

# LLinE

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**LLinE is a trans-European journal dedicated to the advancement of adult education, lifelong learning, intercultural collaboration and best practice research.**

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## INTIME ONTIME

## MEASURING BENEFITS OF LIFELONG LEARNING – BELL-SURVEY

## RESEARCH

## Annuikka Tapani

## “BRICOLAGE”, OR JUST PUTTING THINGS TOGETHER?

“Bricolage” researchers use any methods that they perceive to produce a more rounded interpretation of social reality. This freedom of choice should be unconstrained by heavy research design done beforehand or hypotheses. Annuikka Tapani tests the use of bricolage in researching the collective identity in a quite recently merged educational organization. She also visits her research conclusions and makes recommendations on how to improve the “we-ness” in an educational organization.

## A WORLD OF LIFELONG LEARNING: THE MIDDLE EAST

This issue continues LLinE’s regional thematic series. The aim of the geographical themes is to expose ourselves to new practices and ways of thinking about lifelong learning and to link European adult education professionals with colleagues overseas.

This issue takes a practice-oriented approach to dealing with adult education in the Middle East. With a focus on NGO work and adult education advocacy we try to come to grips with some of the realities adult educators face in this multifaceted, and in parts, volatile region. Recent developments such as the Arab Spring loom in the background in many contributions.

## POLICY

## Katrin Denys

## ADULT EDUCATION IN THE MIDDLE EAST

Youth unemployment, lack of funding and very scarce scholarship for adult education on one hand. Rising interest in the benefits of lifelong learning, vibrant NGOs and policy reforms on the other. Katrin Denys paints a large canvas of what it means to be involved in adult education in the Middle East. In this orientating article Denys argues that non-formal youth and adult education could complement formal education and make a real difference in tackling the problems that partly lead to the Arab Spring.

## PROJECT PICKS

## Noora Sharrab

## HOPES FOR WOMEN IN EDUCATION: GREATER OPPORTUNITIES IN HIGHER EDUCATION

In the absence of state bodies and funding for the cause of adult education, many NGOs in the region rely on cooperation with Western institutions and countries in their education and advocacy work.

Hopes for Women in Education is a Canadian-Jordanian initiative educating refugee, displaced and non-status women in the Middle East. Noora Sharrab, co-founder of “Hopes”, outlines the mission and practical operations of her organization, specifying some general characteristics on NGO work in the Arab World.

## Mitri Raheb

## LIFELONG LEARNING IN PALESTINE: DIYAR AS AN EXAMPLE

Diyar is an organization of lifelong learning that has prevailed in the context of continuous occupation. For Mitri Raheb, Diyar’s founder, fostering culture and art is at the core of the organization’s activity. Far from being a “luxury”, culture is as crucial as any material needs for people living amidst crisis. Diyar’s programs span from “womb to tomb” – thinking and aim at empowerment in situations where passivity and inaction could easily reign.

## Ruba Samain

## ADULT EDUCATION AND MEDIA IN JORDAN

Youth unemployment is one of the most stringent issues in Jordan, as elsewhere in the Middle East. The problem is aggravated by poor dissemination of information about adult education opportunities: the concept of adult education has negative connotations in the country and is virtually a blind spot for local media. dvv international, the development arm of the German Adult Education Association, is carrying out a series of discussion events in the country with the aim of urging media to recognize and report about adult education.

## INTERVIEW

## A HOUSE OF DIALOGUE

Europe is in close contact with Islamic culture constantly through the tens of millions of muslims living on the continent. This co-existence is sometimes characterised by friction and islamophobia, sometimes dialogue. The Yavuz Sultan Selim Mosque

in the German city of Mannheim is an example of the latter.

The Yavuz Sultan Selim is known as “the Open Mosque”, a self-proclaimed place of “interreligious dialogue and tolerance”, operating tours of the building and lecturing on Islam for interested Mannheim residents. LLinE talked to Ulrich Schäfer, a Christian Minister active in the Open Mosque.

## DEBATE

## Sven Birkerts and Jamais Cascio

## PRINT VERSUS DIGITAL

You are holding the last print issue of LLinE journal. We are moving online in the knowledge that something will be gained, something lost.

Here, two renowned pundits, Sven Birkerts and Jamais Cascio debate the pros and cons of print and digital: which way will the scorecard point? Sven Birkerts is often profiled as a defender of the print format and its benefits. Futurist Jamais Cascio is described as a techno-progressive, writing on the potential of digital publishing.

## REVIEW

## Wolfgang Jütte

## UNIVERSITIES –THE ODD ONE OUT IN LIFELONG LEARNING?

Kerres, M., Hanft, A., Wilkesmann, U. & Wolff-Bendik, K. (Eds.). Studium 2020. Positionen und Perspektiven zum lebenslangen Lernen an Hochschulen. Münster/New York/München/Berlin 2012.

## SPEAKERS’ CORNER

## Fernando Dell’Agli

## THE SOCIAL AND ETHICAL RESPONSIBILITY OF ADULT TRAINERS AND EDUCATORS

# Co-creating the future of lifelong learning

We are living in a world that is more closely interconnected than it has ever been before. While our understanding of different countries and cultures has increased, we have also learned about the similarities of the kinds of challenges many nations in different parts of the world are facing in the midst of social, economic, technological and environmental developments. While appreciating locality, diversity and cultural uniqueness in responding to these changes, global sharing and collaborative knowledge creation is an important means to address our futures. An important part of this collaboration and knowledge sharing is to do with co-thinking and co-creating the futures of education and lifelong learning.

Rapid social and technological changes in our society have urged us to think about the role, objectives and realization of education and lifelong learning. The dominant discourse of education stemming from an instrumental view has begun to be questioned. Does a view of education that takes competitiveness and economical advantages as its major drivers address the complexities of our society and the needs of learners? Unfortunately, the mere focus on economy will often lead to inequality in educational opportunities the cost of which may be more expensive than imagined in both social and economic respects.

A different conception of education requires us to broaden our perspectives to learning and education. For example, we need to acknowledge the role of education and lifelong learning opportunities in building futures that offer resources and contexts for becoming human, for becoming an active citizen and an accountable and responsible member of different communities of practice. Considering the requirements

of our times, the role of education should be seen in supporting our holistic identity development that includes agency, resilience and character. It also entails social and media skills as well as creativity. In addition, we need to acknowledge the role of education in strengthening economic and environmental sustainability.

It is important that more discussion around the purpose of education and lifelong learning is generated. Above all, if we want to see education as having a role in mitigating inequalities and in contributing to the creation of fairer and democratic futures, the conception of the purpose of education and learning opportunities need to be broadened, if not even changed.

Education is the key motor for shaping our futures. Ideally, education can be motor for transformation of social values, responsiveness and imagination. Education and lifelong learning can act as pivotal resources for nations to build their futures that they want rather than training individuals for the futures they have been given. We can rewrite the relationship between education and social and technological change if we want to.



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# Measuring benefits of lifelong learning – BeLL-survey

Monika Kil, Francesca Operti and Jyri Manninen\*

## BENEFITS OF LEARNING

Over the last few years political as well as scientific debates have stressed the growing importance of adult education. There prevails a consensus that adult education plays a significant role in promoting personal, social and economic well-being. However, until recently much of the evidence on adult learning's potential to create personal, economic and social value has been scarce (Motschilnig, 2012).

Wider benefits can be defined as a mix of private, external, public and non-monetary benefits (OECD 2007). Important as they are, the wider benefits of adult learning are neither currently well recognized nor systematically measured, especially those related to informal and non-formal learning. This leads to the lack of recognition and related state support for the non-vocational adult education sector.

While well-founded studies have been made on the benefits of schooling, further and higher education, relatively little attention has been paid to the benefits of learning in adult life. Furthermore, the research conducted so far has focused mainly on the economic returns of education and thus the idea of social and personal returns from learning has been relatively under-researched.

## EMPIRICAL EVIDENCE

Recently a study from Finland (Manninen, 2010; 2012) found a connection between several further benefits of adult learning (such as physical and mental well-being, civic and social engagement) and participation in liberal adult education. The results show that liberal adult

education has at least some influence on the learning of certain skills and competencies (e.g. ICT skills, general knowledge), which promote direct benefits (e.g. new aspirations, new networks) or additional benefits (e.g. self-confidence, learning skills). These altogether foster the subjective perception of the further benefits.

More dated research supported these findings by suggesting that learning plays an important role in promoting specific benefits such as health (Hammond, 2004), parental abilities (Feinstein et al., 2008; Brasset-Grundy, 2004) or civic competencies (Feinstein et al., 2008; Preston, 2004).

According to Cathie Hammond (2004) learning may promote certain psycho-social qualities (such as self-esteem, self-efficacy, sense of identity and purpose), which on the other hand improve “well-being, mental health and the ability to cope effectively with change and adversity, including ill-health”. The psycho-social qualities may thus function as a mediator between learning and health.

Leon Feinstein and his co-workers (2008) had found that education can improve communication within families. Also, parental education influences the children's performance in education, although a longer educational period does not guarantee good parenting. However, self-esteem and confidence gained in parenting courses may be passed on to the children, making them beneficiaries of their parent's learning. Similar findings derive from a review by Angela Brasset-Grundy (2004) supporting evidence of the latter impact on children's learning. Parents par-

ticipating in educational offers are more able to provide their children with educational support, show improved capacity to communicate with them, and are more confident as parents.

Additional literature points out that education may have a positive influence on societal cohesion and active citizenship as they promote trust, tolerance, civic co-operation or likelihood of voting. Although further research is needed to validate these findings, first evidences suggest that learning environments laying stress on responsibility, open dialogue and mutual respect may promote civic and social engagement (CSE) (OECD, 2007) and other aspects of active citizenship (Feinstein et al., 2008; Preston, 2004).

## LAUNCH OF BELL-SURVEY AND HUNT OF BENEFITS OF LIFELONG LEARNING

Based on the results from Finland (Manninen, 2010; 2012) and the UK (Feinstein et al., 2008; Brasset-Grundy, 2004; Hammond, 2004), a consortium of ten European institutions launched a comparative European research project on the “Wider Benefits of Lifelong Learning “(BeLL) in November 2011. The project group consists of Universities<sup>1</sup>, private and public research institutes<sup>2</sup> as well as practice institutions<sup>3</sup>. To lead on the dissemination of the project results the European Association for the Education of Adults (EAEA, Belgium) has been enlisted as tenth partner. Serbia<sup>4</sup> will participate in all phases of the research as a silent partner.

The Project BeLL is funded by the European Commission as a part of

the EU funding line “Studies and Comparative Research (KA 1)” and to date it is the first project to collect comparative quantitative and qualitative data on measurable benefits of adult non-vocational learning. Additionally, survey feedback sessions in the respective adult education institutions will add to the data. To adequately represent the variety in European adult education landscape, data from 10 000 participants will be analysed. The research will primarily focus on social and individual benefits (like well-being) of learning, rather than economic or vocational benefits.

Another aim of the study is to validate the benefit-construct within European context and to obtain empirical results about the nature of benefits of non-vocational learning.

Furthermore, the BeLL-research is in line with the Council Resolution on a renewed European agenda for adult learning (2011/C 372/01). In particular, when it invites member states to improve their knowledge base on adult learning and monitoring the adult learning sector by:

- stepping up efforts to collect sufficient baseline data on (...) wider benefits of learning for adults and society, and extending the data coverage to the age-range beyond 64 in keeping with the prolongation of working life;
- intensifying research and in-depth analysis of issues relating to adult learning, extending the range of research to include new fields and encouraging more inter-disciplinary and prospective analysis;
- strengthening the monitoring and impact assessment of the development and performance of the adult-learning sector at European, national, regional and local level, making better use of existing instruments where possible;

Concluding, the Project BeLL will give valuable insights in the substantial understanding of the complex relationship between participation in educational activities and the concrete benefits this brings for the par-

ticipants and societies they live in. The eagerly expected results may help to comprehensively provide knowledge in an area that has received little attention in adult education research so far.

#### ENDNOTES

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- 4 *Adult Education Society (IIZ-DVV)*

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# “Bricolage”, or just putting things together?

“Bricolage” is a research methodology, known from, for example, Claude Levi-Strauss, characterised by an attitude of freedom towards research methods. The bricoleur uses any methods that he or she perceives to produce a more rounded interpretation of social reality. This freedom of choice should be unconstrained by heavy research design done beforehand or hypotheses. This article demonstrates the use of bricolage in researching the collective identity in a quite recently merged educational organization. The answers written by the staff are transformed via mixed methods: argument and rhetoric analyses to narratives. The primary goal of the author is to test the bricolage method in studying this merger. She also visits her research conclusions and makes recommendations on how to improve the “wellness” in an educational organization.

Annukka Tapani

## INTRODUCTION

In this article I describe the process of studying collective identity in a merged institution. The research question here is how functional it is to be a bricoleur while studying one's own community. The French term *bricoleur* has no direct equivalent in English. The closest equivalent is handyman or jack-of-all-trades. The bricoleur is a person who creates out of what is available, what is contained in his or her environment, to solve a problem or answer a question. The bricoleur is constrained to utilizing the tools that are at hand, though those tools are shaped and adapted to fit the situation that is being addressed (Levi-Strauss, 1966).

In this article bricolage is used as a research method: I am trying to make some new views out of the results but it can also be used as a method of influencing. Bricolage implies a process of creating something new out of the resources available. Institutions are molded through a process of bricolage whereby an individual in an institution uses the ideas and philosophies already at work in that institution to transform it (Aagard 2009, 82.). Institutions may constrain the extent to which the individual can bring about change; however, the bricoleur who possesses knowledge and resources can be effective in bringing about this change (Clever, 2002).

Bricolage as a concept is used e.g. in describing how nurses survive in today's resource-scarce world (Aagard, 2009), in seeing a teacher as a bricoleur (Reilly, 2009), bricoleur-programmers in computer sciences (Turkle, 1991) or studying experiences as sources of legitimate knowledge in qualitative research

(Telles, 2000). These cases hint that the bricolage could be utilized many ways: the researchers may find interest in it as a new way of methodology, teachers could develop it as a teaching method and the policy makers should be interested in the theme of merging and how the problems of it are revealed through this process. Also for managers, educators, teachers and all the members of the staff the message and the meaning of collectivity should play a role: we should all take into account what is our own role in forming the collective identity of an organization, in forming the communality in our working society.

The basic question concerning collective identity is: who are we and who are the others. We often face this question when entering a new situation and considering what our place there is. On the organizational level we find a lot of examples of merging. It is not easy for an employee to know with whom she is going to work tomorrow, with whom she is supposed to feel "we-ness." Being a member of a group and finding a place for oneself are elements that form one's feeling of security. One can find the group of her own for example in the feeling of nationalism: the people on the same side share the same nationalistic stories and reproduce them. On the grounds of the stories some nationalistic, and also organizational, acts are justified, while some others are not. In this way a common assent for some things and resistance for some others develops (Vaara, 2005).

The forming of the collective identity has several kinds of meanings: on one hand the feeling of togetherness has an effect on the smoothness of

work and, on the other hand, it is a question of image. The social structure can be changed only through active and deep commitment. Sometimes there is a need to think whether the change must be executed in the whole organization at the same time or could it be better to start from one point and diffuse the change after the gained experience to the other parts. The critical mass, the staff, should take part in the process: the leaders are the main players but they are not playing alone. It is easier to carry out a change if the staff knows what is going on (Säntti 2001, 250).

Identity as a concept is an interesting one because the question of an individual being in the world asking who I am and what is the meaning of me being here is a product formed by the Western cultures through the times (see Heikkinen & Huttunen, 2002, 164–165). Ahlman (1967, 159) noted that one cannot exist without the other: we need both the individuals and the meaningful community. Collectiveness is not possible if the personal identities do not first manifest to each other and become aware of each others.

In order to find the collective identity it is essential that the actors have something in common. Shared symbolic codes are important in the formation of the collective identity. The symbolic codes include e.g. socially shared manners, which reflect the feeling of togetherness and the features of the collective. Every individual reflects the entity of the common social process on her personal individual way. In order to find the collective identity, it is essential that the actors have something in common. Thinking and communication are pos-

sible only through social processes. (Kaunismaa, 1997, 220; Kuusela, 2001, 67–68; Mead, 1962, 201–202.)

