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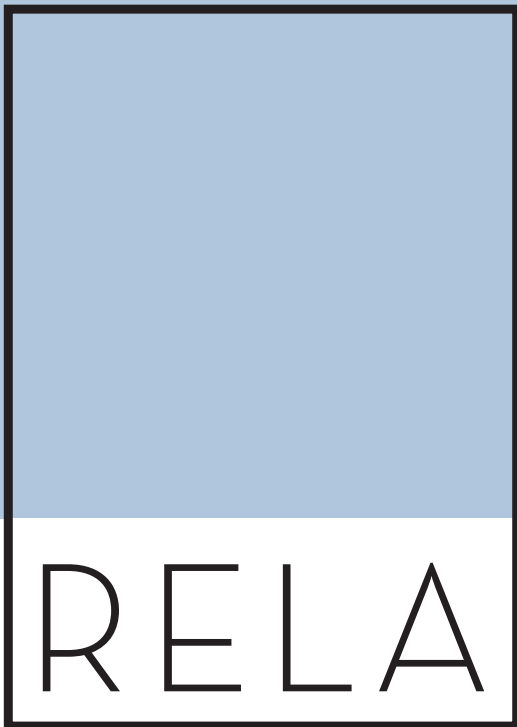## European Journal for Research on the Education and Learning of Adults

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Varieties of agencies during working life changes

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Abstract

The aim of this study is to shed light on the varieties of workers´ agencies in working life change situations, which is an under-researched topic in the literature of workplace learning and in working life studies. The research questions are what kinds of agencies there are to be found when workers encounter changes and how the different kinds of agencies are connected together. The understanding of agency is grounded on the subject-centered socio-cultural approach, whereas the methodological approach is based on applying life-course perspective on research material consisting of 48 working life narratives written by Finnish adults. The narratives are analyzed by abductive content analysis. The results reveal the dynamical and periodical processes between the different kinds of agencies during one´s working life narrative. The different forms of agency overlap and rotate. Suffering can be seen as a dynamic concept mediating transformative agencies, small agency and resistance.

Keywords: Agency; small agency; suffering; working life changes

Changing working life calls for individual agency

The working life of future is expected to be quite different from the models and logics we are used to. One aspect of that is the growing number of different kind of changes during one´s work career. However, many features of the future are already here making the anticipation possible. (Gratton, 2011) The new features of work have encouraged particularly labor economists to produce several models for anticipations especially concerning the technical development and automation of human work. The most

fundamental debate is characterized by a dichotomy between the view that automation will spell the end of human work and the argument that technologies will increase the demand for labor like they have done in the past (Acemoglu & Restrepo, 2018). Even the "moderate" forecasts have suggested (massive) disappearance of whole occupations or at least tasks, which means remarkable needs for reflection, training and new choices and starts for working adults (Frey & Osborne, 2013; Nedelkoska & Quintini, 2018; World Economic Forum, 2018.)

Acemoglu and Restrepo (2018) have stated that the correct approach to changes in labour market would be task-based, not occupation-based, which means that there will be more changes in the working peoples´ tasks and duties than in the whole occupation structure of the society. The researchers have constructed a task-based economic framework, where automation is conceptualized as replacing labor in specific tasks. They argue, for example, that the displacement effect of automation is balanced by the creation of new tasks in which human labor has a comparative advantage, which for its part fosters a countervailing reinstatement effect for labor. Nevertheless, Acemoglu and Restrepo (2018) anticipate that the adjustment process is likely to be slower and more painful than this account of balance between automation and new tasks at first suggests. This is because the reallocation of labor (meaning adult people, for the most) from its existing jobs and tasks to new ones is a slow process, in part owing to time-consuming search and other "labor market imperfections". (Acemoglu & Restrepo, 2018.)

The approaches, conceptions and terminology used by the labor economists highlights structure over human agency. However, it is obvious that the working life changes require a remarkable amount of agency and learning to become a living reality. In addition, even the economists state that it is worth to note that new tasks require new skills and competencies, and especially when the education sector does not keep up with the demand for new skills, a mismatch between skills and technologies will complicate the adjustment process (Acemoglu & Restrepo, 2018). For these reasons, understanding working life changes is a crucial necessity to the education and learning researchers and practitioners. There certainly will be a need for lifelong education and learning and some education system reforms, too. However, for the most, there is and will be an individual level need for continuing reflection and agency in the changing situations confronted during one´s career and life course. In their profound literature review, Eteläpelto, Vähäsantanen, Hökkä and Paloniemi (2013) have stated that widening the theoretical perspective of workplace learning into subject´s active participation and agency at work is needed in order to realize workers´ commitment to the ideal of being a flexible and creative life-long learner and an active co-developer of working practices.

In this article, the individual agency manifested in working life change situations, especially in organizational changes, is elaborated based on empirical qualitative study. I ask what kind of agencies there is to be found when people encounter changes at their workplaces and how they are connected to each other. Especially, I am interested in "small or minimal agency" (Honkasalo, 2008) that has not been in the focus of working life or workplace learning research. I propose that there exists varieties of interconnected individual agencies behind the aforementioned labor market imperfections that are worth recognizing both at the firm level development processes and at the society level. At the individual level, the agency is conditioned by sufferings generated by working life changes that cause many kind of experiences of losses to working people. A better understanding of these experiences and interconnected varieties of agencies would be crucial to experts who offer counselling, training or education to adult people in changing working life.

Variations of agency in change situations

Agency in organizations and working life is characteristically understood as a transformative power, as something needed to generate (positive) development. Tuominen and Lehtonen (2018) state that in organization studies the concept of agency is used to explain organizational members´ ability to purposively pursue continuity or transformation in their social contexts. They use the notion of transformative agency in order to refer to the individual´s ability to purposefully transform the structures in which they are embedded. The researchers state, that the kind of agency has been widely considered as actions of individuals or groups of similarly positioned individuals who compete with other agents in advancing their interests. In contrast to that, Tuominen and Lehtonen (2018) want to see agency as a multilevel phenomenon, which is relationally and dynamically constituted in organizations.

The dynamic nature of different kind of agencies at workplaces has already been noticed in the classic sociological research literature based on labor process theory (Braverman, 1974) that has taken on the foreground the resistance and consent of the workers (Burawoy 1979, 1985; Edwards 1979; Friedman, 1979). By using these approaches, even the silent resistance to development projects and other activities not hoped for, namely organizational misbehavior has been analyzed (Ackroyd, 2013; Järvensivu, 2007). Respectively, it has been shown that sometimes learning at work can be seen as the employers´ means of intensifying and controlling work, but that it can be opposed and resisted by workers, too (Järvensivu & Koski, 2012).

During the years, the recognition of the range of recipient responses to change has been expanded beyond resistance per se to include cynism, withdrawal behaviors, readiness, support and commitment (Boram, 2018). Rafferty and Jimmieson (2017) remind that the approaches to resistance to change in research literature differ, but the recent thinking suggests that resistance is a multidimensional construct.

Despite the findings in social sciences, Boram (2018) states that in recent organizational and management literature the change recipients are described as implicitly if not explicitly passive in all the characterizations used and the agency of them has not been of much interest. Instead, it has been common to concentrate on the role of the change agents in organizational changes. He sees that even the term resistance has been later conceptualized and operationalized as a reactive passive attitude, although it was originally used to describe the active application of a force to counter change. Boram states that the distinction between positive (acceptance) and negative (resistance) responses to change and the tendency to ignore the degree of activation involved in recipients´ responses fails to capture a meaningful component of recipients´ responses to change (Boram, 2018). Respectively, Harman (2014) states that the terms learning and learner are often used generically in the research literature of workplace learning, as if they had a fixed and shared meaning and the approach to workplace learning all too often is alignment with the targets and development needs set by management, whereas workplace learning also could introduce resistance (Harman, 2014).

Rafferty and Jimmieson (2017) state, that there is plenty of critical research about the negative influences of organizational changes on the well-being at work but the subjective perceptions of the change situations are less studied. They propose that this focus on objective measures may still have resulted in an underestimation of the effects of organizational change on employee well-being. They emphasize the importance of researching the individual sense making processes in order to understand workers experiences and reactions to organizational changes. (Rafferty & Jimmieson, 2017). Tuominen and Lehtonen (2018) remind that two central properties underlying working

life agency, namely reflexity and bargaining power differ. The bargaining power is more explicitly tied to the structure, while reflexity can be seen as a more durable and less conditioned by structure. According to them, more research is required to understand how the properties needed to identify the opportunities to change emerge and interact to create individual´s transformative agency in different organizational contexts. (Tuominen & Lehtonen, 2018).

These debates show, that after all the years of working life research, there still seems to exists under-researched aspects concerning the agency of workers in organizational changes and in other working life change situations. A better understanding of these aspects would be essential to be able to facilitate changes and to help and counsel workers to construct their professional identities and work careers. Based on the aforementioned studies, the research gaps seem to situate in the workers active meaning making processes that create different kind of agencies and understanding the varieties of agencies and degrees of activity involved in the workers responses to changes. In line with these research needs, the study at hand concentrates on the different kind of workers´ agencies when they encounter change situations (mostly organizational changes) at their workplaces.

My understanding of agency is based on subject-centered socio-cultural approach proposed by Eteläpelto and her colleagues (2013). I agree with them in that there is a need to understand subjects in their complex socio-cultural surroundings and to investigate them from a life-long perspective, not merely from a momentary and cross-sectional point of view. The subject-centered life course agency sees adult learners and workers as individuals who not only learn the new knowledge and skills needed, but also act as feeling and willing subjects. These kind of subjects actively prioritize, choose and consider what is worth aspiring in their life and in the future. The researchers state that the aspect of life-course perspective has been neglected in theories and studies of workplace learning. (Eteläpelto et al., 2013).

I apply in my research the life-long or life-course perspective by studying retrospective working life narratives written by 48 Finnish adults using the perspective of changing forms of agency. Because I am interested in the varieties of agencies in working life change situations, I concentrate on the parts of the narratives that describe the changes and the writers´ experiences of them. Resulted from that, the life-course perspective is restricted and focused to 3-40 years of the writers' lives.

Respectively, my interest in varieties of agency is focused on the socio-cultural context of my study, which is the workplaces and the changing working life in Finland. As can be noticed in the literature cited above, in the context of working life, it has been conventional and justifiable to make a separation between transformative agency in line with the development targets of the management (like participating in the firms´ development work) and workers´ resistance. Based on the individualization tendencies of working life and the noticed need to focus on individual subjects perspective (Eteläpelto et al., 2013), I also differentiate between the in-firm transformative agency and transformative agency in respect to one´s career (like career transitions).

In the light of my research material, the Finnish working life narratives, there still exists one further need to an extension of the understanding of workers´ agencies in change situations. I propose that in order to be able to shed more light on the questions about workers´ agency in working life changes, there is a need to take one extremely typical reaction or response of the workers under consideration and that is what I am going to do next.

Small agency and enduring suffering in change situations

Undoubtedly, workers transformative agency and their active reactions, responses and resistance to changes in all of their forms are central varieties of agency in working life change situations. However, none of the cited approaches to agency in working life changes recognizes the kind of agency that Honkasalo (2008, 2009) refers to by using the term "small agency". She uses the concept to describe the agency that contrasts to the notion of rational agency, aimed at social transformations (Honkasalo, 2009). According to Honkasalo (2008), the widely applied rational and goal-oriented notion of human action and agency is too narrow a notion to allow the precarious modalities to be captured.

Honkasalo has developed the notion of small agency in her anthropological study of Finnish North Karelia, the region worldwide known for its´ heart diseases. Honkasalo did her research among the people who have remained in North Karelia after structural changes that have caused most young people to move to other parts of the country. The people, especially women, described the life as tight or restricted ("ahas") compared to full or rich life that they formerly had and that was taken away from them. They had gone through many kinds of losses, for example, the family members had moved away and their work and profession (agriculture) had become almost impossible. Honkasalo states that the women suffered a lot because of the situation, but also acted while suffering. The everyday life of them was filled with a modality of agency that aimed neither at social transformation nor at resistance. The ends of their agency were to keep one´s own and the family´s "hold on the world", and to reconstitute meaningful kinship, residence and identity. (Honkasalo, 2009).

These descriptions have much in common with the experiences and descriptions of Finnish people in working life and organizational change situations that I have studied in my previous studies using the narrative material at hand and other research materials before that (Järvensivu, 2014, 2016). With regard to the narrative material, there were plenty of losses, which the writers described. The writers told how they had lost their working communities, colleagues, their tasks, duties, and even their work identities in the organizational changes. They felt being left alone and alienated, even oppressed. The workers certainly suffered. They cried. They had severe sleeping problems and many kinds of symptoms. They got illnesses and diagnoses (Järvensivu, 2016). In the light of these findings, the agency in working life change situations is embedded in tough experiences and suffering corresponding the experienced socio-cultural context in North Karelia.

Frost and Hoggett (2008) have used Pierre Bourdieu´s conceptualization of social suffering as a notion that draws attention to social misery both as an unequal distribution of material goods and as people´s lived experience of domination and repression, including feelings (humiliation, anger, despair and resentment). They state, that the notion of suffering denotes the intermeshed components of thinking, feeling, responding, and acting. In their psychosocial approach, they also have been concerned with suffering as both a reflexive and non-reflexive phenomenon. In other words, social suffering can at times be thought about, critically and creatively, but at times, it is embodied, enacted or projected because it cannot be thought about. Social suffering draws attention to the lived experience of inhabiting social structures of oppression, and the pain that arises from this. (Frost & Hoggett, 2008).

According to Renault (2010) the current phase of capitalism, labelled neoliberalism, is characterized by the emergence of new conditions of work as well as structural trend toward social exclusion. The subjective difficulties that these new conditions of work produce can be labelled as suffering at work, which has a double implication for social

critique. Suffering at work is a part of pathological aspects in the new working conditions, but it also produces individualization and guilt complexes that are obstacles to any practical dynamic of social transformation (Renault, 2010).

In her study, Honkasalo (2009) defines social suffering as an umbrella category that connects different kinds of human problems, including those that create pain, distress, and other trials that people undergo or are forced to endure. She uses the notion of social suffering as a methodological tool for thinking about illness experience, uncertainty, and agency (Honkasalo, 2009). She sees suffering as an intersubjective experience, but she also follows Bourdieu and focuses on sufferings in plural form. She is interested in the tiny, small-scale sufferings, which are produced within and by the social processes of everyday life. She has found variety of peoples´ attempts not to render themselves as objects of circumstances, but instead to act. Sometimes these people fought to try to keep suffering at distance. However, she sees that people somehow "embraced contingency" and didn´t try to avoid it. Honkasalo states that people in North Karelia didn´t suffer for uncertainty. Instead, they were in constant danger of losing their grip of the world, their presence. (Honkasalo, 2009).

Honkasalo defines presence following Ernesto Martino as one´s ability to be an active agent in the world. She sees that protecting one´s being in the world or fighting for having the possibility to remain there constitutes a cultural core of human agency. The loss of one´s own subjectivity, of one´s ability to act can be threatened for many reasons, but Honkasalo reminds that the cultural context bears many meaningful modes of holding on to a world and having a grip on it within social interactions. Honkasalo follows Martino´s thinking on agency as having a grip on the world. That way, she comes to the approach of the small agency that makes a clear difference to the agency considered as intentional, individual, rational, and normative and aiming at social change. (Honkasalo, 2009). I propose that the kind of understanding of agency and its´ connections to (social) suffering is extremely important to be able to understand the agencies of my research participants.

Honkasalo reminds that the agency should be explored within the grammar of concepts within which it resides, which means that in the context of social suffering, the notion of agency embraces ethical aspects as well (Honkasalo, 2008). Enduring suffering was shared and valued among the North Karelian women. Enduring created ethical agency and the identity that was considered a proper North Karelian woman. It was an investment, struggle and achievement. The agency was crucial to endure suffering (Honkasalo, 2009).

Enduring suffering can be seen as an agency along with the lines of the theological etymology and roots of suffering (passion). Regarding theological heritage, suffering as an experience is considered as carrying along the experience of rendering oneself more or less passive, adapting. However, Honkasalo (2008) reminds of the often-neglected domain of agency that human experience always entails. In addition to attempts to control uncertainty, it also can be encountered by embracing it, living with it, bearing it (Honkasalo, 2008).

In this study, I am especially interested in the possibility to find small (ethical) agency in the narratives of (mostly women) workers who had encountered change situations at their workplaces. Would it be essential to raise the small agency, like enduring suffering, to the categories of relevant forms of agency beside the transformative agency and resistance in working life studies?

Methodology

This research is based on written stories, that I call working life narratives, collected in a research project at Tampere University. The narratives were collected by writing invitation that was focused at Finnish adults during the years 2011-2012. In the invitation, we asked people to write us about the solutions they have made to get through the working life changes that they had encountered. We also encouraged people to tell us about the "minor and major victories at the working life field", because we wanted to collect happy narratives, too.

The invitation was disseminated through newspapers, magazines and social media. Forty-eight people sent us their working life narratives. Most writers were women and only a few were under forty years old. Some of the stories were short but most consisted of several pages and consisted the whole working life narrative of the writer. We also got a couple of "books" the length of which were tens of pages. Some of the stories were written by hand and difficult to read. The research material was quite extensive and versatile. It has been very laborious to analyze, partly resulting from the tough experiences described in the stories, too. In the end, there were not so many happy narratives. Because of its very personal nature, the material is not made open.

During the past six years, I have read the stories many times and made different kind of analysis of the material using, for the most, narrative approaches (Hyvärinen, Hatavara & Hydén, 2013). For example, the typical narrative of working life changes, happy and unlucky narratives and the episodes and traits of them have been differentiated. In that sub-research, it was found that almost every story started at the situation of organizational change and that there were plenty of common experiences including losses, loneliness, illnesses and sufferings. These results have been published in a scientific book written in Finnish (Järvensivu, 2014).

The other narrative study has been made about the embodied social suffering that turns to illnesses and further to survival narratives by which the domination, oppression and social suffering is resisted. That sub-research showed the importance of the notion of social suffering in understanding the writers´ reactions and feelings and the structural oppression behind them, which is used as an important background information for the study at hand. Six remedial narratives were revealed in that study. Using them, the writers changed their narratives from unlucky or even suffering narratives to happy narratives. These results have been published in a social medical scientific journal in Finnish (Järvensivu, 2016).

In this article, I continue based on the fore mentioned analyses and focus on the perspective of agency in change situations, which has not been previously analyzed. My objective is to find out the varieties of agencies and the possible connections between them. Especially, I concentrate on the small agency. I apply abductive content analysis meaning that I move back and forth between inductive (data-driven) and deductive (concept- or theory-driven) approaches to the research material. (Graneheim, Lindgren & Lundman, 2017). First, I make a categorization of the different forms of workers´ agencies manifested in organizational and other working life change situations. That part of the study is merely descriptive (Graneheim et al., 2017). Then I deepen the interpretation and concentrate on two narratives to be able to answer the questions concerning the nature of the small agency and the connections between different kind of agencies during the narrative. That second part of my analysis is based on an interpretive paradigm (Graneheim et al., 2017).

I have marked the citations by numbers of the writings. The translations from Finnish are mine and I am aware of that I might have lost some nuances that would be important to the interpretation. I also have anonymized some expressions of the citations.

Results

Workers transformative agency, resistance and small agency in change situations

While the first research task is to investigate the variety of the workers´ agencies in organizational and working life change situations, the convenient analysis unit of the study is the expression of agency. It has been found that the presence of expressions of agency vary between people´s narratives, and even profiles of identities according to the presence of expressions of agency and learning can be formed based on that (Biasin & Evans, 2019). Concentrating on the expressions found in the complete narrative research material at hand allows finding out the variety of agency expressions. The analysis of the different kind of agencies proceeded as follows: First, I picked up the different kind of expressions of workers agency from the research material. Then I categorized them into subcategories. Finally, I reduced the subcategories to main categories.

I formed and named the main categories using the theoretical considerations presented in the theoretical part of this article. The main categories I found are (in-firm and during career) transformative agency, resistance and small agency. The subcategories of the transformative agency are participating in development processes (in-firm transformative agency), education and training (in-firm or in-career transformative agency) and career transitions, like taking a new job, learning a new vocation or profession or starting as an entrepreneur (transformative agency during career). The subcategories of the resistance are complaining to the supervisor about the work content, trying to negotiate about the workload and asking for more compensation for extra work. Finally, I differentiated small agency as having some (minimal) influence on one´s own job, enduring suffering, balancing between being present and taking distance and getting illnesses. I give some examples of the categorization and reduction process in the table below.

Examples of the expressions of agency	Subcategories of agencies	Main categories of agencies
"After two years I had my strength back and I started to think about a break. Even leaving the job didn´t seem to me like escaping anymore. I took a leave for training myself." (case 10) "I got a new job. Now I have been in the new job a couple of months and I am very happy and enjoy my work." (case 3) "I left the senseless paid work and started my own business. I still work a lot but I can control it myself and do the things I want to." (case 28)	Participating in development work Educating Training Career transition (new job, new vocation, starting as an entrepreneur)	Transformative agency - in-firm agency - in-career agency

"I told to my supervisor that I couldn't handle the work load even if I wouldn´t be a part-timer." (case 3)	Complaining of the work content or workload Asking for more compensation for extra work	Resistance
"We will have a fusion. I was committed to my unit but now I have to freeze my hearth in order to get the job done. You have to zombie out not to go with the negative discussions in coffee room. I have decided to work at home. I feel like deserter, but I don´t have enough strength to fight with them anymore. It has been interesting to notice the absent-minded sickness in myself that I can´t abolish by explaining." (case 7) "I started to get symptoms, because I had no social affiliation. If you complain, the spiral is there. You will be stigmatized and repressed. I felt that I had been excluded of my own unit." (case 42) "I got some kind of crisis, and had physical sicknesses." (case 15)	Enduring suffering Balancing being present and taking distance Getting illnesses Having some influence on one´s own job	Small agency

Table 1. The analyzing and categorization of the agency in change situations.

Because of my interest in the under-researched small agency and its´ role and function in the working life change situations, I analyzed further the narratives where there were expressions of small agency, suffering and enduring.

Enduring suffering as a form of small ethical agency in change situations

In order to give an answer to the research questions of the connections between the varieties of the agencies and the role and nature of the small agency during the working life narratives I picked up two stories to a scrutiny. I chose the narratives that included profound descriptions of the experiences and varieties of agencies and gave some hints of the time perspective, too.

The most prominent cases were the narratives of one teacher and one librarian who later changed her job as a union officer. Both of them were middle-aged women who had a university degree. The story of the librarian was one of the narratives that included almost all the parts or episodes of the typical narrative of working life changes, which were found in my previous study (Järvensivu, 2014). The parts were organizational changes, losses, breaking the communities, heavy workload, chaos, suffering, loneliness and alienation, stigmatized as a poor worker, illnesses and break. The only missing part was the break that was an important episode in many other stories, including the story of

the teacher. The break in a story could be a sickness leave or alteration leave or a leave for education and training or an unemployment after a dismissal. The function of the break to the writers' narrative was resting and reflecting, which for its' part, could transform the unhappy narrative to happy one (Järvensivu, 2014).

I´ll start by analyzing the excerpt of the teachers´ story. The excerpts from the working life narratives are limited to the descriptions of working life change situations, which means that the analysis concentrates in these two cases on about 4 and 20 years period of the writers´ life course. I have marked in capital letters my interpretations to make it easier to follow my analysis.

> Year after year I wanted away. I tried to think about other opportunities. Two years I was so tired that I could not think about them properly or apply for opportunities. (SUFFERING, NO STRENGTH FOR TRANSFORMATIVE AGENCY) I just wanted away. Away. (WANT TO DISTANCE) I had difficulties with my boss. When I promoted the interests of my colleagues or students in the meetings, I got a reputation of a challenging person. (RESISTANCE) My supervisor counselled me many times how I should behave and once he asked directly, why I am so difficult. (NOT A GOOD WORKER) When I got my strength back after two years I started to think of a break. After one year, I was strong enough to make a decision. Leaving the workplace didn´t feel like escaping, anymore. (NO MORE ENDURING OR ETHICAL NEED TO STAY; DISTANCE) I started the training leave. (BREAK; TRANSFORMATION) After the year, I came back but to other kind of tasks, fortunately. I have managed the situation only by thinking that this is temporary (ENDURING, TEMPORARILY). I have suffered sleeping difficulties and illnesses. (SUFFERING, GETTING ILLNESSES) I apply for other jobs all the time. (TRANSFORMATION) (case 10)

As the example of the teacher´s narrative shows, the varieties of agencies have dynamical connections and changing nature when inspected in life-long perspective (in this case meaning a couple of years). Transformative agency, resistance, suffering and enduring overlap, shift, and change during the working life narrative. Suffering takes more place when the space for agency becomes narrow. The teacher endures suffering for a while, but there exists resistance and considerations of transformative agency at the same time. It seems that during the years, transformative agency begins to displace enduring in the teachers´ case but that is a very slow process. At the writing moment, suffering still stays, but the time horizon gives hope. Enduring suffering is interpreted to be temporary, which makes it durable (see also Honkasalo, 2009).

In the teachers´ story, enduring suffering and staying at one´s place seem to be culturally appreciated, whereas leaving the working community is seen as a betrayal or escaping. In the same way, Honkasalo (2008) stated that staying and being present were important dimensions of enduring and ethical agency in North Karelia, where responsibility defined agency from the viewpoint of a tension between choice and commitment. In line with that in the working life narratives, enduring suffering also enables being present, which could be interpreted as not losing one´s subjectivity (Honkasalo, 2008). The agency is small, staying at one´s place, mostly silent (Järvensivu, 2016), because it is valued. It is something that good workers would do. However, this kind of subjectivity, agency, have to be interpreted as local, in-firm agency. Enduring suffering at one´s workplace means retaining one´s presence and potential agency at that workplace. It means commitment to the workplace and working community. At the same time, enduring suffering means choosing not to leave, whereas leaving would have meant transformative agency in perspective of one´s career. For the most, enduring also means not to choose resistance, either.

Enduring suffering was choosing to stay and choosing enduring meant suffering. The teacher tried to find a balance between staying present and taking distance. She wanted away, but the ethical responsibility to work community forced to stay. It took an enormous strength to leave the workplace and the community and there was a need for suffering for years before the teacher had enough strength and 'leaving the workplace didn´t feel like escaping, anymore' (case 10).

Suffering as mediating the different kinds of agencies

The second narrative, the story of the librarian, has common features to the story of the teacher, but there exists different aspects, too. In the text below I cite an excerpt of the librarian´s story.

> I am a woman, over fifty years old. My first long employment relationship started during the years at the university. I worked as a librarian and when I got my degree, I thought that, why not. Therefore, I qualified for that, got the permanent job as a librarian, and enjoyed my work. In the library, I also experienced managerial job, bureaucracy, the positions of the employee and the employer and the difficulties of the development work. (TRANSFORMATIVE AGENCY) I was social. I worked for the labor union and was the voice for the employees. (TRANSFORMATIVE AGENCY INCLUDING RESISTANCE) That was interesting and I learned a lot. I got promotions and many kind of tasks during my library career.
>
> The library work has changed enormously from the 1980´s. I had the chance to see the time of the pencils and papers and so I saw the fast technical development. All these CD-roms, awkward online modems and then the Finnish and international databases, automation, web 2.0 and who knows all this metadata and digitalization of today. The speed of the work began to be dizzy in 1990´s. It was addictive and stressful for someone who has a strong work orientation. (TRANSFORMATIVE AGENCY) In the beginning of the 1990´s I was a supervisor and within many kinds of projects and working committees. Every day was different. My work was interesting and fun. The working community was nice, my subordinates supported me, and the supervisors encouraged.
>
> But then. What happened? I was no more with the union work because I worked as a supervisor. (NO MORE RESISTANCE) The routine work, planning, purchasing. (NO MORE TRANSFORMATIVE AGENCY) My nearest supervisor started to get part-time pension benefits. I noticed that I worked for 1,5 persons. I asked for more salary but didn´t get any. (RESISTANCE) I felt to be between a rock and hard place in the committees, in which I sat. I know how my subordinates wanted to work and what kind of changes they wanted. The directors wanted something else. (TIGHT AND NARROW SPACE) I had to take care of some unpleasant jobs as a supervisor. The fluent flow of work was my main objective and there you have to do against individuals, unfortunately. You can´t please everyone. (GOOD WORKER / SUPERVISOR?) I felt that there was a great contradiction between the objectives of my own work and the objectives of the library. This change could be seen everywhere in the library work. (MORAL CONTRADICTION) There were contradictory changes in the economic principles. (SOCIAL SUFFERING)
>
> The others showed symptoms, too. The supervisor is responsible all the time and she has to be ready for everything. I had never thought that I would cry because of work but one day I did. (SUFFERING) I cried for anger and for powerlessness. I was only one mechanical part of the large apparat. I couldn´t keep my direction. (LOSING ONE´S PRESENCE AND AGENCY) I had to adapt to the direction of the library´s managers, although I knew that it would cause suffering in the personnel. (NOT A GOOD WORKER / SUPERVISOR) I was ever more frustrated. I noticed that Fridays, after the kids had gone to bed, I sat at the kitchen table with a bottle of wine and a candle. I was wondering what I would do with my

life. (TRANSFORMATION?) I knew that I would have a career in the library. I would get an opportunity to influence on the library inside it, if only I would be patient. They liked me at the upper floor although I was critical. (TEMPORARY ENDURING FOR THE BECOMING POSSIBILITY ON TRANSFORMATIVE AGENCY)

I was almost forty, then. I got some kind of crisis, and had physical illnesses. (SUFFERING, GETTING ILLNESSES) I started to think that if I didn´t leave the library now I would stay there and wait for the retirement. (ENDLESS ENDURING) I felt that I was absorbed empty. (SOCIAL SUFFERING) I didn´t want to develop the library to the direction it was taken by the management. I do not know, maybe I thought too much about myself and about my career in the library. (OVERESTIMATING TRANSFORMATIVE POSSIBILITIES?) However, I felt that I was filled with the kind of things that functioned like the filling in the ragdoll. I was becoming rigid and inflexible and I couldn´t move the things around me. (SOCIAL SUFFERING, LOSING ONE´S AGENCY) My colleagues saw me suffering and they tried to help and support, but in the end, I was alone in the committees and negotiations. (LONELINESS, ALIENATION) Just then, my own union was recruiting an officer. I felt that it was for me. I made an application. There were 62 applicants and I won. (TRANSFORMATIVE AGENCY) First, there were quite peaceful working conditions, but then the changes began there, too.

