Mari Karm

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES OF ESTONIAN ADULT EDUCATORS

Abstract

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PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES OF ESTONIAN ADULT EDUCATORS

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INTRODUCTION

Expanding understanding of the necessity of life long learning brings along the demand for adult educators. The context of adult education becomes more and more complex and complicated (globalisation, market economy, technological developments, orientation towards learner-centeredness, hidden compulsoriness of learning and the resistance of learners to it, the growth of non-state training organisations, new forms of learning, etc) and it constantly poses new challenges to the professionalism of educators who have to realise their role in the changing world and who should be able to direct and support adult learning.

At the same time adult educators are in a unique position among professionals as they have acquired a speciality in the course of their studies but often lack formal preparation for teaching because their studies had not necessarily included teacher training. At some stage of their career they might undertake adult education studies but the general tendency seems to be that the skills of the educator are developed through experience and reflection of their practice. The quality of preparation and professional activity of among adult educators can be very versatile. Adult educators can have different perceptions of their professional identity, personal theories on teaching and their needs for personal training and development. While the responsibility for professional growth and development falls on the adult educator him/herself, it is important to figure out what his/her perceptions of professional identity, professional growth and development are.

Professional development of adult educators is essential because it serves the purpose of improvement; it helps the educators to support the adult learning more efficiently. Due to the aforementioned, programmes that take into consideration the different needs of adult educators are needed. In order to compile such programmes one has to have clearer and more profound understanding of perceptions of educators in the field of identity of trainers and the essence of training.

Research related to adult educators focuses primarily on describing necessary competences, requirements to adult educators, establishing norms and standards. But in regard to professional development, it is essentially important to research how an adult educator him/herself interprets professional identity, developmental needs and opportunities. Prior to the current research, interpretations of adult educators of their formation and development, perceptions and beliefs about teaching, have not been researched in Estonia.

In determination and analysis of the research problem I rely on the following concepts: professional development (Ruohotie 1996, Ruohotie 2003, Cranton 1996), adult learning (Alheit 1995, Illeris 2003, Jarvis 1998, 2004), experiential learning (Boud, Keogh, Walker 1993, Kolb 1984, Marsick, Watkins 1990), critical reflection (Brookfield 1995, Moon 1999, 2004), (Mezirow 1991, 1994, 2000), community of practice (Lave, Wenger 1991, Wenger 1998), professional identity (Kelchtermans 1993) and the formation of professional knowledge (Eraut 1994, 2000, Jarvis 2004).

The central issue of the research derives from the situation where the context of practical activity of adult educator is in constant changing − educational environment becomes more complex and varied and sets higher requirements and demands to professionalism of adult educators. Educators of adult educators lack the knowledge of what the understanding of adult educators of their professional identity is, what their personal teaching theory is and how their professional development and learning re enhanced.

The following research questions are posed on the basis of the above described research issue:
- **How learning opportunities, professional identity and personal educational theory support the formation and development of adult educators' professionalism?**
- **How adult educator substantiates his/her professional development, learning, professional identity and personal teaching theory?**

Aims

The aim of the current research is to analyse the learning experience, formation of professional identity and perceptions of adult educators in the context of their professional career. The aim is to develop a conceptual basis for composing professional development programmes for adult educators.

The following methods are exploited in the current research:
1. analysis of literature
2. data collection through professional biographical interviews and photo-interviews
3. analysis of theoretical and empirical data
- holistic analysis of narratives,
- thematic field analysis,
- analysis of identity statements,
- analysis of teaching stories,
- critical discourse analysis.

The main principles of social constructivism lay the foundation for methodology of the current research. Social constructivism is an interpretation approach and deals with social reality from the perspective of interpersonal communication. People interpret the surrounding world and ascribe personal meaning to it in the course of interaction. In the light of theoretical principles of social constructivism, it is important to realise the current research represents one possible interpretation that is influenced by my personal biographical, cultural, scientific and experiential background.

The theoretical part of the current dissertation deals with the aspects of professional development, professional identity, adult learning and formation of personal teaching theory of adult educators. Acquiring a profession entails the construction of professional identity that brings together the interrelations and influences between personal perceptions and social context. In order to comprehend the learning of adult educators I emphasise the importance of learning from experience and reflection in adult learning. Apart from that I provide an overview of learning sources and deep learning concept. As professional development can bring forth transformative learning, therefore a thorough analysis of features of transformative learning is provided.

The empirical part of the research is compiled of interpretation of perceptions of Estonian adult educators based on the narratives collected through interviews. I provide an overview of how the sample was decided upon, description of stages and methods. Apart from that I describe the analysis of data and essential results of interpretations of formation, learning, identity and personal theory. The empirical part unfolds the analysis of the most common biography routes, the ways of finding the educational fields and analysis of the choice justification – all of the above listed are based on narrative analysis. My research intentions included the analysis of professional identity formation, essence and significance of educator identity in the perceptions of educators. As the result of the analysis of perceptions, interpretations of educators about the opportunities available for learning training skills are presented: learning sources and areas are identified on the basis of narrative analysis. While interpreting the personal learning theories of adult educators, perceptions of educators of education process, learning, teaching and adult learner are discussed.

Results of the analysis of theoretical and empirical data are generalised in conclusion, and conceptual principles for compiling professional development programmes of adult educators and administering professional development activity are presented.

1. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES OF ADULT EDUCATORS

Professional development of adult educators is a complex process. In the course of this process, educators as professionals research, reflect upon and interpret their practical activity. This caters for theorisation of practice, formation of personal theories and development of profession. The objective of professional development is not solely knowledge acquisition and skills' development; professional development comprises also explication of reflection and comprehension of the general area context, as well as understanding that everyone can contribute to the development of the area and the profession, and formation of educator identity.

The profession of adult educator is relatively new and individual perceptions of the profession of educator, necessary competencies for professional activity and personal professional identity can vary significantly. Formation of clearer perception could be supported by professional standard that defines educator roles and provides descriptions of necessary competences for the activity.

The following factors impact educator's perception of professional development needs.

- **Self-concept and perception of professional identity.**
- **Prior biography and profession** – influence might be connected with identity, values and perceptions of the previous profession.
- **Learning preferences** – educator might prefer different means and activities (courses, professional discussions, research) in order to support professional development.
- **Interpretation of professional activity** – if educator sees teaching as transfer of knowledge, then he/she considers development of presentation skills crucial; if he/she interprets teaching as facilitation of learning, then he considers development of monitoring and guiding skills of teaching important.
- **Stage of professional development** – as novices and professionals/masters learn differently, then one can conclude that professional development requires different activities.
- **Professional organisation** – specific features of the work place or educational institution, economic options, goals of activity influence the opportunities of professional development of educators, set different expectations, needs, boundaries and visions regarding professional development.
- **Community of practice** – when the individual does not perceive him/herself as the member of educators' community and does not consider community requirements concerning professionalism important, then he/she does not pay much attention to the development of professional proficiency.
- **Shifts in social context** – the structure of society and value system, shifts in economics, technological basis, knowledge growth, changes regarding learning theories, attitudes of learners, perceptions of career.
- Professional development could be interpreted as **lifewide learning** process of professionals and opportunity formation for learning through practice. Facilitating lifelong and lifewide learning requires study skills, knowledge and skill transfer techniques and learning in different learning environments together with readiness for transformative learning, self-analysis and reflection skills.