The merging and birth of new collectives does not concern only the business sector but also the public sector: there is a need for effectiveness and that forces educational organizations to merge. Small units are united and by this way larger entities are built. In Finland this has been a tendency in the sector of polytechnics and also in other educational institutes. The polytechnics are rather new actors in the educational area. That is why their profile is not completely clear yet: they have only about a 10-year history (Liljander, 2002b, 23, 27). One of the challenges in forming collective identity inside the polytechnics is that the working community consists of multicultural professional actors. The culture of teaching social and health care differs quite a lot of from teaching technology. And still people should have the feeling of belonging to the same entity (Kangasniemi, 2002, 157, 159–160.).

### POLYTECHNIC AS OBJECT OF STUDY

The context for this study is one Finnish polytechnic. It is an institution of professional higher education operating in one special region in Finland. It has ten educational units and two separate research and development units. The polytechnic operates under the administration of the main city of this region. The total number of students is about 6000 and the total number of staff members is 530, of which there are 310 full-time workers. The institution was established in 1997. All of its units have not been in the polytechnic for the same time.

The background for creating this polytechnic institution was the fact that colleges were found to be too separated from each other. The challenge for the polytechnics is how to find a collective identity, as the community of teachers is very pluralistic (Liljander, 2002a; Lil-

jander, 2002b.). The applied-science and practice-oriented polytechnics were meant to be an answer to the ongoing changes in the Finnish working life. By this modernization the quality of the education was to improve and attention was to be paid to the changes in the Finnish society. The polytechnics were to serve the professional growth of the students and also to support working life and its development. Another purpose was to serve local regions and this was one of the things that separated polytechnics from the universities. This also made the universities notice their own regional effects and possibilities. Nowadays, according to the law, the polytechnics and universities are the two parts of the Finnish higher education system (Rask, 2002; finlex1.edita.fi).

While conducting this study I worked as a project manager in the career and recruitment services of the Polytechnic so I was to co-operate with the whole organization. I heard a lot of talk about “we” and “they in the central unit” and the theme of “we” appeared increasingly interesting. Maybe it would be easier to co-operate with the new colleagues if we get to know each other’s thoughts and also the things that hinder us from co-operating more. My questions for the personnel were:

- What does the word “we” mean to members of this polytechnic?
- In what occasions do they use the word “we”?
- What are the things that prevent the collective identity from broadening?

To restate, the objective of this article is to study collective identity in a merged institution by using the bricolage methodology and to test the method’s usefulness. Before describing the research process I will take an overview on the concept of collective identity as a form of the identity. After that I will take a theoretical look on what the bri-

colage methodology means and also describe the methodological points in this research process.

### PROBLEMS AND POTENTIAL OF COLLECTIVE IDENTITY

Collective identity is simply defined as the identity of a collective. A collective is defined as a loose group and an example of that might be a work community: a collective identity can be understood as a we-identity of a two-person collective or as a collective identity of a nationality consisting of millions of members. All we-identities between these extremes are also called collectives. The collective has or it forms for itself a special way to act. This common way to act is based on the common history (van Knippenberg, van Knippenberg, Monden & de Lima, 2002; Helkama, Myllyniemi, Liebkind, 1998; Kaunismaa, 1997, 220–221.).

According to Mead (1962), identity is constructed in human minds and in everyday action. The construction differs depending on the situation and who you are dealing with. The formation of the collective identity requires that a person reflects her thoughts and experiences to the attitude of the Generalized Other, gets feedback and modifies her behaviour according to that. To be a whole Self requires relationships to other Selves (Kuusela, 2001, 69). At the same time each person modifies the attitude of the group because her behaviour gives a stimulus to others who then again change their behaviour according to that. The Generalized Other is made by the action of “I” and “Me” when we take the others’ attitudes into our behaviour, especially the attitudes of those who are the significant others. These significant others can be real persons or they can be mental reflections of other persons in one’s mind (Blumer, 1969, 65,68; Mead, 1962, 154).

It is always challenging when two or more organizations merge. A group of people, a collective, has formed its way

to act during their common history. While merging there is always a question of whose identity will remain. In many cases the collective identity is a part of the groups' social system. The collective identity is based partly on myths, partly on common history. The identity is always produced and it is based on the individual's ability to see something that concerns herself in symbolic and linguistic expressions (van Knippenberg, van Knippenberg, Monden & de Lima, 2002; Aarnio, 1999, 12; Kaunismaa, 1997, 222–223, 228–229).

Sometimes it is up to the person to decide whether the group identity is needed. There are some special cases in which a person must consider if she can cope with the situation by herself or with the group. A person considers her abilities to cope with the situation and compares the chances to the abilities of the group. This kind of a consideration is called self-efficacy (Bandura, 1997). Sometimes there is also a need for joining the group in order to achieve changes in the society. This kind of an identity is called a project identity (Castells, 2000).

The identity forming process can originally be driven from individualistic needs but sometimes there is a need for finding a common identity. There are some researchers, such as Eskola (1984), who assume that the community where a person lives, as well as the person's position and function in it, play a big role in forming the identity; the rest is a result of coincidences and various kinds of occurrences.

To be a member of a group is said to be an origin for the identity but it can also be a ground for separation: sometimes a group wants to separate itself from other groups and sometimes it may even dehumanize the members of the outgroup (Helkama, Myllyniemi & Liebkind, 1998, 291). One of the essential tools for separation is language: the language is a forceful tool for creat-

ing the identity but also for separating the outgroup. Not all groups have the same power and status and the social identity is not always forming self-respect positively. The members of a group do not have the same power even in the forming of the identity of the group (Ahlman, 1967; Kaunismaa, 1997; Helkama, Myllyniemi & Liebkind, 1998, 311–312.). According to Ahlman (1967, 170), the degree of knowing the central values of collectiveness varies: some people are considered more, some less, members of the group and these can also vary during time. Also Kaunismaa (1997) says that there are some people who create the identity, some assume it and some sustain what has been created. However, the question from Rummens (2003) still remains: which identities are predominant in which situations, why, and who is in charge of that?

### DESCRIBING THE BRICOLAGE

A handyman or handywoman who makes use of tools to complete a task is called a bricoleur, a kind of a do-it-yourself professional (see Kincheloe, 2001, 680; Levi-Strauss, 1966, 17). Levi-Strauss (1966) says that people doing research in the bricoleur way pick up the pieces of what is left and paste them together the best they can. Denzin and Lincoln (1995) describe the bricoleur as a person who uses any and all methods of inquiry to form better interpretations of ongoing social life. There is a voice inside the bricoleur that says: "who said research has to be done in this way?" (Kincheloe, 2008). There are many kinds of bricoleurs, for example interpretive, narrative, theoretical and methodological. The interpretive bricoleur for example produces a pieced-together set of representations that is fitted to the specifics of a complex situation (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005, 4.).

To call oneself a bricoleur raises questions of other mixed methods. It is

true that they have a lot in common but doing research in a "traditional" way a researcher has to be true to his/her philosophy that lies behind the methodological choices. In studies using bricolage methodology one has to step into an unknown area: research using only the methods one knows best is replaced by more creative choices. On the one hand this gives the researcher a lot of opportunities but on the other hand it leaves one alone with one's choices: it is not possible to feel totally safe by using this kind of creative methodology. To be a bricoleur feels like being a part of a researcher team, researcher triangulation, but in this case one researcher plays all the roles by him/herself. You look at the same data using different "sets of eyes" and can not be true to only one kind of a view. "Traditional" research studies are planned very well beforehand but in bricolage researchers have to be open to new ways to interpret the data along the process. In using the bricolage methodology the researcher must be comfortable with complexity and with multiple choices.

For example, as I shall illustrate below, in my study of collective identity at a Polytechnic university, I used a mix of rhetoric and argument analyses, and finally narrative, informed by a phenomenological method. I also analysed my own research questions using the same methodologies. This mix of methods illuminated the data from different angles.

Maybe this bricolage method could be the answer to the critique towards the qualitative research: some researchers claim that qualitative researchers choose the data that is beneficial to their hypotheses. The bricolage methodology opens the researcher's eyes to many possible kinds of analysis of the data and this may help qualitative researchers to approach "the truth", whatever the truth then is. The bricoleur must be interested in all of the data

because it can give him /her new opportunities to understand the phenomena studied.

The above used words seemed very promising about the bricolage methodology. But, there are also moments such as Kincheloe (2001, 280) described: “bricolage.. that is when you really don't know anything about research but have a lot to say about it.”

The bricolage methodology is sometimes also compared to mixed methodology. The real difference between them may be hard to find, for example both encourage interdisciplinarity. It can also seem that the bricoleur only uses different methods and makes the cocktail he / she likes most. Bricolage can hence appear easy but to succeed in it one has to be aware of one's choices. This can be compared for example working with groups in the classroom. If you can make a good *esprit de corps*, for example the teaching seems easy. The teacher only gives some hints and the group learns together and even seems to have fun. But nobody notices how much work is done to make it seem easy. It is the same with bricolage: one has to be aware of the methods one can combine and also to have one's goal in mind. What is the analysis going to prove or show? In addition to knowing the possible methods and aimed goals, you have to be open to possible ways to do the research and be very open-minded what comes up from the analysis. The bricoleur has to have not only a lot to say about the research but also has to have the capability and courage to do it.

Nevertheless, the bricoleur is aware of deep social structures and the complex ways they play out in everyday life. In this context the bricoleur becomes a sailor on troubled waters, navigating a course that traces the journey between the scientific and the moral, and the nature of social, cultural, psychological and educational insight. (Kincheloe, 2008.) Advances in qualita-

tive methods and models of inquiry appear to be developing somewhat more swiftly than in the past, with inventions, improvisations and other forms of bricolage becoming more sophisticated and more highly adaptable and adapted (Lincoln & Denzin, 2005, 1116).

The bricoleur researcher can be seen as a maker of patchwork, a weaver of stories, as one that stimulates an inclusive and dynamic dialogue between the researcher and her audience (Yardley, 2008; Lincoln & Denzin, 2003, 5). The bricoleur's way of working can be described by adding new methodological tools, new forms of representation and interpretation, in response to the unpredictable and unforeseeable needs of an ever changing research environment. This extended methodological framework provides the researcher with the opportunity to explore a more open and expansive terrain, to interpret and reinterpret data across the different textual and visual forms. Research work undertaken in this way inevitably tests the capacity of the methodology itself to move successfully beyond the boundaries of more formally documented and disseminated research practices. (Weinstein & Weinstein, 1991, 161.) Bricoleurs act upon the concept that theory is not an explanation of nature—it is more an explanation of our relation to nature (Kincheloe, 2008).

Bricoleurs appreciate the complexity of the research process and view a research method to be far more than a procedure. In this kind of an analysis bricoleurs understand a research method as also a technology of justification, meaning a way of defending what we assert we know and the process by which we know it. One application of bricolage methodology is ethnic studies. In this research area the use of multiple methodological and theoretical tools is seen useful. The bricolage way of seeing things has worked well in the

“Qualitative researchers must be good writers to do justice to the stories of the participants.”

effort to understand structures and inscriptions of power and the ways they promote social and cultural inequality. Thus, the education of ethnic researchers demands that everyone takes a step back from the process of learning research methods. Such a step back allows us a conceptual distance that produces a critical consciousness (Kincheloe, 2008). Such a consciousness refuses the passive acceptance of externally imposed research methods that tacitly certify modes justifying universal knowledge that is decontextualized and reductionistic (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000; Foster, 1997). As described before, the bricoleur way of seeing things includes many different views, many different “spectacles”, and this gives a good predisposition to see ethnical questions in a new perspective.

#### RESEARCHING “WE-NESS” IN THE POLYTECHNIC CONTEXT

According to my experience to be a bricoleur requires some basic work and basic understanding of the studied phenomenon: you have to have some pieces on hand in order to begin the construction as a handy-woman. That is why I started by using the phenomenological framework as a philosophical point of view: phenomenology enables applicability to everyday experiences. Another essential part of phenomenology is the interest in awareness. Gerner (2001) and Priest (2002) suggest that the meaning of phenomenology is to produce such a description of the everyday experience that we can understand the essential structure of the phenomenon. The way to understand the real world goes via individual experi-

ence (Gorner, 2001, 546; Priest, 2002). It is possible to use reflection because of the strong stress on awareness: nobody can talk about an experience if she is not aware of it (Järvinen & Järvinen, 2000, 206; Gorner, 2001, 546; Priest, 2002; Varto, 1996, 86.).

When collecting the data, I emailed a survey to 60 people. They were allowed to return it by email or by posting it. I got 39 answers back, all of them via email. I used email because I wanted to test new ways of communication. The last decade has offered us new forms of communication, such as email, chat rooms and mailing lists. The capacities and uses of Internet communication shape the user's and also the researcher's perceptions and interactions. The Internet and associated communication alter interactions. In technologically mediated environments the self, other and social structures are constructed through interaction (Markham, 2005, 794). As Castells (1996) says, with the help of the Internet and new technology we are now living in a new kind of network society. There we can adopt many kinds of values and contacts as parts of our identities. Online communication may, according to several studies, complete the face-to-face communication and in some cases even compensate it (Field, 2003, 104). Turkle (1997) notes that the Internet offers possibilities to create an identity of one's own choice: the Internet acts as a significant social laboratory. New kinds of forms of social interaction, "post-social" forms of communication, such as mobile phones, email and the Internet, lead to new kinds of identities and virtual communities (Chambers, 2006, 35, 151).

Data analysis consisted of five steps: this phase was what I call bricolage and illustrates the approach: I studied the data in several ways. In the first step I used argument analysis. The basis of rhetoric is the argumentation. In argument analysis I use the normal way

of interpreting the text; that means I should be favourable to the text. I shall believe that the text is reasonable and I shall understand its structures although I may not understand it at once. In argument analysis this means that I recognize the argumentative structure of the text: I notice how the statements are connected with each other and this entity is reasonable in its wider frame (Kakkuri-Knuutila & Halonen, 2002, 60; Kakkuri-Knuutila, 2002, 233). The parts of the argument are statement, reason and the underlying assumption. The statement is what we want someone to believe. The reason is the point why the statement should be believed. The argument has two meanings: on one hand it means reasons and, on the other hand, the wholeness consisting of the statement, reasons and underlying assumptions (Kakkuri-Knuutila & Halonen, 2002, 63).

The data was studied by searching for the arguments, what lies behind them and what the bases for the arguments are. I wanted to find out the core of the answers and used the phenomenological method: I tried to reach the lived life (e.g. Järvinen & Järvinen, 2000, 206; Kakkuri-Knuutila, 2002, 240). Here is an example of argument analysis in the answers to the question: What does the word "we" mean to members of this polytechnic.

*Reason:* "We" means the whole Polytechnic when people talk to outside co-operation partners.

*Reason:* "We" is a unit when people talk in the own unit or when it is necessary to separate the units from each other.

*Reason:* The word "we" can be used of a team, a unit, a branch, the whole Polytechnic.

*Underlying assumption:* It is difficult to use the word "we" inside the organisation.

*Argument:* "We" can have different meanings depending on the situation. It is clear how to use it outside of the or-

ganisation but difficult to use it inside.

The second step was rhetoric analysis: the psychological and linguistic approaches were taken along (see Priest, 2002; Varto, 1996, 86–89). In the new rhetoric all public performances can be studied: the theory of argumentation called the new rhetoric covers all performances that are aimed to persuade or affect regardless of the audience or the discussed matter (Perelman, 1996, 11–12). The arguments were completed as narrative stories (e.g. Heikkinen & Jyrkämä, 1999, 43; Jyrkämä, 1999, 146–147). The argument analysis was completed with a psychological point of view and the same kinds of answers were merged to narratives. Via this phase I wanted to find out to whom the respondents were directing their answers to and how they tried to add cogency to what they were suggesting. These days, narrative inquiry in the social sciences is flourishing. Qualitative researchers now routinely refer to any prosaic data as a narrative: it is used in sociology and anthropology as far as life history is concerned, feminists poured new life into the study of personal narratives and sociologists treated narrative as a form of discourse worthy of study in itself. A central question for all narrative researchers is which voice or voices they should use as they interpret the voices of those they study (Chase, 2003, 651–652).

Narratives are also used in describing the research material, the quality of the data: according to Polkinghorne (1995, 6–7), the data can be produced in numerical, short answer and narrative ways. Bruner (1986) says that the form of understanding based on narrative is called a narrative form of information and the traditional, scientific, way of writing as a pragmatic form of knowledge. Richardson (1994) suggests that narrative writing is in itself a type of inquiry. Every qualitative researcher must be a good writer in order to do justice to the complexity of the stories

of the participants in any study (Jane-sick, 2003, 61).

Here is an example of a story made on the basis of the answers to the question: What does the word “we” mean to the members of this polytechnic.

