

Czech University of Life Sciences Prague

Faculty of Economics and Management

Department of Management



Diploma Thesis

**Lifelong learning – taking a degree in later
years**

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DIPLOMA THESIS ASSIGNMENT

Jana Marková

European Agrarian Diplomacy

Thesis title

Lifelong learning – taking a degree in later years

Objectives of thesis

The aim of the thesis is to evaluate the reasons why adults, 30yrs and higher, didn't finish their university degree and have now decided to finish it.

In addition, this thesis will identify the motivations behind commencing their studies in later years, both personal- and work-related issues.

Compare the experience of today's generation with finding a job. Is it easier with a university degree or working after high school.

Methodology

1. The theoretical part will be done through literature review.

The author intends to do the practical part by having discussions with several people rather than sending out questionnaires and analyzing the discussion based on basic questions that will help evaluate the reasons behind finishing a degree.

The proposed extent of the thesis

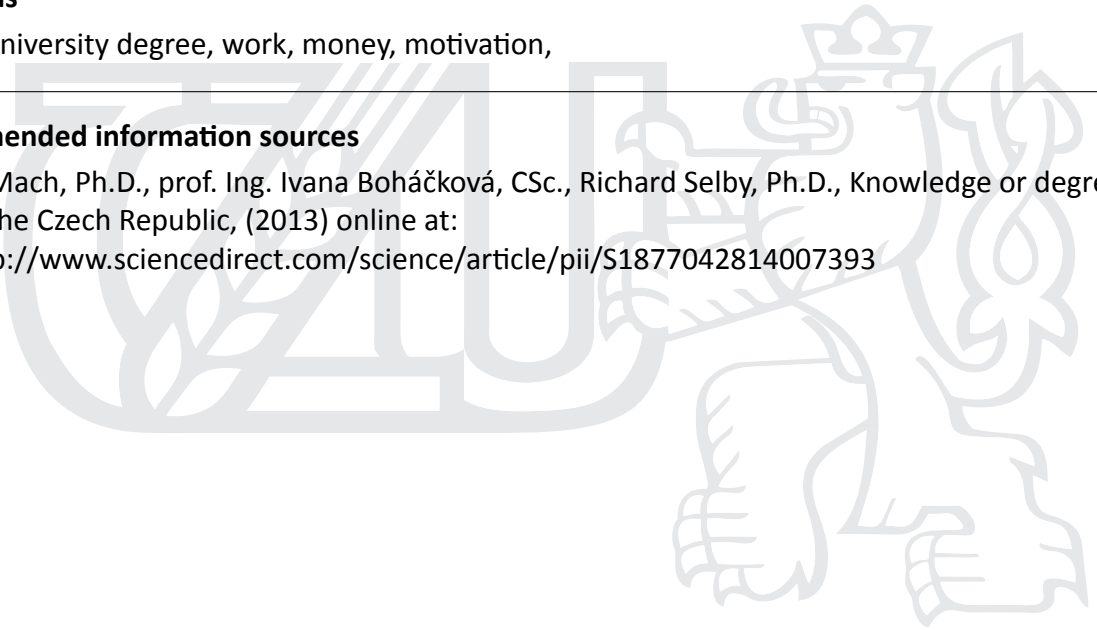
Approx 60 pages

Keywords

adults, university degree, work, money, motivation,

Recommended information sources

Ing. Jiří Mach, Ph.D., prof. Ing. Ivana Boháčková, CSc., Richard Selby, Ph.D., Knowledge or degree? Insight of the Czech Republic, (2013) online at:
<http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1877042814007393>



Expected date of thesis defence

2015/16 WS – FEM

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Declaration

I declare that I have worked on my diploma thesis titled “Lifelong learning – taking a degree in later years” by myself and I have used only the sources mentioned at the end of the thesis. As the author of the diploma thesis, I declare that the thesis does not break copyrights of any third person.

In Prague on 30.11.2015

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Acknowledgement

I would like to thank Ing. Richard Selby, Ph.D. for his advice and support during my work on this thesis.

Lifelong learning – taking a degree in later years

Celoživotní studium – získání vysokoškolského titulu v pozdějším věku

Summary

This diploma thesis, Lifelong learning – taking a degree in later years, is aimed at adult learners that lived under the communist regime in the Czech Republic and experienced the impact of communism on education. It also takes into consideration the views of today's learners on the educational system and the work environment. The theoretical part gives us an insight on the concept of lifelong learning, the position of the EU and the Czech Republic on this case, defines the basis of HR management and its policies, states the main motivation theories and gives us an insight on the economic and political situation before 1989.

The practical part analyses the reasons why adults could not continue with their studies after secondary school, their motivations for returning to university in later years to obtain a university degree and their overall view on today's importance of having university degrees and the job market. It also analyses the reactions of today's learners and their motivations to education and the importance of university degrees in today's world.