Professional development, professional identity, professional learning and personal theory are interrelated and influence each other (Figure 1).
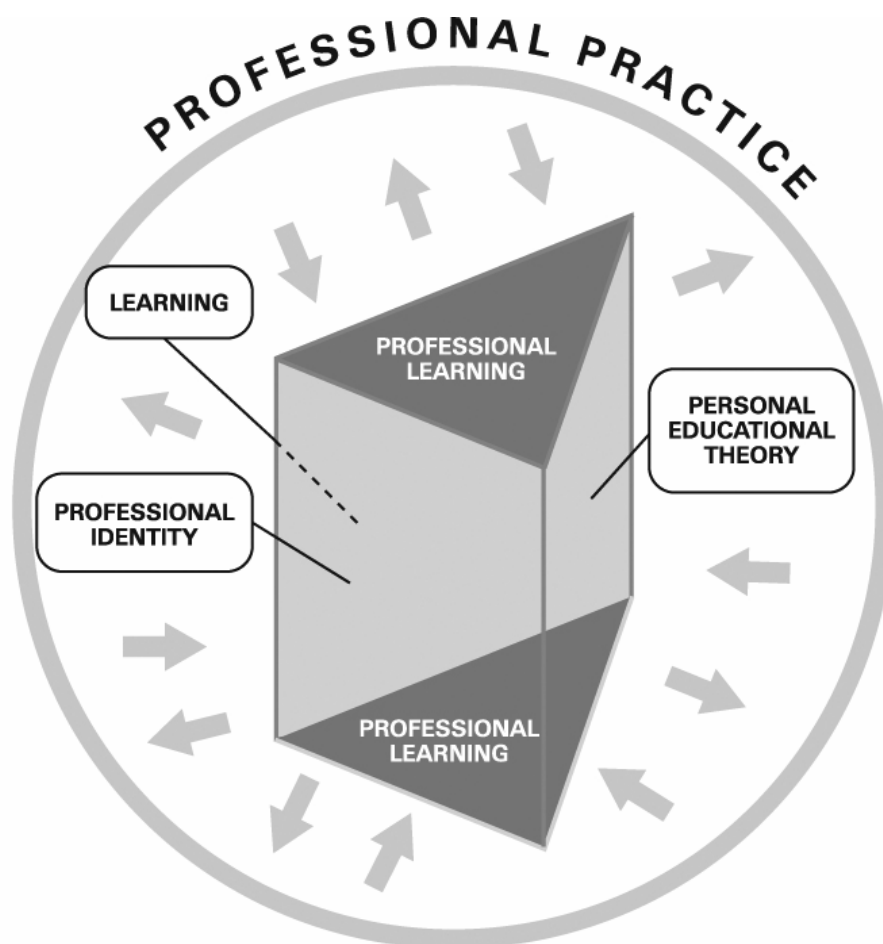
Figure 1. Interrelations between professional development, professional identity, professional learning and personal theory

Professional development of adult educators involves construction of professional identity, lifelong and lifewide learning and formation of personal teaching theory on the grounds of theoretical principles and interpretation of his/her practical activity. Changes and shifts that take place in one process (e.g. in construction of professional identity) bring forth changes and shifts in other processes (e.g. in professional learning and personal theory). In the course of professional development a need might emerge for deep changes in educator practice and for new interpretation of professional identity. It is also an option that no changes take place in any spheres and professional development is hindered.

1.1. FORMATION OF PROFESSIONAL IDENTITY OF ADULT EDUCATORS

Professional identity as social identity is one of the aspects of individual self-concept that is constructed in the social context through dialogue between self and surroundings. Interpretation of professional identity can be viewed as a form of argument that is used by the individual to justify, explain and provide meaning to his/her activity, situations and values while representing his/her profession.

Social status that comes together with belonging to the community or acceptance by the members of community is an important aspect of professional identity. Different social status of different professions can affect the choices of individual and commitment to professional activity in the field (Kupferberg 2004).

Readiness to belong to the community and adopt social identity is also reflected in how an individual determines and defines him/herself as the member of the group or community. Both in Estonian and in English a variety of terms are used for people working in the field of adult education, such as: *lecturer, educator, teacher of adults, trainer, tutor, key skill coordinator, work-based assessor, progress tutor,*

advanced practitioner (Cranton 1996, Gleeson, Davies, Wheeler 2005, Malcolm, Zukas 2002; Professional standard of adult educator 2003). Presumably it is not easy for somebody working in adult education to define him/herself and determine his/her belonging in the professional context.

Professional identity as a new social identity is more easily adopted by those individuals whose self-concept matches with professional identity.

The identity of the educator is one of the social identities that is constructed through narratives and comprises the following important aspects:
▪ The meaning that the educators give to being an educator, how they justify for themselves their choice.
▪ Self-image of educators – how educators describe themselves as educators.
▪ Self-evaluation – the cognitive side of self-concept, what is their attitude towards themselves as educators.
▪ Norms – what is the cultural narrative, what is the social image of educators, what are the expectations of the society to an educator (Kelchtermans 1993).

G. Kelchtermans emphasises the significance of self-concept as the aspect of ideal and norm in interpretation of professional identity.

The idea of normative and fictive identity of a teaching individual can be heavily influenced by the prevailing discourse in society and existing myths. Every community of practice designs and regulates its relations with social world through discourse. Research has concluded that adult educators do not share common cultural and social narrative that could be used as their cultural resource (Filander 2004).

When individual feels his/her relatedness with educator community, has adopted educator identity and its values, then he/she starts to develop him/herself as an educator.

1.2. LIFEWIDE LEARNING AS A PREREQUISITE OF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Educator's learning is influenced by his/her prior biography, experience, prior learning, context of practical activity, discourse and social context. As an adult the educator has shaped perceptions and beliefs that could either support or hinder his/her learning and integral view of world that can be renewed and expanded in the course of learning.

Meaning of experience in educator's learning

His/her experience is the main source of professional development of the adult educator. The experience comes from the course of life, learning experiences, professional practice, professional community, experiences collected in training and the cultural context. Learning experience of adult educator includes learning in formal learning situations but a lot is learnt in situations not specifically designed for learning and whether learning takes place or not depends on educator him/herself and opportunities that the situation offers.

Whether experiential learning is possible or not is affected by the following features: subjectivity, individuality, social context and prior experience.

Experiential learning opportunities are affected by how the experience is noticed, processed and interpreted. Abundance of experience or duration of activity does not reflect the level of competence or quality of performance. Noticing and reflection are crucial in changing experience into the source of learning (Marienau 1999).

Reflection is intellectual and emotional process that involves interpretation and giving meaning to experience that leads to learning and shifts in professional practice.

J. Moon (1999, 2004) states that input (theories, experiences, feelings) and output (constructed knowledge, self-development, professional development, metacognition, new ideas and solutions, the building of theory or understanding that further reflection or learning is needed) are essential in the process of reflection. In order to reflect upon one's practical activity information could be gathered from different sources: self-

observation (learner and educator biography, journals), case studies, and feedback from learners, experience of colleagues, advice, critical discussions, reflections, and theoretical literature. Broader outcome of reflection include learning and changes in professional practice as a result of professional learning.

In order to improve one's professional practice conscious reflection is required as subconscious processes do not enable to make informed and conscious decisions about learning (Boud, Keogh, Walker 1985, Daudelin 1996).

Deeper reflection process is enhanced by certain circumstances such as time and place, supporters, institutional environment, emotionally supportive environment, necessary knowledge base, meta-cognitive skills (Boud, Keogh, Walker 1985, Moon 1999). Reflection is dialogue that can happen in solitude (dialogue with oneself) or together with others. Wording tacit knowledge and passing form one reflection stage to another is supported by cooperative discussions with advisor, critical friend, colleague or supervisor (Day 1993, Handal, Lauvås 1987, Korthagen, Vasalos 2005).

Sources of learning of adult educator

Sources of learning of adult educator include his/her biography, different learning experience (secondary school, higher educational establishment, in-service training), participation in educator community, professional experience and educator experience and cultural environment (Figure 2).
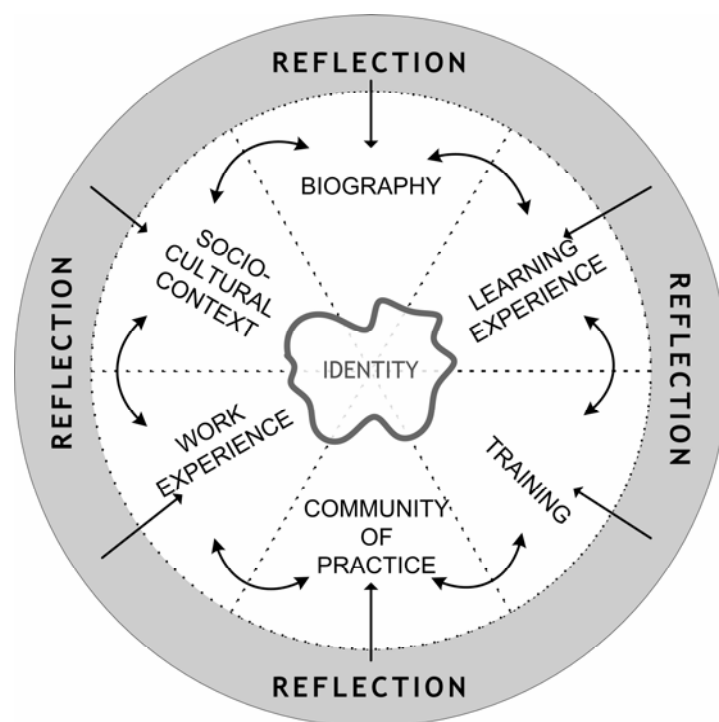
Figure 2. Sources of learning of adult educator

- **Biography and course of life** – former typical course of life (learning and preparation, work, rest) has changed nowadays into the situation where active working phase is interrupted by new preparation phases (in-service training, continued studies, retraining) (Alheit 1995, Dominicé 2000).

