

## Editorial

At a global level, social and economic developments, the rapid development of science and technology, and competitiveness in the workplace, bring education and knowledge to the center of the aspirations and needs of individuals, organizations, and societies. Lifelong learning is considered necessary, and Adult Education's field seeks to respond to these challenges by promoting activities for the development of knowledge, skills and attitudes, which are essential both as professional abilities, but also as quality factors for life and work. This highlights the importance of embedding within the individual and social consciousness, as well as in the culture of organizations and institutions in the scientific, educational, and work sectors, the significance of lifelong learning through the life span for the economic, social, cultural, political, and personal development. Adult Education's initiatives and programs, regardless of their thematic and instrumental significance, involve a critical and reflective approach, aiming at the transformation of mental habits and assumptions of learners, to reveal deeper aspects of adult learning.

This 7<sup>th</sup> issue of the journal ADULT EDUCATION *Critical Issues* presents interesting cases and studies from the international and Greek level of political, organizational and educational contexts.

In their article, **Maria Christou**, **Martha Logothetou** and **Chrysa Manthou** attempt to highlight, the perennial issue of symbiosis with a critical analysis of its patterns, as they emerge in the tragedy "Electra" by Euripides, linked to works of art within a didactic intervention that was in the Self-Education Group of the H.A.E.A. Part of the "Transformative Learning through Aesthetic Experience" method and art processing techniques are presented in their paper, aiming to enhance the emergence of emotions, critical reflection and self-reflection of the adult participants when approaching the tragedy.

The role of imagination in provoking critical reflection and transformative learning through art, as an example deriving from teachers' training in surrealist poetry is presented by **Sofia Kalogridi**. In her paper she presents the views of 12 primary education teachers who participated in an educational workshop entitled: *The difficulty in approaching surrealist poetry within the classroom and the transformation of the teachers' views through art. The role of imagination.* The aim of the workshop was to harness the power of imagination to stimulate critical thinking and transform the teachers' dysfunctional views over teaching surrealist poetry at school. The training method was the '*Transformative learning through an aesthetical experience*' launched by A. Kokkos and poems by Miltos Sahtouris from his collection 'Το σκεύος' (The Utensil) were used. The teachers – trainees processed poetry and released their imagination, a skill significantly important to develop at least for specific purposes in transformative learning, which enabled them to discover 'hidden' meanings within the words of the poem and in particular 'reading' the images that play a dominant role in surrealist poetry. Therefore, by interpreting words, symbolisms, surprises, ended up by reviewing their initial views regarding the difficulty of understanding and teaching surrealist poetry.

**Chrysoula Gkevorkian** and **Anna Tsiboukli** in their paper focus on organizational learning as a strategic means for the development of human resources and the improvement of the work environment. They present a case study for distinguished businesses with the best workplace in Greece. They argue that modern organizations' objective to acquire a long-term competitive advantage through the training of their staff, so that they may cope with the requirements of organizations' complex and unstable environment by transforming into Learning Organizations. The aim of the writers is to reveal whether the awarded companies in Greece, in terms of working environment, provide learning opportunities to their employees within their working environment. In their research they followed the quantitative method, and a reliable questionnaire was filled by 80 employees, who work for an awarded company as one of the best companies in Greece, certified by an international organization called "Great Place to Work". The DLOQ-Dimensions of the Organization Learning Questionnaire with 55 items, was selected, to evaluate the dimensions of organizational learning and organizational performance. The findings of the research indicate that the selected company has the characteristics of a Learning Organization and that the adoption of the seven dimensions of this theory has a positive impact on organizational performance. Furthermore, results show that the company managed to develop a learning culture required for the development and training of human resources, to increase its performance.

**Nikolaos Pappas** studied experiential learning during in-service training in Psychopedagogical Centers via a qualitative study, aiming to explore the contribution of experiential learning to acquiring new knowledge and skills due to the application of empirical and experiential techniques within in-service training programs. The researcher, using a qualitative approach, interviewed a sample of twenty (20) employees in the Psychopedagogical Centers in Greece, in order to identify and analyze their views and perceptions on experiential learning and their possible link to work efficiency. The results confirm the importance of acceptance and experiential learning methods, mainly through activities and participatory forms of action linked to activities implemented in the actual workplace. Active participation plays a significant role to the critical reflection on the changes of their assumptions as well as the acquisition of abilities in the workplace.

**Styliana Pileidi Konizou** attempts a historical review on evolution regarding Adult Education in Cyprus. The article includes data from the Cyprus State Archive, and it is divided into three main historical phases, linked to historical documents related to the educational revolution in policies during the English Occupation (1950-1960), the Independence Period (1960-1974), and the Turkish Occupation (1974-to date). The primary research data are then related to the history of Cyprus literature. The historical review reveals a clear correlation between historical experiences and educational changes regarding how these changes have affected and continue to affect adults as learners and it ends up with the contemporary challenges that Adult Education currently faces in Cyprus.

**Venetia Nouri** in her paper critically examines the role of Centers for Teaching and Learning (CTLs) in enhancing learning outcomes within higher education institutions. These centers are pivotal in fostering effective teaching environments, enhancing faculty capabilities, and ultimately improving student learning outcomes. The paper

delves into the theoretical underpinnings that inform CTL practices, highlighting the influence of adult learning theories, transformative learning, and critical pedagogy on faculty development initiatives. It assesses CTLs' strategies in course design and student assessment, discussing the practical challenges such as funding limitations and resistance to pedagogical shifts. Moreover, it explores the broader implications of CTLs on institutional policies and the integration of technology in teaching. The paper proposes strategic enhancements for CTLs, including increased funding, policy reform, and leveraging international collaborations to enrich teaching practices.