Keywords: Lifelong learning, adult education in the Czech Republic, motivation, 1989, communism, today's learners

Souhrn

Diplomová práce “Celoživotní studium – získání vysokoškolského titulu v pozdějším věku“ se zaměřuje na vzdělávání dospělých v České republice v období komunismu a všeobecně vliv komunismu na vzdělávání. Zabývá se také názory a pohledy současných studentů na vzdělávací systém a trh práce. Teoretická část se zabývá problematikou celoživotního vzdělávání, všímá si pozice EU a České republiky vůči této problematice, definuje základy řízení lidských zdrojů a jeho politiky, představuje základní motivační teorie a zároveň dává náhled na ekonomickou a politickou situaci před rokem 1989.

Praktická část analyzuje důvody, které bránily mladým lidem pokračovat ve studiu po střední škole, jejich motivace k návratu ke studiu na univerzitě a získání vysokoškolského titulu v pozdějším věku a zároveň jejich pohled na potřebu získání vysokoškolského titulu v návaznosti na potřeby trhu práce. Analyzuje také reakce dnešních studentů a jejich motivaci ke studiu a důležitost získání vysokoškolského titulu v dnešním světě.

Klíčová slova: celoživotní vzdělání, vzdělávání dospělých v České republice, motivace, 1989, komunismus, dnešní studenti

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1. Introduction

In today's world the society is surrounded by innovations, technological development, globalisation and market enlargement. The society needs to keep up with the modernization and streamline and develop accordingly. The demands are set high and will keep growing for the new generations.

Lifelong learning is learning throughout life and a constant acquirement of knowledge and skills that one will practice throughout his lifetime. Education can be attained formally as well as informally, that is by absorbing new experience in life. The concept of lifelong learning proposes that everyone regardless of age, gender, marital status, religious background or ethnicity should embrace it.

Education is essential in today's world on the job market. Educated persons have better work possibilities, better positions in society and in the business environment. Education is also seen as a self-development tool through which persons develop their skills and gain a new perspective on the on-going changes. Having the correct educational level is crucial in the work environment. Educated persons have an advantage to survive the pressure they are exposed to in the growing environment. Adult learners seek education to deepen their knowledge and gain a modernized perspective on the field they practice. Today's learners seek education to become irresistible and wanted in the work environment. They seek to become the best amongst others and have the best position on the market.

Before the Velvet Revolution in 1989, the Czech Republic was under the pressure of the communist regime. It was up to the communists to decide if an individual was allowed to attend a school of his choice or not. The reasons for not being given the permission are mainly due to the wrong ideology, persecution in the family and any other activities that were not in line with those of communists. Therefore, after the fall of the communist regime adults had the possibility to get their university degree in later years. The motivations behind that can be both personal and work related. On the other hand, today's learners have free access to tertiary education and can choose freely to attend any university of their choice. But their motivations to attend university and get a degree are slightly different. Examining these motivations and the overall views on

education and the job market for both generations is essential for realising the importance of how the surrounding environment and society influence university education and education as a whole in today's world.

Education, as the tool of gaining knowledge, is vital in all stages of our lives. If we are deprived from the possibility to study, then we stagnate on the same position and our growth – personal and intellectual, is much slower. We need to be motivated from all sides in order keep up the pace of changes

2. Aims and Methodology

The aim of the diploma thesis is to evaluate the reasons and motivations as to why adults in later years, that is 30 and higher, have not gained their university degree straight after secondary school and have decided to return to university to get it now. In addition, this thesis will identify the motivations behind commencing their studies in later years, both personal and work-related issues. The thesis will also evaluate the situation of today's graduates regarding their motivations to study and get a university degree and their views and motivations towards the work environment.

It is essential to discover the basic features of lifelong learning in the Czech Republic, concentrating on the possibilities that adults have available. Many sources from books and research papers were used to clarify lifelong practices, motivations, human resource management and especially the situation before 1989, which was an essential time regarding education. The practical part is based on questionnaires and interviews with respondents. Questionnaires were given to adult students finishing their degree in later years, to students studying university of third life and also to today's students. They were aimed at discovering the motivation behind attending university, the reasons why adults could not continue with their studies and the connection between the education and work environment. Questionnaires and interviews were processed anonymously.

