

EDUCATION OF ADULT EDUCATORS (EUROPEAN EXPERIENCES)

In this work we discuss through three structural units the problem of concepts and models of professional preparations of adult educators. Basic determination for holistic, qualitative paradigm made, as only completely acceptable model (design) for research of this problem on intentionally chosen sample -- case study, standardized and performed in accordance with all given methodological requirements.

Founded upon exposed and the detailed theoretical and empirical base that is given in the introductory part, as relevant factors that influence our problem of study, in the central part the following was discussed: tradition, rapid development of science and technology, changes on the European and world social and political scene, socio-cultural and economical factors, general acceptance of the concept of lifelong education and learning, significant increase of the sum of scientific knowledge and multiplication of scientific researches in the field of andragogy, ramifications of adult education system, as well as strong tendencies to professionalization in the field of adult education.

Besides some general tendencies (acceptance of concept of lifelong education and learning, implementation of contemporary technological and scientific accomplishments, frequent differentiation of andragogical entity on the fields of formal and non-formal education, introduction of graduate, postgraduate and doctoral studies of adult education, as well as possibilities of in-service training and education of practitioners in the field of adult education, etc) -- in many European countries forming of concepts and designing of models of professional preparation of adult educators is caused by *existing tradition*.

The problem that has been studied is directly influenced by *some socio-cultural factors* -- development of industrial and organizational settings, relation of the society towards adult education and lifelong learning. It has been indirectly influenced also by diversity of political, ideological, economical and social systems and structures, as well as the system of redistribution of political and economical power in society. The latest need for changes in preparation of personnel in the field of adult education has been influenced by many global social changes that have happened in the last ten years -- the disappearance of the bipolar system (division of countries on the capitalist and socialist ones), emergence of "societies in transition", outbreak of local wars and constant tensions on the international level, emergence of new racist movements, attempts of de-marginalization of certain groups, as well as broadening of the gap between developed and less developed countries.

These changes represent important driving force that cause the need for preparation of andragogical personnel that is qualified to deal with the problems of the civil education, education for peace and mutual living, nonviolent communication, life in the family, as well as education for marginal groups (refugees, minorities, women, unemployed, poor), that is, preparation of personnel that is qualified for active and critical participation in the process of democratization of education. One of the fundamental tasks of professional andragogue (adult educator), under such *social, political, economical and cultural circumstances*, is providing of

help and forming of human identity, making of "new 'zoon politicon' that will be able as new 'homo faber', new 'homo ludens', 'new imaginary man', 'new homo sapiens', 'new homo socius' to pass the way from political to human emancipation" (Despot, 1976, p. 171), thus enabling adult education to "become more than right, become a key for the twenty-first century" (UNESCO, 1997).

Rapid changes in forming of concepts and making of new models of professional preparations of adult educators have been followed by changes made as *acceptance of concept of lifelong education and learning* in previous decades. The attempt of the reform of educational system on such philosophical foundations has brought the strong turning point of the existing opinions of university with respect to this scientific and research field. At the end of sixties many universities started to foster adult education (andragogy) as a subject and a field of research, and later on, to open departments and sectors that deal with scientific research and preparation of adult educators.

While the traditional paradigm, fostered from the second half of 19th century until (in some countries) the first half of the 20th century, connected adult education with the literacy of adults and its educational function, modern theorists understand education and science as a foundation of a future development of society, and in this context adult education is seen as a field that is obligatorily in the very center of the educational policy. Adult education is no longer concentrated on the problems of literacy and acquiring of knowledge needed for inclusion in the world of work. It is conceived in a broader way -- until highest degree of professional improvement is attained, and is manifested in many ways -- formal, non-formal, informal, experienced, self-directed, work-oriented, leisure education, education for family life etc. In Yugoslavia, Belgium and the Netherlands this concept is becoming a foundation for forming special models of professional preparations of adult educators. In such a manner the practice of adult education, that influences forming of requests for professionalization of the whole field, is very dynamic, so that adult education (andragogy) becomes the subject of university and non-university studies at basic, post graduate and doctorate studies, as well as in forms of continuing professional improvement.

The increase of the total sum of scientific knowledge and rapid development of technology have influenced important changes in the system of adult education itself, and have intensified the need for professionalization of adult educators. First steps towards fulfillment of this goal can be seen back in the period after the World War II, when numerous workers' and peoples' universities, workers' academies, evening schools and other institutions for adult education were opened.

