

ADULT EDUCATION - PART OF CONTINUOUS EDUCATION

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ABSTRACT: On the whole educational sciences, adult education is a disciplinary field less developed, given that education theorists have focused more on developing explanatory and methodological mechanisms for educating children, he being in growth, training, requiring support and assist in its development. Arguments for which adult education was in the shadows are related to that long considered that once trained child and ending compulsory education does not need to learn or, at least, it becomes adult, he knows how to make this and does not need support. However, the diversity of educational needs of adult stems from the fact that during this period, the adult has to fulfill a number of social roles, has a number of responsibilities for the various social statuses, for whose solution is not entirely competent in school to make them front, that these roles overlap and are in constant dynamic change (or having the status of parent, employee, director, spouse or divorced, remarried, grandfather, retired, etc.) Often causing the crisis adult needs assistance.

KEY WORDS: adult education, continuing education, lifelong learning, permanent learning, personal development.

1. INTRODUCTION

Adult education has grown more intense only in the last 30-40 years, due to social dynamics, the explosion of information and scientific knowledge and technological competence profiles causes changes in the profession, changes in the hierarchy of values, etc., participation of the adult to learning activities throughout life becoming a necessity; adult education is increasingly becoming mandatory due to external constraints, though not always formal. For a first step towards scientific substantiation of a domain is to clarify the terminology used, correct and consistent use of terms banded it is necessary to point that operate in this area disciplinary terms, the more that we will see further, which we call generic *adult education* is a concept with considerable stretch pragmatic, normative, rich in meanings. The main confusion arising from the use of terminology in the field somewhat synonymous phrases adult education and continuing education. The terms we refer were quickly imposed internationally, on the one hand, due to more frequent use of English in international communication, and on the other hand, as an expression of developments in this field in the Anglo-Saxon, which were the sources of inspiration for other countries. In British English, the term has connotations of adult education Leisure education, general education development and satisfy some hobbies. Being pragmatic, americans are more interested in developing work-related skills and lifelong learning by the phrase solves two dilemmas: on the one hand, provides coverage in compensatory programs for further education and those who have abandoned prematurely and in terms of age at least, can

not be considered adults and, on the other hand, it stresses that *continuing education* is that which extends the initial education, clasp those who have completed their initial education after compulsory schooling has ended.

In reality, conceptually, the concepts of adult education and continuing education (adult education beyond formal education, initial call is made when the individual is adult) largely overlap, the differences are more than nuance in meaning that adult education aimed at more general issues, alternative educational dimensions that must be covered (civic, cultural, leisure, social or marginalized groups for specific educational interventions to different groups of adults aged people, housewives, unemployed, immigrants, minorities, etc. .) while continuing education training aimed at more continuity along the career (for updating knowledge and skills, training, retraining, reorientation and reintegration).

On the occasion of UNESCO's General Conference Session in Nairobi, 1976, adult education has been defined as "all organized educational processes, which prolong or replace initial education in schools or university carried out, due to which people considered adults by the society to which they belong develop their skills, enrich their knowledge, improve their times reorienting their technical and professional qualification ". At one point, they met a certain phrase use and other related concepts adult education, as an expression of emphasis on trying to find solutions to complete healing or inadequate initial education and continuing education throughout life, among which

- *recurrent education*, designating the opportunity for the working population to return to previous training, supplementing it, to face accelerated obsolescence of knowledge and skills previously acquired. It is a complement to formal education for adults who wish to complete their initial education interrupted for various reasons;

- *iterative education*, designating the opportunity for the adults to choose periods and types of studies that will follow them alternatively or simultaneously with productive work or gaps to complement training or incomplete studies or for improvement, deepening or even shift.

These terms however failed to impose time as they are limited to only certain aspects, being gradually embedded within broader continuing education, as shown by developments in practice.

