certain problems and find expert ways of fixing it.

The impact of this experience had a transformative effect on the students:

> I learnt more about sexuality and gender more than I ever knew ... I think it really changed shifted – my mind set (S1);

> Now I am going to go out there to talk people about all aspects ... I am going to go to church and tell them what homosexuality is … and intersex is not what they really think it is (S2).

Perhaps less dramatic, but no less transformative, was the realisation by the students in CS2 of the role that subjugated knowledge can play in mediating the less socially reliable knowledge of the academy:

> The real experts of that area, of that programme are the people that are going through that experience so ... whatever I have learned that is on paper ... we could say we are the real experts, whereas we get there and introduce something that we think they need [but] they might probably think that 'no this is not for us' (S1);

Similarly, community participants from all three projects highlighted that the students had contributed to their community knowledge pool. For instance in CS1 the NGO leader highlighted opportunities for sharing of ideas:

> And then also the students when we were having that meeting also had ideas in terms of community involvement, of which we can look at exploring in our further workshops working with the students as well.

Conclusions

Although the projects were small scale and short-lived, the findings suggest that both community participants and students gained in terms of shared knowledge, that was facilitated through a process of initial clarification of competing goals and an ongoing process of dialogue. However, there was no indication that the knowledge that the students gained informally in the community learning spaces would impact on the university's own knowledge base. The SL pedagogy and community spaces acted as mediators for that flow of knowledge between students and community members, and the power differentials between the participants seemed to shift so that through dialogue they learned to trust each other. At grass roots level this power-knowledge relationship played out in different ways between the different layers of participants, so that the formal status of the university and its apparent interest in working with subjugated knowledge holders provided a way of legitimising the informal activities and giving them more status.

It is possible that more sustained projects, over a longer period of time, could build on the potential for co-creation of knowledge, but the constraints of curriculum timetables and time-limited nature of student involvement militated against this for these case studies.

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Elderly education in our days: The case of one university of third age

Initial thoughts

Education can have multiple roles/functions. Educational needs emerge from different fields and seek to respond to different answers, questions and objectives. Canário (1999) states that education is marked by the emergency of the concept of permanent education. For this author education is "a continuum that integrates and articulates different levels of formalization" (ibid., p. 80). This is reflected in several activities developed in formal, non-formal or informal contexts (Findsen, 2005).

1. Formal learning occurs in a structured environment with teaching as one of its explicit purposes (Canário, 1999); it takes place in a school environment and with trained teachers. Most school systems are designed around the govern choices (curriculum, physical classroom design, methods of assessment, etc); appoints for the norm and is the same for all the individuals (ibid.).
2. Non-formal learning is defined as a response to the problems of formal education (Coombs, 1989); it can be any organised educational activity outside the established system of formal learning; as such, it is flexible and adapted to contexts, singular/particular situations and groups (Canário, 1999, p. 80).
3. Informal learning can be defined as activity occurring outside the institutions and settings that provide structural education with defined objectives. Informal learning is related with spontaneous and natural processes (Gohn, 1998), it arises from the set of activities and interests characteristic for individuals and which occur in peoples' everyday lives (McGivney, 1999).

The most recent national surveys of education and adult training (INE, 2009; 2011) show an overall high participation in diverse types of education, training or learning

among individuals who are younger, students, economically active, more academically qualified, and competent in foreign languages as well as in the usage of information and communications technologies. But there is far more concerning when we look at the older citizens – which will be in the forefront of our paper. Two principal obstacles seem to be in the way of the participation of elderly in education processes. From one side, the elderly are not the priority of educational policies. And from the other side, it is also true that they themselves do not assign a meaning to education and learning policies that follow European Union logic because their goals seem to considerably differ.

Nowadays, general awareness of the importance of education and learning – as well as to connect it with the concepts of aging – starts to be noted. Studies suggest that the individuals aged 65 years or more can learn if the contents are clearly presented, appellatives and motivators. Some research results even show us that elderly, with their specific roles and functions, should be seen as an important resource of our community (Withnall & Kabwasa, 1989).

Considering the typical characteristics of this age group, their educational needs may significantly vary. It is therefore important to provide flexible and different programs to address these needs (Kennedy, 1989). Carefully thought out public education policies for this age group are thus required by both educational factors as well as by the need of elderly for the social inclusion. And one of the most evident examples of the elderly education practice – which belongs to the third sector organizations – are exactly the University of the Third Age.

Participation in lifelong learning

Some of the studies reveal that adult participation in educational and learning processes has increased since the 1970s and is even growing in the past decades (Bélanger, 2011). However, such studies mainly include the general sample of adults (with only a small sub-sample of older adults), focusing on their participation in education, while studies which would specifically focus on the participation of elderly are quite scarce.

The participation of individuals in education is not independent of some factors which influence adult learning. Those influences can be supported by macro-level (educational system, labor market, etc.), meso-level (firm and employer characteristics, place and region of residence) and micro-level features (socio-demographic characteristics, subjective dispositions, etc.) (Dammrich, Vono de Vilhena & Reichart, 2014).

According Eurostat data, lifelong learning is not usual activity among people aged 55 years and older yet. Participation rates start to decrease when people turn 45 and further do so when they reach the age of 55 to 64. This may seem as a contradiction, since participation decreases precisely when people have more free time (Bélanger, 2011).

According to the last survey about participation in lifelong learning (INE, 2011), globally the participation in education and learning activities is increasing. In 2011, approximately 49% of the population aged 18 to 64 participated in lifelong learning activities. Females' participation was slightly higher than males', i.e. 49,5% compared to 47,9%; the age group between 55-69 years had the lowest share of participation in every category (19% in lifelong learning activities, 2% in formal education, 18% in non-formal education and 52% in informal learning). Although these figures cannot be considered as satisfying, they still point to the utmost importance of non-formal and informal education

for that age group (and it is also important to note that females prefer non-formal and males prefer informal learning).

To summarise, there can be multiple functions of education and learning. We can see that the participation rates in aging population are consistently lower but seem to be improving over the years. We can also say that learning is somehow related to the individual's past – to his or her social context and motivations. On the other hand, education and "participation in" seem to be tightly connected as well, and finally, some gender differences can also be noted.

Civil society organizations and adult education

For the purpose of this paper, it is important to stress some notions about the civil society and its meaning for adult education. Historically speaking we can say that the relations between state and civil society are complex. State and civil society used to be seen in the modern occidental world as presenting a dual character (Gamble, 1982): opposed to the artificial construction of the nation-state and its main symbols (Giddens, 1992), there was this private, spontaneous, typical relationships of civil society. So the concept of civil society rests in the assumption that (beyond the state and the market) there is a third sphere in society. We can say that the history of the evolution of the Providing-State is the sign of the displacement, to the state, of the main groups of civil society, representing the public roles of protection and social action (Monteiro, 2004).

For the other side, the expansion of neoliberalism brought new changes and new relations. Neoliberalism was capable of building a huge consensus that would include the "weak state" (Boaventura de Sousa Santos, 1998): the strength of the state therefore triggers the weakness and disorientation of civil society, in such a way that weakening the state would be a precondition for the strengthening of civil society. By discharging services and responsibilities and promoting the privatisation of nearly all aspects of life, the state provided space and freedom for civil society organisations. So we can say that neoliberalism's' success implicates the participation of the civil society. The services once belonging to the Welfare-State as its responsibility are now transferred to a third sector.

This sector includes a complex and dynamic set of non-governmental institutions that tend to be non-violent, self-organised and self-reflective (Keane, 1998). Third sector is characterized by its private character, absence of money (non-lucrative), and its main aim is to provide benefits for the community or individuals. It is based on volunteer actions and work, and on strong values such as solidarity, participation, democracy and local roots (Ferreira, 2009). This is not a set of unified organisations: actually, it is quite the opposite; they have aims of various natures.

If there is no doubt that the third sector organisations can have a tremendous importance as an alternative to the state and market, one has to consider that under certain conditions this might be deceptive. Traditional forms of control may be vanishing, participative methodologies and community action open a new space in which civil society organisations are seen as a fraction of the state (Santos, 1990). The state waits for the civil society to provide the answers. This is even more obvious in the case of specific populations such as elderly and elderly education.

In the case of adult education, the civil society has had a strong tradition of different entities since the end of the XIX century. A large part of the institutional development of the adult education emerges from the action of the popular and community sectors. The relations between adult education, civil society organizations and democracy constitute

the base of the adult education as a political educative field (Lima, 2012). In many countries, the recent education policies promoted vocational training and lifelong learning, normally for young and active people; and at the same time they depreciated the adult education (non-school education) (Veloso, 2011). In that sense, many of the initiatives promoted for the adults are not in the centre of the programmes and the political educative initiatives; quite the opposite, they are organized by civil society organizations outside the state policies, programmes and financial support (Lima, 2012).

With the neoliberalism and the emergence of the third sector we can observe a degree of hybridism consisted by a mix of the state, the market and the community. According to Lima (ibid.), three different types of civil society organizations can be considered as part of the third sector in adult education: The first type is related with the civil society organizations and their participation in learning and adult education; is related with critic and transforming contexts, or places for educative and multicultural production; they are oriented toward democratic citizenship, justice and social transformation. The second type of civil society organizations can be seen as bureaucratic extensions or local services of the state or public administration. And the third type of civil society organizations are "free market units or organizations of corporative culture and enterprise *ethos*, oriented towards learning market and their clients" (ibid., pp. 107-108).

These types of organizations can coexist at the same time, depending of the socio-educative reality. It is therefore necessary to understand this reality not as a sum of separate entities, but rather as far more complex, including a political, cultural and educative analysis. As such, it contains a large diversity of situations and institutions.

Licínio Lima and Paula Guimarães, studied the adult learning and educational policies and provide an analytical approach to. They focus on three analytical models, namely the democratic emancipatory model, the modernisation and state control model, and the human resources management model (Lima & Guimarães, 2011):

> "…*the democratic-emancipatory model*, in which democratic participation and critical education are very important in relation to AE actions, in particular popular and community education; *the modernisation and state control model*, based on public provision, the intervention of the welfare state, and generally dominated by educational guidelines; and *the human resources management model*, in search of economic modernisation and the production of skilled labour, led by vocationalist guidelines focusing on the production of human capital. These are models which, through their inclusiveness, seek to embrace a wide range of public policies adopted in countries and regions which themselves differ widely, as we shall now show." (ibid., p. 40)

Universities of the third age: an example of elderly participation

The Universities of the Third Age (UTA) arise as institutional entities targeted for elders and with the intention to provide the appropriate response to the needs and educational problems of adults and the elderly. The first University of the Third Age emerged in France in the 1973, to address the needs of the pensioners' occupation. This was a project started by Pierre Vellas, and the emphasis was put on performing activities, study rooms for young and old people (Formosa, 2014).

The UTA normally is an autonomous entity. Veloso defines the main aim of the UTA as the promotion, the valorization and the integration of the elders, the contact with the reality and the local social dynamic, the occupation of the free times, and avoid the

isolation and the marginalization (Veloso, 2007; 2011). UTA seems to represent a service for all the community and is composed by a basic triad – Learning, participation and community life – which fills the needs and solves the existing problems in this sector, while at the same time promoting the welfare and the active aging (Veloso, 2011; Jacob, 2005; 2012). As further stressed by Veloso, the "Universities of the Third Age can be attended as diversified places, more or less emancipatory, depending on which educational practices are being developed and the objectives that have been defined" (Veloso, 2007, p. 256).

Many researchers conclude that the participation of the elderly in the activities of UTA helps to all of the participating actors to recognize the stereotyped perceptions about the elderly and the old age (Veloso, 2011; Machado & Medina, 2012). The participation in the UTA's activities seems to increase their physical, intellectual and social levels (Formosa, 2014) and consequently the life quality of the elders (Jacob, 2012).

In Portugal, the first UTA appears in 1976. If we make a relation between the first UTA and the number of them, we can see that they emerged in 1980's, but only in 1996 their number starts to increase more seriously. Between 2004 and 2008, around fifty UTA were founded in Portugal. Currently, there are more than 500, some of them created by the elders themselves that felt an educational and social need for it (Jacob, 2012).

In UTA, a lot of activities have been developed with ludic and educational features.

According to Jacob (2012), UTA in Portugal works "out of the school system" (ibid., p. 34). Some of these entities are integrated in other structures (for example non-governmental organizations), but the author says that it does not mean these structures are closed or the elders "do not participate actively in UTA's management and organization" (ibid.).

So it is possible to say that elderly education can be understood as an instrument for the acquisition of learning and social promotion; even more than achieving the formal education (as in traditional school) it is important to put participation and well-being of individuals – as well as the development of non-formal dynamics of learning supported by reflection and critical thinking – in the focus of the elderly education;. Education allows the adult to live and follow a world that is constantly in change, not only as a spectator but as an active and intervening subject (Formosa, 2011).

Research context and methodology

Education can be an instrument to foster learning and social promotion; apart from that, it allows adults to live in the world that is constantly changing. In Portugal, the participation of adults in learning strongly decreases with age.

In many cases, universities of the third age (UTA) emerge from the civic initiatives exactly because of the lack of the educational opportunities for elderly. As such, these are among the few entities that seem to promote education and learning activities for elderly and provide them the opportunity to participate. Those were the reasons that argue the importance of the PhD project titled "Educative Practices in Universities of the Third Age in Portugal". The specific aim of this research is to understand the educative practices developed in the UTA: what activities are adults participating in; who conducts these activities; who makes their design, development and evaluation. It focuses on elderly education, more specifically on UTA-organizations, where the population of elderly people participates, and tries to understand how the initiatives in which they are involved impact their participation, emancipation and subjective wellbeing.

The first task of the research was to conduct an exploratory study case of one university of the third age. The results of such case study should enable us to have a contextual vision about the reality of the universities of the third age, as well as about the practices developed in these contexts. Following the initial literature review and its analysis, some informal interviews with the participants in order to get deeper insight and understanding of empirical practices were conducted.

In this paper we present the case study, conducted at one university of the third age in one of the cities of southern (littoral and urban area) Portugal. Our aim is first to understand the case (Stake, 1994) and in addition to that:

a) If older adults merely follow what has already been predetermined by others or if are they actively participating in the planning and development of such activities as well;
b) whether there are some connections between this social/educational contexts and the emancipation of the individuals;
c) Finally, we want to have some clues on how to study these phenomena in posterior cases (a national level) (theoretically and methodologically).

In the first phase, our case approach included, the document analysis (members files, calendar of the lessons, regulations etc.) and informal conversations (Bogdan & Biklen, 1994) with key-informants in order to naturally understand the origins and evolution of this group. These were fundamental to establish an informal relationship and to be able to observe natural situations that make part of the UTA. Naturalist observation followed, in different moments and lessons. Finally, we have conducted a semi-structured interview (Fontana and Frey, 1994) with important members that have been directing the institution and have a historical memory of its evolution; then we conducted informal conversations with those who take part in the lessons (e.g. educators and learners).

Senior University: our case

The UTA, situated in southern part of Portugal, has been founded in 2010/2011. It emerged as an activity of a parish. It was created in order to provide some educative/social activity for the older people in the town:

> *"What we had here were people at their garden benches, in the streets and in cafes. They wasted all their days there. They didn't do anything productive." (E1).*

The principal idea was therefore to promote the quality of life of the elderly, considering the recommendations of the European Union about lifelong learning. The big aim of the UTA is to promote activities of non-formal learning. "This is a context of non-formal learning, with different lessons and several cultural, recreational and socialization activities, basically designed for older (aged 55 years or older) inhabitants of the city. They may or may not have scholar background (formal education)." (UTA Regulation, 2014). The UTA is opened between October and June every year.

After the initial idea, it grows up as a snowball: people calling for friends and neighbors. In the first year they were a total of 100 members, and since then this number significantly increased (and reached more than 200 members in the last year). As for now, the UTA has 151 members, most of them (75,7%) are females. The decrease observed

between the last year and the current year can be related with the introduction of fees. In the first years of the university it was completely free of charge, but to cover the basic expenses they finally decided for a symbolic fee of 20 euros/year. For example, it is covering insurance (5,90€/year) and materials – but although symbolic and low, it seems to be the reason for the decrease of the number of participants.

Only two of the full members don't live in the city. Although the small number, it is interesting to see that they have this kind of university in their city, but they were specifically looking for this one, maybe because of its specific characteristics and relations. All the members are more than 50; 7% are between 50 and 59 years old; 50% are between 60 and 69 years old, 33% are between 70 and 79 years, 8% are between 80 and 89 years and 1% are 90 or more than 90. Majority of them are thus retired (more than 90%).

We can see a big diversity of social classes among the members, blue and white collar workers alike. The balance of members is women that used to work at home (13%); some people with a professional past related with teaching (1ºciclo until university) (7%); there are also some nurses, bankers, dressmakers, technicians, etc.

Besides the principal aim of the UTA – i.e. to promote non-formal education activities - we can see that there are more objectives such as: "be a space for information about the rights and duties of the elderly; promote the well-being and the quality of life of this individuals; fight against the social isolation and social exclusion of the elderly; development and promotion of the interpersonal and social relations between the several generations; promote and support the social volunteering; promote partnerships with public and private entities" (Regulation, 2014).

The UTA normally works in one room (rented free of charge from city hall). Current UTA activities are consisted of internal (available to the members only) and external activities (open for all the community). The members are free to participate in all the courses they want. They can choose between 19 different courses. UTA offered different languages (English, French, Spanish, Portuguese), cultural and history (regional history, universal history, citizenship); artistic and performing activities (theatre, choir, dance, chess, bridge, manual works) and another nowadays relevant activities, such as informatics, health, sciences for life, economy, phycology and alphabetization. They also have field visits, cultural walks, traditional parties for the members etc. According to our data, they participate more in health (77 participants), informatics (64 participants), English (56 participants) and universal history (51 participants). Not so much popular activities are alphabetization (6 participants) and bridge (7 participants). It is interesting to see that some members participate in all the activities, while others only participate in some of them. We can also see a "padrone" between the participants: some of them only participate in languages, or in histories and economy, or those that only are in the artistic activities like theatre and choir.

Besides the internal there are external activities, open to all the community: meetings, debates, and presentations about several subjects: "We organize one every month". The last topics were "100 years of world war", "proverbs", "25th of April[34]", "citizenship", "what future?", "dementia", "the quality of sleep", etc.. Their aim is to conduct as many different activities as possible and to attract the widest audience. These activities are typically conducted in the partnership with the public, private and civil or social institutions.

[34] The 25th of April is a national holiday to celebrate the revolution that ended the dictatorial regime in Portugal in 1974. This event was, therefore, a part of the club's contribution to the celebration of that important event that re-established democracy in Portuguese society.

Actually there are 16 different educators in this UTA. The educators of the several courses (or educational practices) are completely volunteers. They have different educational qualifications (secondary school, bachelor degree, master or PhD); they also diverse in age - the oldest is 77 years old (lives in a neighbour) and the youngest is 22 years old. Some of them are retired, but majority of them are still active. Furthermore, it is interesting to note that a significant part of them (among the retired ones) are also in the opposite side (i.e. learner); they deliver their lessons as educators and they are themselves members of the UTA and are attending other courses as learners.

Besides this versus dynamic (educator-learner) it is also interesting that all the participants in the UTA are being educators and learners at the same time, sharing their professional and personal experiences and contributing in the activities: "They learn together from each other!".

In some cases they organize the activities, making all the necessary contacts. Despite the lack of money and other kind of resources, participants co-operate to achieve their objectives:

> *"Here, nothing seems impossible. With motivation, will and desire, everything is possible! There are always some people who willingly take the initiative and say: 'We will do, we will go, we want to do it.' " (E1).*

Therefore, it can be observed that people (despite their age) are dynamic and are keen to participate in different ways. The elderly seem to perceive this UTA group as their own secure space, a place where they feel good and which they identify with, a place where they can contribute and win with that contribution:

> *"The whole experience has been really good. People learn, but not only that. They also share their knowledge and it is really rewarding" (E1).*

UTA is not closed institution. They listen to their participants; they are open to their expectations and their opinions about the activities. And the results seem to be positive, they are functioning well and this is certainly important for their success and for the well-being of the individuals: "All the individuals should have the freedom and the opportunity to participate in different areas of their life and inside their society" (UTA Regulation, 2014, p.2).

> *"Here, people already had their life, professional life.. here they have the opportunity to change the experiences, to learn and to do something useful with their time. Participation in UTA is one way to do something healthy and to do something in their time. Or else they will stay home watching TV and this kind of things." (E1)*

Friendships and family social relationships also seem to be of the utmost importance for the wellbeing of participants in this context. Namely, these reflect the concepts of identity and belonging. Participants meet and have space to be together even after lessons:

> *"Sometimes I see them enjoying coffee after lessons. I also know that the dance group members go at lunch together once every month."*

At the same time, this group seem to constitute a community: they are capable of establishing important ties between them and with the larger community. Besides all the

mensal activities opened for the community, there are other indicators pointing to this. First, the partnerships with other institutions, which make some of the activities possible (dance and theatre). And secondly, the social help that these individuals give to social institutions of the city. For example, they are working in several institutions as volunteers:

> *"Besides participating at UTA, almost all the elderly also volunteer in other city institutions, such as Red cross, Association for elderly and Association for young people." (E1).*

> *"Although the UTA was initially an idea of the small political institution, all the city is winning with it. Particularly participants, but also the city as a whole. There are a lot of activities for the community. Wherever we go, we promote the good name of the city." (E1)*

To summarize, the UTA activities are fundamental to promote education and fight against isolation among older people, creating strong face-to-face ties of friendship and participation in socialisation groups and through activities. These individuals participate in several ways - they offer suggestions, they plan and design the activities, and they participate in their development. The personal share and the friendship seems the base for the participation and socialization structure and for the success of these UTA and for emancipation of the individuals.

Final thoughts

Among the elderly, the higher number of participants can be found in informal and non-formal learning. There are some obstacles and limitations regarding elderly participation, though. These problems are related primarily to the priorities of the policies and educational processes directed to the labor market. If we consider that the main purpose of lifelong learning (LLL) is the promotion of skills for employability, this purpose does not seem to stimulate education for all. Namely, if we follow this logic, it is exactly the population of elderly adults who are being the most excluded from education (Melo, 1997).

Following the concept of development and social cohesion - supported by the regulation of the UTA - we can say that UTA has a big responsibility in the establishing conditions for the participation of all the individuals. This institution offers conditions, the access and resources for such participation. Even more, it gives freedom for a total participation in all the activity phases – from the idea to its realization. All this work is supported by two important points: the equality of education opportunities for all, and the specific demographic structure (that we tend to see in occidental countries) in that city.

Our case study has revealed some interesting points about the importance of educative contexts and the importance of participation for elderly.

Although being inside a political institution, UTA has a significant degree of autonomy. It needs permission for some (large) activities, but it is independent, it basically decides on its activities on its own. In other words, this legal status does not represent an obstacle for the functioning of UTA, but rather it enables it to be supported in all the necessary ways. So according Lima and Guimarães (2011) analyses we can say that this UTA reflects a hybridisation between the democratic emancipatory model and the modernisation and state control model.

This club seems to contribute to the emancipation of the individuals; it promotes a lot of debates and sessions where people can participate in. Participants are encouraged

to be interviewers and participate in this context and in the city actions. A significant number of them are highly active, not only inside UTA, but also as volunteers in several other institutions. This individuals seems completely motivated for participate

It should also be noted that UTA seems to attract participants from outside of the city. Here we are talking about educators that live in neighbouring cities and come to voluntarily conduct their classes; and learners who may have UTA in their city, but they nevertheless choose this particular UTA.

This UTA seems to have some specific characteristics, such as the informal context. In other words, it is not elitist, but quite the opposite, participants feel good and like to come here, there is a horizontal relation established. They feel the UTA as their own space, where they can learn from each other. And besides that it also represents a space for socialization and it is quite important for the well-being of its individuals.

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Vocational education and training: An overview of dropout studies in Brazil

Introduction

This work is being developed under an Iberia-American network of international education research, which includes participation of researchers from different universities in Latin America, Iberian region (Portugal and Spain), and Italy[35]. It is also part of an ongoing research project (2011-2015)[36], which involves collaboration among faculty and students from graduate programs in Education in three different Brazilian post-secondary institutions. The team is also composed of teachers from vocational institutions in Brazil.

The research examines different facets of Brazilian vocational education such as the organization of federal vocational institutions, teaching education and work, student success, as well as three possible paths from vocational education - school dropouts, transition to the workforce, and entry into higher education. A recent policy of expansion and reorganization of vocational education in Brazil suggests a need for examining issues related to this new policy. The study focuses on the following four key-questions:

[35] Iberia-American Studies Network about Vocational Education and School Dropout – RIMEPES. This network is attached to the Brazilian directory of research teams of the National Council for Scientific and Technological Development (CNPq), agency under the Brazilian Ministry of Science and Technology. For more information about the research team, see this link:
http://dgp.cnpq.br/buscaoperacional/detalhegrupo.jsp?grupo=0333708LS2DNU4

[36] The research project, called "Technical secondary education of the Federal Network of Vocational and Technological Education of Minas Gerais", is coordinated by Professor Rosemary Dore and it is funded by CAPES/INEP under the Brazilian government Education Observatory Program (Project 89).

1) How have vocational schools been affected by recent institutional restructuring?
2) Is increasing enrollment accompanied by policies of permanence and minimizing dropouts?
3) How are the policies for the transition from vocational to workforce and higher education interpreted and implemented by individual school administrators?
4) What institutional and individual factors affect student permanence and dropout?

These complex and interrelated individual, institutional and contextual issues require research to understand their dynamics and provide a basis for the formulation of policies, which can help to improve the quality of education in the country.

With particular attention to question four above, this paper seeks to review the literature related to vocational education dropouts in Brazil by considering the knowledge about individual and contextual factors associated with this problem and how it can be overcome. The theoretical perspective guiding the analysis of the literature is based on a conceptual model of the dropout process(Rumberger & Lim, 2008). The following topics show a description of this theoretical rationale, as well as methods, analysis of the literature, and the main conclusions of the study.

