

Priority Directions for Facilitating Lifelong Learning in Armenia

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Abstract

This study aims to identify the priority areas for implementing lifelong learning in Armenia. A four-stage project-based learning method was applied in the context of the research; a total of 164 respondents participated in the survey and interviews, including educators, high school students, and students from pre-vocational educational institutions across four regions in Armenia. The analysis of responses to the questionnaire revealed the perceived importance of the teacher training, quality standards, programs, and educational materials. Additionally, external factors were considered, such as cooperation at both local and international levels, the need to update the material-technical base and incorporating new technologies, particularly digital ones. A key takeaway from this analysis is the unanimous agreement among participants on the essential need to embrace lifelong learning and to pursue the necessary reforms of the educational system in Armenia.

Keywords

Lifelong learning; project-based learning method; training; cooperation; educational programs; new educational technologies.

Abstrakt

Cílem této studie je určit prioritní oblasti pro realizaci celoživotního učení v Arménii. V souvislosti s výzkumem byla použita metoda projektového vyučování ve čtyřech stupních; průzkumu a rozhovorů se zúčastnilo celkem 164 respondentů, včetně pedagogů, středoškoláků a studentů z institucí předškolního vzdělávání ve čtyřech regionech Arménie. Analýza jejich odpovědí odhalila všeobecné vnímání důležitosti následujících faktorů: vzdělávání učitelů, standardů kvality, programů a vzdělávacích materiálů. Kromě toho byly zohledněny vnější faktory, jako je spolupráce na místní i mezinárodní úrovni, potřeba aktualizace materiálně-technické základny a začlenění nových technologií, zejména digitálních. Hlavním výstupem této analýzy je jednomyslná shoda účastníků na zásadní potřebě přijmout celoživotní vzdělávání a pokračovat v nezbytných reformách vzdělávacího systému v Arménii.

Klíčová slova

Celoživotní vzdělávání; metoda projektového vyučování; školení; spolupráce; vzdělávací programy; nové vzdělávací technologie.

Introduction

Contemporary life brings countless challenges, making flexibility essential. To significantly succeed in the present day means to be tough, adaptable, and committed to lifelong learning. While many countries recognize the importance of lifelong learning, their approaches to implementing it vary widely. These differences are influenced by each society's unique needs, educational policies, and the financial resources available. The final goal is to create a supportive environment that encourages continuous growth and learning for everyone. Nowadays, in the Republic of Armenia, the attempts to integrate lifelong learning is still in the very early stage of development.

The concept of "Lifelong Learning" (LLL) is essential to achieving the fourth goal of the UN's 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development: "Ensuring inclusive and equitable quality education and promoting lifelong learning opportunities for all," as outlined in the UN General Assembly Resolution, Transforming our World. The essence of education is a lifelong journey, including various levels of learning, skills, abilities, and opportunities for development. The UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning (UIL) plays an important role in shaping policies and implementing the concept of lifelong learning (Cinque et al., 2021). Through the exchange of experiences in planning and managing educational systems, UNESCO supports countries in providing quality education for individuals throughout their lives (Delors, 1996). As our society continues to evolve, the challenge of helping individuals integrate into the community grows more important. From an early age, people learn social values and experiences as they navigate different stages of socialization, especially through lifelong learning (Billet, 2018).

