

ADULT EDUCATION
& THE PLANETARY CONDITION

Adult Education and the Planetary Condition

Edited by Aaro Harju and Anja Heikkinen
The articles in this book are peer-reviewed

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Finnish Adult Education Association
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Freedom and Responsibility in Popular Adult
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The 6th biannual Nordic Conference of Adult Education and Learning was organized in University of Tampere during 25-28 March 2015 (see www.uta.fi/edu/nordic/index.html), organized by universities of Tampere and Åbo Akademi and the research programme Freedom and Responsibility of Popular Adult Education.

The topic of the conference was Adult Education and the Planetary Condition. In the call for abstract, the organizers stated that the traditional nation-state context of adult education research and practice is challenged by the consequences of globalization. This refers not only to increased mobility and interaction across different borders, but also to financial and economic, social and environmental crises at a global scale. Researchers were invited to discuss their topics and results in the tension-field of local and global. While the conference was open to all interested in encounters and dialogues within the Nordic adult education community, it attracted presenters and participants from all continents.

In the reflection meeting the question of Nordicness of adult education was raised to the fore: several colleagues outside Nordic countries were astonished for the lack of discussion on the characteristics and challenges in Nordic adult education. The reactions among the audience were diverse. Some suggested strengthening self-reflective collaboration between Nordic researchers, engaging also practitioners and policy-makers; others considered that the issues and challenges of adult

education are not distinctive for Nordic countries and thus don't need special Nordic collaboration. However, wishes about strengthening the dialogue among Nordic research community were pronounced, at least in the form of preparing the next Nordic Conference of Adult Education and Learning in 2017, expected to be organized by the University of Linköping.

Connected to the conference, an exhibition Places and Spaces of Adulthood, was displayed at the front windows of Virta-building, thanks to Jenni Pätäri, Markus Huhtamäki and the EDUSTA Gallery team (see www.uta.fi/edu/esittely/galleria/nayttelyt/spaces.html).

The organizers and the editors are grateful to the Finnish Ministry of Education and Culture for financial support to the conference, to School of Education and the Conference team in University of Tampere for providing facilities and administrative support, and to the City of Tampere for providing reception. We also thank other members of the scientific committee Jyri Manninen and Petri Salo, as well as the organization team Annika Turunen, Kristiina Tuokko, Markus Huhtamäki and Jenni Pätäri, and conference assistants Emma, Katriina, Bryson, Namwaka and Florence.

Finally, acknowledgements to Markus Huhtamäki, who assisted in harmonizing and polishing the texts, and to Marika Kaarlela, who designed the lay out and illustrations.

*In Helsinki and Tampere, May 2016
Aaro Harju and Anja Heikkinen*

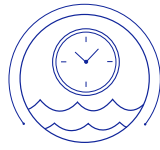


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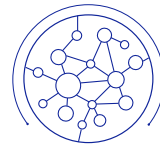
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BY

—
Anja Heikkinen
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INTRODUCTION:

Why adult education and the planetary condition?

Candidates for the focus on planetary condition

The title of the 6th biannual Nordic Conference of Adult Education and Learning was Adult Education and the Planetary Condition. The organizers invited researchers to discuss their topics and results in tension field of local and global, in the context of increasing global interaction and mobility, and of financial, economic, social and environmental crises. They questioned, whether the local challenges of adulthood are increasingly also planetary. While the main function of the conference was to provide space for sharing ongoing research and meeting others in adult education research community, not too many contributions were explicitly responding to the call. This indicates, however, also that adult education, both as field of practice and of research, focuses largely on adaptation of organizations and individuals to given local or national context. What might the focus on planetary condition mean for adult education practice and research? As focus-candidates could suggest themselves, for example, trans-nationalism, post-colonialism, sustainable development, or the age of the Anthropocene.

A strong focus-candidate is trans-nationalism, a concept that indicates the erosion of nation-states as key political and cultural actors in the expansion of economic globalization. Trans-nationalism belongs to discursive repertoire of the proponents of glo-

balization as well as of its critics. Although actors in adult education practice and research do not necessarily use the concept, most of them adapt and respond to the European Union policy (increasingly jointly with the OECD), whose aim is to enhance not only trans-national labour markets, education and research areas, area for skills and qualification and quality assurance (European benchmarks), but also trans-national values in Europe (cf. DG EAC's... 2009, Commission... 2012). The main aim of the EU programmes and actions in education and research – Erasmus for All, Horizon 2020, and Bologna and Copenhagen processes – is the creation of trans-national space, albeit for making EU-Europe the most competitive actor in global economy. More generally, trans-nationalism focuses on the coping strategies with (work-based) migration, on the global prospects of communication technologies, on the impacts and the role of supra-national corporations and agencies in education and work. Practitioners and researchers typically search for good practices in order to improve or correct the methods of adaptation to economic globalization. The concept of global education, paving its way to curricula and study programmes in adult and higher education, as well as the promotion of education export, can also be considered as part of the growing trans-nationalist trend.

Post-colonialism as a focus on planetary condition embraces a fundamental critique of the world-capitalism, based on the coloniality of power. (for ex. Quijano 2000.) Practitioners and researchers with post-colonialist focus consider the current political, social and economic inequalities as continuation of colonialist history. It creat-

ed a Euro-centric world-order, which is justified with ideologies about racial, intellectual and epistemological supremacy of (white, modernized) Europeans, and fortified by the suppression of indigenous cultures through Europeanization and Westernization. Although (Western) post-colonialism emphasizes the need to deconstruct the Euro-centric world-order, the focus often is on decolonizing the minds and deconstructing different hegemonies among the Westerners themselves. While post-colonialism belongs typically to agendas of political movements, it is also quite popular among researchers, who conceive adult education practice and theory to be successors of social movements, struggling for emancipation.

The concept of sustainable development (SD) has become part of mainstream discourse in adult education policy, practice and research. In Nordic countries, governments, parties and civil society are officially most progressive in commitment to the principles of SD and to the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (United Nations 2015). In Finnish adult education, for example VST (Finnish Adult Education association), the umbrella of non-formal adult education associations, proclaims markedly its commitment to SD (www.sivistystyo.fi/index.php?k=14590). It proclaims that eco-socially educated humans should be the aim of non-formal adult education and all life-long learning. The criteria for sustainability follow national guidelines used across all sectors and stages of education. In practice, only minority of organizations report any activity in sustainable development, and the focus remains on environmental management

and on wellbeing of staff and students. (Saloheimo 2015). Despite the official recommendations by the ministry of education (Opetusministeriö 2006) to have a SD plan, and the inclusion of SD into national core curricula for vocational qualifications, the interest among vocational adult education organizations seems to be marginal. For example, AMKE (the Finnish Association for the Development of Vocational Education and Training, www.amke.fi/toiminta.html), the umbrella for providers of initial and adult vocational education, doesn't mention sustainability or environmental issues at all. The situation is much the same in higher education institutes. The current mainstreaming and economization of sustainable development (cleantech, bio-industries etc.), however, will very likely strengthen SD as the main focus on planetary condition in adult education practice and research.

The fourth focus-candidate, the age of the Anthropocene might contest the self-conceptions of adult education policies, practices and research most deeply. Anthropocene refers to a new geological epoch “during which humans have a decisive influence on the state, dynamics and future of the Earth system”, threatening fundamentally the conditions of human life on the planet. While the earth-scientists play a key role in diagnosing the aspects and dimensions of the human influence in the new era (Anthropocene Working Group, <http://quaternary.stratigraphy.org/working-groups/anthropocene/>), the findings shake the foundations of human-centred disciplines and research. The human is no more exclusively the object of humanities and social sciences, nor can the human sphere be isolated from its non-human, planetary environment. (Latour 2014, Steffen et al

2011.) While the mission of education – also adult education – has been to elevate humanness, humanity and culture, the age of the Anthropocene forces practitioners and researchers to critically review their mission. How has education contributed to development of humanity and human societies, which have brought the whole Earth system to this state? Beside self-critical historical reflections, what kinds of alternatives for anthropocentric mission could and should be envisioned for adult education? The studying of the formation of humanness from historical and contemporary perspective, or in relation to trans-nationalism, post-colonialism or sustainability would remain still remain important. The issues of democracy, justice and participation would be even more important in such endeavour. However, there is a need to embed them into a wider framework of relations between humans and nonhumans.

Review on contributions

Although many articles of this book may not seem to refer to planetary condition directly, an attentive reader might find some connections to one or more focus-candidates discussed earlier – or to others that were not mentioned.

The articles in the *first section* discuss contemporary challenges of adult education policy. The topic of Anders Breidlid's article is the possibility of sustainable formal and non-formal education in the global South, while the education discourses in most countries are heavily influenced by the global North and West. He argues that the epistemological hegemony, which he calls the global architecture of education, has led to marginalisation of local and in-

indigenous languages and cultures. This has severely worsened the learning outcomes of both children and adults. Breidlid analyzes, how Western knowledge has become hegemonic, and how the hegemony is legitimized and supported by the UNESCO, by different academic journals and how it is sustained in the education systems in the global South. He states that it is necessary for indigenous and Western knowledge systems to co-exist in order to improve outcomes of learning in the South. Finally he presents alternatives to the hegemonic discourse in some formal and non-formal education programmes in the global South.

Karen Egedal Andreasen, Palle Rasmussen and Christian Ydesen question in their article, how to guide youth in danger of being marginalised or excluded from society in general and the labour market in particular. They analyse the guidance dimension in the youth in development project as described in the project and by the youths participating in the project. The project was designed to facilitate and support transition to an adult life by giving participants social support, feedback, experiences, room for reflection and feeling of acceptance and inclusion. In Denmark all social work with young people at risk involves guidance to “the right path”, since individual guidance seems to be the key asset in mobilizing young person’s needs and experiences. The article indicates important elements in the guidance of youth at risk, such as psychological intervention and personal support, support from significant persons and guidance about educational system and possible jobs.

Johanna Lähti, Anja Heikkinen and Leena Lietzén examine in their article the trans-

formation of Nordic equality politics facing global reality. They argue that in Nordic countries, equality became the core aim of political agendas in the end of 1960s, especially in its popular or liberal version. It has emphasized participation of all people in social, political and economic life. Gender equality has dominated mainstream conceptions of equality in education and employment. However, they suggest that the fixation to Nordicness in equality politics may have led to erosion of its potential for developing new, trans-national and planetary conceptions of adult education. Until 1990s, Finnish education policy, equality referred to social justice, to regional equality, and to equal educational opportunities for all. Since then, the market orientation and increased transnational influences in policymaking have challenged the culturally embedded (Nordic) notions of equality and changed its aims towards individual rights in education and work. On the other hand, the agile moves of global industries have revealed paradoxes in the Nordic equality models, and lead to wider questions about inclusion and exclusion.

The article of Lorenz Lassnigg questions, whether current politics are subsuming non-vocational adult education (NVAE) to qualification and competence strategies or promote search for new missions. At the EU-level, the qualification framework (QF) is one of the main instruments for promoting employment and for progression within educational trajectories. Lassnigg questions, what the role of QF is for NVAE. He suggests two alternatives. First argument is, that the QF policy is such a strong strand that if NVAE does not participate, it might lead to a disadvantage of this sector in terms of political support, financing, etc. The second argument refers to the re-

relationship of NVAE to overall adult education and lifelong learning. Is it more favourable in political strategies to conceive adult education as an integrated sector including NVAE, or to treat NVAE as a separate sector within adult education with its own needs and logics?

Joo-Hyun Park's article concentrates on opportunities for higher education in Finland and Korea. In both countries, the purpose of adult education is considered to be developing skills for today's and future labour market, helping adults to acquire basic skills or key competencies, and achieving non-economic goals such as personal fulfilment, improved health, civic participation, social inclusion, reduced levels of crime, and environment protection. In the contemporary knowledge society and worldwide competition, adaptation to changing technologies and learning of new skills for the changing labour market requires adult education to maintain the adaptability of adults after the age of 30. At the same time the demographic change has raised the big issue of the quality of retired life, which also requires distinctive programmes in adult education. Neither has the traditional citizenship education lost its importance. Park investigates current adult education in Finland and Korea mainly with the data from the OECD. She inquires the expansion potential of adult education by showing the interrelations between adult, vocational and higher education.

The second section consists of articles dealing with adult education and work life. The first article by Karin Filander, Tuula Heiskanen, Hanna Ylöstalo, Satu Kalliola and Heidi Kervinen examines the moments of dialogue between theory and practice through reflections on several cases. They

argue, that in the global change of work environments, employees are increasingly treated as competitive entrepreneur-subjects who must be permanently ready for new productivity and flexibility demands. The authors study the change through an ex post facto comparative reflection on a few projects, which aimed at relating theory and practice and were implemented in the Work Research Centre of the University of Tampere. Their interest is in examining what kind of knowledge and theory — and 'pedagogy', or rather 'andragogy'—were developed in the case studies. The article concentrates on organisational and individual levels, but questions also the neo-liberal ethos that is present in all cases.

The article by Lisa Marie Lorenz and Steffi Robak discusses bridges for trans-national adult education, based on a current project, in which three German partners work together to establish an Advanced Training Academy in Beijing, China. They introduce the Chinese cultural standard "guanxi" as an example of the need to adapt in cooperation. By using a case study of the ego-centric guanxi-network of Mr. Li, they show the emergence of the cultural standard and the transition to program planning process. The key concepts in the article are trans-nationalization, institutionalization and professionalism. The authors assume that connections between societies will be generated by networks of individual (persons) and collective players (organizations), which incorporate education and training. By institutionalization they refer to development of organizational structures for the continuous offering of projects, consultations and programs for adult education. Professionalism becomes apparent through pedagogically competent action of the personnel. The authors argue

that trans-national adult education requires scientific and experiential knowledge and case-related reflection on interconnect- edness and cooperation, including under- standing of cultural features.

Laura Seppänen and Jarno Riikonen focus in their article on learning interpretative- ness for sustainability in the context of ro- botic surgery. The increased complexity of work, enhanced by the specialization and division of labour, is a global phenomenon. This creates uncertainties for profession- als and organizations. In order to support sustainable development, adult educa- tion needs to find new methods for dealing with complexity and uncertainty at work. The authors explore a method for enhanc- ing learning an interpretative way to work. They argue, that if sustainability and inter- pretativeness – continuous learning mak- ing new connections between phenomena – are increasingly needed in work, this can happen through dialogic self-confrontation methods.

The article of Elizabeth Opit and Perpetua Kalimasi on impacts of political, econom- ic and educational shifts on the gendered division of work widen the perspective of adult education and work life to global- ly exploited and marginalized location in East-Africa. It is based on reading of docu- ments related to gendered division of work in Uganda and Tanzania during the period from the 1960s when the colonial rule end- ed, up to the onset of the Millenium Devel- opment Goals that were launched in 2000. Prior to the independence, the colonial re- gimes used formal education to prepare a ‘native boy’ with vocational skills for minor and low paid jobs while the girls were ed- ucated to become wives to the educated African boys. The historical trend of gen-

dered work after the colonial period il- lustrates a shift from the confinement of women to traditionally feminine jobs to do- ing male dominated occupations. The num- ber of women holding key positions in the two countries mainly increased due to af- firmative action measures implemented by the post colonial governments in response to the international calls and declarations for gender equality in all spheres of devel- opment in society.

In the *third section* of the book, adult learners are in focus. Alba G.A. Naccari dis- cusses the contribution of bodily mediation for ecological adult education. She attempt to show the educational opportunities of the Symbolic-Anthropological Bodily Me- diation Pedagogy®, which includes outdoor activities, such as dance and movement. The term “mediation” means that move- ment and dance activities are used as tools to educate the person. Naccari considers experiential learning as an opportunity to change adults´ attitudes in the current dra- matic state of the eco-system. She reminds of the ancient origins of dancing in natu- ral surroundings, a practice that can still be experienced in ethnic dances across the world. The intention of bodily mediation is to awaken a sense of belonging and multi- ple interaction with ‘Mother Earth’, to ex- perience the harmony between human and cosmic rhythms, and to create a sense of responsibility for the earth-system.

Vesa Korhonen´ s article on in-between different cultures discusses integration ex- periences and future career expectations of international degree students studying in Finland. Higher education institutions have been most eager to adopt internationaliza- tion into their strategies since the turn of 2000s. Nevertheless, the situation of inter-

national students and workers in Finland is by no means easy. The article examines, how international degree students experience their integration into academic education, into Finnish society and the labour market during and after their studies. Cultural integration describes the general engagement with society, language, and culture as well as cultural adaptation, academic integration involves issues connected to teaching and learning environment, social integration includes social contacts and friendships with academics, and career integration means international students' conceptions about their expertise, possible employment or career after graduation. The concept "in-between" refers to international students' search of their agency in the encounters between different cultural perspectives. The author questions, whether the "in between" position is creating an opportunity trap for international students in Finland.

The fourth section deals with mobilization for sustainability in adult education. Jenni Pätäri, Anja Heikkinen and Sini Teräsahde reflect in their article the interpretation of responsibility in Finnish popular adult education research. They assume, that both the autonomic research and the autonomic popular adult education are in danger of turning into tools for business economy and innovation. The authors argue that recognition of the societal responsibility of the academy and popular adult education requires making different confrontations and dichotomies visible. For this critical reflections on the development of popular adult

education research in Nordic countries is needed. This should promote societally responsible research and practice, which would take into account conditions for survival of humankind and the planet. The improvement of the current situation, democracy and moral agency, including both human and non-human perspectives, would need new ways to collaborate between researchers, practitioners and policy-makers in popular adult education.

The book is closed by the article of Lili-Ann Wolff about adult education in an unsustainable era. Sustainability is not *one* alternative anymore; it is *the only* alternative, emphasizes Wolff, though she also problematizes the concept of sustainable development. Researchers agree that the humanity's production and consumption have exceeded the limits of planet Earth and that the present development model is unsustainable from environmental, economic, and social perspectives. The author discusses the implications of the present unsustainable quandaries especially on adult education, and suggests new ways to encounter the present environmental and social challenges. She analyses the potential of different grass-root movements insisting both global and local change in economy, in treating the environment, in consumption and product design. Because the dilemmas of sustainability cannot anymore be responded through changes in individual lifestyles, Wolff suggests that adult education should promote empowerment of adults through collective action.

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• PART 1 •





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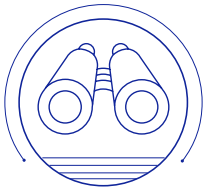
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Comparative political perspectives of adult education – subsuming to qualification and competence strategies or searching for new missions?

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Adult education, opportunity for higher education in Finland and Korea





BY

Anders Breidlid

INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGES AND WESTERN EPISTEMOLOGY:

the challenges of sustainable development in education in the global South

Introduction

The focus of this article is the formal and non-formal education in the global South, and how the education discourse in many countries are heavily influenced by a Western educational discourse. The pervasiveness of a Western discourse, or Western epistemology, in the education systems in the global South is a logical consequence of the interrelationship between Western epistemology and colonialism and imperialism. I argue that this epistemological hegemony in the education systems, what I call the global architecture of education in line with Jones (2007), means a marginalisation of local and indigenous languages and cultures. This has severe consequences for the learning outcomes for both children and adults in the global South. In the chapter I explore why Western knowledge has become hegemonic, and analyze how this hegemony is legitimized and supported by UNESCO, by different academic journals and how it is sustained in the education systems in the global South. Moreover, the chapter queries the sustainability of this epistemic hegemony, both in the schools and in adult education institutions, and discusses some alternatives to the hegemonic education discourse, both in formal and non-formal education programmes in the global South.

I argue that it is necessary for indigenous and Western knowledge systems to co-exist in education systems in the South in order to dramatically improve learning outcomes (see Breidlid 2013). Finally I address some alternatives to the hegemonic education discourse both in certain formal and non-formal education programmes in the global South.

My positionality

The starting point for this discussion is my own epistemological positionality. My background is deeply embedded in Western epistemology, and its hegemony was never disputed during my university years as a student, and what I know of top universities in the West confirms a picture of epistemological uniformity even today, or as Linda Zagzebski (2009) suggests, epistemic universalism.

But my experiences in the global South, particularly in Africa and Latin America during visits to educational institutions, exposed a situation where Western knowledge and epistemology had been transferred more or less undigested to education systems in the global South. Children attend schools and adults attend educational institutions where the language of instruction is often a colonial language. Moreover, the context and cultural environment of the learning institution is often alien to the students. Briefly put, so-called epistemic universalism has been imposed on the school system, universalism meaning Western. It means that Western knowledge is what counts in the world today; it is in fact hegemonic, and more or less unquestioned apart from some Muslim coun-

tries, and among some indigenous groups like for example the Māori in New Zealand and indigenous people in some countries in Latin America.

How did Western knowledge become hegemonic?

Western knowledge in the singular (the knowledge which has colonized the world) is so-called scientific knowledge: rational, empiricist, secular, universal as well as dynamic, civilized, and progressive. It claims to embody Truth, is superior and hegemonic. Moreover, it claims universality and objectivity and has been transported to the rest of the world. But as the Frankfurt school told us a long time ago: knowledge is a social construction deeply embodied in structures of power (Giroux 2009). Science changes and is not simply reversible (Wallerstein 1997). The fluctuation of scientific truth is well coined by A. Richard Palmer (2000), a US biologist: “we cannot escape the troubling conclusion that some perhaps most cherished generalisations are at best exaggerated in their biological significance and at worst a collective illusion nurtured by strong a priori beliefs often repeated” (Palmer 2000, 470).

Knowledge and power are twin concepts that have dominated the world scene since the 15th century. Europe’s intellectual heroes guided Europe through the enlightenment period, and sought to establish Reason with a capital R as a basis for the generation of knowledge. While the enlightenment period in many ways was a very important period in Europe’s history it had a darker side often glossed over.

» The Other was termed irrational, voiceless, feminine, superstitious, underdeveloped, uncivilised, barbaric and static. »

Interestingly Linda Zagzebski (2009, 97) claims that an important legacy of John Locke and other Enlightenment thinkers is intellectual egalitarianism, and that this egalitarianism is deeply embedded in contemporary Western culture. This is, however, a problematic statement since John Locke for example was a defender of slavery, believing slavery should be a form of punishment for those who committed a crime worthy of death and anyone who committed such a crime should become a slave. Descartes shaped colonial policies and David Hume, the Enlightenment sceptic, stated that “I am apt to think Negroes are naturally inferior to whites”. For many Enlightenment thinkers, however, intellectual egalitarianism was their philosophical guideline. Suffice it to mention here Rousseau, Diderot and Daniel Defoe. But as Jeannie Kerr (2014) argues, the problematic side of modernity emerged in imperial structures of coloniality. Mignolo refers to this as the *coloniality-modernity relationship* from the mid-15th century which caused racism and patriarchy, “that created the conditions to build and control a structure of knowledge, either grounded on the word of God or the word of Reason and Truth” (Mignolo 2011, xv).

Western knowledge production based on ‘reason and objectivity’ thus followed in the wake of colonialism, imperialism and

capitalism. Sword and word went hand in hand, and a Self-Other dichotomy was established between Western and non-Western knowledge production in line with Kipling’s statement (1889): “Oh East is East and West is West, and never the twain shall meet.” Indeed a long way from epistemic universalism referred to above.

Colonialism’s civilizing mission had a very clear epistemological aspect: it was a necessity to save the Other from barbarism and ignorance. The Other was termed irrational, voiceless, feminine, superstitious, underdeveloped, uncivilised, barbaric and static. Other knowledges than Western knowledge were rubbished and marginalized, and became an excuse for conquest and domination (Said 1979). Of course there were important places of learning in the East as well as in America and Africa, but they were not recognized by the hegemonic, Western discourse.

The global architecture of education

The global architecture of education (Jones 2007, 325) means a common, Western epistemological discourse which permeates most education discourses in the South as well as in the North. It is designed on the basis of one style, the Western epistemic style with its roots as already described

in 15th and 16th century Europe. There is basic agreement that education systems in the global South follow a standard script or global educational discourse (with certain exceptions). Where international organizations, NGOs and particularly researchers disagree is what the consequences of such a uniform script are. Basically it is only researchers who discuss the epistemological assumptions underlying the global architecture: the big international organizations hardly touch upon the theme of differing epistemologies as one cause of educational failures in the global South.

The Education for All (EFA) Global Monitoring Reports

The EFA Global Monitoring Reports, published annually by UNESCO, report on the global state of affairs in education with different foci every year. An analysis of the various issues expose an understanding of education deeply embedded in Western epistemology, where there is hardly a critical question about the dominance of the Western discourse. While the EFA reports are concerned with quality there is no profound discussion of what kind of quality. The reports are permeated with the same educational discourse, the global architecture of education, and even though the reports recognize the weak school results in many countries in the global South there is no soul-searching activity about the underlying reasons why. The report from 2015 (UNESCO 2015) discusses achievements and challenges from 2000 to 2015, but it fails, with some exceptions related to indigenous people and local languages, to discuss to what extent alternative knowledge systems could have improved the relatively meagre school achievement in the global South.

Global Report on Adult Learning and Education

The two global reports on Adult Learning and Education (UNESCO 2009 and 2013) follow in the wake of the EFA reports, but mention briefly alternative knowledge systems. Interestingly the second report (UNESCO 2013) extends literacy beyond reading and writing to include multiple forms and processes of human and social communication. The significance of indigenous knowledges in upholding traditional culture and identities is also referred to in the second report, but without considering it a major hindrance to learning in the global South *in toto*:

The Asia and Pacific region takes into account its rich cultural and linguistic heritage, by underlining the importance of culture specific responses, drawing on traditional or indigenous knowledge and values and upholding cultural identities. (UNESCO 2013, 52)

The UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development and a Norwegian Development Agency (NORAD) Report

The difficulty of penetrating the wall of universalist presumptions was clearly exposed during the UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (2005–2014) where only old solutions to challenges related to sustainable schooling and development are given (UNESCO 2015).

A recent report Evaluation of Norwegian Multilateral Support to Basic Education

(NORAD, October 2015) has assessed Global Partnership for Education (GPE) and UNICEF for the Norwegian Development Agency. The critique of the two organizations (which are closely linked) is harsh, particularly in terms of learning outcomes. In the conclusion the evaluation team states:

The efforts of donors and partner governments to expand enrolment have helped many children, but resources now need to be invested in factors that increase the main payoff from being enrolled, namely, acquiring basic knowledge and skills (ibid., 90).

The report recommends to “give more emphasis to proximate causes of learning outcomes: student/teacher time on task, teacher supervision, and use of *local language in early learning*” (my italics) (ibid., 91).

What the report in reality states is that the organizations’ focus on quantity has impaired learning outcomes, and that they have not employed the use of local languages in their interventions. It is difficult to understand, but not surprising, that a huge global UN organization like UNICEF is still trapped in the ideology of the global architecture of education by making use of colonial languages in their work.

What the report fails to comment upon is the cultural and epistemological alienation that follows in the wake of UNICEF’s interventions. Indigenous or alternative knowledge systems are not referred to at all in the report, thus confirming a picture of an international education expertise which is still primarily embedded in a Western educational discourse and epistemology. The

recommendation by the evaluation team to use local languages as media of instruction in early learning is, however, a step in the right direction.

Different ‘schools’ and the content of academic journals

As mentioned above researchers disagree about the consequences of such a uniform script. According to Meyer, Boli, Thomas and Ramirez (1997) the positive aspects outweigh the negative. Belonging to what I call the ‘World Society School’ they underline the importance of mass school education as part of the global spread and institutionalization of modern state forms and state institutions. The problem with this school of thought is that it has a one-size-fits-all approach, is decontextualized and thus ignores the vast differences of culture, languages and epistemology in the global South. The goal is, as their book ‘World Society and Nation States’ (1997) implies, a homogenization of societies to fit into modern state forms originating in the West.

Similarly, what I call the ‘Institutional School’, is not concerned with and does not problematize the global educational discourse at all. Influenced by Rostow’s *Stages of Economic Growth* from 1960 the credo is that all societies go through a linear development as part of the globalization and modernization process. With a clear positivist as well as ethnocentric streak it is argued that development goes beyond culturally determined criteria based on ‘negative’ aspects like metaphysics and transcendentalisms. In line with the Enlightenment philosophers referred to earlier, the claim is that Western knowledge is universal and rational and must be taught as the obvious knowledge system

in school. The massive failures in school in many countries in the global South are, it is claimed, due to classical challenges, like shortages of qualified teachers, materials, books, classrooms and equipment. Such a view is in line with World Bank policy on education (World Bank 2015): the World Bank has, like other donor organizations, set up knowledge banks which function as data banks to generate 'evidence-based educational policy research and policy-making' (Steiner-Khamsi 2009, 245). These knowledge banks where the World Bank has a leading role are bases with an accumulation of ideas of so-called 'best practices' in educational interventions such as EMIS (Education Management Information System), pro-capita financing, outcomes-based education, standardized student assessment, and a host of other traveling reforms funded by multilateral organizations (Steiner-Khamsi 2009, 245). In line with Western institutional thinking on education alternative knowledge systems are conspicuous by their absence.

The third 'school', the 'Radical School', with researchers such as L. Tuiwhai Smith (1999), R. Bishop (2007), M. Ogunnyi (1988 and 2003) in the global South and B. de Sousa Santos (2007), L. Semali (1999), J. Kincheloe (1999) in the North as well as some international NGOs critique the epistemological roots of the common global script and their negative consequences. In line with my critique, they claim from various perspectives that the homogenized script causes alienation, demotivation, learning problems. The consequences of the global architecture of education are teaching based on Western values and colonial language, dislocation of home language and culture, and a negative impact on learners across the world.

Basil Bernstein's (1990) study in the UK is in this context illuminating. He found that children attending school from the working and middle class use different language codes: the working class children employ a so-called restricted code whereas the middle class children employ an elaborate code. Both languages codes are effective communicative tools, but they address different socio-economic and cultural environments. However, in school the elaborate code is employed, meaning that the middle class children profit from the linguistic and cultural climate in school. Even though the children speak English, the restricted code is clearly a disadvantage in school and is an obstacle in the learning process.

When different codes within the same language cause learning problems, it is hardly surprising that the classroom in the global South, Africa in particular, is completely alienating to the native child. The language of instruction is in a language they do not know and are not familiar with, and in a cultural environment with world views equally unfamiliar.

Leading journals on international education and development seem to toe the line of the institutional school. Journals like *International Journal of International Development*, *Comparative Education Research* and *Compare*, to take just a few examples, do not, with certain exceptions, debate the big epistemological questions related to schooling and development discussed above. Not even education journal in the global South, like *Perspectives in Education* and *Journal of Education*, have articles which ask basic questions about the crisis in education in the global South beyond the conventional answers related to teachers, infrastructure and materials.

Lessons from the global South

One of the most articulate spokesmen of the epistemic violation discussed above is Ngũgĩ wa Thion'go, who claims that the cognitive conquest was more important than the military: According to Ngũgĩ: "its most important area of domination was the mental universe of the colonized, the control, through culture, of how people perceived themselves" (Ngũgĩ 1981, 10). Ngũgĩ wrote on the basis of personal experience about what can be termed epistemic genocide in school, where he was not allowed to speak his mother tongue, not even in the school yard. Ngũgĩ claims that the mind of the subaltern has been colonized.

Colonizing the mind: South Africa and Australia

It is my contention that the classroom as well as the adult learning spaces are the most important sites of knowledge production. In school more or less the whole population are exposed to a specific type of epistemological 'indoctrination'.

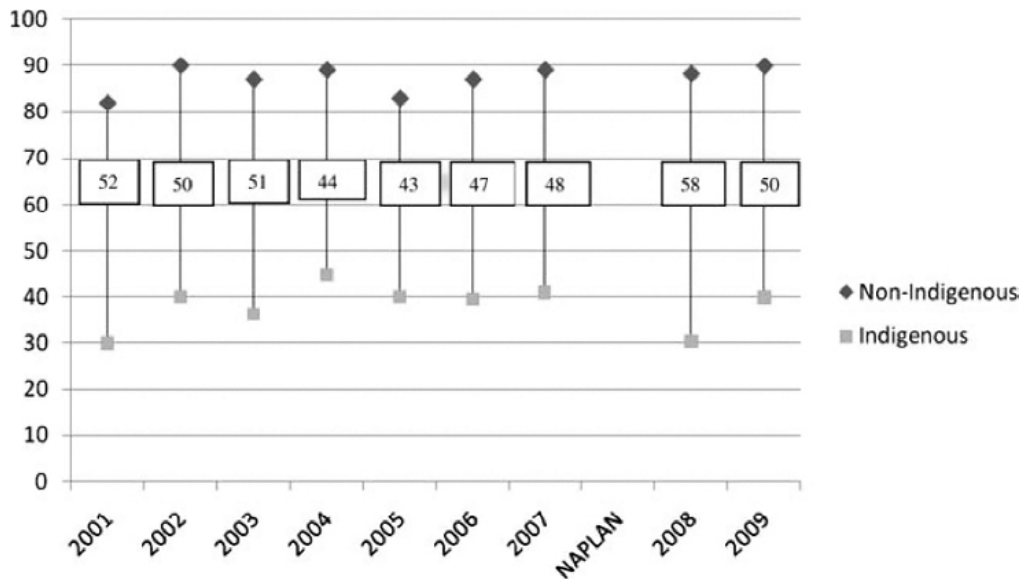
Similarly the adult learning spaces are also influenced by a specific epistemology, seldom adjusted to the culture and epistemology of the local context. In other words: these learning spaces are perfect spaces for the consciousness building (conscientization) or the colonizing of the mind. In line with the radical school and Ngũgĩ, my claim is that the colonial Western school system, the global architecture of education, causes alienation, demotivation, learning problems in the global South.

South Africa is a case in point where pupils move between different knowledge sys-

tems or world views in a day. As Curriculum 2005 states: "the existence of different world views is important for the Natural Science Curriculum. (...) Several times a week they cross from the culture of home, over the border into the culture of science, and then back again. (...) Is it a hindrance to teaching or is it an opportunity for more meaningful learning and a curriculum which tries to understand both the culture of science and the cultures at home?" (DoE 2002, 12). The results in South Africa are devastating. Clearly there are multiple factors, that can explain the situation, but the imposition of Western epistemology is an important explanatory factor. According to the Centre for Constitutional Rights (2008) only 1 out of 29 matriculates (3.5%) are functionally literate after matric and the drop-out rate in South African schools is 77% over 12 years of schooling. Functional literacy is defined as reading and writing skills necessary to everyday use, which alone is not enough to compete in the demanding economic landscape. This literacy rate has not improved substantially even though multiple interventions have been made.

As Curriculum 2005 states, the students move from different world views, i.e. epistemologies in a day. The worldview, the perception of the world and how knowledge is produced at home differ substantially from what is produced in the learning institutions for both children and adults. Local knowledge production is based on everyday activities, is oral, is not compartmentalized into different knowledge units (is more holistic), is primarily communitarian and has a strong spiritual element. Western epistemology is primarily individualistic and written, is supposedly rational and universal, is compartmentalized, is

— FIGURE 1. Reading results.



Sources: 2001–2007 NT Board of Studies Annual Reports (MAP Benchmarks)
 2008–2009 Ministerial Council for Education, Early Childhood Development and Youth Affairs
 (NAPLAN National Minimum Standard and Above).

oriented toward the global community, and has a labour market as well as a strong material focus. The marginalization of local or indigenous knowledges is based on the rationalist foundationalism of Western epistemology where indigenous knowledges were/are inferiorized (see also Carey and Festa 2009).

The clash between epistemologies in school hinders learning, but is not being properly addressed by Ministries in the global South nor by international NGOs. A survey in South Africa shows, however, that South Africans, when asked about science versus indigenous knowledge systems (IKS), are overwhelmingly positive to IKS (Moos et al 2010).

However, this overwhelmingly positive attitude to IKS is not translated into classroom practices or the curriculum. The Basic Education Minister in South Africa, Angie Motschekga, is clearly worried about the poor school results in the South African schools. She therefore commissioned a ministerial task team report, which recommended to make mathematics compulsory. Moreover she launched a national campaign to make people aware of the importance of mathematical literacy (*Mail and Guardian* 2014). The question is, however, if this is sufficient to address the huge challenges in the school. From my field work in Eastern Cape I experienced that pupils could excel in mathematics, but would fail in the exam because the exam questions were in English. A principal at an all-black

farm school pointed at one of his students and said: “He is the best in mathematics but he will fail the exam” (Bredlid 2013). To really improve the situation would require the production of context-relevant text books in the 11 local languages. The most common objection from the government is that South Africa cannot afford it. The question is whether South Africa can afford not to do it (see also Ogunnyi 1988 and 2003).

In Australia the situation among indigenous groups (Aboriginals) is even worse. The diagram below shows Australian indigenous and non-indigenous Year 3 reading results 2001–2009 by percentages, including percentage point difference.

The fundamental linguistic and cultural needs as well as ecological knowledges of Aboriginal youth and adults are not taken seriously in Australian formal and non-formal education. It is well known, for example, that profound ecological knowledges are passed down through the generations in Aboriginal communities, providing potential in education for connections to Western knowledge and offering a conduit for more successful learning experiences in schools and in adult learning situations.

There is therefore a need to reorient education systems in many indigenous communities across the globe as well as in many Sub-Saharan African countries where indigenous languages as media of instruction and local cultures are included as a non-exotic part of the learning. It does not mean the scrapping of everything Western, but it means querying its epistemological assumptions. It means co-existence between Western and indigenous knowledge systems in the

educational institutions, or in Bhabha’s (2004) words, a third space. A space where indigenous knowledges relate to Western knowledge and where the position of the power of hegemonic Western knowledge is neutralized. In this third space potentialities for generation of new knowledges in the intersection between Western and indigenous exist.

It is necessary to rewrite the textbooks and curricula, and include in the learning spaces the languages Africans and indigenous people speak. It is not sufficient, however, to translate textbooks from a colonial language, since translated books with a foreign cultural content still poses learning problems for the learners.

Decolonising the Mind: New Zealand and Namibia

My visit to Māori primary schools in New Zealand exposed a situation quite different from the situation in Australia discussed above. A new curriculum for Māori children (*Te Marautanga o Aotearoa*) has been developed in parallel with the kiwi (white) curriculum where Māori language and Māori epistemology are foundations in the curriculum.

According to the guidelines “*Te Marautanga o Aotearoa* will ensure students have the skills and knowledge to participate, contribute to, and succeed in both *te ao Māori* (Māori world-view) and *te ao whānui* (global world-view). Students will be confident, connected, actively involved, lifelong learners.”

Interestingly the results in the Māori schools seem better for Māori children than in the kiwi schools.

» However, there are examples of non-formal education programmes which are culturally relevant, participant driven, and socially empowering. »

Another example of a decolonized curriculum is found in Namibia, even though it is limited to the first years of schooling. Brock-Utne refers to the Village School Program in Namibia where the Ju/'hoansi San children from grades 1 to 3 were to be given basic education in their mother tongue and with a culturally sensitive learning environment (Brock-Utne 1995; 2000). The results were encouraging. The children in the project did much better than San children in ordinary schools. Teaching material was produced based on traditional stories of the Ju/'hoansi people. As Pfaffe states:

Following the production of the Ju/'hoan literacy primers, their subsequent translation into English promoted the cultural richness of the Ju/'hoan people, and made it accessible to a wider audience. Moreover, the English readers are now offering possibilities for contextually appropriate teaching of English as a foreign language. (Pfaffe 2002, 161)

Alternative non-hegemonic non-formal education programmes

While the formal education system often centers on social harmony and status quo, with a predetermined curriculum and with students often too young to participate in transformative social action, adult education is in principle not necessarily so bound to a formal curriculum. Moreover adults can be more proactive and instigate social transformation including consciousness-raising and empowerment. But in the real world in the global South, neither formal nor conventional non-formal or informal education challenges in most cases the global architecture of education. In the global South the case is often that adult learning programmes copy syllabi and material from the formal, conventional school system.

However, there are examples of non-formal education programmes which are culturally relevant, participant driven, and socially empowering (Bartolomé 1996; Freire & Macedo 1987; Lankshear & McLaren 1993; Shor 1992). Such programmes challenge

oppressive structures, unequal power relations, and are not confined to teaching specific literacy. These are education programmes for epistemological, cultural and often ecological sustainability incorporating indigenous knowledges.

Cuba's Literacy Campaign in 1961 may be the prime example of literacy programmes based on a local cultural context which literally eradicated illiteracy from the island, prompting UNESCO to declare it an illiteracy-free country in 1961. Moreover, other lights in the adult literacy tunnel include the Nicaraguan Literacy Crusade of the early 1980s, the Highlander school in the southern United States during the civil rights movement as well as the shanty town dwellers in Brazil and Chile, where conscientization to a critical consciousness was in focus. (Horton & Freire 1990; Kozol 1978; Miller 1985)

In New Zealand the Māori renaissance movement has employed Freirean methods outside the state system, and developed the Māori language and Māori ways of thinking by including Māori epistemology and ecological sustainability. Education forms part of the struggle by the Māori as well as other indigenous people for recognition and equity.

Conclusion

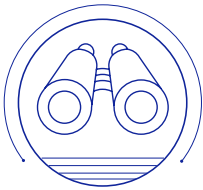
There is an urgent need to explore alternative ways of making both formal and non-formal education more adapted to the needs of the learners in the global South. Some of the examples from countries in the global South, briefly discussed above, however, demonstrate the close link between coloniality and the current institutions of learning. Not the least, governments and ministries of education in the South are influenced by support from international institutions, such as the World Bank, UNESCO and UNICEF and international NGOs. The political and intellectual elites in the global South have failed to delink themselves from the global architecture of education and are thus complicit in the massive failures of education systems discussed here. They have managed to silence the rich reservoir of indigenous knowledges that are employed by people every day across the global South and thus contributed to upholding the inequalities and poor learning opportunities of the masses of illiterate children and adults. What is needed in education institutions in the global South is not more of the same medicine that has failed so dramatically, but medicine that responds to the heterogeneous epistemological landscape.

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GUIDING YOUNG ADULTS AT RISK

– effects and challenges
in the Danish welfare state

Introduction

An important question in the work with young adults at risk is to discuss how to guide those in danger of being marginalised or excluded from society in general and the labour market in particular (Sultana 2004; OECD 2011; Vuorinen & Leino 2009). For young adults who have not completed any education after compulsory school, and who might not even see this as a possibility, the chance of getting employment and leading a life as an integrated citizen is much reduced. Labour markets of modern industrialised societies tend to be characterised by a need for educated and specialised employees.

In Denmark all social work with young people at risk involves some kind of guidance aimed at putting the young person on ‘the right path’. The guidance effort is seen as a central element in connection with individualised education and training possibilities, as individual guidance largely seems to be the key asset that makes it possible to mobilise the individual young person’s needs and experiences. Guiding young people into education has become an increasingly important element in Danish social and employment policies. All young people are required to have a formalised education plan by the end of mandatory public schooling; and upon leaving school they have the duty to be active in either education or work; if not, they may be denied public

benefits (Ministry of Children and Education 2010). More recently this principle has been extended to young adults; the 2013 act on active employment policy states that local labour market authorities must assess whether a person will be fit for some kind of vocationally relevant education, and if persons are assessed as able they are obliged to start and complete an education programme (Ministry of Employment 2013).

Across the Danish social welfare system guidance practices are implemented and carried out in different ways and with different effects. The most common and widespread type of guidance pertains to courses in the writing of resumes and job applications. However, this type of guidance fails to take into account that many young people at risk are facing strong barriers in their transition from compulsory school to education and employment. Often they have low academic skills and personal problems, and live under social conditions that do not support the required stability in life for attending and completing further education. They often also suffer from low self-esteem and have bad experiences from contacts with the school system and labour markets (Jensen & Andersen 2006; Jensen & Jensen 2005).