Theoretical rationale

The factors associated with dropouts in vocational education were analyzed from a conceptual model of student dropouts (Rumberger & Lim, 2008).According to this model, two types of factors influence school dropouts: a) Individual - associated with individual characteristics of students; b) Institutional - linked to three main contexts that influence students: families, schools, and communities. These factors and their respective categories are shown in Table 1.

Factors	Categories	
Individual Factors	Performance	Achievement
		Persistence
		Attainment
	Behaviors	Engagement
		Coursework
		Deviance
		Peers
		Employment
	Attitudes	Goals
		Values
		Self-perceptions
	Background	Demographics
		Health
		Prior performance
Institutional Factors	Families	Structure
		Resources
		Practices
	Schools	Composition
		Structure

Factors	Categories	
		Resources
		Practices
	Communities	Composition
		Resources

Table 1: Conceptual model of the dropout process
Source: Developed by the authors, based on Rumberger and Lim (2008)

The individual factors are assembled into four categories: a) performance, which includes academic achievement, educational persistence, and attainment; b) behaviors, including students' engagement, coursework, deviance, peers, and employment; c) attitudes, including psychological aspects, namely goals, values, and self-perception; d) background, which includes demographics, health, and prior performance (Rumberger, 2011; Rumberger & Lim, 2008).

Although the experiences, attitudes, behavior and educational performance influence school dropouts, such individual factors are also associated with institutional contexts of which students are a part.

The institutional factors that can potentially influence the educational outcomes of students are gathered in three categories: a) family, which covers its structure (number and types of people in the family), resources (financial and human) and practices (educational expectations, educational support and school parent involvement); b) school, which encompasses the social composition of students in school, the school structure (location, size and type of school), physical, human, and financial resources of school, and school practices (administration, teaching and school climate); c) community, which refers to the role of communities in youth development. The communities have influence through access to resources such as childcare, medical facilities, and employment opportunities; parental relationships, which allow contact with family, friends, and neighbors; and social relations that arise from the mutual trust and shared values that can help supervise and monitor the activities of young people (Rumberger & Lim, 2008).

Data and methods

Utilizing the Brazilian CAPES web portal, which contains 126 databases and more than 37.000 scientific journals with full text available, the literature was collected through a search of keywords linked to the theme of school dropouts in vocational training. This website gathers, in a single virtual space, the most popular Brazilian and international scientific publications (CAPES, 2015). This paper examines the content of these journals from Brazil.

The software Zotero was used to form and explore bibliography. It is a bibliographic manager, which enables the registration and organization of reference items such as books, articles, thesis, and legislation.

The analysis of literature considered the following six steps suggested by Creswell (2002): 1) organizing and preparing data; 2) initial reading of information; 3) coding of data; 4) description and thematic analysis from the codes; 5) representation of the results in tables, graphs or figures; 6) interpretation of data.

The interpretation of data was done from a critical analysis of literature. “A critical review of the literature not only helps scholars understand arguments in a particular area of scholarly inquiry, it also hopefully reveals disagreements, gaps, biases,

misunderstandings, and other opportunities for original contribution" (Huff, 2008, p. 163).

Dropout studies in Brazil

A review of the literature on school dropouts in Brazil reveals a significant number of research studies in the context of K-12 education. Most of these studies are related to school failure and they consider dropout and repetition of grades on par with one another. This lack of specificity can fail to provide an essential understanding of what a dropout entails (Dore & Lüscher, 2011).

Specifically, with regard to the context of vocational education in Brazil, there is a lack of studies pertaining to dropouts (see Table 2). This lack of research has also been identified by Dore and Lüscher (2011) in their search conducted within Brazilian databases, which demonstrated a small number of studies and data on the topic of dropouts. Thus, there is a need for more consolidated research in this specific area of study in Brazil.

Author	Study Objective	Dropout Definition	Dropout Factors
Almeida and Barbosa (2010)	Analysis of the dropout/ repetition of course/level causes in a Farming course offered by a federal Agrotechnical School in 2008.	Exclusion from school.	Lack of vocation for the course, lack of commitment of students, repetition of levels, financial and family difficulties.
Machado (2009)	Analysis of dropout factors in Computer and Agriculture courses in a Federal Agrotechnical School (2002-2006).	School abandonment or desistence of continuing studies.	Separation from family[37], lack of interest, motivation, or connection with the field of study, drug use, entry into the labor market, poor quality of previous education, discrepancy between a theoretical curriculum and real life.
Matias (2003)	Analysis of students' pass, fail and dropout in a federal vocational institution.	Dropout during the school year without requesting transfer to another school.	Socioeconomic status of students who need to work to increase the family income.
Nunes *et al*. (2007)	Analysis of dropout in a Nursing course offered by a government program of Nursing workers professionalization.	Dropout from the first month of the beginning of the course.	Incompatible hours of work and study, lack of interest in the study field, health problems, pregnancy, learning

[37] Separation from parents usually means that students have to relocate from rural towns to developed cities, where more schools are available.

Author	Study Objective	Dropout Definition	Dropout Factors
			difficulty and inadequacy of internship programs.
Silva, Pelissari, and Steimbach (2013)	Analysis of the reasons for staying and leaving in vocational schools in Paraná state.	Reflection of exclusion and disillusion of the value of school education.	Preference for regular high school, lack of interest in the course and learning difficulty.

Table 2: Literature review on Brazilian vocational education
Source: Developed by the authors

In most of the studies presented in Table 2, the dropout problem is analyzed from primary data based on the perceptions of different actors within the vocational education system. Nunes *et al*. (2007) conducted a study with dropout students; Almeida and Barbosa (2010) with teachers; Silva, Pelissari, and Steimbach (2013) with graduated and dropouts students and teachers; Machado (2013) with managers, teachers, and students. In the study of Matias (2003), the problem is analyzed from secondary data on access, timely completion of diploma, repetition of levels and dropout details in vocational courses, all provided by the researched institution.

The results of almost all these studies show that the students do not identify with the vocational school or course, and express preference for regular high school. Moreover, there is a lack of vocational prospects or interest in the field of study, lack of motivation, and commitment to the course. This lack of identification by the student can be related to their early career choice. Since most of the students of federal schools attend secondary educational and vocational education concomitantly, the expected age to start a vocational course is 15 years old. Thus, students can choose a study field prematurely without enough information about the course and its related profession. This lack of information shows the need for educational/vocational counselling in public Brazilian schools. Even in private schools, meeting the demand for this kind of service has been insufficient (Melo-Silva, 2003; Melo-Silva, Lassance, & Soares, 2004; Ribeiro, 2003).

Some dropout factors related to the teaching-learning process are also pointed out by the mentioned studies such as difficulty in the course subjects and course failure. Students facing learning difficulties can feel like a failure at school, which may lead to grade repetition and dropping out. This situation suggests a need for more academic support for students (e.g. learning services, extra tutoring, and psycho-pedagogical assistance), as well as reflection and improvement of institutional practices concerning teaching, curriculum, and pedagogy.

Other dropout causes relate to familial contexts and student challenges include health problems (personal or familiar), pregnancy, drug use, financial and family difficulties, and separation from family in order to live closer to vocational schools. Factors related to work are also highlighted such as labor market entry, and incompatibility of hours of work and study. These last factors may be related to individual or familial socioeconomic status, which often requires the early entry of young people into the work world.

Factors related to the institutional context of schools identified potential problems. Prior to attending vocational courses, low quality primary education can negatively

influence the academic performance of students in vocational education. Other issues are the discrepancy between a theoretical curriculum and the practical knowledge required in real life as well as the inadequacy of internship programs, which are related to the context of the institution of vocational education.

The factors related to the institutional education context are rarely mentioned in these studies when compared with prevailing personal, familial, and socioeconomic factors of the students. The omission of school factors is also observed in the dropout study in the Professional Education Program (PEP), conducted by the Minas Gerais state government, which does not mention school contexts as a cause of dropout.

The PEP, offered by the Government of Minas Gerais since 2008, aims to expand enrollment in private vocational institutions by providing scholarships for low-income students. The students also receive food and/or transport support from the PEP. Despite this, of the total number of students enrolled in this program in 2008, 27.45% gave up the vocational course (Dore & Lüscher, 2011). This hindered the National Education Plan's (2011-2020) goal of a 90% completion rate (Brasil, 2014). Reducing the dropout rate should be a policy concern, as truancy is costly to both the individual who drops out and to the society as a whole (Rumberger, 2011).

Though the PEP study data is often vague, the Minas Gerais state government indicates twelve leading causes of dropouts in PEP. First, course dropouts are due to employment or work (36.56%). This may be related to the socioeconomic status of the student, which leads to choosing work instead of study. This is one reason for dropping out that finds support in studies conducted in other modalities/levels of education in Brazil as well as in research on vocational education conducted in other countries. The second major cause is dropping out without any justification (20.91%), which requires a detailed investigation to identify the real causes (Dore & Lüscher, 2011).

The study fails to define the other causes that the authors name such as incompatible timetable, which accounts for 9.15% of dropouts, and studies, accounting for 8.91% of dropouts. These causes have led to questions related to its imprecise meanings. For instance, what types of timetables are incompatible (work, study, or familial activities)? Or what does the cause study mean (other kind of study or the vocational study itself)?

The other causes of dropouts in PEP relate to entry into higher education, lack of identification or difficulty with the course subjects, moving out of town, transportation, health, children, and pregnancy (see Table 3).

Motive	%
Employment	36.56
Drop out/Unjustified	20.91
Incompatible timetable	9.15
Studies	8.91
Entered higher education course	7.40
Moved to another town	4.23
Health	3.01
Transport	2.95
Pregnancy	1.85
Found it too hard	1.85
Could not relate to the course	1.75
Children	1.43

Table 3: Dropout Causes in PEP – 2008
Source: SEE-MG (2009)

Soares' (2010) research on high school dropouts show similarities with some dropout factors in vocational education. A survey was conducted with 600 students who left high school in the Minas Gerais state between 2006 and 2009. Some of the reasons students gave for dropping out of school include having incompatible work and school schedules (56.6%), student disinterest in course content (11.6%),other reasons (11.4%), pregnancy (6.5%), family problems (3.3%), heavy course load (2.5%), distance from school (2.4%), teacher disinterest in students (2.2%), teacher demand on students (2%), relocation (0.9%), and failure to enroll (0.6%).

Besides confirming the main reasons identified in the literature on student dropouts (need to work, socioeconomic status and student disinterest), Soares' (2010) study also identified aspects of the school responsible for a significant loss of students, demonstrating the importance of developing strategies to make school more dynamic, innovative, and attractive as well as to make the process of teaching and learning more effective.

Another study on the reasons that cause young people to leave school was conducted by Neri (2009) based on micro data from the Monthly Employment Survey (PME/IBGE). In 2006, out of 3.12 million young people between 15 and 17 years of age, 30% had a monthly per capita income of less than R$ 100.00[38] and with a dropout rate of 23.3%, compared to a rate of 5.8% of the richest 20% of individuals. The dropouts related to restrictive income is 446% higher among the poorest people. The lack of intrinsic interest in education is the dropout reason for 40.3% of the total surveyed population; the need for work and income corresponds to 27.1% (Neri, 2009).

In most of the studies reviewed in this section, dropouts are related mainly to the individual and socioeconomic aspects of the students. However, the dropout problem is not limited to individuals' economic, social, or cultural factors. The process of permanence in the education system also has a close relationship with the institutional aspects of the school and courses, such as resources, organizational structure and internal practices (Fini, Dore, & Lüscher, 2013; Rumberger & Lim, 2008; N. V. Silva & Hasenbalg, 2002).

Thus, school dropouts are a complex, multifaceted, and multicausal phenomenon linked to personal, social and institutional factors, which can result in temporary student leave or permanent departure from the education system. This problem should be analyzed using a holistic perspective regarding school, the education system, and the individual.

Some individual dropout factors are students' behavior and attitudes to school life, parents' educational level, family income, and students' social interaction with peers, teachers, and school community. School dropout factors include school structural characteristics, institutional resources, pedagogical practices, and student body profile. At the system level, an important factor is the mechanism of student return to school. The students' reintroduction to the school after a long period of interruption in their schooling process can be a problem. When the student does not follow an educational path in the expected and allowed time, the system will need to adopt alternative structures to facilitate their return, such as education programs for youth and adults. The approach of dropouts from these three perspectives can bring a broader and clearer understanding of the phenomenon, considering the diversity of its aspects (Dore & Lüscher, 2011).

[38] This amount in Brazilian currency (Real) is worth about 30 Euros (€).

From this perspective, further research with students who dropped out of vocational courses is necessary in order to identify the diversity of factors associated with the dropout problem. By adopting a holistic approach with the aim of measuring and monitoring this problem, the dropout rate can potentially be decreased and vocation education can be improved.

Conclusion

The literature review pointed out an insignificant amount of research concerning dropouts in Brazil. This indicates that studies on completion as well as dropouts for vocational education in Brazil, which is currently being developed under the RIMEPES network, are both pertinent and relevant.

Most of the reviewed literature found that dropouts were associated mostly with students' individual and socioeconomic aspects, omitting institutional aspects of the school. Thus, there is a need for further evidence of the dropout causes at the institutional level, which is being examined by the ongoing study that was mentioned.

The review of literature presented also suggests the necessity for researchers, administrators, and practitioners to deepen their understanding of the causes of dropouts in vocational schools from empirical data and conceptual discussions, representing the diversity of factors that influence students' educational trajectory. The review also evoked the importance of seeking strategies to prevent the problem, such as the individualized monitoring of students at risk of dropping out in their studies.

In this direction, we highlight three important agents that should contribute to the development of resolutions for the dropout problem: the education system, which should provide recommendations to the population to minimize the problem and to facilitate the return to school for students who dropped out; schools and community, which must seek solutions to their intrinsic problems; public policies for vocational education, which should encourage the student to stay and complete their studies. More knowledge of the causes and manifestations of this phenomenon are essential to face the problem and propose ways to prevent dropouts by the government and society.

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Vacancies - eyesores or/and (new) chances of identification for communities: How to support initiatives of people and their voluntary work to successfully breath new life into unoccupied buildings

Introduction

Community Education is described as an longterm and fundamental requirement to empower a sustainable soil for a Lifelong Learning culture (Chrisholm et al. 2009: 32ff). Emphaszied is especially the informal learning of the civil society at a regional level. The targets for a culture of Lifelong Learning culture should be reached by personal development, social, cultural and general education contents headlined with voluntary work in new learning environements with a high component of selflearning. Because of the longterm view of this strategy and the qualitative aspects the focus is on the practice and organisation of existing projects and initiatives (see Lassnigg 2013: 5ff). The following article is built up by such an evaluation.

In the last 25 years, the Upper Lusatia, a region on frontiers between Czec Republic and Poland, was facing a profound structural change. This process of economical and political transformation left many vacancies due to closed down plants and a declining population. The spectrum ranges from industrial buildings and historical half-timbered houses (Umgebindehäuser) to objects, which served the community as places of social life in a village or a town, such like guesthouses, pubs and theaters. Many of those were lingering over a sad fate for years or just became ruins. But spaces can always be read as texts. And so those empty buildings are connected with the collective experiences of the people. The perception of those spaces as eyesores changed slightly and some of those buildings received more attentation. It is to aknowledge that especially people from the community groups began to engage in activities around the vacancies. The extend of the

dedicated people ranges from inhabitants to returnees and newcomers. The decisive factor is always if the local environment of the community administration and other players are supportive or repressive. In the last years in the region of Upper Lusatia many and very heterogeneous groups and initiatives around vacancies were formed. It is obvious that they are not very institutionalised concepts. The engines of the revival are idealism in a positive sense, local ties and commitment, civil voluntary work and personal learning.

The project "Zukunftsprojektor" had the issue to find, show and support voluntary initiatives by offering educational support. The focus was on groups and their voluntary work for the preservation of the vacancies and the collective use in the region of Upper Lusatia. The project was financed from the program "Neulandgewinner" by the "Robert-Bosch-Stiftung" and guided by the "Zukunftsbündnis Upper Lusatia.". The academic evaluation was accompanying the whole project for two years and focussing on the following questions:

- What are the motives and challenges of this kind of initiatives around vacancies?
- And which role takes the buildings and their potential use for the voluntary work?
- What kind of function takes the initiatives in terms of community learning?
- What are best practices of supporting this kind of building-voluntary work in rural regions?

Methodological background

As a qualitative approach the study had not the issues to test theoretically hypotheses within an empirical context. Because of the exploring character of the program and the project itself an inductive methodology was preferred. Attending the approach of the American pragmatism (see Joas 1996) and especially in the context of very innovative and creative contexts of development. The practice as doing is the first step. The second step is than the theoretical reflection on the base of empirical experiences.

This pragmatic understanding of innovative development doesn´t claim that there are already theories of how to do the right things right and how to support engaged groups around vacancies in the perfect way so that community learning is happening and everybody can participate. In this theoretical approach the focus is not on a normative controlling if community learning is happening while some people want to change the ruin within the centre of their community. But the focus is open to question which kind of goals were reached in the empirical practice and to formulate them together. In this thinking the goal of the voluntary work developed in a retrospective perspective not in a prospective (see Weick 1985: 33f; 278f; 340f). Everybody involved in the project is looking from a special perspective to the common process and is so adding this perspective to a development which is generating a theory (Schäffter 2008), here a theory of how to support voluntary work for vacancies in order to support this as a sort of community learning. The two steps empirical method is reflecting this inductive approach.

The Research objects were: First to describe the history of the initiatives for the unoccupied buildings and their needs. Second to gather success factors for the support and to argue with the impact of this groups for the revitalization of community life. The results were organized into: Motives and history of commitment, challenges, support needs and success factors of commitment. The resaerch results are providing the

opportunity to bring attention to issues of community learning to support local development in the regions of Eastern Germany. Learning is seen as a social proccess and associated with personal and social issues. In this perspective adult education as Lifelong Learning is to reflect historical and social transformation as a 'searching process' to find innovative and individual solutions in a transformation society. "People are learning because they want to contribute to the common goal, sharing the responsibility for achieving change or perhaps just keeping something going" (Gilchrist 2013: 02-2).

This contribution provids the perspective of how vacancies in rural communities can give an opportunity of new identification with people and their practical engagement. And different examples for the way to breath new life into unoccupied buildings.

Casestudies - A glance into the practice of the voluntary work for vacancies

Der Kretscham - The public house

Kretscham is an old word for a public tavern in the middle of the village. Very often with a ballroom inside to dance and to celebrate. An association of 15 members keeps one of these old buildings in a village of 5.500 inhabitants up. Their issue since more than 12 years is, to open this building for the public as the cultural centre of the community. The starting point of the voluntary work of the young people was very practical. While looking for a space for shared house, which is not easy to find in a village, the youngsters found the former public house and started to rent the old hotel level up the former ballroom. From the beginning the young residents were confronted with the meaning of the building for the community of the village: *"When we came the first time to the works on the house, we realized, that very day, it was unbelievable, plenty of people stoped in front of the house and asked us to be allowed to come in and to take a look insinde. That was the moment when we realized what an importance this house has in the heads of the generation of my mother and grandmother."*

Many personal memories and a very high public interest is besoming the reason for the first public event. Planed as a small barbacue party with a DJ, this party becomes a hit with over 800 guests. The reason for this resonanz is the local identification with this house: *"Very old couples, more than seventy years old, came up the stairs and where sitting on the gallery, holding hands and just looking into the ballroom. Onetousand people were telling onetausand stories, apparently in this house half of the village must have been married, fathered or something like this."*

Other events like public parties and exhibitions followed the first event as well as continuing constractions on the almost dilapidated building. The association was founded and the voluntary worked professionalized. In the first years the construction of toilets and fire protection the most important projects. Now the organization of the parties and events is professional and the house three times a year open for the public. The biggest cahllenges for the initiative are financial sorrows and the difficulty of the private ownership of the house. With a private owner communal financial support is not possible. Support is required both in providing legal advice as well as to network with other vacancies initiatives. After all, the key question in such a long-term voluntary work is, how can the people, who cover the costs of the association, open the facility three times a year and organize and carry out voluntary events in the future?

The water tower

The association LEBENs(T)RÄUME e.V. (registered association) was founded in 2012. It consists of approx. 35 active members with a mixed-age structure. Its goal is to make the shrinking region more livable with offers for nature experience and environmental education. At first the project Stadthonig (honey from town) started off. An old industrial wasteland was converted into a bee pasture and so honey is produced and sold locally for several years now. The association connects its approach of environmental education with the preservation and analysis of the historic industrial heritage of the region. The association has drawn wide acclaim among the locals in a short time through the work with the bees and the production of honey. Due to the high publicity of the assocation in the small town, the dedicated members were offered another vacant property for sponsoring and thus for "revival". The historic water tower is part of the former company premises LAUTEX where more than 40,000 people were employed until the early / mid-90s. The tower borders the former fire station equipment store of the company's fire department, which the association manages as a user. The water tower is *"one of the few buildings that has been preserved from the whole complex"* of the company LAUTEX. All other buildings were demolished as part of urban development. Since the acquisition of the building the issue of sustainable use is top priority. Due to the historical significance of the building, the memory work plays an important role:

"*There are many elderly people who love to see how it has developed, what has become of it, how it will continue to be used and are very grateful that it has been preserved as one of the few buildings and that their memories can live here. Every two weeks we have a narrative café for seniors, where many of these former employees can really reminisce, and so old stories come back to light and that is nice to see. And it's also important for us that we get information that we can look back on and reappraise to keep the history alive*". This approach goes hand in hand with the question of what the historic building is supposed to become. There is a need for sustainable search for ideas with the local community. In addition to the collective development of ideas the question arises how the implementation and the development of the association's work is going to be managed and this is drafted as a demand for advice. Although the association's work is on a voluntary basis, future profitability and the creation of a permanent position is aspired.

Wächterhaus and Fleischbänke

The Fleischbänke (stalls for meat sales) were first mentioned in 1361 as a location in Zittau for slaughter and sale of meat and were built in 1759 at its present location. It was used until the 19th century followed by vacancy. And the Wächterhaus Zittau is a historic inner-city building from the 16th century with an eventful history, among other things as Jewish prayer room and department store and has been empty since 1990. A ‚Wächterhaus' is an utilization concept for vacant properties. Initiatives were founded for both buildings in 2011 with the help of the Stadtforum (a city board) to establish a revival by temporary use. Partly the same people work for both initiatives, the Wächterhaus and the Fleischbänke, and take that voluntary work forward. The use and but not the purchase of the buildings is in the foreground, in order to protect them from demolishing: *"We are only interested in, that the building, so that we can use it temporarily, so to speak, in order to draw attention to the building and if someone comes who buys it, then we make way or use it as long as it's possible and attention is useful.*

Attention and public interest is achieved by using the facilities by artists, the granting of access for everyone and the implementation of various public events: "*There*

is a license agreement, which lasts about, in our case, ten years, and the time, we can spend it in here without making major structural changes, we can use the building for our purpose" Especially the historical reference and the provision of access to the building is a crucial factor for the revival. The entire local community is invited to visit the building and to get acquainted with the temporary use and the space it provides for everyone. This openness is also one reason for his personal engagement in the voluntary work: "*The events themselves were a good step forward, so also for the town, because they, could all come, there wasn't anything unpleasant in here, but all came in, looked at it, oh, beautiful old building, and I have been here once as a child and I remember it as a big department store. So many older people who showed interest in it and don't say uhä what you are doing now, but through the connection with art it has been open and has been accepted and is still accepted. And that's something I found very inspiring, to participate in things, to integrate myself*".

The starting point for the selection of the buildings for temporary use is their present inner-town location and the interest of direct interaction with the history: "*The Fleischbänke is an independent initiative whose, primary purpose was to find a few people who said*: '*Man I walk here often, passing this meat market, I think it's such a pity that this is lying bare*'." The stories and the identification of the people is made a subject of discussion in the events and made accessible through an open door: "*The fact that this is now just within the town, which is, still something supporting, that they searched for something in the inner-town, even next to such a road, which is highly traditional.*"

The community from the very beginning supports both initiatives. The Urban Development Company is interested in the voluntary work and therefore establishes communication to owners. The organization level of the Meat Market might be relatively low, but for the implementation of large-scale events such as a Christmas markets all local citizens and stores etc. worked closely together. Existing networks with urban actors and direct approaches played a major role in order to get attention and support. The takeover by an investor is scheduled for the voluntary work and cooperation is aspired and has already been successfully implemented for the Fleischbänke initiative. The work is rewarded with public attention and personal feedback of the community at the events. The work is voluntary but the commitment is remunerated with a greater say in urban development.

Whereby the committed people are aware of the problem of property relations and available municipal capital, "*because on the one hand you can of course tear down buildings and build something new, but on the other hand, there are a lot of buildings that are just empty because there is some sort of problem there*". The initiatives address this gap of urban incapacity and advertise their town and a broad attention: "*That is a possibility, with such a Wächterhaus, as well as with a project like Fleischbänke, to campaign for an object, where you think that is worth it to take it further into the interests of the urban public, and sometimes that is enough, that is of course marketing, i.e., to market buildings and real estate property, perhaps encourage people to purchase a property, you just have to put in a lot of energy, or perhaps distribute the energy to several people, simply to present various projects und yes, make people curious ".*

The challenge in addition to the architectural barriers is that the requirements for temporary use have to correspond with the existing building stock and the inner-town location. In addition to the structural requirements the greatest need for support may well lie in the ensurance of a continuous project work. A project which lasts longer than the first start-up and the first success and which presents the initiatives permanently, even if the buildings are different. The respondent clarified a direct need for consultation, to not overexert themselves especially in larger user groups and thus put the whole project at

risk. It is important to address both individual motives of those involved, as well as to convey the social aspect of the common activity: The success is supported by a vision beyond individual and social objectives. The secret recipe is in addition to the search of like-minded people, the reinterpretation of vacant properties into opportunities for a new use. The regional networking plays a central role as a counterweight to structural weakness.