3. Introducing the concept of Lifelong Learning

3.1. Introduction

Lifelong learning is *“a process of gaining knowledge and skills that continues throughout a person’s life”*. [1]

In today’s world of globalisation, constant growth, and technology development we as people are unconsciously being taught. Every day the society learns something new. Information is what surrounds the everyday routine. It is this that requires the society to be educated, highly professional, qualified and responsible to cope with the demand. The traditional pattern of school – work – retirement is no longer seen as norm in today’s world. Today we see many individuals going from work back to education, educating themselves while working or being volunteers for education. [2, 3]

Lifelong learning (LLL) is seen as expanding and upgrading all existing educational providers such as schools and institutions of higher education. It also expands beyond the formal providers to incorporate all agencies, groups and individuals that are involved in any sort of learning activity. Lifelong learning also rests on the belief that individuals are self-directing which leads to them seeing a certain value for engaging in lifelong education. [2, 3, 5]

In September 2015, 193 world leaders have dedicated to 17 Global Goals for sustainable development to end extreme poverty, fight inequality and injustice and protect our planet by 2030. Education is essential to the accomplishment of every one of the goals. [4, 5]

Educated people reduce poverty and increase income. Education leads to better health. It prevents inequality and injustice. Educated people are more capable of making political decisions when it comes to voting for example. An educated society is more likely to make cities more safe, inclusive, sustainable and resilient and also they are more inclined to protect the environment by recycling, using resources more efficiently and being concerned about the environment itself. [4]

3.2. What is offered

3.2.1. EU's position

The European Union has had education in their policy ever since. As new and new countries have joined the European Union, the unemployment rate has gone up. Luckily the EU has had several policies and works on frameworks regarding education. The EU is also trying to decrease the level of unemployment throughout the member states. The forecast for 2025 is that there will be only 11.2% of employed people in jobs which require primary education, 44.7% will be employed in medium-skilled jobs and 44.1% will be enrolled in highly-skilled jobs. The increasingly complex and knowledge-intensive society calls for higher skill levels along with transversal skills, such as digital, language and entrepreneurial competences.

The EU, regarding adult learning, is working with 32 countries on the implementation of the European Agenda for Adult Learning. More adult learning can help Europe to overcome the economic crisis, keep the ageing workforce active and productive and meet the need for new skills. Currently the numbers of enrolled adults in adult learning is decreasing amongst member states but the EU has its strategies to convert the decrease into an increase. [6]

The Europe 2020 strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth recognises LLL and skills development as key elements in response to the economic crisis, to demographic ageing and the broader economic and social strategy of the EU. Enabling adults to improve their ability to adapt to the changing labour market and society is one of the major roles identified that can help achieve the Europe 2020 goals. Adult learning provides a means of up-skilling or reskilling those affected by unemployment and career transition. [6, 7]

In the EU there were also previous resolutions and discussions based on adult learning. The European Parliament Resolution in January 2008 urged member states to promote attainment of knowledge and to develop a culture of LLL. This was to be done by implementing policies for gender equality that are designed in a way to make adult learning more attractive. The Resolution of the Council and of the Representatives of Governments of member states in November 2008 highlighted the importance of

guidance as a continuous process which would enable people at any age and any stage of their life to identify their capacities, competences and interests to make educational, training and occupational decisions and to manage their life paths. The Council's conclusion in May 2009 established a strategic framework in which four objectives relating to LLL – quality and efficiency, equity, social cohesion and active citizenship, creativity and innovation – which is fully consistent with the Europe 2020 strategy. [7]

The EU takes into account that LLL starts at pre-school age and finishes with post-retirement. Adult learning is a vital component covering the entire range of formal, non-formal and informal learning activities, general and vocational which are undertaken by adults. Adult learning can make a significant contribution to meeting one of the Europe 2020 goals which is concentrated on reducing the early leaving from education and training to be below 10%. Another contribution which adult learning can make to economic development by strengthening productivity, competitiveness, creativity, innovation and entrepreneurship should be recognised and supported. One goal that should be met is to ensure that at least 40% of young adults complete tertiary or equivalent education. This would lead to developing a competitive economy based on knowledge and innovation which is capable to use its resources and human capital to a maximum. [7]

The EU therefore calls for:

- The enhancement of possibilities for adults to have access to high-quality learning possibilities at any time in their life, in order to promote personal and professional development, adaptability, employability and active participation in society.
- The development of a new approach to adult learning and training which focuses on outcomes and responsibility from learning and autonomy is also needed.
- Strengthening awareness among adults that learning is a lifelong venture which should be pursued at regular intervals during their lives and especially in times of unemployment or career transition.
- Strengthening greater awareness amongst employers that adult learning contributes to promoting productivity, competitiveness, creativity, innovation and entrepreneurship.

- Encouragement of higher education institutions to embrace adult learners as a means of displaying social responsibility and greater openness towards the community at large.