How did I survive? I have seen so much that I know that I am safe if I do what I am asked to do. (NOT LOSING ONE´S PRESENCE) No more. (NO RESISTANCE, NO IN-FIRM TRANSFORMATIVE AGENCY) I am not high-flying for the quality of my job, anymore. They respect me and I have some influence on my job. (SMALL AGENCY) I have learned my lesson. It is a consequence of the exhaustion, which I suffer, too. Resting doesn´t help for that. It is not only physical fatigue in its nature. It is in my soul. Sometimes thinking about it makes me feel sad, but on the other hand selfishness and self-preservation tell me that it must be that way, otherwise you don´t survive. (SOCIAL SUFFERING, ENDURING) (case 15)

In the librarians´ story, enduring suffering and not leaving the library might have meant possibilities to retain one´s presence and even have possibilities to transformative agency in the future. There was a promise that enduring suffering would someday change to in-firm transformative agency. However, the situation was too tight, space for agency too narrow, possibilities too uncertain and social suffering too much to endure for the librarian. She was about to lose her hope for better, her presence and even her small agency, but then became the possibility to transformative agency at the level of her career.

After all, the end of the story has different features. The changes have begun at the new workplace, too. It seems like the woman had lost her endeavors to in-firm transformative agency. She is suffering again and she is exhausted. It could be interpreted that the woman suffers for having lost something about her agency, the transformative part of it. Now she tries to endure and hang up with the small agency she has in the form of influence in her own work, although she is longing for the transformative agency that she once had.

Suffering is in the narratives connected to another form of small agency, too, which likewise is a part of the teachers´ and librarians´ stories. Many writers described different kind of symptoms, sicknesses and illnesses. Most of them were mental in nature, like depression or burnout. These illnesses could be interpreted as forms of suffering, but they also contained space for one special kind of agency. That was an agency of the victim (Wainwright & Calnan, 2002). The illnesses and diagnoses made it possible to the worker to be confessed as a good and proper worker who had been the victim of the ever hardening working life and who despite of that had worked a lot, actually too much. In addition, illnesses could be cured (Järvensivu, 2016). That opened up possibilities to transformative agency.

The role of suffering seems important in understanding the workers´ agencies when they encounter change situations. My first perception is that, when the space for agency becomes restricted suffering deepens and it even takes a form of illnesses. That is in line with the theories of social suffering which emphasize the role of structural oppression in generating painful experiences (Frost & Hoggett, 2008). However, the crucial question concerns the possibilities of the worker to develop transformative agency when suffering. Does suffering in work generate transformative actions or hinder them?

The narratives don´t give a simple answer to that question. There seems to be dynamical and periodical processes between suffering, enduring and more transformative forms of agency during one´s life-course or working life narrative. The different forms of agency overlap and rotate. Suffering can be seen as a dynamic concept mediating transformative agencies, small agency and resistance. Therefore, my second perception is that it is important to understand suffering not only as an experience, but also as a generative form and source of agency and power. However, developing the transformative agency while suffering seems to take many years, which contrasts to the idea of a flexible worker, who changes tasks and jobs fluently and whose only effort to take is learning new skills and competencies.

Discussion and conclusions

In this article, I took a closer look at the "labor market imperfections" that the economists have stated to hinder the fluent transition to the working life of future (Acemoglu & Restrepo 2018) by studying experiences and agency of Finnish workers in change situations based on written working life narratives. I contributed to the literature of agency in working life changes that usually has focused either on transformative (positive) in-firm agency (Tuominen & Lehtonen, 2018) or on the workers resistance (Burawoy, 1979; Rafferty & Jimmieson, 2017). My research task was to find out the varieties and connections of workers´ agencies when they encounter changes at their workplaces. Better understanding of workers´ agency is needed for developing practices that help people to learn and find the possibilities to act in the working life change situations.

The study shows, that in addition to transformative in-firm agency and resistance, there exists both transformative in-career agency and "small agency" in working life changes. The small agency takes a form of enduring suffering, getting illnesses or having a minimal influence in ones´ own work. The study also revealed the meaning of (social) suffering in encountering the organizational changes and in forming individual agency. The suffering recipient of working life changes could be interpreted to be a fundamental source of the "labour market imperfections", about which the labor economists worry.

On the other hand, the results deepened the picture of enduring suffering as a form of (minor) agency in change situations by revealing it´s connections to other, more powerful, forms of agency, namely transformative agency and resistance. I agree with Honkasalo (2008) in understanding enduring suffering as a small and ethical agency, but I propose that not to be the whole picture. In working life change situations, the small agency can generate resistance or transformative agency, although that is a slow process lasting for years. The life-course perspective, proposed by Eteläpelto and her colleagues (2013), helps to find out the interconnectedness, and dynamical, and changing nature of the varieties of agencies in working life changes.

This research have some practical applications, too. I found that there is a threat of losing one´s agency (presence) in uncertain working life change situations, which generates suffering. Therefore, it is necessary to participate the workers to development

processes as early as possible to make a space for their agency (see also Kalliola, Heiskanen & Kivimäki, 2019). There might be a need for counselling practices, too. Interesting further question would be, if the participative development process or an individual counselling process could form the space needed for reflection and agency to develop.

The most notable limitation of this study is that it is based on retrospective qualitative research concerning only 48 working life narratives of Finnish people, mostly women. Qualitative and quantitative studies of the theme in Finland and in other countries are needed. Further research could consider closer the connections between the different kinds of agencies and the forms of small agency in varying contexts and countries, and the meaning of them with respect to learning. The life-course perspective could also be applied more profoundly to research the dynamics and connections between the varieties of agencies during different life phases.

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PIAAC and the South – Is Southering the new Othering? Global Expansion of dominant Discourses on Adult Literacy

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Abstract

Large-scale studies such as Programme for the international assessment of adult competencies (PIAAC) are currently the most influential variant of literacy research. PIAAC is undergoing a process of regional expansion towards countries located in the geographical south. Based on the finding that large-scale studies can create stereotypes about social groups, this contribution examines the extent to which this danger also exists with regard to countries and regions. For doing so we suggest the term southering. Southering brings together the discourses about the South with the concept of othering, introduced by Said (1978). The presentation of the results as tables and world maps can result in exposing countries of the South to a pronounced deficit perspective. The contribution does not pursue the goal of questioning the legitimacy of international studies. Rather, we would like to point out the necessity of exercising due care in the interpretation of corresponding study results.

Keywords: Global South; large-scale assessment; Othering; PIAAC; Southering

Introduction

The last decades have witnessed the growth in importance of international large-scale assessment studies (ILSA). Evidence based policies call for large datasets, which allow

analysing differences between and within countries regarding educational achievements. The discussion about the sustainable development goals (SDG) by the United Nations reinforces the need to measure skills. The authors of this paper themselves are in charge of a national assessment survey and intensively used the datasets of the Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies (PIAAC) for secondary analyses in the last years. We take the high degree of attention towards international large-scale assessments as the starting point to reflect about another aspect of PIAAC. This contribution refers to the regional distribution of the assessment. Looking at the three rounds of the survey one might observe a regional expansion. Participating countries in the first round were mainly located in the geographical North. Meanwhile there is a still small but growing number of countries in the southern part of the globe in PIAAC rounds 2 and 3 (OECD, 2019, p. 19).

Critical positions on ILSA state that literality should not only be understood as a measurable construct, but even more importantly as a social practice. They also point out that competence measurement might promote deficit views of groups and countries (Evans, 2015; Gorur, 2015). In fact, the current discourse about literacy and about basic competencies is far from being oriented towards emancipatory aspects as Freire captured these terms (Freire, 2014). At the same time, the careful analysis of large datasets can even help to relativize common deficit-oriented stereotypes (Grotlüschen, Riekmann, & Buddeberg, 2015).

Our paper poses the question of whether the danger of labelling groups by stereotypical images can also occur regarding countries or regions, especially regarding countries from the South. We want to investigate whether PIAAC – and this might relate to other international surveys as well – unwillingly reinforce inadequate assumptions about 'South' in a process we want to call 'southering'. Therefore we examine different aspects of data collection and display of findings. However, it is by no means our intention to claim that such processes, which we describe by the term southering, are carried out intentionally. Rather, we want to name aspects in which stereotyping can take place and which therefore require particularly careful handling of data records.

Theoretical framework: South and Othering

To pursue this question we will first outline the position of PIAAC in the context of literacy research. We secondly explore the question of what can be understood as 'the South' beyond geographical concepts. Finally, we propose the concept of 'southering' as a term, which on the one hand can be related to Said's concept of "othering" and on the other hand to questions of the global South.

Literacy research and PIAAC

One of the first prominent large scale assessments regarding adult skills was the *International Adult Literacy Survey* (IALS) (OECD & Statistics Canada, 2000) in the 1990s. It was followed by the *Adult Literacy and Life-skills Surve*y (ALL) (OECD & Statistics Canada, 2005) and most recently by the *Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies* (PIAAC) (OECD, 2013a). The involvement of international organizations like the OECD has been discussed (Ydesen & Grek, 2019) as well as their growing influence on national educational policies (Grek, 2010). As a result ILSAs have become the currently most important tool in research on adult competences (Addey, 2018; Gorur, 2015; Hamilton, 2018). In PIAAC literacy is defined as 'the ability

to understand, evaluate, use and engage with written texts to participate in society, to achieve one's goals, and to develop one's knowledge and potential' (OECD, 2013a, p. 59). This notion of literacy also implies that literacy is a measurable set of skills. Assessment relies on a hierarchical competence model. Definitions and techniques to investigate literacy stem from northern conventions.

Even critical positions recognize the strengths of ILSAs, in particular the reduction of complexity and an easier understanding of differences between countries and regions (Gorur, 2015). The transformation of a complex fact like literacy into numbers (Hamilton, Maddox, & Addey, 2015) however carries the danger of simplification. Since the early 1990s (Street, 1992), the critical discussion on literacy became more and more visible as the 'New Literacy Studies' (NLS). Different approaches, implementing the New Literacy Studies' ideas, have been used for national studies, e.g. in Scotland (St. Clair, Tett, & MacLachlan, 2010) and Morocco (Erguig, 2017), but they remain the minority compared to repeated French, English and German national studies (Grotlüschen & Riekmann, 2011; Harding, 2011; Jonas, 2012;).

The single and internationally comparable notion of literacy as a consequence results in uniform narratives. Addey warns that literacy research via comparative large-scale assessments becomes a 'single story'[1], meaning that the definition becomes self-evident and cannot be scrutinized anymore.

The dominance of large-scale surveys in general and of PIAAC in particular appears to expand from high-income countries in the first round of PIAAC (mainly northern countries) to middle-income countries in the following rounds 2 and 3 (mainly southern countries).[2] Taking into account OECD's efforts to develop a PISA assessment for low-income countries (PISA for Development, Kaess, 2018), we might take this expansion to the 'South' as a general trend for assessment surveys.

The South

In his article 'The West and the Rest', Stuart Hall (1995), claims that 'west' might sound geographical, but is a concept rather than a natural category. One example for the conceptual character of a geographical issue is the so-called 'Brandt line'. Until the early 1990s, the 'first' and 'second world' used to be the western and eastern side of the iron curtain, all other countries being labelled the 'third world'. A commission led by the former German chancellor Willy Brandt tried to overcome the East-West controversy and to reach a more objective description of different parts of the world. The report suggested a line (the Brandt line) according to gross domestic product per capita, that mostly follows the latitude of the 30th degree North (Wionczek, 1981; Kaess, 2018). Figure 1 displays the Brandt Line, which indicates a North-South division. This division explicitly does not refer to Australia and New Zealand. Despite their geographical position, the two countries in discourse as a whole always belonged to the 'North' (Magallanes, 2015) not necessarily including their indigenous populations.

Figure 1: The Brandt Line (Royal Geographical Society, www.rgs.org)[3]

Referring to Martinez the notion about the South relies on conventions: 'By convention, the bottom half of a map is South' (2012). Maps have not always been oriented this way. The word 'orientation' points to the Orient (Jerusalem), and not the North. Famous maps between 800 and 1500 AC were round and flat, had Jerusalem in the centre, Asia in the top area, Europe down left and Africa down right. The first compasses were invented in China. They pointed to the South (Needham 1962, p. 229).

There are also discussions about the type of projections used in geographical maps. The well-established Mercator projection leads to an optical reduction of Africa and South America and to an optical valorisation of Europe, North America and Asia (Hruby, Chico Avelino, & Montoya Ayala, 2016). In education, maps mainly play a role in geography. A South-African textbook on critical literacy however also deals with maps in the context of perception of social and global reality. A specific task is 're-drawing the world to challenge maps based on Europe as the centre of the world' (Janks, Dixon, Ferreira, Granville, & Newfield, 2014, p. 147).

A very pronounced position taking the South out of the context of physical geography is formulated in the journal 'Global South'. Sparke states that 'South is everywhere, but always somewhere' (2007). According to discourse analyses of 'Global South', North and South have different connotations, e.g. freedom, urbanity and order for the North, the subaltern, rurality and chaos for the South (Pagel, Ranke, Hempel, & Köhler, 2014).

A further – quite extreme – position is not based on empirical data. It still shows a different position in discourse. It is supported by the artist and transgender activist Paul Beatriz Preciado who states that 'the South is not an existing, given place, but a gendered, sexualized, and racialized myth' (Preciado, 2017, p. 1).

Scholars from the discipline of political geography also state that South is not a geographically clear region. Instead, South might also be interpreted as something spatially different. It can be related to areas within nations and carry certain ascriptions. Jansson refers to 'internal orientalism' within the USA (2003, p. 293). With regard to the North and South in the USA, Jansson explains:

> This discourse consists of a tradition of representing the American South as fundamentally
> different from the rest of the United States, and an important strand of this tradition involves

construing 'the South' as a region where racism, violence, intolerance, poverty and a group of other negative characteristics reign. In contrast, 'America' is understood as standing for the opposite (Jansson, 2005, p. 265).

From Othering to Southering

In the late 1970s, Edward Said published his work on orientalism and the constructs of the 'east' and the 'other' (1978). He used the term 'othering' to clarify how the west imagines and discriminates the orient. Stuart Hall explicitly referred to Said's work when reflecting about 'the West and the rest' (Hall, 1995). Othering is also applied for discourses on migration. (Castro Varela, 2015).

Another discourse about othering appears in the current discussion on sustainable development goals, initiated by the United Nations (Hanemann, 2019). From a decolonizing perspective, this might be seen as an answer within the system of violent modernity (Andreotti, Stein, Ahenakew, & Hunt, 2015; Andreotti, Stein, Pashby, Susa, & Amsler, 2018). According to Andreotti et al. 'modernity's shine is articulated in ways […] that the very existence of the shiny side requires the imposition of systematic violence on others' (2018, p. 23).

Jansson identifies the ascription of the 'south' as a 'spatial other'. By using the term internal orientalism, he explicitly refers to Said's concept. More recently, Jansson's used the term 'southering'. He reflects on 'the structure of the internal orientalist discourse about "the South" (which I will call "southering")' (Jansson, 2017, p. 131). In this contribution we will use the term 'southering' in order to analyse processes which might result from international measurement of competences.

Corpus for the analysis: PIAAC data exploration tools and country reports

This paper relies on official publications and the data analysis tools provided by the OECD. Scholars focus on the mass media discourse after publication of first and second round of PIAAC results (Hamilton, 2018; Hamilton, Maddox, & Addey, 2015; Yasukawa, Hamilton, & Evans, 2016). The mass media discourse after the second round shows some interesting specifics, especially on Singapore and Greece. Hamilton shows that despite very similar results the development in Singapore is interpreted as a positive trend of educational achievements, while for Greece incapable educational policy and dependency from the European North is reported (Hamilton, 2018). Even though the empirical findings are more or less the same, the overall narratives of a successful, (neo-)liberal Asian economy and an unsuccessful, southern European economy dominate the discourse.

One of the tools that addresses mass media and a larger public is the International Data Explorer (IDE), provided by OECD and Educational Testing Service (ETS). This free online tool leads to fast results for most questions that can be answered with basic descriptive statistics. The IDE also allows generate interactive maps based on PIAAC data. The discussion of maps produced by the IDE follows the question whether the maps support southering procedures.

The second source of information that is comparable across countries consists of PIAAC Policy Briefs or Country Notes for specific countries[4]. The PIAAC overall reports (OECD, 2013a, 2016a, 2019) do not cover the country details and not all countries produced exhaustive country reports. Questions arise, whether there is a country report

produced by the national project managers and their teams and if there are differences regarding structure and content.

Findings: Southering by PIAAC

The techniques displayed here are taken from the PIAAC system, but probably might apply for many other large-scale assessments as well. We do not assume that any of the authors or people in charge intends to discriminate or disconnect countries or populations. Our focus is to investigate how influential the tools are, that shape the process and influence the discourse.

Southering by literacy definitions

PIAAC rounds include more and more countries. For the international comparison, the definition of literacy has to be globally agreed, which referring to Addey (2018) leads to a 'single story' with all the consequences of northern definitions being applied to southern countries (also: Richards, 2014). The notion of literacy not only concerns high-income countries, but also becomes global. The process has a tendency to fix terms for global monitoring, e.g. the new PISA competence domain global competence (Schleicher, 2016). Two recent discourse analyses show the very Western character of this approach (Ledger, 2018; Grotlüschen, 2018).

Southering by assessment instruments

Assessment surveys technically base on item development, translation procedures, scoring rules, scaling and background models. Some of the instruments and procedures are available for further research (e.g. the STEP initiative by the World Bank using PIAAC items or the LEO-PIAAC linking study (Grotlüschen, Buddeberg, Dutz, Heilmann, Stammer, 2019). However the reproduction of surveys requires very specialised knowledge. Hamilton states that an 'industry of workshops' to train scholars for secondary analyses travels around the world (Hamilton, 2018).[5] Countries from the Global South therefore might feel under pressure either to buy the standard instruments from the northern organizations or to start a long-term capacity-building process to gain their own knowledge.

More recent global processes like the UN Sustainable Development Goals and the requirement of monitoring the achievements generate additional time pressure (through monitoring, reporting and comparison). The consequence is a lack of time for new, globally agreed definitions, theories and instruments. If there is no time for developing own processes the countries and international organisations have to 'borrow' definitions, procedures, instruments from existing surveys. Doing so they confirm the dominance of the North, even if none of the experts and organisations would vote for it, if there were enough time. Time pressure in global procedures might be seen as a technique of southering[6].

Southering by country income

The OECD works with high and middle-income countries. The World Bank offers classifications by Gross National Income[7].

- Low-income countries are almost completely African (plus Haiti, Afghanistan, and North Korea).
- Low middle-income countries include several formerly Soviet Union countries, e.g. Ukraine, Moldavia, Kyrgyz Republic, and Tajikistan.
- Some Upper middle-income Countries (e.g. Mexico, Thailand) did participate in PIAAC.
- The high-income countries consist of roughly 100 countries out of which 23 (round 1) plus 7 (round 2) plus 5 (round 3) participated in PIAAC.

PIAAC will presumably expand further among the high-income countries and maybe a few middle-income countries, but – due to the high costs of the survey – not in the low-income countries. Both PIAAC and PISA are currently developed towards an easier and less costly version, which can be administered by middle- and low-income countries. The line between rich and poor countries becomes visible again. High income countries are able to afford PISA, the low-income countries might use PISA for Development (Kaess, 2018).

Southering by league tables

Results of international surveys usually display results in tables, which place the high performing countries on top and low performing countries at the bottom. This type of table is often called 'league table'. In total 24 countries participated in the first round of PIAAC (2008-2013)[8]. In the second round (2012-2016) other OECD member states (Chile, Greece, Israel, New Zealand, Slovenia, Turkey) and other partners (Jakarta/Indonesia, Lithuania, Singapore) entered the survey. Round 3 (2016-2019) was conducted in Ecuador, Hungary, Kazakhstan, Mexico, Peru and a second time in the United States.

Italy, Greece and Spain participated in the first (Italy, Spain) or second round (Greece). For Spain (OECD, 2013b) and Italy (OECD, 2013c), the country notes report their position at the lowest end of the literacy scale, but these notes do not report OECD averages. Instead comparisons are made with reference to the averages of the other participating countries in Round 1. 'Adults in Spain show below-average proficiency in literacy and numeracy compared with adults in the other participating countries.' (OECD, 2013b, p. 2).

From Round 2 on, comparisons consequently report OECD averages (see the Greek report: OECD, 2016b). Chile, Israel and Turkey participated in round 2. All three countries perform clearly below the OECD average and find themselves at the bottom of the table. Wording and reporting is strictly comparative, both cross-national as well as intra-national (e.g. younger versus older subpopulations). Doing so 'South' is created and confirmed between and within European countries. The OECD is geographically widespread and creates its own internal South, mostly not for geographical reasons but according to literacy proficiency as measured with northern instruments and definitions.

The way tables with results are organized changed slightly between PIAAC round 1 and 2. Countries, which entered the survey in the second round, are displayed in a different colour to be identified easily. Compared to the black-coloured countries of Round 1, most of the new countries are visibly at the bottom (South) of all rankings.

Southering by maps

Another way to display survey results are interactive maps. By using the International Data Explorer, maps and charts are easy to produce. Figure 2 shows a map automatically generated using the online tool.

Literacy,
Difference in averages between jurisdictions, for All adults [TOTAL] = All adults
PIAAC 2012

Selected countries
OECD Average
England and Northern Ireland (UK)
Israel
Singapore
Slovenia

Focal jurisdiction
Has a higher average than the focal jurisdiction
Is not significantly different from the focal jurisdiction
Has a lower average than the focal jurisdiction
Sample size was insufficient to provide a reliable estimate
Was not selected for comparison
Did not participate

NOTE: The data from the Russian Federation is preliminary and may be subject to change. Users should note that the sample for the Russian Federation does not include the population of the Moscow municipal region. The data published, therefore, do not represent the entire resident population aged 16-65 years in Russia but rather the population of Russia excluding the population residing in the Moscow municipal area. More detailed information regarding the data from the Russian Federation as well as that of other countries can be found in the *Technical Report of the Survey of Adult Skills*. Some apparent differences between estimates may not be statistically significant.
SOURCE: Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), Program for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies (PIAAC), 2012 Literacy Assessment.

Figure 2: Map produced with the IDE, based on PIAAC data (focal jurisdiction: OECD average)

The legend of the map shows that the focal jurisdiction in this case is the default jurisdiction, namely the OECD average. This value serves as a benchmark. All other countries appear as significantly above (green) or below (red) the focal value. Countries in which the literacy performance does not differ significantly from the average are sketched out in yellow. The map shows that all new countries from Round 2 (e.g. Chile, Greece, Israel, Turkey, Singapore) turn into red colour (significantly below average) while most Anglo-American countries turn to green colour (significantly above average).

The time of entering PIAAC matters. The Northern high-income countries are the early adopters, they started PIAAC, developed the definitions and instruments, they defined the scale and levels and they still are the majority in the participating countries. Consequently, their proficiencies have a strong statistical impact on the averages. The early adopters form the benchmark. The newcomers interpret their results in relation to this benchmark.

The countries involved in adult large-scale assessment differ quite a lot from the International Adult Literacy Survey (IALS) to the Adult Literacy and Lifeskills survey (ALL) and later to PIAAC. The earlier International Survey of Adult Skills (IALS) with

its data collection in the 1990s can also be used as a base for the maps and tables. The OECD did not execute IALS – unlike PIAAC. Therefore, no OECD average can be reported. Figure 3 shows a map based on results from IALS.

Literacy,
Difference in averages between jurisdictions, for All adults [TOTAL] = All adults
IALS 1994
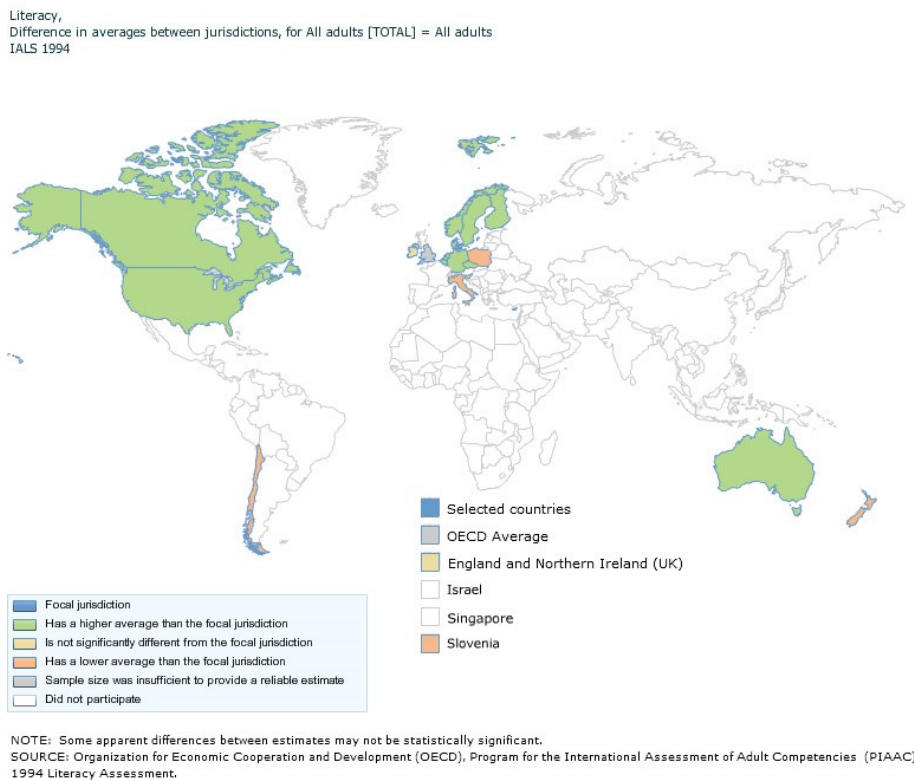
Figure 3: Map produced with the IDE, based on IALS data (no OECD average available, focal jurisdiction: Average of all participating countries)

The focal legislation in figure 3 is the average of the selected countries, i.e. the countries marked with colours in the map. Still, the North-South divide is easily visible: North America and Northern Europe, together with Australia, perform above average and are highlighted in green. Different from in PIAAC, the performance of New Zealand in the mid-nineties was below average, so it is coloured in red. New Zealand seems to have undergone a process from underneath the average to above the average between IALS and PIAAC.

The maps representing PIAAC results clearly indicate that in large areas there had been no PIAAC assessment so far. However, in history there has been a number of local and nation-wide assessments in different countries of the world, from Cuba to Kenya, from the early 1960s to most recent surveys. These initiatives must remain invisible in this form of visual representation.

Southering by extra sections and additional variables

PIAAC includes assessment in literacy, numeracy and problem solving in technology rich environments (PS TRE). While in all countries the literacy and the numeracy test was carried out, some countries skipped the problem-solving test, among them Spain, Italy,

France and Cyprus (OECD, 2016b, p. 55). In recent country reports[3] there are information about the share of adults in these four countries who opted out of the computer-based assessment of literacy and numeracy and who decided to take the paper-based test instead. This proportion might be a good proxy for reporting low computer skills. Still it separates the non-test-taking countries visibly from those who booked the full arrangement.

Besides the different modules of PIAAC (literacy, numeracy, problem solving) participating countries could add country specific variables into the background questionnaire. The survey is based on an international background questionnaire that allows general international comparison. To a certain extent, countries can add variables of national interest. This gives a certain insight on how important some questions are for a country. In some countries additional variables were included into the interviews, e.g. religion (in Israel), region of origin or skin colour (in the USA).

In several countries from Round 2, religion plays a more important role than in most countries from round 1. Muslim shares of the population can roughly be estimated as follows in some of the Round 2 countries: Turkey (99%) (Federal Foreign Office, 2019), Indonesia (87%) (BPS - Statistics Indonesia, 2012), Singapore (14%) (Department of Statistics, Ministry of Trade & Industry, Republic of Singapore, 2015). The Arab population in Israel is about one fifth of the inhabitants (20%) (Israel Central Bureau of Statistics, 2016). As religion has not been a variable in Round 1, the display of league tables and comparisons regarding religion to an OECD average is not possible. Countries with complex religious conflicts like Israel will use the data for internal comparison. Israel even oversampled the orthodox Jews (Charedim) and can draw conclusions based on the different educational systems offered to the different religious subpopulations.

The questionnaire for the assessment in the United States contained an extensive set of variables on health information seeking behaviour and on health and health literacy, as well as on participation in adult basic education. Moreover, questions about skin colour and the region of origin were included (see table 1).

