

Adult Educators' Core Competences

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Abstract:

Which competences do professional adult educators need? This research note discusses the topic from a comparative perspective, finding that adult educators' required competences are wide-ranging, heterogeneous and complex. They are subject to context in terms of national and cultural environment as well as the kind of adult education concerned (e.g. basic education, work-related education etc.). However, it seems that it is possible to identify certain competence requirements which transcend national, cultural and functional boundaries. This research note summarises these common or "core" requirements, organising them into four thematic subcategories: (1) communicating subject knowledge; (2) taking students' prior learning into account; (3) supporting a learning environment; and (4) the adult educator's reflection on his or her own performance. At the end of his analysis of different competence profiles, the author notes that adult educators' ability to train adult learners in a way which then enables them to apply and use what they have learned in practice (thus performing knowledge transfer) still seems to be overlooked.