The expansion of development of new technologies has contributed to the development of new ones and more effective application of existing models of education and learning of adults, especially distance learning. "Digital revolution" that started at the end of eighties has contributed to the media permeation of all forms of education and learning of adults. The influence of new media has been broadened to the whole life continuum, so the existing concepts of work and education require rapid re-conceptualization. These changes bring numerous difficulties, both on theoretical and practical level. However, the first imperative is the training of adult educators for rapid and efficient implementation of modern sci-

entific and technological achievements. This requirement has brought changes in some static models of professional training in the field of education and learning of adults (for example in France, Norway, Denmark, and Belgium).

The differentiation of existing and making of new institutions in the field of education and learning of adults have brought to the fact that on the global level it is now possible *developing of system of adult education*. On the other hand, the developing of adult education system has brought to the dynamism in the andragogical practice, and therefore to the increase of adequately trained adult educators. In some social environments impossibility of accommodation of the existing system of professional training of adult educators to the new situation, leads to the distinction of existing models with respect to the certain parts of the system of adult education (for example, in France, Belgium, the Netherlands, Germany -- already on the level of basic studies, and in Czechoslovakia on the level of post-graduate, master studies).

Great *increases of the sum of andragogical knowledge* and important scientific achievements in the fields of other sciences (psychology, sociology, economy etc) that could have been implemented, directly or indirectly, in the field of education and learning of adults opened possibility for more adequate professional training of adult educators on all levels. Therefore an important coupling of factors that represented basic motivation for reforming of models and intensifying of developing of professional education and training of adult educators and stimulus for their professionalization has been formed.

Continuous permeation of all these factors together with the fact that in the field of adult education the volunteers are hired in a lesser extent, and that there are more of those who work as full-time or as part-time workers -- adult educators that has obtained previous professional education and training represents "the first step in the process of professionalization that already established professions have passed" (Wilensky, 1964, p. 137). This has caused the shift in focus from the adult education as a field of semi-profession.

Period of initiation of intensive discussions on the problem of professionalization in the field of education and learning of adults and forming of opinions about the problem of profession has been characterized with the following questions: What is the work of an andragogue? What is a profession? And What are the possibilities, foundations and ways of forming of the profession of an andragogue? As for the question "What is the work of an andragogue?" one can have different answers that are caused by adoption of a specific philosophy of adult education. As for tasks and engagements of the andragogue, there is often used Houle's pyramid of andragogical personnel (Houle, 1956), according to which andragogical personnel can be divided in three groups:

- 1) first, the biggest one, that is found in the base of the pyramid of andragogical stuff, that is engaged mostly as volunteers,
- 2) second group, that makes the central part of the pyramid, and is made of the personnel that is engaged in the adult education while having their steady jobs, and
- 3) third group, which is on the top of the pyramid, and is made by persons with the biggest influence on the forming of the profession itself.

The predictions that were speaking of a possible change of this "pyramid of andragogical personnel", in some of states included in this study, in the sense of decreasing the contribution the first group and increasing of the last one (Figure 2, cf. Bengels, 1999, p. 10) partially (Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Belgium, the Netherlands, German, France) or completely (Yugoslavia, Czech Republic, Finland) came into existence. However, with respect to tasks that adult educators are fulfilling, their roles and competencies, the consensus is still lacking, often even on the level of an individual country.

In the modern literature that deals with the problem of professionalization, several approaches emerged -- taxonomical, power approach, Marxist, neo-Weberian, ecological, system, dynamical, functional). As key moments for making of a new dynamical concept of professionalization, that does not start with neo-Weberian position, concept that is based upon scientific and research work that provides the challenge and possibility of inclusion in active modeling of the profession itself for achieving basic goals of its professional group, one can state: "democratization of education, dynamical practice of adult education and constituting of andragogy as science and its inclusion in study plans of high education institutions" (Savićević, 1987, p. 9). This starting point assumes making of possibilities for professional training of adult educators on graduate studies, possibilities for professional preparation of adult educators on postgraduate and doctoral studies as well as professional further education and in-service training and education of practitioners in the field of adult education.