Recent theories suggest that mental processes involved in learning are not just about transferring knowledge or understanding information; they are heavily shaped by the surrounding environment, including the cultural values of a specific area and its economic status. In this regard, communication plays a vital role, especially in the context of long-term learning (A memorandum, 2000; Poghosyan et al., 2019). The diminishing relevance of traditional educational environments like classrooms and auditoriums signals a shift in how we view education. This change necessitates the exploration of new pathways for skill development that extend beyond these conventional settings, focusing on informal learning techniques. Lifelong learning stands out as an important means for acquiring and integrating new skills (State Programme, 2022; Lifelong Learning, 2009). Thus, when developing policies for educational advancement and reform, it is crucial to consider the historical, social, economic, and demographic factors, along with the geographical context of the country. In the modern era, the importance of lifelong learning is on the rise, serving a critical role in addressing global challenges such as inequality, poverty, climate change, and national security. The execution of this concept and strategy can vary widely from one nation to another, shaped by community needs, educational policies, and levels of funding. By 2030, there are plans to significantly increase the number of young people and adults who possess relevant skills, including technical and professional competencies, to support their employment and entrepreneurial efforts under favourable conditions (Delors, 1996). It is essential to create a comprehensive strategy that guarantees lifelong learning opportunities for everyone, taking into account the historical and socio-economic factors that shape educational policy development at all levels. Consequently, nearly all European countries have shifted from adult education to continuing education, ultimately adopting the concept of lifelong learning. This education is provided through structured programs offered by educational institutions, both in workplace environments and formal settings (Pipoyan, 2018). Our research focuses on examining both international and local experiences, considering the potential for transitioning to lifelong learning in Armenia and identifying key priority areas. Two decades ago, the idea that people over thirty could pursue higher education or switch careers was seen as quite unusual in Armenian society. Today, however, this concept has gained significant traction. In the past, individuals typically sought long-term employment with a single organisation after finishing their education, engaging in only a handful of training programs. Yet, with the rapid evolution of communication and technology, recent university graduates are finding it increasingly difficult to adapt to the new environment. They must continuously learn and develop new skills to stay relevant (Korshunov et al., 2019). Armenia officially announced its commitment to the concept of "Lifelong Learning" back in 2009, emphasising

the importance of sustainable development and enhancing human capital. However, it wasn't until November 16, 2022, that the law titled "On the approval of the state program for the development of education in the Republic of Armenia until 2030" (Chen, 2016) was enacted. Following this, in 2023, the Government approved a plan of activities based on this law. The activities outlined in the plan mainly aim to create supportive conditions and environments for lifelong learning for both adults and youth (Kulya et al., 2016). As a result, the implementation of lifelong learning in the Republic of Armenia is still in its early stages. A successful shift to this system requires innovative educational approaches across different levels and forms (formal, non-formal, and informal) with flexible connections. These mechanisms should ensure individual mobility within the education system and between education and the labour market.

The goal of our research is to identify key areas for implementing lifelong learning in Armenia. To accomplish this, we have outlined the following tasks:

1. Examine the foundational theories and worldwide practices of lifelong learning, incorporating perspectives for Armenia.
2. Explain the importance of adopting lifelong learning in the context of Armenia.
3. Increase the understanding of educators, particularly in pre-vocational educational institutions throughout various regions of Armenia, about lifelong learning by leveraging modern educational technologies and methods.
4. Identify the main priorities for implementing lifelong learning in Armenia.
5. Develop suggestions for the effective implementation of lifelong learning.

As part of our study, we organized a series of seminars and discussions, involving educators and students from high schools and pre-vocational educational institutions across four regions of Armenia: Tavush, Lori, Yerevan, and Aragatsotn. These efforts were designed to promote close collaboration with educational leaders and encourage meaningful dialogues between educators and students. A total of 164 participants, including educational leaders, educators, and students, took part in the seminars, ensuring comprehensive engagement and highlighting the importance of the topic in the conversation. The choice of regions was influenced by the density of educational institutions, their proximity to borders, and various socio-economic considerations.

Literature analysis

The analysis of literature highlights the importance of thoroughly understanding lifelong learning, drawing insights from both international and local research, collaborative initiatives, and the experiences of developed countries. Lifelong learning refers to the ongoing process of acquiring and updating knowledge, skills, abilities, and social interactions throughout an individual's life. This encompasses a variety of educational opportunities, including formal, non-formal, and informal education, as acknowledged in global practices (Parkyn, 1973; Melkonyan, 2018). According to international perspectives, lifelong learning is seen as a series of educational activities designed to improve personal, civic, social, and job-related skills (Making lifelong, 2022; Dallaqyan et al., 2018). It is viewed as a flexible, diverse, and accessible journey that takes place at different stages of life and within any community, connecting the educational, social, and labour sectors to provide numerous learning options (UNESCO, 2023). The European Commission outlines four main goals of lifelong learning: improving life satisfaction, encouraging active citizenship, supporting social inclusion, and enhancing adaptability, which go beyond just economic and professional aspects (The 2030 Agenda, 2015). The idea of lifelong learning is becoming increasingly popular worldwide, especially in European nations, where there is a wealth of discussions, research, publications, and program development on the topic. Historically, ongoing and systematic education has played a crucial role in personal growth and societal advancement, highlighting the significance of adult education in developed and civilized societies (Melkonyan, 2016; Dallaqyan et al., 2018). UNESCO