Superordinate term of adult education is the permanent education. According to serbianteacher Dusan M. Savicevic, this concept has three dimensions: *vertical, horizontal and internal* [1]. The first dimension concerns the temporal continuity of the educational plan, from birth to death, throughout their life; the second brings together all spheres of knowledge and integrity of knowledge obtained both in formal manner and non-formal, while the third dimension concerns the multitude of individual learning needs. Therefore, education / learning takes place permanently, bringing together both all educational influences into a coherent and convergent individual's lifetime. Integrated concept of lifelong learning involves a series of reconsiderations on adult education, such as placing adult education in the education system articulated ways conducted transversely and longitudinally and abandoning its approach as an appendix of school education as an entity contrast or as a therapeutic option or deficiencies school education, but as a natural and necessary fact for individual improvement and development continues to face "challenges", always new, of a changing society. In fact, experience has shown that the boundary between childhood, youth and adulthood is sometimes relative, in terms of individual development and educational needs related. Lifelong learning is

regarded as a continuous investment and development articulated in individual meetings where its meaning given by the European Commission, "all learning activities that take place throughout life, with the aim of improving knowledge, skills and competence in her personal vision, civic, social or employment-related labor market ". Therefore, we deal with a definition that brings together both economic point of view and the humanities, and lifelong learning being traced as goals: *personal development, active citizenship, social inclusion and employability*.

Lifelong learning should be articulated in all forms of education, formal, non-formal and informal, taking into account all the learning experiences of the individual.

- *Education / formal education* refers to forms made systematically organized with a predefined curriculum in educational institutions and leading to certification, qualification, formally recognized. This includes both compulsory education, the school and the academic and the vocational centers for adults carried out for their qualifications certified.

- *Education / non-formal learning*, including various courses, educational programs, variable duration, organized by various educational institutions or in the workplace, in which individuals participate without being forced. Non-formal education involves a willful participation in an organized educational framework, but outside of compulsory schooling and usually without being certified.

- *Education / informal learning* requires that, in a manner not necessarily structured, acquire new knowledge, skills and abilities in everyday experience, without participating in any way. Informal learning is driven by individuals or groups who choose to engage without anyone imposing their criteria or teachers; can be made from a more experienced colleague to learn or may be acquired through self-directed, when consciously trying to learn something. Informal learning is more prevalent among adults than attending classes or educational programs.

2. THE ROLE OF ADULT EDUCATION AND FURTHER EDUCATION

Adult education helps to resolve such phenomena as:

- *Providing a second chance to education* for those who have received initial education incomplete, rudimentary or did not participate at all in this process. This is especially significant restorative filling gaps initial formal education, that affect individual major who holds a certificate of qualification because leaving school prematurely, for this reason, he does not have access to the labor market to secure sources subsistence. It may also be necessary to provide basic education for semianalfabetă person who does not have the fundamental skills of social subsistence;

- *Ensure the promotion of professional careers* (and ensuring high standards of living) through continuous improvement and other specializations, allowing adaptation to dynamic labor market and professions through continuous updating and enrichment of knowledge and skills;

- *Ensuring active participation in social community* for the benefit of all so everyone, from the development community, but especially to bring its contribution to the improvement / resolution of various issues and to support those in need, the social marginalized etc.

UNESCO conference of adult education (Hamburg, 1997), it is regarded as a key action of the XXI century "to promote democracy, justice, equality of opportunity, economic, social, scientific and contribute to building a world in which violent conflicts to be replaced by dialogue and a culture of peace based on justice. At the individual level, adult education should contribute

to the development of autonomy and sense of responsibility to empower adults to cope with economic and social changes, to promote creative participation of citizens in the community. "

As for *lifelong learning*, the new educational reality, arising from the need to meet the challenges of contemporary society, education policy speeches have focused on three fronts variable, with progress to bring its contribution to this: the individual plan, the democratic and the adaptive .

At the *individual level*, lifelong learning it acts through support to "liberate" the ignorance (in particular cognitive development), dependence (by empowering others), constraints (by transforming his perspective on after reflection) of inadequate (through personal development) [2].

The *democratic plan*, lifelong learning helps to ensure social justice, equality, social development and democratic participation through involvement of citizens informed, empowered, motivated and empowered in this regard.

At *adaptive level* , it is that lifelong learning makes it possible to adapt to the changing cultural context.

3. AREAS OF ACTION IN ADULT EDUCATION

The delimitation of areas (sectors) action is dependent adult education criteria tiebreaker, the accent is put at one time to resolve one aspect or another. If some typology focused on target groups with their specific problems, or distinctions based on age, other social problems solved aimed etc. Clear boundaries but were not able to do, there is always the overlaps and interferences simply because a particular issue (eg. Illiteracy) generates side effects (eg. Unemployment, social exclusion, poverty, etc.), and on the Furthermore, because it is always about the interpenetration of individual and social plans (ie. we can not talk about a democratic society without empowering adults to participate actively and responsibly, without talking about tolerance and understanding adults to ethnic, religious, etc.).