Table 1: PIAAC: Additional questions in the USA

		Are you Hispanic or Latino? **Which of the groups on this card describes your Hispanic or Latino origin? Choose one or more**
	01	Mexican, Mexican American, or Chicano
	02	Puerto Rican or Puerto Rican American
	03	Cuban or Cuban American
	04	Central or South American
	05	Other Hispanic or Latino background

		Which of the groups on this card best describes you? Choose one or more
	01	White
	02	Black or African American
	03	Asian
	04	American Indian or Alaska Native
	05	Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander

Source: PIAAC Background Questionnaire, retrieved from
https://nces.ed.gov/surveys/piaac/final_en_bq.htm

In case the interviewee confirmed that he/she is Hispanic or Latino, the interviewer asked for a very detailed specification. Furthermore, the overall sample of US interviewees was asked whether they would call themselves White, Black or African American, Asian, American Indian or Alaska Native or Hawaiian. The sample sizes in PIAAC are more or less 5,000 people, out of which a substantial group may be Hispanic, while shares of the subgroups will be too small to allow representative conclusions. Furthermore, the questionnaire connects the questions with people of colour which are different from 'white' people. Findings on literacy by skin colour will probably show the majority of the marginalized, underprivileged, less educated and less prestigious darker subpopulations end at the bottom of the table.

Summary: PIAAC and the South

Findings show, how South is created and re-produced by the presentation of PIAAC results in several ways. The authors would like to point out once again that this is not an intentional procedure, but a side effect of general data analysis. Southering can occur because of the time pressure resulting from supranational agreements which is pushing the less developed countries to adopt techniques and procedures already available by the North. This implies the 'export' of northern definitions and instruments to the South: All definitions and test instruments are used for OECD countries and further partner countries. They also influence the worldwide Global Alliance for Monitoring Learning (UIL/UIS/OECD).

The presentation of rankings or league tables where bottom equals low proficiency compared to OECD average leads to positions of most non-OECD countries below average and thus in the 'South' of the table. This occurred also to southern European geographical areas, e.g. Spain, France, Greece or Italy. In a similar way the production of maps with South at the bottom, coloured in red, connects low performance with southern countries. In addition, the maps can give the impression that there is no literacy research beyond the countries depicted there, thus ignoring earlier tests and campaigns, e.g. the Cuban Literacy Campaign 1961.

The presentation of extra sections for countries, which do not want to afford all parts of the tests and the production of smaller versions of the tests for low- and middle-income countries (e.g. PISA for Development) reinforce the separation between high-income and low-income countries. An intra-national South might be produced by focusing sociodemographic variables, such as religion or skin colour. The subpopulations perceived as 'non-whites' and the book religions claimed as non-Christian may undergo a process of southering within their societies.

Discussion: Southering as new Othering?

To participate in international educational surveys has a number of advantages for the countries in question. Empirical evidence can help to implement educational programs, support the useful allocation of investments and – in the case of PIAAC – rise the awareness towards adult education – the education sector that generally receives far less attention than early childhood education or school education.

The strategy of awareness rising proved to be successful in some cases, like in Germany (Grotlüschen, 2013), in other countries these expectations have been disappointed (Elfert & Walker, 2018; Smythe, 2018a, 2018b). Rising awareness however

also can lead to rising expectations which adult education alone cannot fulfil. Government programs address participants with courses on literacy, install accounting procedures and fund further research. We would suggest that the idea of bringing every single person onto an arbitrarily defined literacy level does not meet the realities of societies. Living with low literacy is possible, especially with a strong connection to a socially supportive group of family, neighbours, colleagues and friends (Buddeberg, 2019).

Another domain regularly covered in large-scale assessment, is numeracy. Like the approach of literacy as a social practice (Barton, Hamilton & Ivanič, 2000), Yasukawa and colleagues discuss numeracy as a social practice (Yasukawa, Rogers, Jackson & Street, 2018). The approach of decolonizing mathematics is discussed by Nicol and Luneta in South African Soweto (2018). Approaches like these reconsider local knowledge and de-universalizes mathematics. This argument supports the findings in this article. The local or regional practices of literacy can hardly be covered by large-scale surveys, because these surveys for technical reasons have to apply universal definitions and instruments and cannot capture specific regional practices and competences.

This leads back to the question of North and South. We would not claim to renew the well-established terminology of *othering* with a newer and narrower concept. Othering remains a concept that helps uncovering processes of hegemonic discourse, of establishing and maintaining power and of devaluating knowledge. Othering discriminates people, populations, subpopulations and regions by defining them as different from the dominant Northern discourse and from Northern knowledge. We thus use *southering* as a subconcept of *othering*, being narrower in terms of the geographical construct, but still pointing at the enormous relevance of the discourse to establish and maintain Northern hegemony throughout the world.

Hegemonic scientific discourses take place in the global realm of educational assessment, and we subsume them as contributing to a process of southering. Even institutions, which intend to follow emancipatory pathways, like UNESCO institutes and their counsellors, are involved in this procedure. The monitoring of the Sustainable Development Goals gives reason closely to observe its directions and discourses[9].

Notes

[1] Addey referred to Chimamanda Adichie, a novelist born in Nigeria, who gave a TED about `single stories': www.ted.com/talks/chimamanda_adichie_the_danger_of_a_single_story. Adichie clarified how 'single stories' are spread by repeating only one paradigm.

[2] The participating countries in the three rounds are displayed in a world map presented at the launch of PIAAC results from round 3 in autumn 2019: www.slideshare.net/OECDEDU/skills-matter-additional-results-from-the-survey-of-adult-skills.

[3] Figure is retrieved from Royal Geographical Society (www.rgs.org), whereas the wording in the figure can not be changed. Therefore, it is important to note that what is here called 'less developed countries' are often called 'developing countries' in the public discourse.

[4] OECD provides country specific material online: www.oecd.org/skills/piaac/newcountryspecificmaterial.htm. Specific reports used for this article are part of the reference list.

[5] Consequently, the implementation of tests and the interpretation of the final test scores are difficult. This is a common feature with many international comparative investigations, e.g. IEA's TIMSS, PIRLS, ICILS, ICCS and OECD's PISA.

[6] We owe this insight to Camilla Addey, who expressed it at an expert meeting on monitoring the Sustainable Development Goals 4.6 (literacy and numeracy).

[7] https://datahelpdesk.worldbank.org/knowledgebase/articles/906519

[8] Those countries were Australia, Austria, Canada, Czech Republic, Denmark, England, Estonia, Finland, Flanders (Belgium), France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Korea, Netherlands, Northern Ireland,

Norway, Poland, Slovak Republic, Spain, Sweden and the United States. Cyprus and the Russian Federation participated as partner states (i.e. non OECD members).
9 e.g. the report on Singapore: www.oecd.org/skills/piaac/Skills-Matter-Singapore.pdf
10 One of the authors is member of this process and this captured in ambiguities.

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Changing the subject: A community of philosophical inquiry in prisons

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Abstract

This article reports on part of a project that introduced philosophy programmes to a number of Scottish prisons. It centres on the deployment within these prisons of McCall's (1991) Community of Philosophical Inquiry (CoPI). It provides a rationale for, and analyses the participation structure, of CoPI, setting out how its communicative constraints and demands provided prisoners with novel means of reasoning and engaging in dialogue with others and with oneself. In interviews conducted with a sample of participants, they described how the critical listening to, and reasoning with, each other in CoPI tutorials had allowed them to develop greater self-awareness and a more reflexive understanding of their own thinking and actions. Findings are framed within sociocultural theorising on literacies, learning and identity. Drawing on Holland, Lachicotte, Skinner & Cain (1998) account of identity and agency, we show how CoPI afforded participants a new positionality and discursive practices.

Keywords: Community of Philosophical Inquiry (CoPI); Critical reasoning; Discourses; Positionality; Prison education; Reflexivity

Background

The wider project

There have been moves in prison education within the last two decades to broaden out learning from a narrowly instrumental focus on basic literacy and numeracy skills to a more expansive understanding of literacy education and to subjects that may be more intrinsically engaging. This move to provide a wider curriculum has included a range of arts projects (Tett, Anderson, McNeill, Overy & Sparks, 2012) and initiatives to provide philosophy discussion groups in prisons (Szifris, 2014, 2016).

The current article reports on one such initiative. The findings presented here originated from a project, *Philosophy in Prisons: Critical Thinking and Community of Philosophical Inquiry*, that involved partnership between the School of Philosophy, Psychology and Language Sciences and the School of Education in the University of Edinburgh to create and deliver programmes of philosophy in four Scottish prisons as an alternative form of educational experience for those prisoners who chose to attend education classes. Access was established through discussions, between the University of Edinburgh and the Education department of the Scottish prison service. Links were then made between researchers and prison teachers in four Scottish prisons; and students were invited to attend the six-weeks programme of one-hour tutorials. In Scotland, students attend education classes by choice, so the students involved in the project were self-selecting. The classrooms in which the tutorials took place were inhabited by the university tutor, the prison teachers and the students; prison officers remained outside of the teaching rooms and there was no video surveillance. A total of 50 participants across four Scottish prisons were involved in this project.

The current article sets out to:

- situate the project within the wider context of education in prisons;
- delineate the interactional constraints, norms and affordances that characterised the very specific literacy practices of the Community of Philosophical Inquiry tutorials;
- present and interpret the gains that a sample of participants reported through taking part in these tutorials, principally in terms of developing: more reflective dialogue with others and self, greater self-awareness and a more reflexive understanding of their own thinking and actions.

Nolda (2014) has observed that adult education research has been 'more interested in the political and discursive aspects of power, and less in the interactional ones' (p. 98). Guided by such a general concern and a belief that it is particularly pertinent to pay attention to interactional aspects of power within settings such as prisons, we felt the need to provide a fine-grained analysis of the interactional order and communicative practices that are distinctive to the CoPI approach. Accordingly, a section of the article draws on relevant insights from pragmatics and sociolinguistics to achieve this objective. The intention is to bring into sharp focus the particular character of the CoPI tutorials with their specific interactional moves and forms of argument. It will be argued that what occurs here is the provision of 'tools', of ways of structuring and controlling one's interactions with others and self, that may, to a degree, become internalised and encourage a more measured, reflective response to situations.

In summary, the aim is to delineate the practices of thinking, relating and being within the programme; and then to present findings concerning how participants represented their deployment of these practices. First though it is necessary to situate this project within relevant literature.

Prisons and education

The UK prison context

In July 2019, the population of UK prisons was approximately 82,676; 8205 of whom were in Scottish prisons. Since 1990, the Scottish prison population has risen by 60%. (House of Commons Library, Briefing Paper Number CBP-04334). The rise in numbers

of the prison population has brought with it a complex set of problems relating to overcrowding, self-harm, prisoner assaults, violence and mental health (ibid.). In Scotland, the vision of 'Unlocking Potential – Transforming Lives' agenda has informed a new Learning & Skills (LS) approach which has opened up more opportunities for university education programmes to be delivered in a growing number of prisons in Scotland. (Scottish Prison Service, 2014)

The Scottish Prison Service publishes its commitment to 'Improving the Delivery of Purposeful Activity' (SPS Annual Report & Accounts 2017-18), key indicator of which is to 'care for prisoners with humanity' (ibid, appendix 8b) in order to reduce reconviction and improve educational attainment. Key to the goals of the Learning Centres in Scottish prisons is increasing literacy and improving students' skills profiles. Currently, literacies learning is built on a social practices model, which acknowledges that literacy is a contested term that changes over time and can refer to multiple social communications and conventions across various contexts. This goes beyond the traditional 'functional literacy' approach to include the development of skills to express ideas and opinions, make decisions, solve problems and acquire and employ a range of communication skills that contribute to citizenship (Literacy Principles and Practices Paper, Scottish Government).

Why philosophy in prisons?

The opening paragraph of this article has pointed up the moves that have been made in prison education to extend out learning from a narrow focus on basic skills to a wider conception of literacies and the inclusion of subjects that may prove more personally engaging and rewarding. Here, Tett et al. (2016, p. 172) have flagged up the potential rewards to be gained from arts and humanities programmes that operate 'from an individual's 'strengths', rather than their 'deficits' (p. 173). This was an important consideration in launching a philosophy programme within prisons.

Support for taking ahead work on philosophy in prisons can also be found in the substantial research and development work that has been undertaken by Szifris (2017) in a Scottish (2014) and in English prisons (2016). The philosophy programmes studied by Szifris took a somewhat different form from the one reported in this article (see, Szifris, 2014, p. 8; Szifris, 2016, p. 36) but also made extensive use of discussion. In her 2016 article, Szifris observes that 'by starting from the point of a person in society, as opposed to an offender with deficits to be addressed, philosophical dialogue … allows the individual to see themselves and their place in the world, from a different perspective (p. 33)'. This potential for philosophy tutorials to position participants primarily as inquirers, rather than as offenders, strikes us as being a key matter.

Interviews with individuals involved in these studies revealed their enjoyment of the philosophy sessions (Szifris, 2014, p. 25) and the opportunities they afforded for 'positive personal interaction with peers' (Szifris, 2017, p. 419). There were self-reported gains in listening, communication and reasoning skills (Szifris, 2014, p. 3), including the 'skills of rational debate' (Szifris, 2014, p. 17). Gains were also reported in self-reflection, self-questioning (Szifris, 2014, pp. 28-29) and in understanding other people's perspectives (Szifris, 2014, p. 3; 2016, p. 35). Summarising her findings, Szifris (2017, p. 421) noted that they 'demonstrated a clear relevance of philosophy to the self-understanding of participants with prisoners highlighting the role of the dialogue as well as the subject matter in encouraging self-reflection, providing structure to their opinions, and providing language for alternative self-definition.' Szifris has framed her findings in relation to theories of desistance from crime. As following sections reveal, our own concern is not

with such matters and we draw on sociocultural accounts of literacy, learning and identity as opposed to the literature of criminology.

Community of philosophical inquiry

Philosophical Inquiry: critique and response

Subsequent sections give an analytical account of the CoPI approach around which this project centred. It has been employed in a range of adult education settings, but had its origins in work conducted at school level. The general movement of philosophy for, and with, children has recently been the object of a trenchant critique by Biesta (2017). Accordingly, it is appropriate to engage with this critique before turning to CoPI itself. Biesta views philosophical work in schools as having focused on the analytical-logical tradition of Western thought, giving insufficient attention to more phenomenological/existential traditions. In his own words, 'it feeds [children and young people's] thinking but does not really reach their heart or touch their soul' (p. 18).

A key point of Biesta's critique is the charge that philosophical work in schools is driven by an instrumentalist purpose, imbuing skills in critical thinking required for navigating the 'uncertain world … of global capitalism' (p. 418). While such an instrumentalist orientation might fit well with the neoliberal agenda of 'lifelong learning', it is clearly antithetical to the humanistic and emancipatory traditions of adult education.

This critique has, however, met with a spirited response. Cassidy (2017), among others, makes the counter-claims that philosophy with children 'demands an encounter with others' (p. 488) and that dialogue 'is central to this way of living, of being in the world, and, arguably, to *being*'(ibid.) She states that: 'The ego, in PwC, is not at the centre; the community and the dialogue take precedence' (p. 489). As the following pages will establish, the CoPI approach adopted in this project, does not have a narrow instrumental focus but very much centres on promoting communally embedded, open, dialogic enquiry.

CoPI: 'philosophising'

In McCall's Community of Philosophical Inquiry the key objective is to engage participants actively in philosophical reasoning, in 'philosophising' (McCall, 2009, p. 2), rather than on conveying substantive content concerning philosophy. To engage in the activity of philosophising is quite distinct from the practices of studying traditional philosophical texts and philosophers. Within a community of inquiry, participants engage in thinking aloud together, driven by a framework for dialogue that encourages them to think together in a connected fashion and that demands rigorous attention to critical reasoning (Kennedy, 2004; Simenc, 2008; Daniel & Auriac, 2009). A key reason for employing McCall's framework lay in the potential that it appeared to offer participants to 'change their mind about the ideas they hold, maintaining that the philosophical assumptions that underlie our thinking and judgements are fundamental … to who we are' (McCall, 2009, p. 86).

Her approach works to unearth possible error and explore contradictions in thinking. Thus, one of the important goals of CoPI is to strip away what cannot be the case rather than to seek out the 'truth'. Some of the key features of the practice challenge participants:

- to illuminate the concepts, ideas and theories that emerge from the dialogue
- to collaboratively deconstruct and/or reconstruct ideas that form from initially puzzling questions to reveal possible error in thinking
- to recreate 'self' through the community of inquiry and the relationship formed with others in the group
- to develop engaged and active 'citizens' through rigorous, logical reasoning
- to recognize and evaluate analogies
- to recognize fallacies
- to remain conscious of emerging judgments
- to remain alert to alternatives   (adapted from McCall, 2009)

In a CoPI, the chair leads and manages the dialogue, structuring the process by: imposing time frames; deciding on questions; indicating who can speak; asking for responses. The chair models such skills as: summarizing; clarifying; seeking examples and definitions; pointing out contradictions; connecting different ideas. Ideas are conveyed through every-day, common language without specialist terms and with no appeal to 'authority'. This is seen to be a leveler for the community of participants and helps to create a thinking forum of 'equal' participants, (a way of being that is quite distinct from the hierarchical relationships customarily found in prisons, on the 'block'). Participants learn how to summarize a previous point, or how to seek clarity. As the chair presses participants to unpack ambiguity or challenges assumptions, so eventually they learn to do this for themselves and each other. The chair retains a unique perspective outside of the dialogue and is able to attend to the dynamics and mood of the group.

CoPI: participation structure

CoPI has a number of rules of engagement that act to create a very particular structure of participation. Before the start of each six-week programme, the participants were asked to choose another name for themselves and wear it for each other to see. This established a key feature of the tutorials – individuals were invited to distance themselves from their 'criminal' identities. One of the 'rules of play' was a constraint on what the participants could contribute: i.e. they were not allowed to talk about themselves or introduce anecdotes about the events that had led them to be incarcerated. This critical distancing was intended to help participants free themselves from their assumptions and give full attention to the arguments at play within the inquiry. Taking on a constructed identity aimed to provide the detachment required for the participants to wonder aloud together, involving the 'imagination as well as critical analysis' (McCall, 2009, p. 81).

Turning to another rule of engagement, participants in a CoPI tutorial are told that they must follow the format of:

'I agree / disagree with … X … when they said … Y because … Z'.

This key constraint ensures that the participants make clear whose contribution in the group their argument has developed from and what they believe they have actually heard, before going on to articulate their own thinking and reasoning. It can be seen to be central to the 'participation framework' (Goffman, 1981) that characterises McCall's CoPI, and it is therefore worth unpacking its functions and effects. It ensures that the new contribution made by a speaker does relate to the preceding turn and develops the consideration of a particular topic. Here, following Rawls (1989), Malone (1997, p. 50) notes that 'the more indexical the talk is – that is the more it is tied to the situation – the

more compelled a listener is to pay close attention.' The preceding speaker is directly included in the new utterance, which can be seen to be a means of building a community of inquiry.

Nofsinger (1991) has observed that in *formulating* (p. 121), i.e. giving:

> the gist of what some other participant(s) said … the person who formulates what somebody else said is displaying a certain understanding of that earlier talk. This is an important source of alignment in everyday conversation and other types of interactive talk. … The assumption is that perhaps the best way to align one's understanding with what someone else intended to convey is to formulate that other participant's talk and monitor his or her response. (p. 121-122)

In addition to acting to align participants' contributions and thereby build a degree of intersubjective understanding, this CoPI rule of engagement allows disagreement to be cast in an 'impersonal' form, tying disagreement to a reason or position that the speaker needs to construct. Agreement also needs to be justified rather than being a simple act of affiliation with the preceding speaker.

Returning to the role of the chair in shaping a particular structure of participation, it is crucial to the development of the dialogue, channelling it within a tight, logical structure. The chair's role is played out by identifying the philosophical assumptions within the contributions of the participants and finding questions that 'bring this underlying philosophy to the forefront' (McCall, 2009, p. 10). The chair's role is to ensure that the participants engage in genuine dialogue that is 'philosophical in content; that there are two or more philosophical ideas at work; that contrasting philosophical ideas are juxtaposed and set against each other; that arguments are given to support ideas and that there is a movement or development of the ideas and arguments' (McCall, 2009, p. 91).

By pursuing these purposes the chair ensures that in the often combative atmosphere of prisons participants are required to *make* an argument, 'use reasons, evidence, claims and the like to "make a case" ' (Nosfinger, 1991, p. 146) rather than *have* an argument. The chair acts to create an interactional order which fosters the pursuit of contrasting positions, of reasoned disagreement, while attenuating the possibility of acrimonious personal confrontation.

CoPI: texts and questions

In each inquiry, participants sat in a circle and were given a text, (print and/or image), which was read out to ensure that no one would be excluded from the processes of thinking. The texts served as conceptual springboards, not as objects for analysis in themselves. They included extracts from philosophical works, e.g. Heidegger, *What is Called Thinking?* (1968); from literary texts, e.g. Robert Frost's *The Road Not Taken* (1920) and academic text extracts, e.g. on epistemology and the problem of doubt. Other texts were visual (see the war image on p. 12). For each tutorial, the text was selected by the chair for its potential, as a key element of CoPI, to elicit contrasting ideas on a specific philosophical topic. Topics covered included: The Nature of Knowing; Mind, Brains and Computers; Morality; Free Will and Determinism; Time Travel. The chair collated the questions that arose from participants' sense of curiosity or puzzlement as they first engaged with a text, writing them up on a whiteboard with the names of the questioners alongside. For example, the questions asked by the prisoners in response to the Frost poem, *The Road Not Taken* were:

What is the path?

Who decides what the path is?

Are we pre-destined to repeat the mistakes of the past?

Where does the path lead to?

Do we really have any choice in this life?

Why do we think we are free?

By choosing one path, are we fated?

The discussion then began with the question selected by the chair which was deemed to have the potential for lively philosophical exploration. Rooted in the key question selected by the chair, discussion continued for approximately forty-five minutes. Participants engaged in exploring and evaluating the implications of each other's arguments in order to contribute to the development of the dialogue and to the construction of a more complex configuration of a particular philosophical problem.

As a further illustration of a text and its accompanying questions, one tutorial explored questions concerning morality: is it objective, subjective, or relative? The group were given the following image as an initial stimulus to thinking.

This text clearly had an effect on the participants, some of whom were imprisoned for murder and/or violent offences, who used it as a means to open up and share views about morality that were very close to the bone. The text elicited the following questions from one of the groups:

Is killing in war ever justifiable?

Can taking someone's life ever be defended?

Are some people born murderers?

Does society create murderers?

In war, do some people have to die for most people to live in peace?

Are soldiers murderers?

Is the law always right?

Should people sacrifice their lives for something they believe in?

The Discourse of CoPI

It will be clear from the preceding account that CoPI has a much wider scope than a narrow instrumental concern with the development of communication skills and critical thinking. Its concerns are well encapsulated within Gee's conceptualisation of capital "D' Discourses (Gee, 2008). Gee distinguishes between *primary discourses* individuals acquire in their immediate family and community of origin, and *secondary discourses* that they then go on to acquire in different contexts. He defines a 'Discourse with a capital 'D' '(p. 155) as:

> composed of distinctive ways of speaking/listening *coupled* with distinctive ways of acting, interacting, valuing, feeling, dressing, thinking, believing, with other people and with various objects, tools, and technologies, so as to enact specific socially recognizable identities engaged in specific socially recognizable activities.

Here then the connection between engaging in a set of literacy practices, such as CoPI, and ways of valuing, being and enacting an identity are brought out very clearly. We will move shortly to describe how the participants in this project perceived their encounter with this particular secondary Discourse. First though it is necessary to outline the approach and methods of interviewing and analysis.

Methodology and methods

The preceding section has set out the potential gains in reasoning and in relating to others and to oneself that may flow from engaging in CoPI tutorials. The question remains, however, of whether the participants themselves perceived any benefits from their participation. How did they react to the programme? Did they view it as having any value for their lives? How would they themselves characterise its effects? To investigate these questions, interviews were held with the prisoners. This interview study was grounded in an interpretative phenomenological approach (Finlay, 2014) 'which construes people and the world as inter-related and engaged in a dialogic relationship that constructs [multiple versions] of reality' (Shaw, 2010, p. 234).

In the context of a prison, close attention clearly needs to be paid to ensuring that consent to participation in research is indeed freely given. The self-selected participants in the tutorial groups, (who gained no extrinsic benefits for their participation), were all given a clear overview of what the course and the research project entailed. They completed ethical consent forms that established their agreement to be part of the course and separately to take part in a group interview. Teachers in the prisons assisted the participants in this process. It was also made very clear to the prisoners that they could opt out of the interview part of the project at any time, but no participant chose to do so. No prison officers were present during the CoPI sessions, or in the interviews; nor were there any surveillance cameras.

After each six-week block of tutorials in each prison, participants were interviewed in groups of four; the time constraints on being able to have contact with the prisoners on an individual level and the number of prisoners involved influenced the setup of the interviews. It was also seen as of distinct value to have the prisoners engage in small-group interviews to allow for a conversational style of discussion, which could be viewed as less intimidating than individual interviews and allow for both individual and collective perspectives to emerge. Consonant with an interpretative phenomenological approach, the interviews were treated as a 'social encounter in which knowledge is actively formed and produced impl[ying] that the interview is not so much a neutral conduit or source of

distortion, but rather a site of, an occasion for, interpretive practice' (Holstein & Gubrium, 2011, p. 151). The interviews were semi-structured and allowed for the emergence of key themes in each round of interviews. Interviews lasted for approximately 40 minutes.

Participants were asked a range of questions which encouraged them to reflect on their views and beliefs about their experiences of 'doing' philosophy in this way. These included the following:

> What did you think of the course over the last six weeks? What did you think about adopting a different name for yourself and leaving your 'identity' at the door of the classroom? You were asked to contribute to the discussions using a specific format (I agree/disagree with X when they said Y because…). What did you think about this? Do you think that participating in the CoPI method influenced the relationships between the group members, or not? One of the key features of the tutorials involved you listening critically to each other in order to help you make connections between each other's thinking. How did you feel about this? Do you think you developed your reasoning skills through the six-week programme, or not? In doing this course, did you learn anything about your self?

The findings reported here derive from the analysis of interviews with men in one site where, in line with the focus of this article, the course was firmly centred on CoPI. The ages of this group of 12 participants ranged from around 18 to 65. They had all been convicted of serious offences and were in the main serving long sentences.

The semi-structured interviews were transcribed and analysed through the lens of an interpretative phenomenological approach which requires an orientation to the data that is 'profoundly dialectical [where] researchers need to straddle subjectivity and objectivity, intimacy and distance, being inside and outside, being part of and apart from, bracketing the self and being self-aware' (Finlay, 2014 p.124). Scrutiny of the assumptions, process and outcomes of the analysis was guided by Smith, Flowers and Larkin's (2009, pp. 180-183) articulation for interpretative phenomenological analysis of Yardley's (2000) principles for assessing the quality of qualitative research: 'sensitivity to context; commitment and rigour; transparency and coherence'; and 'impact and importance'.

Key themes that emerged from the analysis of the interviews were: opening up the mind/gains in reflexivity; developing through the CoPI constraints; reasoning, self-questioning and identity; enacting a different culture of thinking, relating and being. The following section provides a succinct, illustrative account of these interconnected themes.

Findings

'Opening up your mind'

It has been noted that a central reason for adopting CoPI tutorials was the possibility that they would constructively challenge participants to reflect on their own world-views and encourage them to see themselves from a range of different perspectives. The interviews provided evidence that these goals were being achieved. Almost all participants agreed that CoPI tutorials 'disturbed' them from their own insular views and brought them to develop a more reflexive standpoint:

> 'I really enjoyed it. It made you look at different people's perspectives… Sometimes you modified your own views or strengthened your own opinion. It gave you confidence in your argument through thinking that way, kind of stepping back and being able to reason about how you came to your decision'.

One participant described the experience of reflexivity as an 'opening up of your mind in an isolated environment, being in prison'; and this motif of 'opening up' their own minds to their own and each other's perspectives recurred throughout the interviews.

Developing through the CoPI constraints

The participants identified several elements of the CoPI 'rules' as key to the dynamics within the group and to change: the use of a new name, (leaving their previous name and criminal 'identity' outside the classroom); and adopting the interaction format of 'I agree / disagree with … X … when they said … Y because … Z'. These constraints emerged as central to growth into a more expansive sense of self. The participants found that adopting a new name and engaging in a form of critical objectivity had the effect of 'leaving your ego aside … and it allows you to also not necessarily think about something from your own perspective, but from the point of view of a question'. One individual encapsulated the groups' perceptions of the value of using different names for the tutorials in the following terms:

> I agree that using alternative names was a good idea because if you were maybe having an argument – no arguing in a fighting kind of way – but having a discussion argument with somebody, it wasn't a personal argument that you would have with the individual, the argument was with the idea, as opposed to a person against a person … It led you to be more understanding and more open.

This nudge towards critical distancing and the development of the ability to remain objective throughout challenged their perceptions of themselves and contrasted with their experiences of disagreement in the 'halls' where 'if you disagree with somebody it is an attack on them and they react in violence…In the halls, [it is like] I disagree with you because I am the Alpha male'. Taking part in the philosophy classes was viewed as inhabiting a secure space where the participants learned how to disagree with each other. This was seen to be a 'good exercise in how to be a social animal'; and is in line with Szifris' finding that philosophy in prisons challenged the 'machismo' image of a group of alpha males vying for dominance (Szifris, 2018). Indeed, the men involved in the CoPI tutorials described how the name they adopted and the framework that governed contributions to the discussion were 'like having a different identity. In that one hour session, you're no yourself … It's like you're new, a new individual and having that philosophical debate … you're opening up your ears and listening to other people's opinions'.

This participant also identified the demand in CoPI for critical listening as key to fostering critical reasoning and a more open orientation to others. He described how the participation framework in CoPI acted to break down narrow, self-centred, selective listening:

> because you were having to say ' I agree with Mr A when he said …', because you were having to say exactly what you agreed with rather than just nit-picking: 'I agree for such and such a reason.' When you were having to say, 'I agree with X for reason Y', you actually had to listen to them, because a lot of the time, we're guilty of only listening to what we want to hear.