emphasizes the importance of literacy, learning, and the planning of new educational initiatives as key focus areas (The Future, 2019). A thorough analysis of the literature indicates a global trend towards long-term education and lifelong learning, with numerous European nations and China adopting this approach, while also drawing lessons from various regions including Finland, Russia, France, and Norway. Lifelong education is viewed as a progressive journey that enhances individual potential through continuous development. Higher education is acknowledged as a fundamental element in fostering sustainable development and knowledge renewal in a rapidly changing world (Proposal, 2018). Finland serves as a prime example of effective lifelong learning practices, placing a strong focus on secondary schools that offer both general and pre-vocational education at the state level, all underpinned by a community-oriented, family-involved curriculum model (Action, 2023; Proposal, 2018). In Russia, the globalization of the economy and the increasing need for modern technologies have led to the establishment of private and corporate training centres for adults since the late 1990s, resulting in significant reforms in lifelong learning (Disterverg, 1959). Continuous professional training is deemed crucial in 28 countries for facilitating successful education and career advancement (Gasparyan et al., 2015). The idea of lifelong learning was first introduced by Danish theorist Paul Lengrand, who presented it to UNESCO, emphasising the individual as the core of educational processes (Sargsyan, 2018). Following this, George Parkin from New Zealand created a new conceptual model of lifelong learning tailored for various countries through experimental projects (The Future, 2019). The theory of lifelong education highlights learning as a continuous journey, breaking down the traditional divisions of life into educational, work, and post-work phases, while focusing on both individual and social dimensions of human activity (Making, 2022). The United Kingdom serves as a prime example of effective lifelong learning implementation, often seen as a model among developed nations. In the UK, lifelong learning is embraced across all societal levels, with active participation from the entire population. The government plays a crucial role by providing substantial support for lifelong learning initiatives, including free educational opportunities in various institutions. Direct state funding helps individuals gain new skills and knowledge. The UK's approach reflects a collective understanding between the government and the public that a prosperous society relies on education. Developed nations acknowledge that investing in education is essential for creating better opportunities for a dignified life, with each investment contributing to societal and economic growth (UNESCO, 2019).

Material and Research Methods

The materials and research methods used in our study are focused on general education (high schools) and pre-vocational educational institutions across four regions of Armenia: Tavush, Lori, Aragatsotn and Yerevan encompassing a total of 164 participants. Participants were selected based on the principle of including both the regions and the capital of the Republic of Armenia. Additionally, efforts were made to maintain a quantitative balance between regional and professional groups (i.e., teachers and experts). All participants were included in the research sample upon providing written consent (Table 1).

Table 1: Characteristics of the study sample (N = 164)

Characteristics of the sample		Number of persons	%
Gender of beneficiaries	Female	112	68,3
	Male	52	31,7
Age	16-20 years old	100	61
	30-40 years old	21	12,8
	40-60 years old	43	26,2
Position	Participants	100	61
	Lecturers	34	20,7
	Experts	30	18,3
Region	Tavush	40	24,4
	Lori	41	25
	Aragatsotn	42	25,6
	Yerevan	41	25

The selection of these education levels was carefully considered due to their importance in addressing vocational guidance challenges. The decision also took account factors such as limited financial resources and the time constraints imposed by the two-year study period.

A four-stage project-based learning approach, with each stage incorporating distinct strategies and methods was used in our study. A total of twelve three-day workshops were conducted across the four selected regions.

The project-based learning technology approach included the following stages: preparation, planning, research, and presentation of results (Avanesyan et al., 2022).