The following will analyze four areas: adult vocational education, education for democratic citizenship, adult basic education (illiterate) and education / leisure.

- *adult vocational education* (adult training) is considered the most important dimension of their education, because adulthood, the dominant component of social status is linked to employment, profession pursued [3]. On the labor market, professional skills are required more complex, with an ever higher level of education, the tertiary sector of services, is growing at the expense of industry, which has undergone significant restructuring. The phenomenon of unemployment is an urgent and crucial that require additional training aimed at empowering unemployed find a job and reintegration into the labor market. Also, jobs dynamics is one fast being faced with individuals to change jobs and even profession several times during their professional career. Occupational mobility both between different jobs and between different geographical areas, thus requiring a more advanced educational training. Career advancement is often accompanied by an improvement profesională.Toate they require distinct strands in adult vocational training, namely:

- Training, qualification purposes, retraining or specialization, especially for the unemployed or those under redundancy. Ensuring qualification to adulthood intersects with providing second chances to education and basic education, especially for those with low level of education, while providing retraining to target those who have lost their jobs, those whose profession is not sought on the labor market or vocational disqualified because of a long period which have not benefited from training;
- Further training for those who wish to advance in their careers, to develop professionally, to keep abreast with the latest area to avoid danger decalificării profesional;
- Preparing adults for forming an open attitude towards change and growing confidence to change.
- *Education for democratic citizenship* is, in fact, education for active civic participation in a democratic society. This type of education aims to empower individuals on the knowledge and skills required for democratic practices. Also, education for democratic citizenship is a factor of cohesion and social justice, mutual understanding, intercultural and interreligious dialogue, solidarity, helping to promote harmonious relations between individuals, it is therefore a tool in the fight against violence and intolerance . Such education is achieved through multiple approaches, interconnected, involving civic education, human rights education, intercultural and multicultural education, peace and global understanding, etc. We can not talk about an integrated citizen in a democratic community and its values adapted without him to know his rights and duties as a citizen, not to practice being open, non-discriminatory towards people of other ethnicities, religions or races. Civic competence is considered a core competency in today's society and therefore, through civic education seeks to form a citizen who, based on knowledge of his rights and freedoms, political structure, economic and administrative, to develop the capacity to select, authenticity its choice based on their value system (found in accordance with the values, traditions, social norms) and to act according to their active engagement in a constant and responsible. The absence of this kind of education is manifested by civic apathy, lack of confidence in democratic institutions, increase corruption, racism, aggressive nationalism, xenophobia, intolerance of minorities, discrimination and social exclusion, however threatening the security, stability and development of democratic societies . Education for democratic citizenship is all the more necessary in adult, because many of them were educated in the school of democracy and pluralism spiritual rules, they are voting population, those who must respect the rights of others responsibly and do not accept that their rights are violated. Despite its importance, this type of education has long remained in the care of NGOs, because there was no political will to support it and promote it uniformly and intensively. However, no governmental institutions have proven their professionalism necessary to attract people to this type of training, their power being limited penetration among citizens. Lack of citizen involvement in community life, the high degree of corruption, violation of citizens' lack of spirit, endorsed etc. are effects of lack of education for democratic citizenship in our country. Therefore, efforts should be sustained educational campaigns that stimulate interest for this type of adult education, but also a political will to support and promote it.

- *adult basic education*, type of education that cover key generic skills acquisition to survive in society. While in the traditional sense, basic skills aimed at reading, writing and numeracy, knowledge based society, they are more complex and aimed, according to "Memorandum on lifelong learning" (2000) and the European Commission Communication on "Making the European area as a place of lifelong learning "(2001): computeriale skills, technological culture, foreign languages, social and entrepreneurial skills.

