

Training an Andragogue as a Specialist in Adult Education

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Abstract: The problem of adult education is actualized in the context of today, due to the introduction of continuing education and the need for lifelong learning. One of the priorities of education is always relevant to the preparation and development of the staffing potential of the education system, including adult education. The leading specialist in this field is andragogue as a specialist in training, counseling, providing social assistance and performing organizational and managerial functions in the adult environment. The relevance and demand for the training of andragogues is conditioned by the growing influence of education on the course of socio-economic, political, and cultural development of the world community. In order to find out the real state of andragogue preparation in Ukraine, the authors developed and tested a questionnaire of online adult education experts using the Google form. The results of the study show that representatives of state institutions, non-governmental organizations and public associations have enough scientific and practically oriented experience in the field of adult education. Their activities are centered around providing adult education and counseling services to careers, mobility, retraining and life trajectory design. The need for training andragogues as specialists in the field of adult education capable of effectively organizing the adult learning process has been identified. Respondents identified significant personal qualities of the andragogue: organizational and communicative abilities, broad outlook, emotional stability, availability of analytical, prognostic and project skills and cognitive activity.

Keywords: *adult education; andragogue; lifelong learning; empirical model of learning; integral and role teacher positions.*

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1. Introduction

We are accustomed to thinking that only children need help to learn, and adults decide for themselves why and how they learn. Today, however, education has become a significant factor in the development of not only man but also society. The vital innovation, technical, information and social processes that are taking place in all forms of work today are changing the situation, activating the value of new educational ideas and forms of adult learning that meet the needs and social order of today's society. The idea of lifelong education and lifelong learning has become practically necessary and important for humanity as a whole, for every organization interested in development and prosperity, for any adult who is committed to productive activity, self-realization and creativity.

Adult education is a part of lifelong learning, aimed at realizing the right of every adult to continue learning, taking into account their personal needs, social development priorities and the needs of the economy. At the beginning of the 21st century, lifelong learning became the defining educational trend in most European countries. The international community is in favor of empowering adults in their quest to learn, regardless of age, nationality, professional or social background. Adult education is recognized as one of the effective ways to improve the quality of life of citizens, enhance professional mobility, and effectively build civil society.

Therefore, adult education specialists - andragogues - are becoming increasingly popular in various fields of social life. A number of practical steps have been taken in this direction by the international community: the training of andragogues for different sectors of the economy is being conducted in higher education institutions, the activity of career advisers as specialists in the professional career of adults is normalized, methodically substantiated educational programs for adults on the andragogical principles etc.

European countries are united in their quest to train qualified adult education professionals who can meet the challenges of today and provide adult education. In Ukraine, the training of adults in the field of adult education is conducted in institutions of higher education in educational and pedagogical programs of the second (master's) level of higher education in the field of knowledge "01 Education" in the specialty "011 Educational, pedagogical sciences" or "Sciences about education" specialization "015 Pedagogy of higher education" with future qualification "Teacher of universities and higher education institutions".

2. Literature review

In general, andragogics (from *gr. aner, andros* - adult, mature husband + *ago* - lead) as a completed theory of adult learning appears in the work of the prominent American scientist Knowles (1970). Knowles (1970), as an adult education theorist, believes that the primary task of the global pedagogical community is to "train competent educators in adult education who are able to use their knowledge in a constantly changing environment, to engage in constant self-improvement and self-awareness". The article by Keefe (2015) describes the experience of using the six assumptions of Knowles in practical adult education of Myles Hortone from the Highlanders Folk School. In the context of the study, the works of foreign scientists on the problems of the andragogical orientation of the profession of teacher are important. Scientists De Oliveira (2005), Billett (2010) are addressing the urgent need of modern man to study for life, justifying its emergence with the need for professional mobility of an adult in the context of globalization changes. The article by Housel (2020) discusses the problems of preliminary training and advanced training of teachers for adults. Researchers are considering innovative methods and forms of adult learning, such as MOE platforms, distance courses and online programs (Sato, Haegele & Foot, 2017).