The European Agenda for Adult Learning defines the focus for European cooperation in adult education policies. Member states are invited to focus those areas that are most relevant for the given country. There are four common objectives identified in the agenda for strategic framework – Education & Training 2020. [6, 9]

Firstly, make LLL and mobility a reality. This could be met by focusing on stimulating demand and developing comprehensive and easily accessible information and guidance systems which are aimed at raising awareness and motivation among potential learners. Also promote the involvement of employers in workplace-based learning with a view to develop job specific skills and broader skills thus creating a flexible work schedule. [8]

Secondly, improve the quality and efficiency of education and training. To build a strong adult learning sector it is advised to focus on improving the quality of adult education staff and to ensure a feasible and transparent system for the funding of adult learning. It is also necessary to focus on the developing mechanisms that ensure that educational provision better reflects labour market needs and therefore provides possibilities for acquiring qualifications and developing new skills that will increase people's capacity for adaption to the changing environment. [8]

The third objective concentrates on promoting equity, social cohesion and active citizenship through adult learning. It is essential to improve adult literacy and numeracy skills, develop digital literacy and provide opportunities for adults to develop the basic skills and forms of literacy to cope in the modern society. The enhancement of learning opportunities for older adults in the context of active ageing – volunteering, intergenerational learning, exploit knowledge, skills and competences of older people – for the benefit of society as a whole. Addressing the learning needs of people with disabilities and those in specific situations is also essential to focus on. [6, 9]

The enhancement of creativity and innovation of adults and their learning environment is the last objective. The focus on enhancing the role of cultural organisations, civil society, sporting organisations and other institutions as creative and innovative settings

for non-formal and informal adult learning is needed if countries want to develop new pedagogies and creative learning environments in adult learning. [9]

3.2.2. Position of the Czech Republic

For the Czech Republic to achieve success in the modern, dynamically developing economic environment it must concentrate on the key pillar which is particularly the ability of inhabitant to be able to compete on the global, rapidly changing labour market. Currently the Czech labour force is recognized for its qualifications, skills, precise work and flexibility but it must also concentrate on the importance of sustainable development and its potentials. The establishment of a motivating, legal-economic environment which allows funds to be invested effectively is a precondition for the development of LLL. Investments into LLL must be seen as a development investment with the highest priority.

Several strategic documents of the CR have touched the topic of LLL. This is essential as it acts as a promotion of the development of human potential as one of the basic factors for sustainable economic growth of knowledge-based economies. [10]

- The National Strategic Reference Framework of the CR 2007 – 2013 points out the inadequately developed system of further education and sets out recommendations how to eliminate the imperfection. Great emphasis is placed on LLL as an important factor in the creation of an open, flexible and cohesive society, which is one of the necessary prerequisites for increasing competitiveness.
- The National Lisbon Program 2005 – 2008 (National Program of Reforms in the CR) summarised that reforms in the area of education development improve the quality of the labour force and extend the potential for education. It also mentions that there is a necessity of increasing the level of participation of older persons in the labour market. Also the modernization of the employment services should assist in improving further education of unemployed and job seekers.
- The Strategy of Regional Development of the CR places the development of human potential amongst critical opportunities. This development will rely on strengthening the active employment policy, especially programs for young

people, people with health disabilities and the long-term unemployed, development of further education and LLL.

- The National Innovation Strategy prepared in 2004 concentrates on further education/LLL throughout the document emphasizing that education must be a constant priority.
- The Strategy of Human Resources Development of 2003 is the most comprehensive document which points out fundamental and material reasons why the HR development and its main instrument LLL have not been successfully implemented.
- The National Strategy of Education for Sustainable Development (2010) is a starting point for the creation of educational programs and is an inspiration for cooperation with educational institutions at a local and regional level.

The Czech Republic's main concern regarding education is the ageing population. There has to be something done with this situation due to the constant development. In the year 2005 the share of inhabitants aged 50 – 64 with basic or lower education was 17% compared to 7% of the age group 25- 39 years. The share of persons with tertiary education was 10.5% for the older population compared to 12.3% of the younger population. Older persons do not have the key qualifications which complicate their transition from one job to another and make the adaption to the labour market also slower. The older population is not sufficiently motivated to acquire and keep new jobs. [10, 11]

The situation of the initial educational environment in the Czech Republic is crucial to identify as initial education determines whether the participant will continue in further education. There is a strong tradition in recreational learning in the Czech Republic, however studies have shown that only 10% of children in the age of 8 -14 do not have any hobbies and most have just two or three activities per week. This is may be due to the growing technology boom. Regarding secondary education, the Czech Republic has one of the highest rates of participation in secondary education in the EU. In 2004 there were 94% of participants aged 25 – 34 which had at least secondary education. Thus, the CR had met the objectives of the Lisbon strategy.