The Volkshaus (formerly used meeting house for trade unions)

The Volkshaus was built in 1928 as a union house with bonds at the Bauhaus style and Expressionism and funded by the unions. The house was used as a multifunctional cultural and educational center. The house, which is owned by the town Weißwasser, is vacant since 2005. For two years now an initiative establishes to take care of the preservation of the house. A two-member team of the project "Zukunftsprojektors" accompanied the foundation of the association and the project development closely. The active group consists of about 15 people who attend the regular meetings. The objective of the voluntary work is to conserve the inner-town historical monument: "*It is important that the monument remains. And that's why I have decided to take part."* The Volkshaus is a particularly striking example for a former cultural center in the town center. On the one hand, it is still very present in the minds of the people on the other hand this cultural center hasn't been replaced yet by any other similar locality. In addition to the preservation of that listed and historical building, the Volkshaus needs to be revived as a center for cultural and eventful activities. In this town doesn't exist any entertainment facility like this meeting house. However, before the use of the building can be contemplated specifically, essential steps should be taken care of. Based on the initiative of the City Council, who initiated a petition to save the Volkshaus and discussed the handling with vacant inner-town monuments in meetings, an initiative group emerged due to a call in the newspaper. Rejection of funding opportunities triggered the foundation of the association. There is a great need for support in terms of the cooperation with the local administration. It is primarily not about the issue of funding commitments, but about the support of the voluntary works by permits. This is where the volunteer structure of the initiative meets bureaucratic structures. The strength of the support team lay not at least in the trans-regional importance, and was of benefit to the initiative due to project attention in general. In particular, the persistence of the participants is one of the success factors for the new initiative. But the cooperation with the town as the owner remains a requirement for further voluntary work.

Motives, challenges and potential

Accompanying the four initiatives and groups who support the work on vacant properties in rural areas, the following overall results can be outlined: The trigger for this type of voluntary work is diverse. Nevertheless, we can resume three points:

1. The vacant properties are mostly historical buildings, allowing the population to combine a part of their own history and the history of the community. In these buildings people lived, loved, worked, and danced. Often the buildings are still remains of already demolished complexes.
2. The vacant objects are perceived by the people as "eyesores" and thus are contrary to the personal connection. This contradiction often leads to initiation of voluntary work.
3. The vacant objects offer the voluntary work a directly experiencable space. This concrete and immediately available space is one of the main triggers for common action.
4. It is seen as an opportunity to jointly make a difference, either as a group, an association, or cooperation with the local administration.

Just as diverse are the challenges and difficult to generalize because of the different ages and level of maturity of the six accompanying initiatives. Three different stages of maturity can be determined for all of the initiatives.

During the *initial phase* the first step is, in addition to group building, to gain support from the community. The reflection of the history of the building is an invaluable contribution. Another challenge is the support from public administration and authorities. Once again the support from the community and a possible impact of the project, for example as part of town marketing, makes a contribution. An important factor especially to gain new commited members is public relations work. The team of the “Zukunftprojektor” achieved great things and made the importance for the local community be seen especially trough the attention in trans-regional networks.

During the *professionalisation phase* the work load in terms of project development and administration rises. In this phase it’s important to strengthen the idea of voluntary work and the experience to jointly work for a goal and uphold it. At this point it is necessary to hold on and withstand setbacks. Not all plans work out immediately and the first optimistic mood vanishes. At this stage it becomes apparent how important the approval of the people is to achieve long-term success. Therefore, it was particularly important to be present with the building for example at local festivals, days of the open monument or with a cultural highlight at Christmas. The community could be convinced, ideas of usage could be gathered and a great support was given. The building moved back in the minds of the community.

During the *implementation phase* many objectives had been achieved or adjusted to what is possible. In this case it is important to set new goals or convert the voluntary work in economic endeavours. During this stage the municipal coorperation is essential. Wether it is a long-term conversion in a cultural center or a handover to an new user, at this stage it is important to transfer or to handover the voluntary work. This process is like a generation change. The need for support of the voluntary work can be clearly defined from the described challenges.

Picture 1: Maturity stages of the voluntary work for vacant properties

The three success factors of the accompanied voluntary work are:

Voluntary work as door opener:

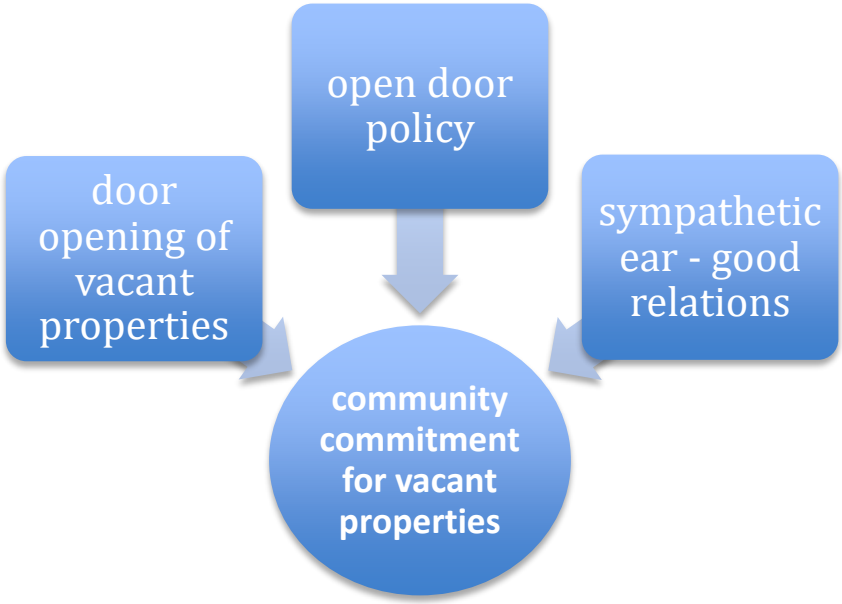
1. Object-related: The object must be open and free for use and open for the general public. Voluntary work and learning within is literally a first door opener for the public.

Open door policy:

2. In terms of voluntary work and community learning: The actions must be transparent for the public and the involvement must be solicited continually. This open door policy is crucial to gain new members and support from the municipal administration. Public campaigns have a favourable impact on this matter.

An sympathetic ear for members:

3. Organization-related: It is extremly vital to gain companions for voluntary work and get them enthusiastic about common ideas. Regardless of the organisation level, working and getting along well together is essential for the voluntary work. The metapher of a sympatethic ear would be the thing to do.



Picture 2: Three success factors of community voluntary work for vacant properties

Levels of supporting community learning within vacencies

Some of the requirements can be satisfied by short distances and consultation. Also the involvement in community activities such as local festivals or an interview with the official journal provide public recognition and awareness and promote discussion about vacant properties in the community. The more vacant building with their history and possibilites are visitied and not torn away the more people will take part in the discussion about future use. This calls for possibilites of public discussion about what will become of an old industrial plant, a district culture house or chimney.

The project "ZukunfsProjektor" provided assistance in form of networking, exchange between different regional and trans-regional projects and decision-makers as well as group-related presentation und mediation. On the whole, the issue of vacancy and the existing voluntary work in the region Upper Lusatia has been appreciated already in a long overdue manner and made visible beyond the individual communities. The awareness and appreciation of such voluntary work is still lacking in many areas. In the same time the reflection of the volountary work the learning on a personal and social level and in the community also was part of the suport work. The volunteers got more aware of their engagement in the community and there big issues in partiziaption. These levels of learning are listed in the follwing colum left side down below. The very general description of a program format is precisely shown in the right column towards the qualitative concept of the specific design from the project community space of learning (Lernort Gemeinde, see Schäffter 2009).

General characteristics of a program format	**Characteristics of the program format *Lernort Gemeinde* as a design**
Organizational dimension	Multilevel architecture of an inter-institutional network organization
Institutional central theme as social functional purpose	Value development in discursive learning processes in the public community is going to be learning space
Substantiated educational practices	Pedagogical support of daily routine learning in appreciative exploration of one's own social space
Social performance profile	Enabling environment conducive to learning (context control) for self-organized learning in the field of civic voluntary work

Table 3: Exemplary analysis of a program format (see Schäffter 2009: 31)

The example of the monitored objects within the famework of the project "Zukunfts-Projektor" in Upper Lusatia confirms the thesis that the self-organized groups and initiatives around vacancies become model examples, how to handle vacancy in rural areas, which challenges it brings and what value a supporting network has.

Buildings are not only material and substance; they are more like medium and reason for self-organised and self-empowered action. The processes that take place in this context, are teaching spaces in previous empty spaces. What do they teach us? They teach us that we experience in changing times the change of community voluntary work as well: In future times people will get involved in a non-binding, action-oriented manner. We will

experience a mixture which joints common public interest and creation of value, meaning structures will be rebuilt and developed further. And community learning happens within this new structures. Following this line of argument, a process is taking place which the regions in transition like Upper Lusatia. A long time it's been known as transformation regions. Considering transformation, then there are two pathes ahead: the path of imitation or the path of evolution. In Saxony the first path was taken over long distances. The interesting thing is now: With the newly outlined forms of community learning– here observed as an example for vacant properties – the second path applies here: the evolutionary. Because commited people find, due to "contraints" but driven by common goals, their own ways and recreate and "invent" themselves and solutions. For societies this is precisely the germ cell of social innovation – an invaluable asset for rural areas. The "vacancy" is the potential of rural areas. It creates a freedom for possibilities. This means that the empty space as free space becomes teaching space becomes pioneer space.

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Translating cultures – adapting lives: The learning curve for Polish migrants in the East Midlands, UK

Introduction

Poland's accession to the European Union in 2004 resulted in unprecedented migration of Polish citizens to the United Kingdom (UK), where the labour market became fully accessible for new member states.[39] Despite British border control, the number of Polish migrants who settled in the UK is only an estimate while borderless structures of the EU enable and encourage free flow of people. This, in turn, leads to the development of new multi-ethnic, multicultural, and multilingual patterns within European societies. The extent of this phenomenon was reflected in the 2011 Census when Polish was identified as the second most spoken language in England (BBC, 2013).

Since many Polish migrants decided to move to the UK and other European countries, issues of adaptation, acculturation and inter- and cross-cultural encounters became more prominent in their everyday life. Although Polish communities have attracted much research attention, numerous cultural and educational issues are still underrepresented in research. Since migration projects are strongly marked by learning experiences, migrants' adaptation in the host culture becomes an open-end learning curve with diversified personal goals.

This paper focuses on the analysis of a portion of the results collected in a doctoral project *Translating Cultures – Adapting Lives* conducted among Polish post-2004 first-generation migrants in the East Midlands, UK. This qualitative study was aimed at establishing the significance of cultural translation in adaptation processes among Polish migrants; therefore, the questions were oriented at cultural elements of everyday life of the Polish community. In this paper, multiple issues related to social and cultural challenges, the role and significance of languages and new habits acquired by migrants

[39] 2004 accession countries: A8 = Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia
+ A2 = Cyprus and Malta

are discussed on the basis of the data. In addition to data presentation, some analysis of both cultures is conducted and an initial interpretation of the issues in question is proposed. Some of the discussed problems, such as the linguistic impact of the life decision on migrants, require a separate detailed discussion; therefore, in this paper they are only briefly presented.

Methodology

The multi-methods qualitative research study *Translating Cultures – Adapting Lives* was conducted in the East Midlands, a region that comprises of Nottinghamshire, Derbyshire, Lincolnshire, Leicestershire and Northamptonshire, between 1st May 2013 and 25th March 2014. Since Polish migrants are spread in all possible locations of the UK, the area was chosen for practical reasons, i.e. accessibility for the researcher and virtual impossibility to do a cross-country research for a project as small as a doctoral research study. Moreover, Lincolnshire, apart from London, is the area where many Eastern European migrants settled due to numerous opportunities to find seasonal jobs, mainly in agriculture.

The research study was aimed at Polish post-Accession migrants in the East Midlands. According to Migration Observatory (2012), the latest Census of 2011 shows resident population in the region at the level over 4,5 million of whom 9.9% were born outside the UK and of whom 5.3% were non-UK passport holders. Among those born outside the UK, the largest population is of working age (between 20 and 50 years of age) with virtually equal gender distribution. Among non-UK passport holders, as many as 50,740 reported Polish citizenship (Migration Observatory 2012), though the figure reflects only those who willingly declared their country of origin. Hence, the real number of Polish migrants in the East Midlands can be much higher.

With regard to methods, the data was collected through an online and face-to-face questionnaire and in semi-structured interviews with individual migrants and representatives of local institutions and charities engaged in migration issues. Although technology offers numerous opportunities to communicate and engage with people, it turned out that potential respondents were rarely interested in completing the questionnaire when they saw the project advert or a post on a community forum; however, their interest rose significantly when information and requests were spread as word-of-mouth, whether orally or via Facebook and e-mail. Hence the snow-ball sampling technique appeared effective. This also denotes features such as trust that become prominent with regard to the Polish community.

Eventually, the online survey was accessed 195 times, with 116 completed responses. Out of the latter, 105 qualify for further analysis as the remaining ones were completed by migrants from other parts of the UK or second-generation migrants. That again points towards a particular cultural feature of the studied migration group, i.e. either not reading instructions or assuming that additional information could be useful. The questionnaire comprised of 80 questions of various types (Likert scale, Yes/No/Not sure, multiple choice, open-ended and demographic questions) with a comment option offered across. All questions were divided into six (five + one) categories, i.e. identity (ID), cultural awareness (CAw), cultural adaptation (CAd), cultural translation (CT), language (LG) and general demographic (G). All the questions were labelled accordingly to enable easier classification in the data analysis stage. The questions, the project description and the consent form were available in two languages, English and Polish, to accommodate all

possible language preferences of the respondents with regard to reading comprehension and their expression in the response.

Analysis of selected results and discussion

Migrants' decision to move to the UK, disrespectfully of its fundamentals, inevitably results in a relatively high number of inter- and cross-cultural encounters. Some adaptation issues that are of significance for Polish migrants in the East Midlands include multi-ethnicity, food and cuisine, languages, knowledge and awareness of the local culture, customs and behaviour. Similarly to other studies, TCAL participants focus on the comparison and comprehension of certain social norms, acceptable behaviour and language (see studies such as Besemeres, 2007 and Leuner, 2007). In addition, many informants put emphasis on improvement and self-development (see also Isanski, et al., 2013; White, 2011; Kaczmarczyk, 2010 and Burell, 2009) and the retention of the native language (see also Leuner, 2007). Since the study generated a vast amount of data, the following discussion includes selected issues, i.e. social and cultural challenges in the host country, some aspects of the Polish perception of the British, the significance of languages and newly-acquired vs. recreated habits.

Social and cultural challenges of the host society

Identity seems to be one of the most important aspects of migrated lives. The processes of noticing, comparing, evaluating and recreating are continuous and take place along the individual-collective continuum as there is constant confrontation of the Self and the Other. Jenkins (2003) explains that to define *us*, one needs to split off *they* first. Only by contrasting *us* and *them* can the process of identity formation take place. It seems, therefore, that categorisation is inevitable although people rarely neatly fit into prescribed categories.

In order to establish the awareness of the local culture and the elements that the TCAL informants identified as challenging, among other questions, the respondents were asked to comment on '[w]hat was most difficult for [them] to understand and/or get used to [when they came to the UK] (CAW 1) and 'what […] is the main difference between Polish and British people' (CT 1). Since the initial entry into a new culture seems to be the very moment when unfamiliar appearance, behavior, values and objects are noticed most easily, the first of the mentioned questions, i.e. CAW1 was aimed at capturing particular issues that individuals observed when they moved into the UK. With time, increased exposure to the distinguished aspects of the host culture diminishes their peculiarity. The second question, i.e. CT1, required the respondents to identify the differences between Polish and British people. Such a reflection allows individuals to determine those features of personality and behaviour of the hosts that are either contradictory to the home system of values or are non-existent and would be desired in the society of origin. The examples given below were stated by both men and women, though it needs to be mentioned here that more than half of the TCAL respondents were female.

The issue of the observed initial challenges (CAW 1) generated a range of reflective comments that vary from a predictable language barrier and driving on the left through climate and changeable weather to interpersonal relations and elements of architecture and interior design. Apart from a small number of respondents who claimed that 'nothing'

seemed difficult, many informants stated that 'a language barrier' [orig. 'bariera językowa], the 'Indian accent' [orig. 'hinduski accent'], 'a lot of different accents' or 'dialect' were problematic at the beginning. Language as a problematic issue was mentioned by respondents from three age groups, i.e. 26-35, 46-55 and 56-65, which indicates the inclusion of those migrants who had an opportunity to learn English at school and those who were taught Russian as the main foreign language. Therefore, it can be assumed that dialectal differences in the East Midlands can become a challenge for migrant population despite the fact that English is taught in Polish schools. Furthermore, such an observation also triggers the reflection on the extent to which different English dialects should be introduced to general education.

In terms of social issues that were identified by the respondents as unfamiliar is the multiethnic composition of British society. Since Poland has never been multiracial while in recent history multi-ethnicity was successfully replaced with an umbrella term and concept of Polishness, the cultural diversity of the UK can be challenging for those who came to the country for the first time and for those who do not have much travelling experience. The latter features can be possibly recognized within the choice of words some informants use to describe British society, e.g. 'people of a different skin tone' [orig. 'ludzie o innej karnacji'] or 'the street of "colour" ' [orig. ' "kolorowa" ulica']. The phrasing can indicate a two-fold issue. Firstly, the respondents were searching for the appropriate terms, which may have been affected by the confusion with Polish terminology on the subject. For example, in English a standard adjective to describe a person of African origin is *Black* while the term *Negro* is highly offensive. In Polish, however, the use of terminology is reverse, i.e. *Murzyn*, which could be directly translated into a *Negro*, means *Black* while the word *Czarny*, which in direct translation means *B/black*, has got a pejorative meaning. Such a linguistic confusion leads to the aspect of the issue, i.e. the growing awareness of political correctness and legal consequences of racist language. This can be occurring due to participants' exposure to ethnic issues and socio-cultural interaction within the host community; however, it was beyond the scope of the study to establish whether such a mental change would feed back to the home culture on a permanent basis.

In addition to the language barrier, the TCAL respondents have also identified other issues of communicative nature. Namely, some informants admitted that 'addressing people by *you*' [orig. 'mówienie na *ty*'] seemed too direct. Since in Poland the use of the first name or the *you* form is reserved only for personal contacts, the common absence of the Sir/Madam forms in communication can be confusing for migrants at the beginning. At the same time, British 'indirectness' or 'lack of directness' [orig. 'brak bezpośredniości'] and 'superficial politeness' or 'false kindness' in interpersonal relations were also seen as a problem. Both examples related to in/directness can depict the complexity of the matrix of British and Polish values and behaviours.

Further points related to personality, behaviour and attitudes were stated in the responses to the CT1 question. Although the informants pointed out an array of issues, aspects such as 'mentality' [orig. 'mentalność' and 'mentalność i sposób myślenia'], 'self-esteem' and 'self-confidence', 'Polish sincerity' vs. 'English hypocrisy' [orig. 'szczerość Polaków i obłuda Anglików', 'fałsz' i 'Anglicy również są często fałszywi'] and 'personal culture' [orig. 'kultura osobista'] were given as the most important differentiating factors on the Polish-British social matrix. In addition to brief responses, the question also triggered some extended evaluation of people's character, e.g. 'personality – the British are people of simply better character. I don't want to demean some Poles who are fantastic, but in general I prefer the British' [orig. 'Osobowość – Brytyjczycy są po prostu

lepszymi ludźmi z charakteru. Nie ujmuję oczywiście niektórym Polakom, którzy są fantastycznymi ludźmi, ale generalnie wole Brytyjczyków'] or 'English people – over confident, Polish – undervalued [orig. niedocenieni] and lower confidence, but higher self-esteem to achieve'.

The examples quoted above clearly show that Polish migrants contemplate and compare bahavioural patterns they brought from home with the ones they faced in the destination culture. Since comprehension and adaptation are processes that occur at a very individual level, understanding certain behaviours seems to be filtered through the membrane of values from the home culture. Therefore, a confused interpretation risks either delay or failure in adapting to the host society. One of the respondents further explained their point on English hypocrisy by commenting that 'instead of saying it directly, they pretend… while a Polish person will stand on dignity and will be direct' [orig. 'zamiast powiedzieć wprost, udają … Polak uniesie się honorem i powie wprost']. This depicts a certain level of confusion of culturally important value concepts, i.e. politeness and courage to admit mistakes or wrongdoing. While for the British directness is intrusive or offensive, the Polish may see it as effective in solving problems as it actually takes courage to be direct in someone's face. Hence, being indirect can be understood as unnecessary hypocrisy. Consequently, while for Polish people directness is associated with honour and dignity, in the British system of values it is seen as undignifying. Although such a difference may have socio-historical background, such misreading of cultural values can cause social friction. Therefore, to alleviate such tension, not only intercultural interaction is needed, but also plain explanation of the meaning of certain approaches.

Moreover, some practical aspects of migrants' lived experience were highlighted in the comments to CAW 1 question. The following issues have been identified by respondents as unfamiliar: 'taps' [orig. 'krany'], meaning separate taps for hot and cold water, 'cold and damp in houses' [orig. 'zimno i wilgoć panująca w domach'], 'queuing at bus stops' [orig. 'kolejka do autobusu'], a 'red brick landscape' [orig. 'ceglany krajobraz'] or 'pull cord light switches' [orig. 'wlacznik na sznurek']. Although the above issues seem to be typical of British everyday life, the fact that the informants considered them as novel can indicate the need for preparatory training or information about the life in the host country. This could be done by comparing and contrasting home and host systems of values, aspects of everyday life and expectations towards citizens. It needs to be mentioned, though, that attempts of publishing a formal guide *How to live and Work in Great Britain* [*Jak żyć i pracować w Wielkiej Brytanii*] have not been entirely successful within the community of post-2004 Polish migrants[40] for reasons related to the issues of trust and authority.

Finally, another practical aspect of the adaptation process for Polish migrants in the East Midlands is food, i.e. the everyday challenge of the local food and cuisine and the availability of cuisine from all parts of the world. While the issue of the irregular presence of Polish dishes in migrants' everyday life is at times seen as a problem, foreign and exotic cuisine is perceived as an advantage of UK's multi-ethnic society. Some respondents indicated that at the beginning of their stay in the UK, 'food' [orig. 'jedzenie'] was a difficult issue. The noticeable presence of Polish people in the UK resulted in a rapid increase in the provision of Polish products on the market; therefore, doing everyday shopping, as if it was in Poland, is entirely possible in the UK (see also Rabikowska & Burrell, 2009). The TCAL respondents, when prompted to indicate their 'favourite food in Britain' (CT 9), they

[40] Interview with the President of the Association of Poles in Great Britain, conducted in Nottingham on 24th March 2014

gave examples of British, foreign and Polish dishes, e.g. 'fish and chips,' 'Tikka Masala,' 'English breakfast [orig. angielskie sniadanie],' 'Indian cuisine,' 'Mexican cuisine,' 'kebab,' 'sushi,' 'Polish dishes [orig. polskie potrawy],' 'Polish food [orig. polskie jedzenie]' or 'plov [orig. płow]. Hence, it can be assumed that Polish migrants are determined to retain their national cuisine as a cultural value, but at the same time many migrants are eager to utilize the opportunity of tasting food from other parts of the world that the multi-ethnic British society offers.

The significance of languages

In order to be able to understand cultural subtleties, individuals may require certain experience and linguistic skills. The results of the TCAL study clearly show that both languages, host English and native Polish, are important for Polish migrants who live in the UK. The English language seems to be perceived as a tool that enables better communication and therefore enables adaptation to a new environment. More importantly, not all informants who took part in the TCAL study had an opportunity to learn English earlier in their lives as until the 1990s Russian was the first and sometimes the only foreign language taught at school. The Polish language, however, is seen by Polish migrants as an embodiment of the culture of origin and a sentimental link to the roots of individuals.

With regard to the host language, nearly all questionnaire respondents (96%) and all interviewees confirmed that 'proficiency in English is important for [their] live[s] in the UK' (Q18). In their comments on the significant role of the English language in migrant lives, some TCAL survey participants described it as 'fundamentalna' [transl.: fundamental] and further elaborated by saying 'zwłaszcza w pracy' [transl.: especially at work]. Some informants also revealed that 'bez biegłej znajomości języka nie byłabym w stanie wykonywać swojej pracy' [transl.: I wouldn't be able to do my job if I was not fluent in the language]. The use of strong adjectives and linking the language to the professional sphere of migrants' lives in the UK depicts not only their willingness to adapt, but also a strong wish to live a settled life in a home away from home. Similar results on the significance of the English language for Polish migrants were obtained in earlier studies in other regions of the UK (see White, 2011).

Furthermore, a vast majority of the informants (90%) declared that their proficiency in English improved after they moved to the UK. Those claims were made irrespectively of the length of stay in the host country. It needs to be mentioned here that the linguistic perspective on foreign/second language acquisition strongly opposes general views regarding the easiness of language absorption once in the host country. Hence, it can be assumed that those who took part in the TCAL study made conscious effort to enhance their linguistic ability in English. Nonetheless, some TCAL respondents pointed out regional dialects such as in Nottinghamshire or Derbyshire as a serious linguistic challenge in everyday existence. Moreover, some respondents, such as a young female (age group 19-25) attempted to explain their lower proficiency in English by saying that she was learning the language at school, but 'jak to w szkole, wiadomo jak uczą' [transl.: school is school, you know how they teach]. Although the last example can indicate shifting responsibility onto the system of education, it can also denote that the standardized version of English taught in Polish schools does not include regionalisms, such as the afore-mentioned local dialects.