*We is something like “at that time we”. The whole Polytechnic is “we” when I talk to outside partners. When I say “we” in the own unit I mean the own unit.*

*The word “we” can be used, if needed, about the team, the unit, the branch, the whole Polytechnic. It is the situation that defines the meaning of “we”.*

In the following phase I wrote down my thoughts on the stories: how convincing the stories were; to whom they were written; what kinds of means were used in trying to be convincing; how successful these means were in reaching the intended audience; what was the writer’s own position; and what else did the stories make the reader think.

After that I asked eight other people to check the analysis by using the terms of rhetoric analysis. The eight persons were familiar with the organisation that was studied but not all of them were members of it: nevertheless they had some connections and co-operation with the organisation and so the life-world was at least somehow familiar to them, too. While reading the narratives I asked them to think

- how plausible the narratives are
- to whom they are directed
- in which ways the writer wants to influence the audience
- how successful the means are as far this audience is concerned
- what is the writer’s own position
- what other things do the narratives make you think of

Finally, I coded the data at the same time using the NVivo qualitative analysis program. In the NVivo coding phase the logos, ethos and pathos were searched from the data. In the logos

level I coded the substance of the argument and its core. In the ethos level I coded the ways in which the person expresses her character or credibility, his understanding of the aimed audience and the ways she uses to justify his arguments. In the pathos level I coded the ways in which the person expresses feelings and to whom she directs her text to.

As the last phase I analysed my own email letter by using the rhetoric analysis to my text. My text was very chatty and by reading it one can notice that I think that a community, a work community, where we all have a feeling of belonging together is a state worth struggling for. There were some critical words in my letter that revealed my opinion. Here are some examples of the analysis of the letter:

*Logos level:* I agree with the argument because of my role as an officer in the central unit.

On the *ethos* level I try to show my own nature by using very positive words like: “I am *very* thankful”, “the *most* important”, “with *sunny* greetings”. I imagine that this kind of language fits my personality. I also suppose that I am well-known all over the Polytechnic; that is my imagination of the audience.

On the *pathos* level I try to create a vision of why this is an important theme for me to study: I am just a *beginner* in the research process. I try to add pathos by writing that the answers of the personnel are *very* important to me.

### SOME RESULTS: WHAT TO SAY ABOUT “WE-NESS”?

If I summarise the results of this study, there are some core meanings of the meaning of the word “we”, using the word “we” and thinking about the preventing matters. It can be said that the meaning of the word “we” is positive and it is worth struggling for. The meaning is created by common acts

and common experiences: it is easier to feel “we-ness” with those people you work daily with or with whom you have something in common.

The use of the word “we / us” depends on the company and the situation. Inside the polytechnic the word “we” is used of the colleagues and of the own unit. Outside, while talking with strangers or with partners it is used of the whole polytechnic; sometimes the staff feels that they are “forced” to do so. The texts are made convincing by using metaphors and strong words. The texts are written for the leaders, for the communication and information personnel, for the personnel of the own unit and for the personnel of the whole polytechnic.

Things that are preventing from becoming “us” are felt to be far away from oneself, like distances between the units, and one cannot do anything to change them. Also the personnel and its attitudes are said to prevent of thee feeling of “we-ness.” And the leadership is said to be too weak. What they mean by leadership is not defined.

### REFLECTIONS: HOW DID THE BRICOLAGE WAY OF THE RESEARCH WORK?

The merged polytechnic community can be seen as a complex situation, a complex work community: for example, different working cultures must interact with each other and after having a long history of working alone this is not necessarily easy. This context offered a good game field for bricolage research: like Denzin and Lincoln (2000) said, this kind of a context wakes the consciousness to refuse the passive acceptance of externally imposed research methods that are decontextualized. That is why this kind of research can be described as an interpretive bricolage (see Denzin & Lincoln, 2005, 4). The researcher was like a weaver of the stories (Yardley, 2008) and tried to see the theory of identity

and its forms as an explanation of our relation to nature (Kincheloe 2008). The role of the bricoleur researcher was to make organisational stories to help the staff to understand that their feelings of collectiveness were shared and they were not alone with their thoughts. In the beginning of the research it seemed obvious that the new organisation, the new collectiveness, was given to the staff by the leaders of the organisation. This kind of organisation can be compared to existing nature, like Kincheloe puts it. The organisation just exists and you have to live with and in it. But by using the described kind of organisational study it was possible to explain the existing circumstance, the existing nature, to the staff and explain what is one's relation to the whole. The used methodology helped to create the stories and this methodological, argument and narrative based story-building also helped to keep the respondents anonymous.

It is said that appreciating research as a power-driven act, the critical bricoleur-researcher abandons the quest for some naïve concept of realism, focusing instead on clarification of her position in the web of reality (Kincheloe & MacLaren, 2005, 316).

Argument analysis and phenomenological reduction worked well together: they enabled me to see what the respondents were really writing about. There were some problems also in this phase: all the respondents knew me, at least by name, because my work was to co-operate with all the units. They might thus have answered me in a way they knew they should answer to an officer who works in the central unit. All in all, the use of reduction and argument analysis made it possible for me to outsource myself and try to read the answers as objectively as possible.

Combining the rhetoric analysis with argument analysis helped me to see the whole richness of the data. I thought I could categorize the argu-

ments and do some theme analysis on them but the addition of psychological and linguistic inspection to them made the story even more interesting. I was acting like Weinstein and Weinstein (1991) described: adding new methodological tools, new forms of representation and interpretation, in response to the unpredictable needs of an ever changing environment. I also had in mind that by completing the same kind of arguments by using the elements of the rhetoric analysis to narratives I could get some more views to my data.

As a member of the working community I was aware of deep social structures and the complex ways they play out in everyday life (see Kincheloe, 2008). It was very useful that the other persons also read the narratives. They noticed many things that I did not. Afterwards I thought that maybe I could have written the stories more freely. I could have taken one more step back because such a step allows us a conceptual distance, like Kincheloe (2008) puts it. This could have been done through the arrangement of the arguments one more time or through writing the stories more freely, maybe by using a more personal style of language. Now as a researcher I tried to stick with the original texts. That is why there were different styles mixed in one story. To write smoother stories I could have written them in my own style but keeping the arguments in. The best parts of "being a sailor on troubled waters" were the argument and rhetoric analyses and I think the most innovative element in this research process was to combine the 39 answers to narratives: picking up the pieces of what is left and paste them together as the best you can (Levi-Strauss 1966).

From an organisational point of view, I would recommend the kinds of surveys where the staff members can freely express their feelings. But if the answers are read by their taskmasters

they may not answer in an honest way. My role was only a project worker, I was nobody's boss or manager so I think this had to do with the way of writing. On an organizational level we should pay more attention to these kinds of emotional things: to whom we really are willing to reveal our feelings, and for what sake. The other point we should consider when thinking of these kinds of merged institutions is that every member of the working community has a role in forming the collective identity. It is not just a job of "somebody, it is a job of everybody. How to make this obvious to everyone? The seminar days once a year are not enough. And back to basics, what is the "organisation", is it not just you and me and the others who work there? Or does it just exist for the managers and leaders? It could be important someday to discuss the symbolic codes, values and myths that are playing a role in identifying with the organisation. I think the staff would be more eager to discuss these things than just watching power point shows on statistics.

Finally, to reflect whether this was bricolage or only "putting things together": It was a process of mixed methodologies but not only putting things together. It was a process of seeing things in a deeper way. Was the bricolage a functional method? I would say yes. It was eye-opening to see things in a different way. Future research projects might leave even more room for creativity. All the discussions and contacts during this process have been inspiring to me. Although there were some troubles in being a maker of patchwork I will go on in the bricoleur way also in the future. It is worth struggling for.

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# Adult education in the Middle East

The so called Arab Spring reminded the world of a key challenge the Arab world is facing: widespread unemployment and limited opportunities especially for youth and young adults – which is even more alarming in a region where almost two thirds of the population are less than 25 years old. The formal education system seems to be unable to cope with the large number of students and often fails to help young people to gain the knowledge, attitudes and skills they need to develop themselves and their communities.

Non-formal youth and adult education could complement formal education and provide development opportunities. In the Arab Middle East, adult education is a well-known term but usually refers to literacy only. Other aspects of adult education, such as non-formal vocational training, civic education, environment education – to name just a few – are not considered as a key component of adult education and are not being funded and established systematically. However, at a second glance, a large variety of institutions and promising approaches already exist.

Katrin Denys

## ADULT EDUCATION: A RESPONSE TO THE ARAB SPRING?

The so called Arab Spring reminded the world of a key challenge the Arab world is facing: widespread unemployment and limited opportunities especially for youth and young adults. All over the region, from Iraq and Syria in the East to Morocco, Western Sahara and Mauritania in the West and even in the oil-rich Arabian Peninsula, unemployment is growing. The financial crisis added to the economic pressure. On average, unemployment rates mount up to 14 percent (and are thus more than twice as high as the world average of six percent) especially among women and youth (AHDR, 2009, p 10). With over two thirds of the population being under 25 years old, (AHDR, 2009, p.3) sooner or later an outcry was to be expected. This outcry, although coming from Tunisia, resonated in the Middle East: protests in Jordan, the Palestinian territories and Lebanon shook the political elite, but did not result in any major changes so far, whereas in Syria a war between regime and opposition forces broke out and its outcome is still unclear.

With all their differences, Jordan, Syria, Lebanon and the Palestinian territories display many common characteristics and are closely connected to each other by the Palestinian refugee issues and close family ties. They share a common history and culture, similar Arabic dialects and similar education systems. Often these countries are summarised under the term “Middle East”, a purely referential Eurocentric term but widely used in the Arab world today. Well aware that Israel is part of the Middle East, this article focuses on adult education in the Arab Middle East and leaves Israel aside. One reason being, that much has been written about adult education in Israel already,

another reason being, that with its history and population Israel differs in many aspects from the other Middle Eastern countries.

Over time the Middle East has seen Pharaonic Egyptian as well as Roman and Byzantine rulers and has been a part of the Arab Mamluk Empire. Many of its cities and holy places were later conquered by the crusaders. In the so called golden age of the Umayyad Caliphate, people looked at Damascus as the capital of a leading civilisation in the world stretching from Spanish Andalusia to today's Pakistan. In the 15<sup>th</sup> century, the region became a part of the Ottoman Empire, before Great Britain and France drove out the Ottomans and divided the area between each other creating today's borders before the countries claimed their independence. In the 20<sup>th</sup> century the region has been shaken by the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and absorbed the shockwaves of wars in bordering Iran and Iraq.

Most people living in the Middle East are Arabs. Syria and Jordan are home to small Armenian and Circassian communities. The leading religion in the region is Islam, but there are large Christian minorities which form up to ten percent of the population in Lebanon, Jordan and the Palestinian territories. Small Druze and Alevite communities are living in Syria. This brief digression into the history and composition population shows that the societies in the region are very diverse and that they have been subject to different influences over the centuries.

Being used to media images of the Middle East as a zone of conflict and war, it might come as a surprise to some readers, that the education level in Jordan, Palestine, Syria and Lebanon is much higher than in most other Arab countries. Following official statistics, illiteracy rates are lowest in the Pales-

tinian territories (5 %) and highest in Syria (17 %) which is relatively low compared to other Arab countries, where illiteracy rates amount to almost 30 percent in Egypt and nearly 45 percent in Morocco (UNESCO, 2012). Enrolment rates of girls and boys in the region are very high, almost at a hundred percent. However, despite better education statistics, the Middle East is also shaken by unemployment and poverty: in Jordan, 13 percent of the population are living under the poverty line. The average unemployment rate is at 13 percent as well, and for the age group 15–24 over 50 percent (ETF, 2009, p. 3). The Human Development Report (UNDP, 2009, p. 40) estimates that without international aid, 45 percent of the population in the West Bank and 80 percent in the Gaza Strip would live in poverty. The unemployment rate in the West Bank is almost at 20 percent and in the Gaza Strip 35 percent. According to a survey from 2007, 60 percent of the under 25 year olds are unemployed (UNDP, 2009, p. 36.) According to the World Bank (2011), ten percent lived below the poverty line before the conflict in Syria and seven percent were without a job. Fifty percent of the women and 13 percent of the men between 15 and 24 years of age were unemployed. It might help to put these figures into perspective when comparing them with other parts of the world: in Greece and Spain, where youth unemployment rates are as high as in the Middle East (around 50 %) (Eurostat, 2011), they mark a major crisis and spark serious labour migration.

The reasons for widespread unemployment and poverty in the Middle East are manifold. Limited natural resources, little water and arable land, insufficient investment in labour intensive sectors, and in the case of the Palestin-

ian territories, limited opportunities for economic development due to the Israeli occupation are among the most cited explanations for high unemployment rates.

Governments in the Middle East are very well aware that the main resources of their countries are the people and they have started comprehensive reforms in the education sector. More and more stakeholders embrace the concept of lifelong learning, which enables every person to learn at any stage of their lives, no matter what income, educational background or previous work experience they have. There is a recent tendency of government officials recognising that the formal education system consisting of schools, vocational training institutions and universities needs to be complemented by a fourth element to make the claim of lifelong learning a reality and to enable people to keep up with societal and technological challenges and innovation: adult education.

Decentralised education opportunities for adults, which do not require year-long commitments and which are not limited to certain age groups, professions et cetera would help people to gain the knowledge, attitudes and skills they need to develop themselves and their communities. Throughout their whole life, people would have the opportunity to learn how to identify and access new opportunities for income generation, how to voice their needs and concerns and how to find orientation in a changing world, where traditional beliefs and habits are being challenged by new lifestyles. Adult educa-

”Adult education infrastructure is surprisingly large.

tion can help address the challenges which brought thousands of people to the streets and respond to their rightful call for better working and living conditions.

### SEARCHING FOR ADULT EDUCATION IN THE MIDDLE EAST

In the Middle East adult education (in Arabic *talim al-kbar*) is a well known and widely used term but usually refers to literacy education only. Other aspects of adult education, such as non-formal vocational training, civic education, business trainings, environment education – to name just a few – are usually not considered as part of adult education. The few studies, which have been explicitly conducted on adult education, are concerned with literacy only. Key sources in this context are the reports prepared by every country in the framework of the Conference on Adult Education (CONFINTEA) process focussing on literacy. Other than that, there are hardly any studies or statistics on adult education. Thus at first glance, one could think that no adult education outside literacy courses exists. However, digging deeper, one can see the outline of adult education in its wider sense emerging.

Official strategies for general education, vocational training, employment, poverty reduction et cetera reveal some information on adult education. Another set of useful sources are assessments, surveys and project reports from local and international institutions on topics related to adult education, which can be found under keywords such as vocational training, women and youth empowerment, education reform and so on. Thus, at a second glance, one will find successful approaches and important building blocks for adult education in its wider sense all over the region which repre-

sent the basis for creating viable and accessible structures for lifelong learning in the Middle East. The following overview and analysis are based on statistics, reports and strategies as well as observations and conversations with various stakeholders from the region.

### TARGET GROUPS

Adult education can be relevant to any person, regardless of one's educational background, income, age or gender. In the Middle East, adult education could help solve the burning issue of high youth unemployment. People who generate income and sustain their family are less dependent on others and can make their own decisions, participate in economic and social life and interact with others without feeling inferior. Thus a major target group for adult education at this point is young adults, who do not have the knowledge, skills and opportunities to find work or open their own business. This includes people with a university degree and people in vocational training, but also school drop-outs, who are hardly literate. A recent survey shows that over a third of the graduates from universities and vocational training centres feel they are not qualified for employment (Efe, 2012, 32). This corresponds with the employers' view that one third of the applicants do not have the necessary knowledge and skills for the job, often lacking understanding of current technologies but also soft skills (Efe, 2012, p. 37.). Governments have acknowledged that many curricula in schools, vocational training centres and even universities are not geared towards requirements on the labour market, and substantial reform efforts have been started.

## SCOPE AND QUALITY OF COURSES

Complementing the classical adult education, which is usually limited to literacy education, there are more and more courses providing knowledge and skills in vocational training: business start-up, marketing, life skills, civic education, environment education et cetera. However, the typical courses offered are limited to simple hairdressing, computer skills and sewing. Courses usually stretch over a period of one week to one month. On average, the courses have five to ten participants. According to staff from education institutions, most of them are women, who did not have the chance to finish their education due to early marriage and family obligation. Men tend to be more hesitant joining courses, partly because of a certain shame to admit learning needs and partly because they do not see any chances for improvement in their situation after having attended a course. None of the courses have a clear curriculum and certificate. The quality of courses varies and depends largely on the qualification of teachers of whom hardly any are trained in how to facilitate learning processes for adults. The trainings do not usually comprise any information on how to market the newly acquired skills and how to set up a small business, apply for funding et cetera, whereas many practitioners found that these skills and a more elaborate selection of participants which would allow identifying those who really want to generate income, are key to success of the trainings.