Dropping out of school is also far less common compared to other countries, however there has been a slight increase in recent years of leaving school prematurely. Students that leave the educational system with only basic education are 6 – 8%. The reason for premature leaving is mainly due to social background of students. One of the main reasons why students leave after basic level from school is due to the fact that their parents also have only basic education. In order to create a firm basis for LLL, it is necessary for young people to finish the initial vocational system with a qualification allowing them to be employed in the labour market and also give them the possibility to continue in further education. [10]

The Czech tertiary system has undergone fundamental changes and dynamic development over the past fifteen years. After November 1989 six new universities were established across the Czech Republic. Higher Educational Institutions (HEI) provides two types of study. Firstly, they provide a certified study program where graduates obtain a university education. Secondly, they provide programs for LLL free of charge or programs oriented towards an occupational or recreational which are paid. The HEI awards the graduates certificates in the framework of LLL. Nonetheless, education of adults at HEI remains of lesser interest. The number of graduates of HEI aged over 26 is decreasing possibly due to the fact that they no longer have the right to payment of social and health insurance from the state. However, the importance of the need for lifelong extension and post-graduate study is increasing for practitioners with secondary and higher education. The programs offered in lifelong education programs should be oriented towards specific needs of the work environment. [10]

The range of courses and programs for LLL provided by HEI is intended for the general public as recreational study but also for specialists for supplementing or updating previous professional education. A large share of HEI designs their study programs for further education in the sense to react to the demand for obtaining higher education qualifications amongst productive adults. The popularity of education for seniors at public higher educational institutions is seen as favourable. These “third-age universities” are becoming a traditional activity and are welcome by the seniors. Supporting the education of older people is a crucial standpoint on the labour market. The ageing of the population will gradually lead to participation of older persons in the

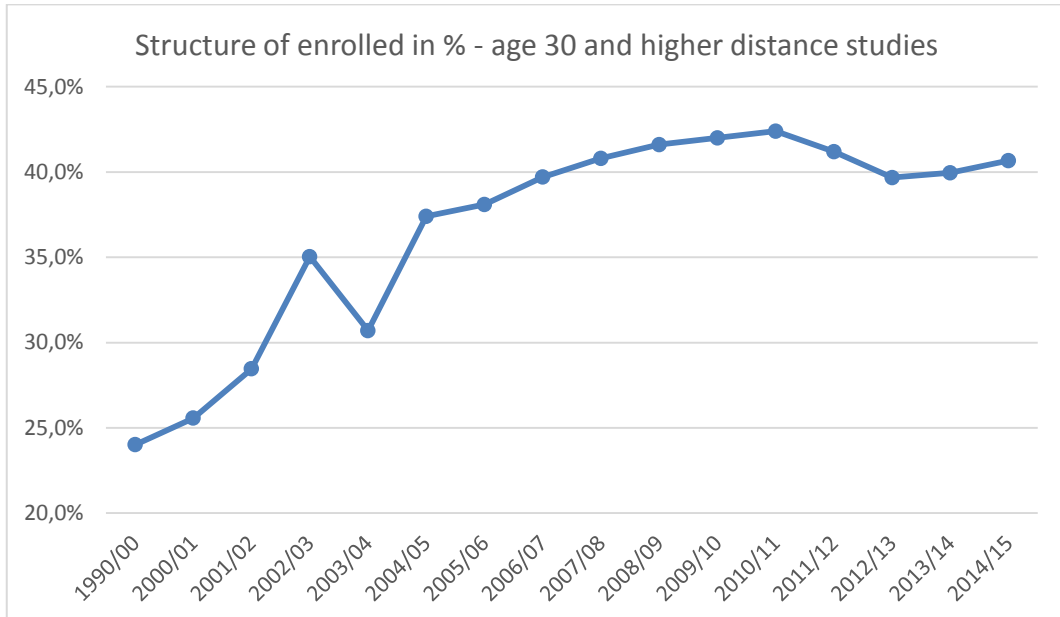
working environment or later retirement. It is also evident that their effective placement in the labour market will also require an extension and diversification of the range of further education provided by educational institutions in the tertiary sector. [10, 11]

The preferred orientation in adult education is the following [11]:

- Foreign language: in the form of evening classes or even staying abroad
- Information and communication technologies, especially with senior students
- Other individual education in the field
- Requalification – for the unemployed with individual preferences, specifying a new direction of requalification can be difficult for adults with longstanding experience.
- Getting a university degree
- Fields of interest, e.g. music, dance, decoration, etc.

Adults getting their university degree in later years will in most cases enrol in combined study programs. Combined studies are a combination of present/full-time and distance studies. This means that the study program takes place usually four days a month, Friday and Saturday, in which the professor goes over the core of the given subject and the rest is up to the adult to study in their free time. It can be complemented with other forms of distance learning such as e-learning or consultations with the professor. At the end of each semester adults must pass an exam from each subject as it is with full-time studies. The duration of combined studies is the same as present studies. Bachelor degrees take three years and master degrees two years. The advantages of combined studies are those that it is less time consuming – just four days a month and then time for home-study, adults are able to continue with their work routine and no lost hours sitting in classrooms. There are twenty-six public universities, two state owned universities and forty-four private universities. In almost all of these universities there is a possibility to choose a course for combined studies.