- **Prior school experience, professional studies and in-service training** as well as studies in the field of adult education. Professional and in-service training have provided educators with theoretical knowledge and skills in the field, learning teaching in the process of those studies has been random informal learning (Marsick, Watkins 1990) that one becomes more aware of in the course of practical activity.

- **Community of practice** is seen as the community of adult educators. Participation in community of practice means common work, common practice, common responsibility and shared knowledge (information, skills, rules, norms, attitudes, discourse, narratives, symbols, signs) (Lave, Wenger 1991, Knight 2002, Wenger 1998).

- **Workplace** is not solely for acquiring professional skills but it is also important in understanding professional relations, work-related roles, structure and hierarchy of the organisation, power relations, etc.

- People are part of **socio-cultural contexts**. On the one hand socio-cultural contexts affect individual thinking and activity, on the other hand individual thinking and activity designs socio-cultural contexts.

Educator operates in different socio-cultural contexts (studies, professional activity, and educator activity) and in these different contexts the same problems could be viewed, interpreted and solved in totally different ways. The above makes it difficult for the educator transferring knowledge and skills from one context into the other. Easy solution in one context might not be applicable in the other context (transferring learner experience into educator activity).

Range and depth of learning of adult educator

The learning process of adult educators can be of variable depth, depending on the field, personal readiness, etc. The deeper the learning, the further it goes beyond mere gathering and interpretation of information, the more likely it is directed towards transformative whole learning.

The range and way of reflection is different in case of learning of different depth. The same applies to the extent of whole self involvement and change of beliefs and understanding. Different authors underline that it is **transformative learning** that leads to deeper understanding and involves whole self into the process of change.

Transformative learning is a process by which previously uncritically assimilated assumptions, beliefs, values, and perspectives are questioned and theory become more open and better validated (Mezirow 2000). Central to Mezirow's conceptualization of transformative learning theory is also critical reflection. Teachers then transform frames of reference (habits of mind, meaning perspectives) through critical reflection on their own and other's assumptions and beliefs about teaching.

Transformations often follow some variations of the following phases (McGonigal 2005, Mezirow 2000):
- A disorienting dilemma, activating event – exposes the limitations of a learner's current knowledge and approach
- Opportunities to identify and articulate underlying assumptions, critical self-reflection
- Critical discourse – recognition that one's discontent and the process of transformation are shared
- Exploration of options for new roles, relationships, and actions
- Planning a course of action
- Acquiring knowledge and skills for implementing one's plans
- Opportunities to test and apply new perspectives

Recent studies on transformative learning have shown that. The process of transformative learning may be long-term and progressive process which involves emotions, intuition, soul, spirituality and which is affected by sociocultural context and person's lifehistory (Mezirow 2000, Taylor 2000).

Not every learner is ready for transformative learning. The same applies to educators – all educators do not aim at transformative learning. Moreover, transformative learning is not necessary in all learning situations.

1.3. ADULT EDUCATOR'S PERSONAL EDUCATIONAL THEORY

One of the aspects of professionalism is personal educational theory or subjective educational philosophy (personal knowledge, knowledge base of teaching): beliefs, principles, attitudes, values of learning, teaching, towards the role of the educator and relationship between the educator and learners. Personal teaching theory is the foundation for how the person acts in training situation, what he/she endeavours for, what methods he/she picks, how he/she chooses to communicate with trainees, etc.

Personal teaching theory is designed from the grounds of knowledge and experience gained and it depends on the way how he/she more or less reflectively integrates these into the whole (Eraut 1994, Kelchtermans 1993). Personal theory and practice inter-shape each other – personal theory prompts practical activity and theory renews itself on the basis of practical experience.

The basis for formation of professional **knowledge** is theoretical knowledge (scientific theories and concepts, practical *know-how* (generalisations and principles formed on the grounds of practical activity and *tacit knowledge* (unworded and subconscious knowledge) (Eraut 1994). Personal teaching theory involves both personal worded and tacit knowledge as well as worded and tacit knowledge of community of practice (Knight 2002, Verloop, Van Driel, Meijer 2001).

Beliefs about learning and teaching take shape on the basis of early life and school experience but they can transform under the influence of new experience and as a result of transformative learning. Learning and teaching related beliefs decide study content, goal-setting of learning and teaching, study aid choice and material development, communication with students and assessment of learning outcomes (Zinn 2004).

In the process of education the following aspects of **personal teaching theory** are important: understanding the objectives of education process, understanding learning, teaching, understanding adult learner and professional identity of educator.

Beliefs about teaching are interrelated with beliefs about learning and attitudes towards learner. Pratt (1998) descries 5 qualitatively different views that reflect adult educator beliefs about teaching, learning, motivation, learner and objectives of education. Teaching can be defined from transmission perspective, apprenticeship perspective, developmental perspective, nurturing perspective and a social reform perspective (Pratt 1998).

Awareness of one's own teaching theory can help the educator in making informed decisions, expand big picture, manage conflicts, interpret interrelations between educator, learner and subject, observe one's activity in social context, plan teaching and act against mainstream when necessary.

In conclusion it can be said that professional development of educator, learning, professional identity and personal teaching theory are dynamic and closely related constructs.

In the course of professional development research of practice, reflection and interpretation takes place in the context of theoretical knowledge and new theories evolve from interpretation of practice. The aim of professional development is both development of skills and knowledge and reflective interpretation of practice. The understanding the need for professional development of adult educators is affected by self-awareness, prior biography and profession, learning experience and learning habits, field of adult education, expectations and support of the organisation, community and society norms and discourse.

Learning of the educator, construction of professional identity and teaching theory take place in social context, in dialogue with oneself and others. Reflection and its quality play an important role in these processes. The above lays foundation to learning from experience and improvement of practical activity, at the same time supporting conscious formation of professional identity and personal teaching theory.

Educator extracts experience from different sources, integrating theoretical knowledge and practical analysis and as the result of these processes partly conscious, partly tacit knowledge and beliefs constitute personal teaching theory that guides the choices and decisions of the educator in his/her practical activity.

2. JUSTIFICATION OF METHODS OF DATA COLLECTION AND INTERPRETATION

The body of material of the current research is teaching beliefs of adult educators. Methodological foundation of the thesis is social constructivism that decides upon the use of qualitative research methods. Qualitative approach in this research is justified as beliefs of adult educators have not been researched earlier in Estonia and therefore it is essential to take an integral approach towards the issue and view the subject matter from different possible aspects.

In order to enhance validity and reliability of results, triangulation has been used both in data collection as well as in methods of analysis. I collected material for this research with 2 methods: professional biographical interview and photo-interview.

I combined different methods when analysing the collected data (holistic analysis of narratives, thematic field analysis, analysis of identity statements, analysis of stories, critical discourse analysis).

Process of collection and interpretation of empirical data

Process of collection and interpretation of empirical data consisted of five stages and comprised following activity.
1. Administering pilot research and data interpretation (17.12.2003.–18.05.2004)
2. Administering professional biographical interviews and photo-interviews (26.12.2004–31.05.2006)
3. Literation of interviews (28.12.2004–17.07.2006)
4. Analysis of interviews (28.12.2004–31.01.2007)
5. Interpretation, discussion and synthesis of empirical data.

Research process was not linear, data collection was parallel to analysis. Empirical data was first analysed and interpreted interview by interview, next trends, themes and motives from different interviews were compared and collated.

Characteristics of the sample

Proceeding from the subject and aim of the current research, it was necessary to research interviewees that have experienced change in their activity when becoming educators and getting involved in teaching. While deciding on the sample I tried to pick people who have not worked as teachers beforehand (teaching for this person is a clear change, learning a novel speciality and role) and whose training experience was less than 3 years. Representatives of educators from different fields and with different employment patterns (self-employed as well as employed by different (educational) institutions) were studied in order to give a more comprehensive survey.

Research involved 28 educators (20 female and 8 male).

Interviewees were educated for the following **specialities**: medicine, psychology, economics, music, accountancy, history, performing arts, Estonian, national defence, social work, youth work, agronomy, chemistry, educational sciences.

It is difficult to bring out the specific field of training because some of them operate in several close fields. The main fields of activity were management, team work, service, sale,

accountancy, secretarial work, medicine, personality development, motivation, training of educators, occupational safety, project writing, national defence, feng-shui, flower arranging, etc.

The sample represented the variety of Estonian adult education and provided appropriate adequate opportunities for data collection in the area of beliefs related to professional learning and development of adult educators.