## PROVIDERS

The infrastructure for adult education in the Middle East is surprisingly large and provides an enormous potential. Literacy courses for adults are usually held in schools and organised by the Ministry of Education. There are over

60 so called community centres in Jordan, which – depending on their size and involvement – usually host literacy courses, a limited number of vocational trainings, kindergartens, youth clubs and women initiatives. Thirty of these community centres are institutions of the government, managed by the Ministry of Social Development. Each centre has on average three employees (civil servants): the director, a program manager and someone for cleaning and maintenance. The remaining 30 community centres are a part of an organisation founded and supported by the Royal Family, the Jordan Hashemite Funds for Human Development (JOHUD). These centres have a similar mandate but usually have more staff and more resources due to cooperation and fundraising with various international organisations. JOHUD is also one of the three implementing agencies of the poverty reduction program in seven out of 30 poverty pockets – areas where especially high poverty rates have been identified. Next to the community centres, there are many local non-governmental organizations (NGO) and charities, which organise neighbourhood support and childcare all over the country, and also provide courses for youth and adults, but are not connected to each other.

In Syria United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) has initiated the establishment of around 14 community learning centres in 2005 with the aim of developing disadvantaged areas. After a pilot phase, the Syrian government took over the management of the centres and has maintained them since. Syria also runs cultural centres in almost every larger town, where cultural and educational activities take place. The non-governmental scene is rather small. The Syrian spring, which witnessed a rise in

civil society actions and establishment of hundreds of new organisations upon Bashar al-Assad taking over presidency from his father in 2000, was followed by a move of the government to take control over the emerging non-governmental organizations (NGO). Since, the Syria Trust for Development headed by the First Lady, Asma al-Assad, incorporated the largest and most successful initiatives and manages very professionally with well trained staff countrywide programs for reducing poverty through training.

In Palestine and Lebanon, plenty of NGOs and local initiatives as well as Centres for Continuous Education attached to universities are offering training and education for adults, but they are rather scattered and diverse without a connection with each other. Some firms and private education agencies offer adult education, but usually this is limited to specific target groups and based on fees, which many unemployed cannot afford.

In general, education opportunities are extremely limited in rural areas. Since many people do not have the means to travel to larger towns, they are dependent on the local education institution, which usually struggles with little funding and resources.

Apart from very few successful examples of cooperation between providers and employers, exchange and joint initiatives are rare. Best practice has been developed by the Jordanian Career Education Foundation (JCEF), which implements trainings for large companies all over Jordan targeting disadvantaged youth and providing them with technical and soft skills and helping them find work in the company. International and regional cooperation and exchange is taking place mainly under the umbrella of UNESCO with its Conference on Adult Education (CONFINTEA), which is organised roughly every twelve years as well as regional and local events organ-

” *No policy,  
no body, no  
funds...*

ised in random intervals. Also Arab League Educational, Cultural and Scientific Organization (ALECSO), the European Training Foundation (ETF), the International Council for Adult Education (ICAE) and smaller networks provide forums for exchange, but have not led to any comprehensive and systematic cross-sectoral activities in adult education.

#### POLICIES

So far, none of the countries in the Middle East adopted a strategy for lifelong learning or adult education. What can be used as a programmatic basis for strengthening adult education is a regional strategy for literacy adopted by ALECSO, national strategies for general education (including literacy education), for vocational training (including non-formal vocational training and advocates for an open national qualification system) as well as strategies for employment identifying promising sectors for training and suggesting measures for enhancing employment. Governmental commitments within the global campaign Education for All and the Millennium Development Goals can be drawn on as an entry point for adult education, which can be seen as a means to reach the set targets.

In the Palestinian territories, an initiative is underway to develop a strategy for adult education in the context of lifelong learning. Since 2011 a committee with representatives from relevant ministries and education providers has been working on a draft supported by dvv international (Deutscher Volkshochschul-Verband e.V., German Adult Education Association). Building on the relevant components from other

strategies, the policy paper is meant to provide guidelines to decision makers in how to enhance adult education as a means to reduce poverty. It draws on a brief situation analysis and includes a governance framework, cornerstones for capacity building questions and key areas of intervention.

A key opportunity, but also a challenge in developing and implementing policies, is creating synergies with related sectors and thus show that adult education is not an end in itself, but rather an instrument which will help achieve more general goals such as reducing poverty and unemployment. At times of diminishing foreign funding, the success of the strategy will depend on its linkage to wider goals and ongoing initiatives in the field of poverty reduction and fighting unemployment. Any policy in the field of lifelong learning and/or adult education would need to identify goals, clarify which bodies are in charge of implementing the strategy and define indicators for measuring progress as well as a mechanism for collecting the necessary data. Subject priorities can be defined, but can also be left to the society and the providers to explore.

#### GOVERNANCE

The strategies available reflect quite well the dominant governance structure for adult education. Just like there is no systematic and integrated strategy for adult education, there is no body for governing adult education. Responsibilities for what can be summarised as adult education are split between the Ministries of Education (usually in charge of literacy classes), Labour (usually responsible for vocational training), Social Affairs (in charge for caring for children, elderly, disabled) and women. Working on policies for adult education means to bring together all

these ministries and bridging the responsibility gap, in which adult education with no clearly identified governing body might fall. Committed individuals in ministries or large NGOs are often ready and able to start and support adult education activities as long as they fall under the mandate of the institution. Even if interested and engaged, they sometimes find themselves fighting for the cause alone. Opportunities for networking with their colleagues from neighbouring countries are a welcome means to exchange ideas and strengthen each other.

Since there is no policy and no body for adult education, there are also no national funds. Funding for governmental institutions is usually provided by governments, whereas non-governmental organisations finance their activities mostly through donations and foreign money. Donors for actions, which can be summarised under non-formal adult education, range from large players like the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) or Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA), European and American NGOs as well as Christian organisations like the Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA) and Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA), which are especially strong in the West Bank – surprisingly not much funding for non-formal education is provided by Islamic organisations. These donors usually operate within their own funding cycles and programs and exchange little information – let alone coordinate – their efforts. Depending on the country and the status the organisation has, fundraising and cooperation with foreign organisations require permits from the government. None of the countries has government funds especially for adult education.

There are no institutions solely for studying adult education, training staff and building capacity. However, in some teacher training institutes or universities, there are courses supplementing general education for teachers and trainers interested in adult education. The Ministries of Education usually provide a short training to future literacy teachers.

### STRENGTHENING ADULT EDUCATION IN THE MIDDLE EAST

The gap between the demand for labour market oriented education and the limited supply of varying quality can be bridged by heaving the large potential for adult education in the Middle East. In all countries in the region the infrastructure and basic expertise for adult education exists and – more importantly – more and more decision makers and practitioners embrace the concept of adult education as a means for economic and social development. The process of linking education stronger to the labour market and social needs, which we can observe in the formal education sector, is slowly affecting non-formal education as well.

First of all, a diversification of courses is necessary. Based on simple but comprehensive assessments of local needs, resources and opportunities, new curricula and courses should be developed to help people to develop the knowledge, skills and attitudes they need to master the challenges they face. Traditional subjects such as sewing, hairdressing and computer classes could be complemented with other courses in promising sectors that would allow people to create different products and offer various services needed. Often, people already possess certain skills and just need training in how to market their products or services and how to run a business. Learning

achievements could be valued by certificates based on certain quality standards and could be recognised in National Qualification Frameworks, which are being developed.

Since a key precondition for good education are qualified teachers, the capacity of trainers needs to be enhanced. This can be achieved through introducing new courses and departments in existing institutions, such as the teacher training academies, universities and civil servant training institutes.

Management and governance for sustaining good practice and assuring quality in the long run needs to be built by the providers and within the governments. In specific subjects that are of concern for more than one country, regional initiatives might be helpful to facilitate exchange and mutual support. Vertical cooperation between various governance levels as well as horizontal cooperation between governmental, non-governmental organisations and the private sector need to be enhanced to ensure relevant, labour market oriented courses. International networks and processes such as the CONFINTEA process coordinated by UNESCO or the Torino process lead by the European Training Foundation (ETF) provide resources and opportunities for collecting data and exchanging good practice.

Policies defining the goals and framework for adult education will draw attention to it, attract funding and invite professionalization and give orientation for accreditation and quality assurance mechanisms.

In a society with a certain culture of shame especially among men to attend training activities, the best way of attracting them in the long run is promoting positive examples of people who managed to improve their living conditions upon having participated in trainings.

A decentralised and professional adult education system responsive to needs and close to people's homes would not only enhance economic development – it would also help people in the Middle East to tackle sensitive issues such as voicing concerns and suggesting solutions to common problems, to question and discuss roles and interaction of various groups in society reconciling traditional and new lifestyles and developing a vision for a thriving society.

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## KATRIN DENYS

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# Hopes for Women in Education: Greater opportunities in higher education

Hopes for Women in Education is a Canadian-Jordanian NGO working to improve, through education, the condition and role of refugee, displaced and non-status women in the Middle East. In her article Noora Sharrab, co-founder of “Hopes”, outlines the mission and practical operations of her NGO. She also reflects on the organization’s internal structure by recognizing the importance of volunteerism and specifying some details on operating in the Arab World.

Noora Sharrab

Education is a right, a human right; indistinctive to sex, age, race, or economic means. Education enables growth, illuminates the mind, provides opportunities, creates critical thinkers, engages communities and fosters individual's rights, in a multitude of dimensions. From early on, whether taught through rigor discipline in the home, or through a rigid pedagogy in an institutionalized system, education maintains a person's ability to advance and enhance their place in society. While education should not be limited to a boy, girl, woman or man; statistical data continues to affirm the place of women as less than men in continuing post-secondary education and obtaining employment opportunities. To specifically note, women in the Middle East continue to lag behind significantly towards the completion of post-secondary education.

As advocated in the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), in Article 10, *there is a need to take appropriate measures to eliminate the discrimination against women pursuing and attaining an education* [emphasis added]. Recognizing the continued frailties that stand as barriers against women, and noting that the security through the advancement of post-secondary education ensures women a greater opportunity to participate and contribute to their social, cultural, personal, religious, civil and political environments. In the efforts to create a commitment to the advancement of the role of women, it is essential that such rights are not only explicit in international doctrines, but also asserted through an engaging community based active effort in assisting women's right to attain post-secondary education.

The advancement of women's education flourishes within our community leaders, role models, activists, scholars, academics, political civil workers and successful unique individuals that enable within them a multitude of opportunities. This paper aims to outline the

operational framework of a Canadian-Jordanian-based non-profit, non-governmental organization entitled *Hopes for Women in Education*, which focuses its work in the Middle East, specifically Jordan, by helping to enhance women's educational opportunities in their local community. This article aims to outline the framework towards helping women become more self-sustainable, identifying the organization's mission and objective, reflecting on the organization's internal structure by recognizing the importance of volunteerism and specifies some details on operating in the Arab World. The purpose of this project, as such, is to elevate the condition and role of refugee, displaced and non-status women in the Middle East that have been vulnerably set back due to their gender and their socio-economic status. It is evident that refugee, displaced and non-status women from lower economic status are limited, sometimes eliminated, from continuing their post-secondary education. By enabling women to attain economic self-sufficiency, *Hopes for Women in Education* aims to work towards breaking down the socio-economic barriers forced on women in Middle Eastern societies. By assisting these women with means to govern their lives, they will undoubtedly influence the world around them.

#### DEVELOPING SELF-SUSTAINABILITY

Promoting self-sustainability through life-skills training, mentorship and guidance helps empower and promote economic independence amongst women. In empowering women with future opportunities, the organization speaks against a sole patriarchal advancement of society without the necessary contribution of women, thus permitting them to function as full-citizens within their society against the discriminate subordination of their status as women. According to Arvonne S. Fraser, in her essay outlining women's historical achievements and developments in attaining Human Rights:

*Demeaning an individual or group over time results in stereotyping and the denial of recognition of that group's accomplishments or contributions to society. ... With discrimination, the less powerful are deprived of their history [to really experience their identities within the spheres they live in], their self-confidence, and, eventually, their legal ability to function as full citizens or members of the larger group [of a society or nation].* (Fraser, 2006, p. 5)

The effort to define women's roles in community building will be to move women from being strictly within the private sphere of the society, and to engage them and weave them within national, regional and international levels. This is by no means a reflection that women do not have a primary and critical role within the private sphere of family-life in our communities, but that women should be endowed with opportunities, as well, to branch out and enrich our greater communities. Furthermore, it is important to note that the need to advance the academic career of these women, will not be to allow them to be educated to become relative to men in their society, but rather, that education is the driving force that promotes social progress through self-development, individual empowerment and intellectual, political, and social awareness as active citizens within our global society.

In recognizing that mid-adulthood participation in formal education furthers a woman's familial and financial place in her society, the continuation of education will empower these women with valuable skills and establish critical cognitive learning skills. In doing so, women will not be eliminated from job opportunities due to their lack of post-secondary education.

#### THE ORGANIZATION'S MISSION AND OBJECTIVES

In essence, the *Hopes for Women in Education's* (herein "Hopes") mission has focused:

*... to advance the level of education*

*of refugee, displaced and non-status women in the Middle East, by providing financial and non-financial support aimed at helping them achieve post-secondary education and improving their chances towards a more self-sufficient and independent future.*

Currently, Hopes operates in The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan (herein Jordan), where it began piloting its work in 2011. Registered in Toronto, Canada and Amman, Jordan, the organization aims to bring global perspectives together towards promoting gender equity within higher-education. To achieve the aforementioned, seven objectives have been outlined that would help define the organization's non-profit structure.

*I. To facilitate educational opportunities through scholarships and financial assistance to continue post-secondary education.*

By connecting with available Community Development Centers, Women Community Centers and/or Community-Based Organizations, Hopes liaisons to reach out to underprivileged and economically disadvantaged women with the hopes to continue their post-secondary education. Many women are forced to either drop out of University or College because they are unable to afford continuing school; delaying semesters until their family can save enough money to pay off the institution (often delaying for years); and/or they have to take turns with siblings to go to University because of the limited financial access. When students are distracted by financial burdens they can become incapable to dedicate their effort and focus on their academic requirements, resulting in rising deficiencies, further reducing their true abilities to perform effectively. Furthermore, many students may take personal loans from family members or friends, forcing them to worry about how they may want to pay off the fees upon completion. Many students articulated that they may have reached their final year

of academic study but were unable to receive their degrees or diplomas because their outstanding financial status. As such, Hopes aims to provide post-secondary scholarships to help alleviate the financial burdens faced by these women. Scholarships include assistance to help cover their Tuition Fees, Basic Transportation and Book costs. In Jordan the average yearly cost for University is approximately 2000 Jordanian Dinars, equivalent to \$2800 US Dollars.

*II. To promote awareness within the regional and international mediums about the role of women in local communities.*

Promoting awareness can be as simple as starting a conversation - allowing others, who would normally not be aware to familiarize themselves with the plight of others. This can be within the national level in Jordan, within the region (Middle East and North Africa) and globally. Through social networks and media, global partnerships and organizational cooperation's, Hopes aims to enrich the available information on women from local disadvantaged communities. Since refugee, displaced and non-status women are not included exclusively as part of the national statistics and indicators, establishing a particular focus on them helps bring to light the frailties in such communities.

*III. As guided by the principles outlined by the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), in Article 10, we aim to take appropriate measures to facilitate the advancement of education of women, such measures could include but are not limited to, providing direct funds towards the continuation of post-secondary education and providing mentorship opportunities to women.*

Ratified by 163 nations, CEDAW stands as a pillar for women to advocate for women's rights globally. Strik-

ingly, the United States is not among the ratifying countries; nevertheless, countries globally have incorporated women's rights as part of their Millennium Development Goals. More specifically, education-related treaties and international conventions have moved forward to emphasize the importance of education:

*... including the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Programme of Action of the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development. The Fourth World Conference on Women, held in Beijing in 1995, recognized that women's literacy is the key to empowering women's participation in decision making in society and to improving families' well-being. In addition, the United Nations has articulated the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), which include goals for improved education, gender equality, and women's empowerment. (Roudi-Fahimi & Moghadam, 2003, p. 3)*

Emphasized in international initiatives, treaties and conventions, it is essential that such goals frame the pillars of the organization, working to further the global achievements provided to women in the field of education.