During the **preparatory stage**, both domestic and international literature on lifelong learning (LLL) was systematically reviewed through the processes of collection, classification, and thematic analysis. By collaborating with relevant specialists and experts, we were able to integrate domestic and international experiences in using digital educational technologies, which ultimately led to the development of comprehensive information databases. The objectives of the study were clarified, delineating the tasks for subsequent stages.

At this point, we conducted an expert evaluation involving 64 educators from general education and vocational training institutions, as well as experts in strategic planning and monitoring of educational programs. Participants were asked to identify the key priorities for lifelong learning (LLL), which were then classified according to the principle of social/personal engagement (Johnston, 2018). The answers of the participants underwent thematic analysis. The results of this method are presented below.

During the planning stage, educational materials were prepared for the participants, covering the history of lifelong learning and sharing experiences from various countries. We proposed several hypotheses on implementation of lifelong learning. Selections were made regarding the regions, educational institutions, and group leaders involved.

The seminars addressed several key topics, such as:

- Providing training for educators,
- The need to revise educational programs,
- Updating material technical base,
- Integrating new technologies (including digital ones),
- Fostering cooperation and partnerships with other countries and professional groups.

The main scientific hypothesis was that the priorities of lifelong learning are primarily shaped by the socially significant needs of individuals, such as social standing and personal status. We also proposed an additional scientific hypothesis in suggesting that the priorities of LLL among students in general education schools have some gender differences.

During **the research stage**, in-depth interviews were conducted using the workshop format to collect data on participants' awareness of lifelong learning. These interviews involved direct communication with educators, experts, and students from both general education and pre-vocational educational institutions. Five sets of questions were used in these in-depth interviews.

The research methodology included several stages and used a variety of techniques to collect and analyse data. Both quantitative and qualitative methods were used. Questionnaire were mixed: both open-response items and multiple-choice.

At the initial phase, participants provided general information such as gender, age, position, and contact details. Handouts and questionnaires were distributed to identify lifelong learning priorities. The questionnaire was developed around the priority areas identified through the expert evaluation process.

Responses were recorded in writing, which allowed for a later typological analysis of the qualitative data. Deadlines and tasks were clearly defined, and groups were formed, each developing its own work plan.

The second set of questions examined participants' perceptions, attitudes, and approaches to implementing lifelong learning.

The third set explored Armenia's potential for integrating into the global lifelong learning process.

The fourth set looked into the factors that hinder the implementation of lifelong learning, while the fifth set focused on discussing and identifying the priority areas for lifelong learning.

Materials for discussion were provided during seminars, and problematic scenarios were analysed using hypothesis and reasoning methods, stimulating lively debate.

During the presentation of results in the fourth stage, groups of participants presented their comments, suggestions, arguments, and conclusions in various formats such as posters, electronic documents, consultation documents, letters, guides and etc. The recorded indicators are summarized in the conclusions and provide a foundation for future research. Discussions ensued after each stage, consolidating recommendations and refining initial lifelong learning priorities.

Challenges emerged during the seminars and discussions with representatives from different regions of Armenia, largely because many were unfamiliar with lifelong learning processes. However, the dissemination of analytical materials enhanced their awareness. Active discussions created an environment where participants could present arguments, consider different opinions, and offer suggestions, leading to revisions of the proposal list.

Throughout the discussions, debates frequently emerged about the prioritisation of processes and addressing stereotypes. All interim questions were collected and analysed, forming the basis for the study's conclusions and results.

Results of the studies

In the initial preparation stage of the research, specialized experts in educational program monitoring and educators from general and pre-vocational education institutions were involved. The results of the expert assessment method are presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Ranking of LLL priorities by specialized experts and educators

Priorities of LLL (Lifelong Learning) education	Educators of general education and vocational training institutions.	Profile experts in planning and monitoring of lifelong learning (LLL).
Macro-priorities (economic development, globalization of society, development of intercultural communication).	2%	17%
Meso-priorities (positive dynamics in intergenerational relationships, increasing social authority and status of the older generation in the social environment).	61%	59%
Micro-priorities (positive dynamics in the perception of subjective well-being, life satisfaction, and enhancement of personal potential).	37%	24%