The importance of proficiency in English or rather a lack of language skills has also been noticed by Nottinghamshire police and the NHS in Lincolnshire. Inability to communicate in English at a very basic level has been identified as one the most significant barriers to registering with a local GP in Lincolnshire, in addition to procedural observations that many migrants seem to be unfamiliar with the code of conduct, possibly due to the fact that in their country medical services can be organized differently or expectations of staff and patients vary.[41] Moreover, lower language proficiency can also impact on migrants' communication with the police in emergency cases such as domestic violence or reporting crime.[42] In both cases, medical and criminal issues, using translation services may be either impossible or inconvenient for the patient or victim due to high sensitivity of the matters. Therefore, in the times of austerity and hostile political attitudes towards European migrants, apart from various migrant-oriented campaigns organized by the NHS[43] and the Police, organizations such as the Signpost to Polish Success (SPS) in Nottingham, the Skegness Polish Educational Association (SPEA) or the Square Mile Project in Leicester[44] provide English classes for migrants to enhance their ability to functionality in the host culture and society.

Despite a high level of awareness among Polish post-Accession migrants regarding the significance of English for their lives in the UK, in numerous studies on the Polish community in the UK (including the TCAL project), there is very little information about migrants' recognition of the English language as their socio-cultural capital, as defined by Bourdieu and Coleman (Halpern, 2005). Hence, most migrants seem to fail to notice the potential of the host language to elevate their career or an array of opportunities in various spheres of life that fluency in English can offer. In the TCAL study, those who reflected on the language issue in the context of international career prospects were those informants who already had some experience of living in other countries. Therefore, it can be assumed that for migrants with relatively little international experience, living in the UK can be of developmental value, both at a personal and professional level.

Another important language issue is the strong desire to retain the Polish language. Since the language is one of the pillars of the Polish identity, it is also a distinctive feature that serves as a differentiating factor instead of race. Polish migrants are classified as White Other; therefore, they can be recognized by their language rather than skin colour or ethnic symbols such as dress code or religious affiliation. Hence, the Polish language is yet another important element of migrants' adapted lives and can be observable in at least two spheres, i.e. online communities and Polish Supplementary (Saturday) Schools. With regard to the first example, the Polish language is a prominent, uniting and, at the same time, exclusionary feature of many portals for the Polish community. It helps to maintain national or even regional identity, retain the bond with the culture of origin and develop a strong sense of belonging to the Polish community away from Poland. Similar observations were made in other studies (see Besemeres, 2007; Leuner, 2007; and White, 2011).

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[41] Interview with the Equality and Diversity Manager in Greater East Midlands Commissioning Support Unit of the NHS in Lincolnshire, conducted in Lincoln on 19th March 2014

[42] Interviews with the Pre-Crime Manager in the Nottinghamshire Police Pre-Crime Unit, conducted on 13th March 2014

[43] The NHS Lincolnshire is about to launch a campaign *Register with a GP*

[44] Interview with the Operations Manager of the Project, conducted in Leicester on 15th January 2014. The Square Mile Project has been organized by De Montfort University in Leicester as a community engagement activity. Leicester is the first city in the UK where the non-English people slightly outnumber white English population.

In terms of the Polish Schools, however, Polish education for migrant children in the East Midlands is available in most cities and some towns (Boston, Derby, Leicester, Lincoln, Loughborough, Mansfield, Northampton, Nottingham, Skegness and Worksop). Students can learn the Polish language, Polish literature, history and geography. Some of the schools were established in the 1950s to accommodate the needs of the Polish refugees who settled in the UK while others like Skegness have been organized by the community to satisfy the needs of current migrants.[45] A needs analysis exercise within the Polish community in Skegness indicated a demand for a Polish school as parents were determined for their children to 'to keep the language, to keep the culture.'[46] Also, Polish is one of the languages that can be taken in A-Levels. Although the government intends to eliminate this option from exams, the Polish community severely opposes the idea and is acting to prevent its implementation. These examples clearly show the determination of Polish migrants to retain their native language in parallel to learning or improving their English.

Acquired habits and behaviour

In order to elicit some reflection over the changes that have taken place in migrants' lives in their stay in the UK, the respondents were asked to give examples of 'customs [they] have learnt in the UK' (CAD 4). The TCAL informants pointed out some aspects related to approaches to people and attitude to life, e.g. 'assertiveness', 'positive thinking' [orig. pozytywne myślenie'], 'calmness in solving problems', patience' [orig. 'cierpliwość'], '(everyday) politeness' [orig. 'uprzejmość', 'uprzejmość na codzień', 'uprzejmość dla drugiego całowieka', 'ludzie są mili']. Some respondents also stated that they acquired the habit of '[drinking] tea with milk' or '[having] afternoon tea'. Such examples clearly show that exposure to the host culture can have a certain impact on the migrants' habits transferred from their home country. Through the reflective process of observation, analysis and evaluation, migrants choose and adapt those aspects of the host culture that seem to be convenient, effective, pleasant or useful in their constructed lives.

Polish perceptions of potential contribution to the host culture and society (CAW5)

The mixing of cultures affects not only the migrating individuals, but the hosts as well. Since the TCAL study was oriented at the perceptions of Polish migrants, the views of the British hosts require another research project to establish how the presence of the Polish migrants influenced the local culture and customs. Nonetheless, the TCAL respondents were asked to identify 'what the British could learn from Polish people' (CAW 5). Similarly to other open questions, the CAW 5 ideas varied from over-generalised statements, such as 'almost everything' or 'nothing,' through attitudes and way of thinking to practical suggestions. Among attitudes and individual features, many respondents mentioned 'hard work,' 'go[ing] the extra mile,' 'determination [orig. determinacja],' 'diligence [orig. 'solidność', obowiązkowość' or 'sumienność'],' 'hospitality' or 'close family relations [orig. rodzinność].' With regard to practical skills, 'cooking [orig. gotowanie]' was the most frequent response. Thus, it could be inferred that many Polish migrants do not feel inferior towards their hosts as they are able to identify elements that

[45] Focus group with the Skegness Polish Educational Association (SPEA), Skegness, 8th March 2014
[46] Focus group with the Skegness Polish Educational Association (SPEA), Skegness, 8th March 2014

would be potentially beneficial for the local culture and social system. Moreover, the ability to suggest potential contributions to the British way of life can also signify changes to the afore-mentioned Polish low self-esteem. In this way, cultural translation, evolution and impact can be acknowledged among Polish migrants in the UK.

Conclusion

Polish post-2004 migrants significantly contribute to the UK's notion of multi-ethnicity. Although they cannot be distinguished from other white citizens by skin colour, they have and are determined to retain some of the elements of their home culture. The Polish anguage and the cuisine are the cultural strongholds that seem to determine migrants' Polishness. On the other hand, TCAL respondents seem to be adopting certain customs or habits typical of their host environment, which indicates their cultural flexibility and openness to changes in their lifestyle, behaviour or approach to people and life. In addition, Polish post-Accession migrants seem to be reflecting on alterations that could benefit the host culture if particular Polish features were adopted within the British society. It can be concluded with a dose of confidence that the mixing of cultures that occurs in migration can result in changes in migrants' lives, personalities and viewpoints; however, filtering those modifications back into the home culture can be a lengthy process and there is no certainty as to what extent they would be welcomed by the society of origin.

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Developing network practices: Interaction, collaboration, and applied knowledge in educational research communities

Introduction

This paper presents an ongoing study relating to educational research networks. The study looks at three key issues regarding the networks development:

1. The interactional practices in research network, including face-to-face or virtual work;
2. The scientific collaboration, represented by partnerships in knowledge production and publications;
3. The applied knowledge generated by the networks for the scientific community and society, including relations with the formulation of public policies and the development of technological innovations in education.

These key issues, in which research networks are considered to be grounded on, coexist with one another and are significant for the construction and dissemination of scientific knowledge in the society.

These ideas are illustrated from a case study of the Iberian-American Studies Network on Vocational Education and School Dropout (RIMEPES)[47], established in 2009. The RIMEPES is a network of international education research involving the participation of 33 scholars and 27 educational institutions from 11 different countries in Latin America and Southern Europe. The RIMEPES includes comparative and multidisciplinary research, organization of local and international conferences, exchange programs, and publications.

[47] Rede Ibero-Americana de Estudos sobre Educação Profissional e Evasão Escolar (http://www.fae.ufmg.br/rimepes). The RIMEPES is registered under the Brazilian National Council of Scientific and Technologic Development (Conselho Nacional de Desenvolvimento Científico e Tecnológico – CNPq): <http://dgp.cnpq.br/dgp/espelhogrupo/1341301481663526>.

An exploratory set of implications of the RIMEPES network is discussed not only from an academic standpoint, but also from a practical one, which considers the importance of engaging scholars as well as communities for developing collaborative network practices. Thus, concerning the development of cooperation in science, this paper presents in the following topics the study's theoretical framework, methods and research context, exploration of the data, and final remarks.

Theoretical framework

The study's framework considers theoretical approaches on the development of research networks in education, focusing on three key issues, which are illustrated in the following conceptual model of collaborative research networks (Figure 1).

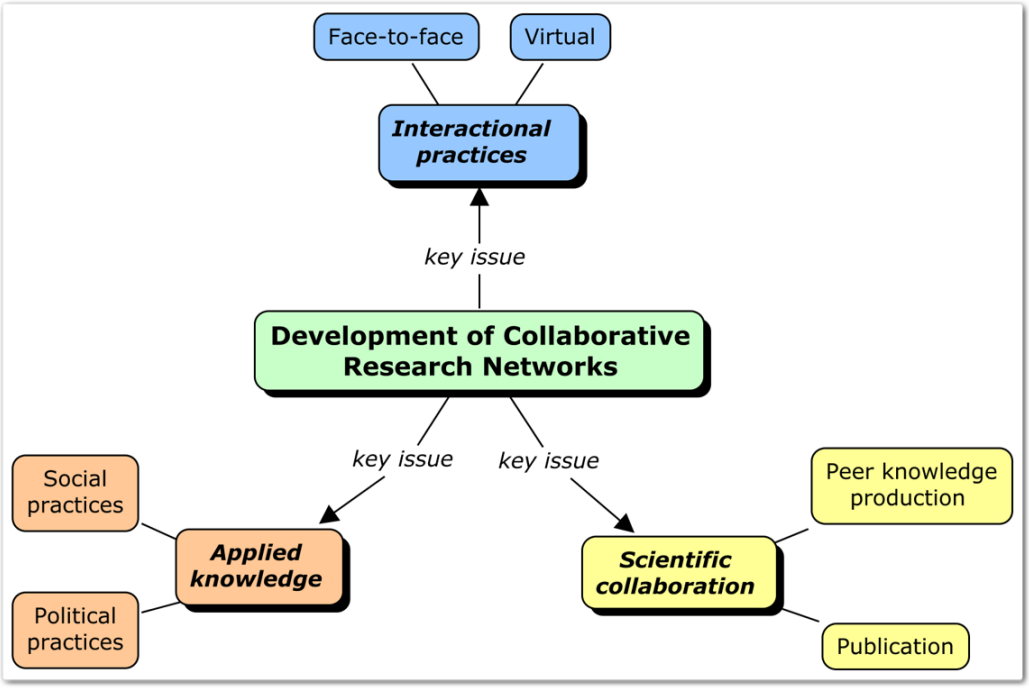

Figure 1: Conceptual model of collaborative research networks
Source: Developed by the authors

The three key issues illustrated, in which research networks are based on, accompany each other and are important for the production and diffusion of scientific knowledge in the society.

Regarding the interactional practices, Cummings & Kiesler (2005) highlight that a "major challenge for dispersed scientific collaborations is coordinating work so that scientists can effectively use one another's ideas and expertise without frequent face-to-face interaction" (p.704). That is mainly the case when researchers are spread around the world, and so it is necessary to incorporate virtual practices in the process of network collaboration, in which these authors have named "virtual team" or "eScience". The amount of virtual and face-to-face practices may vary, and Chin Jr, Myers, & Hoyt (2002) emphasize that in any interactional practice, attention should be given to the "associative" element grounded on "contacts" which leads to active collaborations in the networks. Otherwise,

> "[a]ctive collaborations sometimes fall into a state in which the research becomes indefinitely suspended. A dormant collaboration may result from the loss of mutual trust, comfort, commitment, or sense of ownership among researchers. Alternatively, an active collaboration may fall dormant if it lacks the intellectual curiosity to keep it alive. Moreover, researchers may become preoccupied with new work activities, pushing aside earlier collaborations and projects" (Chin Jr. et al., 2002, p. 89).

Any interactional practices in a network can be referred to as scientific collaboration, but as a way to make this idea more strict and empirically grounded, Newman (2001) observes that formal scientific collaboration occurs when two or more scientists are connected through a paper's coauthorship. Thus,

> "[...] the groups to which scientists belong in this network are the groups of coauthors of a single paper. This network is in some ways more truly a social network than many affiliation networks; it is probably fair to say that most pairs of people who have written a paper together are genuinely acquainted with one another, in a way that movie actors who appeared together in a movie may not be" (Newman, 2001, p. 2).

Last but not least, the applied knowledge aspect highlights the networks' potential to create or change social, political and economic practices, as pointed out by Peters & Araya (2007):

> "To understand the key challenges we face in the twenty-first century it is important to consider the nature of information, particularly the network infrastructure that underlies it. If it is true that learning and information are the vital elements in a new political economy that links space, knowledge and capital, an understanding of networks is vital to any theory of information politics. [...] For many thinkers, the capacity for open collaboration provided by networks represents the emergence of an entirely new mode of social, political and economic organization. [...] In addition to the command-and-control regimes characteristic of industrial production, open networks make possible a third mode of production beyond both state and capital market. Much as open systems in nature, open systems in social production depend upon the free exchange of ideas and labour. As free labour and ideas are joined together in shared social, political and economic practices, the creative potential for self-organization is continually replenished. From the perspective of educational policy, harnessing this dynamic in the production of knowledge and learning could prove revolutionary." (Peters & Araya, 2007, pp. 40–41).

These three key issues are interrelated in various ontological levels (Dore, Sales, & Silva, 2014). From a macro-level perspective, "the education system needs to find ways of enabling *all* institutions to engage in the visions or theoretical models of how networks can improve what is done in schools and colleges" (Carmichael, 2010, p. 1). On the other hand, from a micro-level perspective, the builders of these models and the practitioners that nourish knowledge should be considered. In this perspective, Gramsci (2000) highlights the idea that "taking one's audience through the series of attempts, efforts and successes through which men had to pass in order to attain the present state of knowledge has far more educational value than a schematic exposition of the knowledge itself" (p. 66).

Methods and research context

The research of network practices is developed as a case study, since this type of study enables the understanding of complex social phenomena and allows an

investigation which preserves the holistic and meaningful characteristics of real life events (Yin, 2001).The data collection and analysis techniques include the combination of documentary research and social network analysis. This methodological approach integrates the precision of quantitative analysis with the descriptive wealth of qualitative analysis, thus illuminating the social complexities that permeate educational phenomena (Carolan, 2014).

The research context is the Iberian-American Studies Network on Vocational Education and School Dropout, which aims to understand the dropout problem in vocational education and create strategies for its prevention. The network, which is hosted in Brazil, includes the participation of researchers from 11 countries from Latin America (Argentina, Chile, Colombia, Cuba, Mexico, Peru and Uruguay) and Southern Europe (Spain, Italy and Portugal).Since 2009, the network has been promoting research exchanges and discussions on the subject at the national (Brazil) and international levels, through different activities, highlighting among them the organization of regional and international events, academic missions through partner institutions, joint publications between the members of the network, and organization and formalization in Brazil of a nonprofit association for the prevention of dropouts.

Grounded on these bases, since 2011 the RIMEPES has been developing in the state of Minas Gerais (Brazil) the study "Technical secondary education of the Federal Network of Vocational and Technological Education of Minas Gerais" (CAPES/INEP). This research assembles students and faculty members from graduate programs in Education, and teachers from different institutions of the federal network of vocational education of Minas Gerais.

It should be also highlighted that the RIMEPES context is a singular instance for researching, since it encompasses both aspects of the formation of collaborative groups and the internationalization and scientific mobility, being aligned with the Brazilian National Plan of Education - PNE (2014-2024). The PNE seeks the consolidation of "programs, projects and actions aimed at the internationalization of the Brazilian research and graduate courses, stimulating the work through networks and the strengthening of research groups". This plan also aims to promote national and international scientific and technological exchange between educational institutions, the expansion of "scientific cooperation among companies, higher education institutions and other Scientific and Technological Institutions" (Brasil, 2014, p. 16).

A research network like RIMEPES, besides promoting discussions and publications on Vocational Education and School Dropout, fosters an interactional environment among its members, distributed in several countries, narrowing and creating opportunities for the establishment of partnerships between their home institutions. By focusing on this context, this paper proposes to examine the development of collaborative research networks from a case study of RIMEPES, given that acting through network is essential to improve the quality of teaching and research both locally and globally.

Data exploration

In order to provide a broader view of the RIMEPES network, Figure 2 shows the geographical distribution of the countries, which its members are from.

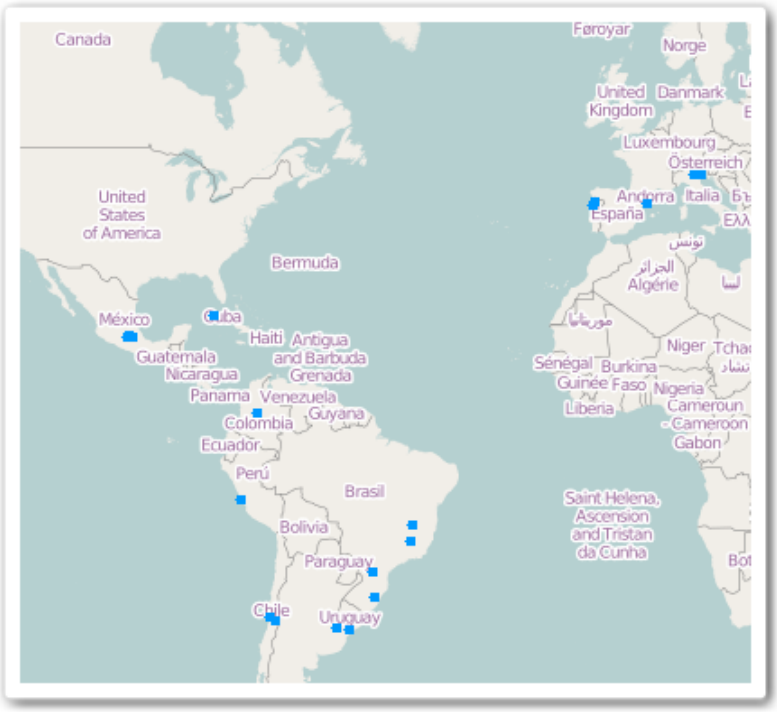

Figure 2: Countries from the RIMEPES' members
Source: Research data

In total, this research network involves 33 researchers from 27 educational institutions, which are distributed among 11 countries: in the Americas there are Argentina (2 researches), Brazil (10), Chile (5), Colombia (2), Cuba (1), Mexico (3), Peru (1) e Uruguay (3); in Europe, Italy (2), Portugal (3), and Spain (1).

The issue of coordination relates to members being spread throughout the world, and it affects both in face-to-face contact as well as virtual collaborative practices. Cummings & Kiesler (2005) pointed out that "multidisciplinary projects can be highly successful in producing new ideas, knowledge, and outreach, when they are carried out within one university", [...] but even controlling for the number of coordination mechanisms used, projects involving more universities were less successful" (p. 714).

This is the challenge RIMEPES faced since its formation. Currently, establishing a fruitful agenda for collaboration demands a centralized coordination settled in Brazil. This centrality is in part due to the founders of the network being from this country. Also, the majority of funding for RIMEPES and development of its activities have come from Brazilian governmental research agencies (e.g. CAPES, CNPq).

Shedding some light on these and other matters, the following figure highlights the development of the research network through time.

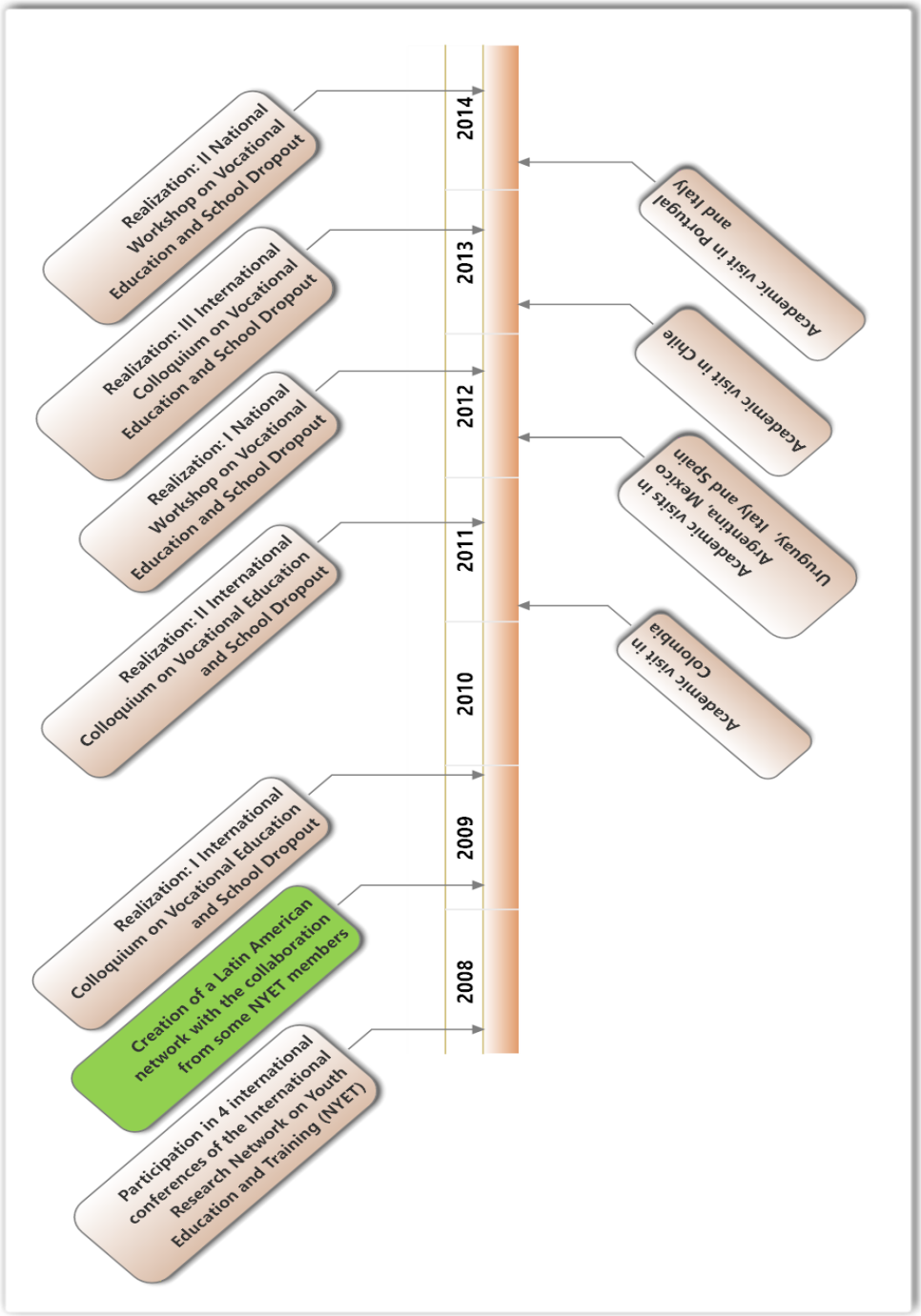

Figure 3: RIMEPES' timeline (Source: Research data)

As illustrated in the RIMEPES' timeline, in the years 2009, 2011, and 2013, three international colloquiums on Education and School Dropouts were organized in Brazil, held in the UFMG Faculty of Education in Belo Horizonte city. The conferences were attended by representatives of the different countries participating in the network, whom are already planning the next conference, to take place in September 2015 at the same location. The colloquiums are an important core for collaboration in RIMEPES, and according to Chin Jr, Myers, & Hoyt (2002), they are instances to establish contacts and foster association, being that the participant "has at least surface-level awareness of a contact's research, interests, skills, expertise, and available resources" (p. 89).

In the III colloquium, the establishment of an Association for the Dropout Prevention was proposed by RIMEPES members. Since 2013, the network participants were discussing this proposal and organizing the structure required for the association formalization, which took place in 2014. Aligned with the ideas of ESREA (2015), through the association, it is expected that it will strengthen "arguments for bottom-up strategies, [and] for the possibilities [of] social involvement of all those living in the community" (p. 1).

Also, from the lectures of III colloquium, the book "Evasão na educação: estudos, políticas e propostas de enfrentamento"[48] was organized and published (Dore, Araújo, & Mendes, 2014). Assembling other publications, in total RIMEPES produced 16 papers by its members: Argentina (2), Brazil (3), Chile (1), Colombia (1), Mexico (1), Peru (1), USA (1), Uruguay (1), Italy (2), Portugal (2), Spain (1). Nonetheless, the applied knowledge (Peters & Araya, 2007) from such papers are still connected with the "local", since they reflect the network members' educational contexts. Also, the scientific collaboration in Newman's terms (2001), which happens when two or more scientists are connected through paper's coauthorship, are restricted to authors from the same countries.

Based in the local context, RIMEPES also promoted two national workshops, in 2012 and 2014, at UFMG and at the Federal Institute of Brasilia respectively, and with the participation of researchers and professors from several Brazilian states. The third workshop is arranged to be held in 2016 at the Federal Institute of Santa Catarina, in Southern Brazil.

To explore the networks potential to create or change social, political and economic practices, it is expected that the studies will evolve from publications on local contexts to cross-national comparative research (ESREA, 2015; Peters & Araya, 2007). A first step in this direction was given through the realization of surveys and focus groups on individual and contextual factors influencing persistence and dropout in secondary vocational public education in Brazilian (sample of 1,570 students). By grounding on the methodology which assembles the applied knowledge of the network (e.g. Dore, Araújo, et al., 2014), it is expected to extend and compare the discussion about vocational education through the different countries in which RIMEPES members are from.