*IV. To encourage women's meaningful participation in their local economic, social, and political systems, and to break barriers faced by women within socio-cultural variables imposed through relations of race, class, age, gender and economic class.*

Women's participation in the local community begins with enhancing their self-confidence in their right to play an active role in the local economic, social and political system. As articulated in the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), these rights stand in sync with women's basic "human welfare and survival" and are even described as their "basic, fundamental, core rights". In reference to the index built in relation to ICESCR, four points are outlined:

- 1) the Right to Work, measured by rates of economic activity disaggregated by sex;
- 2) the Right to an Adequate Standard of Living, as indicated by the ratio of anemia rates of women and the total daily caloric intake per country;
- 3) the Right to Health and Well-being, measured by sex-differentiated mortality rates, sex ratios, and child mortality rates; and
- 4) the Right to Education, evidenced by literacy rates and rates of primary school enrollment disaggregated by sex. (Apodaca, 2006, p. 488)

Social change as a result happens not on one level but within complex dimensions and social institutions. As articulated by Miriam E. David, where she examines the relationship between social and gender inequalities of women in related to work, family and education:

*A key feature of social change has been women's involvement in public life through expanding education and employment, including all levels of education. Despite the manifold social, sexual and economic changes, women's personal and public positions in relation to men, although mediated by social class and family backgrounds, remain unequal. Thus there has been a general expansion of educational opportunities but the relativities between social classes and within them in terms of gender remain.* (David, 2008, p. 262)

What Miriam notes is that social change is most influenced from expanding educational opportunities to women (and men). Such equal opportunities in seeking knowledge help bring forth a sense of equity beyond gender. While gender imbalance continues to exist, education and pedagogy have incorporated such social changes that directly influence and have complemented women's work in the public sphere, as well as, their economic place in relation to the family organization and their societies.



Rawan Rished

*Hopes applicants attended a workshop in summer 2012. The workshop included a discussion on Identity Issues as Refugees.*

#### *V. To decrease the isolation of women from conflict-ridden countries due to political hardship.*

Refugee, displaced and non-status women are often marginalized in their local community because of their identities. Since majority of the beneficiaries which Hopes serves are Palestine Refugees, it is thus essential to highlight their status in the Near-East as relevant to the regional politics and “right of return”.

*Maintaining the refugees as stateless persons in order to retain their Palestinian nationality and thus preserve their ‘right to return’ is the major principle that has guided the Arab League’s Palestine refugee policies. Apart from a few exceptions, all Near-East countries have adopted this principle, providing mere travel documents to the refugees. ... [With the exception], Jordan ‘created’ a new type of refugee: ‘the refugee-citizen,’ namely ‘temporary-citizen’ formally endowed with citizenship rights and duties pending the day when they would be given the right to choose to return to Palestine or to stay in Jordan as permanent citizens.* (AlHusseini & Bocco, 2009, p. 263)

Non-citizens have always been disadvantaged as alien to their country of

residence. Palestine refugees, within this aspect have felt “unwanted” in their places of residence, uneasy that the next political revolution, or uncertainty may displace them once again from their homes due to their indigenous roots and identity. Hopes for Women in Education takes no political stance, however, we believe that education is an inalienable right that cannot be limited or denied due to one's roots. Furthermore, by enabling individuals (not just women) with education, they can better secure employment opportunities, can easily migrate (if need be) and relocate by adapting to new environments and new cultures.

#### *VI. To enhance research and data available about women from conflict-ridden countries through publications, research initiatives, and promotion of academic centers in universities/ colleges locally and internationally.*

Increased data allows for a better understanding and contextualization of a community, group or society. The ability to better form ideas and information about a genre allows a better global understanding of the issue at hand. When limited data is available, it be-



Rawan Risbeq

*Workshops develop skills such as teambuilding, public speaking, career counseling, and personal interviews.*

comes more difficult to connect one community to the next. Hopes aims to contribute to the research on women, gender, Middle Eastern issues and particularly those on protracted and newly displaced people and refugees in the region. Engaging in the dialogue can provide the space for critical thought to help ease and form new possibilities and ideas for solutions and development.

*VII. To improve communities through the active participation of educated women who are empowered to use their learned skills to better other women in their communities.*

As iterated above, the aim of the scholarship program is more than just to provide women with financial assistance, rather, move forward to help alleviate their poverty through greater opportunities. As Catherin Hakim eloquently notes: “There are no sex differences in cognitive ability but enduring sex differences in competitiveness, life goals, the relative emphasis on agency versus connection.” (Hakim, 2006, p. 279) Women’s abilities to participate and become active within their commu-

nities should not be limited on their gender. Undoubtedly, there will be challenges to balance women’s family-lives with their careers. As noted by Hakim, lifestyle decisions in relation to women’s work and family life can be determined by the preference theory. “The social structural and economic environment still constrains women’s choices to some extent...” (Hakim, 2006, p. 286) It is important to consider women’s cultural and traditional expectations in their community. It is critical that the assistance to help women prosper within her community doesn’t move to harm her socio-cultural religious and even individual decisions. Furthermore, “[p]reference theory specifies the historical context in which core values become important predictors of behavior,” (Hakim, 2006, p. 286) whereby women’s ability to make decisions will depend on her parents expectations and guidance and even role-models within the community that have or aim to achieve prescribed career/ professional goals.

The aim thus far, isn’t so much to push women into becoming work-centered, but rather to enhance their edu-

cation to make better decisions that can lead to improvement, and improvement of their communities and future families. In modern societies, “work-centered women” continue to be a minority, despite the major achievements in gender equality. (Hakim, 2006, p. 289) Hakim explains, more common are “adaptive women”, those who work towards a balance in the work-home relationship.

#### INTERNAL ORGANIZATION: IMPORTANCE OF VOLUNTEERS

*Hopes* works within a grass-roots level. We aim to work with communities that can help us with conducting accurate needs assessments catered to them. This is why our volunteers represent a core foundation of our organizations efforts. We aim to empower youth and women from the greater society and local region to create a change in other disadvantaged women’s lives. Volunteers who join our network towards creating a change (on multiple levels) can be those that are encouraged not through monetary rewards but through social and personal ones. Volunteerism helps create a sense of belonging to one’s community or society.

*Nonprofit agencies across the country report that new volunteers are coming forward all the time, asking how they can become involved and make a difference. Millions of volunteers are investing their time, energies, and unique abilities to help solve the critical problems facing nonprofit agencies. These new volunteers come forward because they know they are providing a valuable service that might go undone if they do not step up.* (Riddle, 2002)

Many youth that have become involved with our organization began helping because they believed in our mission. Passion builds a person’s self-

” *The aim is not to push women to be work-centered.*

satisfaction towards productivity and change. Furthermore, the importance of community participation for the role of NGOs in civil society is essential: “The survival of an organization is associated with the extent to which it participates with the local society in making and implementing plans.” (Shawa, 2005, p. 218) As Gandhi said: “Be the change you want to see in this world.” In modern day today, youth are the driving force in developing and creating transformational changes through creative and innovative means, whether through technology, art or other means.

### OPERATING IN THE ARAB WORLD

Long before the resurgence of the Arab Spring and the revitalization of community, NGO's have been influencing active change in the community, from education, health, economic, social, to political issues. According to Sarah Ben Nefissa, non-governmental organizations move forward towards: i) the democratization process; ii) citizen participation; and iii) promotion of common welfare. (Ben Nefissa, 2005) She notes Arab NGOs can be divided into two poles: “...NGOs that seek to assist the communities and on the other hand, NGOs dedicated to social mobilization on different topics and that are working to modify the present social order by positioning themselves as venues for critics and propositions.” (Ben Nefissa, 2005, p. 2) Hopes' work falls within the former option. Hopes sees its work as a mere mediator and valuable interlocutor in the lives of refugee, displaced and non-status communities. Since their beneficiaries are not seen as true-citizens, it is not expected that major changes, reforms or laws will be enforced towards creating impacts to service such communities. International agencies and NGOs have been at the forefront of targeting needed developments and aiding underprivileged communities globally.

### CONCLUDING REMARKS

Moving forward, we acknowledge that there are many obstacles facing a fresh organization in the midst of the Middle East and Northern Africa region. However we are focused on the mission at hand. In only its second year of existence, Hopes has already directly affected the lives of a number of refugee women through workshops, scholarships, and facilitating internships. This past summer two of the Hopes applicants participated at a Global Internship Program at *Migrate* in Amman, and were exposed to cultural exchange, the business realm, English immersion and their own self-reliance. This is just one example of the type of aid Hopes is aiming to provide, to open doors and nourish minds of eager, deserving and underprivileged women. In the past year the organization has multiplied its network of partners and collaborators in a range of realms including but not limited to colleges, pharmaceutical companies, hotel and hospitality and production houses. The purpose of the organization stands alone to draw support from the local community, whom through our awareness campaigns, are beginning to absorb the dire need of these women and the immense impact they can have on their lives.

Each and every woman, once educated and self-sufficient, adds not only to her family's standard of living, but also that of her direct community and then society at large as well. The women that Hopes selects all have a humanitarian interest in addition to their professional goals, as they come from difficult situations they are determined to help others who are in similar scenarios, and it is this mentality precisely that helps spread hope. Each selected applicant must commit to volunteer either with Hopes or in her community directly for 2 years after graduation (alongside her anticipated employment). This provision will create sustainability of the impacts and amplify the culture of volunteerism in the region. In terms of fundraising, Hopes

has approached corporate sponsors, applied for grants and called out for individual donations, aiming to create long-term relationships with each of the three possible sources so as to enable sustainability of the programs. With the bigger picture in mind and high ambitions in sight, each step taken is reinforcing the last, and this is only just the start.

### ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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#### NOORA SHARRAB

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# Lifelong learning in Palestine: Diyar as an example

Diyar is an organization of lifelong learning and one of the leading organizations in Palestine today. This article looks at its philosophy, programs and 17-year-old history. Diyar has successfully practiced lifelong learning in spite and in the context of continuous Israeli occupation. Yet, its philosophy focuses on a culture of life and on transforming people from spectators into actors. Its programs span from “womb to tomb” -thinking with an emphasis on children, youth and women. Securing the needed funds to run such an organization continues to be a challenge.

Mitri Raheb

## HISTORY OF DIYAR

The beginning of Diyar goes back to the First Intifada in the late 1980's. This era was marked by an engaged civil society, an active Palestinian intelligence, and a strong determination to end the Israeli occupation and to create a Palestinian state. Our conviction was and is that Christians have a very special calling in this context and that the Church has an important role to play within the Palestinian society. The Evangelical Lutheran Christmas Church in Bethlehem felt a calling to reach out to the larger Palestinian community as well as the global Church. In December 1992 an "authentic tourism" program was launched inviting groups from Europe and the United States to "come and see" what is happening in Palestine aiming at advocating a lasting and just peace in the Holy Land. The idea was to use tourism as a tool for lifelong learning.

The Oslo I Accord in 1993 created much optimism and the idea arose to create a center that would function as a place for local, national, regional and international encounters. The center was named *Dar annadwa addawliyya*, also known as The International Center of Bethlehem (ICB). It was officially launched in September 28<sup>th</sup> 1995.

*The work of the ICB has been directed towards building a civil society and a sustainable economic development, taking the Palestinian cultural heritage into consideration. Founding a civil society and a sustainable economic development depends primarily on the availability of a highly qualified and engaged people.* (The International Center of Bethlehem, the 1996 brochure, p.2)

Bethlehem was now in transition: from being a city under Israeli military rule to becoming a city under Palestinian authority. The target groups for the new center were youth and women. On the one hand, the center created space for encounters between the Palestinian and European youth thus making the center a window of Palestine to the



*The Azwaj program of Diyar in 2009 involved young couples in an art workshop.*

Diyar

world. On the other hand, the center focused on empowering Palestinian women through programs of lifelong learning that would lead to an increased employability and economic empowerment. No one knew at the time, that this modest center would develop within seventeen years into the third largest private employer in the Bethlehem region with over a hundred people on staff and with projects totaling almost 25 million US dollars.

By 2012 Diyar looks back at a history of extra-ordinary growth:

- In 1995 an abandoned rundown place of almost 400 square meters was renovated to become the initial base. Since then, the facilities have expanded to a total of over 19 000 square meters.
- Staff has grown from four people in 1995 to almost a hundred.
- The overall operational budget has also increased 1995–2011 from the initial approximate 90 United States

dollars to nearly 2,4 million. Since 1995 projects totaling more than 25 million dollars were implemented (16,5 million dollars for construction and about eight million dollars for operation and programs).

- The outreach ministries have expanded tremendously. The number of direct beneficiaries grew from less than a thousand people in 1995 to almost 60 000 in 2011, of which over a total of 2 500 are registered members in its programs.
- Geographically speaking the ICB started in Bethlehem city, expanded to the whole Bethlehem region, and started working on becoming a national player throughout the West Bank.
- International outreach has widened as well. Friendship associations were created in Denmark (2000), Germany (2001), and the United States (2004).

## CONTEXT

This history of incredible growth took place in one of the most challenging contexts. Although the center was started at a period of great enthusiasm and hope – hope of liberation from the Israeli occupation and a vision of two neighboring countries living in peace – it became clear by 2000 that peace is not in reach. On the contrary, the collapse of peace talks between the Israeli and the Palestinians at Camp David, the eruption of the Second Intifada (2000–2005) and the new invasion of the Palestinian cities by the Israeli military made clear that the situation is not improving but deteriorating. Unfortunately the developments in the last ten years proved this to be true. An end to the Israeli occupation is not in sight, the expansion of Jewish settlements in the West Bank made the two-state solution impossible thus turning the West Bank into “a piece of a Swiss cheese”, where Israel gets the cheese – land, water and archeological sites – while pushing the Palestinians in the holes behind walls. This context is a very challenging for education in general and for lifelong learning in particular.

## PHILOSOPHY

### *Culture as the art of breathing*

There was a time when people thought the Israeli-Palestinian conflict was like a 100-meter race. The participants behaved accordingly: they gathered their strength for one concentrated effort in a very short time. When they reached the finishing line, they were out of breath, but could afford it for such a short race. However, people are increasingly realizing that the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, one of the longest ongoing conflicts in modern history, is more like a marathon. If the participants in a marathon behave as if they were running a 100-meter race, they will perish. They will give up quickly, lose hope and heart and leave the field, either physically or psychologically. In a marathon, people need to breathe dif-

ferently, train another way and to run at a more leisurely pace. They need to have plenty of stamina. Culture for Palestinians living in this ongoing and seemingly endless conflict is the art of keeping breathing.

I often meet people and donors, who think that culture in this context is a luxury we Palestinians cannot and should not afford. For such donors, aid is what the Palestinians need under occupation. They need bread to fill their stomachs, so that they can think. This is the usual argument. Our tragedy as Palestinians is that our struggle, ever since the Balfour Declaration in 1917, has often been portrayed as a humanitarian crisis rather than one that has to do with identity and self-determination. But people “shall not live by bread alone”. Culture is one of the most important elements for people’s survival. When people are under immense constraints and in the most immoral situations, culture helps to breathe normally – it becomes an art. In conflicts, people concentrate mainly on those who “kill the body”, but often forget those who “kill the soul”: dignity, creativity and vision of a people. Without a vision, nations “cast off restraints”. Culture allows the soul not

only to survive, but to thrive. Culture is the art of refusing to be only at the receiving end, of resisting being perceived as a mere victim. Culture is the art of becoming an actor rather than a spectator. It is the art of celebrating life in a context still controlled by forces of death and domination, the art of resisting creatively and non-violently.

However, culture is a necessity always, not only in times of conflict. Culture is crucial not mainly for resisting occupation but also in a positive way, for expressing oneself as who one truly is and for communicating one’s story the way one perceives it. Culture is a tool in self-determination: through culture we define ourselves instead of being defined by others. Culture is the medium through which we communicate our genuine wants in a language different from political semantics and religious creeds. Within the Palestinian context, people have reached a stage where they feel political rhetoric no longer represents what they think and want. Also, people often feel suffocated by certain forms of religious expressions that contain too much religion and too little spirituality. Culture is a sacred space, where people learn how to breathe freely in a context where



*The College convenes for the graduation ceremony in 2010.*

fresh air seems to have been used up. This is why I believe culture is one of the most important pillars in a future Palestinian state: the role it plays in the future state will determine for many people, whether Palestine is their homeland not only by birth, but also by choice. What happens in the cultural zone will indicate the direction for Palestine: culture is imperative for a democratic state, where there is not only freedom from occupation but also guaranteed freedom of expression, and towards a state that allocates resources to ensure that the cradle of the three monotheistic religions becomes a major cultural hub for humanity.