Table 2 illustrates how the expert assessment method not only helped gather insights from specialised but also allowed us to rank their evaluations according to the significance of the identified priorities. This revealed that all the specialists surveyed highlighted specific priorities for LLL, which, after classification, were grouped into three main areas based on the principle of social and personal involvement. The classification was made based on the participants' responses. In other words, the macro-level priorities included those directions of LLL development that address global changes in societies and international relations. At the meso-level, priorities that were important for maintaining and deepening forms of social coexistence within society and addressing the social needs of individuals were identified. At the micro-level, priorities representing importance for the growth of personal potential and mental health emerged. As a result, all experts emphasized that the least important directions for LLL learning development were those defining the macro-level priorities. Nevertheless, macro-level priorities were rated higher by specialized experts compared to educators from general educational institutions. Among both specialized experts and educators, the priorities at the meso-level, which have social significance within the social environment, were ranked the highest. The second place was occupied by the responses of experts and educators who evaluated the micro-level priorities, with a slight predominance of educators' responses. The difference in ratings between specialized experts and educators can be explained in terms of educators' personal involvement in the educational process, and thus their personal interest in ensuring such LLL learning priorities as positive dynamics in the perception of subjective well-being, life satisfaction, and the enhancement of personal potential. It should be noted that the age of the surveyed educators played a significant role in the predominance of this assessment, with the majority being aged 40-60 years.

This indicates that the closer a person approaches retirement age, the more they feel the need for LLL and the desire for self-realisation and social demand.

The results of the empirical research showed a high degree of consistency in the examined questions regarding the identification of LLL priorities. The level of consistency among the questions presented in the questionnaire showed a Cronbach's alpha level of 0,799. The data obtained from the analysis of questionnaire responses can also be used in future studies focused on examining LLL priorities across different social groups. The above-mentioned LLL priorities were studied among students, specialized experts, and educators. No significant differences were observed in the responses of the mentioned groups; therefore, the results are presented in summary statistics in the article. The results on the consistency of questions regarding priority areas were processed using the statistical program JASP 0.17.3.0. Below are the results of the reliability statistics for the identified variables (Frequentist Individual Item Reliability Statistics, Table 3).

Table 3: Frequentist Individual Item Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's α - 0.799		
Variables	If item dropped Cronbach's α	Item-rest correlation
Trainings	0.720	0.784
Cooperation	0.599	0.774
Need to change educational programs	0.725	0.787
Updating materials and technical base	0.546	0.553
Implementation of new technologies	0.206	0.812

The indicators of the variables were obtained through statistical software. In addition, they were also validated through thematic analysis, which revealed a relatively weak representation of the variable related to the implementation of new technologies among the LLL priorities.

As shown in Table 3, the categories of questions related to social cooperation, training, and educational programs were methodologically the most reliable. Notably, the group of questions concerning the implementation of new technologies exhibited the lowest consistency. Here, we are likely facing a stereotypical form of national thinking, where innovative LLL learning is mainly viewed through the lens of social communication and cooperation, while the innovative use of technologies is not seen as essential for the effective organization of LLL.

The analysis of the analytical and practical research revealed: The results were analysed using both interviews and surveys. They were further analysed through thematic analysis.

- The necessity of transitioning Armenia to lifelong learning.
- Factors that prevent the implementation of lifelong learning.
- Priorities for initiating the lifelong learning (LLL) process.

1. The need for Armenia to shift towards lifelong learning

is highlighted by current trends in global economic and social development, which require ongoing self-education and the acquisition of new knowledge and skills. Additional and lifelong learning, including non-formal education systems, play a crucial role in this context. However, in the Republic of Armenia, this sector is still developing (Chen, 2016; Kulya et al., 2016). Given the challenging geopolitical and socio-economic situation in Armenia, it is essential to effectively use human resources, prioritizing individual safety and ensuring continuous development.

In this environment, there is a growing need for new specialisations. The focus should be on acquiring knowledge, skills, abilities, and competencies that empower individuals of all ages to make independent decisions. This includes the necessity for ongoing training and the capacity to change professions in response to geopolitical and socio-economic demands. Therefore, lifelong learning (LLL) should be seen not just as a process of moving from one level to another or gaining specific skills, but as a comprehensive system of interconnected educational opportunities supported by professional educators (Gasparyan et al., 2015).