The very essence of the work, its essence and purpose, has imposed some limitations. Therefore, some problems (for example, researching of comprehension and models of professional preparation of adult educators in the world context) although they deserve deeper research, are seen only in function of researching of comprehension and models of professional preparation of adult educators in some European countries. Such a project would ask for long term team work, and even under this circumstance one could complain about internal validity because in the meantime some teaching plans and programs at some of the universities in question, in some country that has been included would have been changed, because the reality is "holistic, multidimensional, and ever-changing; it is not a single, fixed, objective phenomenon waiting to be discovered, observed, and measured" (Merriam, 1988, p. 167). Limitations of the work in this respect are due to determination of the cause -- so analyses of this problem, in environments that are in andragogical sense, also interesting, such as Canada, Great Britain, Israel, Japan, China, USA, Australia, Brazil, New Zealand are missing.

The problem of understanding and model of professional preparation of adult educators is very complex and is determined by numerous factors. Therefore, the analysis of such a problem could not have been based only on descriptive model (this is a drawback of a great number of researches made so far), nor on a singular case study. Since we have chosen holistic, qualitative paradigm, the only completely acceptable model (design) within whose framework it was possible to perform such a complex study was, in Yugoslav andragogical environment scarcely used case study understood as research model in which several methods that lead to qualitative analysis of the problem were interconnected. Modern theo-

rists (Merriam, 1988; Tellis, 1997) agree that the case study in the field of adult education represents rarely used model of research. Our basic decision for such a research design is based on the viewpoint that in the field of education “the unit of analysis, or the case, can be an individual, a program, an institution, a group, an event, a concept” (Merriam, 1988, p. 44), i.e. “that descriptive case studies have been increasingly used in education... Several states were studied and the data about each state's activities were compared to another, with idealized theoretic patterns” (Yin, 1994, p. 25).

The model of the case study poses for the researcher numerous problems that start determining the units of analysis, selecting a sample within the case and defining the research problem. For this work we decided to take into account intentional sample of ten countries from West (France, the Netherlands and Belgium), North (Denmark, Sweden, Finland and Norway), Central (German and Czech Republic) and South-East Europe (Yugoslavia), therefore narrowing the potential width of determining of the general subject. In agreement with a subject given in such a manner, the basic goal of the research was an attempt to make a critical comparison of understanding and model of professional preparation of adult educators on a given sample and to make analysis of the modern models of preparations of adult educators and suggested implications and/or changes of existing models and conceptions based on obtained results. The basic goal of research given in such a manner has implied further detailed differentiation on particular goals and tasks of the research.

The next group of problems in such an elastic research design was related to the standardization of the research. It is done by creating of holistic research design and achieving of construct, internal and external validity and reliability. Construct validity is attained by using of multiply data resources, that for the need of research in the field of education can be reduced to documents, archival records and relevant literature with inclusion of certain modifications with respect to the digital environment for achieving of necessary triangulation (Tellis, 1997). The opportunity to use multiple methods of data collection (form usually calls triangulation) is “a major strength of case study research exceeding” (Merriam, 1988, p. 69). Besides documents, archival records and on-line method collected data, contemporary, relevant andragogical and sociological literature has also been used. Internal validity was achieved with identification of units of analysis, while using multiple-case study and determining hypothetical framework of the research has solved the problem of external validity. The problem of reliability has been solved by creating of the formal protocol, that is made of an overview of the case study project, procedure for collecting data, precisely stated issues and with making a guide for the case study report.

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In accordance with such a conceived base and requirements of the model -- the case study, results of performed research presented in the conclusion of this work emphasize three models of basic tendencies and orientations in the field of professional preparations of the adult educators. These models were compared

taking into account previously established four models made with respect to diversification -- model of professional preparation of andragogical personnel of general profile, model with variable tendency towards distinction, and models of diversification with respect to the field of the system of adult education, i.e. the scope of the system and with respect to institutions and associations within which the process of education is performed. Basic characteristics and limitations were emphasized and analyzed, and possibilities of corrections and further implications of academic, problem oriented and on the field of oriented model with respect to hypothetical "ideal" model of professional preparations of adult educators was suggested.