Figure 1: Structure of enrolled distance studies student in % - age 30 and higher



Source: Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports

As we can see in graph 1, from 1990 the percentage of enrolled students in distance studies has dramatically increased in three years. For the past eight years the level of distance learners has been at around 40% which is a good sign as there has not been any decline in enrolment but persons of higher age have tendencies to get educated.

3.3. Forms of education

3.3.1. Formal, informal and non-formal forms of education

Formal education is given in school, college and educational institutions. It is a planned action which is limited to specific periods or stages. There are certain rules and regulations that need to be followed and it is presented in a form of systematic, planned and guided instructions. There is a requirement from students of a minimum classroom attendance and in return they will receive formal education from specially qualified teachers who follow a well-defined and systematic curriculum with certain aims and objectives. The outcome of formal education leads to obtaining degrees and diplomas based on the achieved levels of education. There is no doubt that in today's world for most part teachers pretend to teach, students pretend to learn and institutions pretend to be really providing the interests of students and of the society. [12, 13]

On the other hand informal education is never organised. There are no set objectives with regards to learning and is never intentional. Informal learning is most often referred to as learning by experience. There is no conscious effort in taking part of education. The activities that provide informal education are visits to museums or institutions of similar kind, listening to radio broadcasting, watching educational or scientific themed TV programmes, reading magazines that are themed into science, education or technology, participating in contests of similar kind or voluntarily attending lectures or conferences. [12, 13, 14]

Non-formal education is derived from formal education and is based on the absence of at least one feature of formal education. Non-formal education takes place outside the walls of the educational institutions. Participants are led to non-formal education programmes as they offer the expertise that they hope to acquire and the necessary support for a better understanding of their own selves and of their world. We can easily identify three educative processes that fall under non-formal education: correspondence learning, distance learning and open systems. [12, 13, 14]

Correspondence learning is a form of distance learning and was first mentioned in 1856. It is a form of education where the correspondence between student and teacher is done through e-mail, message boards or virtual learning systems. There is typically no set schedule offering great flexibility. [12]

Distance learning is based on non-contiguous communication, that is, the student is at a distance from the teacher for much, most or even all of the time. In some definitions it is referred to as the successor to correspondence learning. However, students do have to make occasional visits to their educational institution. There are no academic semesters. The students may at will discontinue studies whenever they need to or want to. [12]

Open systems refer to those systems which offer students a measure of flexibility and autonomy, to study the programmes of their choice when and where they wish and at a pace to suit their needs. [12]

4. Motivation theories and Barriers

Motivation as defined by the business dictionary: *“Internal and external factors that stimulate desire and energy in people to be continually interested and committed to a job, role or subject, or to make an effort to attain a goal. Motivation results from the interaction of both conscious and unconscious factors such as the (1) intensity of desire or need, (2) incentive or reward value of the goal, and (3) expectations of the individual and of his or her peers. These factors are the reasons one has for behaving a certain way”*. [15]

Motivation is what drives us forward. There are several factors that affect our decisions and behaviour. To obtain a high-performance we need highly motivated employees even in quite basic roles. There exist several theories which define the motivations in employees.

4.1. Motivation Theories

4.1.1. Taylorism

Frederick Taylor presented one of the first motivational theories in 1911. According to him, people were motivated purely by money which affected their work ethic. Taylor based his research on a car assembly industry where work was done on a production line and therefore quantity was the key. Employees were given a position on the production line where they repeated the task all day. Workers were therefore paid for how much they produced. This resulted in a large production as workers were motivated and so the company did well. On the other hand the employees didn't have any opportunity of growth, encouragement or time to think for themselves or show their creativity. Taylor's theory was not very favoured amongst workers. Since employees worked hard, the production level had increased and so the company could afford to fire some employees. This of course led to strikes and other industrial action as workers were dissatisfied. This theory didn't work for long in practice. [23]

4.1.2. Maslow's hierarchy of needs

Maslow's hierarchy of needs is well known across the world. Maslow wanted to understand what motivated people and believed that people are motivated to achieve certain needs. The hierarchy of needs, as seen in picture 1, can be divided into basic needs and growth needs. The principal of the pyramid is quite clear. Basic needs are at the bottom as they motivate people when they are not met. Even the duration for meeting the needs increases the motivation to accomplish them. It is straightforward that the lower levels need to be met first before meeting higher levels. There however exist factors that disrupt the accomplishment of meeting a higher level of need, e.g. divorce, job loss. [16]

Diagram 1: Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs



Source: Skill Based Fitness

The original version of Maslow's hierarchy of needs looked slightly different (starting from the bottom):