Research has indicated certain elements as important in the guidance of this group: psychological intervention and personal support; support from significant persons and guidance about the educational system and possible jobs (Clayton et al 2008; Jensen & Jensen 2005:12ff). Further, guidance and counselling in both individual and group settings are considered important. While the individual setting may offer participants the opportunity for reflection and care of a more private and individual char-

acter, the group setting gives the opportunity of sharing and discussing experiences with others in situations comparable to their own (Christensen & Larsen 2011). The personal relationship of the young people with the teachers seems to play a significant role, and a mentor might offer the necessary time and continuity to make it possible for such relationships to develop.

Accordingly, new types of guidance, aimed at making a holistic approach by integrating the above themes, have been tried out in a number of projects in recent years. One of them was the project 'Youth in Development' [*Unge i vækst*] carried out in the northern part of Denmark. In this project a number of full-time coordinators worked intensively with the young people referred to the courses, who all – apart from having no work experience or education after primary school – had social backgrounds involving problems and multiple risk factors. The work involved different courses, numerous individual conversations, making contact with educational institutions and work places, and the sorting out of various problems that the individual person might experience and that were seen to have a detrimental effect on the possibilities of entering into education or work (Andreasen et al 2012).

This article analyses the guidance dimension in the 'Youth in Development' project as described in the project and by the youths participating in the project.

Conceptual framework

Research points to the difficulties some young people are facing in the transition from compulsory school to further edu-

educational opportunities. Theoretically, this problem is discussed by sociologists such as Pierre Bourdieu. The chance of getting an education after compulsory school is much higher when having a background in families with parents who holds an education themselves – the longer education the higher the chance (Bourdieu 1998, 19 ff.). Thus the problems of transition reflect the inequality present in society and the tendency of society to reproduce its social structures and classes.

The concept of habitus offers a framework for understanding how young people are socialised into certain ways of thinking about themselves, about society, education and jobs, and also of how to act when faced with certain kinds of problems. It is described by Bourdieu as,

“a system of lasting, transposable dispositions which, integrating past experiences, functions at every moment as a matrix of perceptions, appreciations, and actions and makes possible the achievement of infinitely diversified tasks, thanks to analogical transfers of schemes permitting the solution of similarly shaped problems, and thanks to the unceasing corrections of the results obtained, dialectically produced by those results, and on the other hand, an objective event” (Bourdieu 1977: 83).

Both education and work are selective social institutions confronting individuals with entrance barriers and with demands on competence, motivation and effort (Brown 1997). The reproduction and the changes in patterns of social inequality in educational and occupational choices and

careers are played out in the interaction of people with these barriers and demands. These processes depend not just on a set of disposition shaped through socialization; they also involve the social networks that individuals are in contact with through their life trajectories (Rasmussen 1999). Some networks convey strong social and motivational resources, others less so. For persons from less resourceful backgrounds and networks, educational environments may gradually lead to changes in these networks, especially if the persons succeed in completing degrees and by means of them move into occupations and workplaces. However, if experiences and achievements in education are less positive and links to occupations remain fragile, the persons may become more or less locked in marginalized networks.

The experiences that individuals are subjected to through their childhood, time in compulsory school etc. will be reflected in their habitus and in the networks they have. For several of the young adults in the project ‘Youth in Development’, their childhoods have been characterised by difficulties, conflicts and complexity and their resources do not match the challenges they are facing when having to choose an education or to make their everyday life work sufficiently well to follow an education course. In most cases their families and other network relationships are also unable to provide them with the necessary support in such processes. Because of this, educational initiatives to bring changes into their situations and life-courses will generally have to focus on facilitating the provision of new experiences, a kind of ‘socialisation’, and on giving the necessary social support in the transition. Even when these young people are interested

in bringing about changes in their situation, they may not know how to do this, how to act in desirable and socially accepted ways when meeting for instance the cultures of educational programmes and institutions, and at the same time they are missing the social support necessary to go through such difficult and demanding processes.

The project 'Youth in Development'

The project ran from December 2010 to January 2013. Geographically it was located in the Northern part of Jutland and comprised a number of partners and stakeholders; among others municipalities, educational institutions, business organisations, and labour organisations. The target group was youths and young adults between age 18 and 30 from the so-called match group 2¹.

The primary purpose of the project was to explore new approaches and methods in the guidance of young people at risk as means of providing them with access to the labour market or an education programme. The secondary aims of the project were to develop cooperation between vocational schools, municipal job centres and different local partners involved in the employment and education of youth, and to support the development of competencies of teachers and other employees in the schools, the administration and organizations.

The project included two different streams matching young people with different needs, but all within match group 2 (as defined in the footnote).

One stream was a shorter one lasting seven weeks, and it was designed for young people who were in transition between compulsory school and education, but needed some help to obtain clarity as to which educational path to take, how to apply etc. The activities in this stream consisted mainly of individual and group-based guidance as well as introductions to different educational paths and professional trades. These courses included an initial conversation between the participant and the supervisors, followed by one week of introductory activities, focusing on creative thinking, individual resources and getting acquainted with the rest of the group. This was followed by 2–6 weeks of individual or group activities, and finally the completion of the course and re-entry into labour market or education.

¹ Match groups are categories of clients/citizens in Danish employment policy (National Labour Market Authority 2009). Match group 2 are persons who are estimated to be able to participate in employment oriented initiatives (such as upskilling) within three months.

» ... the active involvement and conversations with participants on their own terms – not common teaching and common activities – are crucial. »

The other stream was longer, lasting 20 weeks, and was designed for young people with more complex problems and in need of more in-depth support, guidance, and skill development. The 20 weeks for this stream consisted of individual and group-based guidance, physical exercise, a number of on the job training courses, skill development, and aid and support in getting everyday life to function. These courses included an initial interview in which a contract was produced, describing what the participant would concentrate on during the course. This was followed by 2–3 weeks of introductory activities focusing on creative thinking, individual resources and getting acquainted with the rest of the group. The following 10–18 weeks included individual activities (for instance individual guidance and vocational training) as well as joint activities such as study trips and excursions. By the end of the course the participant would have a final supervision with his or her supervisor for the purpose of producing a personal education plan, passing the participant into suitable work or education and keeping them active.

The project success criteria stipulated that participants should acquire readiness and motivation for education as well as knowledge about their own resources (Andreasen et al 2012: 4ff.). The participants were also expected to produce an education plan or job wish based on their personal motivation (ibid.).

It was stipulated that 70 per cent of the participating youths should have started the planned activity no later than three months after exiting the project. Further the dropout rate from subsequent educational activities should not be higher than normal.

The pedagogy employed was based on a loosely connected framework of concepts including systems theory, recognition of personal resources of the participants, the zone of proximal development, learning in communities of practice and the seeking of solutions. For instance the pedagogy was described as being based on the idea that the understanding of problems is not solely related to the specific person, but that understanding “emerges and is maintained in social interactions. From such reason it is necessary to include several ‘systems’ in the understanding and solution of a specific problem” (Andreasen et al 2012: 4ff.). Put into practice this was reflected in the two streams which differed in duration and content as described above.

In the period of our evaluation study 190 persons participated in the project. Of these 114 were either enrolled in some kind of education (most often secondary vocational education) or in some kind of employment three months after completing their courses. This indicates a 60 per cent success rate, less than stipulated. However, a number of persons had been either re-enrolled in a ‘Youth in Development’ course or had in fact not completed

their course because it had turned out that they were not in the relevant match group. Taking account of this the success rate was in fact more than 70 per cent. (Andreasen et al 2012, 26).

The participants

The project activities, especially the 20-week-courses, were based on the prerequisite that the participants would have severe problems of social and often also psychological character. They were supposed to have the necessary skills to be able to start and complete an education programme if this process was facilitated, but they would need considerable support especially of a social character. Choosing the right education programme could be one of their problems, but often the smaller one. To facilitate the development necessary to change this, the course was designed to offer activities and an environment that provided the participants with the necessary experiences about their resources and relevant choices. This was supposed to support them in the development of insight and the social competencies needed to meet the demands of the desired educational path (Christensen & Larsen 2011; Clayton et al 2008; Jensen & Jensen 2005).

We conducted semi-structured interviews with 59 of the young adults between the ages of 18 and 29, including 13 from stream 1 (7-week course) and 46 from stream 2 (20-week courses). Our interviews confirmed that most of the young people in the course shared social backgrounds characterised by different kinds of social, physical and psychological problems such as divorces, early loss of one or both parents, placements, abuse of drugs or alcohol,

problems with attention such as ADHD, being bullied at school, reading problems, academic problems at school in general, low self-worth or self-esteem, depression and other sorts of more severe problems.

Due to such experiences the young people did not feel that they fitted into the educational system, or they did not know how to handle the problems that they would meet in everyday life at school or job. Thus the course was aimed at giving the participants insight into such problems and into their own limitations and potentials as well as tools to handle problems in their everyday life in family, at school or job and knowledge about different educational choices and types of jobs (Christensen & Larsen 2011; Jensen & Jensen 2003).

In addition to similarities in social background the youths also shared experiences with different kinds of courses or activities aimed at bringing them into job or education, organised or commissioned by the social and employment services.

These courses were typically organised as common teaching over a certain period with the primary activity of writing CV's and job applications. The participants in 'Youth in Development' criticized such courses and activities unanimously. They were described as bad experiences containing a great deal of senseless activity, and as being a waste of time. This finding is in accordance with results from a study of youth guidance in the Nordic countries showing that the active involvement and conversations with participants on their own terms – not common teaching and common activities – are crucial (Vilhjálmsdóttir et al 2012). For instance one of the participants, Robert, said that "I have

been through several courses initiated by the municipality and it has never been a good experience. One example is the 'job diamond' where the participants were required to just sit and write CVs".

Even worse was the fact that their numerous applications did not lead to a job or into suitable educational paths. Participants were rarely called to job interviews, and even if they were they did not get the job. So these types of courses tended to retain them in problematic situations because they added to the many defeats.

"For someone like me with an attention deficit, it is impossible to sit down from 8 o'clock in the morning until 3 o'clock in the afternoon writing job applications."

"The other courses I have attended have just been about writing job applications and it has not helped."

From a theoretical perspective this type of courses and activities, which typically do not lead to jobs or education, could be said just to emphasise the young adults' position as being marginalised.

Experiences from the project clearly show that different activities are necessary to facilitate and bring about changes. We will illustrate and discuss this through three cases.

Three young adults

The participants interviewed generally gave a positive assessment of 'Youth in Development' courses. They expressed great appreciation of the experiences and

changes it brought, referring to changes both of a personal character and in their social situations. In the descriptions given by the participants in the interviews we can point to factors that seem to have played a role in the facilitation of such processes. Central factors in the facilitation are:

- establishing the social context necessary for personal development (a social community making everyone feel that they belong, access to personal social support, stability in the social support over time, and in this respect having a mentor, room for reflections on matters of psychological character, improving self-esteem),
- giving participant the opportunity to get experiences to enable them to make a choice for the right education (visiting schools, identifying ones academic and practical resources and skills), and
- giving the necessary time for the process and continuous support.

We will illustrate and discuss this with reference to three cases: Laura (about 20 years old) who had dropped out from education due to drug abuse and social and psychological problems, Robert (in his mid-twenties) who had tried out different kinds of jobs, dropped out of educations and suffered from psychological problems and Minna (20 years old) who needed social support due to social problems. They are chosen to illustrate problems of a different character related to differences in social background, academic skills, age, gender etc. All of these three young people were interviewed a few months after they had completed the course.

LAURA was an example of a girl with a history of being bullied, suffering from attention deficits, and severe problems at school. She did not receive the necessary social support to be able to handle the problems and this gave rise to severe personal and educational problems. Due to these negative experiences she has developed very low self-esteem.

Laura left compulsory school after the 8th grade without an exam. She informed us that she was being bullied and had no friends. “I was depressed all the time and no one wanted to speak with me”, she says. She also says that “I was part of an experimental class with 52 pupils (...) so there was no room for the weak and all of us who were troublemakers did nothing but making trouble.” She got into bad company and got problems with drugs, she tells. Since she left school she has not had a job, but started vocational education “(...) last year, but came into a situation that made me psychologically unstable and maybe I was not mature enough and I had to stop.”

Laura describes ‘Youth in Development’ as a turning-point in her life. She emphasizes one of the positive aspects of the project compared to the more traditional courses for unemployed young people by saying, “I also think it is good there are someone [here] to work with you instead of just writing job applications.” To her the character of the social environment of the course has played a major role in the process she has experienced. She points to teachers’ attitudes and commitment, that they were caring and interested in her as a person. And the number of participants in the class was small compared to other courses: “This course has given me a lot

because it is the first time I experience a class that is not overcrowded so that the teachers can be present the whole time and take care of you individually”, she says.

She describes that she felt accepted, and that the teachers pointed to her competencies. Among other things she was told that she takes initiative. She also found out that she can be a calm human being, and she has become aware of the importance of “saying to one self that you are OK and recognise it”. Such experiences have had a positive influence on her self-esteem, which was very low before starting the course. Laura says that “Getting recognition from others means a lot because you start to think that if these people actually like me then perhaps I can also like myself”.

The course included lessons, discussions and practical exercises in psychology. To Laura this has played an important role in the process she has experienced, she felt that she could really learn from it: “I think the psychology lessons have been really good”, she says. “I have been given some tools, which can enable me to prepare myself psychologically, and perhaps I have also become more mature. (...) I used to just run away whenever something got too difficult, but now I have been given tools that tell me to stay and deal with it in a real and grown-up way, one might say.”

After completing the course, she has got a mentor as part of the project. This step seems to be important to make sure that she has someone to discuss her problems and experiences with, as no one else in her social context is taking such a role. This feeling of other people caring and understanding her situation has been crucial. At the school her teacher asked, if “she should

accompany me on my first day, because I am uneasy around many new people.”

MINNA was an example of a young woman who got into problems because of a very complex family situation during her early years and she needed support in the process of establishing a stable life and attending school.

Minna’s family background was characterized by the divorce of her parents and by an alcoholic mother, who never had a permanent job but most of the time was on social security. Minna lived with her mother until she became teenager, and then moved to her father with one of her two brothers. She did not experience much focus on her upbringing in her family, neither from her father nor her mother. Her father did not have much education; she tells that he was often abroad during her childhood and drank when he was home. He threw her out when she turned 18. Minna has very bad experiences from compulsory school. She was thrown out of school thrice, she says. In grade 9 she came to an independent boarding school for lower secondary education. This was a positive experience for her because there were clear rules for behaviour and good people to talk to. She has started different kinds of education, but has dropped out from vocational school, from production school, and from a social and health care worker course. During the project period she has started vocational education to become a painter, and her wish is to graduate as such.

Minna also points to the importance of teachers caring for the each participant. She describes it as positive, that the ‘Youth in Development’ course “takes the individual human being into consideration; the

coordinator and the teachers care about how you feel.”

She emphasizes the activities related to psychology as facilitating her personal development positively. Especially those activities requiring participants to ‘work with themselves’ and to work with their wishes and goals for life. In her description of the more positive activities, she points to “addressing problems instead of just turning introvert and staying away.” As a main element in the development that she has experienced, and which has made her ready for further education, she mentions “getting help to face your problems and working with them”. Getting a mentor has also been important for her in the process, and she feels that it is “nice that someone is looking after me”. Like Laura she describes it as a completely new experience to feel such personal support, both at the course and by having a mentor.

To Minna, who was not sure which education could be the right one for her, the practical activities in workshops trying out different trades and professions had also been very useful and has provided her with experiences necessary to make such choice.

ROBERT was an example of a young man who had severe psychological problems. He described it to us as something he had faced and said that he was focused on finding ways to handle this situation and to be able to live life in a way he feels satisfactory.

Robert was brought up in a divorced family with his sister and thus had a step-mother and stepsiblings. He describes his family relations as mostly antagonistic, but he has a good relationship with his sister.

» Getting a mentor has also been important for her in the process, and she feels that it is “nice that someone is looking after me”. »

He finished compulsory school grade 10, but has very negative experiences from his time in school. He describes that he was bullied. He has got problems with depression and fear, which he thinks is a consequence of these experiences. He started vocational education, tried out different tracks, but had to stop because he could not get a practical training placement. He has participated in several other courses arranged by the authorities, but of the kind in which he just had to write CV's and job applications; activities he describes as senseless because his main problems are of a psychological nature. He says that he was not ready for the labour market when he started at 'Youth in Development' course. His dream at the moment “is first and foremost to settle my personal problems in a conversation with a psychiatrist”. This he hopes will make it possible for him to “achieve stability and a regular job to my liking and with a good salary, a home, a car, and a family.”

Having this kind of problems, he seems in general to emphasize the importance of getting experiences of a more practical character, on how to handle the problems that he has when he is applying for a job, and on which kind of education to apply for. An important issue in this respect is that “the employer is properly informed so there are no surprises, because if not then you will definitely be told that there is no use for you.”

He points to the limited number of participants in the class room as an important condition for learning, because it makes it possible for the teachers to care for everyone. “If there were too many pupils there would be too many tasks to undertake for the teacher and the coordinator, people's conditions can sometime be somewhat of a bumpy ride”, he explains. The importance of the social dimension of the course is reflected in Robert's wish for the project to have “its own place where the participants can come and be together even outside course hours.”

Robert emphasizes the practical workshops, which he finds especially good. Through these and similar activities the course has made him aware of several possible relevant education tracks and jobs, for instance with the help of tests and other activities to indicate the competencies of the participants.

Concluding discussion

The target group for the project presented and discussed in this article consisted of unemployed young adults who did not have a formal education after leaving compulsory school. As discussed by sociologists, this can be understood partly with a reference to their social backgrounds and former experiences. Our research gives several examples of that, showing that to some extent they all have had bad experiences from compulsory schooling of being bullied, not being able to meet the

academic demands and not feeling able to fit into the culture of the school in general. Also their family backgrounds are characterised by divorced parents, early deaths of close relatives, and problems with alcohol or drugs. After leaving school they have typically tried out different kinds of jobs with little or no success, or they have dropped out of one or several education programmes, or schools have told them to leave due to absence or conflicts with staff or other students. They do in fact wish for an education and a job, but the problems facing them in achieving this seem massive – almost insurmountable – to them. Our research on the project and the participants indicates, however, that it is possible to bring some changes to their self-confidence and everyday life by making it possible for them to get the necessary experience, and by giving them opportunity and tools to reflect on their situation. It does also to some extent seem to be possible to facilitate development of the necessary social competencies to meet the demands of different educational cultures.

Facilitating changes like these is a complex matter. From our research we can conclude that a key pedagogical question is to recognize and accept the experiences and problems of the participants. Pedagogy and experiences of compulsory school has socialised them into perceptions of themselves as not fitting into the system, and perhaps not even having the resources to be able to do so in the future.

To facilitate changes in the way they perceive themselves and their relations to education, work and adult life they need experiences to contradict these socialized perceptions. The development of such personal experiences requires a safe atmos-

phere over a longer period and continuous support. Participants should also gain experiences with the different kinds of education they will be able to choose, and this should include practical experiences with jobs associated with these kinds of education. An academic way of mediating this is not a proper choice; activities in both educational settings and job settings are necessary. Through this, participants will also have the opportunity to experience different social situations, experiences that can be integrated in reflective activities in the framework of the course.

Seen in the life perspective of the participants it should be emphasized that the course runs over a limited period. The question is of course what will happen to these young adults in the future after the course. By having a mentor some of them are getting social support during a longer period, but still limited.

The project 'Youth in Development' was designed to facilitate and support transition to an adult life involving work or education by giving participants the social support, feedback, experiences, room for reflection and feeling of accept and inclusion they need in such transitional processes. Even if it can be characterised as a success in several aspects, an important conclusion is that bringing about changes is in fact a hard process. It should also be noticed that for most of the participants the success does not mean moving up the social ladder. Courses like this are necessary, but they are also a symptom of increasingly harsh labour market conditions which make it necessary to find new ways of guidance just to prevent young people in the underprivileged social classes from being further marginalised and excluded.

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BY

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'THE SECLUDED AND THREATENED UTOPIA'

– transformation of Nordic equality politics facing global reality

Introduction

In the Nordic countries, equality became the core aim of political agendas in the end of 1960s. Nordic equality politics started to dominate the welfare discourses also in Finland, where a shift towards Social democratic policies with commitment to ideas of Nordic welfare state boosted implementation of parallel reforms in health, social care and education. In the Finnish education policy, equality referred to social justice, regional or pedagogical equality, and to equal educational opportunities for all. Equality between sexes, however, was subsumed to other societal demands and democratization process in general. Since the 1990s, the market orientation and increased transnational influences in policymaking have challenged the culturally embedded (Nordic) notions of equality and changed its aims towards individual rights in education and work.

On the other hand, the agile moves of global industries have revealed paradoxes in the Nordic equality models. The global shifts in the divisions of education and work lead to wider questions about inclusion and exclusion inside equality politics. Have beneficiaries been limited to Nordic citizens only? At which costs and on whose expenses has the equality been created?

Through case studies in the fields of vocational and higher education, we analyse the transformations of Nordic equality politics and sex-distinctions since the 1950s until the contemporary days. While the focus is on changing economic and industrial orders, we assume that vocational and higher education policies are important for understanding transformations in adult education. They are contextualized to the political and educational changes in Finland. Even though the differences between Finland and other Nordic countries are remarkable, especially in the historical backgrounds and implementation of equality politics, we aim to point out some shifts and questions common to all Nordic countries. Furthermore, we also raise questions about the Nordic equality politics and sex-distinctions from a planetary perspective.

The paper divides into periods of *reconstruction and recovery* (1950s–1960s), *superior Nordic welfare state* (1970s–1990s) and *globalization without solidarity* (2000s–) according to the main economic and societal shifts. All periods cover the major political and educational changes, the nature of equality politics related to sex-distinctions and finally to the questions of planetary perspective. First, we present our theoretical and methodological frame and in the last chapter, we discuss our findings from the Finnish context in relation to the global reality.

Theoretical and methodological starting points

We contextualise the transformation of equality politics and sex-distinctions into educational and political changes in Fin-

land as a Nordic country. Our analysis is thus embedded in a territory, which in the contemporary political order is recognised as a nation-state. The nation-state as the unit of analysis rests upon the historically structured deposits, which can be identified and mapped (Diamond 1993). The territory Finland represents a small nation, which throughout history has adjusted to the tensions between local and supranational, being dependent on the global economy and sensitive to its fluctuations. Thus, Finland has rather been an object of geopolitics, rather than its subject (Moisio et al 2013). The long history as part of superpower (first Sweden, then Russia) and especially relations with Soviet Union have shaped both the internal politics and external relations.

Currently, the membership of the European Union since 1995 and other supranational agencies strongly influence the political and educational agendas in Finland. Since the 1990s, the discourse of international competitiveness have arisen and the contemporary situation where the state operates through market control (Moisio et al 2013) is visible in education and in the rationalities of educational reforms. The shift towards ‘geo-economic’ era suggests the new definition of territory, where the relocalization refers to the network of attachments and connections rather than a bounded piece of land (Cf. Latour 2014; Moisio 2012; Jessop 2007).

While the aspects of vocational and higher education have remained rather marginal in analyses on transformation of Nordic adult education, we assume that reflections on equality politics and sex-distinctions in the context of geopolitical conditions and shifts also provide new horizons for adult

education research. Since equality politics and planetary perspective seem actually gain momentum in Finnish educational policy after the World War II, our discussion will continue from the period of reconstruction into industrial welfare state and into the globalized information society of the 2000s.

In the Nordic countries, gender equality has since the debates of the 1960s–1970s² dominated mainstream conceptions of equality in education and employment. However, we suggest that such approach may be challenged when observing its educational and political dimensions and moral implications in the global context. What are the values promoted in the search for equality and whose equality is at stake? While globalization of industrial and financial capitalism enables rapid changes in division of work and knowledge production (Kershew 2011), moving traditional jobs from Nordic to low-wage countries and pushing cheap immigrant labour-force to Nordic countries, we find it crucial to widen the perspective of equality politics and sex equality into planetary level. According to Graness (2012), the experiences of different contexts should be taken into account while opening the debate on ethical issues with global relevance to an intercultural approach. Following her, we assume that the opening up to traditions, conceptions and wisdom distinctive for the global South may be necessary for scientists and intellectuals in the global North for challenging and updating their self-granted ethical and political assumptions. By widening the context of equality politics, we may trace changing ethos behind and to reflect, how this relates to sex-distinctions in education. Instead of decontextualized and ahistorical observation of numerical or distributive equality, we wish to question the ‘ethical rules of the equality game’. (Radcliffe-Richards 2014.)

Nordic adult education – especially in its popular or liberal version – has traditionally focused on issues of equality, justice and democracy in relation to political and social change. It has emphasized participation of all people in social, political and economic life. However, these issues have primarily been defined in the context of nation building or nation-state. One of the crucial concepts in Nordic adult education is folkishness (folkelighet, kansaisuus). (Korsgaard 2011.) It refers to collective self-education, which is rooted in the knowledge, experience and wisdom of the folk inhabiting the Nordic territory. However, another although less recognized concept, which was included both in popular or liberal adult education for rural people and in vocational education for crafts and rural industries, is education for means of livelihood (näring, ehrverv, elinkeino). Again, this concept was tightly

² In Finland, the emphasis commenced to shift towards gender equality somewhat later than in other Nordic countries.

related to promotion of work, occupations and industries rooted in the territory. (Heikkinen 2004.) Commitment to equality, justice, democracy and livelihood among local inhabitants may be justified and even globally constructive. Nevertheless, our hypothesis is that the fixation to Nordicness in the self-perception of adult education may have led to erosion of its potential for developing new, trans-national and planetary conceptions of adult education.

While educational policies typically promote reforms by introducing new vocabularies, which legitimize both economic and industrial priorities and educational hierarchies, they also convey certain underlying cultural values. Nowadays the European Union along with other transnational agencies have the hegemony in defining the concepts and policies of education: the vocabulary of commercialisation, competitiveness, marketization and competence-based education has penetrated also the fields of adult education. Furthermore, academization of education and general rise of educational level have created and legitimized global occupational hierarchies, which invites to re-examine equality also from the perspective of transforming distinctions between and inside sexes.

The discussion bases mainly on two ongoing researches. The first builds on an oral history project *Forestry Professions in a Changing Society* during 1999–2001, and committee reports from the secondary stage reform of 1970s–80s, which shaped the educational framework of the interviewees. The documents are compared with the policy documents on university reform of 1970s–80s. The second is a case study about implementation of transnational equality politics in Finnish

universities in the 21st century. It analyses documents of gender mainstreaming at transnational and local level and interviews of key actors, who translate them into practice. This is related to discourse analytical reading of policy documents used for legitimizing reforms in vocational education, polytechnics and higher education in beginning of the 2000s.

Reconstruction and recovery (1950s–1960s)

Political and educational changes

The projects of nation building, started already before Finnish independence from Russia in 1917, and experienced a heavy collision during the civil war in 1918, gained momentum after World War II. On one hand, the Finnish manufacturing industry had to concentrate on war payments to Soviet Union and on reconstruction of the country. On the other hand, the pressure to inhabit almost half a million refugees from Karelia prolonged the social, political and economic support to small farming and rural industries. The project of agrarian Finland collapsed after the triumph of modernization ideologies in all parties and the political victory of social democrats in 1966.

Vocational education maintained its distinctiveness as promoter of industrial sectors and occupational branches. (Heikkinen 2004.) However, initiatives for gathering all vocational education (also at higher institutes) into one ‘educational’ department (preferably in the ministry of trade and industry) were enforced already during the war. Legislation was prepared about obligation of larger municipalities to provide

vocational education for youth (and obligatory vocational school) and of state to provide central vocational schools in all parts of the country. The law came into force in 1958 and in a few years most municipalities – alone or jointly – had to provide some kind of vocational schooling to their youth, private vocational schools had either to be opened to public or transformed into staff training. However, vocational education policy remained separate and fragmented until 1970s, when all vocational education was assembled under National Board of Vocational Education in ministry of Education. (Heikkinen et al 1999.)

The struggle about the educational profile of folk school also continued until late 1960s. The followers of previous farmers' and workers' movements and parties promoted comprehensive school, but differently. To put it simply: while farmers preferred a school with vocational orientation, which would support industries both in urban and rural areas, social-democrats insisted on learned school, which would provide access to academic routes in education. Most representatives from all sectors of vocational education defended strongly separation of vocational and general – whether general or academic – education. Similarly the representatives of academic education fought against changing obligatory comprehensive school, although the five first classes of gymnasium, called middle school, was already becoming more popular than higher classes of folk school. Transition to nine-year comprehensive school was postponed until end of 1960s. (Heikkinen 2011.)

Academic education had traditionally been most valued part of education in national and local policy, not only among economic

and cultural elite, but also among farmers and workers. On the other hand, the proponents of vocational education preferred development of alternative routes through vocational schools to higher vocational education (this could have included a vocationally profiled lower classes in gymnasium). Although gymnasia were governed in National School Board in ministry of education, universities were autonomous until comprehensive centralization and unification of education system in 1970s. Demands about taking into account other than academic routes or needs of industry were common since mid of 19th century, but they were ignored: the pressure to regional equality just accelerated expansion of gymnasium and university network all over the country. (Heikkinen 2011.)

Nature of equality politics and sex-distinctions

The social, political and economic heritage of rural landless and working poor – and majority of Finns were in rural industries – characterized equality policy until late 1960s. Scarcity of food, raw materials and finance justified prolongation of self-sufficiency and 'equality in poverty'. The few social subsidies were targeted to most vulnerable and poor groups. Small farmers, rural and urban workers, especially women, joined their efforts for some universal social benefits, such as folk pension, health, maternity and child subsidies. Concerning education, there were no public systems to support access in education beyond folk school. (Uljas 2012.)

However, the increased state intervention in industrial and economic policy during World War II, increased rights of labour unions and socialist organizations, together

» The pre-war sex-distinctions in work and education were politically enforced after World War II. »

with pressure from small and poor farmers, made regional equality as the focus in national and local equality politics. Factories, educational institutes, hospitals, state offices and other public institutes were established in all parts of the country. Systems for regional subsidies to balance economic and social differences between municipalities were created.

The pre-war sex-distinctions in work and education were politically enforced after World War II. In the state of scarcity and poverty, attempts to strengthen sex-based division of work in industry and promotion of housewifery were doomed to fail. However, the previous ideals of vocational education, which we have described through education for engineers and nurses as masters and mistresses of the nation, were revitalized. (Lietzen et al 2015.) The domination of big industry, technical and manufacturing industry in the wartime politics and administration – also in vocational education –, was reflected in priorities of vocational education policy. Return of soldiers from the war as well as settlement of refugees, combined with payments of war and reconstruction industry, emphasized employment of men, especially into economically and social-politically crucial sectors. Without demonstrations, women were encouraged to withdraw from those areas. Segregation of women into female-dominated sectors in garment

industry, institutional catering, cleaning and social and health occupations was strengthened, alongside encouragement of staying at home as mother and wife, which for majority of women, however, was not economically possible. (Suoranta 2009; Heikkinen 2011.)

Planetary perspective

After the World War II, Finland was beside Germany considered guilty for war and had to fight back its political, economic and cultural status in international relations. On the other hand, Finland had to make political treaties about companionship with Soviet Union, which conditioned its relations to other countries. Despite restrictions to political and economic interaction, bilateral trade with Soviet Union was also beneficial for Finnish economy and industries, enabling stable and long-term industrial activity and employment. While the focus was exclusively on promotion of big export industry, the failures of settlement and small farming policies materialized in massive labour migration from rural to urban Finnish areas and to Swedish manufacturing industry. Although promotion of export industry had dominated development of vocational and higher education policies since the end of the 19th century, the focus on strengthening of national industries and employment supported passive and reactive approach to globalization.

During the 1960s, progressive, anti-imperialist and democratic movements expanded everywhere on the globe. Despite the reluctance of official vocational and higher education policies, international solidarity towards independence movements in previous colonies, resistance to imperialist wars and arms races was growing also in Finland. (Koponen 2005.) A naïve belief in science and technology as tools for achieving equality between places and people was widely shared: there was little awareness of actual consequences from technologization, industrialization and urbanization in different places and among different groups of people. Ethnic romanticism also connected to charitable, but superior attitude of giving from ‘our good’ to the poor and disadvantaged on the globe. (Tuomi 1976.) In the mainstream vocational and higher education, anthropocentric approach continued unquestioned, despite first civic reactions towards pollution from wood-processing and metal industries.

Superior Nordic welfare state (1970s–1990s)

Political and educational changes

The history of the Finnish welfare state is quite short compared to other Nordic countries, where the reforms started already before the World War II. In Finland, the turn into the social democratic planning society took place in the middle of the 1960s, during the deepest technocratic phase. As in other Nordic countries, the role of the state has been central in implementing the ideas of the welfare state and the reforms in the field of education were also carried out via centralized authority, planned by state authorities and controlled

strictly through state legislation. Universalising reforms in health, social care and education were considered fundamental in the promotion of industry and trade.

The Finnish education system was reformed between 1972 and 1977, but it has its roots in political and economic decisions 1960s. First, the reform combined folk school and lower secondary school into nine-year compulsory education. The new nine-year comprehensive school that consisted of six-year primary school and three-year lower secondary school became a permanent system for all pupils by the beginning of 1980s. At the same time with the comprehensive school reform, as logical next step in reforming the education system, was to extend the reform to post-compulsory education. The major area of secondary school reform since the 1980s concerned vocational education. The purpose of the reform was to make vocational education more attractive to students who are transferring from basic school to upper secondary school. One attraction was to open also vocational school as an alternative route to higher education. This was how policymakers aimed to decrease the number of students in general upper-secondary education and to close the existing status gap between general and vocational school. However, secondary school reform was not able to narrow the gap between the popularity of general and vocational schools as was expected. Instead, this well-intentioned model of education increased separation between education and occupational sectors.

Supported by the transfer of governance of vocational institutes from branch ministries to ministry of education, the cen-

trally planned system distanced schools from the working life. (Committee report 1973; Heikkinen 2004.)

The change of education extended until university system. The university degree reform was carried out in the 1970s. It was based on arguments that had become familiar already in the 19th century – are still up-to-date. The university was considered to have exited from the rest of the society and producing too many graduates in humanities. Policymakers wanted university education to be closer to industry and be more responsive to different needs of society and working life. Reform was motivated by the expanding ‘human capital ideology’ from the 1960s, according to which education is important an important factor in economic growth. The extensive legislative reform at all levels of education brought the state in a significant role. The entire education was standardized and taken into centralized control. (Committee report 1972.)

The 1980s was a period of economic growth, construction of welfare state and expansion vocational and higher education. Therefore, the deep economic recession of the early 1990s was hitting Finland even harder than elsewhere in the world economy. Deprivation and poverty level began to rise quickly. Unemployment increased, and educational policies became a part of social policy. Decision-makers tried to reduce youth unemployment by adding training places and increasing attractiveness of education, for example by upgrading higher vocational institutes into polytechnics.

Nature of equality politics and sex-distinctions

In the Finnish welfare state, equality could be seen as a state-led project of equal opportunities. Equality in education was a permanent theme and value in government policy and committees, but the content of equality depended on its target. Equality was seen as a regional question or issue of social and educational opportunities. It materialized in opening up of educational pathways, but marginally as equality between sexes. Expansion of education was believed to lead to the rise of a meritocracy where people’s status would be decided rather by their ability and effort than by their birth or inherited privilege or where they lived. The secondary education reform and other policy programs in the 1980s considered equality as principle of justice, i.e. equity and equal opportunity were the leading values of Finland’s education vision. However, despite the promise of equal opportunities for everyone, the result was rather unification than equality.

In the official equality and education policy of the 1970s, occupational ideals were sex neutral, but based on male or female conceptions. Equality between sexes was considered as an opportunity: women were encouraged to male-dominated fields and vice-versa. Within education in sexually divided fields, there were minor arrangements to help the students of opposite sex to feel welcome. They remained still male nurses or female engineers. (Committee report 1997; Lietzén et al 2015.) At the same time, traditional household work was occupationalised and moved outside the family. Women found job opportunities in positions that had previously been part of the domestic work. The increasing number

» In the 1980s environmental awareness, climate issues and acid rain in Europe opened up a new kind of planetary debate, which extended to Finland. »

of women in education as well as in the labour market was one of the most significant developments in the Finnish society. Throughout the 1980s, the proportion of women in wage labour was steadily around 47 percent, which was very high by international comparison.

Planetary perspective

During the 1980s, Finnish economy and industry started to follow the global trend of liberation of trade and financial markets, while benefiting from outcomes of universalizing and democratizing societal and educational reforms since the 1970s. The post-war consensual commitment of export, rural and service industries to promotion of national economy and social coherence shifted into search for the competitiveness of industrial sectors and actors in global markets, where regional political aspects marginalized. Among policy-makers, vocational and higher education were increasingly considered as distinctive industrial clusters supporting the competitiveness of other industries inside Finnish national economy (or owners and investors of companies located in Finland) (Heikkinen et al 1999). However, as an outcome of movements for international solidarity and justice, discourses on democratization of society and industry remained powerful until 1990s. (Committee report 1973.)

In the official international development co-operation, the late 1970s was a time of growth. In Finland and other Nordic countries, development policy was subsumed to foreign politics, which beside combat against famines and reduction of poverty, focused on promotion of political and economic democracy. (Koponen 2005.) While planetary responsibility was by no means in the heart of vocational and higher education policies, the concrete initiatives built on assumptions that developing countries were lacking knowledge, skills, technology and capital. It seems that for educational policy-makers, investing in and providing assistance to restructuring would make a change. The Finnish development model was a kind of an attempt to move the Nordic welfare system in a foreign culture and develop the destination countries based on donors' terms of charity. The period might be characterized as that of benevolent ostentation, when rapidly industrialized Finland took its own model of development as assistance to Africa and South America. However, in the civil society, variety of movements and associations in vocational and higher education, mushroomed, requesting global solidarity for happenings in Vietnam or Chile, for example.

In the 1980s environmental awareness, climate issues and acid rain in Europe opened up a new kind of planetary debate, which extended to Finland. Nature conservation

was considered a broader matter of common concern than just own environment. The destruction of nature was a threat to the well-being of society. At the same time, the depletion of natural resources such as oil hit the headlines. The relationship between nature and economics became worldwide common policy issues. Pockets of environmental education were introduced into university degrees, however deemed to erode during the recession of the 1990s.

Globalization without solidarity and responsibility (2000s–)

Political and educational change

The collapse of the Soviet Union removed the last external barriers in the approach towards the Western Europe and in 1995 Finland became the member of the European Union. The deregulation and globalization shifted the focus from the technocratic and centralized welfare state into the (global) market economy. In the midst of mass-unemployment and trembling of traditional export-industry, the technology industry grew rapidly. Nokia gained its place as a world's largest mobile phone company and by the 2000s, policy-makers and leading industrialist envisioned Finland as the world's leading knowledge based society. The shift towards knowledge economy occurred hand in hand with the privatization, commercializing and technological developments in the production. The digitalisation in the fields of education and work led to the increasing disintegration of occupations and to deepening divisions between workers, management and academic professions.

Educational institutions were forced to adapt to the rapid changes of Finnish economy towards liberal market economy in the 1990s. The focus of educational policies shifted into higher education, since the building of knowledge economy required the strong contribution of universities. This also led into comprehensive reforms in the field of higher education. In the spirit of strong regionalisation, the nationwide system of polytechnics was created in the 1990s in order to react to rapid changes in vocational working life and to needs of business life and industry. The position of universities, on the other hand, changed in 2010s due to the Universities Act in 2009 and organisational reforms that followed.

The educational policy behind the higher education reforms emphasizes the harmonised competences and the industrial relevance. The pressure on international standardisation of degrees touched especially the higher education through the Bologna process and other transnational impacts on educational policy. Compared to earlier periods the transnational impacts have strengthened involving the ethos of global competitiveness in the educational market. (Universities Act 2009; Koski 2009; Ministry of Employment and the Economy 2008; Ministry of Education and Culture 2011.)

Nature of equality politics and sex-distinctions

The market orientation and the emphasis of individual and global competition in higher educational policy have changed also the nature and aims of equality politics. While the obligations to promote equality have tightened, equality has become a factor for excellence for single organisations (Lätti 2012) and for building

the knowledge economy nationwide. The previous idea of 'equality for all' has shifted into everybody's equality, a subjective right between individuals. The promotion of equality is harnessed for the search of the world-beaters, while everyone should have the equal possibility to compete, to succeed and get to the top. (Heikkinen et al 2012; Ministry of Education and Culture 2011.)

The impact of transnational organisations has grown also in equality politics. Gender mainstreaming, promoted by transnational organizations during the last decades, aims to mainstream gender aspect in all levels and fields in education and work (Council of Europe 1998). Transformed into national and local policies the objectives mainly aim at equal rights to be recruited, proceed on a career and to receive the same salary. While equality is interpreted as similar representation of both sexes, it is seen accomplished, when similar rights have come true. Indicators measuring gender equality are mainly quantitative: i.e. representation of women and men in different positions and tasks, division of salaries, working hours etc. (EU Commission 1996; Lätti 2012; Equality and parity plans...) Thus, the focus in implementing the equality politics is on observable structures and practices. Although equality is regarded as an important objective in universities, equality plans are not highly prioritized in practice. Instead, they tend to serve other goals considered more valuable in organizations and are easily ignored in the conflicts of different aims. In universities, equality work is seen as part of human resource development and management. The enhancement of gender equality is defended by the creation of good working environment, better working capacity of personnel, improved quality, success, productivity and

competitiveness of universities. (Lätti 2012; Strategy of the University of Tampere 2010; Equality and parity plans...)

In the level of policymaking, gender mainstreaming has become an important part of the educational policy. Despite the increase of equality agendas and tightened obligations to promote gender equality, sex-based segregations remain tight due to academization of work and sharpened hierarchies between academic fields. Although women and men have been quite equally presented in higher education since the 1960s, academic branches still divide into male and female dominated areas. Women are strongly represented at care and educational sciences, where the academic status is lower, while men dominate the prestigious, more funded and export-oriented technical fields – especially ICT and natural sciences. Women are involved in the academia in large number, but are relatively few as professors and scientific gatekeepers. They are also facing expectations to take care of the teaching and the community more often than men. Due to these quite unchanging 'deep streams', promoting equality with the means of formal equality politics, which mainly target to observable surface as quantities, salaries and representation of women and men, is highly problematic. (Heikkinen et al 2012; Lätti 2012.)

The building of knowledge economy and the reforms of polytechnics and universities have also created new dichotomies inside and between groups of women and men. While education still allocates women and men into segregated areas in the labour market, both men and women are expected to adapt on a prevailing culture of individual and global competition, to

proceed on a career and get to the top – which also equality politics invites them to (Lietzén et al 2015). Today universities compete increasingly in the global markets where education has become an important export requiring new academic skills and occupational ideals. Academic skills are defined as capability to global action and competition, innovation and branding of educational products. (Ministry of Education and Culture 2012; Research and Innovation Council 2010.) The ideal of equality politics in the knowledge economy is sex neutrality. Gender mainstreaming targets to equal opportunities and to subjective rights to struggle in individual competition, also through ‘gender branding’, the promise of individual building of one’s own gender. Nevertheless, the realities of market economy (competition) are still strongly guiding this construction.

Planetary perspective

Likewise in other Nordic and EU countries, official politics in Finland is committed to sustainable development. However, the market orientation in educational policy has changed the aims of internationalisation. (Koponen 2005.) While the earlier periods carried the ideals of charity and solidarity, in the 21st century the emphasis is rather on global competition. Notions of sustainability and environmental concern remain marginal in both vocational and higher education policies, where the process of Europeanization targets to harmonization as well as to common and competitive educational and industrial market. The focus has shifted to education export, innovation and productization for global markets, to international publication and ranking lists.

Paradoxically, while environmental, economic and social crises are more visible everywhere on the globe, the perspectives of global justice and responsibility have vanished from the aims of educational policy, while the search for profit binds individuals and organisations in the market. At the same time, the aims of equality politics have also moved towards individuality and subjective rights for success. From the perspective of lifelong learning, we can trace the moral gap between empathy and care for environment taught to children and the idea of individual competitor required from the adults.