Last but not least, culture is an important bridge between Palestine and the rest of the world. Although culture has to do with expressing oneself as who one is, this always happens in relation to others. Encountering the other is always important in understanding oneself. It is in the light of meeting a different context that one realizes one's own unique context. Thus culture becomes a space where people meet others and themselves, where they discover a language both local and universal and where they can realize that in order to breathe, one has to keep windows wide open for new winds and fresh air brought across the oceans and seas. At the same time, what Palestine needs are ambassadors of its culture who can express the unique spirit of the land and its people. Culture is the means which empowers us to give a face to our people, to write melodies for our narrative and to develop an identity deeply rooted in the Palestinian soil like an olive tree with branches reaching high into the open skies.

For these reasons Diyar has been focusing on and investing in culture. Through exhibitions, workshops, concerts and higher education, we seek to strengthen the civil society, cultivate talent and communicate hope so that a fresh spirit will continue to blow within, throughout and across Palestine and we will all be able to breathe, "have life and have it abundantly".

” Culture helps to breathe.

#### EMPOWERMENT

Diyar's special approach is about empowering people in a context of continuing conflict. This is a question of global importance. Diyar's vision is related to influencing people's transition from a stance of reactivity to one of pro-activity, from being victims to becoming visionaries, from waiting to creating, and from surviving to thriving. This is in line with Diyar's assessment and understanding of the Palestinian context, whereby currently, and after more than 44 years of Israeli occupation, both the Palestinians and the international community are stuck in a reactive "survival mode". Many Palestinians rely on international aid organizations giving handouts, essentially managing the conflict so that the conditions are not too unbearable for the Israeli government or the international community to be pressured to end the occupation. On the part of the Palestinians, many have resigned themselves to living as victims of the conflict, relinquishing power and becoming objects in peace negotiations and treaties, in which they are weak stakeholders. What is needed is a completely different approach to the problems and challenges facing the Palestinian community. Instead of merely responding to the status quo, Diyar seeks to actively develop its vision and set long term strategies and action plans striving for building thriving communities as a foretaste of the envisaged Palestine.

What is addressed is the way to empower people in a context of continual conflict and crisis. While other approaches may focus on alleviating suffering through material or financial handouts, Diyar's approach is one of empowerment that results in self-sustaining growth and development. People are too often paralyzed in times of crisis by looking at the immense chal-

lenges, when they could look for and focus on opportunities. A feeling of self-efficacy is lowered when people feel resigned to wait for breakthroughs and for others to deliver: they miss on utilizing the resources they already have. Diyar's message to the community is that change can be an accumulative process, where every small step is important, if it is part of a long-term strategy.

#### LIFELONG LEARNING FROM WOMB TO TOMB

The Palestinian educational system is unfortunately still based on mere memorization, and "learning by heart" instead of learning "from the heart". Although Palestinians have a high degree of university graduates compared to most Arab countries, the problem is that often education is not related to the Palestinian job market. With a rapidly changing context, it is not only important what people study, but that they continue studying lifelong. This is why the programs of Diyar focus on lifelong learning "from womb to tomb". We have courses for pregnant women and spouses to accompany them through lectures and awareness sessions related to pregnancy. On the other hand we have courses for the elderly, where people in their eighties take computer classes in order to communicate with their grandchildren living in the Diaspora. But the major program of Diyar today is the following:

- Civic Engagement

The Civic Engagement Program seeks to empower Palestinian youth, women, teachers and future leaders, and to transform them from spectators to actors by identifying, motivating and developing their potential through a unique and holistic approach. The program offers civic education and multiple civic engagement initiatives.

- Higher Education

In Palestine there are no institutions of higher education focused on creative subjects. As such, the education-

al mission of Diyar Consortium is to bring innovative and new specializations into the higher education system in Palestine.

Educational and self-improvement opportunities are offered in the fields of visual and performing arts, as well as tourism and management. New job opportunities are created through this and talented people are empowered to reshape their lives.

- Diyar Academy for Children and Youth

The Diyar Academy for Children and Youth is one of Diyar Consortium's programs aimed to develop the potential and capacities of children in the Bethlehem Governorate, enhance their self-worth and provide room and space for creativity through performing and visual arts as well as sports, since these fields are deemed critical tools for expression, development and empowerment. The Diyar Academy for Children and Youth also stresses the promotion of a culture of life and dialogue as part of its mission, as these values are critical to the growth of not only the Palestinian children, who make up more than 50 percent of the Palestinian population, but to the whole Palestinian community at large.

- Azwaj

Azwaj, the Young Families Program, employs a holistic approach of life-long learning to empower young parents to deal with parental issues and to meet their social, spiritual and recreational needs and those of their children.

- Ajyal

Since Palestine cannot offer social security or health insurance for those above 65 years old, Ajyal Program is a comprehensive elderly care program offering basic services, spiritual fellowship, social support system and opportunities for continuous education and growth.

## FUNDING

It is not easy to manage such a large organization in a context, where planning is very difficult due to continuous unpredictability, where the unemployment rate is high and where a war erupts every five years in average. To be a financially viable organization in such conditions is nothing but a mission impossible. And yet part of Diyar approach is to strive for independency. Most of the fundraising efforts are made to expand the infrastructure. We have been very fortunate to receive some larger gifts: for example the Foreign Ministry of Finland sponsored the building of our cultural and conference center and the Church of Sweden enabled us to start and grow our art program. We have also received gifts from the churches in the United States and Canada. However, it has been important to us from day one to increase the local income, thus assuring the sustainability of the programs. Today Diyar generates almost two-thirds of its operational budget locally. This is possible through a large membership base as well as through services provided by the organization, which generate some income, like a restaurant, a gift shop and rent of facilities. Diyar might be the only non-governmental organization in Palestine, which has achieved such a level of financial viability. Yet, raising the needed funds remains a challenge, especially with the financial upheavals taking place worldwide. The success of Diyar is based on the fact that we are not a "donor-driven" organization. Especially in Palestine, many organizations keep changing their programs and agendas according to funds available by donors. They might shift from women to environment and then to climate change ac-

ording to international buzzwords. In Diyar we focus on our strategic plans designed with long term goals. We invest in "raising friends" locally and internationally.



### MITRI RAHEB

Dr. Mitri Raheb is the president of Diyar. The most widely published Palestinian theologian to date, Dr. Raheb is the author of 13 books. On Regional Middle Eastern Level Dr. Raheb has been leading several civil society initiatives on Religion & State, and "the contribution of Palestinian Christians to society". For his work, Rev. Raheb received several prestigious international awards including the German Media Prize, the Wittenberg Award, the International Mohammad Nafi Tschleibi award, and the Aachener Peace award.

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” *Financial viability: mission impossible.*

# Adult education and media in Jordan

Youth unemployment is one of the most stringent issues in Jordan, as elsewhere in the Middle East. The problem is aggravated by poor dissemination of information about adult education opportunities. In Jordan adult education is largely associated only with education of senior citizens and illiterates. dvv international, the development arm of the German Adult Education Association, is carrying out a series of discussion events in the country: the aim of this project is to point out the major role local media might play in spreading the word about adult education. In her article dvv international's Ruba Samain argues that adult education is a black spot on the map of local media and gives practical recommendations to place education more in the limelight.

Ruba Samain

## INTRODUCTION

In Jordan almost 60 percent of the population are between 15–64 years of age, and over half of the people in the age group 15–24 are unemployed (Jordan's Department of Statistics, 2011–2012). It makes one wonder whether the education system is doing enough to meet the labor market's needs. Though educational structures and policies work towards bridging the gap between the labor market and education, one of the main issues is the dissemination of information about education in the public sphere to reach the intended audience. Most of the time journalists do not focus on adult education and when they do, they understand it to mean education for seniors, particularly illiteracy elimination. Regardless, illiteracy is an important issue to address, but it is not the only element of adult education being targeted through policies. Whose responsibility is it to get the information across? This question will be addressed throughout this article.

This article was inspired by a panel discussion, held on 31<sup>st</sup> of May, 2012 in Amman, which focused on media in Jordan and its interest in adult education. It was hosted by the Institute for International Cooperation of the German Adult Education Association (dvv international) and titled “Adult Education in Focus: Media” [herein, “in focus event”]. This panel discussion is the latest in a series of similar events that we carry out throughout the year. This paper argues that despite the many adult education programs in the Ministry of Education – vocational, literacy and non-formal – they are not represented in the media, and journalists are rarely aware of the full scope of adult education.

## ADULT EDUCATION AND NON-FORMAL EDUCATION IN JORDAN

Huge efforts have been made to eliminate illiteracy: since 1961 the illiteracy rate has dropped from nearly 61 percent to just under seven percent (Jordan's Depart-



Abdullah Al-Ramahi

*Rana Sweis (l.), Eman Jaradat, Katrin Denys and Arwa Al-Zoubi attending the panel.*

ment of Statistics, 2012). The aim is to reach five percent illiteracy rate by 2015 and zero percent by 2020. The existing adult education structures played a huge role in achieving this. These efforts, however, do not mean that adult education is solely tackling illiteracy. On the contrary, it is multifaceted and includes a diverse target group and people as young as fifteen.

The underlying principle in the Jordanian education law is that everyone is entitled to an education, lifelong learning must be taken into account and that parallel educational patterns should be utilized in coordination with specialized organizations. Furthermore, education must be comprehensive including vocational and technological experiences (Act number 3, 1994 cited in non-formal education in Jordan: expert groups meeting for NFE policy, 2006). This is reflected in the adult education programs falling under two streams: the academic stream and the vocational stream. The former addresses illiteracy elimination through basic education and is considered an out-of-class experience for those who did not complete school. The latter aims at providing trainees the “minimum in-

### Adult Education in Focus: Media Panel members

Ms. **Arwa Zoubi** is Broadcasting programme producer and scriptwriter at the Jordan Television (JTV). Ms Zoubi specializes on developmental topics, e.g. family, environment, women and education.

Ms. **Rana Sweis** is a member of the executive committee at “leaders of tomorrow” and also the director of PR and Media. She writes for the New York Times Global edition and is the lead researcher of the Mapping Digital Media in Jordan sponsored by the Open Society Institute. She is a consultant for UNESCO, USAID-AED, UNHCR, JMI.

Ms. **Eman Jaradat** works at Community Media Network as a Project Development Coordinator. She has produced short films, radio programmes and reports on local issues.

Facilitator: Ms. **Katrin Denys** – Regional Director of dvv international in the Middle East.

formation and technical skills they need in life”, focusing on industrial, agricultural and other service skills, while strengthening the links between the centre and the local community (UNESCO, National Report: Jordan, 2009 p.7). Overall the non-formal education program inspires to be labor market oriented and build human resources. There are many educational options, such as childhood learning, literacy, life skills, income generating training, rural development, religious education, cultural and tradition education and professional development.

During the in focus event Abdullah Nasser, from the non-formal education department at the Ministry of Education, mentioned that “so much is being done in Jordan, but we do not realize that what we are doing is adult education”. This is partially problematic. On the one hand, it is great that the ministry is doing a lot in adult education, but the fact that they are unaware of the nature of their achievements is problematic: it is potentially an issue of connotations associated with the term “adult education” (in Arabic *taaleem al kibar*). In Jordan it implies illiteracy and education for seniors. There are potentially two ways to tackle this, either with a media campaign and lobbying from the part of non-governmental organizations (NGO) such as *dvv international*, or by changing the terminology used, which is less feasible and will pose many challenges.

Despite the fact that there are vocational and academic opportunities in the kingdom available for adults willing to learn, and that as many as 27 institutions and associations provide non-formal education in various fields, a study carried out by UNESCO Beirut in 2005 indicated that a major setback is that people are unaware of these possibilities. The study showed that this is partly due to the “lack of organized media to make people aware of the initiatives and activities of institutions working on adult education.”



Abdullah Al-Ramahi

*Amal Wahdan, Head of Family Welfare Association, a community based development centre, gives her comments.*

### THE MEDIA'S COVERAGE ON ADULT EDUCATION

Not only is the media unorganized, but it is unaware of the adult education opportunities available and the scope the ministry works in. A journalist and one of the panelists at the in focus event, Rana Sweis, was very open about not knowing that many adults up and down the country were taking part in trainings with the aim of improving their livelihood and not just to gain the ability to read and write. She is not alone – during the run up to the event a colleague and I visited journalists from the major newspapers and talked with broadcasters, some in private television and others from the national television station. Not one saw adult education as more than an illiteracy elimination for seniors. The concept of lifelong learning was also news to them despite the fact that it is in the Jordanian constitution. This raises numerous questions and rightly so, one of which was raised by Rana: “Whose responsibility is

it to spread this news: the journalists’, the institutions’ or the government’s?”

I conducted a very basic content analysis of the major newspapers in Jordan – *Al Ra’i*, *Ad Dustour*, *Al Arab Alyaoum* and *Al Ghad* – their online archives retrieved only eight news stories containing the term “adult education” and all of them dealt with adult education and illiteracy in Jordan. The paper with the most articles was *Al Ghad* presenting news stories from 2005 to 2012. It is an independent, privately owned newspaper which covers political, economic and social issues and has circulation of 65 000. Second came *Al Ra’i* with two major news stories on adult education and illiteracy in 2004 and 2006, alongside a small mention of *dvv international*’s in focus event 2012. Over 60 percent of *Al Ra’i* is owned by the government and it has the largest circulation in the country. *Ad Dustour*, which is also partly owned by the government (30 percent) and has a circulation of 80 000 and *Al Arab Al-Yaoum* with circulation of 24 000, did not have any news coverage on adult education – though we do not know if this was due to lack of updating online material. However, the news editor of the

”Media lacks an educational vision.”

*Ad Dustour* online newspaper, Mahmoud Dary, stated frankly that the media in general is not doing their part in education and adult education (Jordan Media Guide, 2012). It is not solely the responsibility of the media to cover this topic, however. The Ministry of Education must give adult education importance in its full scope considering the unemployment rate is high and the labor market's needs are still not met despite the programs available with the aim of bridging the gap.<sup>1</sup>

As for broadcasting, in the 1980's the Jordan national television used to air a program called "*Al-Ilmu Nour*", which translates to "education is light". The program was aimed at an adult audience and promoted learning through comedy. It reached out to the target audience by allowing them to relate to the characters and the familiar settings, such as cafes. In contrast, today's shows are more along the lines of talk shows, one such example is "*Yaoum Jaded*" on Jordan TV, which consists of basic interviews. The show gives facts but is not really doing its part to motivate and drive adults to self-improve themselves. Mr. Lutfi Jubail, from the Vocational Training Center, pointed out that in the past there was a vision for educational coverage in the media, and that the media today has moved towards facts and figures, portraying the subject in an unattractive manner. Arwa Al Zoubi, a panelist at the in focus event, mentioned the financial limitations Jordan TV is facing and also brought attention to the lack of *qualified* human resources.

### MEDIA'S PORTRAYAL OF ADULT EDUCATION AND PEOPLE'S PERCEPTIONS

Media's portrayal of adult education or any other subject for that matter affects people's perceptions of their social world. In light of this and the limited nature of the coverage on adult education there is no doubt that people perceive it in a limited fashion. Media can be the catalyst to a positive impact on society by keeping

in mind the target audience and addressing the issues relevant to them in an enticing and attractive manner.

Take the example shared at the in focus event by the head of the local community development center in Al-Karama (Ministry of Social Development). Najah Abu Safi motivated the women in her community to take part in a training program the centre was offering by showing them a short sketch that was acted out by a popular Jordanian comedy team called "*khadar w zaal*". This presentation succeeded in motivating the women and as a result many took part in the training. This highlights the power of targeted and entertaining media coverage. According to the Jordan Academy of Arabic, the most popular medium in Jordan is television at almost 50 percent viewership, followed by print, meaning newspapers and journals, and then magazines (<http://www.majma.org.jo>, 2009). In sum then, although the press should cover news stories intellectually, broadcasting should address this national issue in an entertaining and exciting manner.

### WHO IS RESPONSIBLE FOR LOBBYING FOR ADULT EDUCATION?

As we have seen, the Jordan media's interest in adult education is minimal and only scratches the surface. The ministry is not doing their role of relaying the scope of their work to the media and in some cases they do not even know their work can be determined as adult education as noted by Mr. Abdullah Al Nasser. Lobbying for adult education is left to private agencies and non-formal governmental organizations (NGOs).

Mahmoud Dary stated that in contrast to journalists covering health issues for example, many journalists are not qualified to write on adult education, as they do not adhere to trainings or self-development programs.