Researchers talk about the importance of social media and open information resources in adult learning (Youde, 2020). The article by Pashkevich, Yezhova, and Gerasymenko (2020) is devoted to the use of information and communication technologies in self-education of a person. The article by Youde (2018) discusses the Andragogical model of blended learning. Noting their importance in the professional development of the individual. It is very difficult to measure the effectiveness of using different adult learning methods, there is a constant need for their development and justification (Young, Rathwell & Callary, 2020). This is the origin of Andragogics as the science of adult learning (Henschke, 2011), whose main purpose is to justify the concepts, technologies and techniques of adult learning (Blackley & Sheffield, 2015).

Practical aspects of the preparation of andragogues are revealed through the prism of the necessary competencies of an adult education specialist (Carter, Solberg & Solberg, 2017) and the system of relevant requirements for his personal qualities (Bugreeva, 2019), features of pedagogical and andragogical approaches in adult learning (Hägg & Kurczewska, 2019). As revealed in an article by Yezhova, Pashkevich & Manoilenko (2018), the world's leading fashion education institutions offer

short and complete training courses in fashion design for adults with experience in the fashion industry or related industries. The article by Gopalakrishnan (2020) considers the problem of multilingual pedagogy in adult education. The article by Callary, Rathwell & Young (2017) addresses the issue of training trainers working with Masters Athletes (MA).

The research of Owusu-Agyeman et al. (2018) prove the need to develop specific methods of adult learning because it has unique personal experiences that influence the learning process and its outcomes. Today, most companies use this provision to increase the efficiency of their employees, and to improve the lives of citizens around the world (Hlela, 2019).

Adult learning methods need to be more creative and open to change, noted Ajayi (2019). They must be flexible, capable of forming critical, environmental and creative thinking of adults and teamwork skills (Bengo, 2020).

An analysis of the content of available scientific evidence indicates a tendency to extend andragogical approaches to adult education. However, this experience is not sufficiently reflected. The cornerstone of this problem is the provision of an adult education plane by skilled professionals capable of effectively organizing the adult learning process in a globalized society.

3. Methodology of the Study

The purpose of the article is to reveal the real state of preparation of andragogues in Ukraine.

3.1 Participants

An online survey of adult education professionals was conducted during March-May 2019. The link to the Google form was sent through social networks to providers of educational services in the field of adult education (institutes of postgraduate education, departments of pedagogy, vocational education and management of educational institutions, public organizations, etc.). The sample is valid and relevant, represented by 186 respondents (Figure 1-2), 71.5% of whom are teachers of higher education institutions and institutes of advanced training; 24.7% are representatives of non-governmental and commercial organizations working with adults; 3.8% are students of the second (master's) level of higher education.

The average age of the respondents was from 31 to 50 years (62.9%), under 30 years - 21%, over 50 years - 13.8%. By education, the distribution of respondents is as follows: 65.1% of respondents have a higher

pedagogical education, 30.6% have a higher non-pedagogical one, 5.9% have a secondary special pedagogical one, 2.7% have a secondary special education, 5% have a secondary, 5% - researchers in various fields of knowledge.

3.2. Methods

With the help of the Google Form, the authors created the Adult Education Survey, which included 15 questions about the current state of adult education in Ukraine, the existing problems and the specificities of training adult education professionals, the professional competencies of an andragogue as an adult education specialist. One or more choices can be made in the answers to some questions.

4. The results of the study

The analysis of the respondents' answers regarding professional affiliation and services gives grounds to state that the majority of adult education specialists are representatives of the state of the educational sector: teachers, methodologists, future students in the field of adult education. The non-governmental sector is partly represented by non-formal adult education coaches

In the course of their professional activity, 80% of the respondents had to solve diverse problems of adults in terms of improving their skills, changing their professional skills, acquiring additional competences. 20% of those surveyed do not yet have experience in addressing adult problems.