The restructuring of global production and commodity chains and changes in global division of work have also affected the gender orders inside Nordic countries (Kershew 2011). The use of cheap female-dominated labour has moved increasingly to the global South. Although sex segregation is still visible in Finland and distinctions between groups of women are growing, we should ask who are excluded if promotion of equality is restricted to our own nation-state territory, where individual success has become a virtue. The accelerating rush after international excellence in both vocational and higher education indicates that their functions are being reduced into offering career options for few (elites), with the support of equality politics focusing on subjective right for individual men and women to make a career.

Beyond Nordic equality politics in education

The transformations of equality politics in relation to global economy were reflected in territorial, cultural ethos. In Finland, the

» The concept of global justice forces us to pay attention to ethical commitments of equality in (adult) education. »

un-problematized and defensive regional equality in nation building (in the period of *reconstruction and recovery* 1950–1960) shifted into state led project referring to social justice and to equal educational opportunities for all in the welfare state (the period of *superior Nordic welfare state* 1970s–1990s). From the global perspective, the equality in the first case was linked to un-reflected and naïve agendas of international solidarity and anti-imperialism. In the latter, the equality included the nation-statist and conceited image of Finland in relation to less-developed or ‘developing’ regions on the planet, but also emerging environmental awareness.

The geo-economics led by global financial markets challenged both previous layers: the search for profit binds individuals and industrial actors in the market. In the (global) knowledge economy (the period of *globalization without solidarity and responsibility* 2000s), the equality moved towards individuality and subjective rights for success. From the global view, the ideals of solidarity and responsibility vanished, while the period is linked to global competition between individuals, companies and nation-states and to calculation of different kinds of benefits on planetary issues.

In the end, we wish to raise some questions about how adult education research

on Nordic equality politics – in general and from gender point of view – might proceed to take into account their relation to planetary perspective. Has the current policy of lifelong learning legitimized an ethical and educational rupture from rhetoric of solidarity and sharing in education of children and youth to calculative individualism in adult forms of education?

Concerning the ‘equality game’ (Radcliff-Richards 2014), it seems evident that in the Nordic equality politics, exemplified by developments in Finnish educational policy and practice, the focus has been on distributive justice among citizens in the Nordic region. Although it has included elements of responsibility for material survival of people in other regions (Granness 2012), concrete measures of solidarity have been selective based on the rules defined by the Nordic standards. Until recently, equality, responsibility and justice between humans and non-humans have remained absent from Nordic equality politics, as well as from education policy. The concept of global justice forces us to pay attention to ethical commitments of equality in (adult) education. For the Kenyan philosopher Oruka the question of justice, exceeding national boundaries, means a shift from the paradigm of equality to the paradigm of responsibility for the other. This includes the idea of human

minimum – first to guarantee a certain minimum standard of living to all human beings. (Grønness 2012). The fact that human agency has become the main force shaping the earth, raise also the question of responsibility of humans to living and non-living non-humans (Latour 2014).

The findings about the insular equality politics and educational policy also suggest taking political geography more seriously in political, practical and research discussions. Issues of equality should be considered and evaluated in relation to division of work and welfare in planetary perspective, through negotiation about their different conceptions, based on different territorial traditions. Another radical challenge for Nordic and any other territorial ethics and morals is to open up such ‘negotiation’ to include non-human beings, since the material conditions for exercising equality, democracy and justice among humankind is endangered because of the indifference of humans

for the impacts of their behaviour to non-humans and to human-non-human relations.

Finally, while inhabitants of the Nordic territory cannot and should not forget and escape their material, social and moral histories, there would be a need to critically revise some basic questions in Nordic adult education. Instead of rejecting phenomena and concepts such as means of livelihood (näring, elinkeino) and folkishness (folkelighet, kansaisuus), in revised interpretation they might be fundamental for wider concept of adult education. It could consider issues of equality, democracy and justice from the planetary perspective of reproduction of conditions for human life and learning from experiences, knowledge and wisdom of people. Finally, in order to gain empirical relevance and political influence, our exercise should be shared by similar exercises in other contexts, preferably both inside and outside the Nordic territory.

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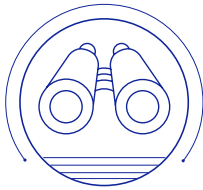
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BY

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COMPARATIVE POLITICAL PERSPECTIVES OF ADULT EDUCATION

– subsuming to qualification and competence strategies or searching for new missions?

Introduction and questions³

A main political instrument, that is promised to support lifelong learning by its advocates in the European Union (EU) and beyond, is the qualification framework (EQF for lifelong learning), which should provide systematic information about the qualifications available in education and training at national or sectoral levels. The aim of this article is to ask some basic questions about the implications and potentials of qualification framework (QF) policies for the development of non-vocational adult education (NVAE): can the NQF help the development of NVAE?

The focus of the reasoning lies at a political and strategic level, starting from an ambiguous constellation of QF policies in the broader attempts to develop and support lifelong learning. At EU level, the QF is one of the main instruments in politics towards education; at the same time the QF concerns qualifications that are primarily oriented towards employment and vocational purposes, or towards progression within the educational trajectories. Thus the role that the QF can play in NVAE is not self-evident. Nevertheless, a closer look at this relationship can be

³ An extended version of the paper including more information about the literature search and the analysis of the Adult Education Survey data is presented in the internet: www.eqf.at/dateien/nordic16.pdf

motivated by two arguments. First, the QF policy is such a strong political strand that if NVAE does not participate in it might lead to a disadvantage of this sector in terms of political support, financing, etc. Second, the question of how the relationship of NVAE to overall adult education and lifelong learning should be tackled politically is more generally at stake: is it at a political strategic level more favourable to conceive adult education as an integrated sector with NVAE being a part of this, or is it more favourable to handle NVAE as a separate sector within adult education with its own needs and logics? This alternative is closely related to the QF-policies because an integrated view would 'naturally' imply an integration of NVAE into the qualification framework.

An integrated or separate conception of NVAE is related to more general political-strategical assumptions and controversies. There is widespread consensus that among the proposed basic aims of EU lifelong learning policies, (a) furthering employability and economic competitiveness, (b) political and civic participation, and (c) social integration and inclusion, the main attention is dedicated to the economic aims, whereas NVAE is more closely related to the political and social aims. An integrated conception might lead either to an implicit co-optation of the non-vocational activities with the mainstream, or to a disadvantage of these activities, which might be put aside or crowded out. If the latter is true, a separate conception of NVAE would be necessary if we want to develop these activities at par with the economic and vocational aims.

The starting point for the analysis and discussion has been a question asked by the Austrian Ministry of Education, of

whether the sector of NVAE (in Austria named general adult education: 'Allgemeine Erwachsenenbildung') should be included into the national QF-policies, or whether it should be kept separate and supported by other policies. A commissioned research project should undertake a literature review about evidence and experience at the European and international level with QF policies in relation to NVAE, and develop support strategies for this sector. This chapter presents some selected results from these analyses, which are rather meant to open up discussions than to establish conclusions. Some parts of the argument are conceptual, some are empirical and explorative.

What is meant by NVAE could also be named differently, since the concept is used interchangeably also for general adult education, popular adult education, or liberal adult education, as the sector is named in different countries or cultures (the term 'non-vocational' is considered as giving a kind of common denominator, to draw the distinction to vocational and directly employment related continuing education).

In particular the following topics will be discussed in this chapter. First, an overview of the structure of discourses about the relationship of QF and NVAE found in the literature is sketched out. Second, some thoughts about the role of the institutional structures in adult education in relation to QF-policies are presented. Third, some explorative (quantitative and qualitative) empirical approaches towards the shape of NVAE in a comparative perspective are tried out. Fourth, a more general argument is made about the purpose of NVAE in relation to available theories of knowledge production in society.

TABLE 1. Search results in Ebscohost Education Research Complete

a. No. of hits from searches <adult education(ae)>, <lifelong learning(III)> and <qualification framework(qf)>

Search <expressions>	Search location	Hits absolute	Hits %
a. combinations of <adult education(ae)> + <lifelong learning(III)>			
<adult education>	text	55.287	100,0%
...+ <lifelong learning>	text	7.971	14,4%
...+ <lifelong learning>	title	685	1,2%
<adult education>	title	2.677	100,0%
...+ <lifelong learning>	text	559	20,9%
...+ <lifelong learning>	title	48	1,8%
b. combinations of <lifelong learning(III)> + <qualification framework(qf)>			
<lifelong learning>	text	28.644	100,0%
...+ <qualification framework>	text	875	3,1%
...+ <qualification framework>	title	37	0,1%
<lifelong learning>	title	1.459	100,0%
...+ <qualification framework>	text	73	5,0%
...+ <qualification framework>	title	10	0,7%
c. combinations of <adult education(ae)> + <qualification framework(qf)>			
<adult education>	text	55.287	100,0%
...+ <qualification framework>	text	677	1,2%
...+ <qualification framework>	title	12	0,0%
<adult education>	title	2.677	100,0%
...+ <qualification framework>	text	31	1,2%
...+ <qualification framework>	title	0	0,0%

(Source: own calculations, repeated searches in January 2016)

LEGEND: The searches are based on how often the <expressions> appear in the whole body of Ebscohost either in *text* or in *titles*, and the combinations indicate to which degree the topics are interrelated in the publication sources. There are no publications included in the source that carry both expressions, <adult education> and <qualification framework> together in the title, and only 1.2% of publications that carry <adult education> in the title or in the text (absolute 31 or 677 hits) include also <qualification framework> in the text. The expression <lifelong learning> is more often combined with <adult education> (20,9% or 14,4%), and <qualification framework> also is more often combined with <lifelong learning> than with <adult education>.

b. No. of hits from searches by time periods: specialized <expressions>

ABSOLUTE	-2003	2003-10	2011-16	total
<adult education> TITLE	1176	854	647	2677
<learning> TEXT	643	604	474	1721
<teaching> TEXT	376	387	297	1060
<lifelong learning> TEXT	152	237	170	559
<qualification> TEXT	91	85	74	250
<outcome> TEXT	171	197	192	560
<learning outcome> TEXT	40	58	60	158
<qualification framework> TEXT	6	16	9	31
RELATIVE (%)%	-2003	2004-10	2011-16	total
<adult education> TITLE	100%	100%	100%	100%
<learning> TEXT	55%	71%	73%	64%
<teaching> TEXT	32%	45%	46%	40%
<lifelong learning> TEXT	13%	28%	26%	21%
<qualification> TEXT	8%	10%	11%	9%
<outcome> TEXT	15%	23%	30%	21%
<learning outcome> TEXT	3%	7%	9%	6%
<qualification framework> TEXT	1%	2%	1%	1%
ABSOLUTE	-2003	2003-10	2011-16	total
<lifelong learning> TITLE	476	561	422	1459
<outcome> TEXT	97	165	119	381
<learning outcome> TEXT	38	82	62	182
<qualification framework> TEXT	14	31	28	73
RELATIVE (%)	-2003	2004-10	2011-16	total
<lifelong learning> TITLE	100%	100%	100%	100%
<outcome> TEXT	20%	29%	28%	26%
<learning outcome> TEXT	8%	15%	15%	12%
<qualification framework> TEXT	3%	6%	7%	5%

LEGEND: The distribution of expressions shows how certain key concepts of the policy discourse have been displayed in the periods before the development of the EQF (-2003), in the period of its development and early implementation (2004-10), and the later period of implementation 2011-16. The concepts related to QF-policies show a small increase from 2004, however, in the publications related to <adult education> their weight is small; in the publications related to <lifelong learning> their weight is a bit larger.

Discourse structures concerning NVAE found in the literature review

The literature review aimed not primarily at the policy documents but in particular on the academic literature which provides established evidence about the role of QF policies in relation to NVAE. For this purposes systematic searches were performed in March 2012 in the Ebscohost Education Research Complete Data base. At this time the European Qualification Framework (EQF 2008) has been already under way for some years, developed since 2004, and officially amended in 2008 (see Table 1 for an overview about the searches).

Basically, the review did not find material about the direct relationship between NQF and NVAE, and generally little material about NVAE was found. The literature search rather found 2 separate discourses instead of one, with the topic of lifelong learning (LLL) as a separating device. The relationship between the NQF and NVAE is actually addressed by two distinct bodies of literature, one dealing with the relationship between the QF and LLL, and the second concerning LLL and NVAE. (Figure 1 illustrates the complex relationships.)

Discourse 1: NQF and LLL

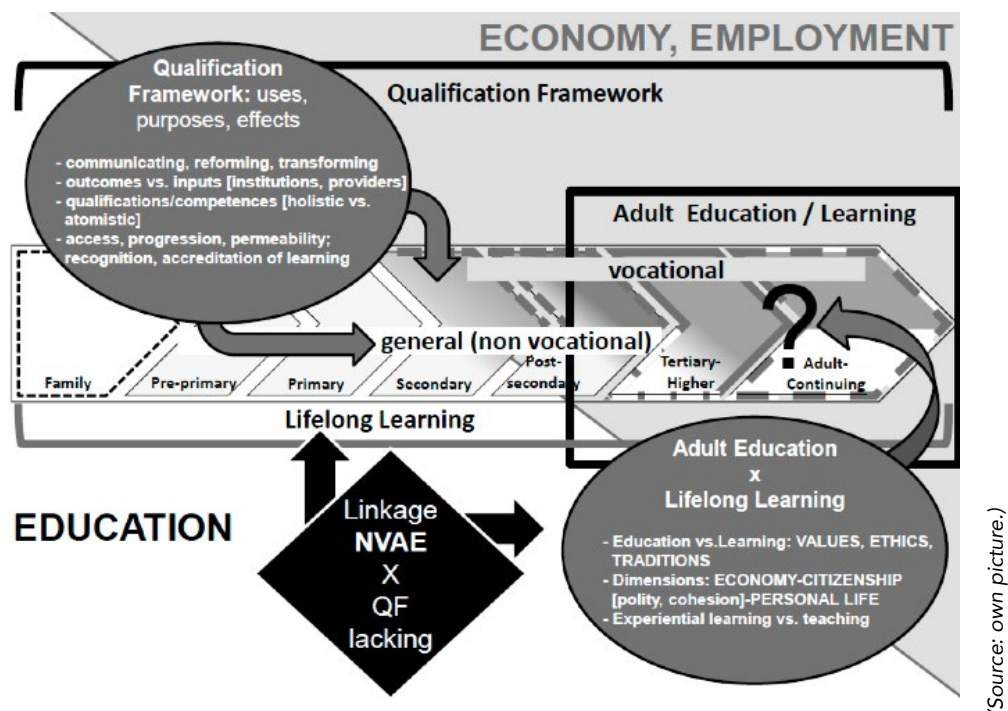
This discourse comprises two quite separate and different discourses: one could be termed advocacy of the NQF in a more applied and policy related sense, the other includes the critical academic literature about the meaning and impact of qualification frameworks. NVAE is covered only very marginally in these bodies of litera-

ture. The main topics are how the 'outcome orientation' and the new focus on the formulation and assessment of competencies would influence the development of education and training in a wider sense. Advocates expect that the better transparency, based on the specification of learning outcomes in the OF and the positioning of the qualifications at certain levels of the educational structures, would increase effective learning and accessibility of education. The critical academic literature has argued that the basic mission of the new outcome orientation would undermine the institutional bases of education (termed the 'supply side' by advocates) and subsume the professional role of educators (termed 'input oriented') under the leading roles of policy makers and the enterprise sector representing the 'demand side', thus leading to a de-professionalisation of the educators.

Discourse 2: LLL and NVAE

This discourse critically analyses how the new policy paradigm of Lifelong Learning would be related to the established meanings of adult education. LLL is mainly seen in a wider context of the 'economization' of society and politics in a neoliberal sense that puts emphasis on the pragmatic and utilitarian purposes of employment related learning, and discards the wider educational missions of traditional adult education related to 'enlightenment' and its established social and political dimensions. Enlightenment would particularly also include reasoning about the purposes of the economy and the wider consequences of putting the imperative of economic growth over all other aspects of society.

— FIGURE 1. Approach and topics of the research project. —



Learning outcomes and recognition of prior learning as key elements of QF

Non-advocatory analyses of LLL in EU policy have partly pointed to the strong and one sided emphasis put on the aims of employability and economic competitiveness at the expense of the social and political aims (Maniscalco 2013); to other parts a more complex picture, including various and also contradicting traits, has been observed that has in particular identified two different strands: the EQF policies emphasising lifelong learning with its primarily economic objectives, and the European key competences which would give room to the political and social objectives

in a broader approach of lifelong education (EERJ 2008; Zepke 2013). However, the more recent policy documents are quite clearly subsuming the key competences under the logic of learning outcomes and the QF (EU-COM 2012). This document proposes to establish tight assessment procedures also for the attitudes in the very delicate realms of civic and social behaviour, but such objectives seem not easily comply with human rights of freedom of opinion or personal integrity.

However, the main linkage of the NQF to adult education is going through the newly proposed practices and frameworks of assessment and recognition of results of

» ...can we assume different degrees of institutionalisation of different sectors of adult education? »

learning outside the formal education provision. Notwithstanding that general idea that the dominance of the documented results from formal education frameworks over informal learning is biased and questionable, the implications and effects of the assessment and recognition approaches are also put under question and are ambiguous in their effects on adult education. The emphasis on learning over education puts the role of educational institutions under scrutiny, and as some argue, undermines trust in the professional authority of the education institutions based on – sometimes fundamentalist – neoliberal preferences for the market over institutions (e.g., Young & Allais 2009). Clearly, if someone owns competenc(i)es which are needed for progression in education or employment, and have been acquired outside educational institutions, but are not certified, this should be recognized without any additional costs for ‘learning’ what is already there. However, the quite substantial costs of assessment are often underestimated (Werquin 2008; 2010). The institutional separation of summative assessment on the one hand, and teaching-learning in educational programmes on the other, is also criticized for having not only positive consequences to education. Important issues are the methodological

problems in assessment, possibly leading to reductionist formulations of competenc(i)es assessment practices, and the establishment of ‘teaching to the test’ practices by educators, which overall might lead to the paradox of better assessment of worse learning outcomes.

Institutional structures of adult education and NQF policies

A basic premise of the research has been that an assessment of the (potential) effects of NQFs for NVAE can only be done reasonably if the basic structures of education are taken into account, or – in other words – that an interaction between NQF policies and the existing educational frameworks must be expected. This means that not only NQF policies must be analysed, but in order to get a proper understanding of this interaction, the basic educational structures must also be identified and analysed. Next, different approaches towards NQF policies must be taken into account, e.g., how much the frameworks are devised only to document the national structures, or to which degree they should have an impact on the change of existing structures. Some authors have expected

that the establishment of NQFs would have an automatic impact on change if outcome orientation is taken seriously, as this would gear attention away from inputs towards results, and would also automatically give the learners and the stakeholders from the 'demand side' (i.e. employers) a stronger position vis-à-vis the providers at the 'input side' (educationalists).

For the question of the project, of how NQF policies could support (or hamper) NVAE, the hypothesis was taken that the effects of NQF policies would very much depend on the existing strength of NVAE in an overall framework of education. Michael Young and Stephanie Allais (2011) have pointed out that the aim of a weakening the educational institutions through the questioning of their professional authority by the neoliberal policy of outcome orientation would have less serious consequences for strong institutions than for weaker ones. Their argument is based on the comparison of 'developed' and 'developing' countries, but can be extended to different sectors of education also: we can assume that the formal education system for the young is more strongly institutionalised than adult education everywhere, so effects of NQF policies can be expected to be different for these sectors. Concerning different sectors within adult education the question is trickier and also leads us to some basic appraisals: can we assume different degrees of institutionalisation of different sectors of adult education? Can we expect a certain relationship between vocational and employment related continuing education and NVAE? Is the latter as a rule more weakly institutionalised than the former? And how can we assess these relationships?

A basic premise in adult education has always been that it must be learner oriented because of its voluntary character. However, this is considered to have changed with the upcoming of the 'education gospel' about the education as the celebrated solution of all our problems (Grubb, Laszerson 2004). The responsibility of updating and developing the vocational and employment-related competenc(i)es was shifted to the individuals, promising them all kinds of gains from further education. As a consequence continuing education is considered being less and less voluntary and more and more 'compulsory' in a sense of individual commitment. The attention of the involved actors then shifts to the expected outcomes of education, and the actors representing the 'demand side' gains influence in continuing adult education. When the responsibility of the individuals to invest in learning for economic gains increases, this shift tends to result in a change of the weights in the overall adult education landscape towards the utilitarian vocational and employment related sectors and practices of provision. Placing the emphasis on the NQF can consequently reinforce this change of the weights, as the main focus is laid on competenc(i)es as part of qualifications that are finally used and needed for employment.

The impact of these changes on NVAE can be expected to depend on the strength of this sector in a national framework of adult education – this is an important conceptual assumption in the course of this analysis. From the Austrian perspective an expectation at the outset of the project has been that in the Nordic countries, where adult education is conventionally perceived as being stronger developed than in other regions, the resilience of NVAE would be

relatively well established. Another question was, whether in the nations of the U.K., or in other Anglo-Saxon countries, where an established critical discourse about AE and LLL has taken place, the sector of Adult and Community education would show some resilience against the overall vocationalisation and economisation.

Empirical explorations of the structure and content of NVAE

Based on the overall reasoning, two empirical explorations are presented in this section. First, the scarce European comparative (quantitative) data are used to gain a superficial glance at the structure and development of participation in adult education; second, a European study is used to chart the basic structures of the purposes and the content of NVAE in qualitative terms.

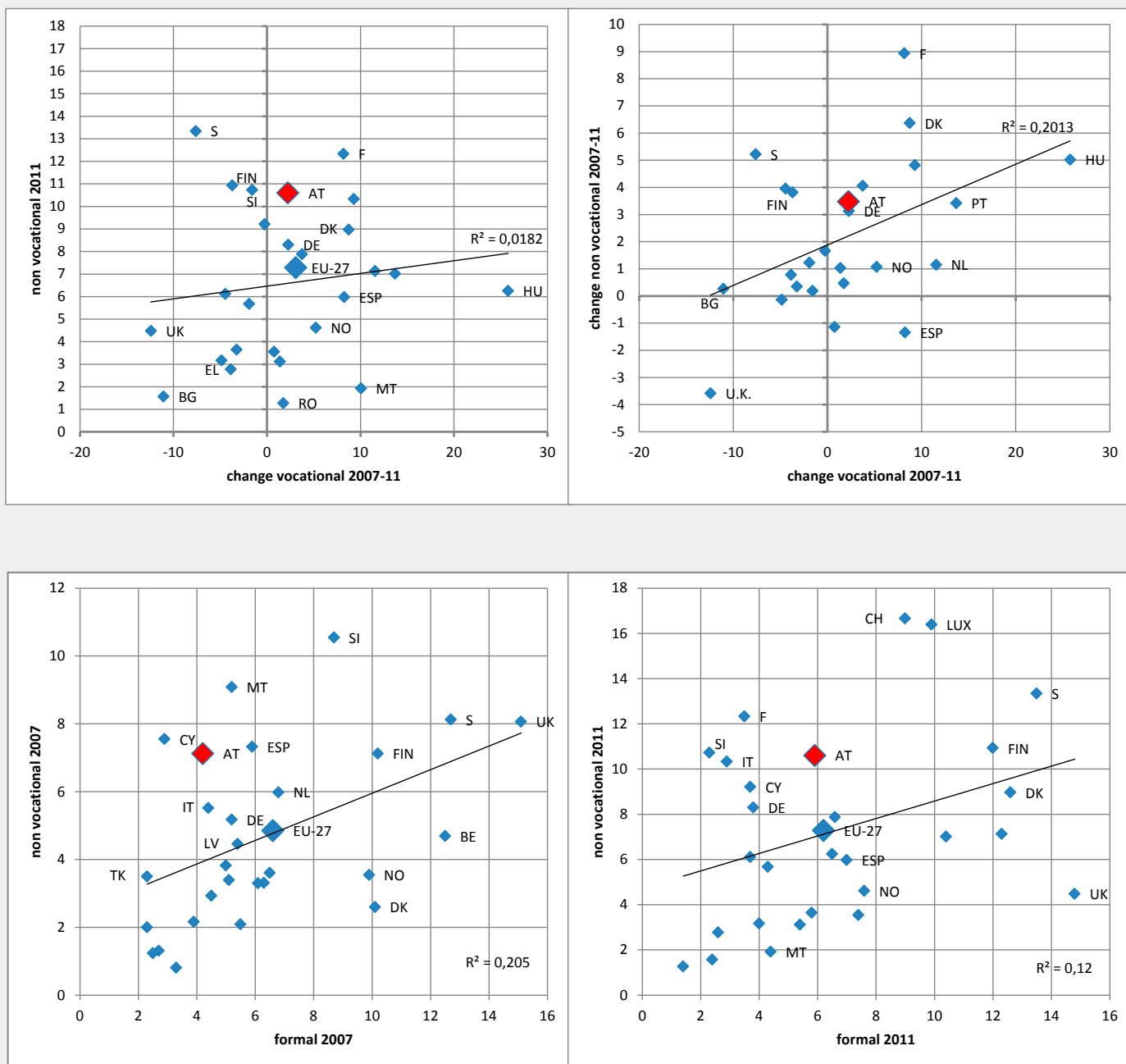
Structures and changes of adult education between 2007 and 2011

The data allow to compare the change in participation in vocational and non-vocational AE in several EU countries, in order to see whether the strong political focus on the economic and vocational dimensions of AE is actually reflected in an increase of participation in vocational programmes at the expense of non-vocational ones. As a second dimension the participation in formal AE can be interpreted as an indication for the institutional strength of AE in a country. A positive relationship between the participation in formal and non-vocational AE could indicate that the institutional strength is in fact important for the support of NVAE.

An overview of the patterns of the different categories of adult education can be given at two points in time (2007 and 2011) based on the European Adult Education Survey (AES; see www.equi.at/dateien/nordic16.pdf). First, we can compare formal and non-formal adult education. The participation rate in formal AE is much less than in non-formal AE (up to 14% vs. up to 70%; EU average 6% vs 30–40%), and there is a weak positive correlation at both points in time ($R^2 .30$). The participation in vocational and non-vocational AE is not related to each other in 2007, whereas there is some positive relationship in 2011 ($R^2 .41$). In any case this does not indicate that the shift towards vocational AE would lead to a systematic decrease of NVAE.

A look at the relationships between the dimensions of formal/non-formal and vocational/non-vocational AE shows some pattern. As most AE participation is taking place in non-formal AE and in vocational AE these two are strongly correlated in 2007 and 2011; a weak positive correlation can be found between formal and vocational AE; however, NVAE is neither related to formal nor to non-formal AE. This might indicate that more specific factors are at work in NVAE, or that the measurement of this dimension is less consistent. In sum a hypothesis that an overall stronger system of AE (represented by higher participation) would support NVAE is not really compatible with these data; if there is a positive relationship, it is very weak.

— FIGURE 2. Participation and change of participation in vocational AE related to NVAE. —



TOP: Change of participation in vocational AE 2007-11 in relation to level of participation in NVAE 2001 (left) and to change in NVAE 2007-11 (right). BOTTOM: Patterns of participation in formal AE related to participation in NVAE 2007 (left), 2011 (right). (Source: own calculations based on EUROSTAT [downloaded March 2013 and May 2015].)

A closer inspection of individual countries shows that the participation in formal AE is quite unstable between 2007 and 2011 with only one third of countries lying at or near the regression line. The Nordic countries show quite different patterns of participation in 2007, with formal AE being consistently above average, but participation in NVAE differing. The UK with the highest participation in formal AE lies near the regression line with NVAE, and the countries with the highest participation in NVAE show rather around average participation in formal AE in 2007 (Slovenia, Malta); in 2011 the highest participation in NVAE is related to high (Luxemburg) and low (Germany) formal participation. Thus, the participation rates measured by the indicators calculated from the AES do not give clear accounts of structures of AE in different countries; either the indicators are not good representations, or the structures are not stable.

In sum, this constellation leaves serious open questions for the overall purpose of finding AE structures which could explain policies in NVAE and NQF:

- high and rising participation in vocational AE is not systematically related with low or declining participation in NVAE (Figure 2, Top)
- more established patterns of AE, represented by high participation in formal AE are very weakly related to higher participation in NVAE, if at all (Figure 2, Bottom).

Purposes of NVAE and NQF policies: why should a QF relate to NVAE?

Another way to approach the questions is to look qualitatively at the purposes of NVAE and QFs, and to relate these to each other in order to find communalities and/or conflicts. The purposes of qualifications frameworks are distilled from a wide bulk of literature (see Lassnigg 2012; Cort 2010; Bjørnåvold & Coles 2007/8). The following main purposes of QFs can be found in the literature:

(a) Direct practice-related purposes: relating education and training (supply) to skills and employment needs (demand)

- Credentialing: relating elements on supply side (programmes, modules, etc.) to QF levels and to each other
- Recognising and validating informal learning

(b) Indirect system-related purposes

- Outcome orientation: relating qualifications to learning outcomes
- Pedagogy and assessment: inducing new modes of competence based education, training and learning

Asking if these purposes are relevant for NVAE, one must first concede that QFs are primarily related to qualifications which are in turn matched to purposes of employment and occupations. Second, the purposes of NVAE can be distilled from an EU wide study (Figure 3, based on EURYDICE 2007, 35–36).

» ...why should we expect that the NQF policy should help to develop NVAE? »

If we confront these purposes of NVAE with the above mentioned purposes of QF policies (matching supply-demand, credentialing, recognition and validation of informal learning, outcome orientation, competence based education), and ask how they fit, then the answer must be that the purposes clearly do not fit to each other.

What can be expected from the NQF as a support to NVAE? If the purposes do not fit to each other it is not easy to see what can be expected on the positive side. On the negative side two aspects can be brought forward. First, the NQF policy is to some degree shaping the policy discourses about adult education, and does take energy away from explicit endeavours to develop NVAE. Second, the application of the NQF to NVAE does subsume it under the instrumental logic of learning outcomes - the new approach in the European policies and discourses that are forcefully trying to apply the logic of the formulation and assessment of learning outcomes to the key qualifications underline this (EU-COM 2012). The approach of the European Key Competences was previously observed as a broader approach towards the societal aspects of lifelong learning than the NQF policies (Hoskins 2008). European research focused to on the broader societal

implications of citizenship, however, more recent developments point strongly in the direction of measurement, extending this approach into the very personal non-vocational competences also. In this sense, the genuine topics of NVAE are pulled towards the utilitarian logic of vocational and employment related AE, so in sum, why should we expect that the NQF policy should help to develop NVAE?

Turning the question around: How to support NVAE?

One aspect of the question concerns how NVAE can/should reasonably been defined, and how it can/should be related to the other sectors of adult education in terms of policy making. How can we distinguish it from other forms of AE? Shall we distinguish NVAE as a separate sector and policy issue?

Currently most observers and stakeholders rather support subsuming NVAE into an overarching hybrid AE (e.g., in Germany and Austria this was clearly advocated during the last decades by the NVAE-stakeholders). This reflects to some extent commercial interests: if there is a relatively small demand for NVAE, it is often argued that vocational AE could

FIGURE 3. Topics of NVAE. (Source: Eurydice 2007, 35–36.)

OVERARCHING TOPICS

- **Social issues**
(including ageing, crime, environment, health, heritage, parenting and poverty)
- **Cultural matters**
(arts, crafts, cuisine, dance, languages, literature, media, music, theatre)
- **Political matters**
(community development, current affairs, democratic participation, history, international relations, law)
- Further fundamental topics
 - Literacy learning
 - Language learning: general foreign language learning; Language learning for immigrants
 - Information and communication technology (ICTs)

KEY COMPETENCES 6 AND 8

- **6 KC: 'interpersonal, intercultural and social competences, civic competence'**: 'all forms of behaviour that equip individuals to participate in an effective and constructive way in social and working life, and particularly in increasingly diverse societies, and to resolve conflict where necessary.' Civic competence 'equips individuals to fully participate in civic life, based on knowledge of social and political concepts and structures and a commitment to active and democratic participation'.
- **8 KC: 'cultural expression'** 'appreciation of the importance of the creative expression of ideas, experiences and emotions in a range of media, including music, performing arts, literature, and the visual arts'.

INITIATIVES (examples)

- 2001, *adult learning for active citizenship*
- 2004 '*Citizenship in Action*': funding of civil society, faith based, youth and cultural organisations, trade unions and family associations that promote active citizenship (learning for interculturalism, civic participation), significance for community-based non-governmental and civil society groups and organisations throughout Europe.

NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANISATIONS (types and services)

- education providers;
- campaigning NGOs promote ideological aims (environmental protection; multiculturalism; social justice; women's empowerment)
- services to NGO- members or targeted education service delivery (individuals with a disability; literacy provision; cultural development; community development)

COUNTRY PRACTICES MENTIONED

- **Nordic countries, Germany**: explicitly recognise the role of non-formal NVAE in developing active and participatory citizenship and social capital and strengthening social inclusion and social cohesion; study circles: challenges of the local communities in which the *study circles* are located
- **Finland**, liberal education: the main mission of non-formal NVAE is to promote democratic values, active citizenship and social cohesion; achievement of personal growth, maturity and independence, understanding of social and human relations
- **France**: movement inspired by Christian, working-class and/or social principles: making education available to all, promoting citizenship and emancipating people through access to knowledge and culture
- **Greece**: parenting skills and volunteer responses to emergencies
- **United Kingdom** (Scotland), Community Learning and Development (CLD): community-based adult learning, community capacity building and youth work outside of formal institutions. *Community education* encompasses formal and informal learning opportunities, core skills including adult literacy, numeracy, information and communication technology.

raise funds to be made available for NVAE. A counter position can be formulated: because of the strong trend – at least in rhetoric – towards vocational AE, the non-vocational provision would come into a danger to be ‘crowded out’ by the other more powerful sectors, if subsumed under one umbrella with them. Starting with the separate purposes of economic, social, political and cultural aspects of adult education we observe that all these purposes are commonly agreed on as being important (e.g., all these purposes are included in the official European policy documents). However, it is also quite commonly agreed by observers that the economic and employment related purposes are very much predominating, and that the others are without similar support, and maybe in decline also (even if the quantitative data do not support this common belief as shown above); some observers – which have been forgotten a bit in the discourse – have tried to turn the question around by pointing to the inherent political missions of adult education (Fields 2005).

If we reconsider the topics and purposes of NVAE in the 2000s (as shown above in Figure 3), we can find an overall characteristic. The activities are ‘subversive’, and cater for those ‘in the shadow’ of society (excluded people and groups at risk), and also outside the mainstream politically (often related to NGOs who are trying to give otherwise neglected groups or topics recognition and a voice). In short, most of these purposes are to some extent conflict loaded, and considered by their advocates as being something ‘to fight for’.

This character of NVAE poses the question if there would be a need for a (new)

mission for NVAE to support its development. Currently the overall discourse of AE and LLL is overwhelmed by the various functional (economic) imperatives related to technology and globalisation. The social and political aspects are subsumed under the functional discourse in a double way: first, by pointing to the increasing manpower/skill needs to be satisfied, and second, by seeing employment as the main integration mechanism into society. However, there are also many indications that skills and employment are not enough for social integration/inclusion, many other aspects of society are necessary which can be supported by NVAE. At the same time citizenship and democracy are strongly under contest by influences of globalisation and the neoliberal mission of putting the market and the (multinational) business corporations over the state. These contradictions are reflected by the concepts of post-democracy and civil society (e.g., Crouch 2004).

Most actors in adult education do not react ‘subversively’, but rather opportunistically, by trying to subsume the problematic aspects under the mainstream of skills demand by displaying the functional aspects of NVAE, and subsuming democracy under the market by commercialising services. The need for a (new) mission for NVAE can be based on the argument that the above mentioned ‘subversive’ purposes of NVAE are key for societal development and, consequently would need an institutional base as well as financial means, however, to other conditions than the commercialised market and the new-public-management-oriented outcome guided policies can provide. In the discourse about NVAE this trend towards ‘economisation’ is widely and heavily crit-

icised, however, we cannot find a similar forceful search for alternative approaches and missions.

If we go back to the empirically observed wider societal purposes of NVAE, what could the mission of NVAE be and what could NVAE specifically do to support those purposes? A proposal for an answer to these questions concerning a new mission can be made by the two dimensions:

- support of transdisciplinarity in knowledge production and
- widening of the institutional base for the support of new modes of knowledge production in society.

Knowledge and knowledge production is an important, contradictory and contested ingredient in societal practice (encompassing economic, political, social and cultural practices). It was historically at the roots of adult education, if we focus on its non-religious parts and sectors, such as enlightenment (Aufklärung) vs. unjustified beliefs, or the university extension, trying to bring science to the people, also reflected in the (partly contested) term of the folk high school (Volkshochschule). However, a simple and one-dimensional notion of enlightenment has run into serious conflicts (Dialektik der Aufklärung, knowledge as element in power and dominance, 'reflexive modernisation', etc.). Thus NVAE has lost this as a clear historical mission (cf. Rinne, Heikkinen & Salo 2007) and various 'anti-movements' developed to

some extent under the flag of post-modernism. This development might also be seen as a diversion of its subversivity, for example by versions of esoteric or sectarian movements that reproduce the old conflicts between enlightenment and religion.

A new mission for NVAE in the 'knowledge society'?

Since the 1990s new (and still contested) approaches to knowledge and knowledge production have emerged in science research that somehow try to combine democracy with knowledge production. Transdisciplinarity means a new kind of cooperative knowledge production by researchers and users by various kinds of a direct involvement of the users into also into the scientific production of knowledge. There are different concepts of this development. One is the rise of the 'mode 2' as part of the new knowledge production (Gibbons et al 1994; Nowotny, Scott & Gibbons 2003; 2006), other are concepts of problem oriented or use oriented science that stick closer to traditional views of science ('mode 1') but also make much stronger relationships to users (e.g., Bechmann, Gorokhov, Stehr 2009; Stokes 1997; Stehr 2008).

We must contend also that all the various observed and proposed purposes of NVAE, in order to be processed in practice, imply or need knowledge. Moreover, they need not only distribution and passive acquisition of knowledge, but also the active

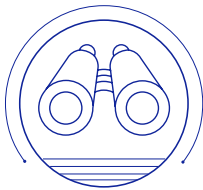
participation in its production, its co-construction, etc., exactly what is meant by transdisciplinarity. However, transdisciplinarity is difficult to achieve; it needs space and resources on the one hand. On the other hand (traditional) science is somehow reluctant to participate in such 'broader' practices, and is also under pressure and 'rationalisation' that reduces its room to move. The regimes in different sectors seem to prevail distinct. The economy and business organisations provide at least some room for transdisciplinary activities (innovation, technological development,

etc.), whereas the public sector, where NVAE is situated (politics and policy, social and community development, environmental issues, etc.) do not provide room so much, because they are more strongly under resource constraints. In particular, the policy development is increasingly shaded away from the public. Therefore, providing additional room for new kind of transdisciplinary knowledge production could be a mission of NVAE institutions. This is quite arguable and clear, and should be a topic of broader discussion also in adult education research.

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BY

Joo-Hyun Park

ADULT EDUCATION, OPPORTUNITY FOR HIGHER EDUCATION IN FINLAND AND KOREA

Introduction

The purposes of adult education are said to be developing skills for today's and future labor market, helping all adults to acquire basic skills and key competencies, and achieving non-economic goals such as personal fulfilment, improved health, civic participation, social inclusion, reduced levels of crime, and environmental protection. (Anna 2013.) It can be categorized into vocational, social, recreational and self-developmental aims. (Selman, Gordon et al 1998).

In today's knowledge society and worldwide competition, adult education aims to make adults adapt to changing technologies and learn and apply a new set of skills in order to meet the needs of the changing labour market. Specifically, as the OECD Skill Outlook (2013) states, the skill ability of a typical adult starts to decrease after the age of 30, but it can be alleviated by adult learning.

Also, the demographic change to the aging society in many countries has brought the big issue of the quality of retired life and the change made it crucial to provide the elderly some learning programs.



(Source: Education at a glance, OECD, 2014.)

— FIGURE 1. Participation in formal and/or non-formal adult education (2012). —

Last but not least, citizenship education as the traditional role of adult education still remains important.

This article will firstly investigate the current situation of adult education especially in Finland and Korea mainly with the data from the OECD. Secondly, it will inquire into the potential to expand adult education. Thirdly, it will explain the interrelation between adult education, vocational education and higher education. Lastly, it will continue to discuss the opportunity for higher education institu-

tions (HEIs) in both job-related and liberal adult education, particularly in the two countries.

Participation in adult education

Participation

Across the OECD, 52% of adults participate in formal and/or non-formal education in a given year (4% formal, 41% informal, 7% formal and informal).

Formal education is defined as planned education provided in the system of schools, colleges, universities and other formal education institutions, which normally constitutes a continuous ‘ladder’ of full-time education. On the other hand, non-formal education is defined as a sustained educational activity that does not correspond exactly to formal education. It may take place both within and outside of educational institutions and cover education programs in adult literacy, basic education for out-of-school adults, life skills, work skills, and general culture in the format of open or distance learning courses, private lessons, organized sessions for on-the-job training, workshops or seminars and so on. (Education at a Glance 2014.)

The figure above shows that Finland is ranked first with Denmark and Sweden in the indicator of participation in adult education among the OECD countries, whilst Korea is placed around the OECD average.

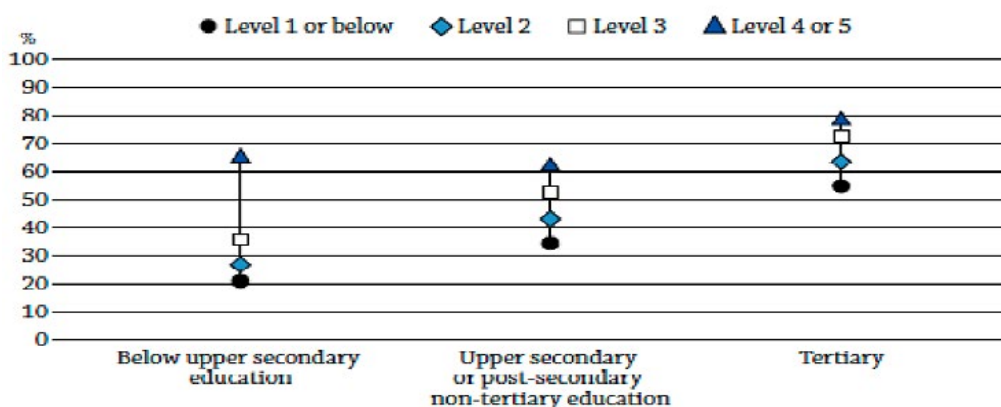
It also shows that Finland, along with other Nordic countries, shows an well above-average proportion of adults attending formal institutions, while the proportion of adults who participate in formal education in Korea is far below average.

The strong positive relationship between participation in adult education, literacy skills and educational attainment is consistent across countries as shown in the figure below.

According to the figure, tertiary-educated adults were over 2.6 times more likely to participate in formal and/or non-formal education than adults without upper secondary education, and people with high literacy proficiency were 1.9 times more likely to participate in adult education than those with low literacy proficiency.