Along with the publications, the interactions over time, especially regarding the RIMEPES' working groups, can also be detected through social network representations. The following three figures show the interactions that took place in the three aforementioned International Colloquiums on Vocational Education and School Dropout, conducted by RIMEPES in 2009, 2011 and 2013. Increasingly,

[48] Dropouts in education: studies, policies and coping proposals.

there has been an intensification of interactions between network member countries.

The density network indicator represents the portion of potential connections that are actual connections. Its maximum value is 1 and this would represent everyone being connected to each other (Scott, 2000). Also, the links presented in the figures tend to get thicker through time, since more interactions are accumulated (i.e. formal relations established by presentations in same panels and workgroups discussions).

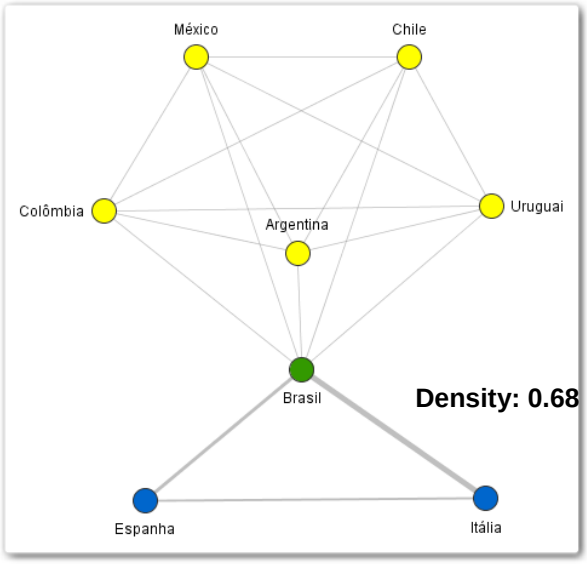

Figure 4: Interactions in the I International Colloquium
Source: Research data

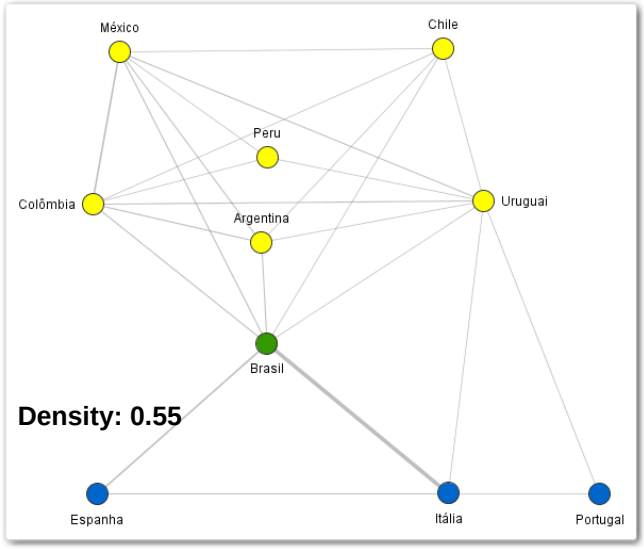

Figure 5: Interactions in the II International Colloquium
Source: Research data

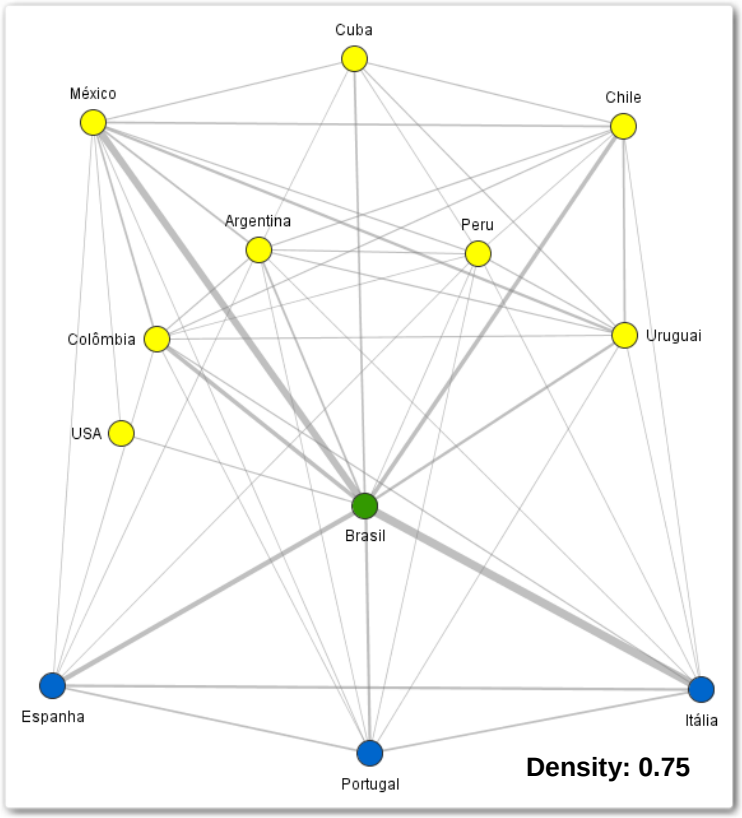

Figure 6: Interactions in the III International Colloquium
Source: Research data

The interactions among RIMEPES members, represented by their countries, were intensified over time as more participants have integrated into the network (Figures 4, 5, 6). The network density has increased from 0.68 to 0.75. In this context, it means there were more opportunities for different expertise and cultural backgrounds to spread throughout the network.

Nevertheless, some relations are stronger and more prevalent in the network, especially the links of Brazil-Italy and Brazil-Spain (thicker links). This has to do with the previous involvement of some members in a European network on school dropouts (NYET) from which the idea of a Latin American network came to light thereby resulting in the collaboration of European researchers for its implementation.

Historically, the centralized coordination in Brazil was the focus whereby most of the RIMEPES funding had supported. In addition, the figures provide a visualization of the Brazilian centrality due to the participation of local members in the panels and workgroups with other countries. Interestingly, Brazil has had the opportunity and the initiative to embrace and produce applied knowledge more than other countries in the network, which has ultimately gathered international expertise. This consolidation is reflected through published books and surveys developed in vocational public schools in Brazil. The centralization is residual and should be overcome in order to produce more symmetrical relations among the countries thereby establishing a long lasting educative community.

Final remarks

This study aimed to explore the collaboration in research, namely interactional practices, scientific collaboration, and applied knowledge among Latin American and European institutions and scholars that are members of the RIMEPES network. The data explored through documentary research and social network analysis revealed that both network actors and the relations among them have soared over time. However, there was a centrality of one country – Brazil – to the detriment of others, due especially to the idealizers of the network who are from this country, and since the funding for RIMEPES and the development of its activities came from Brazilian research agencies.

Some future directions to the RIMEPES research network include supporting events and academic visits for engaging scholars, as well as educational and scientific communities; developing tools for the fostering of more productive virtual practices; advancing from publications on local contexts to cross-national comparative research; evolvement of the association for the prevention of school dropouts; maintaining regular exchange of experiences among network actors; and distributing resources and activities more evenly among other network countries.

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Reading and writing the city through a learning community

Situating learning community "The Busy Bees" as a case study

In this paper we discuss a case study conducted in Learning Community (LC) "The Busy Bees", an adult education practice in Brussels, as part of a larger multidisciplinary research project. This case study was carried out within the framework of 'DieGem', a multidisciplinary research project [49], researching solidarity in diversity in everyday place-bases activities, in 4 domains where people from different origins meet each other: labor, housing, education and leisure. Through 32 case studies in these 4 domains we explore (new) forms of solidarity in places with a lot of (ethnic-cultural) diversity, focusing on various types of citizenship, professional interventions and learning processes. In DieGem all cases are initiated as retrospective case studies, some develop further into action research. This paper is based on the findings of one retrospective case. Central elements are an analysis of shifting problem definitions underlying the practice, a description of the persons involved and their interpersonal practices of solidarity, an analysis of the (evolution in) professional interventions and of the (evolving) policy. We used document analysis, participatory observations and interviews with professionals and participants (De Haene, Spijkers, Schuermans, Steel, Loopmans & Verschelden, 2014). Hereby we focused mainly on the activities within The Busy Bees LC and the perspective of professionals and participants, and took account of some relevant policy documents and the perspective of the involved (formal adult) basic education professionals (Steel, De Haene, Verschelden, 2015).

[1] More information on: www.diversiteitsolidariteit.be

Originally, The Busy Bees LC was initiated by two partner organisations: *Citizenne*, a folk high school that provides non-formal adult education in Brussels, and *Brusselleer*, the Brussels centre for (formal adult) basic education. Citizenne has been continuously supporting the Busy Bees LC, since the second working year (2013).

Citizenne supports different learning communities and offers a variety of open access activities. Citizenne defines the concept of a learning community as follows:

> *"A learning community is a group of people connected by shared goals, values, practices, interests, opinions or background; or territorially linked to a neighbourhood, area or city. This group contributes by its own capabilities, to an engaged society where active citizenship is no empty concept. This community also contributes to the development of the group itself by formulating and enforcing opportunities, and applying these in order to raise the competences, skills and knowledge of its members."* (Citizenne, 2014: 14-15)

As part of its activities, the LC explores Brussels and its (socio-)cultural facilities and (semi-) public spaces. The educators use these activities to expand the radius of action and social network of the participants. In connecting learning to the real life (Citizenne, 2010:14), Citizenne maximises the learning opportunities in The Busy Bees LC as a *locale* and as a *relational place*. The Busy Bees LC uses the working space of Citizenne as operating base, functioning as an anchor or nest: it is a safe and familiar environment for a rather closed group. A lot of activities however, happen elsewhere in the city. In this perspective, the physical operating base also functions as a relational place: an important node in a web or urban network. From the perspective of participants, Citizenne seems to have a rather diffuse place identity. Belonging to the group undertaking joint activities seems to generate a stronger sense of place than the physical spaces where these activities take place.

The Busy Bees LC entails a group of people, with various ethnic-cultural backgrounds that assembles twice a month to practice Dutch and to explore the city and its socio-cultural services together. The cultural diversity in the group is high and the participants all share a weak socio-economic position, making this a very challenging group to work with.

All the participants of the LC transferred from the centre for basic education Brusselleer, where they followed courses "Dutch for non-native speakers". Despite their motivation and/or need for opportunities to practice Dutch by speaking, these participants were evaluated as 'outlearned in Brusselleer': even when following a specific module for 'slow learners' (Alfa+), they do not meet the expected outcome levels to attend the next learning module. To tend to a 'warm' transfer for this residual group, these participants are reoriented to the LC and to a context of non-formal learning where they are introduced in the city's wider socio-cultural landscape, by for example visiting a museum, library, community centre or public event together. The way in which this shift took place, however, means an experience of exclusion to many of the participants, who are already socially vulnerable.

> *"There she stopped. In fact it was Brusselleer who made her stop, though she is very motivated to learn Dutch. For her, it's the only language she is able to use besides*

> *Arabic. From September they said she had to finish, because she had seen it all, there's no sequel for her. She really cried a lot that time […]. She says: I started with this language; I invested so much, during five years. I find it really hard to restart in French now […] She deeply regrets, not only the loss of time but also the fact that she could not receive a diploma, in order to be able to say, "this is what I achieved".* (professional 2 interpreting for participant 1)

The practice of The Busy Bees LC is strongly influenced by the policy backgrounds of both involved organisations. They operate within different policy frameworks, influencing their vision, mission and sphere of action. Folk high schools belong to the Flemish governments cultural policy, whereas basic education is recognized within the Flemish education policy. Basic education, as an emancipatory alphabetisation project, was originally situated within cultural policy, but since 1990 located in education policy, and since 2005 strongly reformed in terms of modulation and certification and a strong emphasis on literacy, within the framework of the Flemish strategic plan on raising literacy.

The Busy Bees LC can thus be seen as a service symbolising a shift from formal to non-formal education for a specific and residual group. From the perspective of the professionals this stands for a shift in the approach and practice of education: from formal and highly modulated to non-formal in a dynamic learning community. For the learners on the other hand this means a shift from an intense learning process in a school environment (twice a week) to a more casual learning community assembling twice a month, and a shift from a focus on language acquirement to exercising Dutch through learning in and from the group and through the exploration of the metropolitan context.

Through 'connecting learning to the real life', Citizenne aims to enhance social cohesion and to develop skills in people without automatic access to lifelong and life-wide learning. When researching solidarity in diversity in this LC practice, we consider precisely the unique professional framework of 'creating conditions' as a form of solidarity. We distinguish two strategies in the professional interventions enhancing this structural solidarity: the support of (learning) opportunities of individual participants and the commitment in relation to an excluded and vulnerable group.

Citizenne maximizes learning opportunities by means of a talent-oriented and network-based approach. During all activities there is outspoken attention for people's talents and strengths. The participants of this LC are often confronted with their own shortcomings and problems: they've experienced numerous incidents of exclusion and are often underprivileged and socially vulnerable. Because of that, the educators stress a positive attitude, and focus on their talents, to strengthen and empower the participants.

The structural commitment to a group of people in risk of dropout is shaped through Citizenne's aim to enhance the access to the city. They try to accomplish this type of empowerment in two ways: on the one hand by exploring Brussels and introducing participants to other places and initiatives and thereby expanding participants' networks and resources; and on the other hand by influencing other organizations to reduce existing thresholds and promote their accessibility through collaboration. Furthermore they make an effort in reading the city and enhancing the public character of the city, through the connection of everyday experiences to a broad and problematizing view on literacy. Analysing this last element into detail, we would like to focus on two elements. Firstly we focus on

the different kinds of learning we see in this type of non-formal adult education. Secondly we address the relation between citizenship, literacy and the right to education. We thereby pay attention to how adult educators support these learning processes and citizenship as practice in the learning community.

Connecting learning Dutch to Brussels' real life

Education and learning processes are at the core of this practice. Through non-formal education Citizenne aims to enhance different types of literacy.

Empowerment and talent development are essential elements in the concept of learning communities. Usually this means that the participants of an LC are themselves in charge of the learning process and that they organize the activities themselves, in alignment with their own interests, talents and desires. In this LC, however, the two professional educators are the driving forces. They shape the signals they receive from the group into a series of activities matching the interests and talents of the group. During all activities there is outspoken attention for people's talents and strengths.

All of the participants of this LC transfer from a context of formal education aimed at individual qualification and have similar expectations from this form of adult education. For some participants however, it is not always easy to value the non-formal learning that is established in the LC:

> *"It is not learning. You come here, you speak Dutch. If you are not correct, nobody will correct you. That is why I say it's different from the Brusselleer. No matter they speak Dutch here. But if I make a mistake in Dutch, nobody would correct me.* […] *It is not good now. If I was in the school, if I speak bad Dutch, somebody got to correct me."* (participant 3)

They recognize, however, that the strength of the LC is the strong connecting dynamic, in which equality and openness are essential.

> "*When I come here, my head can rest, I can forget my problems for a while. When I come here, I feel like the other people, not like I'm less or not enough. Here I feel equal to the others. […] All people are the same here. […] By coming here, my personality and my confidence have gotten a boost. I feel stronger*" (participant 1: 11).

Learning together entails becoming a group and thus the learning processes in this practice are strongly linked to community development: new forms of communality are created in a very diverse group and learning Dutch becomes a way to relate to each other and to society, and a way to participate in society.

> *"We go out to see places. From there you learn what you don't know before, you see what you don't see before. It is a part of learning"* (participant 3: 7).

The educators connect this city exploring to a broad concept of literacy. Through these activities they make a learning process of reading and writing the city possible and thus enhance the opportunities of citizens to appropriate the city. Participants are for example introduced and supported in making use of places or services such as community gardens or repair cafés, but on another level, signals

rising in different LC groups about for example disturbing representations of minorities are translated as public issues and addressed by a wider think tank on perceptions of the Islam. By raising the readability and the public character of the city, the educators support the position of the participants, in their use and appropriation of the city. For them, exploring the city is part of literacy.

> *"Reading is so much. Reading the city, reading a book, just reading anything. Just working with reading and language and at the same time experiencing the city and doing things"* (professional 1: 8).

Citizenne doesn't only want to introduce new places, facilities and organisations to the group, they also want to introduce the group to these organisations in order to stimulate these institutions to start question their own limits and thresholds, and take responsibility for every citizen in Brussels. In this goal, we recognise not only the aim for individual empowerment, but also for the collective emancipation of an underprivileged group of citizens.

Citizenship, literacy and the right to education

In the everyday experiences of the participants of the Busy Bees LC, the importance of learning Dutch is evident. For an Iraqi migrant for example, his Iraqi driver's license is invalid in Belgium, because his name is written differently on his ID and his Iraqi license. And because his knowledge of Dutch is inadequate, he is not able to take a driver's test in Belgium, because it contains a written part. This is only one out of many illustrations of what one of the Citizenne educators mentioned:

> *"That is in part a failure of society. These people are hungry to learn. But there are these stupid little things that they get stuck on, that keep them limited. Breaking through that, is a completely other story"* (professional 1: 23).

Navigating through everyday life requires many linguistic skills, from reading street signs, over deciphering tax letters to grasping the nuances of a conversation between neighbours. Both Brusselleer and the LC of Citizenne focus on this functional literacy. This means that the activities are not just aimed at the improvement of language skills, but also at the enhancement of the access to the city. Mastering a language entails a lot more than just acquiring a new skill, even in a multilingual city as Brussels, the acquisition of Dutch is an important key to full social participation (Federatie Centra voor Basiseducatie, nd).

> *"Language makes me weak. The rest here gives me strength. Language is very important to make you feel strong. I feel strong in Arabic. When I go to Molenbeek, to the many Arabic shops, then I don't feel less"* (participant 1:11).

Language acquisition and literacy in general are being seen as a lever for (active) citizenship (Ooijens, 2009; Van Wing et al., 2008; Rogers, 2003; Tett, 2005). In current conceptualisations of society and its active and responsible citizens, the individual is increasingly seen as responsible for his/her own learning process (Bouverne-De Bie, 2002; Verschelden, 2005). A citizen that

doesn't invest (enough) in these processes, is in this view responsible for his/her own increased risk of social exclusion. Citizenship is viewed here as an attribute of individuals and not as a consequence of the way relations between people and institutions are shaped (De Droogh & Verschelden, 2009). This view is often translated in a focus on integrative strategies: "*Rather than struggling against the social causes of inequality, the new language of exclusion implies that government's task is to promote 'inclusion' into the existing social order*" (Field, 2000, p. 108 in Tett, 2005, p. 459).

Citizenne, however, sees citizenship as a *shared citizenship*, meaning that everyone is responsible for society, but at the same time everyone has to get the opportunities to take that responsibility. Citizenne's commitment to this LC is based on this view on citizenship. They want to create and facilitate the opportunities for this group to actively participate in society, in this case by giving them opportunities to practice Dutch and to learn and explore the city they live in. Moreover, Citizenne doesn't view citizenship as having a certain status. They see it as a relational practice, as something that is realised through the interactions and negotiations between private and public life. The participants of the LC learn to read the city and learn how they can shape these interactions and negotiations, partly through the acquisition of Dutch.

What we've learnt from this case is the crucial mediating role of preconditions and other factors. Citizenne explicitly points to the structural and environmental elements that influence learning processes: poverty and exclusion are serious threats for establishing any type of learning:

> "*Because poverty isn't just economic […] Because of certain situations, because of poverty, because you don't have access to food or proper housing, because you have so many worries, […] We often say that, that language is then a minor concern.[…] To be able to learn a language, you have to be care-free*" (professional 1 & 2: 30).

Notwithstanding the approach of Citizenne stressing a relational view on citizenship, the practice of The Busy Bees LC clearly illustrates that citizenship as practice cannot be viewed apart from citizenship as status and as a set of rights and duties. Tensions between current interpretations of citizenship, do not only mark the individual stories of participants, but are also characteristic for this practice as a whole. We illustrate the pressure on citizenship as practice, referring to the role of the right to education in this particular case.

The right to education is part of the international human rights and is included in the Belgian constitution. Yet, because of a whole range of factors and preconditions, this right is not for everyone accessible or effectuated. There is an important role for society, in creating the right and necessary conditions to be able to learn (Unesco, 1997 in Börjesson, 2013).

At the same time we see a paradigm shift in policy from the right to (basic) education, based on an emancipatory view on mankind and society, to the individual duty and responsibility to keep learning, to ensure a thriving labour market and economy (Jacobs & Van Doorslaer 2001; De Wael, 2006: 49-50). This puts a lot of pressure on the idea of shared citizenship we mentioned earlier. This is evident in the lives of many participants in the LC:

> *"Then I stopped with Brusselleer because of my health problem, yes. They [doctors] gave me sort of pass […], they gave me a paper that shows that I don't understand*

what they are teaching […]. They say that my brain do not catch up to what they are saying. I say it is not my problem, it is health problem. But I really want to learn Nederlands." (participant 3)

The health issues of this participant exempt him from the right (and duty) to learn Dutch. Because of that, he isn't even allowed to take the formal courses anymore, even though he still wants to. In his current situation, the LC is his only way of learning Dutch and his only opportunity to meet people.

We see in other words how the right to education is under pressure and with that also the opportunities for participation and identity building. Furthermore it is striking that a centre for adult basic education is not able to provide its core business, the right to education, because of policy demands, and that the people who depend on this type of education have to be reoriented to a practice of non-formal learning. *"The contribution that Adult Basic Education (ABE) can make is to help provide an opportunity where adults […] can speak about their experiences with their own voice, develop confidence, assertiveness and be the experts on their lives. This implies the right to an education that enables choice, literacies which value difference and the corollary of a significant and lasting shift in power relationships between professionals and 'clients'"* (Tett, 2005, p. 463).

Discussion

Precisely the experienced mechanisms of exclusion and thresholds in society are important reasons for the existence of The Busy Bees LC. The participants are all excluded from the formal education system as a 'residual' group and many of them have an incomplete citizenship status in terms of nationality etc. Citizenne commits to this excluded group of people, by initiating and supporting this specific learning community. To break through the spiral of negative citizenship experiences, Citizenne focuses on "making people shine". The learning processes within The Busy Bees LC are driven by the participants' interests, facilitated by adult educators and strongly embedded in and shaped by the Brussels' metropolitan living context. It is the alternation of rather safe and appreciative in-group activities with the exposure to the vivid yet often excluding city life, that the learning in community that takes place in this LC.

The question whether citizenship can be learned is an interesting one, which is also raised in Citizenne's new policy plan. The adult educators seize the community and the everyday experiences of the group members, to support learning processes leading to (forms of) citizenship as practice. Citizenne links learning to real life by situating the learning processes in place and time, to create and facilitate positive individual experiences for the participants, to empower this group of people and to create a public and political platform to raise these issues. This approach differs from citizenship education in terms of 'teaching citizenship' and emphasises empowerment through learning for democracy (Biesta, 2011), by acting upon the conditions for citizenship. This entails a commitment to create and facilitate the social and political debate in the city. They hereby commit to the contribution to the democratic arena in which (private) issues can be made public and can become the subject of dialogue and negotiation.

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The involvement of elementary schools in the community: The case of Slovenia

Introduction

The collaboration between schools and the community is an important task that schools have, yet it must be emphasized that the door swings both ways, meaning that schools provide opportunities to bring community services and programs to schools, and offer programs and services that support the community (The Federation …, n.d., p. 23). It is important for both schools and the community to establish mutual trust and encourage a culture of dialogue through various activities in schools and in the community. This opens up a space for learning from each other, it offers possibilities of educating both children and adults and develops individuals' social and cultural capital, which strengthens the sense of belonging and solidarity, and enables individual and community development.

Contemporary authors (e.g. Epstein, 1995; Sheridan, Napolitano, & Swearer, 2002) discuss the involvement of schools, individuals and institutions in the community in terms of partnership, which they define as a collaboration of various individuals as equal partners, forming a trustworthy relationship within which they share ideas, resources, services, expertise, and responsibilities on the path to common goals. A quality partnership among schools, parents, and communities has a positive influence on children's school achievements, while such collaboration also benefits parents, teachers, work in schools and communities in general (Epstein, 1995; Sheridan et al., 2002). It is important to realize that schools' involvement in the community contributes to a better quality of learning and, consequently, a higher quality of children's/adolescents' – and their families' – lives. Moreover, such collaboration brings benefits to the community as a whole as well as the organizations and individuals that schools collaborate with.

In the first part of the article we will present a number of basic characteristics defining the collaboration between schools and individuals/institutions in the community, whereas the second part will discuss the results of our empirical research study on the collaboration between Slovenian elementary schools and various partners in the community.

Theoretical background

Epstein (1995) developed the model of "school, family, and community partnerships", in which she particularly emphasizes that children learn in all the three contexts: school, family, community. The three contexts must be considered integrally, since they express themselves in that manner during each child's education and learning. The author describes six types of parental involvement in schools that encourage partnership: parenting, communicating, volunteering, learning at home, decision making and, finally, collaborating with the community. As for collaboration with the community, the author stresses that those resources and services in the community need to be identified which enrich school programs, increase the quality of educational work, encourage students' development and offer support to their parents/families.

Schools, then, should be the ones to create networks of support, assistance, resources, cooperation with various individuals and institutions (partners) in the community, for instance with the municipality, government and non-government organizations, companies, cultural and sports institutions, religious communities, other schools, etc. The networks should be intended for students and their families with the clear intention of achieving better-quality education, assistance and support for families/parents when this is required. Epstein (1995) sees advantages of collaboration with the community for students, parents and schools (e.g. Henderson & Mapp, 2002; Sheridan et al., 2002; Thompson, 2012).

According to Welch and Sheridan (1995 in Sheridan et al., 2002), in different situations, partnerships between schools and communities involve exchanges of ideas, resources, services, and expertise among educators in schools and individuals and institutions in the community working together to satisfy the needs of students and the community as a whole. These partnerships combine resources in the community and resources in schools with the intention of empowering schools, students, families and wider communities alongside their members.