### MEDIA AND EDUCATION POLICY MAKERS

The Ministry of Education's media department works on relaying information to the press. Much of the time it is in press release style. Eman Jaradat, panelist at the in focus event, works for Radio Al-Balad, which is a notable, independent community radio station. Jaradat suggested that much of the news coverage is presented in such a way to highlight the ministries' achievements. In doing so news stories are bland, they do not always target the audience intended and therefore do not have an impact.

Arwa Al Zoubi stated that more needs to be done to improve communication between the different parties and have all sides co-operate. However, there are no clear and regular communication lines between the ministry and the media in all its forms. As mentioned earlier, financial limitations could be to blame in the ministry for not reaching out and connecting with the media and the targeted audiences, in fact other issues are priori-

#### Future recommendations

- Offering journalists training in adult education, especially for journalists with a special interest in education. This training could be provided by a non-governmental organization working in the field.
- Television (private and national) should take it upon themselves to create comedy sketches which promote lifelong learning and enhance the importance of self-development to all target groups.
- Better communication, networking and coordination between different parties is needed. Events such as the panel discussion "Adult Education in Focus: Media" helps to build networks and raise importance.

tized. This is an area ridden with political turmoil, where politics is on the minds of all citizens, educated or not.

## CONCLUSION

Programs available by the ministry may be debatable in terms of their success and quality. Adult education would deserve a place in the limelight so people can start to make use of it in a larger scope. This may put a burden on the finances of the ministry, which would explain the lack of drive on the topic. The media could be very useful in representing different adult education options available in the kingdom and motivating the masses to take part in lifelong learning. This would give them a chance to *grow* through life, and not just *go* through it.

As for the burden of responsibility, the social world is interconnected and all its elements have a role to play: government, media and institutions. The media needs to take an active role in searching information, since it is the fourth estate to carry out checks and balances on all topics in society<sup>2</sup>. The ministry should assume their role in educating the nation by utilizing one of the most important aspects in our modern life, the media.

Ultimately, it is not only important to cover adult education per se but to contribute in promoting education to the masses, from adults with high education to adults with low education.

## ENDNOTES

- 1 Education Reform for Knowledge Economy project (ERfKE) ran two parts during the years 2003–2009 with the aim of meeting the labour market's need.
- 2 There is no formal body for censorship, in the majority of cases journalist exercise self-censorship. Rana Sweis mentioned that before the Arab Spring censorship was 95 percent but after it 85 percent – this is not a huge difference. Regardless, people and journalists resort to the internet to get their voices heard. According to a study conducted by USAID over 40 percent of Jordanians read news online

because it gives a chance to comment, and over 30 percent of Jordanians read news online because it does not adhere to censorship.

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## RUBA SAMAIN

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# A house of dialogue

When the Yavuz Sultan Selim Mosque was opened in 1995 in the Southern German city of Mannheim, it was the biggest Muslim house of prayer in Germany. Two out of ten inhabitants of the city have a foreign background. Around 7 % of the population is Muslim, predominantly with Turkish origin.

The birth of the Mosque, however, was special in many other ways, too. Its opening was attended by Jews, Christians and Muslims. The city's Jewish Community, Protestant Church and Catholic Church each donated a chandelier for the prayer room. But before the foundation stone was even laid, a round table composed of Muslims, Christians, Jews, city representatives and community members had greenlighted the building decision. Now, the Yavuz Sultan Selim is known as “the Open Mosque” a self-proclaimed place of “interreligious dialogue and tolerance”, operating tours of the building and lecturing on Islam for interested Mannheim residents. LLinE talked to Ulrich Schäfer, a Christian Minister active in the Open Mosque.

LLinE: Please, tell us first a bit about yourself.

Ulrich Schäfer: I am a retired Protestant minister. I have studied theology, German language and literature and pedagogy in Germany, along with theology and community organizing in the USA. My work background consists of youth work in various countries, for example the USA and Japan.

After years abroad I returned to Germany and worked as pastor in the harbor area of Mannheim, a district which after the war was a “red light district” and meanwhile has an about 60 % ratio of immigrants – mainly from Italy and Turkey.

How did you get in touch with the Mosque?

During my service in the Harbour Church I was thoroughly introduced into Islam by a friend of Turkish origin. Thus after a couple of years I was asked by my friend and the Turkish body which runs the Yavuz Sultan Selim Mosque to do guided tours within the Open Mosque project and explain Islam in the context of Judaism and Christianity.

What exactly is “the Open Mosque”?

The initial stages of building the Mosque in the nineties were not harmonious. We experienced a lot of fear on both Christian and Muslim sides and antagonism to the idea of establishing a Mosque in the inner city and right next to a Catholic church.

The solution was that we established a “round table” of Muslims, Chris-



tian churches, Jews, city representatives and community members. Finally, the talks of the round table resulted in an almost unanimous “Yes” to the building of the Mosque.

What was it about the round table that worked so well?

It was organized and moderated by the gifted “city representative for foreigners” - one of the first of such persons in Germany. He made sure that all religions, the major political parties, the schools and the organized groups of citizens in the area were represented at the round table together with the city government.

When these people talked to each other about their hopes and fears, it turned out that most of their aims were in common. They found that a mosque is very similar to a church or a synagogue – and the Muslim side, represented by some well-educated persons – among them a specialist in Islamic theology- offered to open the mosque for everybody.

At the same occasion the “Mannheim Institute for integration and interreligious work” was founded. The Institute organizes guided educational tours of the Mosque for schools, police and many other social groups. It also arranges seminars for imams with Protestant ministers and Catholic priests, training seminars for Muslim youth in integrative youth work and training courses for Muslim councillors in hospitals. The Institute has also trained Muslim youth to be guides in other Mosques, so the good practices are spreading!



Wikipedia

*The Yavuz Sultan Selim Mosque stands side by side with the Catholic Liebfrauenkirche. Mannheim has a tradition of tolerance: when Europe was historically divided into Protestant and Catholic regions, the founder of Mannheim welcomed “people of all nations and beliefs”.*

You mentioned tours for school children: is that the primary target group?

There are in fact two target groups: on one side Christians and Jews who want to learn about Islam and on the other side Muslims who should learn to explain their faith and tradition to Non-Muslims and, in the long run, integrate into the German community without losing their identity.

Where does your funding come from?

One third of the budget for the Institute comes from the city of Mannheim. On top of that, we have to apply for project-funding from government programs, federal state programs and private institutions.

What are your daily activities like?

Talat Kamran is the full time leader of the Institute. His main job is to organize seminars, tend to media relations, give lectures on Islam, especially Sufism. A big part of the Open Mosque are the guided tours of the Mosque. I myself give tours as well.

The educational contents of the lectures and tours are planned by Talat and me – and we have an advisory-body of theologians, pedagogues and professors of Islam and Oriental Studies to give advice and develop new programs with us.

You mentioned that the good practices of the Open Mosque are spreading. How?

There are 12 mosques in Mannheim. In addition to several Turkish mosques of different theological denominations there is an Arab



Ulrich Schäfer

*Protestant Minister Ulrich Schäfer gives a tour of the „Open Mosque“.*

mosque, a Bosnian Mosque, a Pakistani Mosque and an Alevitic Center. Our Institute has had contact with all of these mosques since the beginning. The cooperation has opened all of these Muslim communities to dialogue with Christian and Jewish communities and led them to participate more in the life of the surrounding city-community. Today all these mosques engage in regular meetings and cooperation with each other – this was not the case in the beginning. For example, all the major mosques now invite members of the Christian and Jewish community, politicians and civil society actors to the ceremony of breaking the fasting.

On the Christian side of society, an enormous interest and curiosity has developed in the life and worship of the Muslim community. Five to eight thousand visitors flood to the Open Mosque each year. For example, for quite a number of schools in Mannheim an interreligious school-service has become a self-evident event.

Mannheim, after all, has a tolerant tradition since 400 years – interrupted only by the Third Reich. In its history the city was destroyed in regional wars four times – and has depended on immigrants from all surrounding countries to rebuild the city.

Why has the open mosque caused also other Muslim communities to open up to cooperation?

The “Mannheim Institute” was founded for the “aftercare” of the Open Mosque’s integration task. Our interreligious team contacted all the major Islamic institutions and mosques. We managed to convince them that opening up and integrating brings them benefits, for instance through training of their members and public funding of their activities.

Gradually they began to understand that communicating among each other and representing themselves unanimously to the public reduces fear and antagonism and improves their image.

What would you say is the most important part of the learning experience for a visitor to the Mosque?

Firstly, it would be important for the visitor to see the Mosque as a beautiful and highly cultured room, stemming from a long and splendid tradition. Secondly, we want people to realize that Islam – during the main part of its 1400-year tradition - was a peaceful and tolerant religion, cooperating with educated Jews and Christians in their Islamic universities and allowing religious freedom in the Muslim realm. A third point is that there are many similarities between Christianity, Judaism and Islam.

Is the Open Mosque also a site of inner dialogue between different denominations of Islam, for example the Shias and the Sunnis?

The Yavuz Sultan Selim Mosque is Sunni. Shiites, however, pray in the Mosque as well. Another notable thing is that in the beginning music, singing and instruments were unthinkable in a Sunni mosque. This has changed along the years.

How did this attitude change come about?

Sufism is a mystic tradition within Islam that was very central to the religion in the middle ages. During the Westernization and secularization of modern Turkey the mainstream Sunni mosques were controlled by the state. Sufism with its singing and music and dancing – and the integrated participation of women as shown in the Alevitic tradition – became “unorthodox”.

When we got all the (Turkish) Islamic groups together we – the Institute – succeeded to “remind” them of their much broader tradition – and help them to return to their beautiful tradition.

Are there limits to mutual understanding? Is there an element in Islam or Christianity that cannot be reconciled with each other?

The theological differences between Christians and Muslims are not more serious than those between Protestants and Catholics or between different denominations of Muslims.

The success of a dialogue depends very much on personal qualities: one must have a group of people who trust each other, have a common vision and are not easily frustrated. There has to be trust that the dialogue will make Christians better Christians, Jews better Jews and Muslims better Muslims. Any attempt to “missionise” is deadly. This is why fundamentalists on both sides have to be kept out.

Because cooperation relies so much on personal relations, any change in, say, the governing body of a mosque or a church could cause a falling back to older positions.

Islamophobia is rife in many parts of Europe. In light of your experiences in the Open Mosque, what are your views on this?

We have to register that in all European countries there is an “undercurrent” of racism, anti-Semitism and Islamophobia. In France this is even stronger than in Germany – in the former tolerant Netherlands it is growing. Exactly this phenomenon

makes us stick together and work together. If we teach our children to live together and be tolerant there is hope for a tolerant Europe.

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# Print versus digital: A consideration of perspectives

This issue 3/2012 is the last one in print format. LLinE is going completely digital after 17 years in 4/2012. We move into the new publication format fully conscious of the fact that with the electronic journal something is gained while something is lost. Naturally we believe that the benefits of the e-journal –interactivity, accessibility, wider circulation – will outweigh the downsides.

This article engages two prominent thinkers in debate and discussion about the pros and cons of digital vs. print publishing. Sven Birkerts is an American essayist and literary critic known for his pro-print views and his book *The Gutenberg Elegies*, which –already in 1994 – depicted a decline in reading due to electronic technology. Jamais Cascio is an American futurist and writer, often classified as a techno-progressive and associated with optimistic views of digital publishing.

## Sven Birkerts

Even five years ago, when asked about the transition from page to screen, from off-line (paper) to on-line, I could generate a good deal of argumentative en-

ergy on behalf of print. There was a sense that the balance still tipped toward tradition, that the digital model would take over certain precincts, but

that it would not achieve complete paradigm status. I was wrong. Though paper has not been—and likely will not be—completely supplanted, the decisive

shift has happened. When I say this, I don't mean anything quantitative—screen pages versus print pages, say—but habits, preferences and reflexes.

When the digital began some years ago to announce its potency, even as the early zealots were heralding revolutionary transformation, I was alarmed but also skeptical. I did not think that the hard-won accumulation of print-on-paper, its vital presence as the core of all of our intellectual disciplines and political systems, and the great institutions that had evolved to serve it, would yield so readily to the suave pulsations of the new. What I had not taken enough into account was the fact of generational change, and the speed with which people not only adapt to the new but—if this is a permissible coinage—“disadapt” to the former.

It seems so clear to me now—and it hadn't then—that people under 25, say, (this is arbitrary) not only swim like trout in the digital stream, deploying elaborate systems with intuitive ease, unafraid, happily acquiring new applications and user skills, but that they manifest a corresponding *disinclination* about partaking in the old systems. By which I mean: doing things on the page, by the book, away from the electronic grid. Technologies and their fitness for tasks aside, it is almost as if they require the certifying ground of connectivity, as if without connectivity any action is partial, a shadow endeavor. There is no use—I know this as a parent and a teacher both—preaching the virtues of single-task focus or the supposed superiority of artifacts underwritten by centuries of use. It is impossible to preach without sounding like cinema cliché of the small-town spinster librarian.

Possibly I overstate, but I think only slightly. The change in reflex and expectation that accompanied the digital revolution is unidirectional, not part of some to-fro pendulum swing or dialectic. And those of us who live by the word, who work in the broad world of communications—as writers, editors,

publishers—know this by now, and we do much of our planning and projecting in the light of this truth.

The matter is not simple, however. Though there are now almost two generations in the stride of the formerly *new*, a good part of the taste-making system, including powerful and savvy people who have worked within it for decades, remains significantly vested in the old print paradigm. What's more, that system, for all that it might appear stodgy or 'old-guard' to the aggressively fashionable, is nonetheless encoded deeply with the meanings, hierarchies and valuations that allow us to speak of a common culture rather than just an endlessly accessible flow of data. It carries that elusive thing that is our collective history, not just in its volumes of print, but implicitly in the systems that store and arrange those holdings. We are not at a point, and may never be, where we can trust digital storage and electronic access to assume completely the place of print.

What is coming clear, I think, now that we are several decades into the new dispensation, is that the obvious benefits of the digital—storage, access, linkage, and transmission—are counterbalanced by various downsides. These include, for starters, inundation: the sheer undifferentiated mass of material, which is a clear case of a benefit (boundless compressibility of material) creating a liability. The natural ecology that has always governed print production is technologically short-circuited.

Similarly, the impressive achievement of lateral linkage—one thing referencing another with a simple mouse-click—introduces the specter of deep regress. Where is one to stop, where to curtail the branching paths of reference? This relates to another problem: the lack of hierarchy and differentiation. Where the pressure to distributed democratized inclusion is so powerful, the creation of value rankings is difficult, and the difficulty is exaggerated by the fact that the emergent ethos of our digital era expresses a deep suspi-

cion of most species of so-called elitism.

These are very real, but also abstract considerations. The question has to do with the specific effects resulting from a journal transitioning from paper format to digital. As editor of a literary journal, AGNI, based at Boston University, I have pondered these matters a good deal. We have, thus far, held to a compromise position, opting to continue producing our print magazine as before, but producing an on-line supplement that posts new material bi-monthly.

I see that the on-line component has obvious advantages. It tells our readers, for one thing, that we are not stubbornly mired in a single system, one that many of them believe is outmoded. And there are benefits. Being on-line as we are allows us to archive and offer a great deal of material from past issues, while making certain new work available only on paper. We can create a structure whereby we can easily maintain our subscriber lists, process subscription payments automatically, highlight events and deliver news with the tap of a key, integrate and modify images and photographs...

Why do we continue to invest in our small-circulation print publication? There are good reasons for our resistance—or, rather, our desire to maintain continuity. The print format communicates that a journal is not merely a compendium of adjacent literary works, but a made thing (a minor work of art, we tell ourselves), a one-time presentation of specific materials in a specific order. We continue to print because a journal, like a book, takes on a different importance when it is a physical thing—to be looked at, opened at leisure, browsed, shelved, retrieved. It achieves something of the status of the book that one keeps because it is a cherished object. We continue because to create a physical magazine accepts the power of material history, of objects fitting physically into a cultural continuum: it endorses the reality and

importance of that history. We continue because we—the editors and all of the people who partake in production—enjoy the event-status of the *making*. We are brought together by mutual interest, by our fulfilling of the various roles that culminate in the arrival from the printer of a made thing that concretely represents our aspirations.

Speaking for myself, I remain devoted to print because my love of literature was first sparked, decades ago, by my encounter with journals not so different from the one I edit: *The Paris Review*, *The Partisan Review*, *Evergreen*, *Tri-Quarterly*, *Parnassus*... I thrilled forty years ago to find new issues in the bookstores I frequented. My desire to have a share in this legacy is, no question, colored by nostalgia. It is idealistic as well. To me there is a very great satisfaction, an affirming pleasure, in tilting back in my physical chair to look at my physical shelves and to see there, arrayed in sequence, the issues of the journal that I helped to edit. I feel planted in the world, and no amount of data searching has ever given me that feeling.