The current trend at the terminology is to replace the term basic skills with key competences, since it is considered that the former is more restrictive targeting them only on the traditional powers and the term refers to a combination of skills, knowledge, skills and attitudes, including the provision, ie the ability to learn. A detailed overview of key skills include the following categories of competences:

- *Language communication skills* - ie the ability to express and interpret thoughts, feelings, facts, ideas, oral, and written language and react appropriately in different social contexts;
- *Communication skills* in a foreign language, ie the ability to listen, speak, write and read in a foreign language, even if not at the same level of communication in the mother tongue;
- *Basic skills in science and technology*, namely the ability to use basic operations, to make mental calculations and written to solve a variety of problems in everyday life;
- *Computeriale skills* and expertise on the use of media and information, which relates to using multimedia technology to obtain, store, create, present, sort and exchange information;
- *Skills to learn how to learn*, which implies disposition and ability to organize and order their own learning, using time effectively, to solve problems, to acquire, process and evaluate new knowledge and apply them in a variety of contexts;
- *Civic skills and interpersonal* which comprise all forms of behavior that the individual must demonstrate in order to participate effectively and constructively in society and solve conflicts, if any. Interpersonal skills are necessary to interact directly or in groups, both in public and in private;
- *Entrepreneurial skills*, which include individual propensity to induce changes and to accept, accommodate and support those coming from outside. These skills involve the individual to take responsibility for their own actions, positive or negative, to develop visions, strategies, set goals and achieve them, taking the lead;
- *General knowledge skills*, which involves mastering basic knowledge to appreciate the different cultural manifestations in various areas of artistic expression.

Discussing adult basic education, we mean not only the complexity of new goals to achieve in terms of new types of key competences but also the scope containment efforts of a large number of addressable. "The study on employment" shows that in 2000, only 60.3% of the population between 25 and 65 years in the European Union have completed secondary education / schooling compulsory, it is assumed that these key competences form . Of these, only 8% were participating in various forms of education and training, the concern is that the population with a low level of qualification is the largest percentage of unemployed. Such a situation leads to the conclusion that basic education adults must be directed mostly on high-risk groups of social

exclusion (people with low qualifications, minority groups, immigrants, people living in rural and remote areas). This type of education is mainly a manifestation of the tool rehabilitation (compensatory) adult education, its role of second chance education for those who left school early or were not enrolled in educational programs for illiterate or semianalfabeți; So, for those who, due to their low level of qualification and training are at risk of poverty and social marginalization. The adult basic education needs anyone in difficulty due to inadequate or outdated instrumentation initial education, economic and social dynamics need to learn continually assuming [4].

- *Education for / free time* is that dimension of adult education aimed at providing opportunities for personal development, for use creative, regenerative, to optimize the potential of individuals. Free time is the time that extra-professional, characterized by the absence of various applications and professional or social pressure and the free choice of individual activities. The vision is not limited spare time to unwind and relax, but covers the formative aspect of every moment of life, in accordance with the principle of education throughout life. Whether it is an individual or collective leisure, fun or educational, formative restful or active or passive, productive or creative, it must contribute to the promotion and full development of human personality, all forms of leisure with educational aspect and constituting therefore the preserve of adult education. The way in which each occupy their free time depends on the level of prior education and culture and social context in which free trăiește. Timpul reflects therefore psychological and social diversity of individuals. Of the many activities that can give them free time, man must choose what defines him. [5] All the activities in which they engage in leisure have individual educational elements and provides adult education, based on a genuine understanding of the particularities and needs of adults, a scientific support to all educational approaches. The explosion of information and technical progress, producing a reconsideration of the report free time - time employment. In these conditions, professional collapses during free time necessary for restoration and study. As regards pensioners who represent the target population with a lot of free time, the purpose of education is their occupation, the experience and their potential, rapid degeneration and disease prevention occurred because of the feeling of uselessness and abandonment, boredom and alienation.

After presenting various dimensions of adult education, we can draw that there is a clear demarcation between them, but rather interdependent. States invest mostly in adult vocational training, since the impact of this investment can be more easily quantified, with immediate effects more visible. The qualitative aspects of adult education, as well as creating a culture of lifelong learning, the formation of a responsible attitude, open, are more difficult to quantify in terms of investment. It attracts relatively incoherent approach underfunding or to other dimensions of adult education. It is necessary to recognize the link between vocational education and general, to understand that learning is not linked only to work, but involves morality, help to increase motivation to learn and to be informed, contributing at the same time, to improve the situation at work [6]. The complexity makes it virtually impossible skills required separation between liberal adult education and vocational training.