Methods of data collection

First I carried out **professional biographical interviews** that focused on the formation of the adult educator of participants and included mainly studies and professional career. The next step was **photo-interview** (Hurworth 2003, Taylor 2002). Prior to that the participants were requested to find photos that illustrate the answers to the questions on learning, teaching and the concept of educator.
- How would you define learning?
- What is your perception of learning?
- Who is an adult learner in your opinion?
- Who is the adult educator?
- How would you describe yourself as an adult educator?
- How have you developed and changed as an educator?

Photo-interviews were carried out with 19 educators, nine educators renounced photo-interviews.

Educators commented on previously selected and brought along photos in the course of photo-interviews. Indirect analysis was used in interpretation of photos: interviewees selected and interpreted themselves the photos that they had brought along. In the process of analysis interpretations and explanations of interviewees were analysed and not photos as independent material.

Both interviews were viewed as integral narrative text in the course of data analysis. Different methods of analysis were combined in text analysis: holistic analysis of narratives and thematic field analysis (Dominicé 2000, Lieblich, Tuval-Mashiach, Zilber 1998, Wengraf 2001), analysis of identity statements (Snow, Anderson 1987), analysis of stories, critical discourse analysis (Fairclough 2003).

3. FORMATION OF PROFESSIONALISM IN THE PERCEPTIONS OF ADULT EDUCATORS (empirical part of the research)

Characteristic routes of educator formation and field-finding, patterns of educator identity and learning teaching can be observed as the outcome of interview analysis.

Context of adult educator formation

The analysis of educators' stories showed that the choices made by the interviewees were affected by changes occurring in Estonian society in the 90-ties as well as by the widening areas of activity related to the adult educator's profession. In the conditions of market economy, changing a profession or job became common which meant that people did not seem to consider it strange to quit a former job and become an educator instead. Collective activity was replaced with individual entrepreneurship.

These changes affected also adult education – international cooperation in the field of adult education was started, the percentage of private training organisations increased and adults had more opportunities for continuing learning (Jõgi 2004).

In addition to that, several foreign training projects reached Estonia in the 90s; close contacts were created with adult educators in Denmark, Sweden and Finland and many educational projects reached us from USA. Some interviewees were involved in the projects and continued independent training careers after the foreign educators had left.

Joint projects with foreign educators injected European and humanistic thinking, different attitudes and beliefs into the corresponding field. Totally different ways of teaching were experienced at foreign educational events – instead of teacher and subject-centred approach one could experience courses that were administered in the learner – and learning-centred paradigm.

3.1. ROUTES OF FORMATION OF ADULT EDUCATORS

The way of finding the content of the training and one's own subject was one of the most regulating axes in constructing and comparing the routes of formation of adult educators. As a result of empirical analysis one can outline four basic routes of formation.

1. The area of training is related to the speciality studied in university or to professional work.

This route seems quite natural and logical: these interviewees had acquired theoretical knowledge in the field (medicine, psychology, accounting, etc.) in university and gained professional experience through work and then started to share it by becoming educators. However, the seeming smoothness of the route is misleading – there are interruptions on this route too: people change jobs, move to a new place, hold different positions although within the same area of specialisation; taking up the educator's work induces to quit the basic job, etc.

2. The area of training is related to work experience in a field not studied at school/university.

Those who took the second route acquired a specialisation but started work in a totally different field and the area of training (sale, secretary, service) is connected with their practical experience. They lack theoretical knowledge in the area and, instead, share practical experiential knowledge.

3. The area of training is related to in-service training, hobbies or community work.

In case of the third route, the area of training (floristry, adventure-training, project drafting, *feng shui*, management, teamwork) grows out of in-service training – it is not directly connected with a specialisation acquired earlier, but with hobbies.

4. The area of training pops out of nowhere – there is no visible connection between the area studied in university/school, prior work, or hobbies, yet it is in a way linked to all.

Looking at the mere biographical facts it is quite difficult to understand why this choice was made – the person already has a job, and starting work as an educator improves neither the financial situation nor the position at work. Now that the educator's job is chosen, the person has to learn both the content of the training course and learn to educate other people. On the other hand, the prior learning, life and work experience have helped to create the context in which the person started to think about becoming an educator.

These schemes offer an insight into how knowledge of the relevant area of training develops. Professional knowledge is based on propositional (theoretical) knowledge, practical know-how and tacit knowledge (Eraut 1994). Important aspects of professional competence and expertise cannot be represented in propositional form and embedded in publicly accessible knowledge base (Eraut 1994). The professional knowledge of the educators who followed the first route is based on theoretical, practical and tacit knowledge. In case of the rest of the educators, the knowledge learned from practical experience and tacit knowledge is prevailing.

Working as an educator you can cultivate a certain lifestyle, which arises from a new attitude towards values – several meanings described reflect individualism – self-fulfilment, freedom, success, consumption, self-assurance, hedonism, etc.

The descriptions of lives of educators reflect that their course of life is characterised by turning points and interruptions (Dominicé 2000, Mishler 1999), acquisition of new specialities, alternation of learning and working (Alheit 1995). Coping with changes and managing them is connected with how a person interprets these changes, what meaning he/she gives to them, to what extent he/she can see the positive side of changes and how he/she feels its match with his/her whole life.

Relying on the stories of participants it could be said that people have chosen education/training as a field not because of deep interest in adult education but curiosity to find out what this field comprises and the wish to test oneself. Entering the field of education can be viewed as downgrading in the sense of classical career.

Changes (interruptions and turns) in professional activity are substantiated and interpreted in accordance with other events or experiences of life such as divorce, dissatisfaction with the existent job, personal relationships, moving, etc).

The educators construct their life as a whole while retelling their stories and point out the links between their prior life and being an educator. Those participants who see links between education/training and their prior activity (studying, work, hobbies, etc) and who can fit education/training with their personality as a whole find it easier to justify their being an educator. It is a purely subjective process and personal interpretation.

3.2. REFLECTION OF PROFESSIONAL IDENTITY IN THE BELIEFS OF EDUCATORS

One of the aspects of the construction of educator's professional identity is the meaning that the educator ascribes to his/her activity as an educator. On the grounds of the interviews administered, one can present the following meanings that a person assigns to his/her activity as an educator.
- Job opportunities
- Significant advancement in the professional activity
- Change in the personality development
- Interesting (and/or lucrative) additional extra activity apart from the regular work
- Prestigious and self-esteem raising activity
- Mission

- Activity enabling mental self-realisation
- Commitment
- Lifestyle
- Interpretation of other fields of life

While describing oneself as an educator, links between normative perception and ideal, aspects reflecting the non-self of the educator, links with the prior activity, personality traits, one's individuality and change within the educator activity are outlined.

Personality traits are brought forth as aspects of the ideal, such as communication skills, warmth, and self-irony. Other important traits mentioned were adultness (maturity and life experience), authenticity (being genuine and balanced), attentiveness towards learners, determination, creativity, openness, playfulness. Relying onto the strong sides and specific personality traits (empathy, flexibility, courage, creativity, spontaneity, determination, commitment) (Korthagen, Vasalos 2005) support the educator in his/her aspirations towards ideal.

The interviewees do not confront the identity of the prior activity and education identity. They rather point out the features that connect the two fields and point out that professional practical experience is important for the educator.

3.3. INTERPRETATION OF LEARNING TEACHING SKILLS IN THE PERCEPTION OF EDUCATORS

It is crucial for the educator to adopt educator skills apart from the expertise in the subject or field. Depending on the route how the person came into schooling, he/she might have abundant theoretical knowledge and practical skills in the field but schooling is still to be learnt.

The following sources of learning can be pointed out on the basis of the narratives:

Biography – educators consider life experience of ultimate importance, broad-mindedness and adultness. This is important, first and foremost, to understand the learner and manage relations in the process of schooling.

Studies – experience gained as a learner (college, university), people who participated in the research pointed out in the interviews the importance of learning experience in the university or in in-service activity as the source of learning teaching.

Work experience – work experience gives the feeling of security about the learning content – enables to give examples and create links. Difficulties are caused by the lack of means/strategies of transferring an experience (work experience) to another situation (training, teaching).

Educator training – foreign projects or training provided by training institutions are focused on teaching a specific course – the future educator learns the subject matter, and the structure and basic methodology for teaching this subject matter. The advantages of the kind of training are hands-on experience, opportunities for reflecting and discussing and getting feedback on the first steps taken. The future educators' feeling of security is increased by provision of a clear model; they can adhere to this model and their actions are clearly structured and defined. The disadvantage of the kind of training is that no theoretical background either on the content of learning or the methodology of teaching was provided. This makes them a bit insecure when they start teaching others.

However, these training courses are often described as transformative, courses that change the way of thinking or understanding things. This is probably due to several things – on the one hand the courses took place at the time when general paradigmatic changes in social life and educational beliefs occurred in Estonia and within the new circumstances these courses had a new, learner-centred, humanistic and experiential approach that was completely new to people who had acquired education in a Soviet school.