Almost all respondents participated in seminars, conferences or other activities on adult education, either on their own initiative or on their job responsibilities. Such a strong motivation of the respondents, in our opinion, is caused by the need for additional knowledge about the features of adult learning, as evidenced by the respondents' answers to the question "How much do you need knowledge in the field of adult education?" (Fig. 1).

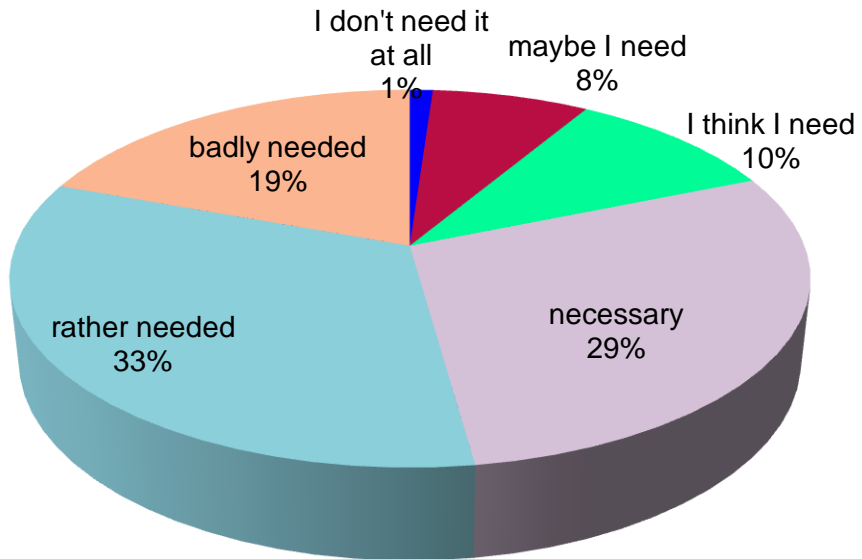


Fig. 1. Distribution of the respondents' answers to the question "How much do you need knowledge in the field of adult education?"

Considering such consumer demand for adult education curricula, we consider it necessary to intensify their development and implementation at the level of higher education institutions and institutes of advanced training. In addition, this demand additionally causes the introduction of a new profession name "Andragogue" with code 2359.2 (professional group "Other professionals in the field of education") into the Classifier of Professions.

The content analysis of respondents' answers to the definition of profession "Andragogue" revealed three approaches to understanding the essence of this profession: 1) specialist for adult learning (69%), 2) teacher for adult learning (15%), 3) specialist in the design and implementation of adult training programs (11%) (Fig. 2).

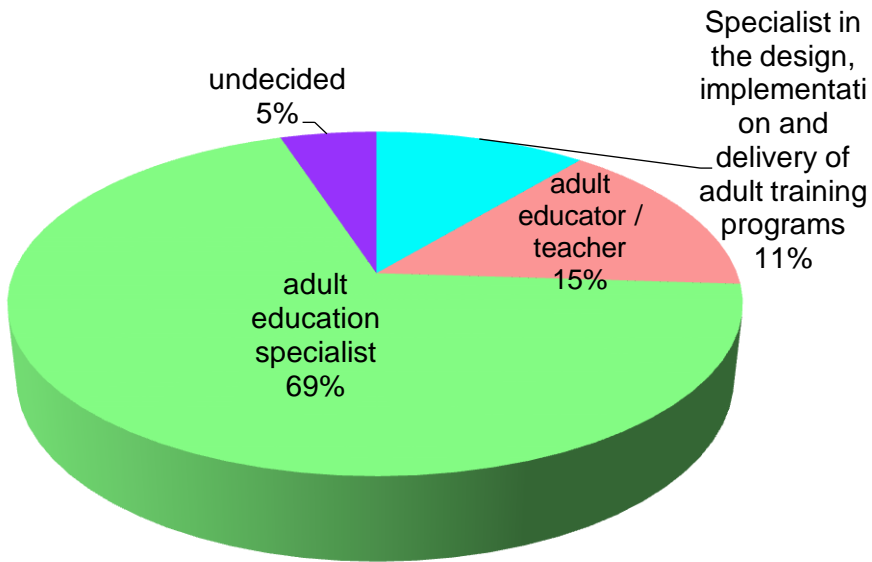


Fig. 2. Distribution of respondents' answers regarding the definition of the Andragogue profession