4. ROMANIAN INSTITUTIONAL SYSTEM OF ADULT EDUCATION

The diversity of institutions in the Romanian educational system of adult education continued growth is due to the need for training throughout their professional career and diversifying demands and challenges of today's society has made to citizens. In our country, adult education is structured in various sub-sectors that overlap each other, which is a common situation in most European countries. But the fact that adult education in our country is not only subject to a ministry, but more (Ministry of Labour, Family and Social Protection for the Elderly, Ministry of National Education and Scientific Research, Ministry of Culture, etc.) affects its development articulated, coherent and systematic. We can say that adult education related institutions have a *different structure*, differing not only in size but also in terms of several criteria:

- Industry: they only activities adult education and other activities carried out;
- Addressing supply: it is open to all categories of adults or addressed only certain groups;
- They belong: they are part of broader organizational structures or independent organizations;
- Interests: commercial (such as vocational training centers, organized as commercial companies), social (eg church services, various humanitarian NGOs), government (in this category are: houses of culture, community centers, etc. .) or organizational (eg centers set within large companies);
- Their legal status: public or private;
- Scope of supply: includes the entire range of adult education activities or focus on a particular area [7];
- Fulfill the role: regulatory, organizational and coordination at national or local adult education activities, provide services in adult education;
- Coverage: whether national, regional or local level.

Adult vocational training is organized either for teaching or for qualification (especially in initial training and in the continuous schooling if they have left without a qualification), specialization or requalification (in training). The responsible adult vocational training Ministry of Labour, Family and Social Protection for the Elderly and the Ministry of Education and Research, but witness and an increasing emphasis on decentralization and private initiatives [8].

According to Law no. 375/2002 approving Government Ordinance no. 129/2000 regarding adult vocational training, the main embodiment of the adult vocational training courses are organized by training providers or employers within their own organizations, internships and specialization in the country or abroad and apprenticeship work.

Initial vocational training of young adults is coordinated by the Ministry of Education and Research (MENCS.) By developing policies and strategies for vocational education, secondary and post, and for coordinating, monitoring and evaluating their implementation. Subordinated M.E.N.C.Ş. There are various institutions with responsibilities in the initial training of adults, such as the *National Centre for Development of Vocational and Technical Education; National Council for Continuing Education and Training; County school inspectorates; Technical and vocational colleges and post-secondary schools; Teacher houses; Higher education institutions.*

Continues professional formation returns under the responsibility largely Ministry of Labour, Family and Social Protection for the Elderly (MMFPSPV), it has the following roles: policies and programs, normative acts in the field of employment and training; verify the National Agency for Employment implements policies and programs; approval, in collaboration with MENCȘ., the conditions for organizing training graduation and the issuance of certificates recognized in the labor market. The continuous training of adults dealing following institutions, subordinated MMFPSPV: *National Agency for Employment (NAE); Regional Centres for Adult Training; County Agencies for Employment of Labour; National Council for Adult Vocational Training.*

Adult training providers are classified into two categories:

- Public sector providers: units of the national education system which organizes training programs for adult training centers for specific industries, training centers subordinated ANOFM etc
- Private sector providers: training centers offering courses under the aegis of Chambers of Commerce and Industry, trade unions, foundations, associations, employers, businesses, ONGs, authorized individuals (eg in the case of apprenticeship place employment).

General adult education is coordinated especially the Ministry of Culture, under which runs the National Center for Preservation and Promotion of Traditional Culture, with the following tasks: proposed to allow public cultural institutions; continuing education programs conducted in partnership with institutions in the country and abroad; provides specialized scientific support and public cultural institutions accredited in the field of lifelong learning. The network of cultural institutions, collectively known cultural establishments, includes: *community centers; houses of culture; Popular universities.*

Adult education is conducted and *in each ministry*, according to area of expertise and specific needs of adults.

It can be concluded that the system of institutions and organizations for adult education in our country is extremely heterogeneous and diverse in trying to adapt to (and adapt) social and individual requirements, so diverse, complex and dynamic.

5. CONCLUSIONS

At continental level, efforts are sustained investment in education, seen as the most important lever for achieving a "Europe of knowledge". The education of individuals is seen as the key tool for achieving that ambitious objective, to make Europe "the most competitive and dynamic market in terms of economic and scientific capable of sustained development, more jobs and better and better social cohesion ". This is why the intensified efforts to ensure high quality education and training as part of the European strategy that promotes inclusion and social cohesion, mobility, active citizenship, personal and professional development, competitiveness and employment.

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