Thus, the courses broke the old understanding of learning and teaching and changed the reference framework.

Usually people go to a specialised course for trainers (andragogy, adult education studies) after acquiring some experience as an educator. Practicing educators tend to feel that they need to learn more about the job. Since the interviewed educators started their work without special preparation, they felt insecure and doubted whether they did things right. Regarding these courses the interviewees emphasise the theoretical aspect, the opportunity to get a theoretical explanation to their practice (meta-theories), reasons for doing this one way or another.

Learning at work and in the community of practice is interpreted as participation in trainings of other educators and learning from the learning experience. In some interviews educators declare that they learn from experience, learn from teaching, but it is quite difficult to understand what exactly they have learned – tacit knowledge. Possibly, tacit knowledge is quite common and a problem may be the lack of the community with whom to discuss, interpret, create meaning, and formulate more specifically what has been learned.

The interviewees notice, bring forth and use a variety of learning opportunities in different contexts in order to learn teaching skills. At the same time they reveal that the miss various opportunities (community of practice, professional discussions, systematic critical reflection, theoretical foundation of adult education) that could cater for deeper learning and professional development. There is a danger that in case the educators limit themselves with learning form personal experience and do not consider creation of theoretical background and development of reflection skills important, their personal teaching theory can be restricted and hinder professional development.

3.4. EXPRESSION OF PERSONAL TEACHING THEORY IN THE PERCEPTIONS OF EDUCATORS

Personal theory of educators includes perception of educators about the goals of the training process, learning, teaching, peculiarities of adult learners and the essence of being an adult educator.

Perceptions of goals and tasks of training involve perception of the interviewees of what is to be achieved in the course of training schooling and what their own goals are in the course of planning and administering schooling. On the basis of the analysis of the empirical data, one can list the following interpretation of the perceptions of the educators of the goals of training are the following:
▪ Changes in understanding and behaviour
▪ Regulating knowledge
▪ Acquisition of skills
▪ Therapeutic influence on learners
▪ Supporting personal development of learners
▪ Formation of social network
▪ Spreading mentality
▪ Entertainment
▪ Business activity

Research has claimed that adult educators do not own a common shared narrative that educators could use as a resource (Brockett 1991, Filander 2004). On the basis of the analysis, one can outline the integration and points of contact of different trends.

Four principles have been pointed out in the expression of perceptions of educators about learning:
▪ Processing information
▪ Lifelong and lifewide process
▪ Change
▪ Means of achieving something

Educators do not link **teaching** with training only but more widely with supporting lifewide learning. Teaching is associated with supervision and in the process learners are supported in goal setting; they are led to contemplate on how this goal could be achieved. Cooperation and dialogue, discussion and equal partnership are considered important in teaching.

Adult learner is perceived as somebody whose understandings have taken shape and these understandings can restrict learning and hinder it. Educators also sense that there are limits concerning shaking the understandings. Educators point out that adult learners are responsible for their own learning, make their own choices and it means that educator should cater for enabling it.

Interviewees presented in the understandings the standpoint that educator roles are controversial and ambivalent. On the one hand they should support learners, on the other hand they cannot suffocate them, on the one hand they should inspire learners, and on the other hand they cannot be too aggressive and scare learners.

In conclusion it can be said that learning and professional development of adult educators is more connected with making use of the upcoming learning opportunities that the result of conscious planning. Learning from experience is of great significance but it might be possible that interpretation of experience stays on the level of single situations and does not find its position in the broader theoretical framework. The importance of theoretical background was emphasised by those educators who have participated in more thorough training – the trainer courses or andragogy courses.

As an outcome of interpretation and analysis of development routes, learning patterns and perceptions of adult educators, it can be claimed that the routes of development are individual, personal and varied and clear trends cannot be outlined. Apart from that several common aspects were revealed such as sensed lack of some factors (support of the community of practice, professional discussions, reflection opportunities, supporting reflection process).

RECOMMENDATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS FOR SUPPORTING ADULT EDUCATORS' PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Points of view that have been outlined in conceptual principles include recommendations and serve as support material for planning in-service training and drafting development programmes at institutions that provide educator schooling. They might also help to decide upon the content and methods of schooling and support programme assessors in their decisions.

Professional development of the educator as lifelong and lifewide learning

The foundation of professional development is the concept of lifelong and lifewide learning. It involves development of learning and reflection skills. Professional development programmes of educators should focus on formation of perception of lifewide learning.

Alongside with training there is a need for support systems that could support practical application of knowledge and skills and conscious continuous reflection of experience. An essential part of professional development is mentoring. The educators also need opportunities of supervision. Professional discussions and supervision should come from neutral sources; otherwise, educators feel that they are threatened by competition.

For sustainable professional development the educator has to evolve into researcher-practitioner who researches his/her practical activity. Change is initiated not through attendance at the trainings but with the research of the practical activity and involvement in scientific research.

Professional development of adult educator as formation of profession and community of practice of educators

Clear perception of the role is crucial for professional development of adult educators. The profession undergoes constant changes and reformation. It is important to support the process through supporting research, professional studies and professional organisations. It is also vitally important that the educators themselves develop the attitude that they have to contribute to the development of their profession.

Educators need the opportunities that the professional community could provide (formation and delivery of professional knowledge, opportunities for reflection, professional talks) in order to proceed with professional development. As the community of educators is dispersed, it is necessary to support the activities that help to strengthen the community (creation of networks, research on community).

Professional development as integral biographical process

Biographical approach is essential in different aspects. Adaptation to the educator's role and readiness to develop educator skills depends on how the entity of life is established; how the links between prior life, studies, work and educator's activity are seen; how personal identity supports the integration of social identity into integral self-conception. Therefore it is particularly important to help people to place their educator's activity into the big picture of their life and link the identity of educator to the overall identity through training.

Professional development as the process of reflective learning

The skill of conscious and systematic reflection is the key to learning through experience. As an essential component of training of adult educators is learning through personal experience, the depth and meaningfulness is determined by reflection skills.

At schoolings, educators should be guided and taught to express their perceptions (encourage journal writing, educator biography writing, carry out discussions on teaching with colleagues, analyse training videos). A significant part of train-the-trainer schooling could be conscious work on interpretation reflection stages, levels and aspects.

Formation and interpretation of professional discourse in professional development

Professional conversation groups, talks, dialogues and narratives could support the learning processes of educators. While interpreting teaching experience of educators, myths about teaching should be determined. This could point out and interpret controversies between practical experience and theoretical discourse.

Formation of solid theoretical foundation in the course of professional development

The creation of theoretical foundation is to be taken into consideration in training the educators. Educators should be provided with systematic overview of trends of adult education, philosophical principles, modern learning theories, learning of adult learners and ethical foundation of training in the course of train-the-trainer schooling. This foundation will later enable the educators to interpret their experiences and learn from these and support spreading more theoretical discourse in the community of practice.

Professional development of educators as the process of transformative learning

Transformative learning process is a very demanding process for the learner and they are not always ready for this kind of learning. One should have serious reasons to be open to transformative learning. Explaining transformative learning at schoolings will help the educators to interpret their own development and support transformative learning of their learners on the assumption that there is a necessity. It is important to realise that change is a step-by-step complicated process within the activity of professional development − it requires time, energy and a lot of work on oneself. Changing and trying out something new involves the risk of failure. Therefore it is important to offer in-service training, continuous support and apply pressure to undergo a change and to apply the learned. The end of the programme does not guarantee that the participants will apply new ideas that the attitudes and perceptions have changed, therefore people should need further support.

Professional development of educator as awareness process of ethics of schooling

Adult educators have the courage to carry out training on the topics that involve interfering with learner's life, changing the learner and counselling. Educators should understand that they should not initiate processes that they could not manage.

The routes and learning patterns of educators are very versatile and diverse and it is difficult to see a clear system. That is why the learning needs are also different and as a result of that the educators need highly individual support system. In the course of professional development self-analysis and reflection skills, awareness of professional identity, personal teaching theory and learning opportunities are of vital importance. This awareness is the key issue in designing developmental programmes for adult educators.

EESTI TÄISKASVANUKOOLITAJATE PROFESSIONAALSUSE KUJUNEMISE VÕIMALUSED

Kokkuvõte

Täiskasvanute koolitaja professionaalne areng hõlmab kolme üksteist vastastikku mõjutavat protsessi: professionaalse identiteedi kujunemine, professionaalne õppimine ja isikliku õpetamisteooria kujunemine. Täiskasvanukoolitaja professionaalsus on seotud nii teadmiste ja oskuste kui ka hoiakute, arusaamade ja tõekspidamistega ning avaldub praktilises tegevuses.