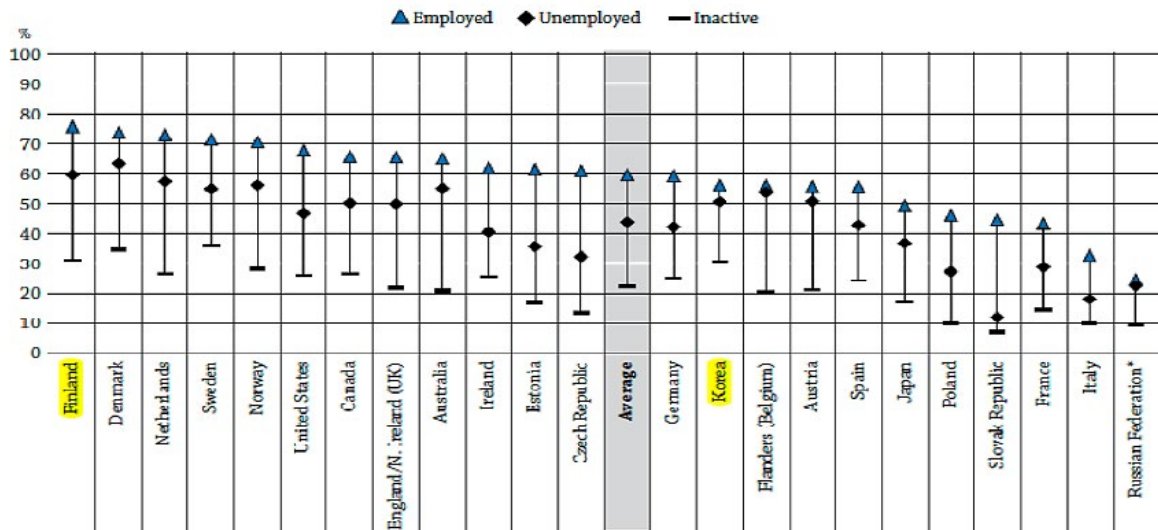
Also, there is a significant gap in the participation rates in adult education according to the status in the labour market.

FIGURE 2. Participation in formal and/or non-formal adult education by literacy proficiency level and educational attainment (2012).



(Source: Education at a glance, OECD, 2014.)

FIGURE 3. Participation in formal and/or non-formal education, by labour market status (2012) 25–64 year-olds.



(Source: Education at a glance, OECD, 2014.)

This figure shows that in Finland adult education for people outside the labour market is relatively inactive, while in Korea adult education for employed people is considerably low.

Expandability of adult education

Life expectancy: in aging society, people have to spend life in retirement for decades. According to the survey of the OECD (OECD Factbook 2014), the life expectancy in Korea increased from 71.4 years in 1990 to 81.1 in 2011, while that of Finland increased from 75.0 to 80.6.

Attainment rate in tertiary education and participation rate in adult education: more people are getting tertiary education in the two countries. The table below shows that the number of adults who have attained tertiary education has been increasing. In Finland 31% of adults at the age of 55–64 have attained tertiary education, but at the age of 30–34, 46% of adults have obtained it. Meanwhile, in Korea 14% of adults between 55–64 years old have attained tertiary education, but 66% of people at the age of 30–34 have achieved it.

Also, the survey result below demonstrates that tertiary-educated adults were over 2.6 times more likely to participate in formal and/or non-formal education than adults without upper secondary education. Particularly in Korea the gap is widened by 3.4 times.

TABLE 1. Percentage of adults who have attained tertiary education, by age group (2012).

	Tertiary-type B						Tertiary-type A or advanced research programmes						Total tertiary					
	25-64	30-34	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	25-64	30-34	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	25-64	30-34	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)	(15)	(16)	(17)	(18)
Australia	11	11	10	13	12	10	30	38	37	32	25	23	41	49	47	45	37	33
Austria	7	6	5	7	8	8	13	20	18	14	10	8	20	26	23	22	19	17
Belgium	17	20	18	20	16	13	18	24	25	21	16	12	35	44	43	40	32	25
Canada	25	26	25	27	25	22	28	32	32	32	24	22	53	58	57	59	50	44
Chile ¹	6	6	6	7	6	4	12	17	16	12	9	9	18	23	22	19	16	13
Czech Republic	x(7)	x(8)	x(9)	x(10)	x(11)	x(12)	19	26	28	19	18	13	19	26	28	19	18	13
Denmark	6	6	5	6	6	5	29	37	35	32	27	24	35	43	40	39	32	29
Estonia	13	12	13	12	13	12	25	27	27	24	24	23	37	39	40	36	37	35
Finland	13	2	1	15	21	17	26	44	39	33	21	15	40	46	40	47	41	31
France	12	17	16	16	10	7	19	27	27	22	14	13	31	44	43	38	24	20
Germany	11	10	9	11	12	11	17	22	19	19	15	15	28	32	29	30	28	26
Greece	9	11	13	8	8	5	18	20	21	19	16	15	27	31	35	27	24	20
Hungary	1	1	1	1	c	c	21	29	29	22	19	15	22	30	30	22	19	15
Iceland	4	c	3	5	5	5	31	40	36	37	30	20	35	40	38	42	34	25
Ireland	15	18	16	18	13	10	25	33	33	28	19	15	40	51	49	46	32	25
Israel	14	13	12	14	14	16	33	38	33	36	30	30	46	51	44	50	45	47
Italy	n	n	n	n	n	n	15	21	22	17	12	11	16	22	22	17	12	11
Japan	20	m	23	25	20	13	26	m	35	27	26	19	47	m	59	52	46	32
Korea	13	25	26	17	6	2	28	40	40	36	23	11	42	66	66	52	29	14

(Source: Education at a glance, OECD, 2014)

TABLE 2. Participation in formal and/or non-formal education, by literacy proficiency level and educational attainment (2012), 25–64 year-olds.

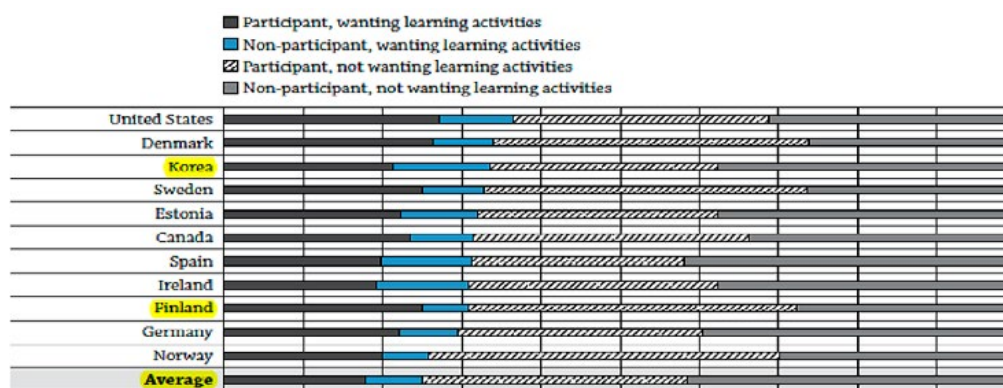
	Educational attainment	Level 0/1		Level 2		Level 3		Level 4/5		Total	
		%	S.E.	%	S.E.	%	S.E.	%	S.E.	%	S.E.
		(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)
Korea	Below upper secondary	15	(2.0)	24	(2.5)	31	(6.1)	c	c	21	(1.3)
	Upper secondary or post-secondary non-tertiary	32	(3.6)	39	(2.1)	51	(2.4)	62	(8.1)	43	(1.3)
	Tertiary	65	(8.0)	62	(2.4)	73	(1.7)	82	(3.6)	71	(1.1)
Finland	Below upper secondary	24	(4.1)	34	(3.6)	44	(4.8)	c	c	34	(2.2)
	Upper secondary or post-secondary non-tertiary	40	(3.8)	56	(2.2)	68	(1.9)	77	(3.6)	62	(1.0)
	Tertiary	71	(6.7)	71	(2.6)	81	(1.5)	88	(1.3)	81	(0.9)
Average	Below upper secondary	21	(0.7)	27	(0.7)	36	(1.3)	66	(6.5)	27	(0.4)
	Upper secondary or post-secondary non-tertiary	35	(0.9)	43	(0.5)	53	(0.5)	63	(1.4)	47	(0.3)
	Tertiary	55	(1.6)	64	(0.7)	73	(0.4)	79	(0.7)	71	(0.3)

(Source: Survey of Adult Skills. PIAAC 2012.)

Desire for learning more: As seen below, about a fourth of adults are interested in further adult education activities. Especially, Korea and Finland have around a third of adults who want to participate in further adult education. The figure below shows

that more participants in adult education showed further desire in learning activities than non-participants. In addition, countries with higher participation rates seemed to have larger proportion of people who want to try out learning activities.

FIGURE 4. Participation in formal and/or non-formal education and desired learning activities (2012) 25–64 year-olds.



(Source: Education at a glance, OECD, 2014.)

All in all: there is a strong possibility that more people will participate in adult education for longer period of time in the future credited to the extended life expectancy and the increase of graduates from tertiary education. This possibility can be strengthened by the need of learning and applying a new set of skills in order to adjust to the changing labour market in the knowledge society and worldwide competition. Moreover, Finland and Korea have more possibility due to more adults who want to take further education than the OECD average.

Adult Education, Vocational Education and Higher Education

According to Figure 1 and the OECD survey of adult skills (2012), less than 10% of Korean adults and more than 20% of Finnish people who attend adult education courses participate in formal education. Also, in the two countries, most of formal adult education courses for adults are made in HEIs. Thus, the areas of 'A' and 'B' in Figure 5 virtually indicate the adult education in higher education. There are many informal adult education programs in higher education institutions, and they also could be included in 'A' and 'B'.

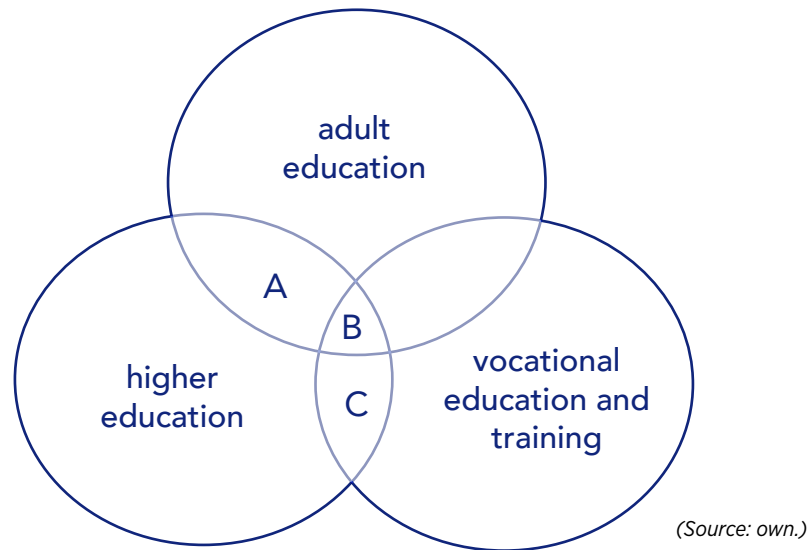


FIGURE 5. Relation between adult education, vocational education, and higher education.

Meanwhile, polytechnics in Finland and junior colleges or some other universities in Korea take the role of vocational education and training, and thus the fields of 'B' and 'C' represent the vocational education in higher education, among which the area of 'B' means job-related education for adults in higher education. The interrelation between adult education, vocational education and higher education can be depicted as follows.

The dynamics between adult education, vocational education and higher education have been developed in the context of countries' own histories and cultures. For example, in Finland it seems that the innovation of higher education in the 1990s has enlarged the areas of 'A', 'B' and 'C'. Also the tradition of the folk education, the dual system and the nationalism in higher education seems to have influenced these three fields to the direction of enhancing

the connection between them. Meanwhile, in Korea the strong tradition of Academism and Confucianism as well as a short history of adult education possibly have caused a weak correlation between vocational education, higher education and adult education.

Adult education, opportunity for HEIs

There is a considerable room for HEIs in adult education whether it is job-related or not. HEIs can extend their spheres of 'A', 'B' and 'C' to 'A+', 'B+' and 'C+', as seen in Figure 6 with correct goal settings and proper strategies.

Liberal adult education

The area of 'A' indicates the adult education programs which are not direct-

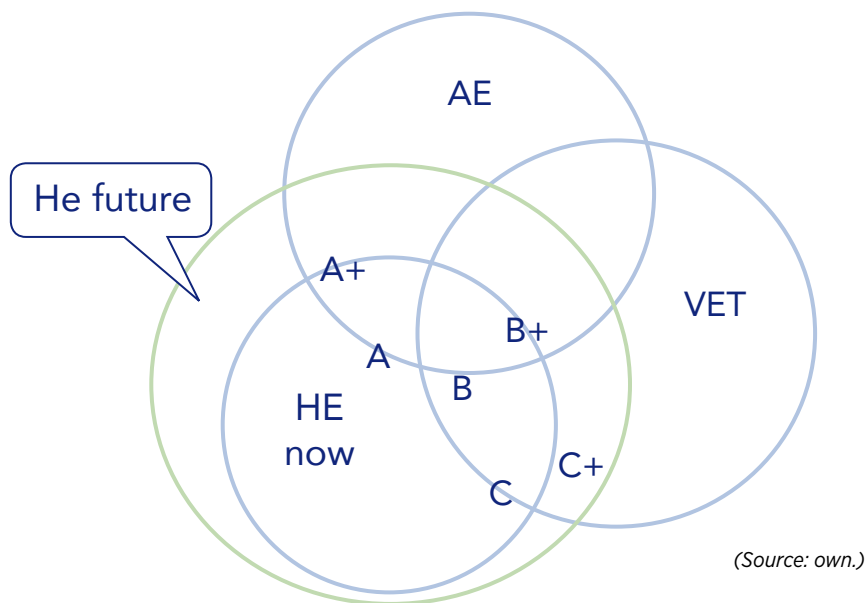


FIGURE 6. Development of higher education in relation to adult education.

ly job-related in HEIs. HEIs have been managing adult education programs for recreation, hobby or social networking to promote enjoyment, respond to adults' self-development needs, and develop citizenship skills at the field of 'A'.

As mentioned before, these areas have a considerable potentiality to expand due to the extension of life expectancy and the increase of graduates from tertiary education. More elderly people will seek for adult education programs for a longer period of time. Also, adult education programs for retirees will mostly be non-vocational courses.

HEIs can expand their spheres of 'A' to 'A+' by attracting retirees who mostly have attained higher education before. Retirees

will be willing to get adult education courses such as academic lectures, recreational activities, health programs and citizenship lectures to improve their quality of retired life. In this respect, HEIs can open lectures designed for the elderly, such as popular humanity lectures and practical lectures for elderly people's daily lives.

In particular, Finland may have more possibility to expand liberal education or humanity lectures for adults than other OECD countries because its attainment rates of higher education is very high, and education for adults outside the labour force is comparatively low as seen in Figure 3. In terms of finance, retirees will gladly pay for the additional education programs that can enhance their quality of life, and the revenue can be a good resource for HEIs,

avoiding the resistance against introduction or increase of tuition fee.

Vocational education and training for adults

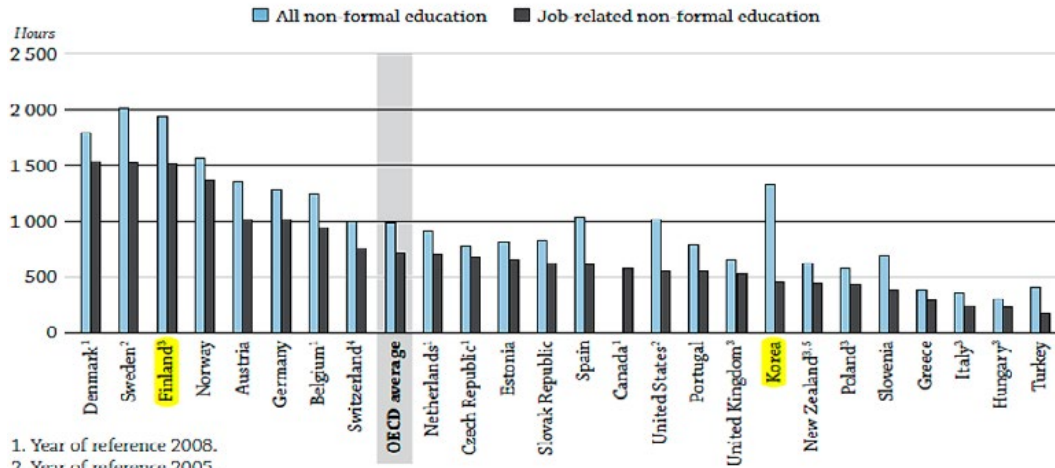
The area of 'B' in Figure 6 refers to skills development and training programs for adults, whilst that of 'C' represents vocational education for young students.

In Finland, adult education was mainly associated with liberal adult education until the 1980s, however since then the measures of the government have been put to target the expansion of certificate-oriented

education and supplementary training. The polytechnic system which was set up during 1990s has aimed to provide study opportunities for working-age adults. (The Finnish Ministry of Education and Culture 2010)

Meanwhile, in Korea, the proportion of job-related curriculum in adult education is very low as inferred from Figure 7 below. Also, as seen in Figure 3, adult education for employed workers including on-the-job training is very inactive. Thus, HEIs need to enlarge the area of 'A' to 'A+' especially in Korea.

FIGURE 7. Expected hours over the working life in all non-formal education and in job-related non-formal education, 2007.



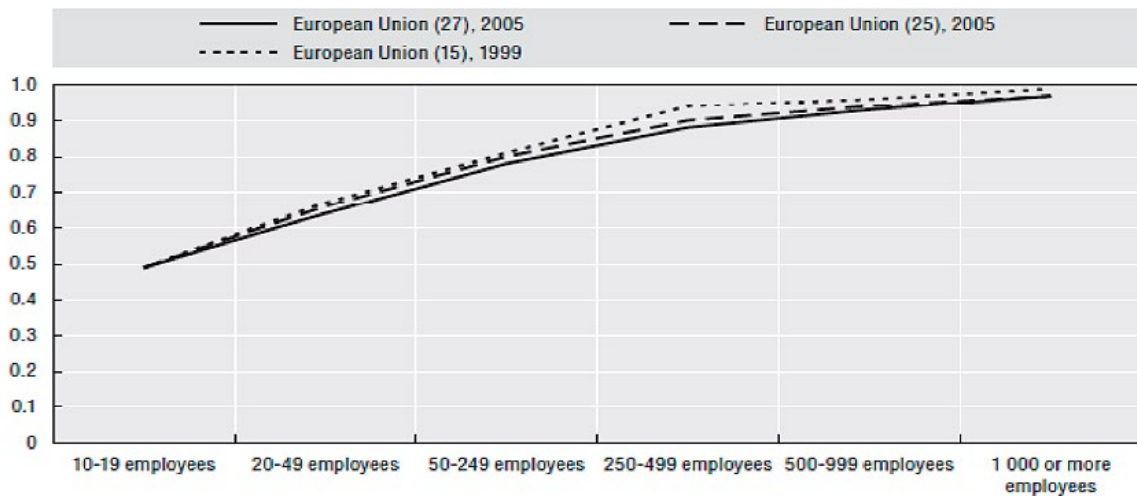
1. Year of reference 2008.
2. Year of reference 2005.
3. Year of reference 2006.
4. Year of reference 2009.

(Source: Education at a glance 2011.)

On the other hand, as shown in Figure 8 and Figure 9 below, workers in small and medium sized enterprises and adults in low levels of skills used to participate in training or retraining much less than those in large companies or in high skills, which leads to polarization and exclusive growth as well as limits the economical innovation of a country.

Therefore, the government needs to give HEIs subsidies for skills development programs for adults with inferior conditions in order to ignite HEIs to activate the vocational education programs for them.

FIGURE 8. Participation rates in CVET (continuing vocational education and training) of enterprises by size in Europe.



(Source: Skills development and training in SMEs, OECD, 2013.)

FIGURE 9. Employer-sponsored CVT courses by occupation.



(Source: OECD Employment outlook 2003.)

— TABLE 3. Reasons given for not engaging in more or any learning activity, —
by participation status in formal and/or non-formal education
activities (2012) 25–64 year-olds.

	Status of participation	Reason for not starting more/any learning activities															
		I was too busy at work		The course or programme was offered at an inconvenient time or place		Education or training was too expensive/ I could not afford it		I did not have time because of childcare or family responsibilities		Lack of employer's support		Something unexpected came up that prevented me from taking education or training		I did not have the prerequisites		Other	
		% (1)	S.E. (2)	% (3)	S.E. (4)	% (5)	S.E. (6)	% (7)	S.E. (8)	% (9)	S.E. (10)	% (11)	S.E. (12)	% (13)	S.E. (14)	% (15)	S.E. (16)
National entities																	
Australia	Participant	30 (1.4)		13 (1.3)		18 (1.5)		18 (1.5)		7 (1.1)		2 (0.5)		1 (0.4)		10 (1.0)	
	Non-participant	20 (2.5)		7 (1.7)		19 (2.5)		27 (2.2)		4 (1.1)		4 (1.1)		3 (0.8)		17 (1.9)	
	Total	27 (1.2)		11 (1.0)		18 (1.5)		21 (1.3)		6 (0.9)		3 (0.5)		2 (0.3)		12 (0.9)	
Austria	Participant	38 (1.8)		16 (1.7)		13 (1.8)		13 (1.3)		3 (0.7)		6 (1.0)		1 (0.5)		10 (1.5)	
	Non-participant	29 (3.0)		11 (2.1)		8 (1.8)		19 (2.4)		1 (0.7)		9 (1.6)		2 (0.9)		20 (2.7)	
	Total	35 (1.6)		14 (1.3)		11 (1.3)		15 (1.2)		2 (0.5)		7 (0.9)		1 (0.5)		13 (1.3)	
Canada	Participant	33 (1.1)		13 (0.9)		17 (1.0)		15 (1.0)		7 (0.6)		3 (0.4)		2 (0.3)		11 (0.7)	
	Non-participant	22 (1.7)		7 (0.9)		23 (2.0)		21 (1.9)		4 (1.0)		4 (0.7)		2 (0.7)		16 (1.4)	
	Total	30 (0.9)		12 (0.7)		19 (0.9)		17 (1.0)		6 (0.5)		3 (0.4)		2 (0.3)		12 (0.6)	
Czech Republic	Participant	36 (3.7)		8 (1.9)		15 (2.2)		11 (2.4)		12 (2.7)		5 (1.1)		3 (1.2)		9 (1.7)	
	Non-participant	33 (6.6)		3 (1.7)		11 (3.0)		17 (3.8)		3 (1.3)		8 (3.0)		3 (1.3)		21 (6.0)	
	Total	36 (3.5)		7 (1.4)		14 (1.7)		13 (2.0)		10 (2.1)		6 (1.1)		3 (0.9)		12 (2.2)	
Denmark	Participant	29 (1.3)		10 (0.9)		13 (1.0)		5 (0.7)		17 (1.1)		4 (0.6)		2 (0.4)		20 (1.1)	
	Non-participant	20 (2.7)		6 (1.4)		19 (2.3)		7 (1.3)		10 (1.6)		6 (1.4)		4 (1.2)		27 (2.5)	
	Total	27 (1.2)		9 (0.8)		14 (0.9)		5 (0.6)		15 (1.0)		5 (0.5)		2 (0.4)		22 (1.0)	
Estonia	Participant	32 (1.1)		17 (1.1)		18 (1.0)		9 (0.8)		8 (0.8)		3 (0.4)		3 (0.5)		11 (0.9)	
	Non-participant	24 (1.7)		12 (1.2)		21 (1.5)		13 (1.5)		5 (1.2)		4 (0.8)		5 (1.0)		16 (1.4)	
	Total	29 (0.9)		15 (0.8)		19 (0.9)		10 (0.6)		7 (0.7)		3 (0.4)		4 (0.5)		13 (0.8)	
Finland	Participant	33 (1.6)		21 (1.2)		7 (0.8)		8 (0.7)		11 (1.0)		3 (0.4)		2 (0.5)		15 (1.2)	
	Non-participant	14 (2.1)		18 (2.4)		7 (1.8)		16 (2.3)		5 (1.5)		3 (1.1)		4 (1.2)		33 (2.6)	
	Total	29 (1.4)		21 (1.1)		7 (0.7)		9 (0.8)		10 (0.8)		3 (0.4)		3 (0.5)		18 (1.2)	
France	Participant	26 (1.7)		5 (0.7)		16 (1.3)		6 (0.9)		21 (1.3)		4 (0.7)		1 (0.4)		22 (1.3)	
	Non-participant	18 (1.8)		3 (0.7)		19 (1.7)		10 (1.3)		14 (1.5)		3 (0.6)		4 (0.9)		28 (1.9)	
	Total	23 (1.3)		4 (0.5)		17 (1.1)		8 (0.7)		18 (1.0)		4 (0.4)		3 (0.5)		24 (1.1)	
Germany	Participant	36 (1.7)		17 (1.2)		9 (0.9)		11 (1.1)		10 (1.2)		2 (0.5)		1 (0.3)		14 (1.3)	
	Non-participant	22 (2.9)		6 (1.7)		11 (2.0)		26 (2.8)		8 (1.6)		3 (1.3)		2 (0.8)		21 (2.8)	
	Total	33 (1.5)		14 (1.0)		9 (0.9)		15 (1.2)		10 (1.0)		3 (0.5)		1 (0.3)		15 (1.2)	
Ireland	Participant	26 (1.6)		10 (0.9)		23 (1.5)		17 (1.2)		6 (0.9)		3 (0.5)		2 (0.5)		13 (1.4)	
	Non-participant	14 (1.6)		8 (1.3)		19 (1.7)		24 (1.9)		3 (0.8)		6 (1.1)		3 (0.8)		23 (2.0)	
	Total	22 (1.1)		10 (0.8)		21 (1.1)		20 (1.1)		5 (0.7)		4 (0.5)		3 (0.4)		17 (1.2)	
Italy	Participant	47 (3.4)		6 (1.4)		15 (2.4)		12 (1.5)		5 (1.4)		2 (0.9)		1 (1.0)		12 (2.0)	
	Non-participant	32 (3.1)		4 (1.5)		14 (2.8)		26 (3.4)		2 (0.8)		5 (1.6)		5 (1.8)		12 (2.4)	
	Total	40 (2.3)		5 (1.0)		15 (1.6)		19 (1.8)		3 (0.8)		4 (0.8)		3 (1.0)		12 (1.4)	
Japan	Participant	42 (2.3)		25 (1.7)		8 (1.3)		15 (1.3)		1 (0.4)		1 (0.5)		4 (0.8)		5 (0.9)	
	Non-participant	30 (3.1)		16 (2.2)		7 (1.6)		27 (3.2)		n		1 (0.9)		5 (1.6)		14 (2.3)	
	Total	38 (1.9)		22 (1.5)		8 (1.0)		19 (1.4)		1 (0.3)		1 (0.4)		4 (0.7)		7 (0.9)	
Korea	Participant	49 (1.6)		19 (1.2)		11 (1.0)		11 (0.8)		1 (0.3)		3 (0.5)		2 (0.4)		5 (0.6)	
	Non-participant	40 (2.0)		10 (1.2)		10 (1.3)		27 (1.8)		0 (0.2)		2 (0.5)		2 (0.6)		7 (0.9)	
	Total	46 (1.3)		16 (0.9)		11 (0.9)		17 (0.8)		1 (0.2)		2 (0.4)		2 (0.4)		6 (0.5)	
Average	Participant	34 (0.4)		13 (0.3)		14 (0.3)		12 (0.3)		9 (0.3)		3 (0.2)		2 (0.1)		13 (0.3)	
	Non-participant	22 (0.6)		8 (0.4)		15 (0.5)		21 (0.6)		5 (0.3)		6 (0.3)		4 (0.3)		20 (0.6)	
	Total	30 (0.4)		12 (0.2)		14 (0.3)		15 (0.3)		8 (0.2)		4 (0.1)		3 (0.1)		15 (0.3)	

(Source: Education at a glance, OECD, 2014.)

Furthermore, in order to enlarge vocational education courses for adults, it would be a good strategy for HEIs to extend the area of 'C' to 'C+'. The areas of 'C' and 'C+' which are vocational courses for young students will be strongly connected to 'B' and 'B+' which are programs for adults, as shown in Figure 6 above because two sets of areas are interrelated with facilities for vocational training, faculties from industries, continuing courses for graduates and so on.

Mitigation of barriers to adult education

As the table below shows, across the OECD countries, 30% of respondents cited the reason "I was too busy at work", and 12% of them answered that "The course or program was offered at an inconvenient time or place" for the reasons why they did not start an adult education.

Remarkably, many Korean adults chose the reason of 'busy work' (46%), while many Finnish people gave the reason of 'inconvenient time or place' (21%), which is much higher than the OECD average. These reasons reflect the problematic situations of the two countries. Korea has the longest working hours in the world while the Finnish population density is very low, which causes the problem of long distance. This information implies that there should be some solutions including e-learning system, field curriculum, time-flexible courses and so on, along with the efforts to reduce working hours or invest in education institution facilities.

Conclusion

During the past decades, the capacity and capability of HEIs have been strengthened

in Korea and Finland. Also, the importance of adult education, whether it is about vocational education and training or not, was enhanced with the appearance of knowledge-based society and the world-wide competition. Paradoxically, this competitive mood, which has brought the hazard of pedagogical and societal ideals, evokes the necessity of traditional liberal education and citizenship education for adults.

Another issue in adult education is the aging society. On the one hand, it brings HEIs the opportunity to expand their roles in adult education due to the extended life expectancy, on the other hand there would be some challenges trying to meet the needs of the elderly or retirees to HEIs. Finland, which has established strong and effective vocational adult education system with polytechnics and other vocational institutions, will be able to put more efforts to liberal adult education especially for the people outside the labour force and the elderly people.

Above all, it would be most crucial that HEIs meet the needs of workers to adapt to new skills or technologies. Korea need to enlarge vocational education and training programs for adults in higher education in order to overcome low proportion of formal adult education, job-related adult education, and education for employed people.

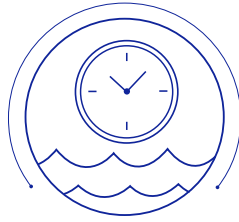
In Finland and Korea, the high attendance rate at higher education and the high willingness of participating further adult education will be some good signatures for the future of adult education given that the two countries solve the problems such as poor curriculum, long distance and long working hours through new curriculum, innovation of higher education system, e-learning programs, on-site curriculum, and so on.

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BY

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MOMENTS OF DIALOGUE BETWEEN THEORY AND PRACTICE

– cases for reflection

Introduction

The global environment of work systems is changing at an accelerating pace. It is hardly an exaggeration to interpret global economic conditions and labour markets to set to an increasing extent the circumstances and demands of future work organisations and practitioners inside both the public and private sectors. Employees are increasingly treated as competitive entrepreneur-subjects who must be permanently ready for new productivity and flexibility demands. These new demands may also imply aims that are difficult to reconcile.

At the same time, there is an aim to create jobs by increasing consumption and an objective of committing to the idea of sustainable development. Sustainable development is most closely connected with the ongoing environmental crisis, but there are also other global phenomena, such as prolonged armed conflicts and economic recessions, that end up as humanitarian and social crises. Global crises force people to expand their customary living spaces concretely, and they must also expand their learning both in the issues of everyday life and working life. Following Docherty, Kira and Shani (2009, 10–12), we define sustainable

development as a continuous, changing learning process that occurs simultaneously at all levels in organisations and their networks.

In this paper, our aim is to offer space for a kind of *ex post facto* comparative reflection on a few classical case studies in which different kinds of theory and practice related projects were implemented inside the Work Research Centre of the University of Tampere. Our shared aim has been to develop a reflection on approaches and topics that differ in terms of their approach to the relationship between theory and practice and between work and education.

The authors of this article were inspired by the long tradition of action research, starting from the ideas of Kurt Lewin (1948), in both solving and understanding more deeply social problems, which has led to numerous efforts to support problem solving and learning in individual organisations and workplaces (e.g., Bradbury et al 2008), as well as broad-scale studies with a focus on development configurations (Gustavsen et al 2008), learning regions (Pålshaugen 2014) and policy learning (Karlsen & Larrea 2014). In all of these studies, in one way or another, the basic task to initiate the process has been to open a communicative space (Kemmis 2008) between those concerned by the specific issue or problem. Tackling broad-scale problems with a large number of stakeholders and those affected by the problems is a more recent field of study in action research than studies focused on individual-, group- or organisation-level problems. Thus, research methods are also less established in this new field (e.g., Mead 2008). We consider that there is room for adult education to

make a contribution to building communicative spaces that generate learning in broad issues.

Our interest is in examining what kinds of knowledge and theory relationships – and even what kinds of ‘pedagogy’, or rather ‘andragogy’ – were developed and tested in the case studies. Our aim is to develop ideas for future critical spaces of reflection that could be important for facing other sensitive subjects and conditions of ‘new labour’ inside labour markets, including many versions of outsider positions.

There is a need to make sense of what is going on in the surrounding world and what kind of resilience the new conditions require from organisations and individual workers. In particular, this paper concentrates on organisational- and individual-level challenges, but it does not exclude questioning of the cultural and neo-liberal ethos that is present in all these cases.

Through the four different case studies, the paper highlights moments of dialogue between theory and practice as well as the possibilities of finding alternative frames for thinking about the daily and local issues in relation to the broader development trends of the economy, labour markets and society. The original research projects, conducted between 1990 and 2014, are viewed in the framework of their case-specific theories. In addition, they are viewed in the frameworks of experienced or emerging economic and social crises while sustainability is seen as a mean to cope with the crises. The authors of the article commit to a perspective which sees work as playing a key role in the creation of a sustainable society (e.g., Hvid et al 2011). The article

poses the following questions concerning the cases:

- What kinds of processes were developed to produce a better understanding of the broad and difficult change processes going on in work life?
- How were sensitive subjects such as power or gender reflected as topics inside these processes?
- What kinds of developmental methods were used to develop cooperation between different kinds of positions, persons and work groups?

After presenting the cases, we will summarise them from the point of view of today's challenges.

CASE I: Changing frames in the midst of transitions – an interdisciplinary programme as a space for reorientation

The roots of Case I are the planning processes aimed at establishing working life studies in the University of Tampere in a more institutionalised manner, as opposed to the former situation in which separate research projects were executed in different disciplines without linkages to each other. Case I was an attempt to generate studies which take the theory-practice relationship and multidisciplinary perspective as a starting point of working life studies and contribute to approaches with the same aim.

Case I was part of an interdisciplinary action research programme that had a wide-ranging further education programme as one of its elements (Kirjonen, Heiskanen, Filander & Hämäläinen 1996). The general aim of the programme was to build bridges over disciplinary and professional boundaries in order to initiate discussions on the challenges of public sector work in an era when pressures for change to the whole public sector were intensifying (Filander 2003). Information about the educational programme was widely distributed, and it was offered as a vantage point for practitioners in the public sector who might be interested in reflecting on the development of working life and issues of working life research from different perspectives. The research group hoped to contribute to the creation of prerequisites for the sustainable development of working life in a situation in which the practitioners were themselves both targets and central agents of various development projects that followed each other at an increasing pace.

In Finland, a decisive shift and turning point came in the early 1990s at a time that saw an economic depression, mass unemployment, the internationalisation of the economy and Finland's entry into the EU and EMU (Julkunen 2001, 13). Apart from cultural changes, a change in retrenchment policy also meant structural and organisational changes in working practices. The economic crisis affected the development of all levels of the public sector. In public discussion the change demands were justified by citing neoliberal ideas and with the rhetoric of increasing efficiency, greater freedom and responsibility at the same time. Finland joined the other OECD countries in modernising the public sector with

» In public discussion the change demands were justified by citing neoliberal ideas and with the rhetoric of increasing efficiency, greater freedom and responsibility at the same time. »

cuts to public spending, the privatisation of strategies, quality assurance, personnel development and changes to the relationship between the centralised state and civil society (Naschold 1996, 1). This drastic societal transition was taking place during Case I. The participants of Case I who were from all levels of the public sector were, facing new kinds of demands to understand and reframe their work and their identities in the midst of these massive changes (Filander 2003, 30). This time period can be considered as a turning point in the Finnish public discussion occurring when the economic depression had just taken a sudden turn to the worse. The turning point took place in the midst of the interactional processes of Case I. While in the beginning of 1991, the participants of Case I were still speaking about labour shortages affecting certain areas of the public sector, towards the end of 1991, a debate began regarding laying off and dismissing public servants. Very soon, this kind of change in the discourse became common in public discussions (Filander 2000, 219).

The participants in Case I were 26 professionals involved in change and development work in the public sector. The participants included professionals working in customer service in basic level administration and in municipalities, professionals employed in district and provincial admin-

istration and professionals from central administration. Apart from the different levels of administration, different sectors were also represented, from occupational health and safety to education, health and social services. In addition, there were developers of personnel work and personnel training from all levels of the public sector. The educational background of the practitioners varied, including the social and educational sciences, psychology, medicine, the juridical field and the technical sciences. The shared motivation of the practitioners to participate in the programme was to see what boundary-crossing perspectives could provide for their own work. The group of educators was interdisciplinary, representing the social, educational, management and administrative sciences, as well as psychology and social psychology. The basic idea of our programme was to develop a space in which experiences and perspectives could be shared and challenged among this interdisciplinary group of educators and practitioners.

From the point of view of the research group that was responsible for the programme, such an extensive approach came with a risk. The basic educational question to be solved through the programme was how to get a multidisciplinary and multi-professional group of scientists and professionals to work together and find a new

understanding of their work in the midst of diverse personal experiences and theoretical and research-based knowledge.

The solution to the educational problems was based on a loose idea of generating alternative frames (cf. Goffman 1974, Schön 1983). The approach was able to generate an interactive process that proceeded from confusion – and sometimes even fierce challenges in the group sessions – to a turning point of recognition of some shared experiences. The shared experiences and resulting confusion related to the worsened economic situation in the country, which reached the public sector in the form of demands for budget cuts and structural reforms. At this turning point, from the practitioners' point of view, the programme seemed to offer some means to better understand the transition stage and the work of practitioners as responding to the new demands. In such a situation, the practitioners felt it good that they had a space that made it possible to step back from their daily work and the power relations involved in it (Heiskanen 2004; 2007). Practitioners such as those who participated in the programme are typically quite lonely in their work. The interactions during the programme and the evolving frames provided an impetus for them to think about their own work somewhat differently (Filander 2003).

In retrospect, the programme, with its wide range of participants and open interaction structure, was a daring effort. The aim of the researchers might be characterised as an aim to create a communicative and transitional space for learning (Filander 1992), a kind of “space of free movement” (Lewin 1948, 5–6). It was a quite open-minded model for theory–practice

interaction, without a commitment to any specific model for developmental work. Instead, the idea was to introduce the participants to different kinds of developmental approaches present in work sciences both nationally and internationally. It might have failed, for example, because of the pressures and worries that practitioners felt in the transition stage. At the start, there was an expectation that the educators should provide them with some answers and solutions. The idea of a mutual learning process in which the educators would also be learners was accepted only gradually. Only at that stage did the loose idea of alternative frames start to yield results.

All in all, the action research project, to which the educational programme belonged as one part, also yielded results other than those specifically related to the educational programme. It helped to build national research networks, and it functioned as a kind of laboratory for the theory–practice relationship, which has had an influence on the working modes of the Work Research Centre in the University of Tampere. Apart from research work, the ideas of theory–practice interaction and networking have been discussed at the annual national Working Life Research Conference organised by the Work Research Centre.

CASE II:

Promoting gender equality in organisations in an era of marketization

Equality and sustainable work have a converging aim: they both seek to attain a better quality of work. Equality is a human right and thus an important value, but it

can also be seen from another perspective – promoting equality may also promote well-being at work. Therefore, when aiming for a sustainable working life, gender and other social divisions should not be ignored. Case II highlights what benefits action research might provide by addressing gender issues and what pitfalls such attempts to bring forth sensitive and often taken-for-granted topics might face in practice.

Finland and other Nordic countries have practiced an active gender equality policy for decades. Nonetheless, the advance of gender equality has been somewhat slow, and certain equality problems seem quite stable; in Finland, the wage gap between women and men is still about 20 per cent, the labour market remains segregated by gender and glass ceilings that prevent women from advancing in their careers have not been broken, especially in the private sector. Women still use the vast majority of family leave, even though men's rights to family leave have been improved through several legislative reforms.

There are several reasons behind this modest progress of equality. In the EU and Finland, equality legislation is soft. It is based on recommendations and voluntary practices rather than on prohibitions and sanctions (Kantola 2010). Because of this, equality issues often have an 'obligation to yield'. On an organisational level, previous gender equality projects have shown that it is difficult to raise inequality issues in organisations, and it is even more difficult to keep them on the agenda (Leinonen et al 2012; Ylöstalo 2012). The Nordic countries have consistently been ranked as the highest in the world with respect to gender equality. Paradoxically, this relatively good

state of affairs may be a hindrance to improving conditions. In Finland, there is a strong belief that gender equality has already been achieved, and it can be difficult to motivate people to promote it further (Ylöstalo 2013). For this reason, promoting gender equality is not always a harmonious process.

Recently, the public sector has become more market-oriented throughout the Nordic countries, and business-oriented thinking has penetrated activities that have not traditionally emphasised profit making. As a result, gender equality is being presented as an export commodity, and equality policies appear to be closely connected to the interests of the labour market. One outcome of this is project-based activities to promote equality, which represent a form of new governance in that they aim to bring together individuals, organisations, enterprises and state officials to solve the problems of welfare politics through market-oriented interventions. Consequently, promoting gender equality has become a site for mixing public and private interests (Brunila & Ylöstalo 2013).

This case demonstrates how gender equality has been promoted on an organisational level by using action research. Action research is well suited to the aim of advancing gender equality because it is a participatory and democratic process concerned with adding to practical knowledge in the pursuit of worthwhile human purposes, and it is grounded in a participatory worldview (Reason & Bradbury 2001). It aims at changing certain conditions while also studying the process of change. The aim is to 'put theory to work' by bringing together action and reflection and theory and practice in participation with others

» The networking of municipalities to innovate together was one of the core ideas of the LOM programme. »

and in the pursuit of practical solutions to issues of pressing concern (Brydon-Miller et al 2003). The role of the researcher is that of participant and researcher.

Action research has helped to overcome some of the problems described above, but it has also created new problems. When gender equality is promoted in organisations, the members of that organisation play a crucial role in the process. Action research aims to empower people and give them a voice and opportunity to participate. It seeks to hear and make use of their experiences to generate change (Leinonen et al 2012). Change can be created, for example, through negotiations about gender and gender equality. However, these negotiations have sometimes ended up with weak compromises, and the gender perspective has been lost. When advancing gender equality, gender and equality should be under constant negotiation. Negotiation puts gender and equality in motion, which is a precondition for change. The outcome cannot be known, but it is important to find ways for it to become part of the negotiation. One of the main points of action research is to create room for ruptures, fractures and, eventually, change.

In order to achieve a more equal society for all – for women and men, for young and old, for people of different ethnic backgrounds and so on – and to have a better

quality of working life and productivity in the future, it is essential to keep the equality perspective on the agenda, as is active development work. Action research provides a communicative space which could be used to include the equality perspective in discussions on sustainable working life.

CASE III:

Influence and learning at work – applications of the Swedish LOM programme in Finnish municipalities

In this era characterised by rapid change and numerous humanitarian, social and economic crises, we are nonetheless able to detect some stability, or maybe cyclical movement. The Finnish public sector organisations seem now to face, in part, the same kind of challenges as in the early 1990s, when they were criticised for having organisational structures that were too rigid, resulting in a lack of genuine client orientation, high expenses and problems in the quality of working life. Moreover, the recession of the 1990s turned out to be a severe crisis for the whole country, not just for the public sector. According to Kiander (2002), no other country of the European Union or OECD was hit as hard as Finland. In 2015, Finland was once again in a deep economic turmoil, due both to global and domestic developments. One of the Finnish responses was to completely renovate the

public health and social services. The case of Quality Project and Quality Network below shed light on the programmatic ways not only to survive but also to learn and make changes in a sustainable manner.

In the 1990s, the Local Authority Employers and the most important trade unions cooperated with the Work Research Centre of the University of Tampere in adopting action research – more specifically, dialogue-based and process-oriented Scandinavian communicative and participative action research – as a development tool in the modernisation of municipal organisations in Finland. In particular, the principles of the Swedish LOM programme (Gustavsen 1991) were followed, but the Norwegian activities conducted by the Senter for Bedre Arbeidsliv (Qvale 1994) and an evaluation of the LOM programme (Naschold 1992) were also taken into account in developing a unique multi-methodological approach, called the Laatu (Quality) project (Kasvio et al 1994).