The picture of the contents, domains, orientations, approaches and concept that are present in the given countries shows great diversity. However, in the framework of such diversely conceived studies for the professional education and training of adult educators one can distinguish and according to scientifically relevant approaches (Savićević, 1972; Pflüger, 1978, p. 48-53) and group into models several tendencies and orientations: 1) academical model, 2) problem oriented model and 3) domain oriented model. These models correspond to a great extent models that are distinguished according to the diversity of professional education and training of adult educators, so that: 1) academical model (that includes Finland, Germany, Czech Republic, Yugoslavia and some studies at certain universities in the Netherlands, Denmark and Norway) corresponds to the model within which personnel of the general profile is educated and trained (Yugoslavia) and models that show existence of the basic sub-model of the general character and variable tendency towards distinction (Finland, Germany and Czech Republic), 2) problem oriented model (that includes Belgium, France and in the biggest part the Netherlands and Denmark) corresponds to the models in the distinction is made with respect to the domain of the system of adult education (France, Belgium, the Netherlands, Denmark), 3) while the domain oriented model (that includes Sweden and in the biggest part Norway) corresponds to the model in which the distinction is made with respect not only to the domain of the system but also by taking into account institutions and associations for adult education (Sweden, Norway).

In Finland, Germany, Czech Republic, Yugoslavia and in some cases in Denmark and the Netherlands in the professional preparation of adult educators it is emphasized the importance of academic approach to studies. The studies most frequently represent a certain combination of andragogy (adult education) with the contents from the field of pedagogy, philosophy, sociology and psychology, i.e. other social sciences. The important emphasis is given on acquiring of a solid theoretical foundation, training in research techniques and systematic academic work. However, although they represent the most stable subject and orientation model, studies conceived in this manner have their limitations that appear in situations of neglecting of practical work and visits to the adult education institutions. If the model "places main emphasis on theoretical thinking, training in research techniques and systematic work of an academic nature" (Pflüger, 1978, p. 49) then it has certain limitations. Introducing some practical courses and co-operation with institutions and organizations for adult education can make the correction of this model.

In almost all the models and sub-models (variants) that can be classified in the *academical model*, the problem of connecting theoretical and empirical work has been superseded during last few decades. Therefore, this model has the most stable support in the process of professionalization of the field of adult education. On the other hand, it shows significant flexibility with respect to the content conceiving that is in agreement with contemporary scientific achievements, while in other social sciences it makes temporary asylum and solid support. This support on one side (possibly) replace theoretical foundation that is not completely developed, and on the other side performs the function of “providing of solid philosophical and social and psychological education with specially broadened contents on nature and characteristics of learning and education of adults, on systems, organization and managing of adult education” (Savićević, 1972, p. 477) therefore increasing transparency. Academical model nearly in its entirety coincides with the two models that we have given taking into account criterion of diversity of professional training of adult educators -- the *model that shows existence of the basic sub-model of the general character and variable tendency towards distinction* (Finland, Germany and Czech Republic) and *model within which the personnel of the general profile is educated and trained* (Yugoslavia). In the last decades of the 20th century one can see clear tendencies and in some universities in the environments that cherish traditions of different modeling of the professional training of adult educators for accepting of academic model as the most adequate one (in the Netherlands, Denmark and Norway).

On the other hand, in Belgium and in some Universities in Norway (Oslo University) and Finland (Jyväskylä University) as well as in some other social environments that are not taken into account in this research, especially in Canada (mostly in Quebec, province where French population dominates) one can see orientation to the multi-cultural approach. The basic cause for this can be found in the fact that the basic model of the professional education and training of adult educators represents the combination of certain andragogical disciplines with some other social science (sociology, pedagogy, psychology) that is seen as the base for further profiling of the model. This model represents a kind of "melting pot" of influences of knowledge and experiences not only from other environments but also from other sciences. In some environments it represents the expression of undeveloped theoretical foundation of education science and learning of adults (Belgium Norway), while in the others it is expressed on the level of specialization and represents only one sub-model (variant) of specialization in the framework of consistently conceived basic study model (Finland). Multi-cultural approach represents one of the examples of modeling of professional preparation of adult educators with respect to the problem. The examples of this *problem oriented model* can be found in other environments also (Belgium, the Netherlands, France, and Denmark). It significantly corresponds to the model that we have outlined with respect to the criteria of diversity of professional education and training of adult educators -- within which the *distinction is made with respect to the domain of the system of adult education* (France, Belgium, the Netherlands, Denmark). This model shows “tendency of combining of andragogical studies with the studies of philosophy, economy, law, politics and social history, social and medical sciences, sociology and psychology” (Savićević, 1972, p. 478). However, with

such a conceiving it is necessary to carefully select the content, and “greater importance should be given to the functional choice of the content and its connection with the andragogical studies rather than to the number of disciplines that will be included in the study plan” (Ibidem).