This observation echoed another individual's perceptions of the power latent in CoPI to bring about a more open orientation to others. His more open orientation can be seen to involve an expansion of the contours of the self:

I think a lot of the trouble I've been involved in in the past, especially violence, has been through misunderstanding or being misunderstood has led to a lot of violence, including what I am in for now … In CoPI it's good to hear people having different views without actually feeling as if, well, [they are] actually different from me just because they have a different view on something … A lot of stuff and violence that I've been involved in in the past has been through misunderstanding, you know.

Thinking before talking, thinking before acting

The participation framework and reasoning demands at the heart of CoPI influenced participants' perceptions, and ways, of communicating with each other: 'Through this course and in this way of thinking, you actually think more about what you're saying before you're making statements, and you'll be more understanding if somebody else has maybe come to a conclusion with their reasoning and thinking behind it.' The idea of thinking-before-acting was articulated clearly by one participant who stated why developing such dispositions becomes important for all incarcerated members of society:

Because that's the way you've got to [think about your own thinking] … because you're no right all the time and you have to think about what .. the way you conduct yourself and you have to think about all kinds of things. You have to think about how you are going to get through your sentence and what you're going to do when you get out. If you don't think about that, you're coming back in.

Rethinking the self

The ways of thinking and of relating together during these philosophy tutorials allowed participants to experience a different way of being, both individually and as part of a group. One of the rules of play in a CoPI tutorial is denying participants the opportunity to talk about themselves and requiring them instead to attend to the development of the conceptual discussion. One prisoner described this experience as 'a good thing because it took like individually ourselves, what had happened in our life, taking that away from us and made it more of a group thing … instead of being like individuals we had all like false names which made it a wee bit more about the topic we were talking about and less about ourselves. I enjoyed that.'

CoPI can be seen to provide a space that to at least a limited degree detaches individuals from their past selves. One participant saw this as an important element of CoPI: 'I can see that being anchored in the past can be damaging for some people, being anchored in the person that you think you are.' Through engaging in the 'constructed world' (Holland et al., 1998, p. 7) of CoPI participants were led to question their long-held assumptions and consider other possibilities. They found that CoPI 'gives you self-awareness because it opens up topics that you've maybe looked at through one perspective, and no really seen that person's point, or a person's view.' On this theme one individual observed that:

I think it does improve your self-awareness, it improved mine anyway, where it makes you think. It just gets you thinking more deeply about the meaning of life and why we are here. I think that is the interesting part in philosophy because it makes you curious as well … I think more curious about learning.

The degree of freedom that the CoPI tutorials opened up for the participants to inhabit a different way of being was captured by several of them in the image of casting off 'a mask'. They discussed the way in which engaging together in a community of philosophical inquiry allowed them to cast off the masks they felt they had to wear in other parts of the prison to 'suppress' their feelings:

> I would say ... in the prison environment you're quite often wearing a mask sort of thing, you're no letting people into your thoughts, your feelings … Whereas within this group [CoPI] you kind of let that mask go … You didn't feel as though it had to be hidden or explained …. Because you were explaining as best you could on a topic and leaving it to be open to question … Whereas a lot of the time, other times, you will not even bring opinions up because of that environment [the halls]: 'he's going to think this'; or 'he is going to think that, he'll say this'; or 'he'll say that'. … But in the whole philosophical reasoning, you learn more to put that to the side and it was the topics … If you have a strong point or something, you state your point because it wasn't a personal attack or vendetta or something you were trying to preach to someone else … it was what you believe or thought, your view, which was open to others to agree or disagree with.

A few observations can be made concerning this statement. Drawing on Gee (1990), Janks (2010, p. 25) has claimed that 'The difference between discourses is productive. As individual human subjects enter into new discourses, they acquire alternative and additional ways of being in the world that is, new social identities.' It can be argued that such a process can be inferred from the above quotation. Gee himself (2008) states that the use of a particular Discourse can be 'liberating' (p. 177) 'if it can be used as … a "meta-Discourse" … for the critique of other literacies and the way they constitute us as persons and situate us in society' (ibid.). It can be argued that CoPI can be seen to be serving this purpose in this instance. At the same time, it is essential not to overestimate its liberating effects. This individual and his fellow-participants still needed to survive in the very different Discourse of 'the halls'.

Questioning oneself

Some participants made statements that revealed how engaging in critical dialogue with others could carry over into a challenging, self-questioning dialogue with oneself. For example, one participant described how CoPI allowed for 'a personal attack on yourself' as part of the process of inquiry. The way in which debate in the group could spark a challenging questioning of oneself is vividly conveyed in the following quotation:

> Because there are a few things in there and I would think to myself after somebody has said something, I'm like: 'I wonder why I've thought that way for so many years about some certain thing?' I've been thinking like that for years and then somebody says something and I'm like, 'Fuck! I was wrong!' You know?

Such a process of critical self-examination opened up the potential for change. In this vein, one individual talked of how:

> I would say that I mean, like everybody else, I think I'm right all the time – even when a judge tells me that I've been wrong and I've got the jail for it. I still think I'm right … but it has been said that by us in here, saying different points of view, like 'what have I done?'; and I do think extremism is a bad trait and it does lead to jail if you do take things to extreme and it's [CoPI] taught me not to be as extreme as I have been.

Enacting a different culture of thinking, relating and being

It was evident from the interviews that a culture of thinking, relating and being emerged throughout the course which participants viewed as unique. They saw the actual enactment of a different way of thinking and acting as distinguishing CoPI from other educational interventions.

> I mean within this environment, in a prison, it's a useful strategy teaching habits to cultivate because it's basically what the [other educational] programmes are trying to get us to do, to change our ways of thinking to consider more … I would suggest that in that kind of environment [a CoPI] it's actually … because you're practising it as you do it, and you're adopting the behaviour you're not just listening to somebody – 'Well, you need to do this.' – you're actually practising the adoption of a new behaviour. …

This view was re-expressed by another participant who 'found myself, my behaviour changed in the way in which I converse with somebody by the actual doing of that particular system compared to how I would act on the outside or on the wings'.

Another participant agreed that the experience of CoPI resonated with him and his sense of self in ways that he had not experienced in other education programmes designed to 'teach you to think in a certain way.' He pointed out that some courses are pursued by some students to 'jump through hoops to get to opens and things like that' whereas 'coming to philosophy' was like 'getting taught how to use a gym and choosing to use the gym.'

Discussion

Access

The findings of this study point up a number of issues concerning education in prisons and how best to assist individuals to gain the forms of thinking and relating that may allow them to construct a more positive future. The opening section of the article set out the critique that has been made in recent decades of a narrowly instrumental approach of providing prisoners with basic literacy skills. By contrast, the CoPI approach to philosophising introduces a set of literacy practices of argument and analysis embedded in a supportive set of social relations. Consonant with at least certain of the tenets of critical literacy, it encourages participants to interrogate multiple perspectives (Vasquez, Tate & Harste, 2013, pp. 11-12) and to disrupt the commonplace (pp. 8-10): 'things that seem normal need to be rethought'(p. 8).

Janks (2010, 2014) has argued that 'critical literacy work has to pay attention to questions of 'power, diversity, [and] access' (Janks, 2014, p. 5). On 'access', Janks poses the questions: ' Who gets access to the language of power and its prestige variety? Who gets access to high-status knowledge?' These questions concerning access would seem to be particularly pertinent to education in prisons. The philosophical discussion approach would appear from this study, and from Szifris's work (2017) to be one means by which individuals can gain access to a greater fund of cultural capital. A wider challenge for education in prisons also comes into view here: what knowledge, skills, and literacy practices 'should' those who are imprisoned have access to if they are to become critically literate citizens?

Participation structure

A section of this article has delineated central features of the participation structure that is to be found in CoPI tutorials. To our knowledge, preceding literature on CoPI has not analysed the pragmatics at its heart in the same level of detail. This analytical exercise was intended to make a wider point. In prisons, where relations of domination and submission can have a detrimental effect on more discursive approaches to education, it would appear to be worthwhile, as in this article, to give close attention to how the dynamics of a group can best be structured to create more equal and productive interaction.

Enabling constraints

The Findings section has set out the substantial gains that this group of participants reported in terms of: 'opening up your mind'; thinking before talking, thinking before acting; rethinking the self; questioning oneself; and enacting a different culture of thinking, relating and being.' The findings revealed that CoPI appeared to have acted to create, what can be termed as, 'ontological disturbance'. The participants felt that taking part in a CoPI challenged them to question long-held assumptions and worked at stripping away the illusions and contradictions in their own thinking. In this way, their own constructs of identity were challenged. These findings are in line with McCall's claim that when 'assumptions are altered through the practice of CoPI, the participants change or recreate themselves – maybe in a very small way; but however small, it is fundamental. And to be involved in this fundamental change of oneself 'with' others is to be in a unique relationship with these others.' (McCall, 2009, p. 86).

At first sight there would seem to be a paradox here in that an educational intervention which placed considerable constraints on interaction had led to an expansion in possibilities for thinking, relating and being. What was at stake here can be interpreted with the aid of Holland et al.'s (1998) 'processual understanding of identity and agency' (p. vii). Building on the sociocultural theories of Vygotsky (1978) and Bakhtin (1981) they look at how specific cultural discourses and practices instantiated within particular contexts provide the 'tools' for building a self: 'processes or traditions of apprehension which gather us up and give us form as our lives intersect them' (p. 41). They also recognise the shaping power of the subject positions that the participants in any social encounter occupy (p. 41). They note that: 'people develop different relational identities in different figured worlds because they are afforded different positions in those worlds.' (p. 136)

There can be seen to have been a marked shift in the positionality of the participants during the CoPI tutorials. They were forced to bracket their past history, including their offending, and to take on the role of inquirers; and, as they observed themselves, the participation structure of CoPI brought about more equal relationships in contrast to those of domination and submission on the 'halls'. At the same time, their engagement in CoPI drew them into new practices of argument and interaction: 'a set of constraints' also provided 'a set of possibilities for utterance' (Holland et al., 1998, p. 171).

Using CoPI in prisons, the contribution to knowledge is clear: the interviews revealed that at least to a certain degree the discursive practices of CoPI were acting as 'tools' for internal dialogue and enhanced self-control. As Holland et al. observe: 'We achieve self-control, albeit of a very limited sort, by the mediation of our thoughts and feelings through artifacts. We learn how to control ourselves from the outside, so to speak (Vygotsky 1978); we learn how to position ourselves for ourselves.' (Holland et al., 1998, pp. 63-64) These tools for reasoned debate with others and with oneself can be viewed as

valuable resources for 'alternative self-definition'. (Szifris, 2017, p. 421) At the same time, as we have observed earlier, it is important not to exaggerate the potentially transformative effects of the Discourse of CoPI when students in a prison need to survive within the very different Discourses of the halls. Future research in adult education programmes of this kind will, however, contribute to our developing understanding of the dynamics involved in the teaching and learning of excluded members of society.

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Ethical codes in adult education as subjects of comparative analysis

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Abstract

In the process of professionalisation of adult educators, a significant role is played by qualification, educational and evaluation standards. However, they do not often deal with ethical questions which can arise from their relationship with participants of the educational process, from their membership in professional associations or from the relationship with an educational institution. This gap is filled by ethical codes, which are not legal standards but they are adult educators' voluntary obligations. The importance of codes was a reason for the comparison of 26 ethical codes aiming to find their common features and non-standard regulations, to point out the prevailing structures and contents and disciplinary measures when the code is violated. The contribution of this study is to enrich the andragogical theory with a deeper understanding of the purpose of ethical codes, their structural elements and content. From the point of view of education policy, an analysis of codes can work as a specific monitoring of the market of educational services. It can serve for designing certification courses of adult educators as well as subjects in graduate studies in andragogy. The limitation of this study lies in the fact that the selection of codes was limited to codes written in four languages; however, one of them was English, which is a world language. As for the territorial scope, codes cover North America, Europe, Australia and New Zealand.

Keywords: Adult educators´ ethics; code of conduct, code of ethics; code of practice; comparative analysis; content of a code; sanctions; structure of a code

Introduction

A good-quality adult educator should be an expert in a particular field, have andragogical competences and appropriate personal qualities (Beneš, 2014; Mužík, 2010; Veteška, 2016; Religa, 2014; Despotović, 2012; Evans, 2012; Malach, 2014; Malach & Chmura, 2014; Milana & Skrypnyk, 2012; Prusáková, 2014). However, opportunities for professional development and clear prerequisites for entering the profession are rare, and often qualifications of adult educators are not regulated. Irregular training of staff is a problem faced by most European and North American adult teaching and learning stakeholders (Koryza, Motschilnig & Ebner, 2017). Based on a biographical study, Maier-Gutheil and Hof (2011, p. 85) discovered that "to develop professionalism it is necessary that the individual move from phases – in which knowledge and skills could have been gained – to phases where knowledge and ability can be tested and reflected upon." According to another study (Buiskool, Broek, van Lakerveld, Zarifis & Osborne, 2010, p. 43), 'adult educators have to be competent not only in their subject matter, but they also need a wide range of interpersonal skills. The ability to adapt to different environments and new developments is also crucial in times of social media, digitalization and the ongoing improvement of digital teaching.' The authors also point out that 'learners might come from different social, educational, cultural and ethnic backgrounds, trainers have to show a lot of flexibility and constantly readapt their teaching methods according to learners' needs' (Buiskool et al., 2010, p. 60).

With regard to the model of Buiskool et al. (2010), Pejatović (2012) summarizes competences of adult educators into three groups: specific competences (based on roles in adult education), generic competences (they are the basis of educators' professional conduct) and logistic competences. A model on adult educator´s minimum competences was developed by Jääger and Irons (2006). Their model has two basic dimensions. The first is the development of a professional competence and the second one is the personality development (it includes self-esteem, tolerance, responsibility, communication skills, empathy and flexibility). When discussing a lecturer, Prusáková (2011, p. 2) also states that 'his/her character traits are also important - fairness, honesty, openness, directness, integrity, consistency'. Luber (2009) implicitly postulates teacher's practical and moral competences, which lead him/her to self-reflection, to constant and critical self-examination and to permanent reflection about the substance of education. These competences occupy a superior position in the teaching profession because they enable the teacher to choose methods and means which are not based or do not promote manipulation with pupils, but they support their development.

Based on the literature, the ethical aspect or dimension of educators' work emerges as integrated in the idea of a good-quality educator, or in professional frameworks or qualification standards. This fact provides a favourable background for the theoretical conceptualisation of the ethical dimension of adult educators work as well as for the analysis of tools which support ethical codes or principles in adult educators practice. Similarly to other educational professions, these tools include ethical codes, codes of good practice or their combination. In this article, the aforesaid codes, or ethical principles, is the subject of a comparative analysis. The aim of the analysis is to identify the structure of the codes, the main ethical principles, the non-standard regulations and the measures to respond to its violations.

Broadly speaking, the directing or supporting subject of adult education is usually called "an adult educator" (for instance, this term is also used by UNESCO, European Union and others). The term adult educator is in practice represented by many sub-professions such as lecturers, trainers, tutors of open education, coaches, mentors, career

advisors, online tutors and others. Interest organisations associating and representing these andragogical sub-professions gradually create their own specific codes, which reflect particular requirements for their performance and for the ethical conduct of their representatives. Such codes are the focus of this article.

Ethics in educational professions and ethical codes

Professional ethics complements general ethics. It enhances effectiveness of the execution of the given profession, influences its prestige, helps to deal with conflicts, speeds up decision-making, provides moral and self-development impulses, defines and justifies crossing of borders of general norms and, in certain cases, it demands that special obligations be considered as essential (Środa, 2005). Moral decisions are a common part of the theory and practice of adult education and adult educators' activities can have far-reaching consequences for other people, which can encourage and help them when acquiring new knowledge, support them in problem solving, open new perspectives and semantic horizons to them, or to intimidate, discourage, or exclude them from educational programmes (Schubert, Beneš, Krystoň, Lorenzová, Pavlov & Skúpa, 2018). Ethical issues related to the practice of andragogic professions need to be discussed and explored whether the professional ethics, in our case the ethics of adult educators, has to have the character of a code or not (Zając, 2016).

Ethical requirements for adult educators professional performance are usually included in codes of ethics. These codes can be the only normative document presenting adult educators behaviour, roles and tasks, or complementing the codes of practice or standards of practice. If they are the only norm, they often include provisions or requirements, which have the character of ethical rules and requirements for basic professional activities or tasks, and in educational professions, it is presupposed that ethical knowledge is not separated from professional knowledge (Forster, 2012). Some countries, for instance, Australia and New Zealand, formulate codes of ethics and conduct and Gilman (2005) states that 'the pragmatic reality is that they can, and often are, complementary'. International organisations such as UNESCO or the International Labour Organisation declare great support in developing professional ethics. According to them, codes of ethics or conduct should be established by teacher organisations since such codes greatly contribute to ensuring the prestige of the profession and the exercise of professional duties in accordance with agreed principles (Fredriksson, 2004 as cited in van Nuland, 2009, p. 25).

Several main purposes of ethical codes for the public administration as a sphere related to adult education was proposed by Gilman (2005, p. 8-9):

- codes of ethics increase the probability that people will behave in certain ways. They do this partially by focusing on the character of their actions and partly by focusing on sanctions for violations.
- good ethics codes can focus public servants on actions that result in doing the right things for the right reasons. Ethical behaviour should become a habit and effective codes allow public servants to test their actions against expected standards.
- codes of ethics do not take away one's own moral autonomy or absolve the public servant from the obligation to reason. Codes of ethics provide at most a strong *prima facie* reason to act in a certain way.
- codes of ethics can function as a professional statement. That is it expresses the public service's commitments to a specific set of moral standards. This has both cognitive and emotive value'.

Codes that have impact usually begin by asking what the behavioural objectives are, what the organizational objectives are, and what the political objectives are. Codes most often fail because they raise unrealistic expectations. Ethical values and principles in codes must have both cognitive and emotive elements. They must appeal to reason, as well as the emotional content of patriotism, loyalty or professionalism. The most successful codes have both administrative and criminal penalties associated with them that are appropriate and timely. (Gilman, 2005). Codes of professional ethics improve the attitude to the profession, they co-create its ethos and build traditions and thus differentiate representatives from given professional groups and increase their internal solidarity (Środa, 2005). Siegel (2000) defined four aims of the universal ethical code for adult educators. First, the code of ethics will provide guidance to adult educators concerning what constitutes appropriate practice. Secondly, the code of ethics will provide a policy-making direction to organizations and agencies engaged in adult education. Thirdly, the code of ethics will provide a common reference for the encouragement of dialogue among adult educators. Fourthly, the code of ethics will assist in communicating the shared values in the field of adult education.

Authors of ethical codes usually formulate their purpose or aims in the preamble. For example, in the introduction to the Standards of Practice for Teaching Professions and Ethical Standards of Practice, the Canadian province Ontario states that they describe what it means to be a professional teaching in the given state, and they reflect a shared belief within the profession. They express goals and aspirations of teachers aiming to improve students' learning and prepare them for life in a democratic society. They are also a tool for the regulation, which includes sanctions for breaking the rules and requirements. Through an analysis of ethical codes, Pomianowska and Tołwińska-Królikowska (2005) drew a logical conclusion that they can have two kinds of functions, external functions and internal functions. External functions deal with the relationships with users of educational activities. The knowledge of principles which an adult educator should follow give clients a stronger sense of safety and possibility to appeal to these principles. The existence of a code increases trust in educators and creates educator's positive image. Codes can form ethical awareness and sensitivity and help decide in difficult situations. Kadlubeková (2016, p. 60) considers ethical principles to be 'generally applicable moral principles of conduct applicable to all andragogists, which should be respected and the compliance with them should be reflected in andragogists' conduct and acts in practice'. The author also described ethical principles derived from the comparison of existing sectoral ethical codes for the field of adult education. All these principles are equally important and presented here in a random order: principle of autonomy, principle of confidentiality, principle of competence, principle of doing no harm *(noli nocere)*, principle of professional development, principle of usefulness and principle of fairness. In ethical codes for teachers, Göbelová (2015) presents five basic principles: respect and dignity, responsibility, justice, truth and moral integrity.

In ethical codes, codes of practice or codes of conduct, adult educators' appropriate personal characteristics and attitudes should be asserted. This can mean a broad outlook, ethical traits, optimism, composure and tact, didactic engagement, decisiveness, fairness, creativity and sense of humour (Malach, 2003) or open-mindedness, tolerance, empathy, patience, courage, respect for others, emotional stability, responsibility, assertiveness, curiosity, inventiveness and sense of humour (Pomianowska & Walkiewicz, 2005). Środa (2015) accentuates professionalism, honesty, impartiality and fairness, dignity, ethics (attitudes, distance, tact).

When examining the ethics of a specialised profession of an educational diagnostician, Wysocka (2013) distinguishes normative ethics and value (axiological)

ethics. Normative ethics describes boundaries of the diagnostic work (prohibitions or things that are not allowed) and value ethics formulates basic values common to all social sciences (value of the human being, value of each individual, value of truth, responsibility and perfectionism). Using the value ethics, the author formulates ethical principles characterising the professionalism of a diagnostician, distinguishing principles describing personally formal competences and principles describing interpersonal competences (which could correspond to emotional elements according to Gilman), and ethical principles in projecting intervention and action dividing them into principles of process effectiveness and principles of purpose and methods of intervention (which would correspond to Gilman's cognitive elements). Göbelová (2015) presents similar distinction of applied professional ethics: descriptive ethics and normative ethics, which is closer to the creation of ethical codes because it characterises what is valid, authoritative and binding and describes norms and principles. A bind expresses what is binding for a teacher and it can be directed towards oneself (one's conscience), pupils, colleagues, parents and school, its wider community and society as a whole. Compared with teachers, adult educators have fewer binds, which are usually directed only towards oneself, education participants or employers.

A recommended content of universal codes for adult educators was formulated by Siegel (2000, p. 51-58) in the form of requirements for main lecturers' tasks and their actions and conduct towards students. Adult educators should:

1. Use expert knowledge and practice to a maximum degree.
2. Respect students' ethno-social and cultural differences and dignity.
3. Avoid the conflict of interests.
4. Maintain confidentiality in the relationship with students.
5. Respect students' unique and varied needs and show the sense of honesty, understanding and fairness.
6. Be sensitive to the possibility of a negative impact of the institutional policy on students, organisations as well as the whole society.
7. Present clear, complete and exact promotional information.
8. Offer financially responsible services and programmes with outcomes which are based on an objective and fair evaluation.
9. Encourage students' active and effective participation in the development of society.
10. Avoid harming students in whatever way.

A whole range of methodical handbooks and tools has been created for the writing of codes of ethics and codes of conduct for teaching professions and for their easier implementation in educational practice (Poisson, 2009; Department of Education and Training, 2006; Ethics Resource Center, 2001; Connecticut State Dep. of Education (CSDE), 2015). They include instructions for the preparation of a code with necessary structural elements, instructions for its adopting, reporting and sanctioning misconduct, reviewing the code and evaluating its impact. In some of them, there are instructions for dealing with ethical dilemmas in educational practice which also happen outside school teaching (CSDE, 2015).

For the creation and update of codes in the globalised world, transnational codes are created as examples and inspiration, they cross borders of ethical behaviour and teacher's personal responsibility and form social requirements for educators as a whole professional group. An example of this kind of code can be the International Code of Ethics for Educators (Whitehead & Mc Farren Aviles, 2018), which is divided into four

domains - Professional Commitment, Pedagogical Practice, Community Engagement and Global Responsiveness, where usual ethical principles are only included, and to a smaller degree than in existing ethical codes, in the Pedagogical Practices domain. Finally, the development of digital technologies created conditions for the Council of Europe ETINED platform (Ethics, Transparency and Integrity in Education), which promotes the use of teacher ethical codes and combats corruption and fraud in education. It can be also useful for the field of adult education and learning. Given the fact that the profession of a teacher and the profession of an adult educator are very close in their focus on education, in some countries (for example in Australia) codes do not distinguish these professional groups neither in their names nor in their focus.

Forster (2012) analysed eight codes from states and territories in Australia focusing on their purpose, structure, content and explicit requirements for the practical educational activity. As for the purpose, the author discovered that it can be formulated as a statement of ethical commitments, practices and aspirations, as a wide framework for decision-making or common understanding and a disciplinary tool or means of compliance. As for the extent, many codes are one-page statements about values, for example in South Australia and New South Wales, which are grouped into the following categories: integrity, dignity, responsibility, respect, justice, care. As for the form, codes can be inspiring, shifting teachers' role and turning teachers into moral heroes, and on the other hand, regulating, having the need to monitor and discipline teachers. When researching teacher codes, van Nuland (2009) sees its basis in defining the role of teachers and in description of the good teacher. He provides examples from international and state documents which argue the need for codes and purpose or function of codes. He states that in the preamble, codes identically emphasise that their purpose is to ensure the protection of a client, it means of the child by the teacher. The main elements of codes are considered to be universal moral principles, which were determined by a range of research quite identically.

Codes as a result of collective conscience of a profession can have three basic formats, they are a) regulatory documents, with specific advice to address and behaviour, often with a system of sanctions, b) widely phrased creeds often stating aims, objectives and values, with no specific guidance content and often encompassed in a larger document and c) elaborate codes covering social responsibility among the many stakeholders as well as a wide range of topics (Frankel, 1989; Farrell & Cobbin, 2002 as cited in van Nuland, 2009). The author also listed activities undertaken to promote the code of conduct, such as newsletters, brochures, websites, teacher hotline to respond to teachers' concerns and issues, presentations at university faculties, outlining the code, e-mail box to receive and respond to requests, and seminars for teachers, representatives from education unions, teacher educators, teacher employers and school council, groups. The issue of codes of conduct for school teachers was the subject of an analytical-comparative study by Golubeva and Kaninš (2017). They found out that codes can be found in many countries. Some countries have a lot of experience in implementing these codes. In other countries, such codes are still a relative novelty. Codes differ in their level of detail, degree of reliance on sanctions, and the extent of the profession's involvement in their development, implementation and review. Codes as an expression of the profession's values and principles can strengthen the ethics of the teaching profession and improve the quality of teaching and the education experience for students and their parents. Codes are also regulatory tools that prescribe standards of conduct often backed by legally established sanctions, inquiry and investigation procedures, and monitoring and enforcement bodies. The authors also pointed out challenges and gaps in the development and dissemination of a code: a code not embedded in professional culture,

lack of ownership, lack of a clear implementation framework and rules without aspirational value statement.

We cannot disregard the fact that it is also possible to raise arguments against codification of ethics. They can be based on knowledge why codes do not work in practice (Gilman, 2005, p. 63-67). It is because the codes raise unrealistic expectations, codes coexist together with a large number of legal norms and are adopted from another professional field or because they get old. Old codes become irrelevant because of the dynamics in governments and organizations. Other specific reasons against the codification of ethical requirements for adult educators can be concerns about the bureaucratisation and restrictions on the freedom of adult educators' work, concerns about unjustified interventions in the commercial environment in the field of adult education and doubts regarding the enforceability of rules of ethical codes and banal sanctions for their violation. Doubts regarding the need for ethical codes can be also observed in the study by van Nuland (2009, p. 83), which after a review of literature on teacher codes that was available at the time of research states that 'there is no objective evidence about the extent to which codes have impact on individual teacher's behaviour'. On the other hand, it is possible to observe at least some attempts to identify 'factors determining the impact of a code that include: a) stakeholder involvement in the development of the code, b) the integration of dissemination activities into the education, training and professional review of teachers, c) the organisation of practical workshops and seminars for teachers, and d) the involvement of the professional bodies responsible for the code' (Golubeva & Kaninš, 2017, p. 5).

Analysis of selected ethical codes for adult educators

An analysis of real, functioning codes (process codes) can be useful for at least three reasons. Firstly, it can help (inter)national organisations associating general or a specific group of adult educators monitor the development of ethical requirements for adult educators' performance or educational services of their providers in other countries, which in its nature represents a useful benchmarking. At the same time, it enables them to compare the aims, form and content of codes with regards to the (inter)national education policy and its implementation strategies. Secondly, it can serve as a suitable framework for shaping professional competences and values of adult educators, whether they are certified lecturers or graduate andragologists. Thirdly, it can be useful for learners since it will provide them with a good picture of the educational institution or the educator and it can help overcome barriers preventing adults from learning, often stemming from uncertainty or the lack of information about the educational process or attitude to learners. Ethical codes in accordance with Siegel's (2002) requirement often state educators' intention to actively include learners in the instruction. This could increase the number of students with offensive behaviour and decrease the number of students with defensive behaviour in the instructed group. The former ones have an active attitude to learning, they prefer activating methods, they independently search for information and broaden their knowledge and they want to learn more. Individuals from the latter group can be characterised as observers of the lesson, preferring teachers to present the learning content and only using information provided by them, abandoning learning and plans for further education when they have difficulties (Skibińska, 2001; Frąckowiak, 2009).

The aim of the comparative analysis was:

- To find common structural and content features in ethical codes of a wide range of andragogical professions
- To identify unusual, non-standard regulations or principles of codes, which can encourage reflection on the innovation and modification of ethical codes in andragogical educational associations and organisations
- To identify measures aiming for the compliance with codes by members and staff of educational associations or organisations.