The municipal partners in the development shared an interest in enhancing the quality of services and the voice of the clients, while the employers focused more on productivity and performance issues and the staff on increasing employee involvement. The means to achieving these goals were new working models, or modes of operation, to be produced as a result of dialogue conferences.

The dialogue conferences, an approach adopted from LOM, were the main action research interventions organised by the researchers. The first conferences were theme based (overall productivity, employee voice), with the aim of offering the representatives from many municipalities

the chance to get together and share their views on the visions, problems and possible solutions for a better future. The participants came from all levels of the organisations involved. They were engaged in a process of democratic dialogue, which was guided by a set of principles emphasising the equal right to participate and the significance of the work experience of all participants (Gustavsen 1991). The democratic dialogue served as both a pragmatic tool and a theoretical concept including assumptions about equal communication and interaction leading to innovation. The networking of municipalities to innovate together was one of the core ideas of the LOM programme. However, the municipalities did not co-operate with each other spontaneously, without the input of the researchers, and participated in the research meetings on invitation only.

Along the lines of Lewin's (1948) action research cycle, where evaluation-based learning leads to new type of interventions, this was taken into account in the next phase of the action research activities, which were organised as the Quality Network. Starting around 1995, dialogue conferences were used to start and evaluate the development processes within one municipality or its specific service sector. However, the researchers continued to invite the municipalities to come together to discuss common issues or modify further the development and research methods, with action researchers from other research institutions (Kalliola & Nakari 2004).

Other arenas for democratic dialogue were also set up to secure more profound changes in organisational culture, such as participatory management, shared decision making, autonomy and discretion at work.

These arenas were task forces characterized by performance expectations, steering groups with supervisory roles, study and research circles and department- or shop floor-level workplace meetings.

With 25 projects by 2001, and many others that followed, it is important to ask how and why dialogue interventions worked. What is the explanation for the documented improvements in client satisfaction and in the quality of working life from the new organisation of work life and often also for productivity gains? (cf. Kalliola & Nakari 2004)

According to the results of some case studies (Kalliola 2003; Kalliola, Nakari & Pesonen 2006), one of the crucial factors is the concrete practical outcome: the realisation of the plans made together in the dialogue conferences. The prerequisite for this is committed managers who have the authority to make decisions. Decision making involves power that can be shared, or re-distributed, in a functional way during the process of democratic dialogue. The re-distribution of power can be seen as embedded in the design of LOM-type projects through dialogue at all hierarchical levels of an organisation, and thus the design contributes to the increase in employee influence.

In addition, the project design contributes to the mutual learning of the participants. When everyone takes their turn expressing new ideas, or sometimes doubts, about the issues under investigation, a lot of information is shared and processed.

This enables mutual learning across organisational, hierarchical and occupational borders.

If the idea of democratic dialogue is fully realised, the dialogue fora offer participants both a voice and a choice in the formulation of sustainable organisational change, which is pushed forward by any kind of crisis. This feature is also important from the point of view of gender in organisations. The Finnish labour markets were (and are) so strongly divided by gender that the concept of 'labour market segregation' is appropriate (Kolehmainen 1999). The majority of the employees in the public sector as a whole, but also in municipalities, are women. In addition, the participants in the action research projects described here were mostly women. Their voices and choices in the process contributed to a more solid and sustainable basis for working life.

Nowadays, the changes in the funding policies of the Finnish Work Environment Fund and the Ministry of Employment and Economy constrain the maintenance of the networks. However, the researchers – and to some extent, the new generations of researchers in the Work Research Centre of the University of Tampere – continue and develop the tradition. Among the new initiatives, and as one example of a new action research cycle, is the use of dialogue conferences as a tool (combined with individual methods) to promote professional agency at work (Paloniemi, Hökkä, Vähäsantanen, Herranen, Eteläpelto & Kalliola 2014).

CASE IV: Renegotiating organisational order

The effects of the international economic crisis began to appear in the operation of Finnish companies in 2008. Business declined quickly, especially among companies operating in international markets, as their credit supply became more difficult. Despite a small recovery in Finland's total production, growth remained modest during 2010–2011, and the second downturn in 2012–2013 showed that several Finnish companies, regardless of sector, faced a long-term period of severe uncertainty. In addition, sectors that typically tolerated economic downturns well were not safe either. Consequently, between 2008 and 2014, several Finnish companies in different sectors reorganised.

In a study called 'Sustainable means for adaptation in enterprises during economic downturn', administered by the Work Research Centre in the University of Tampere, 13 Finnish companies operating in different sectors were followed in the time subsequent to the economic crisis. In 2010–2014, one to three rounds of semi-structured, qualitative interviews were carried out in all the companies. During each round, both employer and employee representatives were interviewed. Typically, the local manager and the head of the human relations department or production manager represented the employer, while the shop stewards represented the employees. The interview data were supplemented by additional data, such as annual reports and information gathered from newspapers and the Internet. In addition, a one-month ethnographic observation was carried out during 2014–2015 in one company. This case

can be positioned as a first fact-finding and diagnosis phase of the action research cycle, as formulated by Lewin (1948).

For economic and production reasons, all 13 companies participating in the study carried out several organisational changes during the following period. Eleven companies carried out staff reductions. The first strategy to be applied was the decision not to renew temporary employment and freelancer contracts. In some of the companies, voluntary retirement, including incentives, was also used. In most of the companies, layoffs and/or dismissals were carried out.

In addition to staff reductions, production systems were developed in all the companies. The companies in the service sector and newspaper industry also increased cooperation with their competitors. In nearly all the companies, customers' needs were attended to more sensitively, and products and services were tailored according to the customer demands as far as possible. While maintaining a loose connection to customers' expectations or the conglomerate level, the decisions framing local negotiations also added internal freedom of action on a local level in a few companies. In half the companies, the significance of internal cooperation was emphasised and resources were targeted to improve the preconditions for mutual communication and cooperation.

In short, organisational change manifested diversely but with certain similarities in the cases. When the permanent staff redundancies were wide or temporary layoffs lasted longer than expected, the changes affected all parts of the organisations. Staff redundancies were carried out relatively swiftly and disrupted internal communica-

» The networking of municipalities to innovate together was one of the core ideas of the LOM programme. »

tion, particularly if the legitimization of the negotiation process or its outcomes were questioned by the employees. As such, staff redundancies may be seen as a revolutionary change. However, with regard to the other means of adjustment, the time subsequent to the economic crisis appears as a period of fine tuning and constant reorganisation, thus resembling a convergent change.

Applying Luhmann's (2002) ideas on autopoietic systems and Herne's (2004) boundary work theory, the study focused on the issue of how boundaries regarding organisational membership, skills, responsibility and commitment were reconstructed and renegotiated during the organisational changes. The study also examined how organisational actors applied various power resources when participating in the emergence of the renegotiated organisational order in both formal and informal arenas.

The results suggest that firmly established cooperative practices seem to contribute to the acknowledgement of diverse perspectives and various possibilities during renegotiations. When emerging from diversity and multiplicity, the renewed organisational order affords complexity and a new normality based on constant self-renewal. In order to adapt to the long-term economic downturn, and in an environment shaped by megatrends such as globalisa-

tion and digitalisation, organisations need to sustain constant, convergent change. It may be crucial to adopt a system that is self-renewing, communication and cooperation based and autopoietic. Nonetheless, the cases show that it is demanding to construct an autopoietic system because of the powerful and long history of the traditional understanding of organisations and leadership, which celebrates separation, segmentation, one (economic) hegemonic rationality, hierarchy and managers instead of multiplicity, diversity and contradictions.

Discussion

The central idea of this analytical reflection was to collect together new and older cases that open up the strong tradition of action research at the Work Research Centre in the University of Tampere. These projects have grown out of doing research on, discussing, teaching and writing about action research projects at the Work Research Centre of the University of Tampere over the course of 25 years. In this article, we have collected some most interesting examples and reflections in four cases that have responded to large-scale societal challenges in order to develop sustainability at work.

Case I creates a framework story of challenging and confronting maximally

different viewpoints during times of extreme economic hardship. The discussions among the participants of the educational programme within the built communicative spaces in the conditions of maximal diversity can also be connected to the system-level challenges for change that we are currently facing. The challenges are actualised in working life as, for example, new productivity and flexibility demands, for which both individuals and work systems have to be permanently ready.

The equality and gender project, our Case II, has created spaces to meet sensitive, gendered practices and structures that are often difficult to verbalise. In today's crises, these types of gendered phenomena arise especially in the female-dominated fields of the public and service sectors. Austerity policies that cut public expenditure are applied in a number of countries, including Finland. There is some research knowledge suggesting that austerity measures actualise inequality issues (e.g., Evans 2015). This is also a challenge for research. One challenge is to identify the approaches and methods by which the multiple and co-constituted effects of austerity measures can be detected. Another matter for reflection is how the researcher builds his/her role within the wider social discussion around the adverse effects of the austerity policies that hit some social groups more than others.

The dialogue- and negotiation-based reorganisation projects in the public and private sectors, as presented in Cases III and IV, were confronted by severe economic recessions, the former in the early 1990s and the latter in the 2010s. In the former case, the projects supported concrete improvements in conditions that were found to be

problematic in the target organisations; in the latter case, the interactive method helped the workers in the organisation to articulate for themselves in a better way their own situation in the context of organisational turmoil. When the participants, along with the researchers, continued to carry out their interactions in the changed conditions, renewal turned out to be possible. This is a worthwhile thought for consideration in the context of the numerous present reorganisation challenges. In both cases, the theory-practice interaction took place in the framework of participation and learning in communicative spaces (democratic dialogue; autopoietic systems), where the actors analysed their changing organisational environments and created new modes to work or at least to adapt.

Action research has been described as an interactive and solution-seeking inquiry between the researcher and those who participate in it (e.g., Reason & Bradbury 2001). This description applies to the cases I, II and III. The authors of this article want to emphasise that talk is also action that changes the world. This is not an emphasis that would be shared by all the action research traditions. In the cases, joint sessions of talk contributed to the translation of unconscious and practical theories into discursively shared knowledge. The role of the researcher in Case IV differs from that in the other cases as it has to do with solution seeking. In Case IV, the researcher used an ethnographic method in the interactions with the organisation members and focused on the question of self-renewing communication and cooperation in the autopoietic system.

We have shown how different studies carried out at the Work Research Centre of

the University of Tampere have addressed issues related to the sustainable development of working life at different times and in somewhat different ways. However, the common characteristics are a multi-disciplinary and dialogue-based approach combined with the balanced use of theory and practice in action-oriented research. We hope that our empirical examples will generate insights for the construction of communicative spaces on matters that deal with pressing social issues related to both work and other social fields. Many researchers, facilitators, initiators and adult

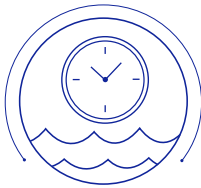
educators of change management are just now confronting similar global transformations, such as facing a new wave of massive unemployment, worrisome problems of climate change or many problems and challenges of integrating great numbers of migrants to Finnish culture. There is a very topical need to find and develop broad approaches (e.g., Gustavsen et al 2008; Mead 2008; Torbert & Taylor 2008) that could help tackle very broad-scale problems, especially those present in current European everyday life.

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INTERPERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS IN CHINA

– bridges for transnational
adult education

BY

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Introduction

Relections on life-long learning in the context of adult education and advanced training have attracted increased international and transnational attention. Border-crossing activities of German adult education providers reach Asia, whereas China and India are identified as the most important international markets by the providers (iMOVE 2013, 15). Besides economic and political perspectives, these activities need transnational educational framework (e.g., Ioannidou 2010). The internationalization of German providers, partly imposed by educational policy, is a challenge to think more deeply about theoretical, professional and organizational issues, and to conduct research on the transnationalization of adult education.

This chapter is based on a current project⁴, in which three German partners work together to establish an Advanced Training Academy in Beijing, China. We outline that structures, which are shaped in such an institutionalization, have to include cultural specifics. Here we introduce the Chinese cultural standard *guanxi* as an example of how cooperation and interconnectedness

⁴ The project relates to the funding line “Professional Education Export by German Providers” which is launched by the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research. It commenced in June 2013 and will run until May of 2016.

need to be adapted. By using a case study of the egocentric guanxi-network of Mr. Li, the dynamics of the cultural standard emerge and transitions to program planning processes will be marked.

Background: Institutionalization of the Advanced Training Institute

In this project, partners' compound consists of three institutions: Konfix, Weitbild and the Department for Vocational and Adult Education of Leibniz Universität Hannover. They pursue the placement of various educational initiatives and programs on foreign market under the roof of a new founded Advanced Training Academy in China. The crossing of national and cultural boundaries is marked by using the term transnationalization. It takes a holistic view of social phenomena, which are classified according to their thematic width (social, economic, political, cultural, technical, and ecological considerations) (Pries 2010, 15–16). Although transnationalization describes border-crossing phenomena, these remain located in their respective national societies through temporally stable and dense relationships. Therefore social relations, social networks and social environments must be considered (ibid., 13). Neither transnationalization claims the liquidation of national societies and national borders, nor their final amalgamation, which also would amount to liquidation (Jütte 2009a, 14). Rather, we assume that connections between societies will be progressively generated by individual (persons) and collective players (organizations) who form a social network that incorporates education and advanced training.

The overarching project's objective is to establish an economically independent Advanced Training Institute⁵ in Beijing. In order to finally build up the Advanced Training Institute, Konfix and Weitbild are acting on an operative level. As a cultural institution Konfix offers education in an adjunctive way. That means education is not the main field of the institution (Börjesson & Zimmermann 2005, 131). Delivering adult education programs is just a mean in order to strengthen its organizational objective: being a mediator of Chinese culture (Gieseke & Heuer 2011, 115). Thus Konfix can be seen as an institution of 'adjunct education' with a cultural profile. With the foundation of the Advanced Training Institute, it leaves adjunct education behind and en-

⁵ Departing from the application, we will refrain from using the term Advanced Training Academy, because in the course of the project it became apparent that the project partners would be unable to live up to the legally regulated material requirements (capital and local space requirements) for an Academy in China. Therefore, the corporate form had to be changed from that of an Advanced Training Academy to that of an Advanced Training Institute. For sake of accuracy the latter name will be used exclusively henceforth.

ters foreign business at the same time. In contrast the second partner Weitbild is a German educational service contractor in the field of professional and advanced training. It delivers programs for adults with technological topics such as logistics. Both partners are going to transfer existing seminars as well as plan adapted or even new programs under the roof of the new established Advanced Training Institute. The content groups will be automotive, logistics and transport, environment and risk management as well as health and care.

In terms of operational logic the third project partner, the Department for Vocational and Adult Education, that is primarily responsible for scientific concomitant research, steps out. It conducts accompanying research on the institutionalization of the Advanced Training Institute and covers all fields which become apparent by establishing an Advanced Training Institute in China. We use 'institutionalization' here to describe the development of shaping organizational structures, which the members of organization use to fulfil their primary task – the continuous offering of projects, consultations and programs for adults under an educational mission. Here, institutions create the organizational framework for the organizational members. Within this framework they form professional structures through the task fields of educational management, program planning as well as consultation. In this way the structures become pervasive and can be re-shaped through the acting of persons (Giddens 1976; 1984; 2008). Furthermore professionalism, then, become apparent through competent pedagogic acting of the personnel (Gieseke 2009, 385). According to Tietgens, profession-

alism is situational competence (Tietgens 1988, 37) that, relative to the respective situation, must be performatively and continuously substantiated (Nittel 2000, 16). It represents a linkage of knowledge (both scientific and experiential knowledge) and case-related reflection (Gieseke 2009, 391).

According to the neo-institutionalism institutions cannot be seen as autonomous instead they are connected to the environment (DiMaggio & Powell 1983; Hasse & Krücken 2005; Meyer & Rowan 1977). However sometimes the institutions especially their members anticipate social changes and align to regulations and laws. Especially in transnational contexts the persons pick up different cultural resources (organizational cultures, country-specific cultural resources and their coding in this society as well as different learning cultures) and transpose these in the delivery of education as well as shape the professional and organizational structures. Special significance is assigned to educational management in the establishment of an Institute for Advanced Training, because it is here that the organizational structure is established and substantially designed. Although employees or members of the organization also shape structures through acting (Giddens 1976; 1984; 2008), it has to be done on a leadership level to ensure perpetuation and strategic alignment.

On an empirical basis (Robak 2004), the (advanced) educational management can be defined as a systematically separated, independent field of acting that is multi-functional and complex. Management tasks are predominantly taken care of by the leaders in adult or advanced training institutions, and partially by pedagogic staff members. The leaders' actions are shaped

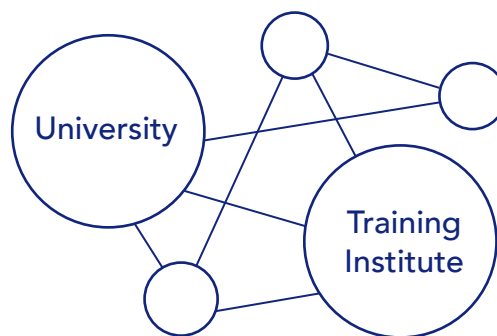
by a specific organizational mode, which stands out for its forms of decisions-making and delegating and which, organizationally, is structurally embedded into 'action combs'. The tasks of the advanced training management are structuring of organization, over-institutional networking management, marketing, outreach work, creating frameworks for program planning, financial management, self-management, project development and quality assurance (ibid.).

In the present state of the project, the special significance of networking and cooperation for program planning, acquisition and structuring of the Advanced Training Institute has been apparent. In the institutionalization process the professional and organizational structures are interwoven by means of networking and cooperation. Therefore it is necessary to review interconnectedness, cooperation and networks more precisely and include cultural features.

Networks, Cooperation and guanxi

In adult education, the concepts of cooperation and network both are increasingly important (Dollhausen, Feld & Seitter 2013, 9; Dollhausen 2013, 15–17). However, both concepts are hardly ever clearly distinguished, which is partly due to the fact that, in practical institutional developments, the concepts describe mutual 'interdependencies' (Tippelt 2011, 458).

Metaphorically speaking, networks are basically fabrics made of nodes and edges. Depending on the numbers of such nodes and edges, they are more or less complex and must be coordinated. The single



— FIGURE 1. Network of five actors. —

nodes are filled by individual or collective actors which are characterized in their mutual relationships through connecting lines (edges) (Sydow & Lerch 2013, 9). The figure below shows a network consisting of five actors. Although not all five actors collaborate with each other, the complexity of the network with just a few partners becomes visible.

The network idea was introduced theoretically and investigated empirically in advanced training by Jütte (2002). Jütte points out that advanced training can be considered a social network, which develops through plural actors. In the idea of social network, Jütte also takes up the relational element and posits it as central: it is a social web of relationships involving various actors (Jütte 2002, 28). What is special about networks is its multitude of (autonomous) actors, which are multilaterally connected and form a heterarchical and horizontal relational structure (Jütte 2009b, 11).

Relationships within those networks are predominantly cooperative; therefore, single edges can be seen as representing

cooperation (Sydow & Lerch 2013, 9). For instance the University and the Training Institute are working cooperatively together in the network, shown schematically in Figure 1. Analytically, cooperation means – in contrast to the idea of network – the purposeful collaboration between autonomous advanced training institutions with other institutions on an institutional and/or individual level (Dollhausen & Mickler 2012, 9). Cooperation is predominantly bilateral and involves two actors (Jütte 2009b, 11). The entirety of the relations inside the network and of the searching movements beyond them for new cooperative and network partners is termed ‘networking’ (Schubert 2008, 35). Therefore, especially for a Chinese context, it is interesting to see whether there is any conceptual differentiation at all between contact, networking, cooperation, and network, and what the separate concepts are taken to mean.

In the investigation of networking and cooperation, which are effectively at work in the framework of the establishment of the Advanced Training Institute, two attention radii are apparent. On the one hand, there are pre-existing networks and cooperation between the project leaders and staff of Weitbild and Konfix. The relations are cultivated and extended in both Germany and China. On the other hand, new staff members bring in and interconnect their own contacts and start building contacts in China. Here the use of personal networks becomes culturally relevant. This is meant by the cultural concept *guanxi*. It must be recognized that cooperation and networking are stronger individually than institutionally.

Chinese culture is characterized by group orientation, hence the individuals see

themselves as “interdependent with the surrounding social context” (Luo 2007, 8) and related to other people (Liang & Kammhuber 2003, 173–182). According to Luo (2007), this group orientation must be considered the ordering principle of society and economy (Luo 2007, 7–8). This is what *guanxi* refers to. Culture can be understood as a universal and typical orientation system for society, organizations and groups. This specific orientation system influence, in which manner people perceive, think, act and judge. It also provides a feeling of belonging to society, organizations and groups for the members in general (Thomas 2003, 112). More precisely Thomas (2003) defined standards of culture, which are regarded as components of a culture-specific orientation system by him. Consequently these standards are forms of perceiving, acting, thinking and judging shared by most of the people. Although the people see such standards as typical, normal and obligatory, they are not able to consciously experience them and their influence on acting, because the standards of cultures are acquired within the scope of socialization (Thomas 2003, 112–113). This is why the research on such standards is challenging and has to include different methods.

The group of researchers around Thomas marks also different standards of culture in China. These include social harmony, hierarchy, *guanxi* and *renqing*, group orientation, face, etiquette, humility and politeness as well as relativism of rules (Liang & Kammhuber 2003). Even though all standards give insights in Chinese culture, we will move on with the explanation of *guanxi* because of its significance for the following investigation and its necessity to understand networks and cooperation in China.

This standard of culture signifies the intensive formation of and care for interpersonal relationship. Its origins lie in Confucianism (Luo 2007, 7–9).

Guanxi “refers to the concept of drawing on connections in order to secure favors in personal relations. It forms an intricate, pervasive relational network which the Chinese cultivate energetically, subtly, and imaginatively. It contains implicit mutual obligations, assurances, and understanding, and governs Chinese attitudes toward long-term social and business relationships.” (Luo 2007, 2).

Guanxi is a matter of egocentric networks, which are characterized by different qualities of interpersonal relationships. As a result insiders and outsiders are separated in someone’s personal network; the inner circle consists of family, friends, intimates, and acquaintances. When an attempt is made to form a relationship (guanxi) with an unfamiliar person, this person tries to strengthen the relationship – metaphorically speaking – to force their way from the outside to the inside (Henze 2008, 196; Liang & Kamhuber 2003, 175).

Moreover guanxi interacts with the Chinese words ganqing and renqings. Particularly intensive relationships with other persons are accompanied by ganqing, signifying sentiments and an affective component. Without such an emotive element, the relations within the individual network are characterized by social distance and are less reliable (Luo 2007, 6). Relationships and contacts with friends and colleagues require care. Through so called renqings they can be established

and maintained (ibid., 9). Renqings comprise of material things of various sizes, such as gifts and invitations for dinner as well as helping each other (Liang & Kamhuber 2003, 175 f.). These mutual and interchange relationships are reciprocal and they strive for balanced proportions (Hutchings & Weir 2006, 280–281). They can be described as interplay of receiving and granting favours. If someone omits to return a favour, the reputation of the counterpart is infringed with the result of losing one’s personal confidence (Liang & Kamhuber 2003, 175–176). Confidence, however, is an essential element of a relationship. Evidently, it is assumed that the counterpart will restore reciprocity (Hutchings & Weir 2006, 279).

Therefore, the setting up of an Advanced Training Institute cannot possibly succeed unless the cultural networking requirements, which result from guanxi, are observed. Accordingly, Luo notes: “Any business in this society, including both local firms and foreign investors and marketers, inevitably faces guanxi dynamics. No company can go far unless it has extensive guanxi networks in this setting” (Luo 2007, 1). It must be noted that guanxi is basically person-centered and that a transfer of personal trust onto institutions is limited. This is what distinguishes networking in a Chinese context from networking in a Western perspective, which tends to consider networking more at the institutional level (Luo 2007, 10–11). Consequently transnational adult education needs to consider cooperation and networks as starting point for pedagogical acting. In the following we present the investigation of an egocentric network in order to focus the importance of cooperation.

Analysis of the Individual Network

Following Jütte, advanced training can be considered as a social network that is defined as a web of relationships (Jütte 2002, 28). This focus on relationships seems especially well-suited for the research of cooperation and networking in a Chinese context, although it must be construed more individual than institutional in the form of egocentric networks. Consequently we will describe the case study of one Chinese stakeholder in the project. Therefore research questions and the design of the study are described in the research method at first. This is used as a base for the description of Mr. Li's network in the second part.

Research Method

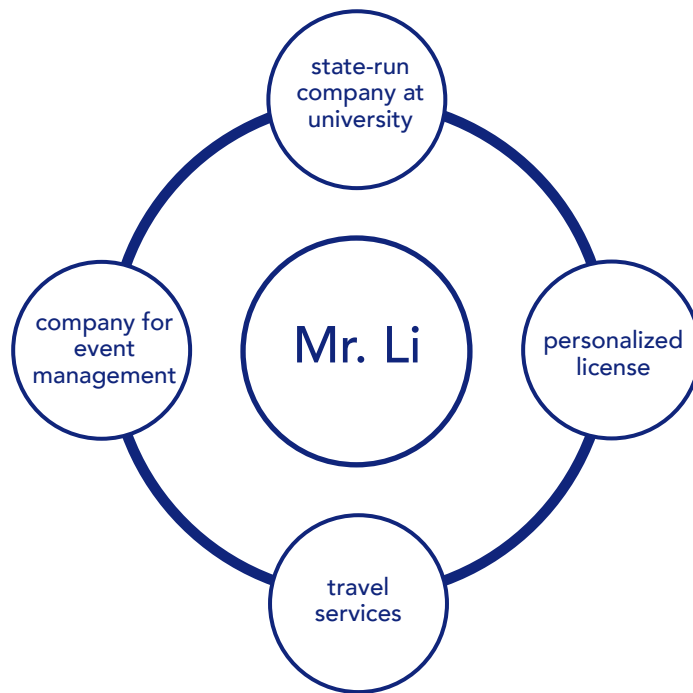
From a project-related position, both perspectives on cooperation – the individual and the institutional – are instructive. On the one hand, the interconnectedness of the cooperation partners as institutions (Weitbild, Konfix, and other possible players) is of interest: How strongly entangled are the cooperation partners? On the other hand, the individual contacts of single actors must be considered (egocentric networks). The last perspective on the egocentric networks of the Chinese actors is covered in this paper. The following study will provide answers to the research questions:

1. What is the shape of the egocentric network of a project-related stakeholder?
2. Which features do the relationships and their maintenance characterize?

Finally we also search for potential relationships between networking and pedagogical processes like educational management or program planning, in which professional structures of the new established Advanced Training Institute are shaped.

As mentioned above people internalize the standards of culture and will be able to communicate them up to a certain level. Because of that limited perceptibility we conducted a case study including different methods for data collection. The case is the egocentric network of Mr. Li⁶, who is an important individual actor in establishing the Advanced Training Institute. He is one of the Chinese shareholders of the institute and acquires new customers and orders. Three interviews were conducted which focused on the topic of

⁶ The name was changed in order to ensure anonymity.



————— FIGURE 2. Base of Mr. Li's egocentric network. —————

cooperation and networking. Besides the interviews his network was investigated by use of structure placement technique. This method aims for the reflection of individual knowledge by illustrating relevant aspects and their relations (Weidemann 2007, 358–359). Therefore the interviewer invited Mr. Li to create a mind map for illustrating his egocentric network. He was asked to arrange cards of own firms and cooperation partners. As a result we hope to find out about the importance of different individual and collective actors more specifically. We conducted the interviews in German because of Mr. Li's huge international experience and language skills.

The interviews were analyzed by using qualitative content analysis after Mayring, because the potential of the method to reduce the size of material, describe the

features of the egocentric network and systemize the elements through categories and a developed coding frame (Mayring 2008; Schreier 2014). In the following description of the results quotes of Mr. Li will be presented in English, which were translated independently by two researchers.

Network of Mr. Li

In order to describe a social network, two features can be distinguished analytically: relational and structural features (Jütte 2005, 44; Schenk 1995, 97–98). Especially in the context of a quantitative network analysis relational features were distinguished from individual actors. In the present paper, these features are used as starting points for the qualitative evaluation of the egocentric network of Mr. Li. Here the relational features comprise the quality and

markedness of relationships and commitments, whereas the shape of the network (e.g., its extent and density) is described within the structural dimension (Schenk 1995, 97–99).

The shape of Mr. Li's network is influenced by four different company affiliations. After the foundation of the Advanced Training Institute he will have a fifth affiliation. Because there are different temporal planning rhythms and target groups in the organizations but same areas of operation – international exchange and trainings, these various affiliations will lead to synergy effect. New company affiliations and areas of responsibility, such as collaboration with the Advanced Training Institute, result from an already existing network. This existing cooperation builds the guanxi-base for new networking projects (Luo 2007, 5–6). Having a guanxi-base facilitate to build up a personal relationship for Mr. Li, it means that the two persons have at least one thing in common. Besides workplace other guanxi-bases can be locality or dialect and kinship for example (ibid.).

The first company involved is a state-run company that is located at a university; this fact also establishes contact with the headmaster of the university who also is the company's chief executive. Through this company, Mr. Li is also in touch with various companies throughout the city. In addition, there is an office, established by the education ministry of the city that offers travel services, which are used by schools, colleges and universities. Thirdly, he owned a company for event management in order to organize seminars, events, etc. But his central company affiliation is a personalized license for the advancement of international exchange of personnel.

It entitles Mr. Li to organize delegations with officials as a target group. The license is covering Chinese delegations from his hometown and lists him as a supplier, with Germany as his emphasis. As a result, Mr. Li organizes and supervises delegations. He was licensed thus on the initiative of third parties with whom he had entertained longstanding relationships and collaborated repeatedly.

The company affiliation and areas of personal responsibility are linked to each other in an object-related way, and they are connected and matched, by the individual actor, with various thematic and situational realms. Mr. Li commands a number of collaborators for each project, which then may be delegated to them once Mr. Li has made the contacts and a proper assignment to the respective company. The main task of the individual actor is to meet customer demands. Cold calling never occurs. Instead of cold calling, promotion activities are based on existing network and the trust of the cooperation partners.

"If I go to the people, of course the people call me first: yes Mr. Li, we are interested in a topic, well then we may talk together. I ask him, which topic he prefers. I always take this book with me and our flyer." (22. Li 391)

Mr. Li estimates his network to be huge in his town. He commands a sophisticated network to which belong several in-town universities, the Commission for Education, various trade schools and authorities. Some of his ties extend up to the highest leadership level. Here hierarchy as a standard of culture becomes relevant at

» His individual network is regionally limited, and it remains inside the limits of the city where he is working. »

the same time. Each of the public authorities has at its disposal an association that connects companies with each other. For over 20 years, there has been extraordinarily longstanding collaboration with the Commission for Education. The appropriate staff member has luckily remained the same over all those years. This clearly illustrates the durability of long-term relationships that are founded in the guanxi network (Luo 2007, 10–11). ‘Good contacts’ are essential and this adequately describes a reliable relationship. His individual network is regionally limited, and it remains inside the limits of the city where he is working. Contact partners vary according to subject areas, and they must be extended to adequately cover the new main field of attention, i.e. advanced learning, which is dealt with by Mr. Li’s work in the Advanced Training Institute. In most cases, the different contact persons already have an existing network and cooperating partners with whom they work. As a result, there is regional and content-related competition for contacts and relationships.

Since the authorities launch foreign delegations pretty regularly, a professional basis for guanxi and mutual trust has emerged.

“Well I have to say, I think we have nearly 30 authorities, 30 different authorities. With nearly all author-

ities we are in contact, well with all, because each year they visit Germany, but not all at once. Perhaps this year five and next year five again, it alternates, that means we keep in touch permanently with the people. We do not need advertising; I think quality speaks itself, isn’t it? Well, we do not need advertising a lot and if they have a project, they will contact us.”
(29. Li 210)

Accordingly, personal license is highly important for Mr. Li’s personal network. But the number of contacts or rather the network’s size is limited, because in all cases the cultivation of contacts is necessary and time-consuming. Moreover the constancy of organizing delegations indicates the impact of government in China, which is also shown in the study of Buckley, Clegg and Tan for business activities of foreign firms. They point out, that government plays still an important role in business, because it provides resources, purchases, runs state-owned enterprises, and is able to change rules and policies for different firms and branches (Buckley, Clegg & Tan 2006). That is why the authors recommend putting efforts into government’s support and creating personal relationships with their officials (ibid., 284).

From a relational perspective the guanxi dynamics work for the individual actor.

There are various relational qualities operative, and there is an inner circle of close confidants (Luo 2005, 439). Conceptually, there is a distinction between guanxi as a generic name which is differentiated and splits into liánxi (contact) and guanxi wang (networking). Here, networking is more deeply related than a contact. Having a contact does not mean that it can be used immediately, because they are sometimes superficial and more like an acquaintance. Cooperation on the other hand describes closer collaboration, which is topic-related.

The research shows that the term guanxi is no longer used in Chinese language, although its dynamics still exist. Generally it is also important to notice, that the various relational qualities are rarely communicated in Chinese or be defined by people in public. That is caused by two reasons. Firstly, guanxi nowadays is used by foreigners, and often it is associated with corruption. Secondly, guanxi shall figure less prominently at the request of the government, because it is assumed that it stands in the way of China's modernization. These are the reasons why the government launched an anti-corruption campaign last year and introduced an increasing number of regulations. According to Mr. Li reliable relationships must not be communicated anyway. Once a relationship is verbalized, this will be highly culture-specific and requires cultural knowledge of conceptualizations, phrasings, and the observation of both the respective situation and the depth of the relationship.

Reliable relationships are accompanied by trust in Mr. Li (Luo 2005, 439). They develop through longstanding, continuous collaboration with a good, flawless working performance and high-quality offerings.

Because of that Mr. Li is able to look for Chinese customers without delivered programs.

“Well, I received flyer from Konfix. I think at the moment it is not that difficult for me, because we know us very well from our long history of working together in our town. They trust me. If the seminar finally takes place, then they know, it must be good, the quality is good, no problems. But I think if we would have the opportunity to prepare it better, it might be even better.” (22. Li 243)

During the cooperation with Mr. Li no expectations of his customers may be raised that cannot be fulfilled in practice. He is humble and convinces through good work. Here, trust may be described as the past experience of quality and the related expectation that future performance will be as good. Again, trust, like guanxi, depends on the respective person, it cannot be transferred. “Trust is also associated with the importance of one’s word over legal documents. When trust has been established, one’s word can be taken in business transactions – to go against one’s given word is to lose face and trust, and ultimately one’s good guanxi. Reciprocity is also linked to guanxi and trust with an unwritten rule that one must “payback [sic] (...) when a favour has been provided.” (Hutchings & Weir 2006, 279). Compared to a western understanding of networking guanxi is inevitable. It refers to collectivism and concern frequently exchanges, which are personal, whereas exchanges in Western societies are rather topic-related and occasional (Michailova & Worm 2003, 510–511).

Guanxi becomes relevant in cases where there is no knowledge about the right contact person or about the field. In cases such as this, one's own contacts may be helpful, or they may know or recommend somebody who can help. One's own contacts also may bring up – for instance, in a professional context – recommendations as to which person has been helpful in the past.

“(...) the customers first ask many people, who is able to do this job. That means word-of-mouth-recommendation is very important. Well they ask the people and if they say one, two or maybe three times, Mr. Li will be able to finish the job, and then they say okay.” (31. Li 208)

Nevertheless, the basis of every attempt to establish contact or start networking is proper knowledge about existing cooperation, work priorities and the structure of authorities.

In China, the fostering of relationships is a continuous challenge as well as the prerequisite for personal success (Henze 2008, 187). Mr. Li also undertakes a multitude of activities in order to take care of contacts. Through delegation practice and mutual cooperation with various authorities, universities, colleges and trade schools contacts are permanently taken care of. In addition, activities such as phone conversations, meetings (e.g., group meetings of trade school leaders), and having dinner together are important and represent renqings. Initially, business matters are subordinate issues. The focus is on the person. Continuously and long-term connections as well as interactions strengthen the relationship between two persons (Luo 2007, 11).

“(...) in China we used to meet us for dinner or coffee, although we have nothing to discuss, that means from time to time you have to cultivate contact. If I really have something and I had no contact with anybody, I won't handle the job. Previously you have to continuously maintain contact and relationship for a long time.” (29. Li 432)

Furthermore guanxi is person-related, which means that the networks that Mr. Li has created for his companies are related to him exclusively. As soon as he leaves an organization, the networks are no longer valid and also not available to other staff members afterwards (Hutchings & Weir 2006, 277; Luo 2007, 11–12). This means that Mr. Li, like anybody, must create novel relationships with the authorities when his contact person is exchanged.

“Since 1998, now 16 years, the officials of our town have changed a few times. We need to orientate ourselves, who is on which position. The previous officials are gone and new persons do the job. Because of the job change we need to maintain the new contacts in order to continue the project.” (29. Li 167)

New institutional cooperation projects emerge when a contact of long standing takes up work in a new company, but wishes to continue her or his collaborative work with Mr. Li. New networks also arise through good reputation, personal recommendations, thematic expertise, and his personal license. In this way, existing contacts and their individual network increase the potential of further networking.

They are produced on the basis of mutually-shared projects. The decision in favour of a certain project is made on a first-line management level. In order to handle a sizeable project, a so-called consignor is also needed on a middle-range management level. Inside the institution Mr. Li must network and create relationships from top to bottom, and thus extend his contacts in order to ensure the actual implementation of the project.

To sum up, Mr. Li's contacts are important especially thanks to their unusual numbers. This enables Mr. Li to have the right contact person for a variety of issues. Networking is applied very fluidly and adjusted to the respective situation. Guanxi can be considered as contact area where functionally related networking partners are available. Contacts, then, are intensified, depending on the respective situation, target group and issues. The network is bound together in relation to the individual actor, product quality, and level of trust. From this it can be concluded that the influence of networking even is noticed in the specific program planning, when single networking partners assume responsibility for parts of content planning.

Conclusion

The present paper shows that, for specific Chinese purposes, the reflections on networking and the creation of cooperation must be extended to include cultural-specific knowledge. In this way transnational education can be realized. In China, it is important to cultivate contacts carefully

once they are established, because the design of personal relations plays a mature role in the professional context. The egocentric networks are the starting point for acquisition, program planning as well as cooperation and networking on an institutional level. For the establishment of the Advanced Training Institute this means that the staff members who were newly employed by both partners in China must relate to one another in order to adjust networks and cooperation. Their contacts and cooperation, as well as the contacts that additional members and associate partners may have, have an essential meaning for the project's successful persistence of the Advance Training Institute on the Chinese training market.

First and foremost, however, networking must be seen as an essential approach to professional tasks. Networking is functional only until the program is effective and collaboration is filled with content. Without the respective program quality no network can be maintained. Networking and program planning are equally important and they coalesce. To put it in a nutshell, interpersonal relationships function as bridges for transnational pedagogical acting in China. Planned programs and the maintenance of relationships stabilize the network in return. Therefore various horizons of networks arise for successful actions on the Chinese further training market.

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BY

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LEARNING INTERPRETATIVENESS FOR SUSTAINABILITY:

– exploring the self-
confrontation method
in robotic surgery

Introduction

Due to globalization and new technologies, professionals in many domains need to deal with increasingly complex and uncertain work. A suitable solution for work task problems is often not available as an external transmittable model; instead it has to be found or created locally in each particular situation on the basis of existing global and local resources, including standardized prescriptions. The increased complexity of work, enhanced by the specialization and division of labour, is a phenomenon that can be witnessed all over the world. Increasing complexities create uncertainties for professionals and organizations. In order to support sustainable development, adult education needs to find new methods for dealing with complexity and uncertainty at work. New technologies not only change work, but also the ways of learning.

The assumption is that a specific mode of work called ‘interpretative work or practice’ is particularly beneficial for dealing with complexity and uncertainty (Wahlström et al 2014). This

notion was first developed by Leena Norros (2004) for specifying the deep mechanisms embedded in the situational actions of work activities. Interpretativeness, based on C.S. Peirce's (1998) philosophy, means learning from both experience of and reflection on profound perceptions of work situations in order to create new knowledge and continually develop work practices (Savioja et al 2014, 272). The interpretative mode of work includes learning, which is an important element of sustainable development (Loeber et al 2007; Pereira-Querol 2011). This paper aims to explore a method for enhancing learning of the interpretative way of working. We follow dialectical-interactive methodological considerations, according to which content and methods are seen as defining each other (Hedegaard 2008, 43). If sustainability and interpretativeness (as continuous learning making new connections between phenomena) are increasingly needed in work, then we need new dialogic methods to support the learning of this interpretative way of working. As the focus of interpretativeness in robotic surgery is in situational and gestural activities, we turn to the Vygotskian-based French tradition of work psychology, work analysis and professional didactics (Clot 2009; 2011; Clot & Kostulski 2011; Kloetzer 2012; Pastré 2011). Together with activity theoretical work on instruction and learning (Engeström 1994), these sources may help in seeing the connections between individual and society, which are so badly needed in research in order to achieve sustainable development (Seppänen in press).

This exploratory paper is part of a research project about interpretative work in robotic surgery (Wahlström et al 2014). In the following, we first present a rough

outline of the work of robotic surgery, where the interpretative mode of work is being examined and developed. Secondly, we take a look at the concept of the interpretative mode of work, and how conceptualization may be related to this. Next, in chapter four, the main principles of simple and crossed self-confrontations, as developed in the French Activity Clinic approach, will be described and applied to the context of learning of the interpretative mode of work in robotic surgery. Finally, we sketch the role of this method of intervention in the global learning system of robotic surgery, and discuss how interpretativeness and the self-confrontation method may contribute to sustainable development.

Robotic surgery

Technological advances in optics, digital video equipment, computers and robotics have opened up new possibilities in surgery. Our empirical study, coming from urology, is about the surgical management of carcinoma of the prostate, an area in which an almost revolutionary introduction of robotic-assisted surgery has taken place. One device, called da Vinci Surgical System, was first introduced in 2000 and has become the dominant device in the field. By sophisticated technology at the ends of robotic instruments, a surgeon can operate in the human body with the facility of a human wrist. In addition, a specialized stereo endoscope lens and camera provide the surgeon with a three-dimensional view of the field under operation. (Su & Smith 2012).

The device has only limited automation, and thus working with it is more like tele-

operation, more of a master-slave relationship than that with an autonomous robot.

The surgeon needs to trust that the robot functions exactly as promised. This provokes many changes and new constraints in the way of operating and in the role of involved actors (Blavier & Nyssen 2010). Robot-assisted surgery deeply transforms the human-machine system. Surgical action becomes increasingly remote (Healey & Benn 2009), and the operating room team needs to control the technology more closely.

The operating room team often consists of two surgeons, two assisting nurses, an anaesthesiologist and an anaesthesia nurse. The camera of the robotic device enables the team to see the operation on-line on several monitors, as a two- or three-dimensional image. The principal surgeon teleoperates, distanced from the patient, at the robotic console. An assisting surgeon is located next to the patient and helps the principal surgeon in many tasks. The pairing of the principal and assisting surgeon is important from the perspective of learning robotic-assisted surgery: often, the principal is the senior expert, and the assisting surgeon, although a specialized and competent surgeon, is still learning to operate with the aid of the robot.

In particular, the focus is on the learning of the surgeons who directly perform their work using the robotic device. It is a question of not only knowing the robotic device, anatomy and physiology, and applying this knowledge to each individual patient in the context of the operating room team, space and equipment, but also of learning, during operating, the features of each patient and applying this knowledge in each unique situation. According

to our preliminary findings, there are many learning challenges involved. Firstly, the surgeon needs to learn to fluently handle the robotic instruments, and this is a long learning curve. Secondly, in contrast to open surgery, surgeons need to see or induce visual indicators to guide their operation, because there is no tactile feel or feedback from the robotic device. This may be one of the biggest changes as compared to open surgery. Thirdly, collaboration between the primary and the assisting surgeon is more important than before, because both have their instruments in the area under operation in the body of the patient. Both visual image and speech mediate their co-ordination.