Nelson, Amio, Prilleltensky, and Nickels (2000 in Sheridan et al., 2002) emphasize that through good-quality partnerships or positive relationships individuals create more than a specific program of collaboration: "/.../ they build a sense of community, a positive social climate, and an ethos of change" (p. 322). This has important consequences for the development of the community and for its learning.

Sheridan et al. (2002, pp. 322–323) define a number of *basic characteristics of the partnership* between schools and communities. An essential characteristic requires that interactions among participants should be founded on collaboration. Partnership is defined as collaboration among a number of related individuals/institutions with common goals who establish a trustworthy

relationship in which they share resources, power, and responsibilities. Collaboration means more than simply working together; it means a change (transformation) in the views and structures about *how* individuals or institutions collaborate (Minke, 2000 in Sheridan et al., 2002). Collaboration means blurring the borders among individuals or institutions and distributing resources and responsibilities for planning, conducting and evaluating activities and goals among all participating partners.

Collaboration between schools and communities is based on shared responsibility. All subjects participating in partnership simultaneously and individually co-create life in a particular community, they enable learning for all participants and they encourage their development.

During such collaboration, very different individuals with different knowledge, skills, experiences, viewpoints and perspectives meet. Such a variety among participants should be perceived as a specific advantage rather than a disadvantage. A variety of viewpoints requires negotiations and agreements and presupposes respect for difference.

Having positive personal relationships is of paramount importance to partnerships among schools, individuals and institutions in the community. Balanced relationships based on cooperation and co-dependence must be established. These relationships are developed in the context that puts students in the foreground of all considerations. Partners focus on students' benefits from the aspect of their learning and development.

The characteristics of partnerships and their activities relating schools and communities or individual institutions are flexibility and proactive orientation. Collaboration and shared activities depend on the context and the situation in which they are done. Collaboration also depends on a number of other factors: the quality of the relationship, the purposes of collaboration, the availability of resources, the suitability of circumstances for collaboration and many more.

Moreover, partnerships presuppose the appreciation and respect for participants' traditions and cultural diversity. We must be aware of mutual differences and similarities, the advantages of a specific culture, its values, and we must also enable the development of specific characteristics and take account of them when planning, conducting and evaluating collaboration. Any prejudices and discriminatory behavior have a negative effect on the quality of collaboration.

Finally, collaboration is based on common, clearly defined goals whose attainment must be regularly monitored. It is important that collaboration should be goal-oriented, which requires a special emphasis during the process of collaboration planning. When stressing achievements, we must not overlook the very processes that any collaboration encourages or the possibilities that arise for future collaboration.

The purposes of collaboration between schools and the community

With reference to the purposes of collaboration between schools and individuals or institutions from the community, various authors (e.g. Adelman & Taylor, 2008; Epstein, 1995; Mitrofanova, 2004; The Federation…, n.d.) identify some fundamental areas that interrelate the efforts of all the different subjects participating in partnerships. Certainly, the purpose primarily depends on the agreement among the partners entering collaboration, the possibilities and conditions that, to a degree, define the purposes of collaboration. On the other hand, it is important to be aware of the diversity of possibilities and purposes that can be agreed on. The realization of the purposes is more real when participants share efforts, and it has tangible consequences for the lives of individuals, families, institutions and other organizations in the environment. In addition, it changes the culture of a society as a whole and co-creates a narrower or wider community – whether we are aware of it or not. Thus, basic purposes of collaboration can be distinguished as follows:

1. *Connecting community representatives – individuals and organizations – with the intention of greater social cohesion and community identity:*
   schools become a meeting point for different individuals (as to their social-economic statuses, ethnic backgrounds, etc.) and provide a space to run common projects; connecting allows for the achievement of a shared vision regarding life and work in the community, the development of interculturalism and inclusive culture.

2. *Establishing a safe environment and preventing undesirable forms of behavior:*
   preventing and reducing negative effects in the whole environment and solving problems such as violence, unemployment, poverty, psychosocial problems in children/adolescents, families and society; promoting healthy lifestyles.

3. *Mutual help and support in efforts toward community development, introducing change and community learning:*
   expanding possibilities of education (including adult education), supporting learning, broadening individuals' horizons in the community; facilitating access to programs and activities which otherwise some young people and families cannot access (e.g. in free time, when solving problems, in distress, etc.), networking and mutual support and assistance; encouraging cultural development and opening up opportunities for cultural activity; exchanging material and spatial resources.

4. *Caring for children's and adolescents' holistic development and taking account of the needs of children, families, communities:*
   joint actions (school-family-community) for the child's/adolescent's optimum holistic development.

5. *Striving for better school achievements and a greater effectiveness of the educational system:*

improving children's/adolescents' school achievements; preventing low learning achievements (dropouts); sharing responsibilities for planning, conducting and evaluating programs and services.

On the one hand, schools can use their activities to contribute significantly to the improvement in life and the development of individuals and institutions in the community in a number of areas and with different intentions. On the other hand, individuals and communities in the community can contribute significantly to the life and work in schools. Knowing and complementing one another as well as collaborating means joint work that leads toward common goals. It is really important to be aware of and to be able repeatedly to evaluate the contributions of different partners toward the achievement of common goals – both at the level of individuals and at the level of groups, institutions and the community as a whole. It is about synergistic influences of various factors and processes encouraged by partnerships. Perhaps we are unable to recognize or identify all the influences in the beginning stages of a partnership, but what is important are shared attempts, shared planning and conducting activities for different target groups. What should not be forgotten is the recognition of the needs in the community and in individuals from different target groups which develop and change throughout different periods.

In the process of collaboration between schools and the community all participants are faced with different subjective and objective obstacles (Adelman &Taylor, 2008). Any possible obstacles must be identified during collaboration, accepted, understood and systematically removed. This is enabled by evaluating recent collaboration, which will assess individuals' viewpoints, actions as well as the (in)effectiveness of the work done so far. The more schools, individuals and institutions know and understand the characteristics (peculiarities) of one another and develop adequate attitudes toward collaboration, the more successful collaboration is likely to be.

The purpose of the research study

Our empirical research study was designed to gain an insight into how elementary schools in Slovenia are involved in wider communities. We were interested in how schools perceive their role in the environment and the main purpose of collaborating with communities. Furthermore, we investigated how frequently and in what manners they collaborate with individuals or different institutions from the community, what the advantages of such collaboration are, what obstacles they face, and what they see as still unexploited possibilities of collaboration. Of the many research questions, this article deals with only the following:

1. How often do schools collaborate with various institutions and individuals from the community?
2. Who would they wish to collaborate with more frequently?
3. What goals are they going to try to achieve in the area of collaboration with the community in the future?

4. What typifies the collaboration between schools and the community that they emphasize as an instance of good practice? Are there any differences in these responses between urban and non-urban schools and among schools of different sizes?

Method

In the empirical research we used a descriptive and causal non-experimental method (Sagadin, 1993).We attempted at including all elementary schools in Slovenia in our research study, and in October 2014 we sent out questionnaires addressed to the principals of all of them (N = 450). A good half (54%) of all the questionnaires (n = 245) were returned. The non-random sample thus included 85 (34.7%) urban and 160 (65.3%) non-urban schools. Schools were additionally divided into those with up to 200 students (small schools) and those with more than 200 students (big schools). The sample consisted of 54 (22%) small schools and 191 (78%) big schools.

The questionnaire included multiple-choice items, scales and open-ended questions. Here we only discuss the principals' responses to the questions presented in section 3 above. In order for us to answer the question about what typifies the collaboration between their schools and the community that the respondents emphasized as an instance of good practice we asked principals to describe such collaboration. We also asked them some additional questions:

- Who participates in the collaboration?
- How and when is it conducted?
- What are the advantages?
- What could be done better?

The answers to these open-ended questions were categorized based on the theoretical background regarding the basic characteristics of the partnership between schools and the community (Sheridan et al., 2002). On this foundation, we formed adequate content categories that served for further statistical processing. The gathered data were processed and presented at the level of descriptive and inference statistics. The χ^2 test was used to verify hypotheses of independence. Statistical processing was performed with the SPSS software package, version 22.

Results and discussion

What institutions and individuals from the community do schools work with and how frequently?

We asked the principals about what institutions and individuals from the community their school works with and how frequently they do it. We used a five-point scale to establish the frequency of collaboration, ranging from never

collaborating with an institution to weekly collaboration at the other end of the scale. Schools defined the frequency of their collaboration for seven different types of institutions as shown in Table 1.

The school collaborates:		never	on special occasio	several times a year	monthly	weekly	total
with public and private institutions	f	/	19	62	87	76	244
	f%	/	7.8	25.4	**35,7**	**31.1**	100.0
with working organizations	f	4	94	111	26	8	243
	f%	1.6	**38.7**	**45.7**	10,7	3.3	100.0
with local community organizations	f	/	8	53	106	76	243
	f%	/	3.3	21.8	**43,6**	**31.3**	100.0
with volunteer organizations and societies	f	/	18	88	94	45	245
	f%	/	7.3	**35.9**	**38,4**	18.4	100.0
with the (local) media	f	1	63	103	73	4	244
	f%	0.4	25.8	**42.2**	29,9	1.6	100.0
in the context of international cooperation	f	23	117	97	5	1	243
	f%	9.5	**48.1**	**39.9**	2,1	0.4	100.0
with experts, artists, sportspeople and other individuals from the community	f	/	91	119	31	2	243
	f%	/	**37.4**	**49.0**	12,8	0.8	100.0

Table 1: The frequency of schools' collaboration with individuals and institutions

The data show that they collaborate the most frequently (monthly or weekly) with local community organizations, followed by public and private institutions and societies and other volunteer organizations. In contrast, they collaborate the least frequently (only on special occasions or even never) in the context of international cooperation, with working organizations and individual experts in the community. It is noteworthy that, at least on special occasions, nearly all schools collaborate with all the listed institutions and individuals in the community. In the frequency table, collaboration in the context of international cooperation is the most conspicuous, since as many as 9.5% of the principals stated they had no such collaboration and further 48.1% of them only collaborated on special occasions.

Schools' wishes for future collaboration

We will now look at what institutions schools would wish to collaborate with more frequently. The institutions were raked from those selected the most frequently to those selected the least frequently (see Table 2).

The school would wish to collaborate more		Percentage of all responses (n = 208)	Rank
in the context of international cooperation	f f%	61 29.3%	1
with experts, artists, sportspeople and other individuals	f f%	39 18.8%	2
with working organizations	f f%	35 16.8%	3
with public and private institutions	f f%	27 13.0%	4
with volunteer organizations and societies	f f%	26 12.5%	5
with local community organizations	f f%	20 9.6%	6
with the (local) media	f f%	13 6.3%	7

Table 2: Who schools would wish to collaborate with more

The data demonstrate that schools would like to collaborate more with the institutions that they have collaborated with less frequently so far: their biggest wish is for international collaboration (29.3%), for cooperation with individuals, experts, artists, sportspeople, etc. from the community (18.8%) and for working organizations (16.8%). We assume that collaboration in the context of international exchanges may be made difficult due to considerable organizational and financial requirements. Schools wish to strengthen collaboration with individuals from the community, which can probably be achieved relatively quickly and easily if there are common interests, motivation and goals. This collaboration is quite rare, the reasons for which may be found both in schools and in individuals from the community. There is, most likely, too little subjective effort as well as too little extra-institutional collaboration in the social environment, which is absolutely necessary if renowned individuals from the community are to be engaged.

The goals that schools wish to achieve in the next three years in the area of collaboration with individuals and institutions in the community

The next issue was to find out what short-term goals schools wish to reach in the area of collaboration with individuals and institutions in the community. Based on the principals' responses to the open-ended questions, we formulated nine categories, which present the content of collaboration more than actual goals; at the same time this points to the individuals and institutions they are going to contact when reaching the goals. However, we are fully aware that within

individual categories the goals are formulated at markedly different levels of conciseness and quality – from merely mentioning the content area of their future work to very concisely formulated operational goals which we believe can contribute significantly to activating strengths for their attainment and can provide us with criteria for the evaluation of achievements. Response categories are given by representation, with the exception of the "other" category, which includes general or unclear answers (n = 194):

1. *enrichment of instruction and extracurricular activities* (41 or 21.1% of all answers):
   participation of individuals and societies from the community in school instruction or extracurricular activities, variation of instruction with guests from the local community;
2. *co-creating life in and establishing connections with the community* (40 or 20.6%): *"We'd like to make local sights known to the general public."*; *"The preparation of a learning path."*;
3. *career orientation* (24 or 12.4%):
   keeping students well-informed about different professions in the environment, enabling their familiarization with professions and working organizations, encouraging enterprise;
4. *international cooperation* (20 or 10.3%):
   participation in international exchanges and projects, collaboration with Slovenian schools in the neighboring countries and schools in former Yugoslavia;
5. *intergenerational cooperation* (16 or 8.2%):
   "More intergenerational cooperation."; *"Intergenerational cooperation (ICT, sports, etc.)."*;
6. *school's recognition, promotion in the public* (14 or 7.2%):
   "To make our school's work better known to the public."; *"To strengthen the school's identity."*;
7. *collaboration with volunteer organizations, developing humanitarianism and other values in young people* (14 or 7.2%):
   this category includes both the replies that explicitly name only volunteering and developing humanitarian orientation in students and the replies that refer to wider educational goals that schools strive for (*"To develop the culture of peace and non-violence."*);
8. *financial reasons for collaboration* (4 or 2.1%):
   "Raising money from sponsorships."; *"Raising as much money as possible to provide for students coming from socially underprivileged families."*;
9. *other* (21 or 10.8%):
   the category includes general answers (e.g. exchange of experiences, learning from examples of good practice, more collaboration in life-long learning) and the answers that stress the already existing good collaboration or the wish to strengthen the existing collaboration, but with no explicit or specific goals.

Our results show that the principals' priorities when considering collaboration with individuals and institutions in the community in the next three

years were in the area of the enrichment of instruction and extracurricular activities (21.1%) and in the area of co-creating life in and establishing connections with the community (20.6%). In terms of content, the former goal relates more to developing a good-quality educational process in schools, and the latter refers to collaboration with the environment. With regard to the similar shares of the two responses, it could be argued that the responding schools are equally aware of the importance of collaboration that directly benefits schools (i.e. enriching the curriculum) and the importance of schools', students' and educators' work for the welfare of the local community. Schools are clearly aware of the importance of co-creating the cultural and social environment in which they function; the role of schools in developing the area's cultural capital is significant. It means establishing a relationship of mutual enrichment.

A good tenth of the responses refer to setting goals in the area of career orientation (12.4%), and a further tenth to the area of international cooperation. 8.2% of the principals cited goals from the area of intergenerational cooperation and learning between different generations. A similar share (7.2%) also mentioned goals from the areas of the school's public promotion as well as volunteer organizations and developing humanitarian and other values in the young.

The smallest share is represented by the goals that the responding principals listed in the area of raising financial means for the school's good-quality work or for the welfare of individual students. These responses were few (2.1%), but we must be aware that such goals are also important to schools' good-quality work, as they affect directly the opportunities that schools can provide in the local environment.

Examples of good collaboration between schools and individuals/institutions from the community

We then looked at what kind of collaboration the principals themselves set as examples of good practice they had developed or realized and would wish to share with others. To find out, we asked them an open-ended question with additional questions: who participates in their chosen example of good practice, how and when is it conducted, what are the advantages of the collaboration and what could be done even better? Despite a whole page of the questionnaire devoted to their response, the principals repeatedly provided cursory and inexact descriptions of examples of collaboration between schools and individuals or institutions from the community. In spite of certain gaps in the responses, the questionnaire gave us at least some information on examples of good collaboration between schools and the community from a great majority (83.7%) of the schools participating in the research study. The principals' responses were carefully analyzed and categorized according to the following criteria: the participants in the collaboration, the frequency of the collaboration, the type of collaboration, the advantages of the collaboration and required improvements. During the analysis, however, we were constantly faced with the dilemma about the quality of the described collaboration between schools and the community, and this is the issue we would like to address below. We examined in how many cases the partnership (Epstein, 1996; Hornby, 2000; Sheridan et al., 2002) means

that participants prepare and conduct a project together, using the process to learn together as well as from one another and to grow personally. At the other end of this continuum are forms of collaboration arising when schools or communities organize something for one another: students put up a show for people in a retirement home, a cultural society organizes events for students, parents present their professions, etc., but there is rarely any real partnership in collaboration. To distinguish between the different forms of collaboration, we divided all the descriptions of good collaboration into two categories, according to the *level of collaboration*:

1. *Prepare something for others* (150 descriptions or 77.7%):

"They ask the school to prepare cultural programs for various events."; *"Students' visits in the retirement home, workshops and performances."*

2. *Establish partnership in collaboration* (43 descriptions or 22.3%):

For a description of good practice to be included into this category, there had to be a clear description of at least one characteristic of partnership (e.g. common goals, interdependence, participation and responsibility of all participants, mutual respect, equality, goal orientation, etc.) or there had to be a clear emphasis placed on a joint organization or carrying out of something (it was not enough only to state that they collaborate): *"Carrying out a specific task – a goal that is useful in everyday life and the local community ..."*; *"learning from one another ..."*; *"planning the content, organization and realization of an event together"*.

Of all the 193 descriptions of good collaboration between schools and the community only rare examples (22.3% of the descriptions) made it possible for us to consider them partnerships – provided they stressed at least one of the basic characteristics. According to our results, it is obvious that schools still face considerable challenges as well as problems when establishing partnerships with the community. In this, schools do not differ according to their sizes ($\chi^2 = 0.022$, g = 1, p = 0.881, n = 193) or their being urban or non-urban ($\chi^2 = 1.014$, g = 1, p = 0.314, n = 193). Yet we must underline that some schools are successful, and they succeed in a variety of different ways. To illustrate it, let us provide an analysis of a selection of examples of partnerships between schools and local communities as given by the responding principals.

1st example:

> In one of the urban schools they offer really good intergenerational collaboration, which goes beyond mere students' performances for retired people; rather, *together* with grandparents students set up a maypole, students teach the retired computer skills, and the retired teach students handcrafts (extracurricular handcrafts classes). Grandparents are, additionally, invited to attend physical education classes, and the school organizes a day of movement and intergenerational socializing – charity bicycling for all generations. This, then, is *continuous collaboration*, not only a one-shot event, conducted in a variety of ways. In the above-mentioned example they *build on mutual collaboration and respect* (according to Sheridan et al., 2002), they include *learning from one another*

(*empowerment of both*), and at the same time they look after cultural heritage, which they see as among the advantages of such collaboration.

2nd example:

"This collaboration includes students from grades 6 to 9 with a teacher and the Retired People's Association of Jesenice (former experts in the area of technology). It is conducted once a week in our school in the technology classroom and workshop. The students, the teacher and three retired people are working on a link for the chain experiment that the school will present at the Pan-Slovenian experiment in Ljubljana at the end of May." Again, this is an instance of *continuous collaboration*. We highlight this example since it stresses that the students, the teacher and the three individuals from the community *work together and strive for a common goal* – we assume that in doing so they share resources, strengths and responsibilities (Sheridan et al., 2002).

3rd example:

"Organizing Saturday trips around our local community; Saturday walks under our supervisors who do their training in the mountaineering society; qualified guides attract other children and parents from neighboring schools." This example demonstrates the following basic characteristics of partnerships (according to Sheridan et al., 2002): the mountaineering society qualifies the teachers to organize trips (*they are empowered*); a further positive point is that they *attract individuals from the wider community* – children and parents from other schools (*they blur borders between individuals and institutions*); we can also recognize *common goals* shared by schools, societies and parents such as useful free-time activities, encouraging motivation for mountaineering and intergenerational socializing.

4th example:

The last example to be highlighted here differs from the others as to the exceptional commitment and *participation of various stakeholders and its integration into the community*. It is an interdisciplinary project on the lighthouse and youth tourism. Participating are all the students and teachers of the school, students and their supervisors from Turkey, Romania and Montenegro (making it an international collaboration), the students' parents, numerous institutions and local community representatives – the municipality, hotels, individual societies, the museum, local restaurants, local cultural workers and students from the Faculty of Tourism Studies. The main activities are organized during the "Interweek – Meet you at the lighthouse" *at different locations* (the museum, the hotel, the lighthouse, etc.), not only in the school, which shows the integration of the project into the community. The project is expressly *goal oriented*, which is also one of the characteristics of partnership (according to Sheridan et al., 2002), since they design leaflets for young travelers, a video and an exhibition for all locals and tourists in the Lighthouse. In the principal's own description of the advantages of the collaboration we can recognize the characteristics of partnership:

"increased awareness of the necessity for the synergy among the local stakeholders that can have an impact on the preservation, development and promotion of the community; familiarity with the professions which are unavoidable in the development of tourism and the conservation of cultural heritage; researching the past, the role and significance of the Lighthouse for the community; designing promotion materials; organizing a cultural event related to the lighthouse and tourism; presenting the results to the representatives of the municipality, local tourism providers and cultural institutions."

Based on the described examples, we can conclude that schools have a variety of ways to collaborate with the community in a good-quality way, as it is always necessary to adapt the collaboration to each unique context and situation as well as to the needs of community members. Perhaps it is crucial that schools become aware of the importance of such collaboration and the advantages that it can have for both schools and communities. Only then will they be willing to invest energy and effort in collaboration.

Conclusion

When considering collaboration between schools and communities, we can rely on the three closely interconnected contexts that influence each child's development – home, school and wider community (Epstein, 1995). From the perspective of the three contexts it is important for collaboration between schools and the community (the collaboration program) to reflect individuality, to be unique and special for each individual school, and to take account of the community's characteristics. This is confirmed by the data acquired from the descriptions of good practice of collaboration between schools and the community.

The diversity of experiences that such collaboration enables enriches all participants. Modern, development-oriented school is defined by its integration in the local and wider social environment that has a unique way of encouraging the learning and development of students, educators and local community members.

Schools and educators should be ready to face the complexity of partnership between schools and the community. This, already at the very beginning, requires a consideration of the three conditions for good-quality collaboration: the expert preparation of partnership and the qualification of participating partners, the choice of suitable partners, and the evaluation of partnership (Sanders, 2003). Constant (self-)reflection is an important part of collaboration as it enables schools, individuals and institutions in the community to analyze their own experiences with collaboration, as well as analyze their own conceptions, beliefs and habits referring to collaboration. Reflection, which takes place in the community, in interaction with one another, allows individuals to cope with the beliefs that hinder collaboration. This serves as the basis for improving the quality of relationships between schools, individuals and institutions in the community as well as for developing more effective methods of collaboration.

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Adults education and capability process: A research on teachers professional develpoment

Agency and professional development

The first step of this research provides a comparative study on pre-school education policies, to identify important issues and topics in European and internationally review. This allows to highlight the recent political focusing on the theme of teachers professional training and development, linked to the improvement of the processes of teaching and learning (COM, 2007).

The research goes on through a deepening of the meaning of preschool education professionalism and adults education, through the analysis of teachers professional training policies by a comparative and international view, and the description of the competences [50] related to preschool teachers professional profile.

The comparative analysis of Italo- Brazilian policies and European pre-school educational policies (COM, 2020; OCSE-Eurydice, 2009; OCSE-TALIS, 2009) highlights the growing importance of learning contexts widened on the redefinition of teacher professionalism, fostering a process of transformative

([50]) The meaning of competence here identified is based on the definition of European Qualification Framework (EQF) included in Europe 2020, which describes: «*Competence means the proven ability to use knowledge, skills and personal, social and/or methodological abilities, in work or study situations and in professional and personal development*.» In the context of the European Qualifications Framework, competence is described in terms of responsibility and autonomy.

Instead, 'skills' are described as: «*The ability to apply knowledge and use know-how to complete tasks and solve problems. In the context of the European Qualifications Framework, skills are described as cognitive (involving the use of logical, intuitive and creative thinking) or practical (involving manual dexterity and the use of methods, materials, tools and instruments)*»

changing that include, alongside traditional skills teaching, other strategic components of social fallout.

The systematic comparison between the political prospects of vocational training and the results of surveys on professional teachers' reality leads to highlight the problem research. A development exclusively centered on the acquisition of skills and competences doesen't appear capable of responding to the needs and educational challenges of contemporary society.

Teachers' training needs today a new strategic and meaningful dimensions involvement, for example: the value and features of professional agency and the contexts of its training (eg., informal learning) which foster the assumption of transformation and updating approaches, and discovery or experimentation attitudes. The building process of such manners is linked to the capacity to express an effectiveness action, which refers to the concept of agency capability process (Sen, 200; Nussbaum, 2011)..

The consideration of adults continuing training in terms of learnfare [51] (Margiotta, 2012; Costa, 2012) leads to the formulation of the hypothesis research, that identifies into the dimension of freedom of agency[52] (Sen, 2000) the focus of capability activation on the professional development..

Competences and capability process

Professional development, therefore, is not readed only as a competences acquisition, but also in terms of "capabilitation" (Sen, 2000; Nussbaum, 2011) on professional agency. The hypothesis research investigates on the capability increasing of agency and its faculty to improve the qualification of teachers' professionalism..

A prerequisite of agency empowerment are the opportunities and conditions placed on its exercise. The freedom of a individual to fulfill and truly achieve what he thinks important allows him to improve his capacity to train the personal goals[53].

Here comes that: *i.* Both personal and professional development appears inextricably linked, *ii.* They don't depend only from the possession of competences such as those traditionally associated to the professional teaching profile, but appears better related to the real opportunity to develop and put them into action. *iii.* This possibility is expressed into the freedom and capability to choose between several different options of agency, and through the capacity to realize them in practice as objectives (called "functionings") (Sen, 2000).

([51]) For *learnfare* we consider the new education paradigm today, originated from the evolution of the traditional vocational training model, based on *welfare state* system, into another in terms of *active welfare*, that request personal and responsable activation to fulfill individual training and education goals.

([52]) The freedom and capability of agency consists in the possibility for the teachers to choose and express their action to achieve every personal goal or aim they consider important. Of course, the freedom of agency is also releated to the existence of different opportunities and conditions to put in action. This kind of processes are included in the definition of "capability process" (Sen, 2000).