The research sample of ethical codes and codes of practice

The research sample of ethical codes or codes of practice consisted of 26 codes. The sample was gathered by searching for codes using keywords in four languages - English, Polish, Czech and Slovak. The selection was chosen with regards to author's language skills. No countries (nor continents) from which codes for the analysis were chosen were determined beforehand. Searching for codes using English keywords resulted in finding codes from Europe, North America, Australia and New Zealand. All codes that were available in Czech, Slovak, Polish and English were analyzed. At the same time, I wanted the sample to include codes from national associations of lecturers, tutors, coaches or advisors as typical andragogical sub-professions and also teachers or tutoring professions indicating how broadly they are understood in the area of lifelong learning. The significant territorial span of codes used and their focus on various andragogical subprofessions can be viewed as an effort to make the sample of analysed codes more representative.

Keywords were put together usually consisting of three parts (ordered by the languages):

1. code, kodeks, kodex, kódex/standard, standard, standard, standard
2. ethics, etyki, etický, etický/practice, postepowanie, praxe, prax
3. adult educator/tutor/advisor/teacher/coach/mentor;
   edukator/tutor/doradca/nauczyciel/trener/mentor;
   lektor/tutor/poradce/kouč/mentor;
   lektor/tútor/poradca/kouč/mentor

Approximately one-third of the codes analysed was from the Czech Republic (30.7%), 4 of them were from USA and Poland, 3 of them were from United Kingdom and Australia and the rest was from Slovakia, New Zealand and Canada (Table 1). More than half of the codes-14 (53.8%) were published in the last three years (2016-2018), 7 codes (26.9%) in the years 2013-2015 and 5 codes (19.2%) are older than 5 years. Codes without the date of publication were assigned 2018, since they were accessed in this year on their websites. Codes were usually found on websites of associations and organisations in the section called 'About Us' and therefore, it can be assumed that they regard this information as essential for the members as well as for the clients.

Table 1: Basic characteristics of ethics codes

Parameter	Indicator	N
Country	USA	4
	Canada	1
	United Kingdom	3
	Australia	3
	New Zealand	1
	Czech Republic	8
	Poland	4
	Slovakia	2
Year of publication	2016-2018	14
	2013-2015	7
	until 2012, inclusive	5
Structure	Structured	22
	Unstructured	4
Sanctions for the violation of the code	Defined	12
	Not established, not included	13
	Undefined but determined by procedures undertaken when breaking the standards	1
Inspiring regulation	Included	25
	Not found	1

Structural and content analysis of ethical codes

Structured codes are those whose content is divided into parts with a title and usually a number, where parts called Preamble or introductory sentences expressing the purpose or goals of the code are generally not numbered. Unstructured codes usually have only (sometimes numbered) a list of ethical principles for lecturers' performance (about 10 to 24). The majority (22) of codes (84.6%) is structured. Based on the analysis, it is possible to determine these structural parts of codes which are (completely or largely) included in a greater number of codes.

1. Preamble
2. Terminology
3. Values or ethical principles of the association/organisation
4. Relationship towards the learner, client, candidates (external links)
5. Attitude (responsibility) to lecturer's profession, other educators, association or organisation (internal ties)
6. Confidentiality/protection of personal data and information gathered during education
7. Compliance with the code, sanctions

Unstructured codes are usually one-page long. Structured codes have about two to seven pages. Several codes are more extensive, code number 3 (5 pages), code number 4, 12, 13 (6 pages), code number 20 and 21 (7 pages) and the largest is number 26 (20 pages).

The Preamble or introductory sentences of codes mainly contain a declaration of the purpose or aims of the code, where the following ones prevail:

- Definition of duties of association/organisation members, which will ensure its good name
- Reference to association/organisation visions and missions
- Determining the expected conduct of the member both within the association as well as towards the outside
- Ensuring the best professional performance or best practice possible
- Ensuring that ethical standards/principles are respected
- Determining and maintaining the benchmark for education and educational services

If codes mention ethical principles or requirements for lecturers' ethical behaviour, they are mainly: integrity, confidentiality/discretion, irreproachability, honesty, confidence, humanity, tolerance, professional and social responsibility, dignity, esteem/respect for learners' cultural background, values and needs, politeness, justice, enthusiasm, sensitivity, reliability, prudence, anti-discrimination, patience, flexibility, welfare and rights of clients.

   Codes also contain requirements for lecturers' professionalism in the andragogical or androdidactic sense more frequently than ethical requirements. Frequent requirements are: being aware of one's role and responsibility; using a range of modern methods; using media/technology responsibly and ethically and preventing teachers and learners' plagiarism; always transferring current, relevant and true information; striving for open and partner communication; providing feedback and evaluation at the right time; enabling learners to share responsibility for their learning, evaluation, goal setting; striving for the highest quality of work; ensuring learners' progress during instruction; demonstrating self-reliance, active and proactive approach; delivering reliable (research) data and sources to learners; improving one's knowledge and skills, also based on clients' feedback; being capable of self-management, self-evaluation and self-control; being able to work in a team; using only truthful promotion.

Table 2: Results of the analysis of codes according to selected criteria

	Association/ Organisation/ Source	Name of the ethics code	Year	Code components/List	Specific provisions	Breaching the code/Sanctions
1	Asociace institucí vzdělávání dospělých (AIVD), CZ	Etický kodex člena AIVD ČR, o.s.	2009	Structured. Parts: Fundamental provisions, 2. AIVD members' attitude to a client, 3. Prices for educational activities, 4. Basic rules for members' activity. From the code, AVID created Ten Rules of a good-quality educational institution and Ten Rules of a good-quality lecturer.	A member of the association ensures that the price for an educational event was in direct proportion to costs incurred, a situation on the market of supply and demand and also a quality of educational events.	None
2	Asociácie lektorov a kariérnych poradcov (ALKP), SK	Etický kódex členov asociácie lektorov a kariérnych poradcov	2012	Structured. Parts: Preamble, 1. Subject of the code, 2. Member's duties, 3. Member's rights, 4. Essential rules for member's activity, 5. Lecturers, 6. Career advisors, 7. Final provisions	The lecturer respects the voluntary nature of learners' participation in roles. Assertions about representatives of these roles are meant as suggestions. The lecturer ensures that representatives sufficiently abandon these roles.	Yes. Disrespecting or violating the rules can lead to immediate expulsion from ALKP. When registering into ALKP, members are obliged to acquaint themselves with the code and confirm by signature their compliance with the code.

3	International Coach Federation (ICF), SK	Etický kodex kouča podľa International Coach Federation (ICF)	2015	Structured. Main parts: Introduction, Definitions of terms, Standards of ethical behaviour according to ICF, ICF ethics oath. Subparts of the Standard: 1. Coach's general professional conduct. 2. Conflict of interests, 3. Professional approach to clients. 4. Confidentiality/Personal data protection.	I avoid whatever sexual or amorous relationship with a current client or orderer/sponsor, a participant in a coaching training, mentored people or people in the supervision. Personal oath.	Coaches take an ethical oath. Among other things, they pledge to honour ethical and legal obligations. Sanction = loss of the membership in ICF and/or ICF certification.
4	European Mentoring and Coaching Council (EMCC), Association for Coaching (AC), PL	Globalny kodeks etyczny dla coachów i mentorów (Code shared by both associations)	2016	Structured. Four parts: 1.Terminology, 2. Work with clients, 3. Professional behaviour, 4. Outstanding practice.	Members will quote authors of texts and materials and will not claim them to be their own. They will avoid any emotional or sexual relationship with current clients. A coach acquaints clients with the code.	Not given specifically, but it is said in the preamble: If a member of the organisation did not comply with the requirements and instructions when working with clients, the Ethical code would be used as a basis for dealing with complaints or disciplinary proceedings.
5	Akademie osobnostního rozvoje (AKOR), CZ	Etický kodex AKOR pro koučink rozvoje osobnosti	2018	Unstructured, it contains 24 points.	Coaches do not have sexual relations with any of their current clients.	The coach is responsible for violating the ethical code. Sanctions if proved = the loss of AKOR certification.
6	Národní vzdělávací agentura ČR, s.r.o.,CZ	Etický kodex Národní Vzdělávací Agentury	2018	Structured. Main NVA goals. NVA values, Professional approach to people interested in the education by NVA lecturers.		None
7	Akademia CZ s.r.o., CZ	Etický kodex	2018	Structured. Parts: 1. Professionalism, 2. Representation, 3. Confidentiality, 4. Disposal of assets, 5. Ethical codes of AKADEMIA CZ lecturers. It contains 15 ethics principles.	Employees ensure that they are dressed appropriately and maintain company reputation.	None
8	Ámos, CZ	Etický kodex agentury Ámos	2009	Structured. Parts: 1. Scope of authority, 2. Essential principles of employee's ethical behaviour, 3. Inspecting the compliance with the ethics code and ethics rules for the conduct of associates of the ÁMOS agency.	Every ÁMOS agency employee and associate working as a lecturer is obliged to report suspected breaches of provisions of the Ethical code or other generally accepted ethical standards by another employee or associate working as a lecturer.	When investigating breaches of the rules of conduct enshrined in the Ethical code or other ethical standards, the management proceeds in accordance with the applicable law and always uses common sense.
9	Orbis Empirica Vzdělávací institut, CZ	Etický kodex	2014	Structured. Parts: 1. Preamble, 2. Scope of authority, 3. Essential principles of ethical behaviour, 4. Instruction, 5. Treatment of confidential information, 6. Inspection of the compliance with the ethical code and ethical standards of conduct.	1. Every employee and associate working as a lecturer is obliged to report suspected breaches of provisions of the Ethical code or other generally accepted ethical standards if they have a justified reason.	The compliance with the code is monitored by the company management and they also deal with possible charges concerning its breaches. When investigating the cases of breaching the rules of conduct enshrined in the Ethical code or other ethical standards from the field of adult education, the company management proceeds in accordance with the applicable law and always uses common sense.
10	AIDS Care Education Training (ACET) ČR, CZ	Etický kodex ACET ČR, Z.S.	2015	Structured. Parts: 1. Significance of the code, 2. General ethical principles, 3. Ethical principles towards programme participants, 4. Ethical principles towards the employer and the organisation.	The code includes obligations of the executive staff to manage the team, lead people and represent the organisation externally.	The code is mandatory for the members. Its violation can be assessed as a violation of the work discipline with all its consequences.
11	Asociace jazykových škol, CZ	Etický kodex člena	2015	Structured. Parts: 1. Conduct towards clients, 2. Conduct towards lecturers and co-workers, 3. Conduct towards other business subjects on the market.	The member always strives to maintain the honour and dignity of the business institute.	Expulsion from the association, impossibility to use the association logo.
12	Woloszyn-Spirka, Krause: Wybrane zagadnienia etyki doradcy zawodowego, PL	Kodeks etyczny doradcy zawodowego	2012	Structured. Parts: 1. General principles, 2. Moral values in the work of a career advisor, 3. Career advisors' duties (towards themselves and the profession, towards a professional group and towards the environment)	Realising one's needs, motives and prejudices so that they do not influence advisor's quality of work and work with a client and decisions of both subjects.	None

#	Organization	Document	Year	Structure	Key point	Sanctions
13	National Association of State Directors of Teacher Education and Certification (NASDTEC), USA	Model Code of Ethics for Educators (MCEE)	2015	Structured. It defines 5 principles: 1. Responsibility to the profession, 2. Responsibility for the professional competence, 3. Responsibility to students, 4. Responsibility to the school community, 5. Responsible and ethical use of technology	Ethical use of Technology: The professional educator considers the impact of consuming, creating, distributing and communicating information through all technologies. Acknowledging that there are no circumstances that allow for educators to engage in romantic or sexual relationships with students.	None
14	Society for Education and Training (SET), UK	Society for Education and Training: Code of Practice	2016	Structured. Parts: 1. Mandatory, actionable provisions, 2. Aspirational provisions.	A teacher should enable students to take responsibility for their learning and evaluation.	None
15	Education and Training foundations, UK	Professional standards for Teachers and Trainers in Education and Training	2014	Structured. Parts:: 1. Professional values & attributes, 2. Professional knowledge & understanding, 3. Professional skills	Teachers and trainers are reflective and inquiring practitioners who think critically about their own educational assumptions, values and practice in the context of a changing contemporary and educational world.	There is a self-assessment tool which lists 20 professional standards. Each statement is scored 1 to 6.
16	Queensland, Australia	Code of Ethics for Teachers in Queensland	2018	Structured. Teachers demonstrate: 1. Integrity, 2. Dignity, 3.Responsibility, 4. Respect, 5. Justice, 6. Care	The code contributes to students' education, welfare and wellbeing.	None
17	National Tutoring Association (NTA), USA	Code of Ethics	2016	Unstructured. It contains 16 points, which mainly mention tutors' didactic methods, as for the ethical principles they mention dignity, sensitivity, differences in students and their personal values.	I recognize I will not have answers to every question asked. I will remain flexible to my approach to student learning, respectful of the various learning styles and preferences.	None.
18	Association for the Tutoring Profession (ATP), USA	Code of ethics	2017	Unstructured. It has 10 points formulated as professional principles (best interest of tutees, commitment, excellence, professionalism) and ethical principles (responsibility, integrity, fairness, respect to other rights, respect to individual differences, confidentiality)	The first point: Best Interest: Tutors will be committed to acting in the best interest of tutees.	Yes. Revocation of tutors' certification, revocation of their membership in ATP. Probation for a specified period of time with requirements that need to be met prior to regaining eligibility for membership. Other corrective action.
19	The Tutors' Association, UK	Code of ethics for tutors	2018	Unstructured. It contains 16 points, mainly didactic requirements. In one point, tutors declare that they will respect pupils' cultural background, personal dignity and values.	The first point: I understand that my role as a tutor is to encourage and enable pupils to achieve their unique potential as independent learners through acknowledgement, encouragement, understanding, and personalised attention.	None
20	Global Professional Tutors Association (GPTA), Australia	Code of Ethics	2018	Structured. Parts: 8 chapters: 1. The objectives of the Global Professional Tutors Association 2. Application of Code 3. Obligations of National Associations 4. Obligations of Business Members 5. Obligations of individual and associate members 6. Obligations of members and associates engaging in online tutoring 7. ALL members and associates 8. Complaints Resolution Procedure and Discipline of members	Point 6 dealing with tutors' obligations in online tutoring.	Yes, in two chapters: Dealing with complaints and members' discipline (sanction: withdrawal or correction of the advertisement, corrective correspondence with clients, withdrawal of literature, materials and programmes disrespecting the code standards).
21	New Zealand tutoring association, ltd. (NZTA), NZ	Code of Conduct	2018	Structured. It has 3 main parts: 1. Introduction, 2. Tutoring organisations´ obligations - The Code of Conduct, 3. Administration	All Tutoring Organisations must ensure that all their tutors have been trained in the organisation's curriculum and methods of teaching are assessed annually in order to maintain educational standards. A member must not use misleading or false advertising or marketing practices.	Yes: In the chapter Sanctions: withdrawal or correction of the advertisement, corrective correspondence with clients, withdrawal of literature, materials and programmes disrespecting the code standards, NZTA can issue a warning or conviction to members, suspend their membership or expel them.

22	South Australian Council for Adult Literacy, Inc. (SACAL), Australia	Code of Practice	2018	Structured. Parts: 1. Principles, 2. Practitioners, 3. Providers. Ethical requirements - courtesy, consideration, sensitivity, fairness, equity, integrity	Practitioners take into consideration (i.e.) learning styles and interests of the participants and negotiate content, learning materials and teaching and assessment methods.	None
23	Centraly ośrodek doskonalenia nauczycieli, PL	Kodex etyczny edukatora (published proposal)	2005	Structured. 3 main parts: 1. Educator towards the group, 2. Educator towards herself/himself, 3. Educator towards colleagues	Authors mention principles for creating the code: 1. Principle of respect for human dignity, 2. Principle of working in the interest of the group and all its members, 3. Principle of honesty towards oneself and others, 4. Principle of reliability and responsibility	None
24	Foundations of Professional Practice, Ontario, Canada	The Ethical Standards for Teaching Professions, The Standards of Practice for the Teaching professions	2016	Two structured standards included in the Teachers Professionalism. Ethical standards are care, trust, respect, integrity.	Both codes are explained and described in relation to professionalism, beliefs about the professional practice and professional identity.	None
25	Zwiazek nauczycielstwa Polskiego, PL	Deklaracja etyki nauczyciela. Projekt	2015	Structured. Parts (i.e. standards) related to: 1. Teacher's profession, 2. Professional dignity, 3. Solidarity and prestige of the profession, 4. Relations with authorities, 5. Relations with parents, 6. Relations with pupils	The teacher is obliged to retain worldview impartiality. Teachers are obliged to respect, support and help one another and share their experience. Teachers are obliged to protect one another against mobbing, harassment and isolation.	None
26	Academy of Human Resource Development (AHRD), USA	Standards on Ethics and Integrity (2nd ed.)	2018	Structured. Parts: 1. Preface, 2. Purpose, 3. General principles. 4. General Standards, 5. Research and Evaluation. 6. Advertising and Other Public Statement, 7. Publication of Work, 8. Privacy, Anonymity, and Confidentiality, 9. Teaching and Facilitating a 10. Resolution of Ethical Issues and Violations	The standard includes provisions during the implementation of research and evaluation. It ensures that research is carried out with participants' consent, it uses appropriate methods for a data collection, protection and interpretation and it ensure the responsibility for publishing its results. The standard also deals with issues regarding advertising and public statements and publication of work in compliance with privacy, anonymity and confidentiality. HRD professionals seek to ensure that their programs, or those in which they participate, are competently designed and developed, provide proper exchanges and experience during implementation, meet the requirements of the objectives set by the program, and are accurately evaluated.	Dealing with ethical problems and violation of rules is included but sanctions are not defined.

Identification of non-standard provisions in codes

The analysis of ethical codes/codes of practice also provided information about less common or (until now) non-standard provisions (Table 2). Non-standard provisions are considered to be those which appeared only exceptionally, it means in one or a few codes. They have or can have an innovation potential for ethical codes of adult educators in general or for their subgroup (for example coaches or advisors).

Unusual provisions were found in 25 codes (96.1%) and they can be grouped into these areas:

- Members of the association ensure that the price of education is adequate.
- Lecturers respect the voluntary nature of learners' participation in roles.
- Lecturers avoid sexual relations with the learner. 3x
- Lecturers quote authors of texts and materials.
- Lecturers ensure that they are dressed appropriately and maintain company reputation.
- Lecturers are obliged to report suspected breaches of the code. 2x
- The executive staff of the organisation is obliged to manage the team and represent the organisation.
- Realising one's needs, motives and prejudices so that they do not influence one's work.
- Using technologies in an ethical way.
- Enabling students to share responsibility for their learning.
- Thinking critically about their own educational assumptions, values and practice in the context of the changing world.
- The code contributes to students' education, welfare and wellbeing or to their best interest and development of their unique potential. 3x
- Lecturers cannot know answers to all questions.
- Lecturers adjust their approach to teaching according to learners' learning styles, preferences and interests. 2x
- Lecturers' obligations in online teaching.
- Lecturers and the organisation do not use misleading advertisement and marketing practices.
- Organisations have to ensure curricular and methodological education and annual evaluation of its tutors.
- Lecturers are obliged to retain worldview impartiality.
- Lecturers are obliged to help and support one another and also to protect one another against mobbing and isolation.
- Human Resource Development (HRD) professionals undertake training or instruction in the use of techniques or procedures that require certification, licensure, or expertise only if they possess the appropriate prerequisite preparation.

The less frequent provisions found in codes react to emerging social problems in the area of sexual relationships, work relationships, understanding of learner's role, technological development, protection of copyright and concept of the quality of life. Specialised standards or codes could be used; for instance a safe Internet usage, professional ethics, advertisement and marketing ethics, copyright law and others.

Code measures aiming to their compliance by the members of educational associations or employees of organisations

A preliminary analysis of codes suggested that they do not or very rarely deal with situations of disrespecting or violating the principles of the code by an adult educator. To analyse these situations, it is desirable to use the theory of law, which, however, cannot

be completely applied to ethical codes as subjects of an examination. Nonetheless, their prevailing structure, where association/organisation values in form of ethical principles represent only one of the significant parts of codes, in addition to other parts dealing with the relationship towards learners, clients, prospective clients (external ties) and also the attitude to the profession of a lecturer, other educators, association or organisation (internal ties). These two parts are in a very close connection with labour law, and that is why legal constructs can be used for the examination of codes. Legal theory deals with legal norms which are the smallest, indivisible (atomic) component of a legal order containing one particular command, prohibition or legal permission. A legal norm can consist of three essential parts: hypothesis, disposition and sanction (Knapp, 1995). The hypothesis establishes conditions under which a certain rule of conduct should be carried out. Therefore, it is a criterion for assessing whether a certain rule will be applied to a given case. The disposition is a core of a legal norm and it establishes the rule of conduct itself. It establishes desirable (or undesirable) act. The sanction defines legal consequences for the violation of the rule given in the disposition. In certain generally applicable norms, no hypotheses are defined and vice versa, others (for instance the Constitution) do not provide sanctions. Legal norms which do not provide sanctions are sometimes called imperfect (*lex imperfecta* in Latin). When examining individual rules (dispositions) of ethical codes, the definition of a hypothesis cannot be always expected since it can be usually derived from the name of the organisation issuing the ethical code. The hypothesis supposes that an adult educator acts as a member of a certain andragogical subprofession (for example as a couch) or is a registered member of a professional association or employee of an education provider. Ethical codes, contrary to legal norms, do not usually define sanctions for the violation of a particular rule, but for disrespecting the ethical code as a whole.

Sections dealing with measures or sanctions for violating the ethical code, or the code of practice, were found in almost half of the codes (12 in total, 46.1%, see Table 2). Some codes contain several sanctions. According to their nature and impact on the educator, they can be put into the following groups:

- Expulsion from the association/revocation of the membership. 5x
- Suspension of the membership in the association.
- Warning or convicting members for their behaviour.
- Loss/revocation of the certification issued by the association. 3x
- Dealing with complaints with the option of using disciplinary proceedings.
- Dealing with complaints with the option of using applicable legal norms and common sense. 2x
- Using labour and legal norms.
- Prohibiting the use of the organisation logo.
- Self-assessment using a tools list of professional standards.
- Withdrawing advertisements. 2x
- Corrective correspondence with clients.
- Withdrawing literature, materials and programmes disrespecting code standards.

The expulsion of members from the professional association, suspension of their membership or warning or (moral) conviction was mentioned in seven codes. The second most frequent sanction is the loss or revocation of the certification. Prohibiting the use of a logo or withdrawing advertisement (probably linked to the membership in the association) is used by three associations and three educational organisations refer to

applicable law when dealing with a violation of the code. An interesting option, which can (but does not have to) have a nature of an ethical sanction, is educator's (self-)reflection using the offered evaluation tool (see The self-assessment tool of Education and Training foundations, UK - in Table 2, number 15). Other useful tools could be outputs of VINEPAC (Validation of informal and non-formal psycho-pedagogical competencies of adult educators) project (2008) in the form of Validpack, which was later tested by a subsequent CAPIVAL (Capitalizing on Validpack) project (2012), or AGADE project (Jääger & Irons, 2006). Standards on Ethics and Integrity (AHRD, no. 26 in Table 2) even state that

> AHRD professionals cooperate in ethics investigations, proceedings, and the resulting activities of any professional organization involved with performance improvement, training, instruction, or learning, when deemed appropriate and reasonable. In so doing, they make efforts to help resolve any issue related to possible violations of ethics.

Discussion

No other study has been found in the andragogical literature which would focus on the examination of ethical codes for adult educators. However, there are numerous studies on teacher codes more generally and in relation to teachers in school which the results of this study could be related to. However, as the focus of this study was on finding common content and formal features across ethical codes, the discussion does not focus on implementation, an issue that is commonly discussed in previous research. For this reason, it is possible to view and compare these results only in certain areas.

From the owner's point of view, or code creator's, codes for adult educators are mainly created by professional associations, while codes for teachers by government authorities (Golubeva & Kaninš, 2017). As for the number of mentioned ethical principles or requirements for lecturers' ethical behaviour, more principles (up to 21) were found in codes for adult educators than in codes for teachers. Golubeva and Kaninš (2017) identified 12 principles in 12 codes in European countries or their parts, however this number was found only in one code (Catalonia), although Poisson (2009) offers a list of 22 major values to be considered within a code. When a regulation in codes for adult educators is disrespected, there are up to 12 penalties, which are very diverse, most frequently the lecturer loses membership in the association or their lecturer certificates, which can result in not being practically able to perform any lecturer activity. Breaching the principles in codes for teachers can have greater consequences for the teacher, often it can mean the loss of a job. Most codes for teachers do not state particular penalties. However, they are stated in half of all analysed codes for adult educators.

Code of ethics for adult educators declare lecturer's responsibility (or obligation) towards participants of an educational event or towards their employer. This is different compared to codes for teachers which rather declare teacher's responsibility towards a wider community of stakeholders, not only including students but also their parents or legal representatives, representatives from the local government, central state government, and global communities. Codes of ethics for adult educators are more often structured according to ethical principles, as opposed to codes of ethics for teachers which are more often structured according to a list of stakeholders towards whom the teacher has ethical obligations.

The research presented in this article did not formulate a specific hypothesis. Rather, the analysis provides a descriptive account of the use of ethical codes in a limited number

of geographical locations. However, despite the limited scope of data, the results presented here could provide a starting point for further research discussion, as well as discussion and debate among different stakeholders involved in the education of adults.

Conclusion

Based on the results presented here, I argue that ethical codes and codes of practice play a significant role in creating a professional culture of adult educators. They are, together with other five standards - professional, qualification, education, evaluation and self-evaluation - essential documents. These documents are the basis for, and interreact with, the emerging andragogical subdiscipline, andragogical profesiology (Malach, 2014). Ethical codes promote visions, goals and values of an educational association or organisation, define constructs they work with, describe the relationship between educators and clients (their external functions) as well as the relationship with other educators, an association/organisation, ensure the protection of information connected with the educational process and inform members and the public that a violation of the code would be investigated and sanctioned. The content of analysed codes illustrates that their creators see changes in external conditions for the work of adult educators and the development of educational means (technologies, strategies) and react to them by formulating new recommendations or prohibitions. It is interesting to note that half of the codes declare that they are ready to deal with educators' ethical failings or explicitly formulate sanctions for this failing.

The contribution of this study can also be seen in the fact that it enriches the andragogical theory with knowledge of the purpose and functions of ethical codes and their structural elements and their current content. For education policy, ethical codes can represent a tool for monitoring the education market in the competitive environment aiming to ensure quality, efficacy and client-friendliness. If a provider of educational services for adults has a declaration of ethical rules, it can be viewed as a competitive advantage by their clients. Motivation for respecting code standards and requirements can be also seen in acquiring and maintaining a good reputation by the lecturer as a member of an association, association of certified lecturers or educational organisation. Familiarisation with the content of ethical codes from associations, organisations or lecturer (sub)professions and their practical application should be an essential part of certification courses for educators and graduate studies of andragogy. This content and formal analysis of codes of ethics for adult educators can be an inspiration for further research focusing on the issue of the implementation of codes and their impact on education practice.

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Just facilitating access or dealing with diversity? Non-traditional students' demands at a Spanish university

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Abstract

More and more the university institutions welcome a heterogeneous student population. In this article we analyse the main characteristics and needs of the so-called 'Non-Traditional Students' in order to contribute to the development of more equitable conditions and improve their participation and holistic development. To this end, a qualitative study has been carried out at a Spanish university, which explored the experience of a diverse group of this type of student body. The results pointed out to a high level of motivation, determination and greater effort on the part of the group, in comparison with their mates. However, the traditional pedagogy was not suited to their characteristics and created difficulties for them. Few teachers were truly flexible with these students, since an egalitarian (rather than equitable) conception of pedagogical action prevailed. Among other things, we conclude by claiming a comprehensive and personalised education, adapted to their needs.

Keywords: Attention to diversity; higher education; inclusive education; non-traditional students; qualitative research

Introduction

Higher education is undergoing a process of openness. The increase in the number of students at this level requires the adaptation of university lessons to a plurality of students from different backgrounds and profiles (culture, age, previous experience, etc.) (Martínez & Viader, 2008).

The London Communiqué (2007) stated that higher education should promote social cohesion and the reduction of inequalities by providing adequate services to all students and creating more flexible pathways. The improvement of access and retention conditions has come at the forefront of the international debate on universities (Orr, 2010). International studies have also been promoted, such as the Eurostudent project, which allows a characterisation of the different "audiences" that carry out university studies and provide comparable statistical data from European countries. However, it is necessary to adopt a more exhaustive perspective that allows us to know in depth the daily reality of the students, attending to their diversity.

In this study we examine the characteristics and needs of non-traditional university students from a qualitative perspective. The objective is to understand their situation and contribute to their participation in the university in conditions of equity. To this end, a review is carried out on the concept of Non-Traditional Student and the research on the subject. We then described the qualitative methodological approach based on semi-structured interviews with twenty-three students at the University of Seville. Finally, the results of the study are presented based on three ideas: the specific characteristics of non-traditional students, their daily development in academic life, and the adaptation to the needs of non-traditional students. As a conclusion, we can highlight the need of an inclusive university pedagogical model based on personalized pedagogy and an equitable approach in which the unique needs of each individual are met.

Non-Traditional students in Spanish universities

Although rarely used so far in the Latin American context, the term non-traditional student is commonly used in European and North American universities to refer to the increasing number of students with characteristics different from the majority profile entering higher education. The term refers to a heterogeneous group of students that, depending on the context, includes mature students (over 25 years old[1]), from disadvantaged socio-economic backgrounds, with specific educational support needs, with family responsibilities and/or belonging to ethnicities, cultures and nationalities other than the majority (Crosling, Heagney & Thomas, 2009).

Research in Spain on these students is scarce, so at this point it can be said that there is a gap in information on the cultural and cognitive characteristics of non-traditional students at the university (Ariño et al., 2008).