The setting between the principal and assisting surgeon is an important site for learning. Assisting enables the surgeon who is learning robotic surgery to observe a wide variety of patient cases as s/he is able to ask questions from the principal surgeon during the operation, or they may discuss different aspects or alternatives. This setting may allow conditioning and imitation types of learning (Engeström 1994, 15). The learning surgeon also operates the robotic console, at first during the beginning of the surgical operation or in its easy phases, and later increasingly in more demanding phases, which may enable, to some extent, learning through trial and error. While the learner operates the console, the principal expert remains present in the role of the assisting surgeon and professional back-up for the learner. The setting is non-curricular and resembles tutoring for the learner, who is already a skilled professional surgeon.

As many scholars emphasize, learning is practically always present in work activi-

» As many scholars emphasize, learning is practically always present in work activities. »

ties. All activity includes learning, because it contributes to transforming reality, and simultaneously to transforming the subject who transforms the reality (Pastré 2011). Samurçay and Rabardel (2004), as referred to by Pastré (2011), make a distinction between productive and constructive activity. The aim of productive activity is to succeed with the desired outcomes of work, whereas the aim of constructive activity, or learning, is to increase the capability, either as a skill or knowledge, to perform the productive activity better. The main aim of the expert-learner setting of robotic surgery, while including some elements of learning and instruction, is still a productive activity – the surgical management of prostate cancer. In the following, we take a look at the concept of the interpretative mode of work, and how conceptualization may be related to this.

Interpretative mode of work

Interpretative practice, or mode of work, emphasizes active engagement in the work situation. It is not the opposite of a standardized practice. Rather, it opens up the potential richness, dynamism and development that is available when standardized practices are concretely performed. The assumption is that the theories of generalization of Charles S. Peirce and Vasily V. Davydov (1990) can help us deepen our understanding of the interpretative mode of work. For Peirce (1998), interpretation is

one kind of epistemic relation that an actor may have with the environment – it “refers to connecting one’s perception of an event, with a necessary response, to something further, a third element – an object that gives meaning to both the perception and the response” (Norros et al 2015, 37). Interpretativeness enables knowledge creation, and new embodied practices can emerge in this process (Wahlström et al 2014).

Theoretical-genetic generalization, as proposed by Davydov (1990), means that first, an initial abstraction is formed which reflects the sensual-concrete totality under investigation. The abstraction should indicate the direction of its formation, correspond to the nature of the entire system, and express its essential foundation. (Pihlaja 2005, 69–70). In surgery of carcinoma, the initial abstraction may be the contradiction between removing the disease and damaging the tissues of the human body as little as possible. The Davydovian notion of theoretic-genetic generalization emphasizes a specific kind of conceptualization and concept formation in learning. A rich picture of a concrete, dynamic system is formed, which enables us to examine the system’s history and future developmental possibilities (Seppänen et al 2009).

An important notion related to conceptualization is that of orientation basis, first formulated by Galperin (1979), meaning a comprehensive qualitative description of how to think about or how to perform a

task or a process (Engeström 1995, 106). Savoyant (2006), following Galperin, calls the organizing concepts that structure efficient action ‘orientation bases’: it is the action that represents an implicit conceptualization, and elaboration reveals or articulates it (Pastré 2011, 213). Pierre Pastré distinguishes three main elements in conceptualization-in-action: the organizing concepts of action, the conceptual structure of a situation, and the operating models of actors (Pastré 2011, 181). The operating model, meaning the way in which an “actor appropriates, more or less well, and more or less completely, the conceptual structure of a situation” (Pastré 2011, 179), come close to Galperin’s definition of an orientation basis. The assumption is that all operations (activities) are “performed with a reference to an implicit or explicit rule of action, and that all rules of action can be subsumed into one metarule that allows for the description of the strategy mobilised by an actor” (Pastré 2011, 192). Interpretativeness is present in the orientation bases, in which the perception and action are connected to an external meaningful object. The interventionist methods of simple and crossed self-confrontations, developed by Yves Clot and his group, aim at enhancing thinking and both individual and collective development through conceptualization and reconceptualization of work together with professionals. We now turn to these methods.

Intervention method of self-confrontation

Self-confrontation is one of the dialogic developmental intervention methods developed by the Activity Clinic team in France in the last 15 years (Clot 2009; Clot

2011; Kloetzer et al 2015). Here, we describe the phases of simple- and crossed self-confrontations and apply them to the work of robotic surgery.

Simple self-confrontation means that the professional, in this case a surgeon, together with the researcher-interventionist, watches a series of short sequences of videotaped material of their activities. The episodes are selected together with the professionals – they may be representative, significant, surprising or problematic (Kloetzer 2012). The professional is in the position of an observer of his/her own activity: the researcher asks them to describe as precisely as possible the gestures and operations that are observable in the video. The researcher’s aim is to support the surgeon in questioning what they sees themselves doing in the video and corresponding discussion. During the dialogue, limits of description may appear, causing conventional truths to fail and new attempts of conceptualization to emerge. (Clot 2009). The simple self-confrontation task will be done by the researcher and both the individual expert and learner surgeons.

Although the surgeons learning the robotic operation are qualified, and therefore not novices in the strict sense, knowledge concerning novices’ learning may still inform our method. Novices are likely to benefit from this self-confrontation kind of intervention because they learn more after the action than during the action (Pastré 2011, 197). For them, conceptualization and the building of experience go hand in hand. They can reconfigure what happened and their own behaviour in a retrospective movement, which allows them to understand how things are linked. (Pastré 2011, 197). Also, for an established, experienced

professional, analysing the concepts that structure their action can be a source for improving their practical work (Pastré 2011, 212). The professionals' concepts can be understood as artefacts that can be developed, and new concepts can turn into instruments (Béguin & Rabardel 2000) when actors take them into their own use.

Explaining one's actions to a researcher from outside the medical and surgical domain enhances a professional's ability to 'articulate' the visible actions. Seeing the video and researchers' questions together make them look differently at the experience gained in the action (Kloetzer & Henry 2010), and, based on the researchers' questions supporting reflection, also 'question' them in terms of pondering different alternatives. This is intended to help the professional work in the interpretative way, by forming new relationships between their actions and multiple other questions in their work.

Crossed self-confrontation is an encounter between the researcher and two professionals who have both been previously confronted with their own sequences of activity (Clot 2009). The purpose is a dialogue about the different ways of acting based on careful observation of the same video sequences as in the simple self-confrontation session. The same professional is again shown the same video sequence, but this time in the presence of the researcher, another professional, and the video images. First, both video sequences are watched together. Then, the researcher asks one professional to comment on the actions of their colleague and to share their impressions and interrogations (Kloetzer & Henry 2010). The professionals now need to address their speech to both the

researcher and colleague. This 'double addressing' helps the professionals further shift their way of looking at the actions in the video.

This phase opens up a variety of ways of acting and also a variety of ways of conceptualizing the same actions. This 'complexity' is used to enhance argumentation or even professional disputes. The argumentative tools, such as concepts that are first used as instruments to explain the activity, may later become the focus of analysis and the object of the interventionist dialogue. Discussions and controversies may take the professional concepts to their limit, and new conceptualizations may emerge. (Kloetzer 2012). The re-evaluated activity, as shown in the video, acquires another status: it turns from an object of thinking into a means of thinking about other possibilities. Ambiguity of the concepts can help professionals elaborate their professional perspectives (Seppänen & Kloetzer 2014). The method can help professionals not only analyse and observe their object of work in a new way, but also take their own relationship with this object as the focus of their reflection (Kloetzer 2012).

In the third phase, selected excerpts of the videos and their outcomes as professional controversies will be discussed within a larger group of professionals and within the advisory committee of the project. In this project, joint workshops among professionals and competence developers will be held, in order to discuss and generalize the organizational guidance practices that may potentially promote the interpretative way of working. The aim of the third phase is to institute or to find instrumented means for supporting professionals in en-

» Interpretativeness and the self-confrontation method represent the functional integrity view to sustainability. »

hancing and developing their interpretative way of working.

Discussion and conclusion

The global company that provides the robotic device for surgery has an established training program for both surgeons and other operating room staff. As well as a four-stage course, including system skill development, technology training and post-case debriefs, the company has also established proctoring networks for different surgical specialties. This means that local learning has a strong global link. It is possible that the dialogic reflective method presented here could complement the global resources for learning.

Sustainability is a key term in the continuing discourse on the future of the planet. In work life, increasing complexity and uncertainty create a need to focus on sustainability. Practical work is an arena in which different dimensions of sustainability, such as economic growth, environmental protection and social equality, become integrated. Alrøe and Kristensen (1998) discuss two paradigms of sustainability: resource sufficiency and functional integrity. The normal scientific perspective, as in the paradigm of resource sufficiency, is to look at the system from the outside and concen-

trate on its inputs and outputs. Functional integrity, in turn, views things from within, adopting the active perspective of a player. In the former, explicit knowledge is important; in the latter, the system is a goal-directed entity, which involves an openness towards both known and unknown interactions, and an ability to overcome changes, and demonstrate flexibility and resilience.

The interpretative way of working and the self-confrontation method represent the functional integrity view of sustainability. Interpretativeness can enhance the resilience of work systems. Resilience means “the intrinsic ability of a system to adjust its functioning prior to, during, or following changes and disturbances, so that it can sustain required operations under both expected and unexpected conditions”. Four abilities are essential for resilience: the ability to a) respond to what happens, b) monitor critical developments, c) anticipate future threats and opportunities, and d) learn from past experience – successes as well as failures. (Hollnagel et al 2011). Interpretativeness, balancing between professionals’ autonomy in making decisions and predefined guidance, enhances all of these (Savioja et al 2014; Norros et al 2015) and in this way contributes to sustainability. Dialogicality and conceptualization are the features of the self-confrontation method that, we

assume, enhance the interpretative way of working.

It is generally accepted that sustainable development requires learning (Hasu et al 2012; Loeber et al 2007; Seppänen in press). What does the intervention of self-confrontation mean for learning and sustainability? It contributes to the constructive side of work activities (Pastré 2011). Firstly, reflection in dialogue about work activities after their performance can enhance learning as reconceptualization. Material actions seen in the video films are the basis of verbal information, because they disclose the origins of concepts (Engeström 1994). The professional ponders on different internal and external alternatives for carrying out the activity, potentially making way for new conceptualizations of the work. Importantly, new connections and conceptualizations can be found between individual actions and collective or even societal questions, which is necessary for sustainability. Second, support of the comparison of professional choices and the ways of dealing with them reveals the fundamental characteristics and problems of the profession; the self-confrontation method potentially expands the resources to face these (Kloetzer & Henry 2010). These new resources contribute to learning of ownership and the power to act (Clot 2009). According to Elg et al (2015), active ownership is one of the guiding principles for enabling sustainable development in organizations.

All research that uses the approaches of this paper emphasizes that existing conflicts at work, which are recognized or experienced as problems and challenges, promote substantial motivation for learn-

ing and development (Clot 2011; Engeström 1994; Pastré 2011). A conflict needs to be central, and to touch essential questions regarding learners' work and needs. This has implications for understanding the 'developmental side of sustainability', which is our third point. Sustainable development remains contestable, and the reflection of challenges, as in the method of self-confrontation, contribute to the definition and redefinition of the 'good' directions for development.

In this paper we have, in an exploratory way, described the interpretative way of working and the self-confrontation method of intervention, and investigated some of their theoretical bases. We briefly illustrated the work of robotic surgery, in which interpretativeness is being examined and enhanced. The self-confrontation method may be an additional resource, in addition to the global learning system, for learning and developing the local practices of robotic surgery. Interpretativeness and the self-confrontation method represent the functional integrity view to sustainability. It is argued that they may contribute to sustainability by supporting the learning of reconceptualizing work and its practices, and of ownership and agency, and by opening avenues for development.

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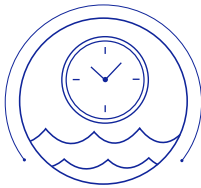
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THE IMPACT OF THE POLITICAL, ECONOMIC AND EDUCATIONAL SHIFTS ON THE GENDERED DIVISION OF WORK IN EAST AFRICA FROM THE 1960S TO 2001

BY

Elizabeth Opit &
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Introduction

This paper presents an account of the influence of political, educational and economic shifts on the trend of gendered division of work in two East African countries, Uganda and Tanzania.

The narratives in this paper focus on the period from 1960s, when the colonial rule ended, up to the year 2001, which represents the onset of the era of the Millenium Development Goals (MDGs) that were launched by the United Nations in 2000 (UNDP 2000). From the 1960s till 2001 Uganda and Tanzania experienced both colonial- and self-rule. The British colonial regime in Uganda started in 1893 and ended on 9th October, 1962 (Ssekamwa & Lugumba 2001). Tanzania was colonized by Germans from 1880 to 1919, and later by the British from 1920 to 1961 (Wandela 2014; Mushi 2009). It is in the era of the MDGs that the issue of gender equality became the core aim of the political agendas in the two countries among others.

The colonial heritage

The historical trends of gendered work in Uganda and Tanzania during and after the colonial period illustrate a shift in women's confinement to traditionally feminine jobs towards male dominated occupations. During the colonial era, women in Uganda and Tanzania were more confined to their traditional gender roles than their male counterparts due to the gender belief that women cannot do men's work (Rice 2011; Toutounji 2013). The British rulers were accustomed to the fact that African subjects came from patriarchal societies and considered "women in such a way that their full and wholesome existence depends on getting married, producing children and caring for the family" (Tamale 2004, 20). Consequently, emphasis on educating girls for home-based duties was entrenched in the formal education system offered by the British colonial rulers in Tanzania and Uganda on the premise that domestic roles of mother, wife and homemaker are the key constructs of women's identity in such societies (Tripp & Kwesiga 2002).

In the two countries, the education provided was designed to produce boy graduates for salaried occupations outside the home, while girls were trained to prepare for their domestic roles and to serve the educated boys (Mbilinyi 1982; Ssekamwa 1997). In 1935, the first inspector of schools in Uganda clearly stated that:

"Girls should be trained to be efficient house wives and mothers – those who do not marry off immediately will be child nurses, needlewomen or school matrons" (Education Annual Report 1935 cited in Kwesiga 2002, 217).

Documentary evidence reveals that all the annual education reports of the colonial era recorded progress made in making girls' education in Uganda relevant to the home. The De La Warr Commission (1937) was concerned with the need to train girls as homemakers and recommended the establishment of a national organizing Instructress in Domestic Science for women in Uganda. Graduates from these schools "recall the long hours they spent digging, plaiting mats, cooking and sweeping the floors, which were tasks designed to make them educationally inferior to men" (Ssekamwa & Lugumba 2001, 9). In Tanzania, the colonial government's syllabus for four years' coursework for boys included English, mathematics, biology, physics, chemistry history, civics, geography, Swahili, religion, art/handicrafts and current affairs. However, although both girls and boys did all the other subjects, the girls did domestic science in the place of the four science subjects (Mbilinyi 1982).

Given the foregoing account, it is evident that the colonial regimes in Tanzania and Uganda used formal education to prepare a 'native boy' with vocational skills for minor and low-paid jobs to reduce the administration costs of the colonial rulers, while girls were educated to become wives to educated African boys. The colonial governments upheld educational systems that promote cultural orientations and socially constructed roles that confine women to unpaid domestic chores, while men benefited from salaried jobs. URT (2010) observed that during the colonial era, women performed household roles, they were less visible in formal employment, had less access and control of many aspects of life such as water, land, education and social networks among other

» What needs to be clearly understood is that women have the capacity to develop themselves and their nations, when empowered to do so. »

responsibilities (Faustine 2007; Anna-Yao 2004; Kwesiga 2002).

The colonial governments' disregard of women attests to Gerson's (2010) and UNIFEM (1993) theory, which stipulates that people are living in socially constructed relations, which are gendered. Gerson argues that even though we have animals in the two sexes of male and female, they do not have gender. This means that unlike the ascribed sexual roles, gender roles are not absolutely exclusive to men or women. This paper serves to confirm that gendered roles are not static, but can be interchanged by shifts in the political, economic and educational arenas.

The marginalization of girls in the British colonial education system continued into the post-independence Uganda and Tanzania. The Africans who took over from the British had the challenge of the need to educate the native Ugandans and Tanzanians to replace the British labour force that was going back to their country. However, the gendered school curriculums continued to be implemented, making women to be less represented in the building of the independent states of Uganda and Tanzania (Samoff 1981).

In Uganda, besides the curriculum being gendered, its implementation was also a challenge. The dominantly male science

teaching staff in the post-colonial schools also perpetuated gendered curriculum implementation policies. It has been observed that most of them consistently advised and encouraged girls to choose options like home economics, secretarial, tailoring and other specific vocations assigned for women (Bazikamwe 1999). In both co-educational and all girls' schools, girls were discouraged from choosing options in purely scientific and technical subjects (Kwesiga 2002; Kasente & Kwesiga 1996). Consequently, trades such as Carpentry, Agriculture, Engineering, Mechanics and Motor Vehicle Mechanics had very few female students. For instance in the 1992/1993 academic year, there were no women in Electrical Engineering and only one woman out of 135 in the Ordinary Diploma Courses was in Mechanical Engineering (Hoffman-Barthes, Nair & Malpade 1994).

In the case of Tanzania, in the 1991/1992 academic year, female students constituted only 17% of the first year admitted students at the University of Dar es Salaam. Only 26% were enrolled in the health sciences and a mere 15% in the University of Architectural sciences (Mkude, Cooksey & Levey 2003). The few who enrolled in sciences never graduated but instead switched to the non-science courses such as education and social welfare (Morley, Leach & Lugg 2009).

Request from economy for change

At this point, it is worth noting that the more women studied only courses that were perceived to be traditionally female, the more the traditional gendered division of work was promoted. Such women would only be employed in the traditionally female jobs after their studies. This phenomenon retarded economic development at national and individual levels. In Uganda a Participatory Poverty Assessment (UBOS 2007; UBOS 2002; GoU 2002; MoFPED 2001) study revealed that women's inadequate control over livelihood assets such as land, labour, skills, information, networks, technology and financial capital remains one of the root causes of poverty. A gender analysis of Uganda National Household Survey (UBOS 2003) further showed that with regard to income and poverty, higher proportions of women-headed households were chronically poor. Selling assets to avoid moving into poverty was more common in female-headed than in male-headed households.

Surveys done in Uganda further reveal that although 83% of women are engaged in agricultural production, only 25.5% control the land they cultivate (UBOS 2001). Many women remain confined to subsistence farming and continue to bear the brunt of food insecurity without access to improved agricultural extension services. This is because male contract farmers are usually preferred as beneficiaries for agricultural extension programmes (Lakwo 2009). In Tanzania, too, though women comprised about 70% of the actual work done in the farm, they had less access to land and other gender-friendly labour serving equipment (URT 2007). If men are

the target beneficiaries of the available agricultural services as opposed to women who are the majority, it creates enormous challenges for women, as they are the ones increasingly taking on the burden of family provisioning and the sustainability of the household livelihood.

What needs to be clearly understood is that women have the capacity to develop themselves and their nations, when empowered to do so. In both Uganda and Tanzania, some extra-ordinary women, who were empowered, have become icons for many other women to emulate. The notable examples are of Dr Specioza Kazibwe, who was appointed as Uganda's Vice President in 1994 (MoGLSD 2012). She was the first African female Vice President. She became a role model for other young women and girls in the quest for women's advancement. Professor Mary Okwakol is another female scientist in Uganda, who has contributed immensely to the advancement of the sciences. She received an international award of the year 1997/1998 from Makerere University for her role in environment conservation. Additionally, she was among the initiators and developers of a GEF/UNEP project and the Conservation and Sustainable Management of below Ground Biodiversity project for sustainable land production in seven tropical countries of Brazil, Cote d'Ivoire, Kenya, India, Indonesia, Mexico and Uganda (Talemwa 2010).

In the case of Tanzania, Dr Anna Kajumulo Tibaijuka was the former East African Executive Director of the UN. To date, she is the highest ranking African woman in the United Nations staff inventory. She is the author of various books and research papers on agriculture and rural development (UNHABITAT 2006). Another example is

Anne Makinda who was nominated to the parliament in 1975 and later became the first female speaker of the National Assembly of Tanzania from 2010 to 2015. There is also Dr Getrude Mongela who apart from being a politician and a gender activist, was appointed a Secretary General, the Fourth World Conference on Women, in Beijing, China, in 1995 whose objectives among others included, ensuring equal access to economic resources (UN, 1996).

The aforementioned success stories are cases of women doing jobs that had for long been perceived as the male domain. From these examples, it is evident that in the independence era, women in Uganda and Tanzania transformed from being stay-at home moms to working outside the homes as top managers, politicians, entrepreneurs, educationists, and scientists among others. Three of these women – Dr Kazibwe, Dr Asha Rose Migiro and Dr Anna Kajumulo Tibajuka – even served in leadership positions at regional and international levels.

Besides the personal excellence that made these women to be leaders, other factors were at play to put women in leadership positions. In Uganda for example, civil wars witnessed in the 1970s and 80s strengthened women's position in the society. These wars ushered in eleven political regimes. The political violence in this era resulted into many deaths of men, leaving so many homes headed by women. In the absence of their husbands/fathers women ventured into the odd and non-traditional job domains in order to fend for their families.

In addition to venturing into male dominated jobs by circumstance, there were initiatives by governments to include women

in leadership positions through legislation. Through the constitution of the Republic of Uganda, one seat of a member of parliament for each district and at least one third of seats for local council are reserved for women (Uganda Gender Policy 2007). Consequently, in 1989 34 more women were elected as members of parliament to represent women. In addition, to the 34 women MPs, an additional seven women competed with men and were elected to the parliament leading to 17% (41) of the parliamentary seats being filled by women (Tripp, Casimiro, Kwesiga & Mungwa 2009, 39, 17). Later, during the 6th Parliament (1996–2001) 39 women were elected as district MPs due to the increase in the number of districts. In the same venture, the government gave women opportunities to occupy offices in the civil service sector. By 2006 women constituted 17.4% of civil service offices (Permanent Secretaries, heads of departments and divisions) while men accounted for 82.6% (Uganda Gender Policy 2007). These statistics indicate an increased number of women in leadership and decision making positions.

At this point it is also imperative to note that international declarations and summits also played a role in transforming both Ugandan and Tanzanian women from being stay-at home moms to being top managers, politicians, entrepreneurs, educationists, and scientists, among others, as illustrated by examples mentioned earlier. Such international calls accrued from summits, such as the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), the UN Security Council Resolution 1324 of 2000 and the Beijing Conference of 1995. For instance the Beijing platform for action, later revised at the 23rd session of the United Nations (UN) General Assembly held in June 2000, encouraged governments to:

“set and encourage the use of short and long-term explicit time bound-targets or measureable goals, including where appropriate quotas, to promote progress towards gender balance, including women’s equal access to and full participation on the basis of equality with men in all areas and at all levels of public life, especially in decision making positions, in political parties and political activities” (Kadaga 2013, 1).

Uganda and Tanzania responded to international declarations and calls for equal participation of girls and boys in all spheres of life in the 1970s. In the mid-1970s Tanzania became a signatory of Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR 1948) and the Convention on Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW). Uganda also ratified the Convention on Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women in 1979. As member states, the two countries were periodically required to report on their progress towards the implementation of CEDAW provisions.

Consequently, Tanzania adopted various strategies to enhance women’s social economic and political development. These include the development of The Women’s Bank, establishment of the Directorate of Gender and Gender Mainstreaming in the Ministry of Civil Service, Organization of Tanzanian Women, Tanzania Women Lawyers’ Association, Tanzania Women Media Association, and Tanzania Gender Networking Program which has been operating since 1993 with a vision to act upon gender issues (Mushi 2010).

In response to the declarations, the government of Uganda established a rural

credit plan to make farm loans available to women through the Uganda Commercial Bank in 1989. Through this Affirmative intervention women were able to access loans to do various economic activities. Available documentary evidence indicates that by 2003 fifty five percent of Micro Finance Institution borrowers were female. Female borrowers constituted a large proportion in commerce (72%), in social services (63%), in animal husbandry (60%) and in manufacturing (48%) (MoFPED 2003). As a result of this economic Affirmative Action, women in Uganda were empowered to increase their economic production, thereby responding to the call for Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women.

The government of the republic of Uganda also put in place policies and mechanisms for stimulating economic growth and poverty reduction for both men and women. Among these are the Strategic Exports Strategy, the Plan for Modernization of Agriculture, the Rural Development Strategy, and the Medium Term Competitive Strategy for the Private Sector, the Uganda Public Private Partnership Strategy and the Micro-Finance Outreach Plan. These interventions empowered women and increased their participation in non-traditional roles. By 2001 the employment status of employed persons aged 10 years and above stood at 89.6% for the self-employed, with 84.0% male and 95.3% female in the rural areas and 54.3% for the male and 68.7% female in the urban areas (UBOS 2001). These statistics indicate that through these interventions women were empowered to access salaried jobs unlike in the colonial era, when they were empowered to be ‘good wives’ for the educated men who did clerical jobs for the colonialists.

Unlike their Ugandan counterpart, the government of Tanzania, in spite of it being a signatory of Universal Declaration of Human Rights, continued to perpetuate gendered division of labour in various sectors of industry. This was due to persistent economic challenges the country was experiencing at this time. For instance, more than half of the population was living in the rural areas, and thus the main activity was agriculture using traditional tools. In order to address this situation, the country launched the *Education for Self-reliance* policy as a measure for enabling people to participate in the achievement of their success. However, even with the education for self-reliance policy, oppressive gender relations that perpetuated gender stereotyped roles of women continued (Mbilinyi & Mbughuni 1991). The economic depression in Tanzania in the 1980s turned down the provision of social services, including education (Kalindwa 2002). In the face of the economic depression, parents preferred to support the boy child than the girl because “they now needed bride price from the married off girls more than ever before” (Mbilinyi & Mbughuni 1991, 13).

In the case of Uganda, the women’s comparatively low education levels were solved through the introduction of the Universal Primary Education programme in 1997.

The government encouraged families to send four children for free education of which two must be girls. It also introduced the Affirmative Action bonus scheme of awarding all female applicants to public universities 1.5 bonus points in 1990/91. Consequently, the number of girls studying in the primary schools and universities rose significantly. Girls’ enrolment in primary schools increased from 46% in 1997 to 48%

in 1999 (MoGLSD 2002). Similarly, female students’ university enrolment rose from 25% in 1989 to 35% in 1999/2000 (Kakuru 2003).

In conclusion, the historical evidence of the shifts in the type of work men and women do has been a result of the changes in the political, economic and educational arenas. The political, economic and education trends in Uganda and Tanzania from the 1960s to 2001 serve to illustrate that women, who have done a traditionally male job, can equally perform roles traditionally assigned to men, when given the opportunity to do so. This includes exposing women to conditions that facilitate them to ‘walk on the unfamiliar ground’. This shift reveals that gender roles are not cast in iron. Gendered roles can be interchanged in the political, economic and educational arenas, if the political will to do so is prevalent among the ruling governments. Such governments should be willing to use Affirmative Action measures to remedy the situation.

From the discussion in this article, it is clear that politics has a major role to play in changing the traditional trend of marginalizing women towards one that is empowering them to participate in all aspects of society productively. This still leaves the following important questions unanswered and they remain topics for further research: are there other factors which can play a significant role in changing the trend of women’s marginalization in society? Besides being visible examples of success, what can educated women in high ranking positions do in order to contribute effectively to change people’s gendered perception of women as ‘stay home moms’? What have women in developed countries done to address the issue of women’s marginalization?

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"In-between" different cultures:
The integration experiences and
future career expectations of
international degree students
studying in Finland





BY

Alba G. A. Naccari

BODILY MEDIATION FOR THE ECOLOGICAL ADULT EDUCATION

With the following I would like to give an idea about educational opportunities offered by the Symbolic-Anthropological Bodily Mediation Pedagogy[®], which proposes interesting outdoor activities, such as dance and movement, for the ecological adult education. It is a methodology created in Italy from some approaches of the dance movement therapy reworked in a pedagogical way (Naccari 2004; 2006; 2012 ed.). The method is used in the work of education, research, training and supervision in 'Eurinome' A.S.D., the 'School of Bodily and Expressive Mediation Pedagogy' in Perugia-Palmi (RC)⁷, that is operative since 2006 and today accredited by Miur, Cid Unesco and Apid⁸.

The term 'mediation' means that movement and/or dance activities are proposed to adult participants in a course not as activities in themselves but as tools to educate the person. Many of the activities proposed through this approach are designed for adult education, considering their different moments of evolution and different educational goals, including environmental education.

These movement activities, often proposed in a natural environment, have their ancient origins in the history of people (for example the famous Italian pizzica-tarantella) and today substantial studies argue their pedagogical references and give reasons and justify their educational goals especially in adulthood in the liberal education, as I will describe further.

⁷ www.danzasimbolica.altervista.org

⁸ MIUR: Ministero dell'Istruzione dell'Università e della Ricerca; CID: International Dance Council Unesco, APID: Associazione Professionale Italiana Danzamentoterapia.

In this paper, I will first briefly refer to the current dramatic eco-systemic situation and to the opportunity of a special kind of experiential learning to try to change the approach adults would have to the problem. Thereafter I will talk about the ancient origins of the tradition of dancing surrounded by nature, a practice that can still be evidenced of in ethnic dances of many countries in the world. Many of these dances, because of their symbolic value, are appropriately integrated into the specific methodology which I refer to. Finally, I will mention some stimuli taken from other approaches and combined to the symbolic-anthropological (S. A.) bodily mediation. The intention of this approach is to awaken a sense of belonging and multiple interaction with 'Mother Earth', to rediscover and experience the harmony between the human and the cosmic rhythms, to enlarge our awareness and sense of responsibility for the earth-system.

As I refer to a mostly practical methodology, designed to activate emotions, moods and attitudes, it will not be easy to find the right words. I therefore invite readers to evoke what they may have experienced in other workshops, or to empathize as much as possible to what I am going to present in this paper.

Introduction and perspectives

The environmental degradation and the negligence for plants, animals and other life forms see adults engulfed by the inability to give a concrete answer to the awareness of the risks that our thoughtless behaviour generates. The 'heuristic of fear' coming from the future (Jonas 1979), facing the risk of 'biocide', does not have adequate concrete consequences. Even the concept of 'non-reciprocal responsibility' (see Jonas 1979), the ability of taking care of those who cannot reciprocate (at least not intentionally, namely children, animals, vegetable beings ect.), which should be typical of adulthood, is sorrowfully disregarded.

Therefore we have a thoughtless attitude towards the ecosystem, just think how multinational companies, that influence many aspects of our economy, determine their choices on income and not on human rights and the well-being of the biosphere. This human unconsidered behaviour not only does not take into account the lives of the future generations, but it also testifies the spiritual decline of mankind, unable to feel and experience the *com-presenza*⁹ (Capitini 1967; 1999) with plants, animals and the whole earth system.

⁹ It could be translated: coexistence-presence-participation of all beings, the dead and the living, bound together to a transcendent level, shearing together the creation of values.

Rising public awareness, in this regard, requires new ways of feeling-perceiving-sharing that would allow a renewed ability for people to act responsibly in their dealings with the environment and other beings.

In the symbolic-anthropological pedagogy, the eco-systemic perspective is one of the essential theoretical references. This aspect underlines the inevitable co-membership and interactions between all beings and contexts (Bateson 1972; Bronfenbrenner 1979), and inter alia between human beings and nature, and the inestimable value of our 'terrestrial citizenship' (Morin 1999). In fact, we could not live without breathing the air cleaned by trees; all our biological and psychological rhythms depend on the rhythms of the earth. This deep connection, which seems obvious, but that is now denied by most of human behaviour, is highlighted by the existentialist philosophers (such as Heidegger, Jaspers and many others). "The compound expression 'being-in-the-world' indicates, in the very way we have coined it, that it stands for a unified phenomenon" (Heidegger 1996, 53). *Dasein*, being-there (the existence) is structurally characterized by its living in the world, as what we are familiar with, what we care about, or rather what we should care about. *Dasein* has the essential constitution of being-in-the-world (see *ibid.*).

To rediscover and feel all this it can be necessary to awake in everyone the ethical and spiritual profound consciousness of interdependence and co-belonging to all beings. That is not only a physical feeling, due to our interconnection with the rhythms of the earth (day and night, seasonal changings and so on), but also a

deep dependence on the mysterious beauty of nature. This is possible by considering not only the 'formal' size of the value, that means the rational and verbal one (Reboul 1992), but also its 'materialistic' dimension, namely that of experimenting the feelings of goodness and beauty thanks to the rediscover of the intimate interconnection with everything else (Morin 1973). This is especially true for adults who are already immersed in saturated worlds of words, which lose their credibility.

To obtain this, different kinds of experiential learnings are useful. As I said before, in the symbolic-anthropological approach, we (as a school) plan bodily and expressive mediation workshops, made mainly outside, in a natural environment. We work through the reworking and integration of ancient traditions that can help people search and listen to the 'Genii Loci', so as to educate a renewed awareness and inner perception of our innate and vital 'terrestrial citizenship'. To awaken a sense of belonging that, while accepting the profound meaning of our life on earth, it allows us to look to the 'Other', (human being, element of nature, creature), not as a being to dominate, as the main globalized economic logic teaches us, but as an 'otherness' with whom one can creatively come in to a possible harmony.

In these workshops, we integrate people's expressive gestural language through their traditional dances, in order to experience, fully understand, and feel their symbolic meanings, often related to a strong sense of intimacy with the whole. The different activities are proposed in a specific setting that facilitates the identification and personal reworking of the symbolic dance theme.

Some origins of a lost bond to be rediscovered

Traditional dances condense and testify to a past related to the rites of nature in different cultural contexts; we can still dance them and learn new ways of belonging to and the respect for all things, thanks to the specific educational setting.

Many traditional dances were originally connected to the awakening of spring, the propitiation of the crop and, through all this, the human beings' power to procreate and generate (Sachs 1933), not only as a biological possibility but also culturally for their community. Dances in nature under trees, are part of many ethnic traditions at all latitudes. As an Italian I have to refer to the dances of my own tradition, among them, the 'Tarantella' is certainly famous all over the world.

The 'Pastorale' (one of southern Italy's Tarantellas) effectively interprets the close relationship between dance as a collective ritual and the community life with its unique culture and the strong relationship of interdependence with nature. Dancing is, in fact, related to the ancient tradition of transhumance that profoundly marked the life of the *Lucan shepherd*:

"in autumn, the transfer of livestock from a cold to a warmer grazing ground (...) meant departure and return, abandonment of the family and of one's environment for a long period, with the inevitable adaptation to a wandering life in different natural environments (...) the departure was seen as the death of the sedentary period and the beginning of the long

journey, the coming back home was the end of the nomadic adventure and the beginning of stability in the daily life" (Gala 1999, 6).

Although it is a tradition very far from ours, it shows a way of life with nature and human feelings that, beyond the cultural and historical context, belongs to deep human nature. The sense of deep interaction, of taking care of animals, of responsibility, of sacrifice are values that today should again be part of the adult way of being, as I will mention later.

Even the 'Tammurriata' (etymologically: dance on a drum), a name which designates the tarantellas of the Campania area, is a dance linked to rural tradition and life, to a culture deeply rooted in the ancient pagan cult that still follows the nature's cyclical Calendar.

The true origin of 'Tammurriata' is to be ascribed to the 'Great Mother' (De Simone 1974), the feminine deity identified with various goddesses, the mistress of ancient rites linked to the land. The calendar of the 'Tammurriata' festivals, from 2nd February to October, follows the path of the sunlight with its fertilizing consequences on the earth, "from the springtime rebirth to the summer blooming down to autumn. In winter the 'Tammorras' are silent and rest, waiting for a new year to come to celebrate again the eternal renewal of the mystery of life" (Garrone 2004, 62).

Adults today would learn a lot if only they listened to the seasonal cycles, it is a fundamental dimension of the eco-systemic wisdom and of deep ecology, the ability to listen and harmonize themselves listening and harmonizing with the 'Other'.

» Primitive Expression creates a strong sense of belonging in the group we dance and sing with, and to the context in which we are involved. »

But I have to make at least a brief reference to the famous 'Pizzica', the current popular definition of what remains of Tarantism from Puglia. The therapeutic dancing ritual binds the birth of the myth at the time of harvest, when the spider can bite you because you are immersed in the summer heat and in the natural elements associated with ploughing, grape harvesting and gleaning. In ancient times the same dancing and musical ritual was made in a natural environment; its origins are linked to the orgiastic Dionysian mysteries, which took place in the wildest nature, a privileged dimension, where a peculiar union and a panic abandonment were sought. (See De Martino 2002; Naccari 2004, 62–69).

Now I cannot enter into the symbolic richness of this myth, which I have already treated elsewhere (see Naccari 2004). I can just mention the symbolism of the repressed feminine (the *tarantate* are predominantly women, whose life was under the male power), and the symbolism of feminine archetype, that regards the ability to welcome, to weave relationships, to imagine, to feel and to empathize. All things highly educative for adults today, especially to improve their ability to relate to the Other (human, creature, environment).

As I said before, our present is very far from these ancient rituals and dances, but we can still learn some important

ethical attitudes of interdependence with everything through them. The relationship between humans and nature could be mutual, and not of ownership and exploitation of the earth and all its creatures. We could learn to be in touch with season changes, and with the mystery and the value of being in connection with the earth life, with its rhythms and changings, something we should take care of.

Experiences to consider

I had the opportunity to experience the positive educational opportunities of dancing in a natural environment, both in dance-movement-therapy workshops and in some other adult educational trainings. I was able to translate some elements of these approaches while drafting the symbolic-anthropological theory and methodology.

An approach that is well known by dance-movement-therapists, and that can be experienced in nature, is the 'Primitive Expression'. It was initiated by the afro-Cuban dancer HERNAN DUPLAN, and it has been reworked as a specific method within dance-therapy by FRANCE SCHOTT-BILLMAN (1987; 1989; 2001). Furthermore, within the symbolic anthropological method we (other colleagues and I, the most important of whom is JOHAN DHAESE) have reworked it for an educational setting. The basic

elements are a binary rhythm, simplicity of movements, the posture always vertical to the ground, the reflection of the group, the use of voice, which, inspired by the ancient tribal chants, allows the group to sing simple and repetitive melodies as if it were a choir. Music is not always necessary, so it is possible to propose the Primitive Expression without other tools than one's body: we simply find a common rhythm, and mark it with the voice and the movement of our feet on the ground; that is why we can practice anywhere, in a truly ecological way (that means both in relation with everything and in a very essential way). Furthermore, the symbolic movements mostly refer to the essential themes of nature: the earth, the sky, the horizon, the infinite, the activities and the work of men and women in these dimensions.

Primitive Expression creates a strong sense of belonging in the group we dance and sing with, and to the context in which we are involved. It also facilitates the activation of a sort of mysterious ancestral memory characterized by a strong and essential bond of interdependence between Earth, with all its natural elements, and the human being.

Another practice that inspired the synthesis and integration of activities in the natural environment in the method I'm talking about, is the so called 'Ecological Movement', which I experienced with Sandra Reeve and Prapto Suryodarmo¹⁰. These methods are extremely complex and both the experts have developed a practice of movement with some spiritual references and some high educational goals.

The Javanese Prapto Suryodarmo gave birth to the artistic movement called 'Amerta Movement' that draws from Buddhism; he

"decided to practice perceiving the world through movement rather than from stasis, or, as he initially described it to us, 'from the Buddha walking, rather than from the Buddha sitting'. Alongside Buddhist practice, the development of Amerta Movement was influenced by the practice of Sumarah, a traditional Javanese meditation practice of 'letting go' or surrender. Suprapto developed his approach to movement as a life-practice in dialogue with both of these traditions.

Amerta is a Javanese word which Prapto translates as the 'nectar' or 'elixir' of life. This practice is based on the basic movements of daily life: walking, sitting, standing, crawling and lying down and the transitions between them, beginning with the observation of children playing. It is also based on moving in

10 Workshop of Ecological Movement, June 2011, West Dorset – England.

nature and an embodied study of movement from the play of elements in motion and the laws of nature.

Both as a psychophysical practice and as a cultural attitude, equal attention is given to the environment as to the body-in-movement” (S. Reeve¹¹).

Sandra Reeve, after a long experience with Prapto, developed her own methodology called ‘Ecological Movement’. Sandra mainly sought the way to make Prapto’s teaching accessible to the Western culture. As she argues:

“Current ecological discourses often seem to take for granted an embodied human position, without taking into account the nature of embodiment. It is this gap which I seek to address when I apply selected ecological principles to movement training. It seems only a small step from ecological perception to a notion of ecological movement as a way of both stimulating and incorporating a new conceptual ecology through direct experience. This would be necessary, if a new paradigm of human behaviour was to be experienced and understood through the moving body. This practice of ecological movement begins with the individual and with becoming aware of the structure of the living body in movement. Embodied environmental awareness, which includes an awareness of situation or context, is a hallmark of ecological movement” (S.Reeve¹²).

In this practice, then, there is a particular attention on listening to oneself and to one’s awareness of being in relation with the environment, trying to live the present in the present, in the total perception of what and where you are. The ‘Ecological Movement’ has a deeply meditative-contemplative value that allows you to go beyond the constant mental chatter and to be in the presence of the spiritual mystery of being.

Geo-dance: from the body-home to the Earth-home

11 www.moveintolife.com/thesis-amerta-movement.html

12 *ibid.*

In the S.A. method, we call those specific activities made in a natural environment with explicit ecological goals ‘Geo-dance’. In this kind of workshops, we think and propose activities oriented towards mediation, integration, and harmonization of the elements living in us

and in where we live, as a kind of ecology that begins from inside. This involves a true practical eco-psychology (see among others Roszak 1992), that means the real care for the interaction between personal well-being and welfare of the context of life (see Naccari 2012, ed.). These activities are complex, because they don't aim to a single ability or intelligence, but to the totality of the human dimensions in the interaction with the varied totality that surrounds us.

In the specific setting all aspects and experiences of bodily and expressive mediation (including traditional dances, and/or activities of primitive expression or of ecological movement) are appropriately integrated with one another in order to facilitate the achievement of the proposed objectives. Here I will resume only some aspects of it, for a full description of the specific methodology we should see more comprehensive studies (Naccari 2004; 2006; 2012 ed.).

The natural environment is the privileged interlocutor, it is intentionally considered and proposed in its dialogical potentialities as a true 'You' (Buber 1984) rather than as a simple background. Every natural element becomes a source of relational potentialities. However, this does not exclude but rather enhances, also the ability to listen to oneself. How can I listen to the silence of nature if I do not know how to be silent inside me?

The workshops are then proposed outdoor: in a forest or a clearing, a wood, a garden, on a lawn, on the beach, on the seashore, in different climatic conditions (hot or cold, wind, rain or snow will be part of relational stimuli); each activity will res-

onate of the specific characteristics of the site. It is not the same thing dancing in a forest or on a beach; the wood can evoke the stories about the magic people living in it, the beach probably will generate a sense of openness and closeness with the vastness of the sea. It will be very different dancing during the day, the night, the dawn or dusk, in winter or summer, under the rain, the snow or the sun rays; all these elements are intentionally part of the setting of the proposed educational experience. The landscape is not a simple device to connect movement activities; it is what gives structure, makes possible and selects what everyone involved can learn, as well as a didactic integrating background (Canevaro 1996).

The choreographic sequences, whether they are ethnic dances, or sequences of primitive expression, represent one of the core activities; due to symbolic-cultural themes condensed in them, they allow the dancers to get in contact with the ancient traditions, as I said before, to incorporate from them what might be evolved on a personal level. Among the ethnic dances, the sacred ones are of particular interest, because they let you experience, in a more specific and comprehensive way, the mystery present in nature as the creation (see Naccari 2015).