An analysis of national literature and a review of Armenia's legislative framework reveal that our country must more fully integrate into continuous education.

Our research has revealed the following conclusions: it is essential to consider the gender and age-specific characteristics of LLL is perceived, focus on prioritising collaboration and organise training sessions that enhance the functionality of these priorities.

2. Factors Preventing the Implementation of Lifelong Learning (LLL)

The research indicates that the transition of individuals between different educational levels and the acquisition of relevant skills is not fully effective in Armenia, mainly due to several factors:

- Socio-economic conditions in Armenia.
- Advancements in modern society.
- A lack of sufficient data on current and future labour market demands.
- Inadequate infrastructure for implementing and developing of lifelong learning (LLL), including the formalisation of informal education systems and the flexibility of the education system, etc.
- The absence of mechanisms to publicly recognize knowledge and skills acquired through informal and non-formal education.
- Limited collaboration and partnership among stakeholders.
- Insufficient training for educators.
- A lack of innovative educational materials and programs that meet the specific needs of the field (Avanesyan et al., 2022; Dallaqyan et al., 2018).
- Macro, micro and meso priorities identified in our research.

Given the highly centralised nature of Armenia's current educational system, there is a deficiency in social partnership and dialogue. The field of LLL requires collaboration among the government, various organisations, civil society, local government bodies, and other stakeholders. Such partnerships are regularly facilitated by UNESCO (Viyasari, 2016).

3. Priorities for Initiating the Lifelong Learning (LLL) Process:

According to an analysis of the questionnaire's "Priority Directions" answers shows that +31% of participants believe that teacher training is an important component in the learning process. Another group, comprising 25% of the total, emphasises the critical need of creating standards, programs, and educational materials. Furthermore, 22% of respondents pointed out the importance of fostering collaboration on local and global scale, while 13 % brought up the necessity of updating the material-technical base. Finally, 9% highlighted how important it is to incorporate new technology, particularly, digital ones (see Fig.1). All participants, in general, agreed that it is essential to make the shift to lifelong learning and implement the necessary reforms.