1. Biological and Psychological needs: air, food, drink, shelter, sex, sleep
2. Safety needs: security, order, law, stability, freedom from fear
3. Love & belongingness needs: friendship, intimacy, affection, love, family
4. Esteem needs: achievement, independence, dominance, self-respect, respect from others
5. Self-Actualization needs: self-fulfilment, seeking personal growth

The reason for this organization is: *“It is quite true that man lives by bread alone — when there is no bread. But what happens to man's desires when there is plenty of bread and when his belly is chronically filled?”*

At once other (and “higher”) needs emerge and these, rather than physiological hungers, dominate the organism. And when these in turn are satisfied, again new (and still “higher”) needs emerge and so on. This is what we mean by saying that the basic human needs are organized into a hierarchy of relative prepotency” [16]

However, self-actualization is still at the top. Even when the five stage model was expanded to an eight stage model self-actualization was on 7th place followed by transcendence needs which is for helping others to achieve self-actualization. Self-actualization is seen as the leading motive or the only real motive. Some characteristics of self-actualized people are self-acceptance and democratic world view, they are realistic, they are problem-centred, tend to be independent, have a thoughtful sense of humour, value their privacy and also tend to be spontaneous. [16]

4.1.3. Alderfer ERG model

Alderfer's model is most often compared to Maslow's hierarchy of needs. It does work in a similar sense. Alderfer wrapped Maslow's five needs into three:

- Existence
- Relatedness
- Growth

The existence needs includes all material and psychological desires as described in the first two stages of Maslow's hierarchy.

Relatedness needs fulfil our need for satisfying interpersonal relationships, encompasses social and external esteem which also means to be recognized and feel secure as part of a group or family [17, 18]

Growth needs refer to personal growth and development by doing work of high-quality, being creative and productive and complete meaningful tasks. [17, 18]

However there does exist a difference between Maslow and Alderfer. Alderfer states that his order of needs is not fixed even though the existence needs typically do have a higher priority than relatedness or growth needs. The ERG theory also differs in the fact that it proposes that people can be motivated by needs from different levels at once. There does not have to be strict advancement from one level to the next. The ERG theory also takes into consideration that people structure their needs in different importance levels. This means that the way how needs follow each other is different for everyone. [17, 18]

4.1.4. Adams' equity theory

John Adams' equity theory is designed to prove that motivation isn't just pay and conditions alone. The theory also explains why benefiting one person leads to demotivation of other people. This theory is based on equality of inputs and outputs on the market-place. People expect to get an equivalent output as the put an input. People value fairness, this keeps them motivated. [19]

Inputs in the equity theory refer to the quality and quantity employees put into their work. These inputs are most typically time, effort, ability, loyalty, tolerance, flexibility, integrity, commitment, reliability, personal sacrifice, etc. [19]

Outputs in the equity theory refer to what the employees get from their job both positive and negative. They can be either tangible or intangible. The typical outcomes are pay, bonus, perks, benefits, security, recognition, interest, development, reputation, praise, responsibility, enjoyment, job security, etc. [19, 25]

Adams theory is not however based just on the equality of input and output of one person. The Equity Theory compares us with those that are in the same situation. In this situation the ratio of inputs and outputs of one person is compared to the inputs and outputs of another person. If a person is in a situation where he feels that his inputs are rewarded adequately by outputs then generally he becomes happier and more motivated. If on the other hand his ratio is less beneficial than those of someone else then he becomes demotivated as he feels has not been rewarded sufficiently. People become demotivated and reduce input and/or seek change or improvement whenever they feel their inputs are not being fairly rewarded by outputs. Fairness is based on apparent market norms. [20]

4.1.5. Hackman and Oldman's job characteristics model

Hackman & Oldman's job characteristics model is the only model that approaches job design that focuses on person-fit theory. The individual's personality, behaviours and task accomplishment are all taken under consideration to describe the perfect fit for the job. The Job Characteristic model is composed of five core characteristics essential for jobs. [21] They are:

- Skill variety (diverse activities and allows the use of multiple skills and talents of the worker)
- Task identity (worker is involved in all tasks of the job from beginning to end of the production)
- Task significance (the impact a job has on other people)
- Autonomy (the freedom employees have to do their jobs as they see fit)
- Feedback from the job (the extent to which it is obvious to employees that they are doing their job correctly)

These characteristics are then combined into three psychological states to determine the personal and work outcome. [21] These are:

- Meaningfulness of work (covers skill variety, task identity, task significance)
- Responsibility for outcomes (covers autonomy)
- Knowledge of results of the work (covers feedback from the job)

It is certain that not all five characteristics are unified for every employee. If the five characteristics lead to a positive manner of the three psychological states then an employee will feel satisfied. If one of the five characteristics is lacking then job satisfaction decreases. Employers are able to adjust job positions to increase the motivation level.