SVEN BIRKERTS

Sven Birkerts is the author of 9 books, most recently *The Other Walk: Essays* (Graywolf Press). He edits the literary journal *AGNI* at Boston University and is Director of the Bennington Writing Seminars.

# Print versus digital: Status Symbolism

Jamais Cascio

The past few years have seen a flurry of arguments about the relative value of online versus printed (on paper) writing. Nicholas Carr's notorious and well-argued "Is Google Making Us Stupid? What the Internet is doing to our brains" in *The Atlantic Monthly* (2008) led a year later to my own countering piece "Get Smarter" in the same journal. But debates about the value of online versus print tend to focus on what we might think of as the "display media" – that is, the structure and the physical manifestation of the text. People will argue about whether reading on screens is harmful, or whether hyperlinks rob a narrative of its linearity. Somewhat more nuanced discussions, like Carr's, ask us to consider how the brain responds to different media, exploring whether the proliferation of digital media has weakened our ability to concentrate – or, as with my own argument, has strengthened our ability to make complex connections.

There is another aspect to this conversation, however, one that often does not get enough attention in the context of the print versus digital dilemma: the social importance possessed by each form of media. How do the media formats reflect and build upon one's status? What does it mean to be a creator in these different media?

I use the following line in some of my talks: "Technology is anything invented after you turn 13." That is to say, we often forget that the material tools and systems embedded into our lives are just as much invented artifacts – technologies – as a smartphone or a 3D printer. Some things just become invisible, so common as to be seen almost as a natural phenomenon. Conversely,

we are prone to treating new material technologies as novel inventions first and foremost, and neglect their cultural and social importance.

In the case of the written word, we need to be careful not to let the certainly interesting and provocative dilemmas surrounding digital media cause us to ignore the increasingly powerful social divide. We can see this divide in action perhaps most clearly in the "barriers to entry" for writers. Here, the distinctions between print and online media are abundantly clear.

Print, as embodied in the magazine and book publishing industries, is far more restricted and limited than digital in terms of who gets to create for broad consumption. Publishers are gatekeepers, and getting something one has written in front of an audience is a real challenge – as a result, there are many orders of magnitude more readers than writers.

Conversely, online is substantially more open; one could even argue that it is more "democratic" in that the barriers to entry for a writer are close to nil. Anyone with semi-regular internet access can produce written material with the potential to be seen by hundreds of thousands (if not millions) of readers. There is no guarantee that anyone beyond one's mother will read what one writes, of course – but the same thing can be said for material published in print.

As a result, there are now millions of people worldwide who can with some accuracy refer to themselves as "writers," orders of magnitude more people than those who ever saw their work in print. And while the quality of the writing varies considerably, much of it

is nonetheless quite good. There are numerous truly excellent essayists who publish primarily or exclusively online, and even writers who work primarily in print often find a more engaged and eager audience online.

Moreover, the openness and interconnectivity of the internet means that there are vast opportunities for “viral” spread of links to and awareness of a given written piece. Links at a high-traffic web site like BoingBoing or Reddit will lead to tens of thousands of reads and further distribution. In short, if one is writing to express ideas or a creative impulse, one is far more likely to have an audience online than in print.

There are clear drawbacks to this, some obvious, some not. Writing on one’s blog is unlikely to be paid work – at best, it can lead to paying work, but that is by no means assured. It is a challenge to most to be heard above the noise of so many writers, especially without a connection to someone with an existing audience. The blog I co-founded in 2003, *Worldchanging.com*, had a few hundred readers within the first few months of existence, but jumped to tens of thousands when a noted science fiction writer, Bruce Sterling, linked to us. The audience for *Worldchanging* eventually peaked in the millions of monthly readers, and *Worldchanging* itself eventually became a source of links to still-obscure writers.

But the experience with *Worldchanging.com* also underscores a more subtle drawback to online versus print media: legitimacy. This is partly due to easy access to online publications, printed work still carries far greater weight as a means of validating the talent or importance of a writer. At *Worldchanging.com* we found that certain audiences in business, government and academia paid a lot more attention to our book (which included material originally published online) than to the website. Why did this happen?

Simply put, print is more of a challenge. Print publishing creates value through constraint on distribution. If a publisher accepts a manuscript, a limited number of copies are produced, which in turn will be sold through a limited number of outlets. Getting a writer’s work into a reader’s hands can be stymied at any point along this chain. But this set of constraints adds value to a given manuscript. Because the barriers to entry are fairly high, readers can assume that the quality of a given book or magazine article will likely be fairly high as well. And because of the myriad ways in which a book or magazine can fail to reach its intended audience, a successful publication is a remarkable achievement, and confers a kind of legitimacy to the writer that a blog visibility, no matter how substantial, can rarely match.

In other words, writing online can be seen as an occupation – something intentional and focused one does with one’s time, whether for employment or distraction. Writing for print, conversely, is more of an identity – something that defines how one sees oneself. And while it may seem like a shift from “identity” to “occupation” undermines the value of writing, the opposite is true: writing becomes a tool for communication not just to the masses, but among the masses. Part of the shock expressed by devotees of print comes (consciously or otherwise) from this sudden and extensive redistribution of power.

And while online writing does not always mirror the print world in form, it can still have remarkable impact. 140 character tweets and Facebook/Tumblr status updates may seem laughable in comparison to a well-crafted essay, but as proved in recent years they can, in aggregate, be truly transformative at a global level. The pen may be mightier than the sword, but the network is far more powerful than either.



### JAMAIS CASCIO

Selected by *Foreign Policy* magazine as one of their Top 100 Global Thinkers, JAMAIS Cascio covers the intersection of technologies, environment, and culture, specializing in the design and creation of plausible scenarios of the future. His work appears in publications such as the *Atlantic Monthly*, the *Wall Street Journal*, and *Foreign Policy*, and he has been featured in a variety of television programs on emerging issues. Cascio speaks about future possibilities around the world, and is currently a Distinguished Fellow at the Institute for the Future.

# Universities –the odd one out in lifelong learning?

Michael Kerres, Anke Hanft, Uwe Wilkesmann, Karola Wolff-Bendik. (Eds.). 2012. *Studium 2020. Positionen und Perspektiven zum lebenslangen Lernen an Hochschulen*. Münster/New York/München/Berlin 2012,. ISBN 978-3-8309-2579-8

There are, of course, publications in Germany that in terms of educational policy uphold the concept of lifelong learning and the opening up of universities – and take a more normative approach. Against this backdrop, the book under review is a notable exception as it presents research into the reality at German universities.

This book provides empirical findings and insights from the comparative studies and innovation projects undertaken in a joint project (STU+BE – *Studium für Berufstätige – Erfolgsfaktoren für Lifelong Learning an Hochschulen* – Studying for those in work – Success factors for lifelong learning at universities) sponsored by the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF). The editors are from the three project partners: the University of Duisburg-Essen (Michael Kerres), the Technical University of Dortmund (Uwe Wilkesmann) and the University of Oldenburg (Anke Hanft).

The central problem presented in the book was this: the university and high school, as a short and sharply delineated experience between school and working life, may not fit the idea of lifelong learning. How could the university be a source of lifelong learning in the future?

The scope of the research was broad. The starting point were the three universities that were partners in the project. Aspects analyzed included the general conditions, the characteristics of the students and the organization of continuing education. The focus

was on the innovation dimensions. The results of the project were discussed in a hearing with experts and some of their contributions are also to be found in the book. On almost 300 pages there are 24 contributions by 19 authors. The contributions examine very concisely courses of studies and further education for non-traditional students. They are structured in five main chapters or subject clusters, which are outlined in the following, although it is not possible to mention all the authors by name.

In Chapter 2 “Dimensions of lifelong learning at universities” the contributions deal with issues concerning legal regulations, strategic positioning, the organization of courses and programme design. The contribution on legal provisions (Heike Fischer) draws a sober balance. She shows how legislation, especially at the federal state level, fails to support the opening up of universities demanded by educational policy. Chapter 3 “Empirical investigations on the reality of universities” covers the image of the “normal student” and the “anatomy of Bologna programmes” by analyzing the key documents, the module handbooks. Under the heading “4. An international comparison of success factors for lifelong learning at universities” case studies from the University of British Columbia, the Open University Milton Keynes, the University of Helsinki and Helsinki Technical University (TKKK) are presented. Taking a comparative perspective, the authors (Hanft/Brinkmann) raise the question why the implementation of concepts of lifelong learning is more successful in other higher education systems than in Germany. Here the great extent to which higher education culture is influenced by the respective background in terms of educational policy becomes obvious. In subject

cluster 5 “Case studies and innovation projects of the three participating universities” the universities Duisburg-Essen, Dortmund und Oldenburg are analyzed according to four aspects:

1. Permeability of successive educational levels
2. Increased flexibility due to new teaching and learning technologies and formats
3. The field of University Continuing Education
4. Recognition and transfer of learning achievements from various learning contexts

In a comparative article, Karola Wolff-Bendik shows that the universities do promote lifelong learning in specific spheres of activity, but the concept of lifelong learning does not become apparent as an overall principle (cf, p.210). In Chapter 6 “Perspectives and positions to increase flexibility in the field of undergraduate studies”, external experts have also written contributions. Here further facets are developed – from the university in the 21st century (Schenker-Wicki) to internet-based courses (Zawacki-Richter) – which open up additional perspectives on the overall topic.

The great number of contributions does not lead to a jumble of facets. The contributions are not only clearly tied into an overall structure, the conclusion, Chapter 7, “Implications of consistently opening up universities for lifelong learning” presents the key findings of the comparative project with considerable verve. Desiderata are addressed to both higher education policymakers and the universities. The eight postulates, which are also interesting from a pedagogical perspective, are as follows (pp.289–290):

- 1) Greater flexibility should be achieved: continue to enhance the development of part-time courses.

- 2) The institutions should support those studying alongside their job.
- 3) It should be possible to accumulate credit points (ECTS)
- 4) The recognition of professional competences should be organized.
- 5) Suitable didactic models should be developed for students in work.
- 6) Learning both on-campus and off-campus should be made possible.
- 7) The feedback culture - which has been neglected for years at German universities – should be revived
- 8) The organization of courses should be geared to the needs of the students.

This list could form the starting point for further detailed studies and also new projects at European/international level.

A criticism I would make is that the title “Studium 2020” did not make sense to me even after reading the book. Although it hints at a connection with the European Commission’s Europe 2020 strategy, this is not referred to in the book. However, at the beginning of the year there was a conference with the authors involved in the project with this title. The lack of precision is therefore probably down to the “attention economy”.

The strength of this book lies less in its examples of good practice than in its empirical foundations. It reveals, for example, that the self-concept and course structures of the universities are unable to keep pace with the changed societal conditions: some two-thirds of students work alongside their university course and one quarter has already completed an apprenticeship before beginning to study. (c.f. p. 285).

A further methodological strength of this book lies in the significance of comparison for gaining insights. This applies, on the one hand, to the three universities involved in the project themselves. On the other hand, foreign

experiences are also taken as reference points to emphasize the need for modernization in Germany. For example, the following is stated about universities in other industrial nations: “In many places these already see themselves as facilities which provide education over the entire lifespan. In this way the education provided by the universities is often much more closely geared to the requirements of society for developing competence and the demand for academic expertise for answering societal requirements.” (Kerres et al, p.9). Here the phenomenon that is well known in comparative educational science as the “international argument” becomes apparent. In German-speaking countries the concept of lifelong learning is still largely limited to university continuing education, i.e. an area strictly separated from undergraduate courses with very different legal regulations. The comparative perspective reveals this constriction and aims to contribute to widening.

This book belongs in the field of higher education research and university continuing education. Those involved in conceptual and research work would benefit from reading this highly topical book. However, apart from one exception, all the contributions are in German.

#### WOLFGANG JÜTTE

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# The social and ethical responsibility of adult trainers and educators

Fernando Dell'Agli

## THE SCENARIO

Today's society is characterized by an ever increasing complexity and turbulence. Traditional ideologies tend to lose their guiding function, strong values are weakening and no longer act as inspiring principles. Many people, within and outside companies and organizations, are confused and bewildered.

I recognize this confusion and dif-fused uncertainty in my seminar students, although juniors and seniors express their uneasiness in different ways.

When I started working in a multi-national company in the mid-sixties, things were changing very slowly. Consequently what had been learned in school, in college or in the university represented an investment for a long future to come.

Social habits, stable and accepted by a vast majority of people, represented a valid backing for those who were not mentally as strong or as balanced as others. At the same time these cultural expectations were perceived as bondages by many.

Now that the traditional habits are frequently abandoned or disputed, older people cannot rely on the kind of support they did before. Youth, on the other hand, faces an ever increasing difficulty in finding a job – at least in Italy – since this change affects reference values and principles. The young are condemned to a perpetual situation of precariousness. The present economic crisis is making the situation worse.

While their studies and cultural background are often on a higher level than those of their parents, the opportunities offered are inversely proportional to their cultural and educational level.

The disappearance, or at least fading, of recognized social behaviours is frustrating both to the young and the elderly. Therefore, when giving my seminars, students are hoping to receive – well beyond the specific contents of the program – an indication on how to read and understand the actual world around them. They yearn for a compass so they wouldn't lose course.

The situation has become even more complicated due to the contradictory messages given by companies, both private and public, and by many managers, who frequently do not act as they preach or how they teach in seminars.

Many managers justify their actions by calling for urgent deadlines or, with regard to education and training, by budget limits and restrictions, frequently forgetting that money spent on education – and time and energy spent in consistent application of the principles taught – are not costs to be cut, but investments for a successful and long lasting future.

## THE IMPACT OF MODERN TECHNOLOGY

In addition to everything described above, modern technology is dramatically changing the affect of time and space on people at various levels. This takes place

- physically, due to the dichotomy between biorhythms and technological rhythms;
- emotionally, due to the increasing anxiety generated by frantic rhythms and fictitious urgencies;
- cognitively, due to the need to absorb more concepts, new ideas and new information in less time than ever before.

## MANAGEMENT THEORIES AFFECT ADULT TRAINING AND EDUCATION

In the last three to four decades many management theories placed people at the centre of the organization as the key asset for success. The leading principle was: if you foster people's motivation, responsibility, empowerment, and give them recognition and rewards, the company will grow and flourish.

Leadership was to be authoritative, not authoritarian, and also participative; the creativity of the employees was to be liberated and encouraged, and their participation in the efforts of the company was instrumental to its growth.

Now the increasing importance of finance with respect to real economy has changed such a perspective: the bottom line results have frequently become the only leading criteria for managing a company, and people are reduced to a mere productivity factor (the name itself, "human resources", reveals this anti-human philosophy).

## THE EDUCATORS' AND TRAINERS' RESPONSIBILITY

As I stated above, seminar students often seek personal guidance and support well beyond the specific content of the seminars. Therefore adult educators and trainers are called to face and overcome great challenges:

- ability to identify and understand evolutionary megatrends and anticipate their occurrence, helping the audience achieve similar understanding in the seminars they attend. This is not an easy task for the educator, and requires a multidisciplinary approach and a global vision of reality;
- developing new meta-competencies, especially in terms of social and emotional intelligence. Educators have to act as coaches and counsellors, not only trainers;
- be prepared and determined to help the people they train and educate to cope with such changes;
- identify new languages and new trustworthy messages which may have a positive impact on people's self-confidence and psychological balance;
- be an example of the possibility to live and operate in this complex world without losing course;
- helping people find the necessary resources within themselves to achieve all this, without indulging into magic formulas.

## SOME PERSONAL EXPERIENCES

During the past year I have had some rewarding experiences while volunteering, putting the above-described ethos into practice. For example, I have given workshops on the theme of self-marketing, which is aimed at suggesting an effective approach to self-introduction in job searching.

In my workshops, I combined techniques typical for outplacement methodology, where I taught my students how to develop an effective approach to self-presentation, but with deep reflections on identification of one's own talents and competencies, and on development of self-esteem and self-confidence.

Another interesting experience is a long-distance mentoring program, promoted by some friends within one of my professional associations, i.e. Manager Zen: once every month I have a long-distance phone conversation with my mentee, a young entrepreneur, and the topics vary from business to personal development and individual growth in response to my mentee's needs.

In both cases the results have been quite satisfactory in terms of people participation and growth.

In this sense, the activity of educators and trainers has acquired in my view an ethical and social responsibility greater than ever before, but at the same time it makes adult education and training a very fascinating job!



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