Terms such as "disadvantaged students" or "non-traditional students" are hardly used in the Spanish context to refer to the population of students with minority characteristics who may experience some difficulty in adapting to the university environment. Other terms have occasionally been used to identify non-traditional learners, such as "over 25" or also "student with specific educational support needs". We agree with Field and Morgan-Klein (2012) and Johnston's (2011) conceptualization of non-traditional students and those who are under-represented in Higher Education and whose participation is constrained by structural factors.

The importance of identifying these students becomes evident if we look at previous statistical studies (Ministerio de Educación, Cultura y Deportes, 2016; Orr, Gwosc & Netz, 2011) which show that more than a third of Spanish students present characteristics different from the usual pattern, which may constitute what McNair (1998) understands as an invisible mass for legislators, managers and researchers in the field. The student population has changed and it is increasingly heterogeneous, which demands the implementation of measures that attend to all student's needs.

The normative scenario that contemplates the situation of non-traditional students in the Spanish context has the aim of regulating the situations derived from the access of minority groups. The first measures were taken in 1971 where a special access path was provided for students over 25 years old who could not meet the usual access requirements.

Recently, important advances have been made in this sense: improving the access of some groups that until now have had little presence in higher education and ensuring their participation and progress in academic life. To this end, Royal Decrees 1892/2008, 558/2010 and 412/2014 were created, which established positive discrimination measures to favor the inclusion of disadvantaged groups in the university. They are also committed to reinforcing the tutorial action through the creation of the tutor of students with disabilities; the integration of guidance activities into coordinated tutorial systems; and the facilitation of the compatibility of study with work.

In addition to these measures, two new access routes were created: one for people over 40 years of age who can demonstrate professional experience related to the degree to be studied, and another for people over 45 years of age who pass an adapted test. Also, the University Student Statute (RD 1791/2010) is committed to improving services offered to these students aimed at promoting their integration and participation.

National and international research on non-traditional students

In the Spanish context research has focused on adult and/or mature students and those with disabilities, ignoring the needs of other groups. In the case of mature students, the analysis of the Spanish university system included in Mnisterio de Educación, Cultura y Deportes (2016) shows that they have greater difficulties in completing their higher education. The work of Bermejo, Camacho, Fernández-Batanero and García-Lázaro (2011) shows that matures students are frequently enrolled in social science degrees, and have an abandonment rate close to 22%. They point out as difficulties in their academic progress the combination of work and studies, the lack of habit and the perception of a lower level of competences compared to their younger colleagues. In general, they seem to have a more responsible attitude towards study, and they know better what they want and how to achieve it.

With regard to the particular needs of students with disabilities, some research (Moriña, 2017; Sánchez-Palomino, 2011) has found that teachers are perceived as the main barrier to their academic progress, mainly due to the inflexibility and lack of inclusion of the methodologies used in the classroom, which highlights their lack of training to work with this student body.

Other aspects, such as the socio-economic background, have been poorly studied. The common assumption is that, once students have entered university, there is equality among them, despite the diversity of their cultural and family backgrounds, and mere support through a scholarship system would reduce such differences (González-Monteagudo & Ballesteros, 2011a).

Studies focused on immigrant students or from other ethnic groups are even more scarce. Here, the work of Pérez-Serrano and Sarrate (2013) provides information on the profile and the elements that favour and hinder the social inclusion of immigrant university students. In turn, Padilla-Carmona, González-Monteagudo and Soria-Vilchez (2017) investigate the factors associated with the academic success of Roma students at the university.

On the other hand, some international studies show that the particular circumstances of non-traditional students can function as risk factors for abandonment, desertion or low performance. The review of Quinn (2013) showed that students that drop-out are those

with low socio-economic status; with dependants; belonging to minority ethnic groups; with disabilities or facing physical access problems and other barriers in terms of personal and social attitudes.

When low socio-economic status is added to these profiles, there is a greater impact on abandonment (Thomas & Quinn, 2007). Reay, Crozier and Clayton (2011) found that working class students perceived problems of 'adaptation' in both academic and social terms. In this sense, it was Bourdieu (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992) who used the expression 'like a fish out of water' to describe the feelings of lower-class students compared to their peers. In addition, the educational background of the family appears repeatedly associated with failure/success at university (e.g. Aina, 2013). Likewise, while traditional students finish school and then go on to university, many non-traditional students have a gap in their education (Xuereb, 2014). The combination of study with work and/or care responsibilities is another very relevant factor in academic dropout (Wyatt, 2011; Xuereb, 2014), which sometimes translates into difficulty in attending classes and keeping assignments up to date. In this sense, it is important to focus especially on mature students. According to Eurostudent's findings, adult learners generally work, have children, have delayed transitions and are less likely to have parents with a high level of education. Some studies report that the dropout rate among these students is much higher than that of the traditional student population (Doyle & Gorbunov, 2010; Jones, 2011). In addition to completion of undergraduate studies, more recent studies (Budd, 2017; Crew, 2015) show that non-traditional students do not persist as long as their colleagues at the university in post-graduate studies.

Towards an inclusive pedagogical model in the university adapted to the non-traditional student body

The existing teaching models are normally based on the idea of a pedagogy for all. However, the current student plurality obliges us to offer a change to the traditional curriculum that until now had been confronted with individualised curricular adaptations. The very fact of creating an alternative route for those who present differences does not participate in the philosophy that underpins the culture of diversity (López-Melero, 2012).

The education system must be equitable, especially with people who have some kind of handicap in order not to aggravate their situation. For this reason, some authors such as Muntaner (2017) suggest that the idea of having a single curriculum of uniform proposal (same tasks, resources, methodology, etc.) ends up reducing the possibilities of those who present differences with respect to the pattern for which it is intended.

Starting from this conception, the answer can be found in changing homogenising proposals for inclusive heterogeneous procedures based on a comprehensive and diversified curriculum (Gavira & Moriña, 2015). This consists of adapting the curriculum of each subject to accommodate personal singularities through flexible and open learning experiences. For this, it is necessary to break with the classical teaching concept, with the teacher being the key figure in inclusive practices (Booth & Ainscow, 2015).

This way of acting based on attention to diversity has demonstrated not only to favour the minority group, but also to improve learning for all (Herrera, Pérez & Echeita, 2016). However, it is necessary to have a university teaching staff with pedagogical skills related to the subject. Some researchers point out that there is still a long way to go in this direction (Más & Olmos, 2012) and that initial and continuous training is necessary to develop the appropriate skills and modify practices (Paz Maldonado, 2018). That is the key to the true democratisation of higher education.

However, we still lack information on the variables related to the difficulties experienced by non-traditional students in their day-to-day life and which impede their successful integration and performance. In this way, the main objective that guides this research is to identify the main characteristics and needs of these students based on their perceptions and experiences. We try to answer questions such as the following: what are their needs, what are their singularities, how is their relations with teachers? what do they demand from university? Responding to them will allow us to assess the extent to which university favours an inclusive pedagogical model as well as to identify the difficulties they experience in their passage through that institution.

Method

The research focused on the characteristics and main needs of non-traditional students at university, identifying both the difficulties they experience and the strengths that help them to cope with the experience. We were interested in their own interpretation of their reality, so we adopted a qualitative approach to make a comprehensive, complex and contextualized analysis (Benson et al., 2010) of their situation.

Participants were selected in two phases according to the following criteria: 1) To be part of at least one of the different groups usually considered as non-traditional students and 2) to represent students from the five main fields of knowledge in the Spanish university sphere (Sciences, Engineering and Architecture, Social and Legal Sciences, Art and Humanities and Health Sciences). The aim was to make the sample diverse according to those two criteria.

A first round of contacts was initiated at the University of Seville (which was the university where the study was conducted), resulting in a compendium of 23 candidates, distributed as follows: According to the first criterion, 6 were mature students, 5 had some kind of disability, 2 had dependents, 7 were from a disadvantaged social environment and 3 were from other ethnic and/or cultural groups. Following the second criterion, most of the participants (15) studied various degrees related to the Social Sciences, but there were two students for each of the other major fields of knowledge.

All of them were provided with an open-ended protocol of questions designed to stimulate the narration of their experiences at the university. The protocol dealt with the following issues: Background and personal experience in their educational process, access to university and first experiences, motivations about the degree, development of academic life, learning and development strategies in the university context, teaching and teaching staff, expectations, future motivations and decision making.

The initial reading and analysis of this material allowed us to visualise the elements in which the information was of interest to the study and was beginning to become saturated. Based on it, the selection of the eight participants who were ultimately the informants who were interviewed in depth (second phase of the sample selection process) was defined. The choice of these eight people was based on the development of their writings, fundamentally on the uniqueness of their stories and the richness they showed for research from a substantive point of view.

Hence, an in-depth and open interview was conducted with each of these eight informants. These interviews allowed us to delve into all those aspects of the stories that had proved particularly significant, and also into others that emerged throughout the conversation. The formulation of the different questions was carried out in a flexible manner and within the framework of an informal conversation format with the participants. The most relevant aspects addressed in the interviews were: Motivations to study at the university,

overcoming problems and difficulties, support in their academic progress, relations with teachers and the capacity of the university as an institution to respond to its needs.

In order to maintain the anonymity of the informants, pseudonyms (chosen by the participants themselves) are used to present the results.

Results

Although different results were developed, we will focus on the three most outstanding ones, as they are particularly relevant for a thorough understanding of the daily experience of non-traditional students at university: their specific characteristics, the daily development in academic life and the adaptation of the institution to their needs.

Choice, motivation and grit. Working double to get the same

In spite of the diversity of situations that appeared in the different information gathered, several common elements stood out in almost all the informants: a high level of motivation regarding university studies, the awareness that academic progress requires greater effort, determination to achieve their aims and attitude to face the adversities.

In terms of motivation, the idea that these students might be particularly excited about studying at the university emerged. In fact, for many of them, the university is a choice, not the stage to be faced, necessarily, when they finish secondary school.

> Of course, the interest that you put in and the interest that you have in it influence your grades, of course (...) now I am not obliged to do it, I do it because I want to do it and... and I want to show that I am capable of doing it, so that, it has a stimulus that... supports you... to get good grades, to work, to emphasise many things that before I had to do with them (Isabel, a mature female student).

Only a high level of motivation explains the effort and the high costs that some people faced: stressful situations occurred and daily planning was required to conciliate academic and family life, which sometimes led these students to question whether this effort and costs were worthwhile.

> Because I had to organize a lot...., I had to hire a person to take the girls to school, to do the housework... And I was thinking do I really need this? (...) I'm neglecting everything because I'm here and I was wondering, is it worth it? Because the girls also blame me that I spend all day on the computer.... then of course, it hurts and you say, is it worth it? (Emma, a mature female student with dependent children).

As it can be seen, there was an awareness of having to make a greater effort than their peers to carry out their studies. Many used the expression "it costs me twice as much" to refer to it.

> Being a little sensible, you have to contribute more to get to the same thing, that is, you have to do double, to get the same thing. That's my conclusion as a non-traditional student, for me to do the same as someone else, I have to do twice as much (Man, mature student).

For many of them, a university degree was a clear objective and they showed a firm determination to pursue it. It could be said, therefore, that clear aims and a firm attitude towards achieving it can be considered characteristics of this type of students.

> It's what I've wanted for many years. I got it a little late, but I got it and now I'm not going to give up! This is what I have been pursuing for a long time (Hernán, a mature male student and first generation student).

On the other hand, there also was an attitude of struggle towards the institution, to try to transform certain aspects that affected them or were an obstacle to their academic development.

> Because now they've changed the elevator buttons, but they've put them back up, too high for me. After what I complained about it, they didn't take my needs into account, since they were as difficult as before (...). The only thing I have always been told is: "We can give you a stick... and that's how you get to hit the button" (...). I felt angry. I have passed 4th grade and everything continues as it was since I started the degree (Yria, a female student with mobility difficulties, who uses a wheelchair).

> More than once I said it in the information office (....) to suggest that they at least renew the microphone listening equipment (...), being always demanding the same to the same people tires me a lot, it is with one person and with another,... I became a little radical, I've managed well on my own, when I can't hear in a class and I get fed up with the teacher, I go to the library, I get the book and I study on my own, and so I sort it out (Alvaritocrack, male student with hearing difficulties).

Sometimes this struggle was not reciprocated, neither by the institution nor by the teaching staff, and caused frustration, anger, tiredness, etc., which led them to look for other strategies to get ahead. This situation deserves some reflection because on one hand, it highlights the inadequacy of the university in facing the challenge of diversity. It is not sufficiently prepared to meet and satisfy the needs of non-traditional learners in an appropriate manner. On the other hand, it seems that their actions are palliative and punctual, which shows that much work remains to be done to create an inclusive university that can adequately accommodate and care for any student, regardless of their characteristics. And finally, it should be understood that improving these conditions from an integrated perspective implies the improvement of the university as a whole, which would prevent the problem from reproducing again in the future and, therefore, would improve the university as an institution and as a social agent.

Struggling with academic life: challenging traditional practices

Although it was sometimes difficult for them to attend lectures, they considered them very important. Taking their own notes, asking for more detailed explanations when they did not understand a concept or the possibility of sharing their own opinions were key elements that helped them to optimise the process of personal learning.

> I always attend 99.99% of the classes, if I miss one it is really due to force majeure (Ananda, a female student of another nationality).

The information suggested that, with a few exceptions, the general tendency of teachers is to give master classes of a theoretical nature, based on the teacher's presentation and the students' taking notes. Non-traditional students criticised the fact that teaching models were, in general terms, so traditional, since they were not appropriate to this academic stage or to the characteristics and demands of these students.

> A typical day at the university is attending classes, taking notes and listening to the teacher, only 2 or 3 teachers use a different dynamic of classes where we talk, but in general we are still like in a school..., the teacher giving the lesson (Lidia, first generation female student).

Although it was infrequent, methodological alternatives were sometimes considered. However, some of them generated new dilemmas for non-traditional students, given their circumstances. For example, teamwork, which is increasingly common among the work strategies implemented by teachers, posed new complications because it requires more time of dedication (which is lacking in this type of student).

> Personally, it usually takes me a lot longer to do my homework than to study, not because I don't have to study, but because these projects take up a lot of my time (MJ, a female mature student with dependent children).

A large proportion of participants had significant time constraints due to the fact that they were making their studies compatible with other obligations. Therefore, although their level of motivation for the classes was high and they were willing to take time to attend them, they also evaluated the situation and if the classes did not provide anything, sometimes they decided to attend other obligations.

> Many times I also decide not to go to class just because of the fact that the classes are boring and don't give me anything, the truth is that I would rather stay taking care of my daughter, honestly... (Cristi, a female student with dependent children).

This type of case again shows that teaching is not adapted to the characteristics of the whole student body, but is designed and proposed for a specific group (the traditional student) that has homogeneous characteristics and, therefore, generates a problem for the rest. The university must try to break this pattern and present heterogeneous, flexible proposals adapted to the needs of all students, not just the majority group.

The inflexible options sometimes made the student choose a modality that did not satisfy him/her personally or respond to his/her needs. For example, when classes could not be attended on a regular basis, a different assessment system was generally developed (for non-attendant students), which was often more complicated and less interesting from a didactic point of view. Some of them considered that this rigidity should be broken and that intermediate options should be considered when taking the subjects, which would be motivating and powerful from a pedagogical perspective.

> I have had a lot of problems with these classes, because after explaining my situation to them they have not given me a good alternative, but the only thing they offer me is the non-attendance plan which is truly not the same at all.... and maybe I cannot attend 100% of the classes, since it is not that I never go... I mean that there should be a middle option between the 100% attendance programmes and the non-attendants' (Cristi, a female student with dependent children).

It is also interesting to note the issue of tutoring which, within university education, should be an important resource of support. As stated in the theoretical framework, it could be thought that tutoring is a particularly useful strategy for this type of student, as it could contribute to the personalisation of the learning process. This would make it possible to establish a closer relationship with the teaching staff, who would meet the demands that non-traditional students find difficult to meet (for example, attendance at classes). However, students' perceptions of tutoring –probably reflecting teachers' view-differed significantly from this conception. Tutorials were considered as a last resort, as a problem or doubt solving device when all other elements or options have failed.

> Yes (I attended tutorials), to get explained the subject in an extreme situation.... when I was overwhelmed on all sides, that is, in the library I didn't get anything, my colleagues didn't understand anything either,… I went to tutoring. Tutoring as a last resort... (Alvaritocrack, male student with hearing difficulties).

Only few participants perceived tutoring beyond the resolution of specific doubts, that is, as a way of establishing a closer and more direct relationship with the teacher in order to, when appropriate, seek the necessary support. Tutorials, in such cases, were perceived as closer and more open than lectures, allowing the tutor to get to know the student's needs and, consequently, to attend them in a more personalised way.

> It is different, attending classes consists of listening to the lesson, commenting on what has been explained, doing activities... but going to the tutorials is more direct... the relationship between student and teacher..., a tutorial where you can talk about all areas within certain limits, the tutor can help, he/she (...) can give you advice, he/she can guide you... (Lidia, first generation female student).

However, after tutorials some teachers met the needs of students in a specific, but not definitive, way.

> And when I took advantage of the tutoring, "look, I didn't know because I have such a disability", he says "yes, yes, I will take it into account"... He remembers, you know, the first few weeks and when several weeks have passed he doesn't remember... (Alvaritocrack, male student with hearing difficulties).

Is equality a fair treatment for non-traditional students?

The relationship of the participants with the teachers was limited to general aspects related to the subject. They did not expect special treatment, so when their non-traditional status went unnoticed, they described the feeling of connecting "well" with teachers, as they received "normal" treatment.

> I don't need special support or special treatment because this is a difficult circumstance, I prefer to leave it out of the classroom (...). I don't need that kind of help, although … if an essay has to be handed in, imagine on Monday, I'm going to have it even if I have to spend the night in the hospital. I've studied in the hospital at the door of the ICU (Magister, first generation female student with special needs from an underprivileged environment).

Despite the demand for equal treatment of students, we could see that there were different situations that would require some flexibility on the part of the teaching staff.
    When the condition of non-traditional students was revealed or their characteristics were directly observable, we found two tendencies among the teaching staff: empathic or egalitarian. In relation to the first one, some teachers showed empathy and even valued the non-traditional condition: either because in some cases it meant greater maturity in the student, or because it tended to be a more participative student body, which, in certain situations, was an advantage in the teaching process.

> Especially young teachers, what they are looking for is the intervention (...) then I have noticed that to a certain extent they are looking for the intervention, because they know that if nobody is going to intervene, you... more or less successfully can break the ice (Man, male mature student).

In relation to the second trend, there were teachers who rejected any special treatment that could generate differences with the rest of the students. The lack of alternatives or the maladjustment to the unique characteristics of these students implied an unfair treatment. However, it is interesting that most participants understood that the action must be translated into identical conditions for everyone, regardless of their circumstances.

> Most of them understand and value my situation, but logically they can't demand less from me than they demand to the other students (MJ, a female mature student with dependent children).

It is quite possible that this point of view was a consequence of the common assumptions in academic culture, often conveyed by the faculty, which have a bearing on the idea that the requirements should be the same for everyone. There was no difference between equality and equity, nor, therefore, a personalised curricular adaptation, which is a nonsense from an inclusive vision of education. Even more so when it is still maintained that it is the student body that must adapt to the institution and not the institution to the student body.

> They, of course, are aware of my disability, because it's obvious, but none of them usually come to ask me if I need anything special or anything else. They treat me the way they treat the rest of the students and that has two aspects: the positive, which is because I feel the same way as the others and do not need anything special, and the negative, which is that maybe I would like them to worry about me a little bit (...). In certain aspects, sometimes, being treated normally in your situation is a disadvantage and you feel a little discriminated against (Yria, a female student with mobility difficulties, who uses a wheelchair).

> So the teacher is still immature, he is talking about justice, he thinks that if he is flexible with me so that I can pass, or not pass, he is doing bad justice. He is comparing me at 59 to an 18-year-old boy... (Nasser, a male mature student of another nationality who does not speak a fluent Spanish).

Why should all students be treated in the same way if each student has a particular set of needs? Should not be attended in an inclusive manner the cases of disadvantaged students?

On the other hand, the aspects that were generally attended to non-traditional students were usually scarce and peripferal. In other words, they focused on specific elements that did not include substantial axes of the learning process. Curiously, this was a type of demand that was not considered a change in requirements by study participants. This is because most of the aspects that were adapted were not central to the didactic structure of the subject.

> In these cases there are some occasions in which teachers put all their effort, everything in their hands to be able to change some tutorials hours, and things like that, although not all of them, in order to be as flexible as possible for this type of students who have already told them (...) But in general, they are usually flexible on tutoring and more informal issues, so to speak. When they are talking about other issues such as practice, exams..., they are not flexible (Hernán, male mature student and first generation student).

As can be seen, not all teachers exercised this flexibility or met the demands of these students.

The discourses on flexibility and adaptation to the unique characteristics of the student body ended up by posing two interesting themes: 1) the responsibility of the student as a necessary condition for the teacher to be more flexible in his/her demands and 2) the obligation that the student felt towards the teacher who attended to their needs.

Thus, some of these students felt that they cannot fail the teachers who adapted to their needs and therefore had to perform to the best of their ability.

> What I've done is not half of the work, maybe in other circumstances I say, "Well, I'll hand in the assignment any way I can and that's it". But I know that today I am going to finish late…even if I go to work with 3 hours of sleep, that this work is going to be perfect...because I am not going to fail that person (Man, male mature student).

Discussion

The results showed that non-traditional students are highly motivated to study at university, which is in line with previous studies finding about their higher levels of intrinsic motivation for learning (Bye, Pushker & Cornway, 2007; Finnegan, Merrill & Thunborg, 2014; Morley, 2012). For them, access to a university degree was a mature decision that, in many cases, involved a significant cost in terms of time of dedication, family and work organization and efforts to overcome obstacles. Some of these factors have been identified as success indicators in higher education (Cabrera et al., 2006; González-Monteagudo & Ballesteros, 2011b).

Until now, university teaching has been planned taking into account only full-time students. However, with the entry of new audiences into higher education we also need to adopt strategies for an increasing number of part-time students who combine study with other obligations. This difference between full-time and part-time students is already included in the Student Statute (RD 1791/2010), which is the legal framework necessary to make the curriculum more flexible.

Likewise, the obligation to attend to class in order to be eligible for continuous assessment systems is an example of a common requirement that must be adapted to facilitate access for all students. Participants in this study preferred to attend and participate in class, rather than the non-attendant assessment system. It is therefore necessary to look for new options that fit all possible situations. This circumstance should lead to a rethinking of the pedagogical framework in which university teaching takes place and, therefore, to challenge the agents most directly involved in this activity (González-Sanmamed & Raposo-Rivas, 2009). In view of this, it would be important that we begin to see the growing diversification of students in our classrooms as a possibility of enrichment and learning (García-Rodríguez et al., 2014). A more plural, diverse and heterogeneous university means a fairer and more inclusive higher education, which also provides opportunities for a larger population.

Another strategic aspect for promoting a more diversified university education is tutoring, whose function of personalising the student experience should contribute to the development of many of the aspirations included in the European Higher Education Area (EHEA). The study by Méndez and Trillo (2010) reinforces the relevance of the tutorial action. However, in one assessment of the development of the methodological renewal, sponsored by the Bologna Plan, tutorial is the aspect that receives the lowest rating from students (MEC, 2006). Our study highlight that for many students tutoring does not go beyond the resolution of a single doubt or issue. Therefore, it seems necessary to change the conceptions of teachers and learners about this function, in order to make optimal use of its possibilities.

In view of the results of this and similar studies (González-Monteagudo & Ballesteros, 2011b), it seems appropriate to state that the characteristics and experiences of non-traditional university students is a growing line of research that can provide a

valuable information for the future of higher education. As the general tendency is that this type of student is becoming more numerous, it is necessary to look more closely at their specific needs. In this way, services and activities that facilitate a greater inclusion of non-traditional students in the university should be offered, enhancing the social dimension of higher education, which is in line with what was advocated in the London Communiqué (2007).

Conclusion

Non-traditional students seem to have unique characteristics in common: they tend to have a clear academic aim and a personal motivation to undertake their university studies. This will take a thoughtful decision that requires more effort than conventional students, but they tend to overcome it by showing enormous determination in this regard.

Until few years ago, Spanish university student population showed fairly homogeneous characteristics. The arrival of a more diverse population in higher education is an achievement of the system (in which it is necessary to continue working to reach the highest levels of inclusion). However this fact poses a new need, it requires adaptation to a more plural and heterogeneous reality, since there are more students with unequal situations.

It seems that the predominant teaching model is traditional (mostly theoretical lessons), so it is not adapted to the needs of non-traditional students. Currently, the adaptation of programmes and teaching practice to the characteristics of the student population in order to compensate the different starting points should be imperative. This model must evolve and make difference, flexibility and inclusion one of its identifying features. In this sense, it is not only necessary to adapt the less relevant aspects of the teaching-learning process, but also to be able to adapt those central elements that are key to learning (as long as the purpose of the subject is not distorted).

As a consequence of its historical evolution, both the teaching staff and the students seem to have a very internalised egalitarian pedagogical philosophy, in which there is hardly any room for equity. In fact, while it is clear that a lack of attention to their differences may lead to some grievance, participants expressed a preference for 'equal treatment'. Inclusive education has not yet made its mark in higher education; it is beginning to make inroads. That is why a personalised attention for every student through approaches in which no one is pointed out is demanded.

Notes

[1] The age at which a student is considered mature differs depending on the country and the university. In Spanish higher education there are different ways to access. One of these is known as the "over 25 test", which includes an access system adapted to the characteristics of the target population.

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European Governance in Adult Education: On the comparative advantage of joining working groups and networks

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Abstract

This article examines the working of complex intergovernmental policies that have brought about new opportunities and structures in European adult education since the 2008 global financial crisis. Drawing on political sociology, it restricts attention on the Renewed European Agenda for Adult Learning (2011), to examine its historical development, and how it bundles together various governance mechanisms, policy instruments, and social actors to govern the adult education policy domain through policy coordination. This points at regulatory politics as a distinctive quality of European governance in adult education. Then, through Social Network Analysis, it explores in depth one of its policy instrument (i.e., coordinated working groups/networks) and the form of network governance it creates. This analysis pinpoints at the comparative advantage of some organizations (i.e., the ministries of Latvia, Finland and Belgium), which partake in this form of network governance. This produces unpredictable contingency in EU policy coordination.

Keywords: adult education; European governance; policy coordination; social network analysis

Introduction

In the European Union (EU), in the wake of the 2008 global financial crisis, complex intergovernmental policies have brought about new opportunities and structures in adult education. For instance, all member states are now committed to help adults with a low level of skills to increase their literacy, numeracy and digital skills and/or to progress towards an upper secondary qualification or equivalent (i.e., *Upskilling Pathways* initiative). At the same time, they are also committed to have their national budgets and reforms' priorities closely monitored by the institutions of the EU (i.e., *European Semester*). These new opportunities and structures also increased the challenges of European governance in the adult education policy domain, and specifically that of effective policy coordination.

A glance at the literature on governance increasingly points at different mechanisms, instruments and tools as key for the act of governing education among other policy domains (Dill, 2000; Dill & Beerkens, 2010; Jordan, Rüdiger, Wurzel, & Zito, 2005; Kassim & Le Galès, 2010; Erkkilä, 2016). All this comes against the backdrop of numerous actors intervening in policy-making, and a variety of disciplinary perspectives and approaches to identify and study the policy devices through which multi-actor governance occurs also through policy coordination, at both European and global levels.

Some point at networking, seminars, reviews, expert groups as 'soft governance' devices that lay at the core of the Europeanization of education (Lawn & Grek, 2012). But the apparatuses for multi-level governance and effective policy coordination within the EU hold some peculiarity that is worth attention. In fact, Europeanization points not only at the process of creating a European policy space (Ibid.) but most importantly to an all-encompassing process of 'domestic adaptation to European regional integration' (Graziano & Vink, 2006, p. 7), which occurs through regulatory politics and a 'joint decision mode' (Kohler-Koch & Rittberger, 2006).

Therefore, researching European governance in adult education, and particularly policy coordination, requires attention to the EU's specific 'actorness'. In fact, the EU multi-level nature involves interdependence of governments representing different territorial levels, as well as interdependence between governments and non-governmental actors (Hooghe & Marks, 2001; Bache & Flinders, 2004; Zito, 2015). Moreover, EU governance tends by its very nature towards Europeanization, and this largely implies the transformative effect of the EU governance system on the political institutions, policies, and political processes of EU member states, and beyond European countries (Sabel & Zeitlin, 2010). Thus, we contribute to a growing area of interest in researching European politics and Europeanization through scrutinizing specific mechanisms or instruments, and by assessing the struggle between their legitimacy and effectiveness (Tholoniat, 2010; Walters & Haahr, 2005; Chatzopoulou, 2015).

In education, particularly the Open Method of Coordination, and policy 'instrumentation' more broadly (Lascoumes & Le Galès, 2007), have attracted a growing interest among scholars when analysing decision-making within the EU and its member states, and its contribution to Europeanization. Ravinet (2008), for instance, addressed the effects of a governance mechanism in the higher education policy domain (i.e., the 'follow-up' mechanism, or the process of re-enforcing continuity of cooperation through various working groups), and its diverse tools (i.e., the devices linked to the actions utilised by working groups and other actors) to show how its evolving structure played a significant and influential role for national adaptation.

While this furthers our understanding of European governance in education, including policy coordination, and its domestic adaptive effects, most studies concentrate

on the analysis of single policy instruments (e.g. Open Method of Coordination), and seldom consider the adult education policy domain.

Against this backdrop, our main concern lays with the working of complex intergovernmental policies that have brought about new opportunities and structures in European adult education since the 2008 global financial crisis. Specifically, we are interested in the development, process and practice of policy coordination that these policies entail, and their possible effects for domestic adaptation.