([53]) The professional agency is here releated to the capacity to "give the better shape to the action" in a awareness way, to achieve the selected goals and personal aims.

The research aims to clarify the relationship between capability factors and professional development. That it will investigate the features of professional agency in relation to own competences, to explore the capacity of the action to express these competences and turn them into functionings.

- The final results look for the re-definition of the dimensions that support and activate professional agency. This allows to design a more coherent and substantial model of professional development. This redefinition stimulates the policy reformulation about political, institutional and regulatory frameworks to foster the qualification of professional development.

The research device

The research according to device:

- The objective of *definition of competences profiles*: this involves, at first, the building of a Model of Competences, and then, a quali-quantitative observation on teachers' competences, and their training contexts.

- The objective of *definition of capability process activation*: through an activity research based on a participatory and training observation, it becomes possible to bring out different aspects of action that affect the expression of competences.

The *definition of competences profiles* includes:

First step*:* after the *Mapping of Competences* associated to the pre-school teacher profile (OECD TALIS, 2008, 2013; Manini, 2011; Eurydice, 2013; CoRe, 2011; Peeters & Lazzari, 2011; ISSA, 2010), we build a *Model of Competences* according to the following procedure:

- *Identification* of Areas of Competences and their connection with criteria of agency, empowerment and capability (Alsop, R., Bertelsen, MF, Holland, J., 2006; Alkire & Ibrahim, 2007);

- *Extraction* of single competences and their description, using a dynamic model of competences development (Tessaro, 2012)

- *Final validation* by two Opinion Leaders (Prof. Tessaro, Ca 'Foscari University, Venice and Prof. Mantovani, Bicocca University, Milan).

Second step: the quali- quantitative observation through *self-assessment Questionnaire on teachers competences development*. These questionnaires involved about 70 pre-school teachers from different regions of Northern Italy. Teachers evaluated their own competences and which of these they wish on the

professional profile in the future, as well as their environments and levels of development.

The *definition of capability process activation* takes place in:

Third step: the *observative- participatory and training research* involves 4 selected teachers, and aims to identify the correlation between competences and agency within the contexts of practice of professional action (Mortari, 2010), through the activation of *reflexivity* (Habermas, 1981; Schön, 1983). The activity starts from an in- depth interview on the reported competences. After, comes a design and implementation of a plan of individual capability process on agency. The final interview will explain the emerging correlation between competences and agency within the teachers' development paths, and will draw conclusions with professional training fallout.

Analysis of partial data

A first reading of partial data obtained from Questionnaires, referred to a panel of 20 teachers, allows to describe the most critical Areas of Competences of the teachers' professionalism. Data make it possible to detect the levels of development of teachers' competences, and their more critical and relevant aspects.

Emerging that the Area of Competence of *Networking* (NET 1, 2, 3) reports relatively significant variations into the teachers responses (value of standard deviation from the average), indicating important differences into the assessment of the level of competences develpoment.

The Figure 1 shows the position of teacher assessment on the average and the standard deviation form this value. The reading of this data indicates that there are significant differences in the realized levels of development of competences of: *i.* Cooperation as "ability to net- work" (Area of *Networking*), *ii*. Ability to exploit the networks opportunities to "strengthen and expand the professionalism" (Startegic Competences of Networking), *iii.* Ability to exploit the network action to "influence political decisions" (Socio- relational and political Competences).

This processing indicates that, into the Area of Networking, teachers take account of significant differences into levels of competences development of: *i.* Competences of cooperation and joint action into network of peers, *ii.* Competences of professionalism increase through networking opportunities, *iii.* Competences to influence the policy making through networking action.

The level of development of these competences appear more variable and interesting for us than those “traditionally” associated to the pre- school teachers professional profile, such as those related to the educational relationship or the relationship with parents (Area of Educational processes and Area of Relation processes with families).

Levels of competence develpoment

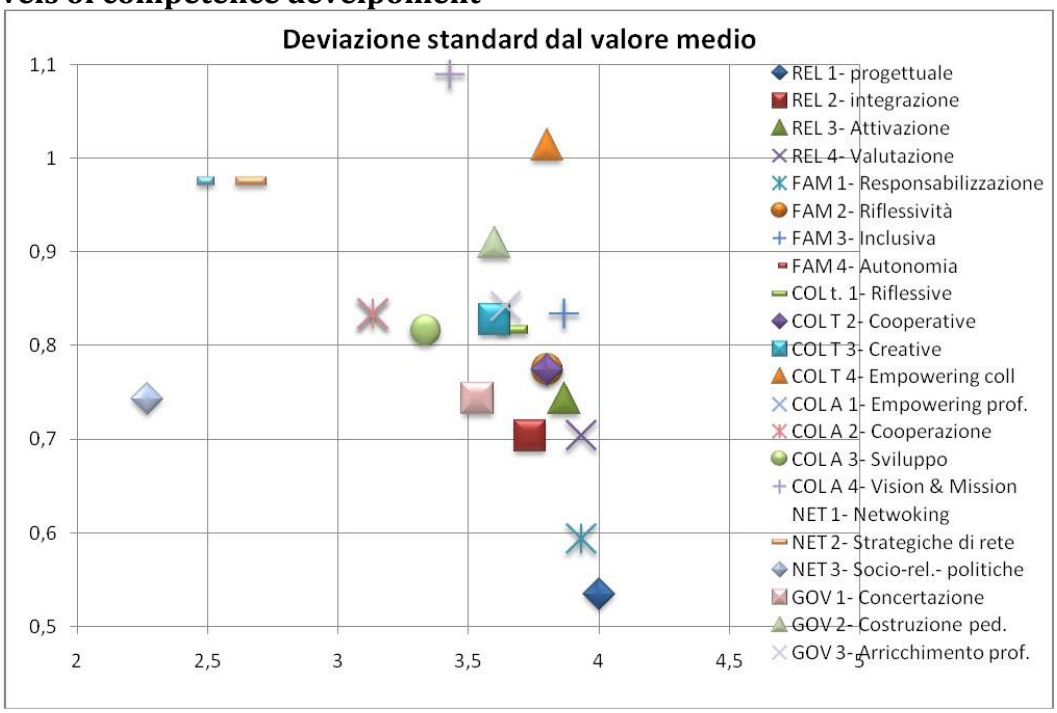

Fig. 1: Approximation of the correlation between the values of average of level of competences development (horizontal axis) and their standard deviation (vertical axis).

Ideal Competences and Owned Competences

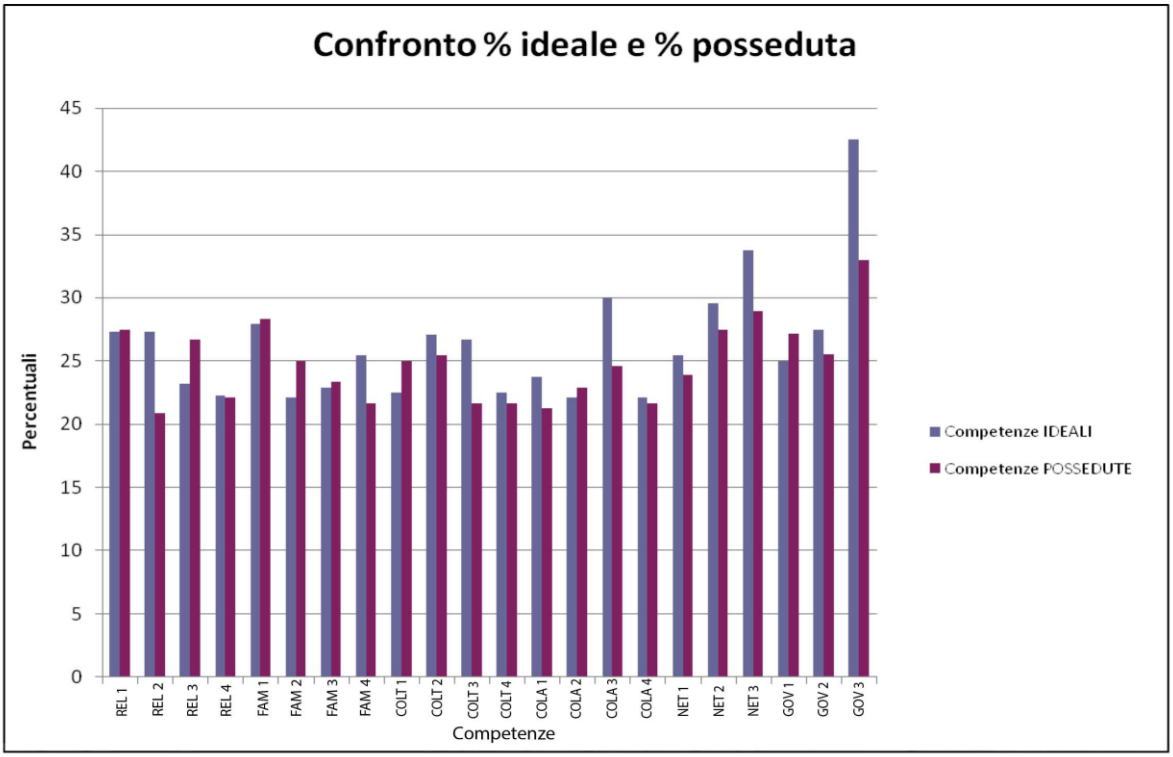

Fig. 2: Comparison between the value of Ideal Competences and Owned Competences.

The Figure 2 illustrates the juxtaposition of Owned Competences and Ideal too (that are desiderable in terms of professional development). It shows the existence of a greater "gap" within the Area of Competence of *Governance*, referring to the dimension of extracurricular planning and design and joint collaboration with the educational stakeholders of the local community.

The results from comparison between owned and wished competences reveal that the increasing of Competences of Governance within professional profile is much significant and desirable for teachers sound out.

Additional levels of analysis and data processing will highlight the existence of other critical issues within the competences reported, and allow to design new research paths in the context. The next research levels addressed to the explicitation of the correlation between competences and agency, to generalise the description of the characteristics of agency and its dimensions of empowerment.

Conclusions: first hypotesis of professionalism expansion

First data from questionnaires indicate the increasing value acquired by extracurricular dimensions on teacher professionalism, related to Areas of Competences of *Networking* and *Governance.*

These partial data drive to suggest new interpretations of the teacher's role and function, as an active agent of change and transformation, particularly social.

The emphasis on the capability process that involved design dimensions and social inclusion (*Governance*) allows to formulate new policies and approaches in support of professional development, defining new continuing training and education paths.

Critical issues noticed about level of development of strategic and network competences (*Networking*) suggests both an investment into the technological and infrastructure adjustment, and on the development of cooperative network arrangements.

The data collected so far indicate the need to rethink the institutional, regulatory and organizational conditions for creating new ones, capable of ensuring the possibility of different development itineraries from those outlined so far. For example, it becomes important to ensure:

- Institutional, regulatory, contractual and organizational opportunities, able to enhance and support professional communities of practice, experiences of extended collegiality, new relational and planning contexts at inter-curricular and extra-curricular level.

- Contractual and work guarantees that include the new dimensions of professionalism within the definition of the professional profile in terms of providing legal arrangements and appropriate career plans.

- The existence of initial training paths, but especially in service, based on the rationalise of the learning contexts widened, would allow to build a

professionalism capable of relationship and dialogue with the social context, in a way to expressing timely and effective actions, and creating generative opportunities of social innovation in the local context.

These conclusions on professional development needs suggest a reflection about the consequence in terms of adults education and community learning in these perspectives:

- The re-think of vocational and training policies, able to include informal aspects of learning contexts widened within *learning communities* (Krašovec S. J., Radovan M., Močilnikar Š., Šegula S., 2014).

- The re-define of a new teacher's figure, actively involved into co-design of learning environment as a *educational integrated system* with inclusive importance (Ellerani, 2013)

- The support of professional function of corroboration and dissemination of *reflexivity*, able to produce community learning in a terms of learnfare and active welfare (Margiotta, 2012; Costa, 2012).

- The creation of communities of practice of politic and pedagogic value, based on *participatory processes and democratic negotiation* (Sorensen, E.K., Murchú, D.Ó, 2004).

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The role of the counsellor in adult education in fostering community learning

Introduction

The guidance in adult education in contemporary society has an important role in not only the realisation of individual learning goals of adults, but also in the realization of strategic goals of adult education in the society. *A counsellor in adult education* is an important actor in reaching higher involvement of adults in lifelong learning which is the goal of all European countries (and also in Slovenia)[54], and has an important role in providing counselling support to adults before, during and at the end of education. This role is becoming also more important in *increasing up learning*, since it can play a vital role in motivating adults to get in educational programs with contents that are linked to the development of the local community. It can also play an important role in finding new needs and contents of adult education in the local community and in influencing on the greater involvement of adults in contributing to the development of the local community.

Such a role is also carried by the counsellors in the *Slovenian network of fourteen regional guidance centres* for adult education. Guidance centres offer free guidance support for education and learning to all adults in the region. The guidance centres have three main goals:

- *to ensure access* to guidance for education and learning to all adults within a local community, especially to the more vulnerable groups,
- *to ensure quality guidance services* for education and learning,

[54] The goal for EU countries in the period up to the year 2020 is 15% of inclusion of adults of 25-64 age and for Slovenia is 19% (National Resolution on Adult Education Act 2013-2020).

– *to ensure effective measures* for greater involvement and success of adults in lifelong learning.

The concept of operating of these guidance centres has been developed by the staff of Slovenian Institute for Adult Education (SIAE), which has been responsible of their continued development, monitoring their work, evaluating their effects and for the continuous training of the counsellors. During the monitoring of the guidance centres activities we have found that the counsellors importantly contribute to encouraging adults into learning, not only for work needs, but also for their personal development and for their social involvement.

At SIAE we have analysed how the guidance centres, with the implementation of non-traditional approaches, so-called outreach approaches, have contributed to the larger involvement of adults into educational programs, which are linked with the development of the local community and can also be defined as community learning. We defined two hypotheses:

1. "Outreach" guidance approaches in adult education have an important effect in general on a larger involvement of adults into education and learning,
2. "Outreach" guidance approaches in adult education also have an important effect on the greater involvement of adults into community learning.

In the paper we will define the importance of guidance in adult education and especially the meaning of outreach guidance approaches in lifelong learning of adults. We will also present the empirical data from guidance centre activities in the period of 2003-2013, with an emphasis on the period of 2008-2013 and the data from the online questionnaire for the active counsellors in the year 2015.

Educational guidance for adults and community learning

We live in a time of increasingly faster changes and more complex social structures and activities, among which adult education also resides. Educational opportunities are becoming larger and more complex in the contents, methods and forms. Adults need new knowledge, skills and abilities for not only work and personal development, but also for an active role in the community throughout their life. As is written in the Memorandum for lifelong learning, lifelong is being joined by lifewide learning (EC, 2000). Consequently, *adults need more counselling support* to more easily make decisions for education, to know how to plan their learning paths and link the results with demands of their daily lives. S. Jelenc Krašovec and Z. Jelenc define the counselling support with three main categories of assistance, which we may offer to adults (Jelenc Krašovec, Jelenc 2003, p. 24):

1. assistance with the involvement into education,
2. assistance with organizing education and learning,
3. assistance with the learning process and evaluation of it.

If we somewhat break down these categories, it would mean that the counsellor takes it upon himself to help achieve an individual's goals and values linked to education and learning, to affect the strengthening of an individual's motivation for learning and their trust in their own abilities, and advising them with the choice of appropriate options and opportunities for further education. The second category involves choosing and deciding ways of execution and the strategies of education and learning, and successful organization of the selected education; subsequently, the counsellor can help the adult with successful and effective learning, with strengthening their ability for such learning, and last but not least, helping them with an insight into the possibilities of using their newfound knowledge (Jelenc Krašovec 2007, p. 26).

In the activities of guidance centres for adult education we take into account all three categories of guidance support, while putting an emphasis on ensuring counselling support to adults in all stages of adult education and learning process: before or at the beginning of involvement in education or learning, during the learning process and at the end of education and learning, each phase with specific guidance activities (Vilič Klenovšek et al., 2000).

Despite the counselling activities in guidance centres having *educational guidance* at their core, the aspects of personal and vocational guidance are often involved. It is often emphasized that it is hard to discern three main features of guidance in modern society from each other (Freibergova 2007, Eurydice report 2015) The intertwining of all three aspects of guidance is also expressed in a european-wide common definition that *in the context of lifelong learning, guidance refers to a range of activities that enables citizens of any age and at any point in their lives to identify their capacities, competences and interests, to make educational, training and occupational decisions and to manage their individual life paths in learning, work and other settings in which these capacities and competences are learned and/or used* (Council Resolution 2004, p. 2).

Recent European documents also emphasize, that the *educational guidance for adults* has a large meaning for increasing access to lifelong learning, for motivating various groups of adults for greater involvement, especially the disadvantaged groups, and for assuring counselling support to adults in the process of learning. In Council Resolution on a renewed European agenda for adult learning [55] is defined as an important goal for increasing and widening participation of adults in lifelong learning, in response to the agreed EU target of 15% adult-learning participation, *the developing comprehensive and easily accessible information and guidance systems, complemented by effective outreach strategies aimed at raising awareness and motivation among potential learners, with specific focus on disadvantaged groups.* (Council Resolution 2011, p. 5)

To develop "outreach" approaches for reaching disadvantaged groups, is displayed also in Eurydice Report, Adult Education and Training in Europe - Widening Access to Learning Opportunities (EC 2015). One of the report's messages is that the education and learning of adults should be promoted by »raising awareness« and »outreach«. As regards the term »outreach« is written that several sources use Ward's definition as a process whereby people who

[55] While initially focusing on the period 2012-14, the **European agenda for adult learning** should be seen in the context of a longer term vision for adult learning in the period up to 2020.

would not normally use adult education are connected in non-institutional settings and become involved in attending and eventually in jointly planning and controlling activities, schemes and courses relevant to their circumstances and needs. (Ibid, p.17-18) And add that more recent glossary produced with the support of European institutions *defines outreach* as *a range of activities outside formal educational institutions designed to identify and attract non-learners, in order to encourage them to enrol in education and training programmes.* (Ibid, p. 58).
In this paper we are focused on the effect of outreach approaches in guidance in adult education and their effect on encouraging learning in the local community.

Outreach guidance and community learning

In the activities of Slovenian guidance centres we have started giving attention to the development and implementation of outreach guidance approaches soon after the beginning of operation.We followed the recommendations of the *Memorandum on lifelong learning from 2000*, which, in the fifth message, especially highlights the meaning of local accessibility of guidance services in adult education on the following grounds[56]. It was highlighted that a new approach is needed which envisages guidance as a continuously accessible service for all**,** and which overcomes the distinction between educational, vocational and personal guidance, and which reaches out to new publics. As we have already written, it was also in the Memorandum highlighted that living and working in the knowledge society calls for active citizens who are self-motivated to pursue their own personal and professional development. Users' needs and demands were placed at the centre of concern which means that systems of provision must shift from a supply-side to a demand-side approach. *It was predicted that for all these reasons, guidance and counselling services must move towards more 'holistic' styles of provision, able to address a range of needs and demands and a variety of publics and that such services must be locally accessible***.** (EC 2000, p.16-17)

We were also encouraged to reflect on "outreach" guidance by examples of good practices from European countries with a developed educational guidance in adult education at the end of the 90s and into the early 21st century, as were (and still are) England and Ireland. The experts of the NIACE (National Institute for Adult Continuing Education) were among the first to start implementing and defining the meaning of outreach approaches. V. McGivney writes that there are many reasons for outreach programs, let us highlight a few: (McGivney 2002, p.1)

- to raise awareness of available learning opportunities among the groups who traditionally do not participate in organised learning;
- to identify communities or groups who have not been reached and who may have unmet interests and needs;

[56] The Objective of Key Message 5 is: Ensure that everyone can easily access good quality information and advice about learning opportunities throughout Europe and throughout their lives.

– to develope new learning programmes that respond to expressed interests and needs.

In developing outreach approaches in education is central that the preparation for educational work or the learning process itself are conducted outside the institutions, with a qualified staff for such a work that are based on the needs and characteristics of a local community. As write V. McGivney, outreach means providing community-based learning activities as a stepping stone to mainstream programmes (building progression routes; training local people as animators, learning champions or community change agents), capacity building, assisting community groups in developing their own activities (a community support process). (Ibid, p.8)

We understand the learning in a local community in the broadest sense of general, non-formal and also informal learning (for a higher quality of living in the community and for a higher quality of personal life). Unfortunately in today's society emphasized notion of the meaning of education and learning for the labour market is still prevalent (stakeholders, media). So the learning for personal development and social inclusion, higher quality coexistence within a local community has to be more intensely highlighted by educators of adults. The development of learning for and within a local community has many meanings that we should encourage and develop. Education and learning in community also facilitate positive social change and more ethical in democratical interpersonal relations. It influences the cohesiveness of a local community, promote socialising and cooperation, as well as the exchange of knowledge, experience and information among various individuals, cultures, social groups and generations. And all this contributing to an increase in solidarity within community. (Radovan and Koscielniak 2015). It is important to offer public provision of adult community learning which plays an important role in reducing inequalities in participation rates between different groups and in particular that increases the participation of otherwise vulnerable group. (Rubenson et al. 2006)

Outreach in Slovenian guidance centres and the community learning

We also position all these aspects into outreach guidance in the activities of guidance centres for adult education in Slovenia. We have defined two core goals of operating outside the headquarters of guidance centres:

– increase access and consequently also the involvement of less educated and educationally less active adults into lifelong learning,
– encourage greater interest for involvement with the contents of non-formal education for the personal development of adults.

The first goal comes from the analyses of the involvement of adults in lifelong learning, which, the same as for European countries, show for the Slovenia, that more educated adults are much more involved in education and training that less educated adults. Data from the Adult Education Survey – AES show that in 2011, 40,3% of adults aged 25-64 in Europe took part in formal or

non-formal learning activities in the 12 month prior to the survey. The data on participation according to educational attainment indicates that while 61,3% of the adults who have completed tertiary education participate in lifelong learning, among those who have a medium-level qualification as their highest educational attainment the rate is only 37,7%; while for those who have reached lower secondary level at most, the participation rate does not exceeded 21,8%.[57] (Eurydice report 2015, p. 24-25)

And the second goal we have detected in the analysis of the data from contents of informative-counselling services in the activities of guidance centres in their first years of operation. The data has shown that adults were more interested in formal and non-formal education that is linked to the needs of the labour market. We concluded that one reason of this is not to know enough on offer of this programs and the other reason was low motivation for involvement in this education, since adults were faced with the situation that in particular they need (formal and non-formal) education for keeping jobs and to improve their chance of employment.

The analysis of the data about the contents of services in guidance centres in the years of 2003-2013 (the computer system for tracking data from guidance centre activities has been established in 2003) show that the counsellors have managed to increase the share of interest in adults even for non-formal education, tied with personal development. The data is shown in the table below.

Year	*Formal education*	*Non-formal education for labour market*	*Non-formal education for personal development*	*Other contents (financing, other certificates, learn to learn etc.)*
	%	*%*	*%*	*%*
2003	49,53	14,81	9,58	26,08
2004	44,31	13,15	7,02	35,52
2005	44,55	10,33	6,46	38,66
2006	36,29	10,37	7,22	46,12
2007	37,47	12,21	9,87	40,45
2008	31,81	13,39	13,06	41,74
2009	26,67	14,98	15,91	42,44
2010	26,91	14,71	18,41	39,97
2011	22,12	14,81	19,98	43,09
2012	22,75	14,26	24,80	38,19
2013	22,04	17,38	22,06	38,52

Table 1: The content of guidance services in fourteen guidance centres in Slovenia, in the years of 2003-2013.
Source: A computer application for tracking the activities of guidance centres for adult education, the documentation of SIAE, 2014.

[57] Similar disparities appear with relation to employment status: the employed are much more likely to participate in education and training than unemployed or the economically inactive (the participation rate for the three categories is 48,6%, 26,9% and 19,6% respectively). (Ibid, p.25)

In the shown years, the number of individual counselling services has been different, ranging from 10.000 to 23,000, since it has been changing with regards to the gradual increase of the number of guidance centres (the network of fourteen centres has been established in the years of 2001-2005) and according to the number of active counsellors, which was, in any individual year, dependent on the financing from the state's side and/or the additional resources from the European Social Fund. But regardless of that, it is apparent from the data that, in the observed eleven years, there has been a constant increase in the number of contents of counselling services linked with involving and/or involvement with non-formal forms of education for personal development (with the content such as: communicational skills, a healthy lifestyle, the study of foreign languages, computer literacy, study circles with contents linked to the development of the local community, contents for sustainable development, cultural heritage, bio-gardening, etc.) From a portion between 6,46% and 9,87 in the years of 2003-2007, an increase has begun in 2008 and after the year 2011 exceeded a 20% share, or, in the years of 2008-2013 totalled 19,04% in average.

If we look at the data from the perspective of involvement of vulnerable groups of adults (less educated -less than a 4-years of secondary education, dropouts, long-term unemployed, older than 50+, Roma people, migrants, homeless people, prisoners etc.) in the years 2011 -2013 the average share of involved adults from was among all the clients of guidance centres 50%, but before 2011about 40%.

We are aware that the aforementioned state has also been affected by other factors, such as more public provision of non-formal education for personal development in the years 2008-2013 that were co-financed with the resources from the European Social Fund and the Ministry of education, the development of the new contents in those programs, in consideration of specific needs of different groups of adults (unemployed, old, migrants, etc.). But we think that an important role in this was also played by the counsellors in the guidance centres for adult education. We asked the counsellors about their role they played with an online questionnaire. We involved twenty active counsellors from guidance centres, that have been working in the years 2014-2015[58]. One of the questions was about how much, as a counsellor, do they think they affect the development of adult education within their local community? Eighteen counsellors answered the question, which is 90% of all respondents. Separate variables were rated on a scale from 1 (nothing) to 4 (very). Their answers are presented in the table 2.