In contrast to the previously described academical model, problem oriented model shows not only tendency towards unselective approach or inadequate scientifically based selection of the content, but also the tendency of important attention to the practical work. Therefore, limitations appear in the moment of de-actualization of the problems, because adult educators can become unnecessary, and relatively large sums invested in remain partly unused. On the other hand, professional education and training connected to the certain, specific problem deserves attention, especially because of its innovation function, but also because of the necessity that the professional education and training is continued through adequate forms of professional further education.

However, regardless on certain qualities, staying in these frameworks leads towards moving away in the process of professionalization, especially taking into account the aspect of scientific founding of systematic theoretical knowledge fund and the tendency of over- dimensional space that is given to the other sciences and practical work. In this respect important efforts are specially expressed through, for the moment, partial, in the Netherlands, Denmark and Norway for approaching to the academical model.

Domain oriented model (Sweden, Norway) has features very similar to the above described problem oriented model. Their mutual differences are easily recognizable and fluid. However, one of the characteristics is related to the extremely poor sum of theoretical knowledge. In the countries where it is expressed, there exists strong tradition but also the tendencies of modernizing and implementing of scientific knowledge in this model. It coincides completely with the *model in which the distinction is made* not only with respect to the field of the system of adult education, but also *with respect to the institutions, associations in which it is performed* (Sweden, Norway). It is characterized by dependence on certain organizational forms, sponsors and by decentralized structure. As the one described above, this model shows tendency of paying significant attention to the practical work, so therefore constraints appear that could emerge because of change of existing structure of institutions of adult education. In Sweden and Norway one can see, according to the domain oriented model, the existence of traditional institutions as well as associations for adult education that have emerged in the previous centuries; strong foreign influences that these countries have suffered; traditional binding to the certain forms, methods and models of adult education (study circles, distance education and orientation toward on-line model of adult education); insufficient theoretical and empirical foundation of educational science and learning of adults and as a consequence, over-dimension of developing of one (or several) aspects of adult education. In these countries one can see the turning point towards strong market and pragmatic orientation, and that not enough attention has been given to the need for creating a certain sum of theoretical knowledge that is taught on the university level and over-dimension of the aspect of the practical work. Also, one can feel a significant influence of the prescriptive concept of educational science in adult education, that comes from Great

Britain and United States of America, that is “basically pragmatic and practical without broader social and philosophical foundation” (Savićević, 1991, p. 189). Thus all preconditions are set for favoring remaining in the framework of semi-profession in the field of adult education instead of tendencies towards professionalization. However, since in these countries already happened that foreign experiences have been absorbed and according to the tradition changed and implemented within the existing frameworks, one can expect that in the near future they will initiate modification of this model.

Positive experiences that appear in all three models -- academical, problem oriented and domain oriented, can be successfully implemented in creating of the new, as well as for corrections and overcoming of drawbacks and constraints of existing models. In such a way, with respect to the sum of the systematic theoretical fund of knowledge it would be necessary, in sense of approaching of academical model, to correct problem oriented and domain oriented model.

Over-dimension of the space that is given to some other sciences and practical work in the framework of problem oriented and over-dimension of developing of one (or many) aspects of adult education that is present in the domain oriented model should be, in a way applied in the correction of academic method by practical aspects, corrected by emphasizing the theoretical aspects in these two models, that is, by providing the possibility of acquiring of solid theoretical foundation, training in research techniques and systematic work of an academic nature.

On all study levels, if one tends to the successful realization of professionalization of the whole domain of adult education, market and pragmatic orientation in the framework of certain models does not have justification, because it overemphasizes the need of turning to the scientific trends, requirement of the market and practical work without the wish of taking out the field of education from the framework of the semi-profession. On the other hand, positive aspects of the problem oriented and domain oriented model should be used for variable forms of professional education and training and their forming through careful listening of the request posed to the andragogue by the market. Only in such a way, in an attempt not to stay inside the geographical boundaries, or within the frameworks of certain models, but with constraints of tendencies of non-critical transmission of knowledge and experiences from other environments or other sciences, it is possible to create more perfect, and in agreement with modern scientific achievements of andragogy, re-conceptualized models of professional education and training of andragogical personnel (adult educators) for which exit of the field of adult education from the framework of the semi-profession is enabled.