In this paper, we restrict attention on the Renewed European Agenda for Adult Learning (Renewed Agenda hereof), endorsed by the European Council in 2011 (Council of the European Union [Council], 2011). We do so with a double aim. One is to illustrate how this intergovernmental policy bundles together various governance mechanisms, policy instruments, tools, and social actors to govern the adult education policy domain through policy coordination. The other is to examine policy coordination, and explore the forms of comparative advantage it produces for some organizations, and the countries they represent.

The paper is structured in three main sections. First, we introduce our conceptual framework, and explain how we conceptualise complex intergovernmental policies as policy mixes (Del Rio & Howlett, 2013). Then, we present the Renewed Agenda as a policy mix that is performing three authoritative functions (i.e., legal, epistemic and procedural) and which has put in motion a new process of instrumentation in the adult education policy domain. Such process is illustrated through a brief account of the historical development of the Renewed Agenda, and the governance mechanisms and policy instruments through which it works. Then we focus on one such policy instrument (i.e., coordinated working groups/networks) and, through Social Network Analysis, explore the form of network governance it creates. In so doing, we pinpoint at the comparative advantage of some organizations that partake in this form of network governance.

Conceptual clarifications

The emergence of policy coordination as a governance technique (Armstrong, 2010) brought into light the variety of mechanisms, instruments and tools as central conceptions enacting European governance, but also as the analytical instruments that allow examinations of the coordinating function of EU institutions. Based on a review of these concepts, how they have been signified, and to which end, by those engaged with public administration, political science, and particularly public policy and education governance, this section provides a conceptual background to the way we employ an instruments approach to examine the coordinating function of EU institutions in the adult education policy domain.

Several approaches in the literature deal with the way policy instruments and tools are understood and used for policy analysis. Some focus on the effect of instruments by analysing practical problems and practical knowledge in government organizations, which may help improving the quality of policy processes (Bruijn & Hufen, 1998). Others are interested in policy instruments and the role they play at policy formulation and implementation stages, particularly, the choice of instruments. Specifically, instrument choice has been increasingly analysed through a constitutivist lens (Linder & Peters, 1998), which calls for attention to the subjective meanings (symbolic, ethical, and so on) of policy instruments, and how these are interpreted and mediated through different values and perceptions of the actors involved in the policy process. Policy design studies

(Del Rio & Howlett, 2013; Barton, Ring & Rusch, 2017) also point at existing conflicts or synergies between different policy instruments employed in the same bundle of more complex policy mixes, which involve multiple governments as well as multiple domains or policy goals, and are at the heart of European governance. In recent years, policy design studies have concentrated attention on the formulation of intelligent design of policy mixes, policy 'portfolios', or 'bundles' (Del Rio & Howlett, 2013; Barton et al., 2017), with the scope of establishing optimality of complex policy mixes (Mandell 2008, Howlett and Rayner, 2007, Lanzalaco, 2011), institutions and networks (John 2011), and policy layering or layering of tools (Thelen, 2004; van der Heijden, 2011; Daugbjerg & Swinbank, 2016; Considine 2012). Methodologically, these studies take into account the types of tools, the policy objectives, but also institutional and behavioural contexts (Del Rio & Howlett, 2013).

Against this backdrop, and in light of the multilevel governance that characterises the EU, we borrow from Del Rio and Howlett (2013) the concept of 'policy mix'. A policy mix embeds 'horizontal' complexity – as each mix relates to different policy instruments and actors within a level of policy-making, as well as 'vertical' complexity – as each mix addresses a number of policy goals, domains and/or governments. In other words, the 'horizontal' dimension of a policy mix relates to a number of instruments (e.g. funding schemes) and relationships existing between them within a single level of policy-making (e.g. European). At the same time its 'vertical' dimension refers to the involvement of multiple goals (like economic growth, adult's up-skilling, etc.), policy domains (such as economy, labour, education, etc.) and governments (e.g. national, regional and local governments in EU's member states, as well as candidate and associate countries). By utilising such a perspective on the Renewed Agenda we reveal the extraordinary policy coordination challenges facing policy-makers and researchers.

The next step enabling a better understanding of this policy mix is based on Lascoumes and Le Galès' (2007) take on policy 'instrumentation' and their distinction at the 'levels of observation' between 'instruments', 'techniques' and 'tools'. Their contribution has two analytical merits. At epistemological level, it includes space for analysing the values, history and nature of instruments. Most importantly, however, at conceptual level, it distinguishes, and clarifies the relations, between policy 'instruments' and 'tools', as tools are the micro devises through which meanings (symbolic, ethical, and so on) are construed. It is on this ground that instruments can shape social practices.

Accordingly, we define the concept of 'governance mechanism' as a policy process aimed at reaching specific policy objective(s) that naturalizes these objectives and the effects it produces. Empirically, it focuses on power and interests, or the debates surrounding the creation and introduction of policy objectives, the ways they were modified, and their controversies. Unlike in our other studies (Milana & Klatt, 2019a, Milana, Klatt & Vatrella, forthcoming), this paper is not focused on investigating the details of such naturalization process, but the 'governance mechanism' perspective enabled us to map and analyse the complex soft forms of governance being used in EU policy development. Moreover, we define the concept of 'policy instrument' as the means used to reach policy outcome(s), in the sense of more or less stable frameworks that structure collective action.

In short, we believe productive to put different standpoints into dialogue. A functionalist standpoint (cf. Del Rio & Howlett, 2013, among others) helps in identifying complex policy mixes, and the relationships between instruments or tools and possible existing conflicts and synergies. In our case, it helped identifying and describing policy mechanisms and instruments utilised in the Renewed Agenda following our historical analysis of the conflicts and synergies in the three phases of its development. At the same

time a social constructivist standpoint (cf. Risse, 2004, among others) enables identifying possible influence of network governance on individual member states. By analysing various characteristics of coordinated working groups under the Renewed Agenda, and drawing inferences between the network nodes through Social Network Analysis, we attempted to identify the 'two-way constitutivness' of social environments and individual member states, and the impact of network governance on domestic adaptation and in-network influence.

Drawing on the above heuristic model that conceptualises and clarifies the relations between policy mixes, governance mechanisms, policy instruments and tools we identified a few policy mixes that, agreed among EU institutions and member states, may connect to and influence national and local governments' decisions on adult education within the EU. One such policy mixes is the Renewed Agenda that, in the next section, we scrutinize from an historical perspective, before examining the mechanisms and instruments through which it works.

Exposing the Renewed Agenda

We differentiate between three periods in the history of the Renewed Agenda to appreciate its formation as a policy mix on its own rights, existing conflicts or synergies and how these changed over time, and its mode of working.[1]

The first period, signposted by the establishment of 1996 as the *European year of lifelong learning* and the *Resolution on lifelong learning* by the Council of the EU (June 2002), is a 'pre-foundation stage' in which the EU sets the ground for adult education to emerge as a policy domain distinct from education and training. At this stage, the adult education dimension of lifelong learning is teased out in dialogue between the institutions of the EU, which bolsters the ties between European education and training and employment policies. This creates the ground for adult and further education to be seen as an intergovernmental and multi-sectorial policy domain with multiple goals. Therefrom, EU institutions concentrated on existing statistical data gaps at the micro-level (learner-centred), and stronger knowledge exchanges and collaboration across member states, and with other international organizations with an interest in adult and further education.

The second period, signposted by the 2006 Communication of the European commission *Adult Learning: it is never too late to learn* (European Commission [EC], 2006) and by the Council's Conclusions on adult learning of 22 May 2008 (Council, 2008), is the *foundation stage* in which adult education became a clearly defined policy domain. At this stage, a policy mix governing adult education within the EU starts to take its current shape, upon initiative of the European Commision.

On these precedents, the outbreak of the global financial crisis also impinged on the tuning of the Renewed Agenda. Specifically, two elements of *Europe 2020*, though indirectly, bear higher significance for the adult education policy domain: a European benchmark on tertiary education for young adults (i.e., at least 40% of the younger generation should have a tertiary degree), and a flagship initiative linking skills to better job prospects (i.e., *An Agenda for new skills and jobs*).

In 2011 the Council of the EU approved a *Resolution on the Renewed Agenda*. Council Resolutions have no legal effect on EU member states, as they are non-binding documents, but express political positions on a specific topic, and set out future work within a particular policy domain that is not (or not entirely) of EU exclusive competency. Accordingly, they may have different scopes that span from inviting member states or

other EU institutions to take action in a particular area to coordinating member states' actions by setting objectives, and proposing assessments and monitoring procedures.

Previous to the Renewed Agenda, the Directorate General for Education and Culture of the European Commission had put forward an Agenda for adult learning in one of its 2006 Communications, and a corresponding Action plan was proposed in 2007 to the Council of the EU, the European Parliament, the European Economic and Social Committee, and the Committee of the Regions (EC, 2007). This led in January 2008 to its adoption by the European Parliament through to a *Resolution on adult learning* (European Parliament [EP], 2008). The Renewed Agenda built on these previous normative steps, yet tailed the global financial crisis that had made its effects felt in Europe too, when member states from the Eurozone became unable to repay or refinance their government debt. It was to contrast this and related social consequences that in 2010 the EC reconsidered the union's growth strategy in *Europe 2020*. Within this scenario the Renewed Agenda recognises that

> to face both the short and long-term consequences of the economic crisis, there is a need for adults regularly to enhance their personal and professional skills and competences… [but] adult learning is currently the weakest link in developing national lifelong-learning systems… [and] Implementing the Action Plan [for adult learning] has also highlighted the difficulty of adequately monitoring the adult-learning sector, due to a lack of sufficient statistical data and evaluation of policy measures. (Council, 2011 p. C372/2)

Accordingly, it sets new priorities in this policy domain that are 'to be seen in the context of a longer-term vision for adult learning which – in the period up to 2020 – will endeavour to raise the sector's profile' (Ibid. p. C372/3). This vision stresses: enhancing the possibilities for adults to engage in learning activities; developing new approaches based on learning outcomes and lifelong learning guidance systems; increasing awareness among employers of adult learning's benefits for productivity; encouraging higher education institutions to embrace non-traditional students; promoting learning opportunities in support of seniors' active, autonomous and healthy aging; enhancing the involvement of civil society, social partners and local authorities on the basis of shared responsibility; and promoting adult learning as a means to increase solidarity between age generations and cultures.

Short-term priorities for 2012-2014 invited member states to better liaise with ministries and other stakeholders; use lifelong-learning tools agreed at EU level; use Grundtvig, Leonardo da Vinci and the Structural Fund to co-finance activities; use the Open Method of Coordination to promote mutual learning; and designate a national coordinator to facilitate cooperation with other member states and the EC in implementing the Renewed Agenda.

Moreover, the EC was invited to ensure complementarity and coherence between policy initiatives; establish close liaison with the national coordinators designated by the member states; enable the sharing of information through peer-learning activities and reviews, conferences, workshop etc.; commission studies and reinforce the capacity of existing research structures; pursue and intensify collaboration with other international organizations, and particularly the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) to exploit the results of the Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competences (PIAAC), but also the United Nations and its Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), and the Council of Europe; harnessing available EU funds to support the Renewed Agenda; and report on its implementation as part of the joint progress report of the strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training (ET2020).

Although not binding, we argue that the Renewed Agenda constitutes a policy mix that performs substantive authoritative functions at legal, epistemic and procedural level, which ease European governance in the adult education policy domain.

Legally, although Resolutions are non-binding documents like Communications, according to EU Law the latter set out the EC's own thinking on a particular matter, whereas the former are legal instruments that encourage all those addressed to act in particular ways, hence enable EU institutions to establish non-binding rules for member states. So, the Renewed Agenda elevated political authority on adult education from the EC (accountable to appointed impartial and independent commissioners) to the Council of the EU (accountable to national governments) (Klatt, 2014). A precedent had been established in 2008, when the previous Action plan on adult learning had gained legitimacy through the EP's Resolution on adult learning (EP, 2008).

Epistemically, the Renewed Agenda's short-term priorities and longer-term vision legitimate an 'instrumental epistemology' in the adult education policy domain that, as Bagnall and Hodge (2018) argue, has come to be favoured in contrast to alternative, competing ones (i.e., disciplinary, constructivist, emancipatory) in the contemporary cultural context.

Procedurally, the Renewed Agenda sets the objectives of member states' action (e.g. liaise ministries and other stakeholders, co-finance adult learning activities, promote mutual learning) and of EC's action (e.g. ensure complementarity and coherence between policy initiatives, establish close liaison with member states, enable knowledge sharing, reinforce research capacity of existing structures, pursue and/or intensify collaboration with other international organizations). But it also prescribes the policy instruments through which these shall be achieved. Finally, it interlocks the short-term priorities in adult education, and related policy instruments, to ET2020, a different policy mix.

In short, the Renewed Agenda, through its legal, epistemic and procedural functions, has put in motion a complex process of instrumentation in the adult education policy domain, which frames 'adult learning' as the process leading to the acquisition of skills by adult citizens, and which, in turn, increases the pool of skills available in a country, and, by extension, within the European region as a whole, an undivided territory, in its racing for global competition.

Governance mechanisms and policy instruments

Our examination of the *mode of work* of the Renewed Agenda (Milana & Klatt, 2019a, Milana, Klatt & Vatrella, forthcoming) points at the following as its core governance mechanisms,[2] operating under the principles of the Open Method of Coordination:

- *Standard-setting:* It involves normative actions and setting common goals (including benchmarking and standardization) that concur towards the establishment of a single, European model in the area of adult education and learning, to which all member states should conform.
- *Capacity-building:* It promotes 'good' or 'best' practices that help orienting the practical implementation of policy solution in the area of adult education learning to what framed as common European problems, by EU institutions, national governments and other stakeholders.
- *Elite learning:* It instigates changes in the value system of national actors through peer learning, peer counselling etc.

- *Financial redistribution:* It implies that EU's wealth is shared out between member states as a deliberate effect of joint decisions that include conditionality, and are used in support of reforms and activities in the area of adult education and learning.

But several policy instruments contribute to the working of these mechanisms; those surfacing in the analysis include:

- *Coordinated working groups/networks:* Groups established and coordinated by the EC, whose members, appointed by member states' governments or the EC, represents different elite positions (i.e., governmental agencies, other stakeholders, experts), and are assembled, over a period of time, to work on important policy issues in the area of adult learning.
- *Mutual- and peer-learning arrangements:* Occasions for representatives of member states, and EC's staff that support this activity, to identify and learn about initiatives and practices in place in different member states (and beyond) in the area of adult learning.
- *Data generation:* The gathering of quantitative and/or qualitative data, the method used to generate data from different sources, and the procedure through which data reaches a database or otherwise organized collection of data.
- *Benchmarks:* Accepted standards at European level, at times negotiated and agreed among Heads of states and governments, by which member states' performances in the area of adult education and learning can be measured, compared, and thus their level of quality judged.
- *Funding schemes:* Plans or arrangements designed by EU institutions to encourage governments, organizations or people to attain a particular objective or to put an idea into effect by providing money to finance an activity, a program, or a project entirely or in part.

In the next section, we focus attention on one among the instruments depicted above, working groups and networks coordinated by the EC, as these represent also the preferable 'working method' identified by the EC within the Open Method of Coordination. We will then examine them through Social Network Analysis so as to reveal the complexity of interest representation, and how it contributes to Europeanization processes.

Zooming on coordinated working groups/networks

Coordinating working groups/networks have become one of the main instruments of policy coordination in the EU. Under the Renewed Agenda, since foundation stage to date (2018), five working groups/networks have been established in the adult education policy domain, under the coordination of the EC: four temporary Commission Expert Groups, and one permanent Other Similar Entity (EC, 2018). Commission Expert Groups are consultative bodies set up by the EC or its departments when external specialist advice is needed 'for sound policymaking'. Other Similar Entities have a similar function but, though administered and financed by the EC, are set up by the EU's legislator. Both Commission Expert Groups and Other Similar Entities advice the EC but their inputs are not binding. Appointed members may include: individuals in their personal capacity (A); individuals representing a common interest / policy orientation (B); organisations (C); local, regional or national member states' authorities (D); or other public entities (E).

Unless there are overriding priorities or emergency conditions, all appointed members are selected through public calls for applications, with the exception of public authorities (i.e., D and E). Selected features of the working groups/networks under consideration here are presented in Table 1.

All working groups/networks were tasked to assist the EC with the implementation of existing EU legislation, programmes and policies and to coordinate with member states, through views' exchange. Only the Working Group on the Implementation of the Action Plan on Adult Learning, active at foundation stage, was tasked also to assist in the preparation of legislative proposals and policy initiatives.

At consolidation stage, however, changes in EU education governance impinged on the adult education domain. An internal restructuring of the EC moved its responsibility from the Directorate General for Education and Culture to the Directorate General for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion since 2013, so the coordination of working groups/networks in this domain shifted accordingly.

Moreover, due to the 2009 agreement ET2020, and its tuning to *Europe 2020*, the work of these groups/networks slowly altered too, as to better fit the principles of the Open Method of Coordination. Made explicit in the mission statement of Working Group on Adult Learning, such adaptation process is also evidenced in its stress on mutual learning among member states, assistance to member states in coping with country specific 'recommendations' by the EU institutions, and 'concrete and useable outputs' as a result of the group's activity.

Operating under a looser interpretation of the Open Method of Coordination's principles, both the Thematic Working Groups on Quality Assurance in Adult Learning, and on Financing Adult Learning, had a thematic focus (quality vs. finance), and higher interest in research gaps. The Thematic Working Group on Quality Assurance in Adult Learning explored synergies to strengthen the policy links between EU policy development on quality in vocational education and training, higher education and adult learning through three subgroups on indicators, accreditation / governance, and staff competences. In the meantime, the Thematic Working Group on Financing Adult Learning explored existing good practices to produce policy recommendations to assist member states in improving the efficiency and coherence of adult learning financing. Two subgroups focused, respectively, on funding adult learning for re-skilling and up-skilling to support innovation and growth, and funding adult learning for social inclusion and active citizenship. Both working groups appointed also individuals in their personal capacity.

By contrast, the Working Group on Adult Learning, in line with its tighter governance function, did not appoint any individual in his/her personal capacity, and instead increased representation of other public entities, and particularly of candidate countries (now including Albania, Montenegro, Serbia and Turkey). Further, among EU agencies, it replaced Eurydice, a network of institutions that facilitate sharing of information on national education systems, with the European Training Foundation, an agency that supports education, training and labour market reforms in transition and developing countries.

Yet, silent members of all working groups/networks are consultancy firms that, having signed framework contracts with the EC, provide their services as facilitators and rapporteurs for the groups/networks' activities.

Table 1 – Coordinated working groups/networks in the adult education policy domain

Full title	Active	Mission	Members (by type)					N. of actors for SNA[4]
			Tot.	A	C	D	E	
Working Group on the implementation of the Action Plan on Adult Learning[1]	2008-2010	Provide the EC with: - Policy advice and assistance in implementing, and following up, the actions set out in the Action plan (2008–2010); - Examples of good practices for dissemination and discussion of proposed actions at EU level, to impact and strengthen adult learning participation at national and regional levels.	49	-	7	37	5	50
Thematic Working Group on Quality Assurance in Adult Learning[1]	2011-2013	- Examine the research gaps on quality in the adult learning sector from MSs' and experts' point of view; - Explore different approaches in MSs on quality in the adult learning sector to improve both systems and provision.	32	4	4	20	4	29
Thematic Working Group on Financing Adult Learning[1]	2011-2013	- Examine the research gaps on financing adult learning from MSs' and experts' point of view; - Explore the effects of different financing approaches in MSs to increase participation rates in adult learning; - Consider the contribution of adult learning to social cohesion and economic development from the cost/benefit point of view.	28	5	4	14	5	24
ET2020 Working Group on Adult Learning[2]	Since 2014	- Benefit MSs in their work of furthering policy development on adult learning through mutual learning and the identification of good practices; - Provide assistance to clusters of MSs in responding to issues identified in country specific recommendations, by having such MSs benefit from the practical experience and good practices of other MSs; - Will concentrate on delivering concrete and useable outputs that respond to the strategic aims of both ET2020 and Europe 2020.	55	-	7	35	13	56
National coordinators for the implementation of the European Agenda on Adult Learning[2, 3]	Since 2012	Facilitate cooperation with other MSs and the EC in implementing the European Agenda for Adult Learning, within the context of ET2020.	39	-	-	31	8	40

[1] Led by the European Commission's Directorate General for Education and Culture

[2] Led by European Commission's Directorate General for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion

[3] Has a 'permanent' status

[4] It includes members type C, D, E and the leading European Commission's Directorate General, but excludes member type A (i.e. individuals invited in their own capacity)

Having identified the main characteristics of each of the coordinated working groups/networks at work in the adult education policy domain, and considered their contrasting peculiarities, next we focus on the form of network governance this policy instrument creates.

A Social Network Analysis of network governance in European adult education

Coordinated working groups are a significant policy instrument used in the European governance of the adult education domain. Governance refers to an organizational form of political as well as government action that is open to the involvement of private and civil society organizations (Rhodes, 1996, 1997, 2000; Mayntz, 1999). Accordingly, the EU (2001) itself identifies the general principle of 'participation' as an indicator of 'good' governance. Yet, among the different meanings that governance entails as a peculiar form of organization and coordination is that of a self-governing network: in this sense, governance emerges from self-organization phenomena set up by interdependent actors (Rhodes, 1996, 1997, 2000). Therefore, we draw on Social Network Analysis (Wasserman & Faust, 1994) to study the interactions of local, national, European and global policy actors within and across these networks. The horizontality between the actors, or the possibility that they are coordinated between peers during a decision-making process, produces self-organization systems starting from the relational models that the actors produce. In line with this definition Jones, Hesterly and Borgatti (1997, p. 914) speak of 'network governance', which 'involves a select, persistent, and structured set of autonomous firms (as well as nonprofit agencies) engaged in creating products or services based on implicit and open-ended contracts to adapt to environmental contingencies and to coordinate and safeguard exchanges. These contracts are socially – not legally – binding.'

The organizations partaking in the coordinated working groups under consideration are heterogeneous so we draw a parallel with the above definition of network governance, as these organizations also engage in producing products and services of some sorts (i.e., new norms and adult education provisions) based on not legally-binding social contracts. Accordingly, to describe the form of network governance in European adult education in which these organizations (as independent actors) engage, we performed a Social Network Analysis starting from a 2-mode matrix. This was generated from the 5 coordinated working groups (or *events*), and includes a total of 98 actors (or *nodes*) (i.e., organizations representing national ministries, third sector associations, EU agencies, etc.) – see Annex, which includes the number of events in which each actor is involved. For each actor with a national horizon of action, we added a two-letter country code in accordance with the ISO 3166-1 alpha 2 standard. The actor data were collected from the official European Commission's Register of Commission Expert Groups and Other Similar Entities (EC, 2018). The register provides the list of all appointed members in each group, according to their membership type (see Table 1). Appointed members include representatives from member states, candidate countries, European Free Trade Association countries, and relevant EU bodies or agencies (e.g., CEDEFOP, European Training Foundation, Eurydice), education and training associations (e.g. European Association for the Education of Adults), and European social partners (e.g., European Trade Union Confederation) (for a full list see Annex). Starting from this 2-mode matrix, we produced a 1-mode matrix, symmetric and binary, for the nodes, through this matrix we obtained a simple graph of contacts among actors (Figure 1). .

Figure 1 – The simple graph of European network governance in adult education
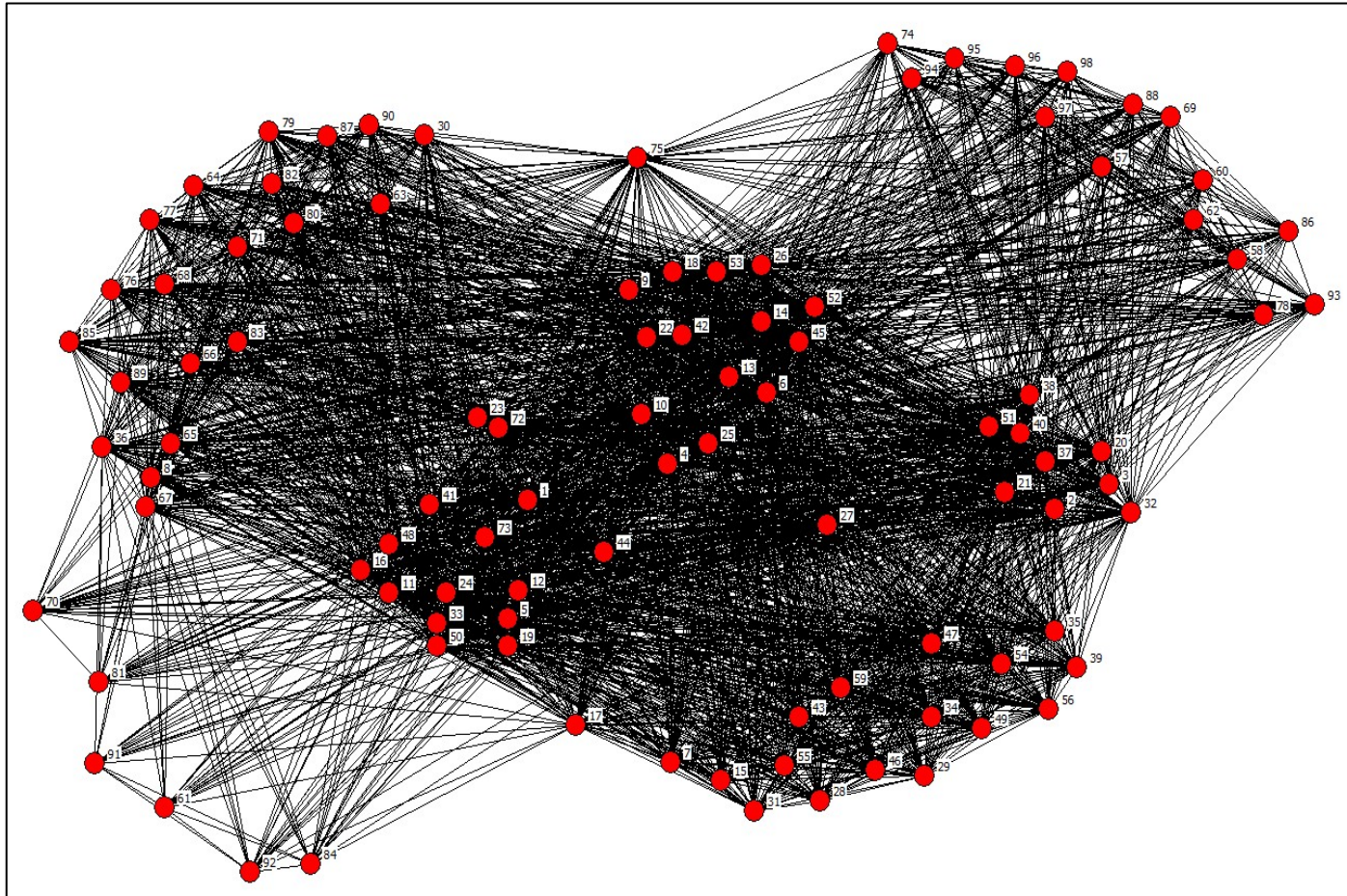
Note: the legend for the nodes is in the Annex.

We used Ucinet 6 software (Borgatti, Everett & Freeman, 2002) to perform the Social Network Analysis, and the NetDraw software (Borgatti, 2002) to obtain the graph. The 1-mode matrix contains the information about the presence of a contact between any single couple of actors: if these actors were in a same working group at least we can establish that they had an occasion for interacting and cooperating. This strategy presents at least two limitations that we will take into account.

The first limitation concerns the validity of our indicators of tie: we can suppose that two actors interact but we don't know if they really did, moreover we know that two actors do not share any working group membership but we do not know if they interact in other circumstances. At the same time, it must be noted that the occasions of connection prompted by the 5 working groups under consideration here are institutionally directed to support the European governance of adult education and therefore the ties that were activated in these circumstances are semantically well connected with the object of our research.

The second limitation concerns the reliability of the relational data we identified: the activity periods of the working groups are in fact partly different (see Table 1), but the analysis of an inter-organizational network (i.e., of a network of collective subjects), can justify the need of a longer time to be taken into account, and the European governance of adult education here analysed is well considered starting from all the 5 working groups.

This clarified, in the form of network governance under consideration the level of cohesion, which represents the density or 'proportion of possible lines that are actually present in the graph' (Wasserman & Faust, 1994, p. 101) (Figure 1), is equal to 63.20%.

Actors' connectivity

For each of the actors involved in this form of network governance, Table 2 reports its level of centrality in terms of degree (of a node) or 'the number of lines that are incident with it' (Wassermann & Faust, 1994, p. 100), and its normalized measure (with a range of 0-1). This measure is a proxy for an actor's connectivity / level of integration within the form of network governance under consideration.