[58] The number of active counsellors in guidance centres varies between 20 and 50 depending on the financing of their activities. After 2013, the number of active counsellor was reduced to 20, because of lack of co-financing from the European Social Fund. It is expected additional financing in 2016.

Variables	Very (4)	Medium (3)	Little (2)	average score
On discovering new needs – contents of education and learning of adults in a local community	27,8 %	61,1 %	11,1 %	3,2
On increasing offers of education for different target groups of adults in a local community	27,8 %	38,9 %	33,3 %	2,9
On greater involvement in education and learning of vulnerable groups of adults in a local community	66,7 %	33,3 %	0 %	3,7
On greater partner collaboration in adult education in a local community (networking)	44,4 %	55,6 %	0 %	3,4

Table 2: The data about the opinion of counsellors on how much as a counsellor, they affect the development of adult education within their local community.
Source: Online questionnaire SIAE, 2015

From the answers of counsellors it is apparent that they believe they have better impact on greater involvement in education and learning of vulnerable groups of adults in a local community (average score 3,7), and on the greater partner collaboration in adult education in a local community (average score 3,4), but less so on discovering new needs – contents of education and learning of adults in a local community (average score 3,2) and on increasing offers of education for different target groups of adults in a local community (average score 2,9).

We were also interested if they think the informative-counselling activity in guidance centres would more than before affect the development of new contents of non-formal adult education within a local community, which would be linked to the development of the local community. Almost all counsellors that answered the question, seventeen or 94,4 % of counsellors have answered affirmatively (only one answered that he doesn't know). If we compare this answer to the opinions above, we can discover that counsellors still have a sort of "reserve" that they could use to affect the development of new contents of non-formal and to affect the increase of provision of education for different target groups of adults in the local community. From their explanations we list the two that express the opinions of most (Online questionnaire SIAE, 2015):

- *»In cooperation with the guidance centre's partners, we could approach the development of non-formal educational programs as a team, thus increasing the connectivity and cooperation between partners and enrich the offers in the region.«.*
- *»The guidance centre can be the connecting link between seekers and preparers of offers. As a voice of adults, the guidance centre can give incentive and suggestions for new content.«*

As we have already written, we believe that the above described effect of counsellors has benefitted from the implementation of outreach approaches in

guidance centres activities. With the establishment of outreach approaches, the counsellors had more options of promoting non-formal educational content for personal development, but not only that, through outreach activity they also more easily established cooperation with different organizations in the local community, and with them encouraged the development of new educational content and learning in the local community. Which forms of outreach guidance have we developed? The most common claims as possible outreach models are the definitions by V. McGivney, who writes about 4 different models of outreach approaches (McGivney 2002, p.10, Eurydice Report 2015, p.98):

1. The satellite model: establishing outreach centres for delivering learning programmes in community locations;
2. The peripatetic model: delivering learning programmes in organisational settings such as hostels, day centres, homes, for the elderly, community centres, hospitals, prisons;
3. The detached outreach model: contacting people outside agency or organisational settings, for example in streets, shopping centres, pubs, at school gates;
4. The domiciliary outreach model: visiting people in their own homes.

In Slovenian guidance centres we have developed forms that include the characteristics of the first three described models**:**

1. *Outreach unit of guidance centres (satellite model) (so called »Dislocations«):* is a form of constant field work, performed at least once per week (in the morning and/or the afternoon) in a predetermined establishment of a different type of organisation but always in the same location; these could be other educational organizations or other organizations, e.g. libraries, centres for social work, municipal facilities, etc.

2. *Mobile guidance service (peripatetic model):* is organized in organizations where there is no need for constant weekly dislocation, such as smaller places in the region or organizations with vulnerable adult groups, like organizations for adults with mental disabilities and/or health problems, employment office, Roma settlement, for the employed guidance in the workplace, etc. The mobile guidance service is planned ahead, in agreement with the partner organization, and offers informing as well as counselling for the particular group of adults or individuals.

3. *Days of Slovenian guidance centres (detached outreach model):* is an annual form of a three-day mainly promotional work of guidance centres outside their headquarters and dislocations, since the counsellors are present in the streets, shopping centres, libraries, etc.

4. *The presence of a counsellor at the events in the local community (detached outreach model)*: the counsellor is present at certain traditional, already-

established and recognizable events in the local community, where he gathers a larger number of people.

5. *Info point (elements of detached outreach model)***:** is a form where the main purpose is informing clients, mainly through written material. It can be a permanent or an occasional spot, equipped with information material. In it, there can occasionally also is a counsellor present. The place of operation is different, from public to different organizations where there is a high frequency of people (hospitals, centres for social work, bibliobuses, etc.).

We have developed them on the basis of different needs of individual adult groups in local communities. We have been trained the counsellors for the implementation of outreach guidance. In the years 2008-2011 we most strongly developed outreach units of guidance centers and after 2012 we strengthened the mobile guidance. In 2014 and 2015 we have twenty outreach units of guidance centres and at each guidance centre more than three mobile guidance services per year (mobile counsellors going to Roma settlements, prisons, retirement homes, companies, etc.).

The counsellors were asked, what they think**,** *if the outreach approaches of guidance have contributed to a greater involvement of adults, especially vulnerable groups, into general, non-formal education with contents linked to the local community.* Their answers are as follows (from the twenty active counsellors in 2015, eighteen have answered this question) (Online questionnaire SIAE, 2015):

- 44,4% of counsellors think they contributed a lot,
- 44,4% of counsellors think they had a medium contribution,
- and two counsellors have answered that they think they contributed little, which presents 11,2%.

From the answers it is clear that almost one half thinks that outreach approaches greatly contribute to the involvement of vulnerable adult groups in general, non-formal education with contents linked to the local community, and almost the second half thinks that they have a medium impact. From the data we conclude that outreach guidance have greater impact in some regions than in others, which needs to be taken into account in the further development.

We have also separately asked the counsellors about how effectively certain outreach approaches have affected the larger involvement of adults into non-formal education and learning. Their answers are presented in the table 3.

	Very (4)	Medium (3)	Little (2)	Nothing (1)	Average score
Outreach unit of guidance centres	44,4 %	44,4 %	5,6 %	5,6 %	3,3
Mobile guidance service	72,2 %	27, 8%	0 %	0 %	3,7
Days of Slovenian guidance centres	38,9 %	50,5 %	11,1 %	0 %	3,3
The presence of a counsellor at the events in the local community	61,1 %	33,3 %	5,5 %;	0 %	3,6
Info point	0 %	44,4 %	44,4 %	11,1 %	2,3

Table 3: The data about the opinion of counsellors on how much the outreach approaches have affected the larger involvement of adults into non-formal education and learning. Source: Online questionnaire SIAE, 2015

From the answers of the counsellors it is apparent that the *mobile guidance service* has the highest score, which is 3,7, followed by *the presence of a counsellor at the events in the local community* (fairs, local events, etc.) with an average score of 3,6. And the same grade, 3,3, has been given to *outreach unit of guidance centres* and *Days of Slovenian guidance centres***.** It is worth to stress that all these approaches are carried out with an active role and the presence of a counsellor, which definitely provides higher effectiveness. The least effective is the *info point***,** with the average score of 2,3 (written materials, usually without the presence of a counsellor). These answers oblige us to strengthen all approaches with the presence of a counsellor, especially the mobile guidance service and the presence of a counsellor on events in the local community.

Conclusion

From the presented data, both from monitoring the work of guidance centres (with the support of the computer application) and the online interviewing of active counsellors in the network of fourteen guidance centres for adult education in 2015, we can conclude that in Slovenia outreach guidance approaches have an important impact on the greater involvement of adults in lifelong learning (especially the more vulnerable groups of adults), and also on the greater involvement in non-formal education for personal development, which is also linked with the community learning.

The counsellors in Slovenian guidance centres also think that they could even better affect the development of new content of non-formal learning in the community. With continuing the development of outreach guidance models and further developing the networks with local organisations. Important part of further development is also a care for the development of a counsellor's competences, necessary for realizing outreach guidance. A counsellor must constantly evolve his knowledge and skills for using them in constantly changing and new contexts of development of local communities.

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Barriers to formal and non-formal education in urban and rural communities

Introduction

Among the EU countries, Slovenia is faced with one of the biggest falls in economic activity (which also affected other spheres in society). The level of economic activity has fallen below the value of 2005, there has been a reduction of well-being, the situation in the labour market has also been worsen, which continues to be characterized by high segmentation. The proportion of employment in the age group 55-64 is the lowest in the EU, there is also a strong increase in youth unemployment. (The draft overall strategy of Slovenia's Development Strategy 2014 -2020, 2013). According to the report of the European Union (EU) Employment and Social Situation Quarterly Review (2012) the trends in the labour market in European countries are strongly negative and show signs of social polarization. Economic growth in most European countries is stagnant or declining. It also reduces the quality of life. The unemployment rate in the first half of 2012 in the EU was around 12% and despite many measures to reduce the negative effects of the economic crisis and recession it has reduced the number of jobs. The youth unemployment rate remains high - many are classified as long-term unemployed or fall into a category of NEET (Not in Employment, Education, or Training).

The EU and Slovenia have adopted a series of measures, policies and programs to reduce the negative effects of the economic crisis and recession. The document 'Europe 2020', which represents the EU's new strategy and build on the Lisbon Strategy, designed different political, economic and social objectives are set. These objectives are in line with the current social development and the situation in which they find themselves on EU Member States and aim to achieve inclusive as possible, reasonable and sustainable economic growth (Europe, 2020,

p. 21). Efforts should be made to reduce the levels of poverty, which affected a substantial part of the EU population. European guidelines and objectives in the strategy "Europe 2020" represent the main instrument for coordinating employment and education policies in the EU. EU countries are working to monitor and evaluate the implementation of structural reforms at national level in order to significantly reduce unemployment and support economic growth. In terms of education, this means creating policies that promote proper education, qualification and skills of the active population, thus contributing to the quality and efficiency of work and working life.

We can assume that the situation of individual countries within the European labour market depends on the specific labour market policies and measures taken in the field of education and training with an objective to significantly reduce unemployment and stimulate economic growth. Main policies at the national level are: Slovenia's Development Strategy 2014-2020 National Development Plan 2007-2013 (2008), the Stability Programme - Update 2013 (2013), National Reform Programme 2014-2015 (2014) and others. The question that arises here is, what effects the implementation of these documents and programs have.

Data from this study motivations and barriers to education for the needs of the labour market (Mirčeva, Žalec and Radovan, 2014), show that in Slovenia participation of adults in formal education in 2011/2012 was slightly higher than the average for the analysed European countries and the average in the non-formal education. But looking at the data from previous years educational inclusion of active population decreased. (Development Report 2014: Indicators of Slovenia). This fluctuation to a large extent depends on the incentives and barriers/deterrents of adults.

The report, prepared by OECD and the Canadian Statistics Office, recognize the need to participate in education to harmonize different levels in the "education market" (OECD & Statistics Canada, 2005). This consists of three levels: (1) individuals who want to attend education; (2) educational institutions that develop and offer educational programs and (3) system-level/educational policy, which is more or less centralized; regulating the field and establishes a relationship between the demand and supply of educational institutions and the interaction between the individual and the educational institution. Educational policy may do so by providing financial incentives, the reduction of indirect costs, increasing supply etc.

The main aim of this paper is to identify incentives and barriers at the level of formal and nonformal education of active population in Slovenia’s regions. Participation of active population in programs of formal and non-formal education is linked to and justified in the incentives and disincentives at various levels of the labour market and in society. We assume that if the incentives are greater than the obstacles, the trend of participation in programs of formal and non-formal education is positive.

Exploring barriers in comparison with the research motives and motivation started relatively late, and are a component of most theoretical models of participation in education (Carp, Peterson and Roelfs, 1973; Cross, 1981; Johnstone and Rivera, 1965). According to Rubenson and Desjardins (2009, p. 189), the majority of research on barriers was created on the one hand as a part of inter-/national research or, on the other, as qualitative research. In these

studies, the starting population are adults who wanted education but could not get it; thus, they and are less focused on adults who did not want to learn at all. Descriptive studies of barriers began with the first national survey in the United States, which was conducted by Johnstone and Rivera (1965). In this study, they asked survey participants to give reasons for not participating in education. The reasons were given, in order of importance, as "I could not afford it", "too busy", "too tired", "I did not know what programs are available," "I find it too childish," "I feel too old to learn" and "I do not need training." Almost half (48%) of respondents stated as a main barrier the cost and lack of time, 45% stated fatigue, 35% lack of information, and 12% of respondents that they don't need education.

Method

Our main hypothesis is that the process of learning and acquiring knowledge, skills and competences operably linked to and justified in the incentives and disincentives offered by various levels of the labour market. In this article we will try to examine the barriers and identify incentives that are affecting participation in adult education and present their differences across different regions.

Sample

The sample consists of adults who were enrolled in the study "Labour Force Survey" (LFS), which was carried out in 2012. LFS is coordinated by the Statistical Office of the European Union (Eurostat). For statistical analysis we used the database of the Labour Force Survey for 2012, which was acquired by the Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia. In designing the database we wanted to include in analysis only the population only respondents 15 to 65 years of age and exclude those who replied that they are regular students. The sample size was therefore decreased to 29,093 persons.

Results

We will be presented two models, designed on the basis of logistic regression to predict participation of the active population, in formal and non-formal adult education. As it is known, formal education enables acquiring the level of education and a broad range of transferable skills. These enables higher stability of work and employability. From the perspective of the functioning of the labour market and employment opportunities of the population it is extremely important, because becoming an important criterion for decision-making in employment (Ivančič, 2010). This was especially evident in the less favourable labour market conditions, when the conditions of employment and opportunities for the preservation of jobs are particularly tighten.

Barriers and socio-demographic characteristics

Table 1 shows the distribution of educational barriers. Respondents who participated in the survey (LFS) as the most important obstacle to indicate an obstacle "There is no interest (age)." This obstacle has stated that 41 percent of all surveyed adults aged 15 to 65 years. Obstacle followed, the "lack of time". This is stated less than a third of respondents. Frequencies other barriers are low, all below 10 per cent. Obstacle "There is no interest (age)" difficult to interpret, because it could cover both the motivation for education in general, lack of motivation, which is the result of social / career situation of older adults, as well as an educational offering that did not suit the needs of the respondent.

Barrier	**%**
Lack of time	27,0
Too busy at work	9,5
There were offers, another place is too far	7,1
Family responsibilities	5,8
Too expensive / lack of money	4,9
Health reasons	4,6
No interest (including age)	41,2
Total	**100,0**

Table 1: Frequency distribution of educational barriers adults (N = 29,093)
Source: Labour Force Survey, 2012 (Slovenian Statistical Office)

We could say that the frequency distribution of the barriers in relation to previous research is somewhat surprising - particularly as regards the main obstacles. Normally, the main obstacles is the lack of time, too expensive education and family responsibilities. According to P. Cross it is the most important group, and situational barriers within this finance and time. This is confirmed by recent research (Mohorčič Špolar et al., 2001; Mohorčič Špolar et al., 2005; Mohorčič Špolar, Radovan and Ivančič, 2011). At the same time she stressed that the importance of these barriers can be increased due to socialization answers that reflect methodologically flawed survey research. In most descriptive studies barriers are usually determined by using survey questions or structured interviews in which respondents were asked why they did not attend the training. Given that education is mostly described as positive and desirable activity - if not responsibility - respondents often respond with socially desirable reasons to explain their non-participation in education, instead, to discover their true reasons.

Also, when comparing the importance of the barriers to education we get mostly linearly spaced trends of these barriers. Thus, as has been shown in previous similar studies, our results also show that to adults with tertiary education lack of time employment in the workplace presents a much greater barrier than to adults with lower education. Reverse linearity is characteristic of barriers "Too expensive" and "No interest (age)." These two obstacles are most commonly cited by respondents with primary education or less.

	Primary ed. or less	Secondary ed.	Tertiary ed. or more
Lack of time	16,3	27,9	33,4
Too busy at work	3,9	9,5	14,0
There were offers, education is too far	6,3	7,1	8,0
Family responsibilities	4,8	5,2	8,2
Too expensive / lack of money	6,2	4,9	3,7
Health reasons	9,5	4,2	1,6
No interest (including age)	52,9	41,3	31,1
Total	**100,0**	**100,0**	**100,0**

Table 2: Comparison of educational barriers with respect to educational attainment
Source: Labour Force Survey, 2012, (Slovenian Statistical Office)

Factors explaining participation in formal education

Analyses that were made in a time of less favourable labour market conditions have shown that formal education is generally less dependent on the current situation on the labour market (Mirčeva and Dobnikar, 2011). Recent data have shown that at the European level, Slovenia is among the countries that achieve higher value and better results demonstrate especially in Scandinavian countries (Mirčeva, Žalec and Radovan, 2014). From a planning perspective, educational policies are also key factors of participation in formal education programs. These are presented in Table 3. Statistically significant factors that affect the likelihood of greater participation of the population treated in the programs of formal education as: age, marital status, residence in certain regions, employment and characteristics of work.

Independent variables	B[59]	S.E.	Wald	Sig.	Exp(B)
Gender (ref: women)	-,17	,099	2,796	,095	,847
Age (ref: 55-65 y)					
15-24 y	3,72	,552	45,366	,000	41,132
25-39 y	3,42	,506	45,704	,000	30,672
40-54 y	2,00	,511	15,258	,000	7,356
Citizenship (ref: No)	2,02	1,046	3,737	,053	7,551
Born in Slovenia (ref: No)	,11	,272	,162	,687	1,116
Marital status (ref: Married)	,47	,105	19,736	,000	1,593
Education (ref: HE+)					
Primary or less	-,717	,438	2,684	,101	,488
Secondary ed.	,142	,107	1,764	,184	1,153
Region (ref: Coastal–Karst)					
1 Mura	-,58	,356	2,659	,103	,559
2 Drava	-,29	,228	1,595	,207	,749
3 Carinthia	-1,22	,466	6,795	,009	,297
4 Savinja	-,33	,248	1,778	,182	,718
5 Central Sava	-,37	,361	1,068	,302	,689
6 Lower Sava	-,82	,513	2,540	,111	,441
7 Southeast Slovenia	-,46	,294	2,465	,116	,630
8 Central Slovenia	-,34	,215	2,537	,111	,710
9 Upper Carniola	-,47	,242	3,798	,051	,625
10 Littoral–Inner Carniola	-,49	,366	1,774	,183	,614
11 Gorizia	-,54	,288	3,542	,060	,581
Urbanization (ref: sparsely populated)	,12	,105	1,417	,234	1,133
Works more than 1h (ref: Ne)	,10	,166	,392	,531	1,110
Main status (ref: other)	-,278	1,171	,056	,812	,757
Employment type (ref: temporary)	-,37	,130	7,885	,005	,694
Work position (ref: non-management)	,07	,117	,381	,537	1,075
Work (ref: short-term)	,03	,226	,012	,912	1,025
Works after hours (ref: No)	-,08	,130	,371	,542	,924
Works in shifts (ref: never)	-,29	,158	3,447	,063	,745
Works in the evening (ref: never)	-,10	,152	,417	,518	,907
Works at night (ref: never)	,42	,177	5,487	,019	1,515
Works on Saturday (ref: never)	-,21	,138	2,331	,127	,809
Works on Sundays ((ref: never)	-,08	,165	,241	,623	,922
Works at home (ref: never)	,45	,114	15,285	,000	1,564
STATISTICS					
Hi- square = 455,82, *p* =,000					
Pseudo R-square = 0,155					
n = 6.579					

Table 3: Logistic regression of factors that influence participation in formal education
Source: Labour Force Survey, 2012, (Slovenian Statistical Office)

B[2] – regression coefficient;
S.E. – standard error
Wald = Wald's chi-square test
Sig – statistical significance
Exp(B)- probability ratio

Model confirms some of the findings of previous research and analysis that indicate the heterogeneity of the impact (socio-demographic, location, features works) on participation in education (Mohorčič Špolar, Ivančič, Mirčeva and Radovan, 2006). In terms of participation in formal education are the most disadvantaged categories of the active population: a group of elderly, those who are married or living in a registered partnership, employees in less demanding jobs, those who have less control and responsibility of management and employees in workplaces that providing a lower flexibility. An important predictor of participation is also home work, which shows that it is more likely that the population in this period participated in programs of formal education, if you work at home. In terms of predicting inclusion in formal education it has proved that the region is important, but not decisive factor. The inhabitants of Carinthia and the Gorenjska region shows the lowest probability that they will in the future be participating in education.

If formal education is a condition of employment and preservation of job in the further development of an individual's career of non-formal education has an essential role. It enables management of specific skills such as innovation, creativity, ability to teamwork, communication skills as well as some cultural and social skills. These skills are important for integration into the working environment or effectively communicating. In this context, we see non-formal education as an instrument for the acquisition and upgrading of knowledge and skills acquired in formal education. (Mohorčič Špolar et al., 2006).

Factors explaining participation in non-formal education

With the second logistic model (Table 4), we wanted to check the predicted value of the factors which can explain the participation in non-formal education and training. Analysis suggests that the main predictors of participation are: level of formal education, gender and job characteristics. The model is statistically significant at $p = 0.000$ (Chi-square = 313.22), and the independent variables in the model explains 8.5% of variance. Our analysis suggest that it is more likely that adults who have at least secondary education will participate in non-formal education programs. A more detailed analysis shows that this level is moving up that a college degree is becoming one that will determine participation in non-formal education (Mirčeva et al., 2014). Another important predictor of inclusion in education is gender. The analysis confirms earlier analysis (Mohorčič Špolar et al., 2006) that have shown that women are more likely to participate in training than men.

	B	S.E.	Wald	Sig.	Exp(B)
Independent variables	-,34	,08	19,50	,000	,71
Gender (ref: women)			1,72	,632	
Age (ref: 55-65 y)	-,33	,35	,88	,349	,72
15-24 y	-,03	,13	,04	,834	,97
25-39 y	,05	,12	,15	,702	1,05
40-54 y	2,20	1,03	4,51	,034	8,99
Citizenship (ref: No)	,06	,18	,09	,763	1,06
Born in Slovenia (ref: No)	,10	,09	1,19	,276	1,11
Marital status (ref: Married)					
Education (ref: HE+)	-1,78	,42	17,61	,000	,17
Primary or less	-,68	,09	59,38	,000	,50
Secondary ed.					
Region (ref: Coastal–Karst)	,68	,30	5,33	,021	1,98
1 Mura	,38	,22	3,00	,083	1,47
2 Drava	,18	,33	,31	,579	1,20
3 Carinthia	,30	,24	1,51	,219	1,34
4 Savinja	,37	,34	1,21	,270	1,45
5 Central Sava	,95	,35	7,31	,007	2,59
6 Lower Sava	,67	,26	6,65	,010	1,95
7 Southeast Slovenia	,45	,21	4,56	,033	1,57
8 Central Slovenia	,50	,23	4,77	,029	1,65
9 Upper Carniola	1,11	,28	15,43	,000	3,03
10 Littoral–Inner Carniola	,33	,26	1,64	,201	1,39
11 Gorizia	-,04	,08	,18	,674	,96
Urbanization (ref: sparsely populated)	,52	,16	11,06	,001	1,68
Works more than 1h (ref: Ne)	-,30	,13	5,37	,020	,74
Main status (ref: other)	,21	,08	6,29	,012	1,24
Employment type (ref: temporary)	,56	,22	6,34	,012	1,75
Work position (ref: non-management)	,55	,09	38,00	,000	1,73
Work (ref: short-term)	,06	,13	,20	,656	1,06
Works after hours (ref: No)	-,14	,11	1,67	,196	,87
Works in shifts (ref: never)	-,01	,14	,01	,930	,99
Works in the evening (ref: never)	,14	,11	1,63	,201	1,15
Works at night (ref: never)	,02	,12	,03	,861	1,02
Works on Saturday (ref: never)	,29	,09	11,12	,001	1,34
STATISTICS					
Hi-square = 313,22, *p* =,000					
Pseudo R-square = 0,085					
n = 6.579					

Table 4: Logistic regression of factors that influence participation in non-formal education
Source: Labour Force Survey, 2012, (Slovenian Statistical Office)

Work features have always been regarded as an important catalyst for inclusion in the non-formal education. Desjardins and Rubenson (2013) of "a long arm of the work" draw attention to the link between work (nature of the work, the workplace, and support for employers) and involvement in education (Desjardins and Rubenson, 2013). If most of the previous analyses warned that higher educational inclusion prefer standard forms of work (work on a permanent contract, working full time) our logistic model shows that in predicting educational inclusion also less standard forms work are gaining more weight (e.g. working at home). Among the factors that predict participation, both in formal and

non-formal education, is also the country of birth. It is less probable for non-Slovenians to participate.

Discussion and conclusion

The results of this analysis showed that the most important factors that predict the involvement of the population in education as follows: age, marital status, residence in certain regions, type of work, night work and work at home. More likely to attend education programs show lower age categories, and those who have the opportunity to work at home. With regard to region, the analysis showed that the smallest probability for participation in education has inhabitants of Carinthia and the Gorenjska region.

Many studies suggests that the national systems can have a significant impact on the decisions of adults to participate in them; in educational activities. Esping-Andresen (1989) shows that the degree of involvement of the population in education linked to the regimes of the welfare state. Countries within the same welfare model are not only similar cultural and historical developments, but are also comparable in terms of policy on the labour market, have a similar educational policy, social security, economic policies. Policy measures, offer important guidance in this direction. These include the creation of a legal basis for the implementation of flexible working hours, work at home, greater harmonization between working and family life, and support for education during working hours. Among the most important incentives is also educational offer. It is not the quantity of programs offered by private and public institutions, but also the diversity and adaptability of offers to the interests and needs of different target groups.

In our study as one of the educational disadvantaged we have identified a group of older people with lower education and immigrants. Implementation of educational activities must be as much as possible adjusted to their needs, characteristics and previous experiences. In the context of promoting the education for the most disadvantaged socio-cultural animation and strengthen the advisory network is very important.

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