Dancing beauty

All the activities, including the ethnic dances, are proposed in such a way that it is possible to perceive and experience the meaning and the beauty of the relationship between human beings and nature. In this specific setting, before and/or after the choreography, we suggest expressive

improvising activities that will allow everyone to enter personally and fully into the choreographic symbol and/or in the natural element experienced by dancing. At the beginning, there is a warm up, which is not only physical but also relational, emotional and imaginative too. At the end of the session, after a verbal sharing on the experience among the participants, the educator can have a little time to tell stories and meanings connected to everything the group has done in the workshop, on a purely cultural level, so to offer the opportunity to know more about it. In some sessions, we can also introduce the subject by telling a myth, and/or a legend, related to the topic that we intend to propose, and/or to the places where we are working.

As Bachelard says, we often start from an image of nature, so to interpret, inhabit and contemplate it through the body in motion. As a kind of particular 'reverie', we can propose the flow of water, the movement of the flames, the opening of the sunset, the dance of the wind, the dance of the snowflakes, the heat of the sun. Identifying ourselves with the image, which becomes, in my opinion, more intense when experienced through bodily movements, in an appropriate pedagogical framework, allows us to experience the image itself in an immersive way, so the image can enlarge the depth of life (Bachelard 1960). When we enter in the images through dancing, they become 'inexhaustible objects' and "psychotropic images". These images are beneficial, especially when they are embodied. They can induce a renewal of the joy of perceiving, a refinement of the senses (see *ibid.*), which brings us back to the intimacy with the world, an intuitive, perceptive, meditative, perhaps mystical intimacy, that finally does no longer make

us feel 'outside' of the world as rational consciousness does, but immersed in it and in its beauty. The experience thus leads us to the perception of an ontology of contemplation that is beauty, bliss, peace, gentleness, confirmation of belonging 'to the soul of the world' (see Hillman 1997), that is also unity, totality, happy immediacy, expanding security (see Bachelard 1960, 179–220). Because, in fact, "you do not see the world if you do not dream what you see" (see *ibid.* 179); and we can add: if you don't dance what you see.

In the interaction with the natural elements, then, we are educated, not only to the discovery of a more authentic, respectful, mysterious relationship with Mother Earth, to the sensitivity and awareness of what it represents, but also to the rediscovery of lost (or slightly enhanced) dimensions of the self and to the discovery of the harmony between human biological rhythms and terrestrial and cosmic rhythms. To feel part of the whole, without losing the sense of our own conscious individuality, can orient to the achievement of a sense of responsibility towards the Earth system.

This is certainly also an education of the heart (Rossi 2008), in the sense of the amplification of the horizons of consciousness, which is made of many and varied affective dimensions. All creatures, animals, plants and other beings are our brothers and sisters, and this is not only a matter of philosophy and theology, it is a matter of the heart!

All this can help adults find a way to a different and more ethical lifestyle, moving towards the care ability of the others that should be typical of adulthood.

Outlines on the research methodologies and questions to develop

As I have said so far a theoretical and methodological approach emerges which, combining old and new practices, aims to reactivate in adult people attitudes and skills perhaps forgotten. They could rediscover the capacity to be responsible for and take care of the Earth system. The novelty lies essentially in the fact that it is an education through bodily and expressive mediation, made outdoor in a natural environment, centred on activities of dance and movement. Being a new methodology, there are not many empirical studies yet that investigate its positive educative effects (Naccari 2012 ed.; 2016). That is why we (as a school) are planning some action-research projects (principally activated within the school Eurinome in Perugia and at the Foro Italico University of Rome) to investigate the effectiveness of the S.A. method.

The epistemological paradigm, to which we refer to, is itself ecological. Taking its cue mainly from Morin's studies, it has gradually been enriched, in Italy, of specific pedagogical investigations (Baldacci 2001; Mantovani 2000; Mortari 2007; Sorzio 2005; Trincherò 2002; etc.).

Generally, the methodologies which we use to investigate and evaluate the educational potentialities are mainly hermeneutic and idiographic so to take care of the complexity of the involved elements. What we are mostly interested in is not the validation of this educational method (which could be quite impossible) but the transferability and corroboration of it.

The researcher is often the bodily mediation educator, aware of the inevitable influence that he/she plays in the explored context. We also strongly hope that the various educators involved share their interpretation and consideration of the educational process, both on the pedagogical and the research side. Some of the searching and analysis data tools are expressly created (Naccari 2011; 2012 ed.), other instruments are part of art-therapy tools (Laban 1980; Riedel 2004). We always use a specific logbook (see Naccari 2011), both to assess the pedagogical and the research process.

Thanks to the various experiences reported collected in our logbooks of geo-dance workshops with adults, we can consider that, usually, those who take part to this type of seminars, after the experience, report they are more attracted by natural elements and they can see more details in them than they could before. They also say they experience more pleasure than before when immersed in nature, and they can benefit from it more than before. There are also significant verbalizations about a greater sense of unity with the whole, a renewed perception of the sense of wonder, and moods ranging from a sense of renewed confidence (faith) in life, to the most varied shades of states of mind that cannot be called but mystical (see Naccari 2012 ed., 133-139).

The issues I would like to investigate before long are: is this renewed sense of belonging to mother earth transformed generally into a new sense of awareness and responsibility? If it is so, in what way? How is it possible to facilitate it? How can we support the adult in going from a new way of feeling to a new way of acting that is more environmentally responsible?

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BY

Vesa Korhonen

'IN-BETWEEN' DIFFERENT CULTURES:

the integration experiences
and future career expectations
of international degree
students studying in Finland

Introduction

Finnish education experienced a strong wave of internationalisation in the early 2000s. Higher education institutions in Finland (polytechnics, universities) are the most important educational level to have adopted internationalisation in their strategies. Indeed, internationalisation is seen to be at the heart of university strategies and it is appreciated as a valuable source of cultural capital (see Jones 2007). Consequently, it is embedded in the reform of research, innovation, and the higher education system in Finland, and strategic goals involving internationalisation have been included in the government programme and policy documents. This is connected to, among other things, attracting highly educated experts to Finland, preserving the country's international competitiveness, and meeting the labour deficit caused by the ageing population.

In spite of the strategic objectives, the situation of international students and international labour in Finland is by no means

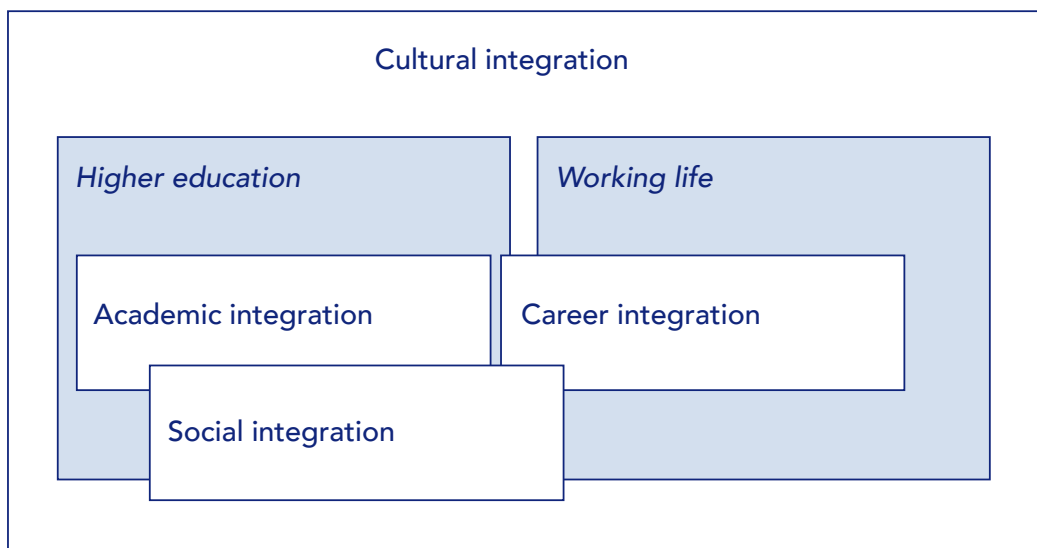
easy. Research on migrant experiences has shown that highly educated immigrants are a problematic group in terms of the labour market in Finland. Even advanced academic degrees do not necessarily guarantee immigrants jobs that corresponds to their education, regardless of whether the qualifications were obtained from the country of departure or Finland (see Forsander et al 2004; Wrede & Nordberg 2010). This so-called over qualification phenomenon has also been common in other European Union member countries for some time (Teichler & Kehm 1995). It affects marginal groups most strongly, such as individuals with an immigrant background.

From the perspective of international students' experiences, studying for a degree in a foreign society, culture, and community is a very demanding, long-term process that brings many kinds of challenges (e.g., Leung 2001; Bartram 2007). Exchange students usually stay for a few months, whereas the international degree students spend several years in the country in order to complete the whole degree. International students in higher education are examined very actively internationally. Research is particularly substantial in those countries where the numbers of the international students have been considerable, such as Great Britain, the United States, and Australia. The focus in Finnish higher education research has mainly been on the exchange students' experiences. Nevertheless, the international degree students' studies at Finnish universities and/or their integration into Finnish culture has been studied increasingly over the past decade (see, e.g., Ally 2002; Kinnunen 2003; Taajamo 2005; Niemelä 2008; Pietilä 2010; Lairio et al 2012; Korhonen 2013; Sakurai 2014.)

The main objective of this study is to examine 1) how international degree students studying at Finnish universities experience their integration into academic education, and 2) how they experience integration into Finnish society and the labour market during and after their studies.

Culture and integration: the dimensions of integration experiences and the perspective of 'in between' spaces

Adapting to a new culture is always a complex and dynamic process (Pietilä 2010). 'International student' as a term easily creates a homogenous image of foreign students, much like the term 'immigrant'. However, international students are a heterogeneous group of people from diverse cultural backgrounds (see Korhonen 2013). There are many different theories and concepts related to cultural integration and adaptation. Sue and Sue's (2008) cultural identity development model takes into account the different stages of cultural adaptation. In the stages of identity development, an immigrant's relationship with his/her own cultural and ethnic roots may vary in relation to the local dominant culture. At first, in the conformist stage, the attitude towards the dominant culture may be overwhelmingly positive and the immigrant values the dominant cultural values over his/her own. Gradually, during next stages of the adaptation process, a critical awareness of the dominant culture proceeds and the appreciation of the immigrant's own cultural roots is gradually restored. This may gradually lead to the integrative awareness stage, where the immigrant develops an internal sense of security and



— FIGURE 1. Aspects of international degree students' integration experiences. —

begins to have realistic and balanced perceptions regarding his/her own culture and the dominant culture. The immigrant may then experience solidarity towards both his/her own culture and the host country's culture. (Sue & Sue 2008, 242-257)

Multiculturalism or cultural integration theories are not necessarily applicable as such to describe the international degree student's integration experiences (Lairio et al 2013). Therefore in this case, an appropriate conceptual approach is developed. International degree students' experiences of integration into society, education, and employment are described using four different integration concepts (see Figure 1). These aspects of integration experiences are especially related to the sociocultural issues of the international students' adaptation process (Anderson et al 2009). The important concepts and levels used to examine integration (in the light of adaptation and the 'in between' point-of-view) in

this case are *cultural, academic, social, and career integration* in Finnish higher education and working life (Korhonen 2013).

Cultural integration is the most extensive of the integration experience areas, and it describes the general engagement with society, language, and culture as well as cultural adaptation and overcoming possible culture shock (Sue & Sue 2008; Pietilä 2010; Korhonen 2013). It covers, among other things, inclusiveness and experiences of a sense of belonging in participating in social practices (Wenger 1998; Wenger-Trayner et al 2014). Cultural integration as a concept thus describes the contacts and social networks that an international degree student has both in higher education and beyond.

Integration experiences related to higher education in particular can be divided into two major areas, namely academic and social integration, which have been used

in numerous retention and drop-out related studies (Tinto 1975; 1997; Pascarella & Terenzini 2005). Academic integration involves issues connected to the academic teaching and learning environment, such as academic performance, personal development, enjoyment of the subject, and identification with academic norms and values (Deil-Amen 2011). In addition, the meaning and foundation of studies (already at the stage when applying to study in Finland) are associated with this. Social integration, on the other hand, includes one's social contacts and friendships and personal contacts with academics. Students engage better in their studies when they perceive intellectual and social congruence, or a normative fit between themselves and the values, social rules, and academic nature of the institution (Deil Amen 2011). Social and cultural integration may overlap social integration because social relationships and peer communities can act both within the university and beyond. Social relationships may also affect engagement in the labour market.

Career integration means, especially in this case, international students' conceptions about their expertise, future plans, possible employment and/or career in Finland (or elsewhere) after graduating (Cai 2012), the assessment of opportunities provided by the generalist degree, and reflections on and choices for the future (Korhonen 2013). Career integration reflects the international students' expectations of engagement in the Finnish labour market and their beliefs concerning how realistic an option it is for them to work in Finland.

Cultural encounters with students and teachers belonging to the majority population are important in the integration

experiences of international students. Therefore, Evanoff (2006) also adds the people of the dominant culture as a factor in cultural integration and adaptation. When immigrants adapt to the target culture, the people of the target culture also adapt themselves to the newcomers' presence. From this perspective, Pietilä (2010) outlines cultural integration as a dialogical communication; it is a development of intercultural sensitivity and a process of sociocultural learning. Thus, cultural integration becomes a two-way process between the dominant and minority cultures. From this perspective, the cultural integration of immigrants can be understood in terms of contact with the dominant population and society while maintaining the immigrant's own culture, as the merging two cultures, or as adopting a hybrid bi-cultural identity (see Snauwaert et al 2003.)

Intercultural encounters and adaptation experiences can be approached more widely from an 'in-between' perspective. Pratt (1992) uses the term 'contact zones' and Ogden and colleagues (2014) use the term 'meeting grounds' to refer the space where international students and host community members confront cultural and individual differences. Bhabha (2004; also Benson 2010) use the term "third space" when referring to the intercultural 'in-between' spaces where the possibilities of self and identity are explored. The space between cultures can offer positive opportunities for people of different cultural backgrounds to experience deeper integration that promotes new identity orientations, constructs new collaboration, and makes cultural and communal structures more transparent (Korhonen & Puukari 2013). However, the space between the cultures can produce negative

in-between experiences. The negotiation of incommensurable differences creates a tension for borderline existences (Bhabha 2004). The term 'in-between' in this context can be used for the international students' searching of their own agency in the encounters between two different cultural perspectives. My aim in this article is to examine more closely if being in the 'in between' position is creating a kind of 'opportunity trap' for international students in Finland. The opportunity trap (Brown 2006) as a concept refers to the decreasing value of the higher education degree in the labour market, which may be a consequence of educational expansion and other similar factors.

International comparative surveys of traditional graduate students show that many are ambivalent about their possible careers and future during the studies (Russo 2011). These results imply that doubts grow as students advance towards completing their degrees, and suggest that students experience many deficiencies in their career planning. However, there are some studies pointing out that international degree students might have more optimistic conceptions than domestic students about their expertise development and future employment possibilities (Harman 2003). Nevertheless, studies concerning Finnish working life and the employment of immigrants have pointed out the difficulties of gaining employment, especially in Finland. In spite of the development of official support structures, even highly educated immigrants may have difficulties in finding employment (see Forsander et al 2004; Wrede & Nordberg 2010). The level of immigrant unemployment in Finland is worryingly high.

Methodology

Research on international degree students has been carried out using both quantitative and qualitative approaches. Using a combined research design methodology (see Gorard & Taylor 2004; Bryman 2006), I seek to discover the general characteristics and trends of international degree students' integration experiences and career expectations, while also extending the review to the students' own personal experiences and meanings.

The quantitative dataset used in this case was obtained from the Finnish Social Science Data Archive (the International Students in Finnish Universities 2007 survey). The sample size included 952 respondents from different universities in Finland. It was originally a survey designed and assembled by the Finnish Studying and Education Research Foundation (Otus) in 2007. The target group of international students was sought from university student registers. The final sample size was 2,441 subjects, of whom 952 participated (the response rate was 39%). The respondents were studying in Finland between 1999 and 2007. The survey data itself is a representative sample of international degree students in Finland and its content is well suited for use in this context, since the objective of using the survey data was to find out how international degree students experience academic learning and integration into Finnish society and what plans they hold for the future.

The qualitative interview data was collected in 2012 to provide a deeper insight into the personal experiences of a selected sample of international degree students at two Finnish universities (the Universities of Turku and Tampere). The interviewees

» The interviewees were from Africa, Asia, the Middle East, and Europe, so they represent the mixture of incoming international students in Finland. »

(n=7) were doctoral students, Master's programme students, or international degree students in the final stages of their studies. They were recruited mainly by snowball sampling, where progress was made through the interviewer's or interviewees' personal contacts. The interviewed international degree students were from the fields of information sciences, educational sciences, and the social sciences. One of the interviewees was female and the rest were male. The aim was to reach interviewees coming from different continents and this succeeded very well. The interviewees were from Africa, Asia, the Middle East, and Europe, so they represent the mixture of incoming international students in Finland. The themes were sent to interviewees in advance and they could choose if they preferred to respond to interview questions in Finnish or English.

The research questions focused on the following three main issues:

1. How do international degree students experience being integrated into Finnish society, and what kinds of supportive social relationships do they have inside and outside the university? (survey, interviews)
2. How do they experience academic and social integration in academic education and teaching and learning communities? (survey, interviews)

3. How do they consider their future career and employment prospects in the Finnish labour market? (survey, interviews)

The survey results have been previously reported in Niemelä's (2008) publication. Nevertheless, the data was reanalysed for this purpose using the most common quantitative research methods, such as descriptive statistical distributions and parameters, as well as cross-tabulations, statistical tests, and logistic regression analysis (Argyrous 1997; Cohen, Manion & Morrison 2011). In particular, the logistic regression analysis results reveal interesting new connections in the data, such as what kind of factors are connected to not feeling socially and culturally excluded and the willingness to stay and work in Finland after graduation. Such results have not previously been reported from this data.

The analysis of the interview data followed the logic of both data-driven and directed content analysis (Miles & Huberman 1999). The analysis in this case started by inductively reading the data and finding emerging themes. However, when comparing and combining results with the survey findings, the analysis was done in the manner of directed content analysis. The chief aim was to identify the main themes in interviewees' speech that highlight different aspects of the integration experiences at university and beyond. In the first phase

Cultural integration	
+ - Contradictory adaptation experiences	
Academic integration	
+ Studying as intellectual growth	- Falling in-between
Social integration	
+ Supporting social peer relationships	- Limitations in social activity
Career integration	
+ Academic education as qualifier for a career	- Obstacles to career engagement
+ Many possibilities in work and careers	

— **FIGURE 2. Themes of the integration experiences combined with the predefined experience dimensions** —

of the analysis, significant expressions were identified from the interview speech and these were grouped together on the basis of similarities and differences. This data-driven thematisation resulted in eight specific themes. Some of the themes represented positive experiences, some negative experiences, and one theme described contradictory experiences. The third phase of analysis was theory-driven and the previous themes were combined into four predefined experience dimensions (cultural, academic, social, career) either as positive or negative experiences (see Figure 2).

Results

Cultural and social integration beyond university

A key concern for cultural and social integration may be social discrimination or

exclusion due to immigrant background (Anderson et al 2009). In the quantitative survey, there was a specific question asking if the respondents felt excluded from university environments because they were foreigners. On the basis of the answers to this question, a sense of belonging is common for most international students, because nearly three out of four respondents (73.5%) reported that they did not feel excluded. Nevertheless, this means that about one in four may have experienced discrimination or exclusion. This is a relatively high proportion of respondents and the number should be lower.

With the help of logistic regression, an examination was done about the factors that possibly serve as the best and significant predictors for the feeling that one is not excluded (see Table 1). The effect of the individual explanatory variable appears in coefficient B in Table 1. The sign (plus or

Does not feel excluded for being a foreigner	B	Standard Error (S.E.)	Sig.	Exp. (B)
EU/EEA country	1.019	.441	.021	2.772
Other European country	1.589	.519	.002	4.897
Asia	1.043	.462	.024	2.837
Years lived in Finland	-.137	.040	.001	.872
Enough social contacts with other people: Yes	1.053	.206	.000	2.867
Overall Percentage: 76.2				

TABLE 1. Logistic regression of factors related to feelings of not being excluded from Finnish society.

minus) gives the reference to which direction the explanatory factor affects. The risk level [Exp(B)] in the final column of Table 1 represents how probable the individual factor predicts the respondent will belong to the 'not feeling excluded' group. The best predictors proved to be European or Asian background and having enough social contacts. Hence, these factors are more likely than other factors to predict the development of feelings of inclusion among international students as a part of their cultural integration. Correspondingly, the coefficient of the variable 'years lived in Finland' in the model is negative (Table 1), which indicates that a longer duration of stay in Finland may even increase the share of those respondents who feel excluded, although the addition of the share is very small on the basis of the coefficient. The overall classification percentage of the logistic model is 76.2. This implies a 76% chance that the respondent will belong to the group students who do not feel

excluded. However, the explanation rate is fairly low, between 8.4-12.3 percent; thus, the model is only indicative of the development of the feeling of not being excluded. The explanation rate tells how well the model found predicts the phenomenon.

Learning the domestic language also is considered one essential part of the cultural and social integration of immigrants, especially in non-English speaking countries (Pietilä 2010). The international degree students' Finnish language skills may be very minor when beginning their studies (Niemelä 2008), which makes their integration more difficult in all integration areas (academic, social, cultural, career). When beginning their studies in Finland, half of the respondents (56%) did not know Finnish at all, and every fourth respondent's language skill was at the beginner or lower intermediate level. Fortunately, the situation had improved by the time of the questionnaire, because for two out of five respondents,

their Finnish skills were at least at the intermediate level, and only 42 respondents (4%) reported that they still did not know any Finnish at all.

The interview data highlighted *the contradictory adaptation experiences* theme in the cultural integration context. This theme related to negative experiences of alienation, disappointment and conflicts, as well as individuality and the burden of responsibility in a foreign culture. Finnish culture was perhaps experienced as individualistic and emphasising autonomy, which at first caused value conflicts and issues regarding behaviour and practices. The experiences of strangeness seemed to be particularly prevalent when the student did not receive any response in human encounters despite his/her own efforts, or did not feel he/she belonged to any community.

When you are in the bus, people sit alone, one, one, one, one. They do not sit together. Do not talk to each other. I see this as one point of individualistic society. (H1)

This reflects the attitudes and values of the society. That is why students here should be so much independent, individualised. Should be more together, interact with other groups. (H3)

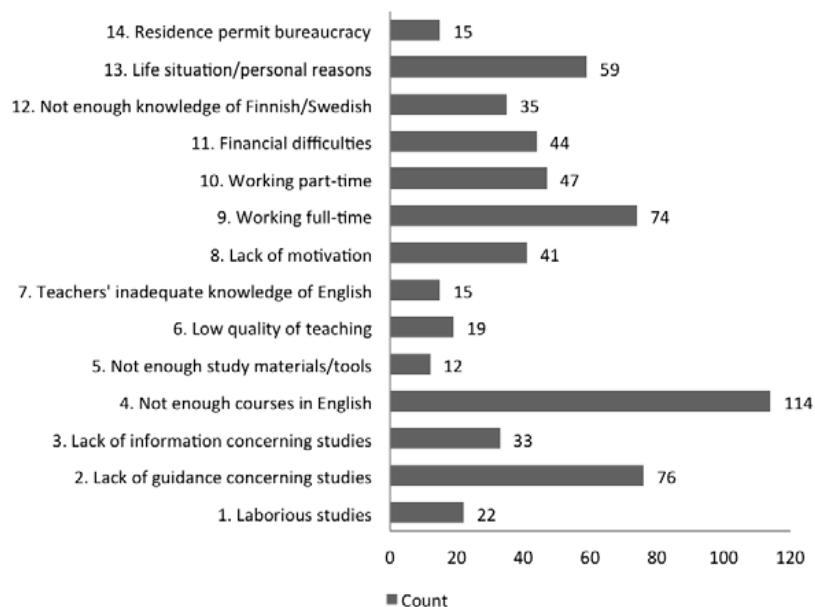
In addition, the positive aspects in the adaptation experiences became forth when the students felt their own cultural background was welcomed or their experiences were socially strengthening. By means of social support and encouragement – as well as by means of a positive reception within the mainstream culture – international students' experienced support in

studies and in life, and gained self-confidence in learning and everyday life events. Support could be provided by contacts with Finnish fellow students who help with difficult matters.

Academic and social integration in higher education studies

The survey respondents were asked for their view on the current level of Finnish education. The estimations given by the respondents were very positive: nearly nine out of ten considered the level of the Finnish education to be at least fairly good and just under a third considered it to be extremely good. In addition to general satisfaction and attitudes towards education, academic integration affects the performance and experiences of the international student's studies (see Trice & Yoo 2007; Rienties et al 2012). Seven out of ten respondents estimated that they were satisfied with the progress of their studies. This is a significantly better result than the domestic Finnish university students' general satisfaction with the progress of their studies on average (see EuroStudent III-IV).

Even though the clear majority of the respondents expressed satisfaction with the progress of studies, half of them noted that the studies had not proceeded in the way planned for at least one reason. When the reasons mentioned are looked at in more detail (Figure 3), the most commonly mentioned reason is "not enough courses available in English" (114 mentions). The second most mentioned reason is "lack of guidance concerning studies" (76 mentions), which again is related to academic education.



— FIGURE 3. Reasons mentioned for studies not progressing as planned —
(mentioned at least ten times or more).

In the interviews, both positive and negative integration experiences were recalled. In connection to academic integration, the interviews brought up the positive theme of *studying as intellectual growth*: the interviewees described the meaning of education as a symbolic value to their life and academic education as such capital that makes it possible to influence matters and people. The dimensions of growth and development as a human being were seen in the interviewees' opinion alongside the relevance of education and obtaining a degree.

The falling in-between theme was highlighted as a negative experience related to the academic integration: the students described studying as moving between

different marginal spaces in the academic community. In this case, the students did not experience engagement with anything. In these negative experiences, the distance of the scientific community from the student's world and the academic actors' clearly defined roles, and separation were emphasised.

You try to accommodate here but you find yourself alone. (...) Just feel that you are somewhere trying to belong, between different areas and groups. Now I just sit at home alone and try to work and study. (H1)

I think I am kind of like in-between these divisions, in this academic community. (H3)

» The interviews also highlighted the fact that among international students, social interaction is easily restricted only to the international students' joint events and meetings. »

The relations of the student to fellow students and staff form the central area of social integration in the university environment. In the interviews, the centrality of the *social agency* theme was emphasized as an affirmative and positive feature. In this connection, the international students described their own socially active role in the student community and emphasised the importance of social communication for success in their studies. In the positive social integration experiences, a desire to engage with other students – to network and interact – emerged.

I have friends, international students. (...) We meet in seminar groups and I get support from them. We also meet in different fields and occasions. (H2)

The interviews also highlighted the fact that among international students, social interaction is easily restricted only to the international students' joint events and meetings. This is encompassed by the *limitations in social activity* theme. Seeking peers of one's own nationality was not especially common. Instead, social activity was considered the most central matter for studying, irrespective of nationality. However, nearly all the social contacts have been restricted to social relations with other international students.

In some earlier studies, more negative social integration experiences seem to be connected more typically to large departments, traditional mass lectures, and complete degree programmes in Finland. Instead, the atmosphere inside the departments with smaller student numbers and self-contained Master's programmes are usually regarded as good. (Niemelä 2008) Contacts with Finns are sought more generally because they are considered important, for example, in strengthening integration in Finnish society and gaining skills in the Finnish language (Taajamo 2005; Niemelä 2008).

Integration into a career, and future career expectations

In the International Students in Finnish Universities survey, respondents were asked about their future plans to stay and work in Finland after graduation. The majority of the respondents were willing to stay in Finland, responding either that they would definitely stay or at least stay under certain conditions (65%). Approximately one in five respondents was definitely sure of staying in Finland after graduation. Correspondingly, approximately one in six (16%) was sure about leaving Finland. The future was still open for approximately one in five.

Plans after graduating: Stay in Finland	B	Standard Error (S.E.)	Sig.	Exp. (B)
I see myself as a member of Finnish society	.310	.084	.000	1.364
Importance of the following factors for the respondent's decision to take a degree in Finland: Plans to work in Finland	.696	.153	.000	2.006
Importance in the choice of university: Employment possibilities in Finland after studies	.698	.147	.000	2.009
Respondent's satisfaction with: Quality of teaching	-.332	.144	.021	.717
Respondent's satisfaction with: Course contents	.457	.153	.003	1.580
Overall Percentage 74.3 %				

————— **TABLE 2.** The factors predicting willingness to stay in Finland after graduating. —————

Work is seen a central factor that integrates immigrants into the host society, and thus the employment of international graduates is an essential question from the perspective of career integration. With the help of logistic regression, an analysis was further made about the factors that possibly serve as the best and significant predictors for the respondents' willingness to stay in Finland after graduation. The risk level [Exp (B)] represents how probable the individual factor predicts the respondent will belong to the 'stay in Finland' group (see Table 3). The best predictors for the willingness to stay in Finland (risk level greater than 2) proved to be intentions to work in Finland and/or the employment

possibilities in Finland as already estimated when choosing the university. These factors are more likely to predict the willingness of the respondent to stay in Finland after graduation. Similarly, estimates related to academic teaching are contradictory in the model (Table 2), although satisfaction with the course content seems to predict that the respondent is more likely the stay in Finland than satisfaction with the quality of teaching. The overall classification percentage of the logistic model is 74.3%, which describes the probability of a respondent belonging to the 'stay in Finland' group. The explanation rate is between 20.0–27.5%, thus the model is considered mainly indicative in this case too.

Even though highly-educated immigrants are usually in the best position in the labour market among all immigrants, international students' difficulties in gaining employment in Finland has repeatedly been emphasised in earlier studies (Ally 2002; Kinnunen 2003; Koivisto & Juusola 2008). The interviews highlighted both positive and negative themes concerning career integration and future career expectations. Thus, career expectations seem to be contradictory. The theme *academic education as qualifier for a career* was one of the positives connected to integration into a career. Even though the interviewees represented generalist fields, they emphasised that their studies had a clear focus on a career path, and acquiring formal competence influenced degree completion. Another positive in the interviews was the *many possibilities in work and careers* theme. The students had not clearly profiled any profession but rather had an open attitude to their future career. In this theme, it was emphasised that generalist degrees do not prepare students for a certain profession, but such degrees can open up opportunities for a wide variety of careers.

I am really quite open about work because you never know. (...) It is not always something you have thought of yourself, it could just come some other way, even if you haven't thought about it. (H7)

As a negative theme in connection with career integration, the theme of *obstacles in career engagement* was highlighted: language barriers and a lack of social networks were emphasised as obstacles. Furthermore, the pressure was caused in the interviewees' mind by the formal

proficiency requirements of the Finnish labour market. This was considered very demanding by the international students. The students may have regarded their own earlier education as inadequate according to the high Finnish proficiency requirements.

That paper is emphasized here really much. Also in the work there are competent people but if you are not valid formally, so it does not mean anything at all here in the society. (H4)

The international degree students' conceptions of career integration are uniform from the points of view of both the survey findings and the interview results.

Conclusions

The results of this study show that if one wants to understand international degree students' integration experiences more comprehensively, attention must be paid to all aspects of integration: namely cultural, social, academic, and career integration. The position of international students seems to lie between cultures (between the old and new or between us and others). Research on the integration and adaptation of international students should widen its focus to the underlying mechanisms that may lead to weak integration and negative experiences in this in-between position (see Rienties et al 2011). Academic integration cannot be entirely understood if, at the same time, the significance of cultural and social integration and the adaptation stages related to cultural integration are not identified (see Sue & Sue 2008). The in-between position in studies easily leads to marginalisation in the competitive

arenas of careers and employment after graduation, and these arenas represent one of the biggest challenges facing international degree students when they form their plans and expectations for the future.

The mixed method data shows that in the different areas of the international students' integration experiences there were either strengthening or weakening factors. According to the findings, the factors strengthening integration with other areas of integration can help overcome a more difficult situation in one particular area of integration. In particular, the impact of the higher education context should be highlighted. For example, Sakurai (2014) found that international students in Finland may not take advantage of peer support and collaborative learning opportunities in the best possible manner. The academic and social integration challenges found – like the themes of *falling in-between* and *limitations in social activity* – already require attention during higher education. The in-between position in career integration does not result solely from the fairly closed labour market. According to the students' views, the language barriers and lack of social networks significantly impede successful employment in Finland. Hence, if other areas of international students' integration were improved, such as cultural, social, and academic integration in higher education and beyond, it would improve the international students' opportunities to find employment in the Finnish labour market.

The expansion of international programmes and getting stuck in the 'in-between' position seem to produce a growing opportunity trap for international degree students. Research literature from different countries shows that the actions of higher

education institutions can improve cultural diversity and the position of minority groups already during studies (Harper & Quaye 2009; Severiens & Wolf 2009; Cai 2012). The integration of international students as a whole could be improved by creating sustainable structures for understanding diversity, the development of multicultural competencies of higher education staff, developing collaboration between the education institutes and the world of work in international study programs, and increasing international students' participation and opportunities have an influence. It is important to provide opportunities for international students to create contacts with domestic students, local people, and representatives of the world of work. It would also be beneficial to organise events where international students can share their experiences of their own country and culture. Expanding students' social networks within the university and beyond should be an essential part of international students' counselling to support meaningful integration experiences (Arthur 2013). The benefits for the students would be improved performance in studies, the development of intellectuality and expertise, and possibly better integration into post-degree careers and the labour market of the destination country.

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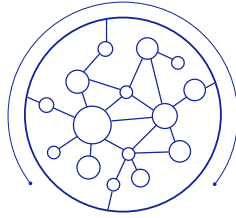
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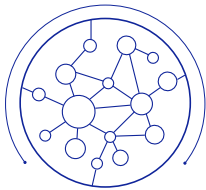
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Nordic or planetary responsibility
in Finnish popular adult
education research?

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Adult education
in an unsustainable era





BY

Jenni Pätäri,
Anja Heikkinen
& Sini Teräsahde

NORDIC OR PLANETARY RESPONSIBILITY IN FINNISH POPULAR ADULT EDUCATION RESEARCH?

Responsibility only to the markets?

Currently, both the practice and research of Nordic popular adult education seem to be conditioned by competition on their own markets. The popular adult education organizations in Finland have developed perhaps even more than in other Nordic countries into sub-contractors of the education – or lifelong learning and national innovation – system that is controlled and resourced within the national and regional framework, called adult education. Universities and researchers, on the other hand, are fighting on the transnational publishing and financial markets. It seems that both the autonomic research and the autonomic popular adult education and the organizations of citizens, are in danger of turning into a tool for promoting national business economic and innovation activities. (Ahonen et al 2013, cf. Berman 2012.) Do the interests of either party support research that critically analyses the conditions, practices and experiences of popular adult education reality, or do they in fact promote the erosion of its potential to their critical de- and reconstruction?

If we take seriously the societal responsibility of the academy and popular adult education, there might be no other way to go forward than to make different confrontations and dichotomies visible. Pursuing this would make it possible to understand popular adult education as a continuum of practice, research and policy instead of seeing it as antagonistic action fields. If researchers, for example, would view the traditional idealistic self-definitions of popular adult education critically, they might be able to actualize the contents of its basic categories with regard to people's contemporary lives and challenges, such as the globalization and localization of economy, supranationalization of politics and administration and the growing number of ecological, economic and social crisis.

In this article we discuss, how responsibility has been conceived in the development of popular adult education research tradition in Finland. It is mainly based on empirical findings from two doctoral researches. The study of Sini Teräsahde focuses on conceptions about the nature and function of adult education research among different actor groups. Jenni Pätäri is studying how the popular adult education research has actually developed during its academic history. For contextualization we use findings from the project Fields and Layers of Finnish Adult Education and other relevant research literature. We show, how different conceptions as well as actual research in popular adult education are primarily responding to national political and societal change while concerns about wellbeing of humankind or the planet itself remain absent.

We challenge the inward-looking self-conceptions of the Nordic popular adult ed-

ucation tradition – exemplified by Finland –, while acknowledging the controversy of the imagined homogeneity of the Nordic countries and the uniqueness of each country. Instead, we draw attention to outward-looking and socially responsible research and practice, which take into account the conditions for survival of humankind and of the planet. We assume that neither improvement of the current situation, nor democracy and moral agency including both human and non-human perspectives, can be achieved without finding new ways to collaborate between researchers, practitioners and policy-makers in popular adult education.

The territory of Nordic popular adult education research

In the current European and supranational discourse researchers, practitioners and policy-makers from Nordic countries all tend to share the vocabulary of non-formal or non-vocational adult education instead of popular adult education. Such negative definitions only pay attention to the lack of occupational or degree-orientation, typical for studies, which adults undertake 'only' as a hobby or for personal development. This vocabulary ignores and loses the traditional meanings of Nordic popular adult education, which are indicated in indigenous expressions such as *folkbildning* / *folkeoplysning* / *vapaa sivistystyö*, which would translate as people's edification / people's enlightenment / free edification work.

Finnish popular adult education is a good example for reflecting on modification of Nordic tradition, since it has exclusively adopted the concepts of liberal and

non-formal adult education, while the attachment to traditional concepts in other Nordic countries still reminds of its function in promotion of public enlightenment and civil society activities (Korsgaard 1997; Gustavsson 1991; Salo 2002). The different use of concepts indicates the more institution-based self-understanding of Finnish popular adult education, where the connections to various societal – economic, political, religious, cultural – movements have remained weakly recognized or unrecognized.

When speculating reasons for the discursive differences, a candidate is the rivalry between continental European and Anglo-Saxon influences in Nordic popular adult education research, which may have been most striking in Finland. The latter has long been dominant, promoting understanding of adult education as a field of study, and applying theories and methods from certain basic sciences, mainly from (learning) psychology and sociology. However, the rhetoric of continental tradition has remained crucial for legitimizing the autonomy and distinctiveness of adult education as practice and theory. Because of linguistic but also of geopolitical reasons, it has become typical for Finnish universities and academics to comply eagerly with mainstream trends in educational research. (Heikkinen 2014a.) Yet, the debates on connections and relations between research, practice and politics are not new. In Finland, they have been crucial since the beginning of academization of popular adult education in the 1920s. (Heikkinen & Teräsahde 2011.) We can ask, whether the pressure from present rhetoric of economic growth and competitiveness are really so different from those of national independence and cohesion about a hundred years

ago? Have peoples' lived realities, the concrete 'edification work' and its contents and meanings really interested more the practitioners, politicians and researchers of popular adult education in those days? Do we know, what the responsibility for popular adult education has meant and who have taken it and why, in the practice of popular education?

Both Anglo-Saxon and continental European traditions clearly build on human and social-centred assumptions about the meaning and aims of popular adult education (Heikkinen 2014b). Through the increasing pedagogization of human societies and practices, education sciences have become a massive force for adoption and reproduction of human-centred thinking, behaviour and morals. On the one hand, the human-centred educational philosophy and history have functioned successfully in legitimizing educational research, which ignores the findings from natural sciences about the non-human aspects of human culture, and promotes ontologically and ethically untenable relation to natural sciences. On the one hand, cognitive and neurosciences are recklessly exploited to legitimize policy-conformist research and recommendations. Concerning Nordic popular adult education research, we can ask, whether the esoteric philosophical and historical discourse allows the circulation of traditional texts and ideas without contextualization to 'factual' transformation of the planet and the conditions of life of its inhabitants. Might the revision of concepts such as *folkelig / kansainen*, which were fundamental in the early phases of Nordic popular adult education remind of the embeddedness of edification work in the material life and living conditions of people? (Korsgaard 1997; cf. Narotzky 1997; Graness 2012.)

The differences in Nordic conceptions of popular adult education are also visible in institutionalization of practices and in different relations between research, practice and policies. In Finland the farmers' and peasants' edification and the workers' edification movements contributed to rather equal distribution of institutions into 1) *folk high schools*, 2) *workers' and people's institutes* ('adult education centres' of today), and 3) *study associations* of both movements, later of any civil society organization or a party. Although people's and public *libraries* were an essential part of popular adult education movements and institutions, in the context of rationalization of educational system they were during the 1960s transferred into the realm of 'cultural policy'. Similarly, for administrative reasons, the 4) *sports institutes* were currently included into institutions of popular adult education, while 5) *summer universities* – established and maintained by municipalities – are still part of this field despite administrative pressure to integrate them into the mainstream university system.

The Finnish discipline of adult education referred mainly to popular adult education until the 1960s. The degree studies started already in the 1930s in the School of Social Sciences (originally established as a Folk High School/Civic College in 1925). The first Finnish and Nordic professorship in popular adult education was established in 1946, and the first doctoral thesis in popular adult education originates from 1955. It took till the 1960s with the next dissertation. In 1960 the School of Social Sciences relocated in Tampere and in 1966 changed its name into University of Tampere. During the same year the discipline was renamed as adult education, partly due to the expansion of vocational adult education. During the 1980s adult education started to expand to other Finnish universities. Parallel to the transformation of adult education practice and policies, also the discipline started increasingly to focus on work-related and higher education. (Tuomisto 2016.)

Responsibility in conceptions

In her doctoral study Sini Teräsahde has come across many conflicting conceptions and discourses about relations between research, practice and politics. The research data of the study consists of interviews, questionnaires and discussion sessions with different actors in Finnish adult education.¹³ The findings discussed in this context build on the analysis of key person interviews and discussion sessions. The analysis about actors' conceptions towards adult education research is composed of three categories: 1) the indicated functions of research 2) needs and expectations towards research and 3) attitudes towards research. Actors are grouped

13 For more detailed description of the project behind thesis research, see Heikkinen, A., Teräsahde, S. 2011.

into researchers, policymakers, and practitioners; and practitioners are regrouped into popular and vocational adult education.

Among practitioners of popular adult education, even 75 per cent of the functions that informant expressed research to have relate, one way or another, to the idea of influencing the policymaking. Also the rest of the functions interviewees mentioned relate to the responsibility to serve different stakeholders. 'Expectations' towards research are high among the practitioners as they, for example, emphasize that researchers should not only produce neutral evidence for policymakers about the societal impact of popular adult education and the benefits of studying in popular adult education institutes, but should even take their side and defend the field against the cuts in the public funding. The interviewees expressed that more than anything they need evaluative research about the impacts and benefits of popular adult education to be used in lobbying. Pedagogical research comes up as a minor need to apply to their adult education practices. They identify many research themes and topics that researchers should grasp. Terms like 'impact' and 'quality' are frequently expressed. The discourse of research needs is strong in this actor group, because they see that the overall increase in the volume of research would increase the political appreciation of the field as well. Therefore, they are also willing to improve the collaboration between research and practice, at least if resources for joint research (Vähämäki 2010) are ensured first.

The underlying 'attitudes' towards research seem to affect practitioners' enthusiasm for wider use of research to support,

develop and question their work and for research collaboration. Research is valued because of academic virtues of science, such as rigor, objectivity and strong argumentation. It is even appreciated if it defends the field. What reduces the interest towards research is the experienced distance between research and practice and the anticipated lack of resources to invest in research activities. All in all the conceptions towards and the value of adult education research seem rather instrumental. The research is considered to be responsible for securing the prerequisites of the operations of the practice. Finland's economic slowdown and the vulnerability of popular adult education as a recipient of funding from tax revenue may explain these expressions. Most popular adult education organizations have to spend all their energy to secure their resources by showing up the efficiency, quality and benefits of their operations and they wish support from the research that has traditionally been close to the field of practice in popular adult education. Consequently, practitioners often get disappointed at research that is usually focused on something else.

The conceptions of actors in popular adult education differ clearly from those in vocational adult education, where the primary 'function' of research is defined as production and provision of neutral knowledge for policymakers to support evidence-based decision-making. Of special interest are the impacts of European policies on national level and analyses of consequences from societal change on adult education and working life. The interviewees expressed only few 'expectations' for research, related to the implementation of educational policies into practice. They don't seem to have any actual needs for research, but

» What reduces the interest towards research is the experienced distance between research and practice and the anticipated lack of resources to invest in research activities. »

they recommend researchers to market their ideas and expertise, the supply, in case practitioners would find a demand for it. The ‘attitudes’ towards research are much more negative in vocational adult education: practitioners consider worlds of research and practice to be separate, attitudinal blocks to prevent cooperation and the autonomous academy to disregard their expectations. The reluctance may relate to historical battles between academic and vocational education.