Table 2 – The level of centrality: Degree and nDegree

	Degree	nDegree
Ministry of Education and Science (LV)	**97**	**1.00**
Ministry of Education and Culture (FI)	**97**	**1.00**
Flemish Department for Education and Training (BE)	**97**	**1.00**
Ministry of National Education (PL)	**93**	**0.96**
Ministry of Education and Culture (CY)	**93**	**0.96**
Ministry of Education, Culture and Sport (ES)	**93**	**0.96**
Ministry for Education and Employment (MT)	**93**	**0.96**
Ministry of Culture, Education & Religious Affairs (GR)	**93**	**0.96**
Ministry of Education, Science and Culture (IS)	**91**	**0.94**
Ministry of Education, Culture and Science (NL)	**91**	**0.94**
Ministry of Education and Science (LT)	**91**	**0.94**
Ministry of Education and Science (BG)	**91**	**0.94**

Ministry of Science, Education and Sports (HR)	**91**	**0.94**
National Agency for Qualification and VET (ANQEP) (PT)	**91**	**0.94**
Ministry of National Education (TR)	84	0.87
Ministry of Education, Science and Sport (SI)	82	0.85
Ministry of Education and Research (NO)	82	0.85
Ministry of Education and Research (EE)	82	0.85
European Association for the Education of Adults (EAEA)	82	0.85
Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports (MEYS) (CZ)	82	0.85
European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC)	82	0.85
European Association of Craft, Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (UEAPME)	82	0.85
Ministry for National Economy (HU)	82	0.85
Ministry of Education and Training of the State of North Rhine-Westphalia (DE)	82	0.85
Cedefop	82	0.85
Ministry of National Education (RO)	80	0.82
Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport (SK)	78	0.80
BUSINESSEUROPE	76	0.78
Ministry of Education and Research (SE)	76	0.78
European Training Foundation (ETF)	76	0.78
Adult Education Foundation (LI)	74	0.76
Ministry of the Wallonia-Brussels Federation (BE)	71	0.73
Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sport of the State of Baden-Württemberg (DE)	71	0.73
Learning and Work Institute (UK)	71	0.73
European Commission's Directorate General for Employment, Social Affairs & Inclusion (DG EMPL)	71	0.73
Centre for Vocational Education (ME)	71	0.73
Federal Institut for Vocational Education and training (BIBB) (DE)	71	0.73
Federal Ministry of Education and Women's Affairs (AT)	71	0.73
Ministry for Children, Education and Gender Equality (DK)	71	0.73
Ministry of National Education, Childhood and Youth (LU)	71	0.73
European Trade Union Committee for Education (ETUCE)	68	0.70
European Commission's Directorate General for Education and Culture (DG EAC)	57	0.59
Eurydice	57	0.59
Ministry of Education and Vocational Training (LU)	57	0.59
Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development (RS)	55	0.57
University of Belgrade (RS)	55	0.57
Ministry of National Education Higher Education and Research (FR)	55	0.57
Ministry of Education, University and Research (IT)	55	0.57

Adult Education Action (RS)	55	0.57
European Association of Vocational Education and Training Institutions (EVBB)	55	0.57
European Federation of Education Employers (EFEE)	55	0.57
Institute for the Development of Professional Training of Workers (ISFOL) (IT) [now National Institute for Public Policy Analysis (INAPP)]	55	0.57
Ministry of Education (ME)	55	0.57
Ministry of Education and Science (MK)	55	0.57
Ministry of Education and Sports (AL)	55	0.57
Ministry of Employment, Vocational Training and Social Dialogue (FR)	55	0.57
SOLAS (IE)	55	0.57
State Education Quality Service (LV)	55	0.57
State Secretariat for Education, Research and Innovation (SERI) (CH)	55	0.57
Association for Research and Media in Education, CONEDU (AT)	55	0.57
Department of Education & Skills (IE)	55	0.57
Ministry of Labour and Social Policies (IT)	53	0.55
Ministry of science, education and sports (RO)	53	0.55
Federal Institute for Adult Education (BIFEB) (AT)	53	0.55
EUCEN/University of Graz	49	0.51
Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (UK)	49	0.51
Ministry of Education and Science (PT)	49	0.51
Federal Ministry of Education and Research (DE)	49	0.51
Federal Ministry for Education, the Arts and Culture (AT)	49	0.51
National Agency LLP (FRSE) (PL)	49	0.51
Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour (HU)	49	0.51
Ministry of Economy, Industry and Employment (FR)	49	0.51
Ministry of Science, Education and Sport (DK)	49	0.51
Ministry of Science, Education and Sport (DE)	49	0.51
Ministry of Labour and Social policy (BG)	49	0.51
Federal Ministry of Science, Education and Sport (AT)	49	0.51
Ministry for social affairs and employment (NL)	49	0.51
Agency for Preschool, Primary and Secondary Education (BA)	39	0.40
Slovenian Institute for Adult Education (SI)	39	0.40
Erasmus + Agency (FR)	39	0.40
The Irish National Adult Learning Organisation (AONTAS) (IE)	39	0.40
National Institute for Education (NUV) (CZ)	39	0.40
Center for Adult Education (MK)	39	0.40
National Office of Vocational Education and Training and Adult Learning (NOVETAL) (HU)	39	0.40

National Qualifications Authority (RNQA) (RO)	39	0.40
Institute of Education Development (AL)	39	0.40
Skills Norway (NO)	39	0.40
National Institute for Public Policy Analysis (INAPP) (IT)	39	0.40
Association of Estonian Adult Educators (ANDRAS) (EE)	39	0.40
Ministry of Education and Lifelong Learning (GR)	39	0.40
National Lifelong Learning Institute (SK)	39	0.40
National Agency for Education (SE)	39	0.40
Ministry French Community of Belgium (BE)	28	0.29
Department for Employment and Learning (UK)	28	0.29
Le Forem, the Public Employment and Vocational Training Service in Wallonia (BE)	23	0.24
Federal Office for Professional Education and Technology (OPET) (CH)	23	0.24
Institute for Banking Education (NBS) (SK)	23	0.24
Directorate for Lifelong Learning (MT)	23	0.24

Perhaps expectedly the organizations with the highest level of integration (nDegree 0.94-1) are the administrative divisions of governments that hold responsibility for education at national level, with two country exceptions. One is Belgium, where the Flemish Department of Education and Training is among the organizations with the highest level of integration (nDegree: 1), yet its counterpart, the Ministry of the French Community of Belgium, is among those with the weakest connectivity (nDegree: 0.29) within the network governance under consideration. Another is Portugal, where the National Agency for Qualification and VET showcases a highest level of integration (nDegree: 0.94) when compared with the national Ministry of Education and Science (nDegree: 0.51).

But among the ministries of education only three from Northern and Eastern Europe share the highest possible level of integration (nDegree: 1): the Ministry of Education and Science of Latvia, the Ministry of Education and Culture of Finland, and the Flemish Department for Education and Training of Belgium. Interestingly, they represent one among the oldest members of the EU (Belgium), one among those that joined the EU at the time of its 1990s enlargement (Finland), and one among the new members that joined the EU in the biggest enlargement of 2004 (Latvia).

Alongside national ministries, also a few trade and worker unions active at European level (European Association of Craft, Small and Medium-sized Enterprises, UEAPME; European Trade Union Confederation, European Trade Union Confederation) showcase a relatively high level of integration (nDegree: 0.85). Remarkably, however, unions representing workers in the education sector (European Trade Union Committee for Education; European Federation of Education Employers) have a weaker level of integration within the network under consideration (nDegree: 0.57-0.70), when compared to their generalist counterpart (i.e., European Trade Union Confederation) or to trade unions like UEAPME or BUSINESSEUROPE (nDegree: 0.78). At the same time, the social partner representing small and medium enterprises in Europe (UEAPME) is better integrated than the its counterpart representing all-sized enterprises (BUSINNESSEUROPE).

Among EU agencies specialised in education, CEDEFOP (nDegree: 0.85) has the higher level of integration, followed by the European Training Foundation (nDegree: 0.78), whereas Eurydice has a rather weakest connectivity (nDegree: 0.59).

Actors other than ministries yet from the public sector that shows a medium level of integration include organizations like the Adult Education Foundation (Liechtenstein) (nDegree: 0.76) and the Centre for Vocational Education (Montenegro) (nDegree: 0.73) from non-EU member states, but which are either member of the European Economic Area (Liechtenstein) or negotiating access to the EU (Montenegro).

Finally, when we compare the level of integration of the two Directorates General of the EC that are involved in the form of network governance under consideration, the Directorate General for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion has a higher level of integration (nDegree: 0.73); this despite the fact that the Directorate General for Education and Culture (nDegree: 0.59) coordinated a higher number of working groups/networks (cf. Table 1).

Actors' brokerage capacity

Furthering our analysis, for each of the actors involved, Table 3 shows its level of centrality in terms of Betweenness, and its normalized measure (nBetweenness, expressed as a percentage) (Freeman, 1979). 'The important idea here is that an actor is central if it lies between other actors on their geodesics, implying that to have a large 'betweenness' centrality, the actor must be *between* many of the actors via their geodesics' (Wassermann & Faust, 1994, p. 189). Hence, nBetweenness is a proxy for an actor's brokerage capacity within the form of network governance under consideration.

Table 3 – The level of centrality: Betweenness and nBetweenness

	Betweenness	nBetweenness
Ministry of Education and Science (LV)	**93.03**	**2.00**
Ministry of Education and Culture (FI)	**93.03**	**2.00**
Flemish Department for Education and Training (BE)	**93.03**	**2.00**
Ministry of National Education (PL)	64.63	1.39
Ministry of Education and Culture (CY)	64.63	1.39
Ministry of Education, Culture and Sport (ES)	64.63	1.39
Ministry for Education and Employment (MT)	64.63	1.39
Ministry of Culture, Education & Religious Affairs (GR)	64.63	1.39
Ministry of National Education (TR)	64.31	1.38
Ministry of Education, Science and Culture (IS)	56.99	1.22
Ministry of Education, Culture and Science (NL)	56.99	1.22
Ministry of Education and Science (LT)	56.99	1.22
Ministry of Education and Science (BG)	56.99	1.22
Ministry of Science, Education and Sports (HR)	56.99	1.22
National Agency for Qualification and VET (ANQEP) (PT)	56.99	1.22
Ministry of Education, Science and Sport (SI)	35.51	0.76

Ministry of Education and Research (NO)	35.51	0.76
Ministry of Education and Research (EE)	35.51	0.76
European Association for the Education of Adults (EAEA)	35.51	0.76
Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports (MEYS) (CZ)	35.51	0.76
European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC)	35.51	0.76
European Association of Craft, Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (UEAPME)	35.51	0.76
Ministry for National Economy (HU)	35.51	0.76
Ministry of Education and Training of the State of North Rhine-Westphalia (DE)	35.51	0.76
Cedefop	35.51	0.76
Adult Education Foundation (LI)	34.78	0.75
Ministry of National Education (RO)	30.75	0.66
Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport (SK)	22.11	0.47
Ministry of the Wallonia-Brussels Federation (BE)	20.06	0.43
Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sport of the State of Baden-Württemberg (DE)	20.06	0.43
Learning and Work Institute (UK)	20.06	0.43
European Commission's Directorate General for Employment, Social Affairs & Inclusion (DG EMPL)	20.06	0.43
Centre for Vocational Education (ME)	20.06	0.43
Federal Institut for Vocational Education and training (BIBB) (DE)	20.06	0.43
Federal Ministry of Education and Women's Affairs (AT)	20.06	0.43
Ministry for Children, Education and Gender Equality (DK)	20.06	0.43
Ministry of National Education, Childhood and Youth (LU)	20.06	0.43
European Trade Union Committee for Education (ETUCE)	19.07	0.41
BUSINESSEUROPE	17.80	0.38
Ministry of Education and Research (SE)	17.80	0.38
European Training Foundation (ETF)	17.80	0.38
European Commission's Directorate General for Education and Culture (DG EAC)	9.81	0.21
Eurydice	9.81	0.21
Ministry of Education and Vocational Training (LU)	9.81	0.21
Department of Education & Skills (IE)	7.43	0.16
Ministry of Labour and Social Policies (IT)	2.67	0.06
Ministry of science, education and sports (RO)	2.67	0.06
Federal Institute for Adult Education (BIFEB) (AT)	2.67	0.06

Note: for the actors (nodes) not mentioned in this table the betweenness is equal to 0.

The two measures of an actor's level of centrality (cf. Table 2 and Table 3) showcase some similarities. Overall, most actors show a high level of integration (nDegree) as well as a high level of its brokerage capacity (nBetweenness). However, a number of actors point at interesting differences in these measures, which are worth attention.

Strikingly the Ministry of National Education of Turkey has a relatively high brokerage capacity (nBetweenness: 1.38) when compared to the ministries of education from a group of countries (Iceland, Netherlands, Lithuania, Bulgaria, Croatia, and Portugal) with a higher level of connectivity (nDegree: 0.94) than Turkey (nDegree: 0.87). It shall be noted that although accession negotiations have stalled, Turkey applied to accede to the EU since 1987, and represents today one of the main partners of the EU in the Middle East. Moreover, since the mid-1990s, the EU-Turkey Customs Union regulates free trade in the area. Turkey connectivity may be driven by its weak educational attainment of the adult population (Eurydice, 2019) and therefore its high aspirations for coordination in this particular field.

Noticeably also the Adult Education Foundation of Liechtenstein has a high brokerage capacity (nBetweenness: 0.75) but a medium level of integration when compared with other actors. In fact, while the level of integration is very close to that of the Ministry of Education and Research of Sweden, a EU member states, the European Training Foundation, a EU specialised agency, and BUSINESSEUROPE, a trade union active a European level (nDegree: 0.78), its brokerage capacity is markedly higher when compared to that of these organizations (nBetweenness: 0.38). Not a EU member state, likewise Turkey, the EU-Liechtenstein relations are shaped by the country's participation to the European Economic Area, and its adhesion to the Schengen Area.

Lastly, there are also a number of organizations that, despite their relative level of integration (nDegree: 0.57), have no brokerage capacity (nBetweenness: 0). These include the ministries of education from a number of candidate countries (Albania, Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia), the State Secretariat for Education, Research and Innovation of Switzerland, which is not a member of either the EU or the European Economic Area, but also the ministries of two EU founding members (Italy, France). Interestingly, for France, also the Ministry of Employment, Vocational Training and Social Dialogue falls into this group.

Remarkably, the two organizations that represent educational providers at European level (European Federation of Education Employers, European Association of Vocational Education and Training) belong to this group as well. So do a few national institutions other than ministries, but that are under ministerial supervision (State Education Quality Service of Latvia, ex Institute for the Development of Professional Training of Workers, now National Institute for Public Policy Analysis, of Italy, SOLAS of Ireland). Finally, this group includes also the University of Belgrade and the Adult Education Action of Serbia, and the Association for Research and Media in Education of Austria.

Actors' maximal cohesiveness

Advancing our inquiry, Table 4 illustrates the results of the cliques analysis. 'A *clique* in a graph is a maximal complete subgraph of three or more nodes' (Wasserman & Faust, 1994, p. 254). In other words, a clique here represents a subgroup of organizations where everyone has an unmediated connection to all the others within the same subgroup. A clique is thought to generate consensus among its members else it may fall apart. Our analysis allowed the identification of 8 cliques.

Remarkable the Ministry of Education and Science of Latvia (node n. 4), the Ministry of Education and Culture of Finland (n. 10), and the Flemish Department for Education and Training of Belgium (n. 25) are part, together, of all 8 cliques. The same triad of organizations stick out in previous analysis as having the highest level of integration (cf. Table 2) and of brokerage capacity (Table 3) within the form of network governance under consideration. So, their maximal cohesiveness in all 8 cliques points at a circumstance that can certainly encourage a mutual coordination among these actors. In other words, they are not only involved in all 5 working groups coordinated by the EC under the Renewed Agenda, but they are also involved in all cliques that, together, engage all other 95 actors. This evidence highlights the role of strong coordination played by these 3 actors alone; hence they result as the most central actors in the form of network governance of European adult education.

Table 4 – The cliques found

1: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 31 32 33 34 35 37 38 39 40 41 42 43 44 45 46 47 48 49 50 51 52 53 54 55 56 59 72 73
2: 1 2 3 4 5 6 9 10 11 12 13 14 16 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 32 33 37 38 40 41 42 44 45 48 50 51 52 53 72 73 75
3: 2 3 4 6 9 10 13 14 18 20 21 22 25 26 27 32 37 38 40 42 45 51 52 53 57 58 60 62 69 74 75 78 86 88 93 94 95 96 97 98
4: 1 4 5 6 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 16 17 18 19 22 23 24 25 26 27 33 36 41 42 44 45 48 50 52 53 65 66 67 72 73 83 89
5: 1 4 5 6 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 16 18 19 22 23 24 25 26 27 33 36 41 42 44 45 48 50 52 53 65 66 67 72 73 75 83 89
6: 1 4 5 6 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 16 18 19 22 23 24 25 26 30 33 36 41 42 44 45 48 50 52 53 63 64 65 66 67 68 71 72 73 75 76 77 79 80 82 83 85 87 89 90
7: 1 4 5 6 8 9 10 11 12 13 16 17 19 22 24 25 27 33 36 41 42 48 65 66 70 73 81 83 89
8: 4 5 8 10 11 12 16 17 19 24 25 27 33 36 41 48 50 61 65 67 73 84 91 92

Discussion

Comprehending the EU, including the role played by the European Commission, in its relations to the member states, and how this affects policy developments in the adult domain is at the heart of a strand of adult education policy research (cf. Milana & Holford, 2014, among others). At the same time, some scholars have paid attention to the working of commissions and task forces instituted at national level within members states (Milana & Rasmussen, 2018). Nonetheless, adult education scholars have paid no attention thus far to the Commission's coordinated expert groups, which are an essential instrument of multilevel governance, and a linchpin in the European policy coordination system.

Our empirical evidence on the coordinated working groups/networks connected to the Renewed Agenda shows how each expert group member is embedded in a relational network. To understand these relationships, social scientists focus on structural location within a network as a source of potential power (Hafner-Burton & Montgomery, 2010; Hanneman & Riddle, 2005 among others). But we are also interested in the mutual-constitutivness of a social network and its individual members, hence in the potential power within the network, and of a network to influence member states' domestic adaptation.

The location within a network can be advantageous or disadvantageous to actors. Advantage can come from ties (patterns of association) that link together actors in networks, material resources or social resources (like friendship) (Hafner-Burton & Montgomery, 2010). This advantage generates power to have access to, make connections or spread resources. These ties determine an actor's importance (or centrality) in networks. Furthermore, access to diverse information is often linked to larger connections. Highly connected actors may have more information and be more influential. Interestingly these connections may possibly have a positive effect on domestic adoption of some rules developed in the network (Maggetti, 2014; Maggetti & Gilardi, 2011). For instance, Magetti (2014, p. 502) points out that 'Central agencies are

expected to have more information, more motivation, more legitimacy and also more reputational pressures on them to adopt the rules that they decisively contributed to developing at the network level.' Therefore, the sources of an actor's power derive from three qualities of its structural connection: its centrality, its brokerage capacity, and its proximity to other members of the network (i.e., the cliques).

In terms of actors' centrality, in the form of network governance we examined, expectedly the organizations with the highest level of integration are the administrative divisions of governments that hold responsibility for education at national level. This is not surprising as all the member states are encouraged to contribute to the work of coordinated working groups/networks established under the Renewed Agenda. Furthermore, the actors expected to be central in a network are usually those with higher organisational resources, and those who have the incentives to be active (Maggetti, 2014). In this respect it is interesting to observe, however, that countries such as Italy or France, with the largest assumed administrative capacity, due to their size, their positional power within the EU, but also to the high levels of adults without upper secondary education in these countries, are not that well connected. This may illustrate that they have less aspirations to play significant roles within the adult education policy field. It may also be assumed that these countries may be less engaged due to the soft power of this policy instrument, which in turn provides more leadership opportunities (agenda setting, peer learning) to less 'powerful' member states (e.g. Latvia). Moreover, we acknowledge that adult education has general a lower status in several (if not all) member states, when compared to primary, secondary or higher education, and responsibility in this policy domain is often distributed across ministries. This may imply, for instance, that those asked to represent local, regional or national member states' authorities in these working groups/networks may well be qualified in adult education and hold strong ties and relations within this form of network governance, but may have limited access to organisational resources or incentives to be equally active at country level. This is an aspect that have been raised, for instance, by both working groups/networks' coordinators and individual members that we have had the opportunity to interview or hold informal conversations with, while we progress with our study. So, while our analysis showcases the complexity of Europeanization processes within coordinated working groups/networks, we acknowledge that more research is needed to deepen our understanding of such a network centrality positions and their effects for domestic adaptation in the adult education policy domain.

Our analysis also points at noticeable differences between the connectivity of each of the five official groups coordinated by the EC, and the subgroups emerging from the form of network governance these produce (i.e., the cliques). Such distinction produces unpredictable contingency in policy coordination.

When we consider the official groups coordinated by the EC, the two Directorates General for Education and Culture, and for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion, are the formal brokers; although belonging to the same organization they are not connected to each other in the form of network governance of European adult education emerging from these groups. Once again, we know from interviews and informal conversations that they interact in a number of other circumstances. Despite this, when we consider the emerging subgroups (i.e., the cliques), three network brokers emerge as each is connected to the other two. These are interesting findings as such divisions may illustrate how actors may be influenced or behave (Hanneman & Riddle, 2005). If the same actors are connected to different subgroups then the possibility of information diffusion grows. The information may spread across different subgroups, and across

entire networks. It seems that such ability rests within the three above-mentioned ministries from Latvia, Finland and Belgium.

Further qualitative analysis is needed, however, to inquiring the nature of these relations, and particularly the relations each formal broker holds with network brokers, and peer-relations between network brokers.

Concluding remarks

In this paper, we examined the working of complex intergovernmental policies affecting European adult education by concentrating attention on the Renewed Agenda.

First, by depicting its main characteristics, and stages of development, we clarified how this policy mix performs a legal, an epistemic, and a procedural authoritative function to govern European adult education. Then, we identified the governance mechanisms (i.e., standard-setting, capacity-building, elite learning, and financial redistribution) and policy instruments (i.e., coordinated working groups/networks, mutual- and peer-learning arrangements, data generation, benchmarks and funding schemes) at work under this policy mix. This points at regulatory politics as one the distinctive qualities of European governance in the adult education policy domain.

Secondly, we deepen our analysis of a specific policy instrument, namely coordinated working groups/networks, as it can be used in direct linkage to decision-making situations or as a space for monitoring the environment, gathering information and socialising. These working groups create a space for Europeanization and national adaptation. But as our analysis shows, it is also important to look at the sources and distribution of power within different forms of network governance, which may lay with actors who are highly connected and have high brokerage connectivity. At the same time, the working groups/networks considered here are linked to several governing mechanisms such as standard-setting, capacity building and elite learning through which they can successfully promote the domestic adoption of soft rules that originate from the network itself. Therefore, it is also possible that high level of centrality in a form of network governance may contribute to influencing other network members; hence actively contribute to the 'joint decision mode' through which multi-level governance works within the EU. Yet, the effects for domestic adaptation are harder to assess, as these are also dependent on organizational backing these members have in their own country. So, this contributes to more efficient European policy coordination where EU policies are not prescribed but 'formed' within specific policy instruments such as working groups/networks. Yet whether such more efficient European policy coordination may in turn result in a higher consistency of implementation and practice within the adult education policy domain across member states (which is the main aim of an effective EU policy coordination) remains questionable.

Finally, we recognise that the study would benefit from data on individual rather than institutional level – understanding how an individual is embedded in the structure of groups within a net may lead to some assumptions about their attributes and behaviour. While such data was not publicly available for all working groups / networks under consideration in this paper at the time of carrying out the analysis herein presented, it is in this direction that we are moving our research forward.

Acknowledgements

Notes

[1] For a more detailed account of the historical developments of the Renewed Agenda see: Milana & Klatt (2019).
[2] Authors' definitions drawing from Ozga, Dahler-Larsen, Segerholm, & Simola (2011); Lawn (2011), Martens & Jakobi (2010); Dale (1999); Woodward (2009).

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Annex

Numbers	Actors	No. of events
1	Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport (SK)	3
2	Ministry of the Wallonia-Brussels Federation (BE)	2
3	Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sport of the State of Baden-Württemberg (DE)	2
4	Ministry of Education and Science (LV)	5
5	Ministry of Education, Science and Sport (SI)	4
6	Ministry of National Education (PL)	4
7	Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development (RS)	1
8	European Commission's Directorate General for Education and Culture (DG EAC)	3
9	Ministry of Education and Culture (CY)	4
10	Ministry of Education and Culture (FI)	5
11	Ministry of Education and Research (NO)	4
12	Ministry of Education and Research (EE)	4
13	Ministry of Education, Culture and Sport (ES)	4
14	Ministry of Education, Science and Culture (IS)	3
15	University of Belgrade (RS)	1
16	European Association for the Education of Adults (EAEA)	4
17	European Trade Union Committee for Education (ETUCE)	3
18	Ministry of Education, Culture and Science (NL)	3
19	Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports (MEYS) (CZ)	4
20	Learning and Work Institute (UK)	2
21	European Commission's Directorate General for Employment, Social Affairs & Inclusion (DG EMPL)	2
22	Ministry for Education and Employment (MT)	4
23	BUSINESSEUROPE	2
24	European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC)	4
25	Flemish Department for Education and Training (BE)	5
26	Ministry of Education and Science (LT)	3
27	Ministry of National Education (TR)	4
28	Ministry of National Education Higher Education and Research (FR)	1
29	Ministry of Education, University and Research (IT)	1
30	EUCEN/University of Graz	1
31	Adult Education Action (RS)	1
32	Centre for Vocational Education (ME)	2
33	European Association of Craft, Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (UEAPME)	4
34	European Association of Vocational Education and Training Institutions (EVBB)	1
35	European Federation of Education Employers (EFEE)	1
36	Eurydice	3
37	Federal Institut for Vocational Education and training (BIBB) (DE)	2
38	Federal Ministry of Education and Women's Affairs (AT)	2
39	Institute for the Development of Professional Training of Workers (ISFOL) (IT) [now National Institute for Public Policy Analysis (INAPP)]	1
40	Ministry for Children, Education and Gender Equality (DK)	2
41	Ministry for National Economy (HU)	4
42	Ministry of Culture, Education & Religious Affairs (GR)	4
43	Ministry of Education (ME)	1
44	Ministry of Education and Research (SE)	2
45	Ministry of Education and Science (BG)	3
46	Ministry of Education and Science (MK)	1
47	Ministry of Education and Sports (AL)	1
48	Ministry of Education and Training of the State of North Rhine-Westphalia (DE)	4
49	Ministry of Employment, Vocational Training and Social Dialogue (FR)	1
50	Ministry of National Education (RO)	3
51	Ministry of National Education, Childhood and Youth (LU)	2
52	Ministry of Science, Education and Sports (HR)	3
53	National Agency for Qualification and VET (ANQEP) (PT)	3
54	SOLAS (IE)	1
55	State Education Quality Service (LV)	1
56	State Secretariat for Education, Research and Innovation (SERI) (CH)	1
57	Agency for Preschool, Primary and Secondary Education (BA)	1
58	Slovenian Institute for Adult Education (SI)	1

59	Association for Research and Media in Education, CONEDU (AT)	1
60	Erasmus + Agency (FR)	1
61	Le Forem, the Public Employment and Vocational Training Service in Wallonia (BE)	1
62	The Irish National Adult Learning Organisation (AONTAS) (IE)	1
63	Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (UK)	1
64	Ministry of Education and Science (PT)	1
65	Ministry of Education and Vocational Training (LU)	3
66	Ministry of Labour and Social Policies (IT)	2
67	Department of Education & Skills (IE)	2
68	Federal Ministry of Education and Research (DE)	1
69	National Institute for Education (NUV) (CZ)	1
70	Ministry French Community of Belgium (BE)	1
71	Federal Ministry for Education, the Arts and Culture (AT)	1
72	European Training Foundation (ETF)	2
73	Cedefop	4
74	Center for Adult Education (MK)	1
75	Adult Education Foundation (LI)	2
76	National Agency LLP (FRSE) (PL)	1
77	Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour (HU)	1
78	National Office of Vocational Education and Training and Adult Learning (NOVETAL) (HU)	1
79	Ministry of Economy, Industry and Employment (FR)	1
80	Ministry of Science, Education and Sport (DK)	1
81	Department for Employment and Learning (UK)	1
82	Ministry of Science, Education and Sport (DE)	1
83	Ministry of science, education and sports (RO)	2
84	Federal Office for Professional Education and Technology (OPET) (CH)	1
85	Ministry of Labour and Social policy (BG)	1
86	National Qualifications Authority (RNQA) (RO)	1
87	Federal Ministry of Science, Education and Sport (AT)	1
88	Institute of Education Development (AL)	1
89	Federal Institute for Adult Education (BIFEB) (AT)	2
90	Ministry for social affairs and employment (NL)	1
91	Institute for Banking Education (NBS) (SK)	1
92	Directorate for Lifelong Learning (MT)	1
93	Skills Norway (NO)	1
94	National Institute for Public Policy Analysis (INAPP) (IT)	1
95	Association of Estonian Adult Educators (ANDRAS) (EE)	1
96	Ministry of Education and Lifelong Learning (GR)	1
97	National Lifelong Learning Institute (SK)	1
98	National Agency for Education (SE)	1

Aims & Scope

The European Journal for Research on the Education and Learning of Adults (RELA) is a refereed academic journal creating a forum for the publication of critical research on adult education and learning. It has a particular focus on issues at stake for adult education and learning in Europe, as these emerge in connection with wider international and transnational dynamics and trends. Such a forum is important at a time when local and regional explorations of issues are often difficult to foreground across language barriers. As academic and policy debate is increasingly carried out in the English language, this masks the richness of research knowledge, responses and trends from diverse traditions and foci. The journal thus attempts to be linguistically 'open access'. Whilst creating a forum for international and transnational debate, contributions are particularly welcome from authors in Europe and other locations where English is not the first language.

RELA invites original, scholarly articles that discuss the education and learning of adults from different academic disciplines, perspectives and traditions. It encourages diversity in theoretical and methodological approach and submissions from non-English speakers. All published contributions in RELA are subjected to a rigorous peer review process based on two moments of selection: an initial editorial screening and a double-blind review by at least two anonymous referees. Clarity and conciseness of thought are crucial requirements for publication.

RELA is published on behalf of the European Society for Research on the Education of Adults (ESREA).

RELA

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