Thus, the majority of respondents present the specifics of the activities of the andragogue through adult learning in general social (formation, implementation and delivery of adult education programs) or pedagogical approaches. The need for such a specialist to have professional knowledge of the specific nature of adult learning and relevant personal qualities is unambiguous. In particular, 88% of the respondents indicated this. According to the respondents, the powers of the andragogue include counseling (21% of respondents), support during professional activities (15%), provision of social assistance (12%) and organization and management of adult learning (5%) (Fig. 3).

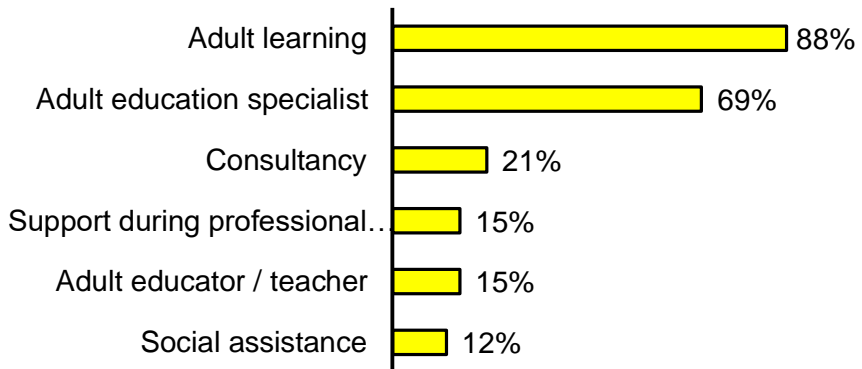


Fig. 3. Distribution of the respondents' answers to the question "What is the professional activity of the andragogue?"

Regarding the education of the andragogue, 49% of the respondents identified as necessary the second (master) level of higher pedagogical education, 10% the first (bachelor) level of higher pedagogical education, 14% - the first (bachelor) level of higher non-pedagogical education (Fig. 4).

Notable is the fact that a considerable part of the respondents (22%) indicated that the training of andragogues by means of non-formal education was sufficient; 5% of respondents consider education a secondary requirement for an adult education specialist. The main thing for them is to be able to respond to the requests of adults with all available teaching methods, forms and technologies.

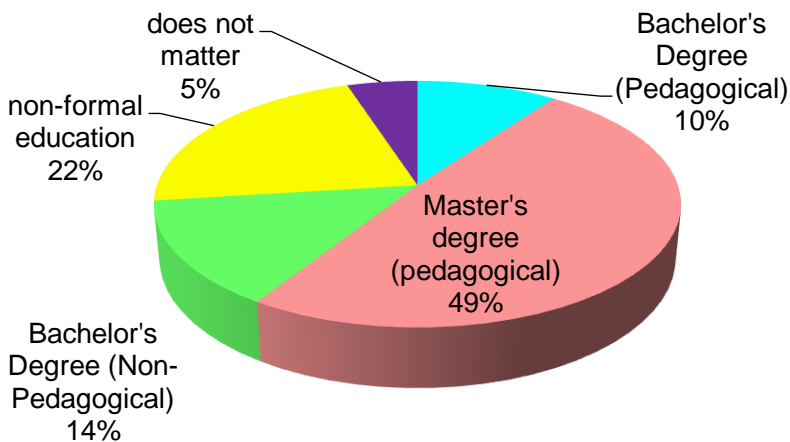


Fig. 4. Distribution of respondents' answers to the question "What do you think should be the requirements for the education of an adult education specialist?"

The next question on the questionnaire concerned the qualification requirements for specialists in adult education (a scale of 0 to 5 was used in the assessment, where 0 is not significant at all, 5 is very significant). According to the respondents, what is important for the adult education specialist is "knowledge of adult learning methods (methods, techniques, technologies, etc.)" - 66% of the answers and "theoretical knowledge of the basics of andragogy, acmeology, anthropology, history of adult education development" - 45% of the answers (Fig. 5).