Täiskasvanute koolitaja kui suhteliselt uue professiooni toimimises võib välja tuua erinevusi traditsiooniliste elukutsetega võrreldes: erinevused ettevalmistuses, diskursuse, normide ja erialase põhiteadmise kujunemises. Vaadeldes olukorda Eestis, võib välja tuua, et eeldused täiskasvanute koolitaja professiooni kujunemiseks ja arenemiseks on loodud: võimalik on omandada kõrgharidus ja magistrikraad andragoogika erialal, välja on töötatud täiskasvanukoolitaja/andragoogi kutsestandard, võimalik on taotleda vastavat kutset ning tegutsevad kutseorganisatsioonid (Eesti Täiskasvanute Koolitajate Assotsiatsioon Andras, Eesti Andragoogide Liit, Eesti Vabaharidusliit). Samas ei ole Eestis praegu formaalset välist süsteemi, mis tagaks professionaaliks olemise (reaalselt on võimalik tegutseda täiskasvanute koolitajana ilma kvalifikatsiooni tõendava dokumendita), ning iga täiskasvanukoolitaja vastutab ise oma professionaalsuse ja selle arengu eest.

Täiskasvanukoolitaja professionaalne identiteet

Täiskasvanute koolitaja professionaalse identiteedi konstrueerimise protsessi mõjutavad koolitaja varasemad professionaalsed identiteedid ja elukogemused ning kujutlus koolitajaks olemisest tulevikuperspektiivis. Koolitaja professionaalses identiteedis peegeldub, kuidas inimene määratleb oma kuuluvust koolitajate hulka, millise tähenduse ta annab koolitajaks olemisele ja kuidas tema väärtused sobituvad koolitajaväärtustega. Täiskasvanukoolitaja professionaalse identiteedi konstrueerimine on pidev protsess, mille käigus toimub tervikliku koolitajanarratiivi loomine, selle pidev korrastamine ja tõlgendamine, et luua järjepidev ja sidus tervik erinevate sotsiaalsete identiteetide, personaalse identiteedi ja ümbritseva keskkonna kontekstis.

Intervjueeritud koolitajate lugude analüüsi tulemustest selgub, et nende koolitajaks kujunemise oluline kontekst on 1990. aastatel toimunud Eesti taasiseseisvumine ning sellega kaasnenud muutused poliitilises, majanduslikus ja sotsiaalses elus. Majanduselus toimuvad muutused võisid tähendada senise töö kaotamist, majanduslikku ebakindlust ja uute valdkondade esilekerkimist ning viia lõpuks koolitamise juurde. Mitmekesisemaks muutuv täiskasvanuharidus (rahvusvaheline koostöö, mitteriiklike koolitusorganisatsioonide osakaalu kasv, uued koolitusvaldkonnad) tekitas intervjueeritud koolitajate väitel samuti huvi koolitamise poole pöörduda. Koostööprojektid väliskoolitajatega avardasid euroopalikku ja humanistlikku mõtlemist ning muutsid arusaamu täiskasvanute koolitamisest.

Intervjueeritud koolitajate õppimis- ja tööalasel teekonnal oli mitmeid pöördeid ja katkestusi ning oma elukäigu terviklikuks mõtestamiseks toovad koolitajad esile seoseid varasema elu, erinevate identiteetide ja koolitajaks olemise vahel. Koolitajaks olemist selgitavad endale hõlpsasti need inimesed, kes näevad seoseid koolitamise ja oma varasema tegevuse (õppimise, töö, harrastuste) vahel ning leiavad, et koolitamine sobitub isiksuse kui tervikuga.

Empiiriliste andmete analüüsi tulemusena võib täiskasvanukoolitajate puhul koolitusvaldkonna leidmisel välja tuua **neli põhilist teekonda**.

1. Koolitusvaldkond kujuneb kõrgkoolis õpitud eriala ja erialase töö põhjal – koolitajad on omandanud erialase teoreetilise ettevalmistuse ning praktilise töökogemuse oma erialal, puududa võib koolitusalane ettevalmistus.
2. Koolitusvaldkond kujuneb töökogemuste põhjal valdkonnas, mida pole (kõrg)koolis või formaalhariduses õpitud – puudub kõrgkoolis õpitud teoreetiline teadmine valdkonnast, edasi antakse praktilist kogemuslikku teadmist.
3. Koolitusvaldkond kujuneb täienduskoolituse, huvialade või ühiskondliku töö põhjal – puudub kõrgkoolis omandatud teoreetiline teadmine, kuid koolitajaid iseloomustab suur isiklik huvi valdkonna vastu.

4. Koolitusvaldkonna kujunemisel pole nähtavat seost ei (kõrg)koolis õpitud erialaga ega senise töö või harrastustega.

Koolitajate professionaalne teadmine õpetatavas valdkonnas kujuneb erinevalt sõltuvalt teekonnast, kuidas inimene koolitamise juurde on jõudnud. Täiskasvanukoolitajate hulgas on koolitajaid, kelle professionaalne teadmine on kujunenud nii teoreetilise ettevalmistuse kui praktilise kogemuse põhjal, ning koolitajaid, kes annavad edasi praktilise tegevuse põhjal kujunenud teadmist. Kuna intervjueeritud koolitajad ise peavad väga oluliseks töökogemust koolitatavas valdkonnas, siis tunnevad end oma esimestel koolitustel kindlamini need koolitajad, kes näevad seost oma varasema töökogemuse ja koolitatava valdkonna vahel.

Koolitajaidentiteedi konstrueerimisel kasutavad koolitajad identiteediväiteid, et selgitada endale ja teistele koolitajaks kujunemise valikuid ja väärtusi, et anda tähendus iseendale ja oma tegevusele. Klassikalise karjääri mõttes võib koolitajana tegutsema asumine olla inimese jaoks nii edasi- kui tagasiminek (esialgu võidakse kaotada sissetulekus, staatuses), kuid igal juhul tajutakse seda kui enda tööalast või ka isiksuslikku proovilepanekut, võimalust eneseteostuseks, kui tegevust, mis annab tegutsemisvabadust, kuid eeldab pühendumist.

Koolitamise poole pöördumist põhjendatakse intervjuudes järgmiselt:
- tööpuudus (ei ole võimalik leida erialast tööd);
- vähesed arenguvõimalused senises töös;
- vajadus teha muutusi oma senises elus (isiklik elu, eneseteostus);
- enesearengu uus tase, mille väljendamiseks sobib koolitamine;
- organisatsiooni vajadused.

Intervjuude põhjal võib välja tuua, et koolitamise poole pöörduma ajendas koolitajaid mitte niivõrd sügav huvi täiskasvanuhariduse vastu, kuivõrd vajadus tööd leida, soov ennast proovile panna, tahe ennast teostada või uudishimu, mida see valdkond ja professioon võiks endast kujutada.

Ettekujutust professionaalsest identiteedist mõjutavad ühiskonnas levivad diskursused (näiteks täiskasvanuharidus kui professionaalsete oskuste omandamise vahend või teraapia või äritegevus) ja käibivad müüdid (koolitaja on osav müügimees ja artist). Valmisolek kuuluda koolitajate hulka ja võtta omaks koolitaja professionaalne identiteet oli intervjueeritud koolitajatel olemas, kuigi kõigi kultuuris levivate koolitajakujutlustega end samastada ei tahetud.

Professionaalse identiteedi omaksvõtmisel on oluline, millisena tajutakse professiooni mainet, kuivõrd väärikaks peetakse enda jaoks kuulumist selle professiooni esindajate hulka. Intervjueeritud koolitajatele oli täiskasvanukoolitajaks kujunemine enamasti edasiminek tööalases tegevuses, tähendusrikas muutus isiksuslikus arengus, millega kaasnes enesehinnangu tõus, prestiižne tegevus, mis võimaldas eneseteostust ja vabadust. Koolitajaks olemine võimaldas sõltumatut ja loovat elustiili (ise kujundada oma tööaega ja töökoormust, valida puhkuse aega, valida koolitusi ning luua uusi koolitusi). Täiskasvanukoolitaja professiooni tajutakse maineka, loova ja huvitavana ning see hõlbustab koolitaja professionaalse identiteedi omaksvõtmist.

Täiskasvanukoolitaja õppimise võimalused

Professionaalseks tegutsemiseks koolitajana ei ole vajalik mitte ainult teema ja ainevaldkonna tundmine, vaid koolitajaoskuste omandamine. Täiskasvanukoolitajaks pürgijal võivad olla põhjalikud teoreetilised teadmised ja praktilised kogemused oma erialal, kuid ettevalmistus koolitajategevuseks on vähene või juhuslik. Täiskasvanute koolitamist õpitakse erinevatest allikatest, vastavalt oma õppimisvajadustele ja ettekujutusele sellest, mida peaks oskama hea koolitaja.