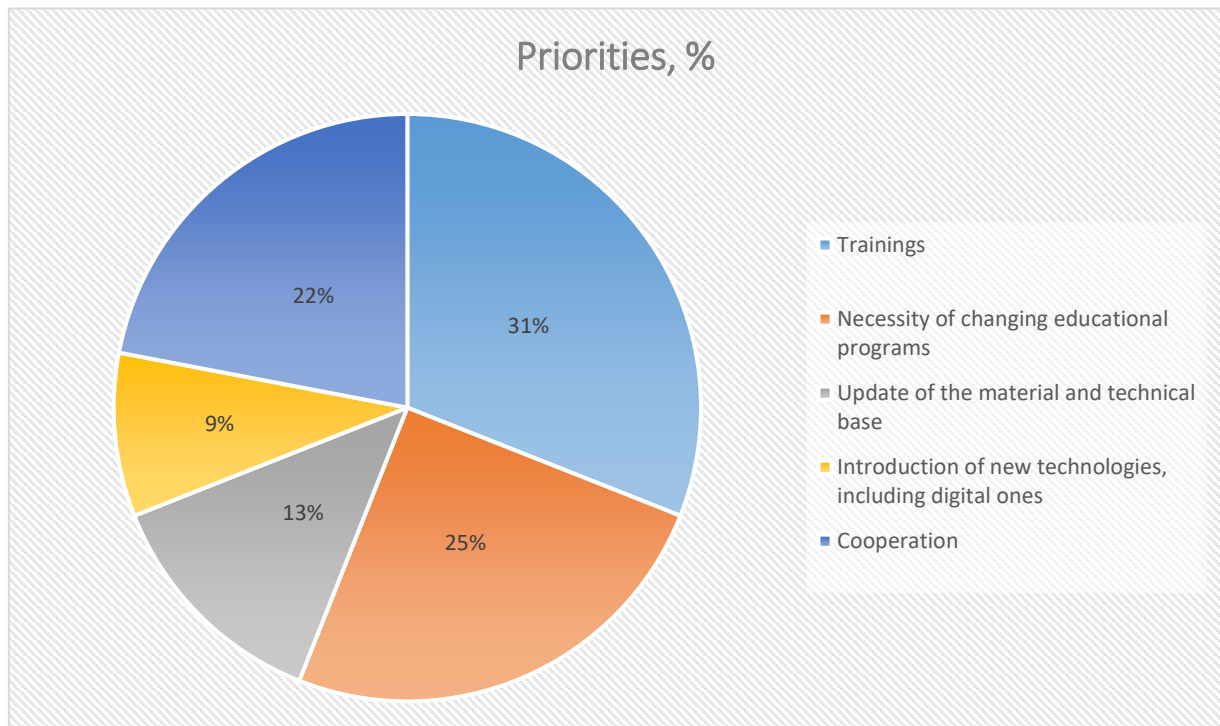


Figure 1: Priority Directions for Implementing LLL in Armenia

We performed a correlation study of participant replies, broken down by gender, in order to verify another scientific hypothesis.

The Spearman technique was used for this, and the outcomes are shown in Tables 4-5.

Table 4. Spearman's Rho, The group of girls - Spearman's Correlations

	Spearman's rho		p
Cooperation - Need to change educational programs	-0.492	**	0.007
Cooperation - Trainings	0.613	***	< .001
Cooperation - Updating the mat & tech base	0.795	***	< .001
Cooperation - Implementation of new technologies	-0.198		0.303
Need to change educational programs -Trainings	-0.196		0.307
Need to change educational programs - Updating the mat & tech base	-0.396	*	0.033
Need to change educational programs - Implementation of new technologies	-0.074		0.702
Trainings - Updating the mat & tech base	0.551	**	0.002
Trainings - Implementation of new technologies	-0.311		0.100
Updating the math & tech base - Implementation of new technologies	-0.294		0.121

* p < .05, ** p < .01, *** p < .001

Table 5: Spearman's rho, The group of boys - Spearman's Correlations

	Spearman's rho		p
Implementation of new technologies - Need to change educational programs	0.014		0.942
Implementation of new technologies - Updating the mat & tech base	-0.023		0.905
Implementation of new technologies - Trainings	-0.255		0.181
Implementation of new technologies - Cooperation	-0.198		0.303
Need to change educational programs - Updating the mat & tech base	0.294		0.122
Need to change educational programs - Trainings	0.691	***	< .001
Need to change educational programs - Cooperation	0.657	***	< .001
Updating the mat & tech base - Trainings	-0.030		0.879
Updating the mat & tech base - Cooperation	-0.067		0.731
Trainings - Cooperation	0.911	***	< .001

* p < .05, ** p < .01, *** p < .001

Discussion of Results

Some variations in determining LLL learning priorities were brought to light by the findings of empirical research done in different regions of the Republic of Armenia. Initially, we observe the variations in the priorities that were identified, both from our actual research and, on the one hand, from the theoretical examination of the literature. Our research revealed that in Armenian society, the primary need is for people to be socially involved and significant, whereas in developed nations, the emphasis is on bringing people into line with the demands of cutting-edge technologies. This is the main difference. The primary scientific hypothesis that the priorities of LLL education are mostly based on people's socially significant requirements, like social authority and social status, was validated by the empirical research's results.

It is evident from the data in Tables 4-5, there are certain gender differences among the responses of boys and girls regarding LLL learning priorities. In particular, girls associated the priority of collaboration primarily with training and the implementation of new material and technical resources, which was reflected in a strong positive correlation between these parameters. For boys, despite the preservation of the main positive correlation between the priorities of collaboration and training, some differences emerged in the priority interconnections. The main difference was noted in the positive correlation between the parameters of changes in educational and training programs and the communicative abilities of collaboration.