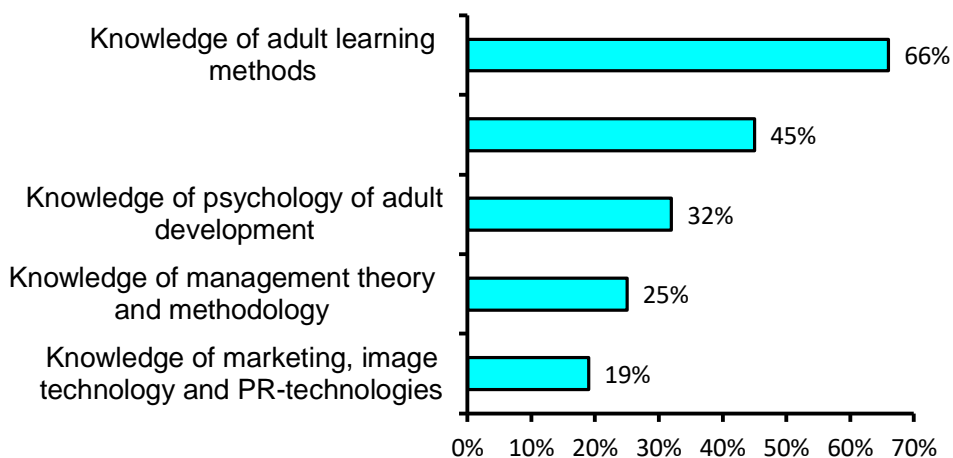


Fig. 5. Significance of the qualification requirements for adult education professionals

Knowledge, according to the respondents, have less importance:

- in psychology of adult development - 32%;
- in theory and methodology of management (pedagogical, project, strategic, self-management, human resources management, etc.) - 25%;
- in marketing, image and PR technologies - 19%.

Such distribution of answers, in our opinion, is explained by the well-established perception of andragogy as a branch of pedagogical science. Accordingly, the qualifications of a specialist in adult education are narrowed down to the pedagogical process of learning. The experience of foreign countries shows that the qualification requirements for the andragogue cover to a greater extent the knowledge of management theory and methodology (pedagogical, project, strategic, self-management, human resources management, etc.). This is explained, in our opinion, by the fact that the andragogue in this context is not so much teaching the adult as

accompanying, helping to build their own life strategy of learning and development. Therefore, knowledge of managing, designing and marketing adult living space is more important.

Regarding the personal qualities of the andragogue, the variation of responses has a wide range (Fig. 6).

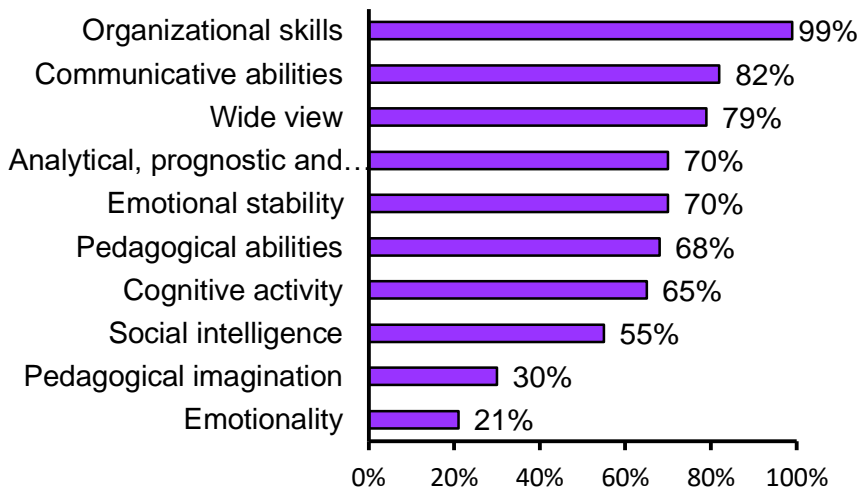


Fig. 6. Distribution of answers to the question “What personality traits should an adult education specialist have? (select all options) »

Respondents identified significant personal qualities of the andragogue: organizational and communicative abilities, broad outlook, emotional stability, availability of analytical, prognostic and project skills and cognitive activity. Also important are the social intelligence and pedagogical imagination of a specialist in adult education.