Täiskasvanukoolitaja õppimisvõimalused hõlmavad õppimist nii formaalsetes kui informaalsetes õppesituatsioonides. Informaalsetes õppesituatsioonides õppimisel sõltub õppimise võimalikkus koolitajast endast, tema õpi- ja refleksioonioskustest, oskustest õpivõimalusi märgata ja situatsioonis peituvaid võimalusi ära kasutada.

Oma õpetamiskogemuste tõlgendamiseks ja sellest õppimiseks kasutavad koolitajad õpisituatsioonide analüüsi, õppijate jälgimist koolitussituatsioonis, koolitustele antava tagasiside analüüsi, arutelusid kaaskoolitajate, koolitusfirma juhtide ja sõpradega.

Kogemusest õppimise võimalusena hindavad koolitajad kõrgelt kellegagi koos koolitamist, millega kaasneb arutelu koolituse ettevalmistuse käigus, vaatlus koolituse toimumise ajal ning tagasiside pärast koolitust.

Koolitajate suhtumine õppijate antavasse tagasisidesse on vastuoluline: ühelt poolt hinnatakse seda kui ühte võimalust õppijatelt õppimiseks, teiselt poolt kaheldakse õppija pädevuses tagasiside andjana. Täiskasvanukoolitajate kogukond Eestis on veel suhteliselt hajus ning seetõttu on ka kogukonnas toimuv kogemusliku õppimise protsess juhuslik ja süsteemselt reflekteerimata. Professionaalse arengu sügavam toetamine, mida kogukonnas osalemine võiks teoreetiliselt koolitajale võimaldada, jääb seetõttu praktikas vähetoimivaks.

Professionaalseks tegevuseks on vajalik teadlik refleksioon. Reflekteerivad teoreetilised tõlgendused ja tegevuse keelelised abstraktsioonid on olulised, sest nad võimaldavad laiemaid üldistusi ja paremat järgnevate tegevuste planeerimist, s.t oma professionaalse praktika parandamist. Reflekteerimisoskus ja -harjumus põhineb iga koolitaja õppimise ja koolitajaks kujunemise taustal. Intervjuude analüüsi tulemusena võib välja tuua, et teadlikult reflekteerivad oma koolitajapraktikat need koolitajad, kelle varasemates õpingutes on pööratud refleksioonioskustele olulist tähelepanu. Varasema ettevalmistuse käigus (nõustamine, suhtlemistreening) omandatud refleksioonioskusi kantakse üle ja rakendatakse ka järgnevas koolitajategevuses. Teoreetilised täiskasvanuharidusega (andragoogika) seotud õpingud on andnud õppijatele teoreetilise tausta refleksiooni olemuse mõistmiseks ning selgema arusaama refleksioonist kui struktureeritud protsessist, millel võivad olla erinevad tasandid ja erinevad aspektid.

Täiskasvanukoolitajad, kelle ettevalmistuses puudub teadlik ja süsteemne reflekteerimiskogemus, tajuvad küll vajadust refleksiooni järele, kuid protsess ise võib jääda pinnaliseks ja väheproduktiivseks – tõlgendus jääb kinni ühte situatsiooni ja vastastikuse kogemuste vahetamise pinnale ilma avarama teoreetilise üldistuseta, refleksiooniprotsessi käigus ei tegelda oma uskumuste ega viiteraamide kriitilise analüüsiga, ei tehta järeldusi tulevikuks ega kavandata muutusi praktikas.

Koolitaja õppimise allikad

Koolitaja õppimise allikateks on tema elukäik, õpingud ja täienduskoolitused, koolitajate kogukond, töö ning sotsiokultuuriline keskkond. Varasemate kogemuste kasutamiseks koolitajategevuses tuleb need üle kanda ühest kontekstist teise ning muuta need kasutatavaks koolitaja professionaalses praktikas.

Intervjuude analüüsi tulemusena võib väita, et koolitajad väärtustavad oma elukogemustest õppimist, mis annab võimalusi õppijate ja inimsuhete mõistmiseks koolitusprotsessis. Samas võib see osutuda ka piiravaks, kuna elukogemuse pinnalt saab koolitaja märgata, tõlgendada ja kasutada ainult neid kogemusi, mis tal endal on. Elukogemuse rakendatavus koolitamise õppimiseks sõltub sellest, kuivõrd koolitaja näeb seoseid oma elu kui terviku ja koolitamise vahel ning kuidas ta neid seoseid tõlgendab.

Intervjueeritud koolitajad sõnastasid intervjuudes olulise koolitajaks õppimise allikana ülikooliõpingutest või täienduskoolitusest pärinevaid õppimiskogemusi ning nimetasid oma eeskujudena mitmeid ülikooli õppejõude ja täiskasvanute koolitajaid. Käesoleva uurimistöö tulemusena ei leidnud kinnitust seisukoht, et koolitajad toetuvad oma tegevuses varasemale koolikogemusele (Taylor 2003), pigem toodi esile kõrgkoolis õppimise ja täiskasvanute koolitustel osalemise kogemust.

Tähendusliku õppimiskogemusena tõlgendasid intervjueeritud koolitajad konkreetseid väljaõpet pakkuvaid täienduskoolitusi, mille tugeva küljena tõstetakse esile võimalust kogeda täiskasvanute koolitamise mudelit ning puudusena tuuakse välja vähest teoreetilist tausta, mille tõttu tajutakse koolitama asudes teatavat vajakajäämist oma ettevalmistuses. Koolitusfirmades toimuvate sisekoolituste juures tõstavad intervjueeritavad esile, et on loodud süsteem oma koolitajate professionaalse õppimise toetamiseks. Ühiselt läbitud täienduskoolituste tulemusena on loodud organisatsioonis töötavate koolitajate ühine teadmiste ja kogemuste kogum, mis toetab ühise diskursuse kujunemist ja aitab kaasa koolitajate kogukonna arenemisele.

Täiskasvanute koolitamise kursustel (andragoogika) õppimisel väärtustavad koolitajad teoreetilise tausta omandamise aspekti. Formaalsetel kursustel omandatud põhialused aitavad mõtestada oma praktilist tegevust, kursustel osalemine loob võimalusi professionaalide omavaheliseks suhtlemiseks ning võib olla vahendiks professionaalse üksilduse ületamisel. Täiskasvanukoolitajad tunnetavad, et koolitajakoolitused on neile andnud tugevama teoreetilise aluse, teadlikuma refleksioonioskuse, võimaluse reflekteerida oma kogemusi ning kujundada professionaalset diskursust ja kogukonda. Samuti on koolitajad tundnud, et koolitajakoolitustel osalemine toetab professionaalse identiteedi teadvustamist ning suurema enesekindluse kujunemist koolitajana.

Professionaalseks õppimiseks saab koolitaja ammutada kogemusi koolitajate kogukonnas. Koolitaja vajab kogukonda kuuluvustunde jaoks, professionaalse identiteedi tunnetamiseks, professionaalse teadmise loomiseks ja oma kogemuste reflekteerimiseks. Täiskasvanukoolitajad Eestis tajuvad koolitajate kogu-

konna olemasolu, kuid see kogukond toimib pigem informaalselt isiklike suhete ja individuaalsete kontaktide tasandil, ilma tugeva kõiki hõlmava organisatsioonita.

Professionaalse arengu toetamise üks võimalusi on professionaalsed vestlused, mille käigus toimub teadmiste, kogemuste ja diskursuse edasiandmine ja uue teadmise loomine. Empiiriliste andmete analüüsi tulemusena võib väita, et koolitajad tajusid teravalt liiga väheseid võimalusi professionaalseteks vestlusteks oma igapäevases praktilises tegevuses. Õpetamisoskustes on väga palju vaikivat teadmist ning koolitamise õppimise seisukohalt on oluline, millised võimalused on koolitajal selle teadvustamiseks ja sõnastamiseks. Vajadus õpetamisega seonduvate teemade üle arutada ilmnes nii algajatel kui kogenud koolitajatel, ent toodi esile, et sageli pole tähenduslikeks ja sügavateks professionaalseteks vestlusteks sobivat seltskonda.

Koolitajaks õppimise mustrid

Süstematiseerides ja rühmitades koolitajate erinevatest allikatest ja erineval viisil toimuvaid õppimisprotsesse, võib luua kolm põhimustrit, sõltuvalt sellest, millal ja millises vormis on intervjueeritud koolitaja omandanud koolitajaoskused.