Unlike practitioners, policy-makers don’t consider the main function of research to be the production and provision of knowledge for evidence-based decision-making, although they might be interested in efficient information about main research outcomes. Instead, they mentioned such ‘functions’ as providing knowledge to different actors for developing policies and practices to support lifelong learning. On ‘attitudinal’ level they don’t prioritize adult education research compared to other research fields. Also they complained about researchers’ lack of practical knowledge, which may prevent them to ask for developmental projects from researchers in adult education.

The conceptions of adult education research among most actor groups seem rather narrow. There are hardly signs about

prospects other than instrumental, such as global and local democracy, equality and justice, let alone the recognition of the absolute value of research that could be compared to the incontestable value of adult education itself, ‘learning for its own sake’ or for the sake of prerequisites of the human civilization.

Responsibility in research

Responsible conduct of research applies to all (academic) researchers but how does the research of popular adult education reflect its responsibility? Although Finnish research on popular adult education has been scarce compared to other fields of adult education, the amount is much bigger if theses in other disciplines are taken into account. Jenni Pätäri’s research data (years 1933–2015, at the moment 422 theses) covers about 20 academic disciplines (adult education 14%). Unlike the practitioners often tend to assume (see previous section), thesis research on popular adult education is actually done.

The following two data samples (Figures 1–4, Table 1) illustrate how the Finnish popular adult education thesis research connects with the question of societal responsibility in different historical periods. The older sample is from 1940–1959

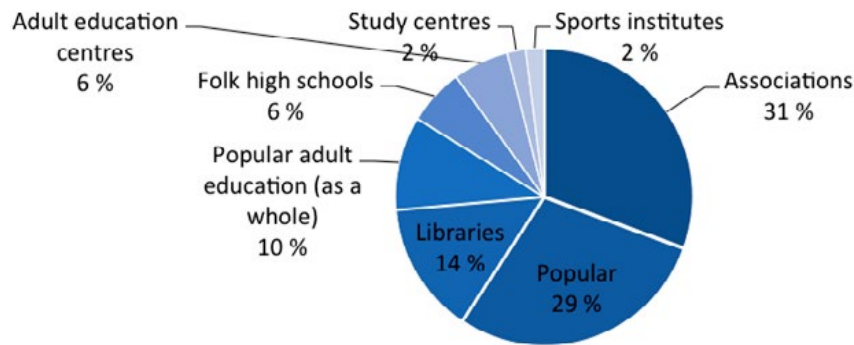


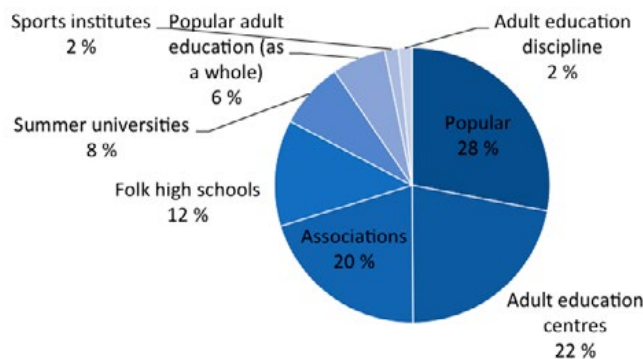
FIGURE 1. Institutional orientation of Finnish popular adult education thesis research, 1940–50s (%), n = 49.

and consists of 48 MA theses and one dissertation (49/180, 27%). It covers six disciplines including adult education. The newer sample 2000–2014 consists of 50 MA theses and 14 dissertations (64/277, 23%) from general and adult education disciplines. Both samples were selected randomly, although weighting educational sciences. The main themes, based on titles and keywords, provide an overview of thesis research.¹⁴

Figures 1–2 summarize the institutional orientation of the popular adult education research in 1940s–50s and in beginning of the 21st century based on a review of titles and keywords of the selected 113 theses. In both samples, there were eight categories identified but they appeared variably. Seven categories were related to the providers of popular adult education. Other categories were related to adult education discipline, to popular adult education as a whole and to popular or general topics – as in *Hobbies and leisure activities of young factory workers* (1949) and *Learning experiences of the elderly* (2012).

All five main providers of contemporary Finnish popular adult education are represented in the samples but in variation. In the older sample association oriented theses were the most frequent (31%), theses on libraries coming next (7%) and folk high schools and adult education centres coming third (3% + 3%). In the newer sample research on adult education centres is the most frequent (22%), asso-

¹⁴ Study centres are categorized according to the reference of a thesis. Topics related to university of Third Age are under the category of summer universities, which explains partly the peak in the newer sample. Workers' and people's institutes are categorized under adult education centres.



— FIGURE 2. Institutional orientation of Finnish popular adult education thesis research, early 2000s (% , n = 64). —

ciations coming second (20%) and folk high schools the third (12%). The proportion of adult education centres has increased the most. Summer universities come second popping up in the newer sample with 8 per cent. The proportion of libraries has decreased the most, which might partly be explained by the administrative transfer of libraries into cultural affairs. The decrease of association oriented research has also been remarkable.

The proportion of provider-oriented research takes the vast majority of the theses both in the older (61%) and in the newer (64%) sample. The samples indicate that popular adult education research commonly responds to the developmental needs of a certain organization or organization type. However, conclusions that are more substantial require analyses of the main themes of thesis research. The table 1 provides examples of theses in different thematic classes.¹⁵

The Figures 3–4 summarize the main themes of thesis research and how they are divided in the samples based on title and keywords analysis. In the older sample there were 14 and in the newer 17 themes identified. The total number of theses (n = 49 + 64) and themes (n = 78 + 102) do not match, because a thesis can be assigned to one or more themes. For example, thesis like *Santeri Alkio's principles of youth education* (1954) is assigned to themes *Philosophical, theoretical and ideological topics*, *Educational mission*, and *Addressing a certain target group*.

¹⁵ Here a thesis is put in one class, although in the analysis it can be assigned to several classes.

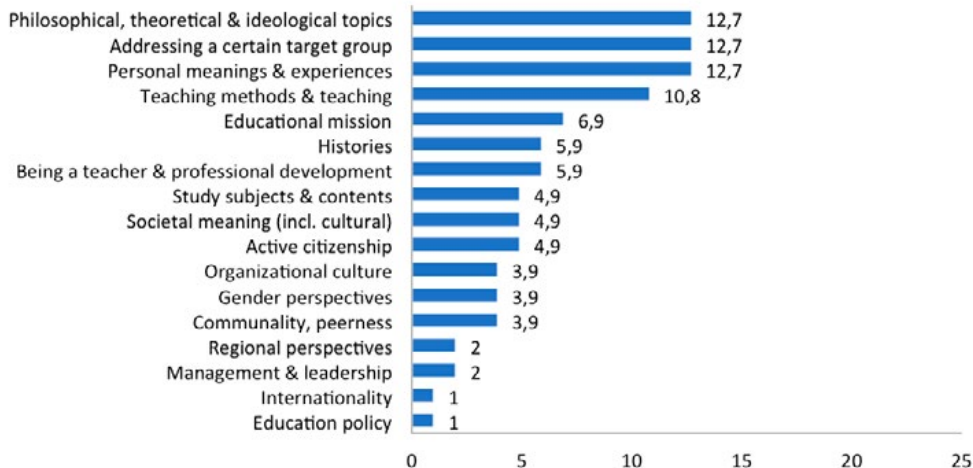
TABLE 1. Examples of theses (translations in English: JP).

Theme	Thesis
Hobbies and leisure activities	A research on educative hobbies and leisure activities in the Savio factory colony (Erich von Denffer 1952, Helsinki: School of Social Sciences. Sociology and social psychology).
Addressing a certain target group	Sports and physical activities as an international language. Immigrants' relationship with physical education and its impact on acculturation. (Rachel Lehtosaari 2010. University of Turku, general education).
Societal meaning	The societal mission of folk high school (Kauko Honkala 1957. Helsinki: School of Social Sciences, societal studies).
Internationality	1. From Nordic roots towards global action? Cultural practices and their internationality in Finnish folk high schools at the beginning of the 21st century (Helena Koskinen 2003, University of Tampere, adult education. Dissertation).
	2. Conditions of countryside libraries in Germany (Anja Seppä 1955. Helsinki: School of Social Sciences, library studies).
Gender perspectives	1. Studying in more ways than one. Aged women at the University of the Third Age in Finland (Hanna Ojala 2011, University of Tampere, adult education. Dissertation).
	2. Finnish literature concerning women's gymnastics (Anneli Vakkari 1948. Helsinki: School of Social Sciences, library studies).
Literature and print media	The relationship between libraries and censorship (Irmeli Ekelund 1958. Helsinki: School of Social Sciences, library studies).
Regional perspectives	Migrants' adaptation to new circumstances and their educative hobbies and leisure activities in the Loimaa region. (Laila Rauta 1949. Helsinki: School of Social Sciences, societal studies).
Education policy	Municipalities' popular adult education and state aid system (Pentti Karppinen 1957. Helsinki: School of Social Sciences, municipal studies).
Active citizenship	Can you change the world by thumbs upping? Social media in civic activity – a place for learning in civic associations (Soile Honkala & Katja Nissinen 2013. University of Tampere, general education).
Communality, peerness	"It really shows that we are alike and like belong to the same group." Peernx--ess in the ICT studies of the elderly (Milla Saajanaho 2008, University of Jyväskylä, adult education).

FIGURE 3. Main themes in Finnish popular adult education thesis research, 1940–50s (% of themes = 78).



FIGURE 4. Main themes in Finnish popular adult education thesis research, early 2000s (% of themes = 102).



In the older sample the most frequent theme is *Philosophical, theoretical and ideological topics* (19.2%), followed by *Educational mission* (15.4%). In the newer sample variation is larger: the most frequent themes comprise *Philosophical, theoretical and ideological topics*, *Addressing a certain target group* and *Personal meanings*

and experiences (all 12.7%). Both theoretical and practical oriented topics are well presented in both samples, but more pragmatic themes have slightly increased (*Addressing a certain target group* + *Teaching methods & teaching* + *Being a teacher & professional development* + *Study subjects & contents* + *Literature & print media*

+ *Organizational culture + Management & leadership*, and also *Gender perspectives*). Their share in the older sample is 40.9 per cent and in the newer 44.1 per cent.

What is striking in the newer sample is the surge of the theme *Personal meanings and experiences* with the share of 12.7 per cent. It consists of topics considering the meanings of studies and studying different subjects in adult education centres or the meanings of folk high school studies for students. It is also noticeable that topics considering popular adult education in relation to *Hobbies and leisure activities* – and their educativeness – are missing from the newer sample, although popular adult education has been criticized for becoming an entertaining leisure activity and losing its critical, educative mission (e.g., Manninen 2010). Also the theme *Study subjects & contents* has decreased from 10.3 per cent to 4.9 per cent.

In the light of the samples, the thematic orientation of research seems to follow its institutional orientation: the majority responds to the needs of popular adult education organizations and people involved (esp. students and teachers). The main orientation seems to have transferred from contents towards people. It also appears to respond to the needs of adult education policy and political agendas, since the *target group theme* focuses often on special groups like elderly people or immigrants.

The growing tendency of thesis research to serve popular adult education organizations is striking in the light of findings of Teräsahde (see above), where respondents repeatedly argue that research and practice have diverged. In the light of these samples it seems that they have in

fact converged and come closer to each other. Reasons behind this discrepancy might be the conflicting expectations, motivations and conceptions of research among various stakeholders and the way in which they see the quality and relevance of research. In conclusion, we can ask, if researchers' practical orientation is stronger than practitioners' research orientation? It seems that the responsibility, or the 'response ability', of the majority of the theses of this field seems rather to look inward than outward to the wider context of society and environment, which also the absence of the war in the older sample (comes up in two of the theses, 4%) rather strikingly indicates. However, it can also be interpreted as a manifestation of the consensus seeking culture of the Finnish popular adult education research.

The responsibility of politics

The actors both in practice and in research of popular adult education seem to expect from each other justification for their existence. However, in reality, the lobbyists of popular adult education practice do not seem to need research-based critique about their practice more than the players of adult education research in publishing industry wish to go deeper into the dull practices. If neither of these camps have power to influence each other's futures, maybe the power hides in the cabinets of policy makers. It may be that the paradoxical position of popular adult education builds on its origin, which was firmly grounded on tripartite alliance between academy, practice and politics.

» It also seems that the personal alliances between practice, research and policy-making in popular adult education have vanished. »

Since the early 20th century, the existence of the field has been justified not on the development of its disciplinary foundation, but on the scientific nature of studies, on the width and beneficial effects of participation and on the circulation of practitioners and policymakers through university (Heikkinen 2012). The dominant interpretation of popular adult education was introduced in the aftermath of the civil war, when its leading figures started to emphasize free edification – Bildung – as conducive to peaceful societal development (Aaltonen & Tuomisto 1991). This also motivated the establishment of the Civic College in 1925 (later University of Tampere), the birth-place of popular adult education as an academic discipline. The first decades of the Finnish independence since 1917 were fragile, especially because of World War II (1939–1945). The reconstruction period, with the treaty of friendship, cooperation and assistance between Finland and the Soviet Union, required societal and political consensus and steady economic growth. The prolonged effort to solve social problems through small farming was abandoned during the 1960s and Finland started to develop into an industrialized and urbanized welfare state. Following the policies of equality of opportunity, education system was expanding and popular adult education as well as vocational

and higher education institutions were founded across the country to promote societal reform. In the mainstream politics of scientific-technological societal progress, planetary concerns gained minor attention in adult education practice and research, which – despite or because of intensified contacts to socialist and developing countries – promoted continuous identification with the Nordic popular adult education. (Kantasalmi & Nest 2014).

Nowadays the joint mission of policy-makers, practitioners and researchers seems to be the training of professionals of adult learning, where scientific expertise on adult education is just one among hundreds of other competences (Buiskool 2009). It also seems that the personal alliances between practice, research and policy-making in popular adult education have vanished. Compared to earlier phases, the major challenge for developing research and practice in popular adult education may be the rejection of the idea of edification amongst the policymakers and elites in general. The struggle between elites about the representation for the people and enlightenment has become replaced by the satisfaction of the demands posed by the quarterly financial demands of global markets. Does popular adult education have any other function any more than func-

tioning as a sub-contractor for the rest of the education system and as a promoter of wellbeing through entertaining services?

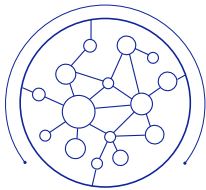
As long as violence has not substituted democracy (power of the people), the elites are in need of recognition by their subordinates in Finland, as in other Nordic countries. Therefore, popular adult education as edification of the people might function as the promoter of scrutiny and control of the nature and level of edification of their leaders and elites in different sectors of social life. However, while the planetary environmental, economic and social crises are expanding and sharpening, the conceptual and action history in popular adult education may require fundamental self-criticism. In the core of such enterprise should be the critique of conceptions on planetary relations between humans, as well as those between humans and non-humans, in the Nordic popular education policy, practice and research. It would be also important to identify any silenced or ignored traditions, which may have suggested alternatives pathways for politics, practice and research.

From the planetary perspective of the survival and wellbeing of the whole human and non-human sphere, the aim of science and research could be considered as a component of a wider (popular) edification project. This however, may not be possible without availability of unbounded spaces for discussing the nature and aims of popular adult education. Even in the context of marketization imperative, Nordic universities still have a legal obligation and right to carry autonomous research, teaching and discussion. This should justify teachers and students to carry out autonomous research especially with basic funding and jointly with other actors in popular adult education (Kemmis 1998; Vähämäki 2010). It is a high time for universities and research communities, as well as practitioners and policymakers, to jointly recognize the vital and fundamental meaning and value of autonomous, self-directed research, which is currently mainly exercised through MA and Dr theses, for the development of planetary responsibility in popular adult education practice and research.

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BY

Lili-Ann Wolff

ADULT EDUCATION IN AN UNSUSTAINABLE ERA

Sustainability is not one alternative anymore; it is the only alternative. A large number of researchers are convinced that humanity's production and consumption have exceeded the limits of planet Earth and that the present development model is unsustainable from environmental, economic, and social perspectives. In this article I will draw on recent research results from various disciplines to show why this is so. Furthermore, I will discuss the implications of the present unsustainable quandaries on education, especially adult education, and suggest new, innovative ways to encounter the present environmental and social challenges.

I will especially focus on the following topics: the quest for sustainability; contemporary world development trends and their transboundary and intricate impacts on daily human conduct; the rise of education as the tool for sustainable development in general and especially in adult education; social movements and social innovations in relation to adult education; and last but not least, the empowerment of adults through education. To begin with, I will problematize the concept of sustainable development itself.

Sustainable development and sustainability

The world has struggled with many environmental threats since the beginning of the industrial era and even long before, but in the 1950s and 1960s, environmental protection became a common concern, and as a result, the protection of nature was regarded as a duty. In the 1980s, the non-governmental organizations IUCN and the World Wildlife Fund WWF in collaboration with the United Nations Environmental programme UNEP published the World Conservation Strategy (IUCN 1980). This document underscored that socioeconomic development and nature conservation are interrelated and that development therefore must consider environmental issues. The aim of this document was to propose guidelines for a vital world in which plants, animals, and people can share a good life. However, this idea was soon to be steered in a more 'cost-effective' direction.

With the 1987 report, Our Common Future, the World Commission on Environment and Development set sustainable development as a political aim for all segments of society, not the least of which is education (see WCED 1987). The report included once again a kind of universal vision of a better future and a call for new values and norms of behaviour at all levels of society. Yet this time the vision placed humankind in the central position and did not diminish the impact of technological and economic progress. According to the WCED report, sustainable development aims at meeting the basic needs and desires of all people for a better life without endangering the possibilities for future human life on earth. The discussion offered in the report, which became known as the Brundtland report,

continued in the first international environmental and development conference, the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, in Rio de Janeiro in 1992 – a conference that gathered thousands of leaders and NGO members from around the world. Still more people gathered at the Rio +10 in Johannesburg 2002 and Rio +20 in Rio de Janeiro 2012.

Since the first Rio conference, sustainable development has been a common concept in political documents at all levels, and it has increasingly embraced issues of environmental protection. Since then, the concept of sustainable development has also been politically divided into three dimensions: ecological, social/cultural, and economic. Many voices have criticized this division and have claimed that the concept of sustainable development is not sustainable in itself and that its interpretation has failed. The concept has been called a slogan and a contradictory myth (see, e.g., Ingimundarsson 1997; Wolff 2011). Because of this problem with the concept, it is now more common to talk about sustainability. In this article I, therefore, prefer to use the concept of sustainability, except when I refer to sources using sustainable development.

After the Rio conference, 'education for sustainable development' gradually became a common concept in political educational documents at all levels, and it has increasingly embraced issues of environmental protection. As a result, the three dimensions of sustainable development are all stressed as important educational goals, and the inclusion of these three dimensions in various educational contexts has thus been a topic of ongoing concern. Already in the 1970s, the political goal of 'environ-

mental education' was to change learners' attitudes, and the UN goal for education for sustainable development is still in 2014 focused on influencing learners' values and attitudes: 'to reorient education and learning so that everyone has the opportunity to acquire the knowledge, skills, values and attitudes that empower them to contribute to sustainable development' (Tbilisi declaration 1977; UNESCO 2014).

Sustainability as a global challenge

A focus on education, however, has not managed to change our unsustainable course. The world still suffers from human overpopulation, a lack of water and food, bad air quality, deforestation, decreased biodiversity, and many more problems. One of the biggest environmental threats is climate change. Climate change is a complex problem that influences many levels of life, both human and non-human, such as water availability, food production, biodiversity, health, equality, human rights, and employment. According to the Worldwatch Institute's State of the world 2014, climate scenarios are dominated by orthodox economic views with unrestricted growth as a hidden goal.

The combination of steady growth with a growing world population is an impossible equation to solve. The world population of 7.3 billion in mid-2015 is predicted to increase to between 9.4 and 10 billion by 2050 and between 10 and 12.5 billion in 2100 (United Nations 2015). More people to feed and equip with material goods means a growing demand on diminishing natural resources. The demand is also growing for people to do hard and dangerous physical

work, such as mining, the construction of roads and streets, and industrial work. Simultaneously, numerous grassroots movements are struggling to decrease climate change, species loss, inequity, poverty, and other sustainability problems. The agendas of these various groups are often in conflict with the programmes originated by governments and large corporations. Their strategies can therefore be called 'counter activities'. I will return to these activities later, but before that I will frame a few urgent and central contemporary development threats and trends through actual examples. These examples concern climate change, the world economy, present-day slavery, technology development, inequity, and finally, the suffering caused by conflict minerals. From this diverse choice, I want to give a picture of the sustainability dilemma that is as comprehensive as possible.

Climate change

Besides the environmental threats that have been obvious for years, new ones often arise. According to a recent study undertaken at the Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research and published online in March 2015, there is a slowdown in the great ocean circulation (Rahmstorf et al 2015). Among other planetary roles, this circulation drives the Gulf Stream. The consequences could be serious, with a significant sea level rise impeding on large coastal cities such as New York and Boston (ibid.). The climate crises, like many other environmental dangers of today, are a complex mixture of political, economic, and social threats built on the myth of endless growth. Nonetheless, continuous growth is impossible on a planet with limited resources (see, e.g., Wijkman & Rockström 2012). Growth is not only a threat against the

biosphere; it also has a serious impact on the most defenceless people in the world. Severe floods and other climate-related disasters caused by climate change actually affect poor countries much more than rich ones because of their geographical locations (see, e.g., Roberts & Parks 2006). The industrial world produces the most greenhouse gas emissions contributing to climate change, but the worst effects are the most obvious in other parts of the world. Therefore, endangering the environment and the global climate is also a reason for continuous global inequality. Indeed, global climate change was already the most controversial issue at the first Rio conference, since the rich countries were not ready to contribute to global wellbeing by giving up their comfortable lifestyle (ibid.).

The world economy

Science professor William Laurence (2015), founder of the Alliance of Leading Environmental Researchers & Thinkers (ALERT), describes in his blog what he counts as the two biggest threats to our natural world today. Firstly, he mentions the G20 countries' shocking plans for infrastructure expansion. The leaders of the world's 20 largest economies have committed to spending "60 to 70 trillion U.S. dollars" on new infrastructure projects by the year 2030. There has never been any single bigger financial transaction in human history, according to Laurence, who sees it as very alarming and as having 'an Earth-shaking impact' on the environment. He lists consequences such as 'massive increases in roads, hydroelectric dams, mining projects, gas lines, and power lines, all across the planet' (Laurence 2015, blog text). Without doubt, these increases will also have an enormous social impact.

Secondly, Laurence (2015) mentions another alarming trend, namely, the rise of the Chinese and Brazilian development banks. These banks fund developments worldwide, and according to him, they do not prioritize the environment in the same way as many other infrastructure funders and donors. Laurence's conclusion is that conservationists and scientists need to redouble their efforts to meet these two challenges at a time in which the world population is rapidly growing.

The labour market

Growth has an unattractive price, and numerous people in the contemporary world must work under extremely bad conditions and even against their will. About 21 million people are working as 'forced labour' in the world of today; 26% of them are children under 17 (ILO 2015). In practice this involves the abuse of vulnerability, deception, the restriction of movement, isolation, physical and sexual violence, intimidation and threats, the retention of identity documents, the withholding of wages, debt bondage, abusive working and living conditions, and excessive overtime (ILO 2015). Many organizations call forced labour 'today's slavery'.

Much food production involves forced labour, and a great number of people working in food production are children. In 2007 about 70% of the about 218 million child workers worked in agriculture (ILO 2007). Many of these child workers are involved in cocoa production in Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana. They are exposed to hazards such as unsafe tools, toxic chemicals (fertilizers and pesticides), and ergonomically harmful physical labour (ibid.). Even though the problem is worse in poor countries, labour

trafficking and sex trafficking exist all over the world (see, e.g., Ramm & Stolz 2014).

Technology

For many living in rich countries, work done on computers has become more typical than physical work. At this moment, humankind is experiencing what technology researchers Brynjolfsson and McAfee (2015) have called the second machine age. The first was industrialization. Today, digital technology is developing so fast that it is very difficult to predict what will be possible in a few years. However, the technology already exists for instructing robots to do numerous jobs and driving cars without human drivers. Computers, tablets, and mobile phones make people more and more dependent on the steadily electronic communication of life online. Professor of political science Jodi Dean calls the ICT society 'communicative capitalism' (De Lissovoy 2015, 33). Philosopher Merleau-Ponty should probably have called mobile phones and computer mice prolonged arms for humans. They have become almost like parts of the human body, especially of the brain, but also of social life. Computer technology has even changed humans' identities, not to mention that it already has redefined human freedom as an unreachable delusion. Instead of slow reflection and deep thought, there are only fragments of information and fluctuating ideas deeply rooted in a fixed, more or less hidden ideology. There has never been such total control over people as today. The control starts from the cradle and lasts until the grave, and it seeps into every corner of human life, even in sleep.

Undoubtedly, much of this development is praiseworthy and will save lives, effort, and time. However, there is also another side of the coin. The new inventions will increase the gap between the poor and the rich, and many people will lose their jobs (Brynjolfsson & McAfee 2015). The situation is a dream for those who are technically talented, hyper smart, and quick. As an example of a fast change with big consequences, Brynjolfsson and McAfee mention the new imaging technology that enables about 400 billion pictures to be shared every year on Facebook. Yet Facebook has very few employees compared to those working at Kodak before its bankruptcy (ibid.).

The development of information technology has, nonetheless, been a great success story in the educational arena, and the companies working in this business make huge profits. However, a great number of the computer-mediated tools for educational purposes still are far from the quality of educational tools that are based on several years of research and practice in the field of education. Many web-based educational programmes of today bring us back to the days of Skinner. On the one hand, this is a success for neoliberal policy because computer-assisted education reduces the teaching staff and saves money – or actually distributes money more unevenly than ever in this field. On the other hand, there are extensive benefits, since computer-based social networks, undoubtedly, have a crucial role in mobilizing grassroots efforts in both local and global sustainability activities.

» Today, digital technology is developing so fast that it is very difficult to predict what will be possible in a few years. »

Industry and minerals

The consequences for workers mining minerals for the mobile phone industry is, thus, a third side of the story. A very great part of the minerals used to produce mobile devices come from conflict areas, not least the Democratic Republic of Congo (this has been addressed by many newspapers around the world and is the theme of the documentary *Blood in the mobile*). These 'conflict minerals' finance a civil war in Congo that is considered the bloodiest conflict since World War II (Kinniburgh 2014). Since 1996 the conflict has cost the lives of more than 5 million people, and nearly 50 women are estimated to be raped every hour. Ironically only 2% of the Congolese people have access to the Internet (ibid.). Furthermore, an article in World Finance in July 2015 forecast that the Democratic Republic of Congo is entering 'a new era of growth and prosperity' to meet a future as 'one of Africa's economic superpowers' (Trustfull 2015). To achieve this goal, another kind of governance is definitely needed. Furthermore, the responsibility for humans and nature needed for the production of goods stretches far beyond single states. Strong global connections indisputably exist between global economic, social, environmental, and identity issues.

Sustainability and adult education

Since the concept of education for sustainable development was introduced, many educational researchers have claimed that this concept limits education to merely a tool for reaching sustained economic growth (e.g., Huckle & Wals 2015; Sauvé 2002). The whole idea behind the concept has also been criticized for neglecting teachers as agents who reflectively promote both the ethical and intellectual development of students according to what the neoliberal society wants from them (see Jickling & Wals 2008). Likewise, some educators and educational researchers base their teaching on their own ideas of what a sustainable world is and try to market this project to students instead of triggering the students' own critical judgments and joint actions, which stimulate ethical reflections and value discussions. Since no teacher knows how the world will look tomorrow, the best approach would probably be to leave the ends indistinct, without any determined aim. As a consequence, the outcome is left undecided and makes room for all involved in the educational process to formulate their own visions and goals (see Wolff 2007; 2011).

Top-down and bottom-up initiatives

Although educational research interests concerning how to teach about sustainability have changed and expanded, especially during the 1990s and the first decades of the new millennium, there is still a deep-rooted predisposition for normative solutions. Education for sustainability aiming at behavioural change has not only been implemented among young people and in formal educational institutions, but also in all kinds of adult education and in information targeted at adults; thus it is a social policy disseminated through mass media, advertising, and other kinds of informal education. In fact, informal education and advertising targeted at adults have been growing businesses ever since sustainable development and other similar concepts such as 'eco' and 'green' became components of marketing. In this business, the target audience is not only ordinary citizens as private persons but also various professional interest groups and business people from managers to employees; that is, the practice embraces entire companies and workplaces. In the United States, but also elsewhere, educational tools in environmental protection work have emerged that supplement command-and-control and market-based methods (e.g., Dietz & Stern 2002; Leonard 2013). The users of these tools say that they strive for a voluntary change of behaviour, in other words, to generate a change that is not forced by regulatory social methods. However, as Dietz and Stern (2002) state, the influence of market-based methods might be overblown and more of a return to historical models than a new approach.

Market-based methods generally aim at profit creation through influencing behaviour, although the manipulation may be well hidden. Behavioural change due to advertising depends on skilful psychological methods and is, therefore, a high level of secret manipulation (see Schor 2004). The principal educational mission should instead be to work for voluntary change based on a completely new model of being together and jointly shaping more sustainable ways of life and experiences of acting (see also De Lissovoy 2015; Leonard 2013). On the other hand, the question may be less about inventing new models, than about challenging existing solutions, infrastructures, laws, and policies (see Leonard 2013).

The commitment to change is voluntary when it rises from an individual's own motivation and thus relates to that individual's own experiences, knowledge, self-image, and worldview. It is, therefore, wasted time to try to promote change without stimulating self-understanding and the understanding of how individuals and groups interact in the world through friendship, religion, economy, politics, education, and other systems, and without encouraging questioning of the fundamental systems and values on which our society is built (see Wolff 2011). Since it is impossible to make education neutral, the most honest solution is to make ethics and politics tangible. Teachers' and learners' backgrounds, emotions, and perspectives are all relevant in adult educational situations. Together, they shape new ideas and train students to become powerful, reflective, and creative builders of the common future. Yet the most important educational task might not be to define a sustainable future, but to openly discuss and react to what is un-

sustainable and unfair in this very moment and create learning situations that trigger students' own thoughts, discussions, and will to know (ibid.). The future world will certainly need citizens with the courage and tools to act in the future, however it looks.

Environmental problems are complicated, and their solutions need many types of knowledge, understanding, and skills. These skills relate to ecology, history, sociology, physics, and many other sciences, not least to global politics and the economy. People have known since ancient times that knowledge is not enough to trigger responsibility and that knowledge alone does not promote the will to act. To be able to bridge the gap between knowledge and action, the first step is to become aware that this gap exists and to learn what challenges must be met in closing it. Most demanding is the need to face all the fabrications and prejudices that hide in this gap. A crucial question is also who or what needs to change most to reach a more sustainable course. Is it the individual, or is it neoliberal politics and its strong infrastructures that influence the choices of lifestyles? After this is determined, the goal of changing the actions of adults may be considered unethical (see also Wolff, 2011).

The initial human right to freedom is daily threatened in many other ways, since influential powers intrude into homes, schools, and our innermost intimate worlds and interfere with the creation of each person's self-image. In his book *Consuming life*, Zygmunt Bauman (2007) is concerned about the trend of living a second life online, a life where individuals market and sell themselves like objects to attract recognition (see also Bauman 2000; Illouz 2012).

He describes this as *subjectivity fetishism*, a condition where humans have to steadily seek to be recognized as either extraordinary or as able to live up to a particular standard and thus as normalized. The phenomenon is an example of what Foucault (e.g., 1978; 2000) called 'governmentality' – people are governed so thoroughly that the control becomes a part of their mentality. Today everyone is so incorporated into the world economy that nobody knows what her or his own will is in relation to the 'all-inclusive' neoliberal system. This situation is a huge challenge for adult education, but new ways are arising of promoting an adult's own initiatives, passion for learning, and engagement.

Social movements and social innovations

Behavioural change is only one educational option. The role of educators changes when they strive to improve students' joint involvement and participation in authentic environmental activities and critical discourses (e.g., Koskinen & Paloniemi 2009; Lange & Chubb 2009; Wals 2006). Then the educator becomes more like a bridge builder between various social groups.

The quest for learning and change is most productive when it is initiated by the target group. There are a growing number of social movements and innovations in the world today. When the interest of private profit dominates public policy discourses, public services are reduced and unemployment increases, leaving the poor as the most vulnerable. Neoliberal policy's neglect of human needs has, therefore, led to the rise of many social movements and innovations. In these movements and innovations,

» Many of the Indian innovations support grassroots groups, for example, the Honey Bee Network, which has initiated over 100,100 ideas over the last 20 years »

learning takes place through practical joint working, as well as through participation in courses, seminars, study groups, and study trips as well as other learning activities.

While learning, the participants develop a critical and creative understanding and find creative strategies for participative change.

These movements or innovations have interests in issues such as sustainability, food and gardening, healthcare, service for the elderly, the sharing of cars or other vehicles, and the organization of mutual help (see, e.g., Manzini 2014). Movements related to environmental issues are targeting animal rights, anti-consumerism, anti-nuclear power, anti-globalization, ecofeminism, environmental justice, fair trade, and many more concerns. Sometimes the issue is about mobilization when a group's sociocultural identity or autonomy is threatened or when a group's daily livelihood or justice for that group is in danger because of a dominant political-economic system (Leach 2013). To solve the complex problems of today, collectives have more potential than distinct experts (Heller 2014). These are creative communities acting independently to reach their own goals without waiting for policy changes (Manzini 2014). The goals to be reached by social innovations are many other than economic, but since they generate costs, social innovations have to be matched to

existing capital (Tillväxtanalys 2014). Both governmental and private financiers support social movements and innovations.

The difference between a movement and an innovation is not immediately apparent. Therefore, I will try to explain the difference using a few other researchers' views. Castells (2004, 3) defines a social movement as 'purposive collective actions whose outcome, in victory as in defeat, transforms the values and institutions of society'. He also adds that movements cannot be classified as good or bad, they are 'symptoms of who we are', and 'avenues of our transformation' (Castells 2004, 4). Some researchers see movements as innovations, but according to Adrian Smith (2014), who studies politics and the governance of grassroots innovation for sustainability, movements are much broader than innovations. He argues that movements create new social identities and thus contribute to cultural change. Although he thinks that movements in the same way as innovations also generate new ideas, practices, processes, and products, he includes much more in a movement. According to Smith, 'movements hold power to account at the same time as forming new power bases, they forge new identities and social understandings, develop new public discourses, cement new solidarities and social groupings, confront and resist other inter-

ests, and movements reshape the contexts of activity of other social actors in business and the state, amongst other things' (blog text). An innovation can thus be born in a movement. Manzini (2014, 57) delimits social innovations as 'a process of change emerging from the creative re-combination of existing assets (from social capital to historical heritage, from traditional craftsmanship to accessible advanced technology), the aim of which is to achieve socially recognized goals in a new way'. Smith, Fressoli, and Thomas (2014) talk about *grassroots innovation movements* in the sense of people and organizations outside local communities (e.g., designers and engineers) engaging the grassroots level in innovation processes, thus encouraging local knowledge and local people in the management of collective innovation activities.

There is actually no fixed definition of a social innovation; definitions of it vary from country to country (Tillväxtanalys 2014). Social innovations can include activities on local, regional, national, and international levels and involve actors that are uncommon in innovative process steered by governments, universities, or companies. The United Kingdom has a long tradition of social innovation, but the many actors define social innovations relatively dissimilarly (ibid. 2014). The definition was also broad in the choices of examples of innovations in the Finnish book *One hundred social innovations* (Ilkka Taipale, e.g., 2013). The book, published in over 15 languages, has raised great interest since it has emerged. Another country with many social innovations to combat poverty, save biodiversity, and produce food is India (Tillväxtanalys 2014; Govindarajan, 2014). Many of the Indian

innovations support grassroots groups, for example, the Honey Bee Network, which has initiated over 100,100 ideas over the last 20 years (Tillväxtanalys 2014).

Even while social innovations are of great interest today, they have always existed in every society (Manzini 2014). In a social innovation, groups and communities create and develop solutions together to address some pressing social need. Social innovation has gained attention because it simultaneously provides grounds for participation and the means to stimulate new ideas that address complex problems. Such problems include environmental challenges that even might require societal and behavioural shifts, but the motivation to shift comes from within the group. The purpose of social innovations is to satisfy human needs in various layers of society. Social innovations relate to empowerment dynamics and give a political character to social movements and bottom-up governance initiatives. They strive to lay the foundations for a fairer, more democratic society. According to Klein (2014), social innovations are simultaneously drivers of transdisciplinary research and guides for collective actions characterized by their special epistemological, ethical, and strategic approaches. These actions must be collective and aim at holistic and sustainable goals (ibid.). Without oversight, the goals can easily turn into something else, for example, profit, but Manzini (2014), with an interest in sustainable design, definitely considers social innovations as a way to move towards sustainability.

Design contexts

In the design context, social innovations have become a new paradigm, a totally

new way to consider the present and the future in an unsettled creative process, according to Heller in 2014. 'The structural order that the industrial age founders of capitalism believed they could impose is a memory. None of the old tricks work as they used to – at least not long enough to matter' (ibid., 42). Heller also states that it is time for business to react to the reality of the state of the planet and humankind. Instead of designing exclusive artefacts for a rich urban minority, social design results in creative transformative ideas that change lives for those who cannot buy expensive goods. Social innovations, therefore, focus on people, not things, and shape interaction and participation to meet social needs with less impact on the environment than the endless production of stuff. '[A social innovation] creates the conditions, relationships, inspiration, engagement and access to wisdom to energize cultures and ignite creative potential – in people' (ibid.). This means that the designers step out from their traditional studios to work in communities and with organizations to find solutions for real problems. The initiators and facilitators of the innovations function similarly to bottom-up designers, but can be like professional designers facilitating change from top to bottom or as hybrids of bottom-up and top-down design, according to Manzini (2014). The capacity of a designer is to recognize unusual potentials and possibilities in people and situations – to see others as powerful individuals capable of working for change (Heller 2014). Like designers, adult educators will have an important role to play in this respect.

Manzini (2014) recognizes two Italian innovators who act like designers even though their professions are different. They are the

psychiatrist Franco Basaglia, who founded the Democratic Psychiatry movement, and Carlo Petrini, who founded the Slow Food movement. Manzini (2014) distinguishes a similar design strategy in both movements: 1) recognizing a real problem and the available social resources, 2) proposing organizational and economic structures that activate these resources, and 3) building an overall vision to unite the local activities. Below I will particularly present the Slow movement and Slow Food.

Food as social innovation

The Slow movement emerged as an objection against the fast lifestyle, and the slow philosophy soon gathered followers all over the world and has been adopted in various ways. The movement was started by Carlo Petrini and a group of activists after a demonstration against fast food in Rome in 1986. The aim was to support 'regional traditions, good food, gastronomic pleasure and a slow pace of life' (Slow Food 2015). In 1989 the international Slow Food movement had its first meeting in Paris. Today the movement has one million supporters in 150 countries. The Slow Food initiative is an example of a social innovation that grew into a social movement, which is now producing many new social innovations. The slow philosophy has spread gradually to various areas of life, such as slow travelling, slow cities, slow arts, slow books, slow sex, slow reading, slow education, slow sciences, and many more. Slowness has become something to strive for in kitchens, hospitals, concert halls, bedrooms, gyms, and schools (Honoré 2004). Slow is shortly about living a good life in a fast world. It is about doing less, but doing it better and at a speed that seems right, that is, in tempo giusto (ibid.).

The basic principle of the Slow Food movement is good food produced fairly and sustainably. To realize this idea, the Slow Food movement's activists see education on many levels as crucial. They call for knowledge and skills in areas such as farming, gardening, and gastronomy (see, e.g., Uusikylä 2012).

Other movements have organized more aggressive actions related to food production and trade, for example, the riot against the World Trade Organization meeting in Seattle 1999 and the West Bengal food riots in 2007 – two of the many food riots that have taken place in different countries since the 17th century. Slow Food and riots are very different reactions to the contemporary intricacy of food. The first could be called a 'softer' and the other a 'tougher' protest against the politics, economics, and unfairness of the food process.

Empowerment and commitment

Food is a good example of a complex unsustainability dilemma that cannot be solved by mere individual lifestyle changes. Solely focusing on finding educational tools to change others' lifestyles ignores the contexts in which people live, including all the various elements that affect their choices, such as cultural features and economic structures (Dimick 2015). The sustainability endeavour needs joint strategies and actions based on multifaceted knowledge and skills to ensure a broader and more efficient influence. Education is definitely necessary to address contemporary sustainability issues. However, the world needs a new epistemology, where knowledge is connected to practices, politics, and the way institutions are formed (Foucault 1998a; 1998b). Understanding is then

much more than knowing facts; it is about self-transformation and involves understanding complex relations and causality that may even have historical explanations (Foucault 1997).

Governments have failed to steer world development, according to the Worldwatch Institute's report in 2014. Instead of officials taking responsibility for issues such as climate change, species loss, and inequity, local people and grassroots movements all over the world have stepped in, according to the report (the result of the climate conference in Paris at the end of 2015 may hopefully increase governmental responsibility). Nevertheless, education and responsible actions are needed on many levels to address the complex dilemmas of today. All those who are willing to step up and act in favour of a more vital and equal sustainable present and future need education, encouragement, and empowerment to activate their commitment. Facing the educational needs of today is a big challenge that is urgent and cannot be delayed.

Today more and more researchers stress that education for sustainable development has neglected the fact that the education takes place in a neoliberal society with aims that are in contradiction with the idea of sustainability (e.g., Dimick, 2015; Huckle & Wals 2015; Bessant, Robinson & Ormored 2015). Addressing individuals and demanding more sustainable actions from them as if they were individualistic entrepreneurs is a distinctly neoliberal approach. It can even be considered a contradiction that those individuals are obliged to repair the collective misdeeds. Individuals are thus considered guilty in a paradoxically complex social situation.

In actuality, the entire society is built on an unrealistic steadily growth paradigm that must be reconsidered. The growth spiral ‘producing more – consuming more – creating more work’ is not truthful and has never been, since the resources are not endless. An improved Gross National Product is actually a sustainability failure.

It is fruitless to try to teach people about sustainability if the roots of the unsustainability problems are simultaneously neglected. The history, the culture of societies (both local and global), politics, and economics on many levels make people what they are in a fast reshaping process day after day. Today the common task is to work towards new models of being together and to mutually shape more sustainable ways of life and experiences of acting (see also De Lissovoy 2015). Instead of telling others how to act sustainably and make them feel guilty for not fulfilling the aim of sustainability, the entire sustainability quest needs to be seen as a process involving people who actively take a stand themselves, are jointly creative, and search for concrete utopias. Humans are social and need to gain recognition from their fellows to grow as persons, and therefore, change is much easier to achieve if it happens collectively and spontaneously.

Conclusion

The emerging social movements and innovations are promising and strong counter forces confronting the prospects of neoliberalism; these forces can become still stronger through education. The empowerment of activists in social movements and innovations takes place through a joint learning experience that builds on the understanding of how people in different parts of the world have struggled for a better life for themselves and their offspring. Additionally, an understanding of the complexity of the present situation and its power structures reveals unsustainable and unfair structures and strategies and creates hope for the future (see also De Lissovoy 2015; Klein 2013). What is missing in contemporary sustainability education is not information or more individual actions, but a collective engagement in change that is based on commitment and a joint vision of the future (Leonard 2013).

In this moment, in order to survive, we must shift to a different social logic, a different mode of being, and a different history (De Lissovoy 2015). Hopeful directions for such a transition are presently emerging in the new global movement for democracy, social justice, decolonization, and sustainability, as well as in collective uprisings in the terrain of education.

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