The aforementioned qualities and knowledge of an andragogue can manifest in such professional spheres of activity as: educational, consulting, tutorial, scientific-methodical and cultural-educational (fig. 7)

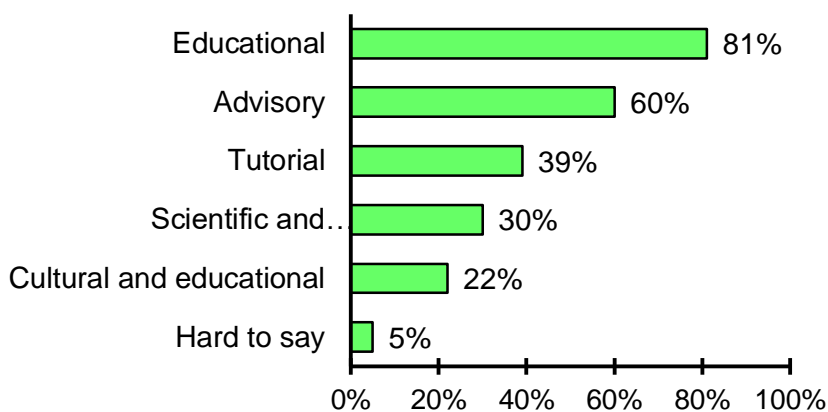


Fig. 7. Areas of activity of a specialist in the field of adult education

Unfortunately, the survey participants were unable to name a higher education institution that trains adult education professionals. It has been suggested that this may be the National Pedagogical University. Drahomanov or Chernivtsi Y. Fedkovich National University, Poltava University of Economics and Trade ("3rd Millennium University") and the Shepetivsk Combined Educational and Production Inter-school, which provides media literacy and mediation training for adults and training in driver and smoke courses.

However, specialists in the field of adult education in Ukraine are trained in higher education institutions at the second (master's) level with the qualification "Teacher of Universities and Higher Education Institutions". The author analyzes the educational and professional programs of the second (master's) level of higher education in the field of knowledge "01 Education" in the specialty "011 Science of education" and "015 Vocational education" with the specialization "Pedagogy of higher education", developed by institutions of higher education in 2016-2018 on their sites. The analysis was carried out in a random order on the following indicators: qualification, which is assigned; purpose and main focus of the program and specialization; suitability of graduates for further employment; selective subjects, in particular the discipline of independent choice of educational institution and the discipline of free choice of student; place and peculiarities of industrial practice.

5. Conclusions

The results of the study revealed that the respondents were aware of the specificity of the andragogue profession as a specialist in the field of adult education, possessing a complex of specialized andragogical knowledge, skills that provide educational activities with adults, taking into account the specificity of their educational needs and age characteristics.

The study found that education professionals are aware of the problems of adult education and support the need for training andragogues. Such specialist should have special andragogical knowledge, skills, methods, techniques and forms of work with adults for quality assurance of the educational process. Adult, being an active subject of the educational process, he determines the extent of his involvement in it and the degree of need for interaction with the teacher.

Significant personal qualities of the andragogue are defined: organizational and communicative abilities, wide horizons, emotional stability, availability of analytical, prognostic and project skills and cognitive activity. The aforementioned qualities and knowledge of an andragogue can manifest in such professional spheres of activity as: educational, consulting, tutorial, scientific-methodical and cultural-educational. In Ukraine, training of specialists in the field of adult education as teachers of higher education has been initiated, which allows for the public recognition of the profession of andragogue as a specialist in the field of adult education.

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