Põhimustritele omased jooned on järgmised.

Põhimuster A – koolitaja saab spetsiaalse väljaõppe konkreetse koolituse läbiviimiseks enne koolitama hakkamist. Lisaks on ta õppinud ja õpib teistest kontekstidest (elukäik, õppimine, töökogemus, koolitajate kogukond, kultuurikontekst).

Põhimuster B – koolitaja alustab kõigepealt tööd koolitajana, toetudes elust õpitud teadmistele, oskustele ja hoiakutele. Koolitamist õppima asub ta juba kogemustega koolitajana, valides enamasti teoreetilisemad koolitajate koolitused või andragoogikaõpingud. Teoreetilisi õpinguid väärtustavad just eriti need koolitajad, kellel on olnud võimalusi teoreetilisteks õpinguteks täiskasvanukoolituse valdkonnas. Selles peegeldub omamoodi paradoks – teoreetiliste teadmiste vajalikkust tunnetavad need koolitajad, kes on juba sidunud ennast teoreetiliste õpingutega. Täiskasvanukoolitajate professionaalse arengu toetamiseks on vaja leida võimalusi, kuidas ahvatleda teoreetilisi õpinguid alustama neid koolitajaid, kes ei ole veel märganud teoreetilise tausta vajalikkust.

Põhimuster C – inimene tegutseb täiskasvanukoolitajana, ilma et oleks formaalselt koolitamist õppinud, ega seo end koolitamisalaste õpingutega ka hiljem. Koolitamiseks vajalikud teadmised, oskused ja hoiakud kujunevad erinevatest kontekstidest kogutud kogemuste tõlgendamise tulemusena. Teoreetilist ja süsteemset koolitamisoskuste õppimist ei peeta oluliseks, vaid arvatakse, et suudetakse seda korvata muude oskuste ja omaduste rakendamisega.

Täiskasvanukoolitaja õppimise valdkonnad

Täiskasvanukoolitajale vajaliku asjatundlikkuse omandamine toimub järgmistes valdkondades: ainealane, metoodilis-didaktiline, sotsiaalne ja refleksiivne kompetentsus. Empiirilise andmestiku analüüsi põhjal saab väita, et ainealase kompetentsuse omandamist peavad koolitajad oluliseks oma kujunemise alguses, kuna ainealane asjatundlikkus seostub kujutlustega koolitajaks olemise normidest. Koolitaja professionaalse arenemisega seoses väheneb vajadus kõike ise teada ning rohkem hakatakse märkama õppijat.

Metoodilise kompetentsuse puhul sõltuvad õppimisväärseks peetavad oskused konkreetse koolitaja kujutlusest täiskasvanute koolitamise eesmärkidest ja tema isiklikust õpetamisteooriast. Koolitajad, kes peavad oluliseks info edastamist, rõhutavad loengupidamise ja esinemisoskuste õppimise olulisust. Koolitajad, kellele on oluline õppimise toetamine, pööravad tähelepanu erinevate õppemeetodite omandamisele, mille rakendamise kaudu oleks võimalik õppijate õppimist toetada.

Sotsiaalse kompetentsuse omandamine on täiskasvanute koolitajatel olulisel kohal, kuna inimestevaheliste suhete, rühmaprotsesside ja konfliktide juhtimine on õppimisprotsessi suunamiseks ja kujundamiseks olulise tähendusega. Intervjuude põhjal tundub, et koolitaja sotsiaalse kompetentsuse kujunemisel toetutakse isiklike elukogemuste tõlgendamisele, teadlikumalt käsitlevad koolitusel kogetud suhtlemissituatsioone suhtlemiskoolituse (suhtlemistreenerite väljaõppe) läbinud koolitajad.

Refleksiivne kompetentsus on koolitaja professionaalses arengus oluline nii professionaalse identiteedi ja isikliku teooria kujunemisel kui kogemustest õppimisel.

Intervjueeritud koolitajad on kogenud koolitajaks õppimise käigus erineva sügavusega õppimist, nii info kogumist ja tõlgendamist kui transformatiivset, isiksust tervikuna hõlmavat õppimist. Täiskasvanute koolitajad võivad olla olukorras, kus transformatiivse õppimise protsess tuleb läbida iseseisvalt, ilma asjatundliku toetuseta ning seetõttu võib transformatiivne õppimine kulgeda aeglaselt ja tagasilangustega.

Täiskasvanukoolitaja isiklik õpetamisteooria

Täiskasvanukoolitaja isiklik õpetamisteooria on pidevas muutumises, seda konstrueeritakse järjepidevalt tegevuse jooksul kogunenud teadmiste ja kogemuste põhjal ning see on aluseks koolitaja praktilisele tegevusele. Tervikpildi saamist koolitaja isiklikust teooriast komplitseerib nii see, et teooria muutub pidevalt uute kogemuste saamise käigus, kui ka see, et koolitajal endal ei ole terviklikku ülevaadet kogu oma teooriast.

Koolitajate isiklik teooria hõlmab täiskasvanukoolitajate ettekujutust koolitusprotsessi eesmärkidest, õppimisest, õpetamisest, täiskasvanud õppija eripärast ning täiskasvanukoolitajaks olemisest.

Empiirilise andmestiku analüüsi tulemusena võib välja tuua järgmised koolitajate tõlgendused koolitusprotsessi eesmärkidest:
- muutused arusaamades ja käitumises,
- teadmiste korrastamine,
- uute oskuste omandamine,
- teraapiline mõju õppijatele,
- õppijate isiksusliku arengu toetamine,
- sotsiaalse võrgustiku kujundamine,
- mõtteviisi levitamine,
- meelelahutus,
- äritegevus.

Eesti täiskasvanute koolitamise maastikul on esindatud erinevate taotlustega koolitajad, mis peaks andma täiskasvanud õppijatele võimaluse leida endale sobiv koolitus.

Õppimist tõlgendavad intervjueeritud koolitajad avaralt ning nende isiklikes teooriates eristub neli seisukohta.
- Õppimine on protsess – pidev, elukestev ja eluhõlmav tegevus.
- Õppimine on muutus – muutus arusaamades ja mõtlemises, mis peaks peegelduma ka muutunud käitumises.
- Õppimine on info talletamine ja korrastamine – väga vähesed koolitajad räägivad õppimisest kui informatsiooni talletamisest, küll selgitatakse õppimist kui informatsiooni korrastamist või informatsiooni vahetamist.
- Õppimine on vahend millegi saavutamiseks – vahendit ei tõlgendata kitsalt instrumentaalselt, vaid suhteliselt avaralt just emantsipatoorse õppimisena, õppimine annab iseseisvuse, vabaduse ise tegutseda, ise maailmast aru saada.

Õpetamist tõlgendavad intervjueeritud koolitajad kui tegevust, mis võib toimuda erinevates situatsioonides ning väga erinevate inimeste juhituna. Õppimist-õpetamist nähakse koostöise protsessina, milles nii õppijal kui koolitajal on oma roll ja osa vastutust.

Koolitajate isiklikus teoorias peegeldub täiskasvanud õppija komplitseeritud, iseseisvalt mõtleva elukogenud isiksusena, kellel võib olla päris palju probleeme, ent kellele on tähtis valmisolek muutuda ja areneda ning kes vajab koolitaja toetust. Koolitajate intervjuudes mõtestatakse täiskasvanud õppija olemust lugupidavalt, samas ei looda täiskasvanud õppijast idealistlikku pilti.

Koolitajate professionaalse arengu vajadused on erinevad, kuna igaühe koolitajaks kujunemise teekonnad ja õppimismustrid, samuti arusaamad koolitamisest ja õppimisest, on individuaalsed ja isikupärased. Vastutus oma professionaalse arengu eest on igal koolitajal endal ning professionaalse arengu kulgemine sõltub koolitaja teadlikkusest, tema ettekujutusest oma professionaalsest identiteedist ja isiklikust õpetamisteooriast. Eesti täiskasvanukoolitajatel on võimalusi professionaalseks arenguks, ent nende võimaluste kasutamine sõltub koolitajast endast. Suur osakaal jääb kogemustest õppimisele, puudu jääb kogemuse teadlikust reflekteerimisest, teoreetilisest tõlgendusest, kogukonna nõudlikkusest, mis võib tähendada, et kõik koolitajad ei pruugi tajuda täiskasvanute koolitamisega kaasnevat vastutust ja riske ega pöörata piisavalt tähelepanu oma õppimisvajadustele. Täiskasvanukoolitaja professionaalse arengu toimimine sõltub tema õppimis- ja refleksioonioskusest ja valmisolekust ise oma õppimisse ja arendamisse panustada.

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