These data indicate the gender and age-related features of the formation of communication and collaboration skills, which were reflected in the results of the empirical research. Specifically, among girls, the need for LLL learning based on a well-established and developed material and technical base became more evident. In contrast, boys were more inclined to prioritize collaboration in the creative process of developing new educational programs. The findings of the research are crucial for the implementation of Lifelong Learning (LLL) in Armenia, as there is currently a need to strengthen both the material and technical infrastructure, as well as to introduce new educational technologies.

The necessity of reforming Armenia's educational system is highlighted by the examination of scientific literature (Belanger, 2021; Halinen, 2016; Lengrand, 1975). The following key tasks should be the main emphasis of Armenia's lifelong learning (LLL) reforms:

- Bridging the gap between formal qualifications and the quickly changing labour market.
- Modifying general norms and procedures for evaluating non-formal education.
- Creating successful collaborations between the government, private organisations, and civil society.
- Creating educational programs for informal education providers; and offering educators professional development.
- Developing educational courses for providers of informal education.
- Providing professional training for educators.

Our research indicates that transitioning to lifelong learning is recommended for Armenia. Key recommendations include:

- Ensuring the continuous training of educators in general education and pre-professional institutions to deliver lifelong learning services.
- Utilising both traditional and non-traditional teaching methods, as well as new educational technologies based on both domestic and foreign experiences.

- Establishing a methodological framework for developing educational materials.
- Promoting professional orientation and consulting activities aligned with strategic developments and modern labour market requirements.
- Establish close cooperation with the world's leading industrial and technological centres through integration into social networks and improvements in the socio-economic situation.

This approach will expand awareness of lifelong learning (LLL), update educational materials, enrich the bank of strategies and technologies, deepen ICT knowledge, and foster cooperation to study international experiences. Advanced training courses will be organised for educators, focusing on:

- Enhancing professional and entrepreneurial skills,
- Developing the ability to initiate and implement new projects,
- Fostering a desire to engage in new social initiatives,
- Improving skills in planning and executing collaborative efforts to build sustainable communities,
- Cultivating a commitment to lifelong learning to ensure the professional and personal growth of students.

Moving forward, our research will continue to develop a model for reconstructing and organising events based on both domestic and foreign experiences. This model aims to fundamentally transform traditional perspectives on education.

Conclusion

Education today is considered to be a continuous and interconnected journey rather than separate stages like primary, secondary, vocational, and adult education. Contemporary societal demands emphasize that today's students must possess not only knowledge but also essential competencies and strong competitiveness for expanding cooperation. Educational reforms are therefore geared towards equipping students with knowledge, skills, values, and perspectives essential for adapting to an uncertain and intricate future, while actively contributing to societal well-being through creativity and engagement. The ongoing global transformations necessitate the implementation of lifelong learning processes across various nations, thereby integrating their education systems into a cohesive whole.

The research team's analytical and practical studies on lifelong learning in Armenia highlight the urgent need to adopt this holistic approach. This article has analysed the implementations of lifelong learning processes in different countries, including Armenia, providing insights into their methodologies, offering recommendations, and identifying priorities. While most countries have embraced LLL concept, the strategies and methods of implementation exhibit significant variation, shaped by societal needs, educational policies, and available financial support. Presently, in the Republic of Armenia, the endeavour to integrate lifelong learning is in its nascent stages.

Recent study provides a vital base for developing and implementing modern educational strategies and policies in Armenia. This research on lifelong learning encompassed general and pre-professional education across four regions of the country, involving 164 educators and students, experts through lectures, seminars, and discussions. Analysis of responses to the questionnaire revealed perceived importance of factors to consider in the course of transformation of the Armenian education system. These findings show that the transition to LLL and reforms must begin with an

amendment to the curriculum and the organization of relevant trainings that take into account cooperation and the implementation of trainings, as well as new educational technologies... The reorganization of Armenia's national education system necessitates integrating formal, informal, and non-formal components. The educational process is no longer viewed as a series of distinct stages (primary, secondary, vocational, and adult education) but rather as a continuous and intricate journey. The analytical and practical research conducted by the authors in the field of lifelong learning in Armenia confirms the pressing need to transition to this educational format.

This conclusion synthesises the main points discussed in the text, providing a coherent summary of the research findings and implications for education in Armenia.

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