4.1.6. Theory X & Y

Douglas McGregor, a social psychologist, developed two contrasting theories on human motivation and management in the 1960s: Theory X and Theory Y.

Theory X assumes that employees are naturally unmotivated and dislike their work. These types of organisations tend to be top heavy, little delegation of authority and control stays centralised. [22] It is assumed those workers:

- Dislike work, find it boring and will avoid it if they can
- They would rather be directed than have responsibility which they avoid
- They must be forced or coerced to make the right effort
- The main motivation is money and fears about their job security
- Most of them have little creativity except when it comes to getting around rules

Under theory X, people use work to satisfy their lower needs and satisfy their higher needs in leisure time. However, it is in satisfying the higher needs that make employees more productive.

Theory Y illustrates a participative style of management that is de-centralized. It is assumed that employees are happy to work, self-motivated, creative and do not mind responsibility. These workers [22]:

- Need to work and want to take an interest in it. Under the right conditions, they can enjoy working.
- They seek and accept responsibility under the right conditions
- They will direct themselves towards a target that they can accept
- Under the right conditions, they are motivated by the desire to realize their own potential
- They are highly creative creatures – but are rarely given the opportunity to be

In relation to Theory Y, the organization is trying to create the most symbiotic relationship between managers and workers. This theory is suited to knowledge work and professional services.

4.1.7. Expectancy Motivation Theory

Victor Vroom suggested a theory in which he states that the relationship between behaviour at work and goals of a person are not that simple. Vroom's expectancy theory concentrates on the separation of effort, performance and outcomes. He assumes that behaviour outcomes from conscious choices opposed to alternative choices whose purpose is to maximize pleasure and to minimize pain. The performance of an employee is affected by factors such as personality, skills, knowledge, experience and abilities. [24] The theory proposes that even though individuals may have different sets of goals, they can be motivated if they believe that:

- There is a positive relationship between efforts and performance
- Positive performance will result in a desirable award
- The reward will satisfy an important need
- The desire to satisfy the need is strong enough to make the effort worthwhile.

Vroom's theory uses the following variables:

- Expectancy: belief based on the measurement of confidence of people in being able to get the results expected.
- Instrumentality: to what extent an individual believes that the company will deliver the rewards promised – if a person performs well then a valued outcome will be received.
- Valence: this belief refers to the emotional orientations people hold to rewards. It measures the depth of the want for extrinsic (money, promotion, benefits) or intrinsic (satisfaction) rewards.

It may seem that Vroom's expectancy theory is based on self-interest for rewards but actually it is based on the associations people make towards expected outcomes and how they can contribute towards these outcomes. [24]

4.1.8. Reinforcement

Skinner came with the Reinforcement theory of motivation in which he states that individual's behaviour is a function of its consequences. This theory focuses on the effects that occur when a person takes some action. It concentrates on controlling the behaviour of individuals but focus on the causes of behaviour. [25]

Companies use the following methods for controlling behaviour of their employees:

- Positive reinforcement: when an employee shows a positive and required behaviour a positive response is given. Positive reinforcement encourages occurrence of behaviour.
- Negative reinforcement: this suggests rewarding an employee by removing negative/undesirable consequences. Both positive and negative reinforcement can be used for increasing desirable/required behaviour.
- Punishment: removing positive consequences will lead to lowering the probability of the repetition of an undesirable behaviour in the future. In other words applying undesirable consequences for performing undesirable behaviour.
- Extinction: extinction occurs when employees no longer get praise for their desirable behaviour. This will unintentionally lower desirable behaviour.

Managers who are making attempt to motivate their employees must ensure that not all employees are rewarded simultaneously. Employees must be told about their correct actions and also must be told how they can achieve positive reinforcement.

4.1.9. Motivation for LLL

The main motivations behind adults enrolling in adult education are the following:

- Keep pace with the developing environment and be competitive on the labour market and within the society
- Achieve their career goals
- Open up new horizons and other options
- Have a “good feeling” from personal development
- Make the best use of free time

The motivation to further education is dependent on individual needs and capabilities. The strongest inner motivation to adult learning is owned by ambitious people, usually younger, by those that want to succeed in their professional lives and those with a natural interest in the surrounding environment and people. [11]

Inner motivation to further education is without doubt the loss of employment and uncertainty regarding employment (especially when women are on maternity leave). In general, people with a stable job position, secured and those that have lot of workload tend to have a lower motivation level. The objective need for further learning does necessarily reflect the inner motivation to continue with education. The declared willingness to attend adult learning is relatively big, however, the real willingness is low. [11]

4.2. Barriers

Regardless of the fact that adult education has become more popular in today's world, the numbers talk against that. Adults have many motivations as to start in education again but there are certain barriers present that prevent them from enrolling in a course or training program. The barriers that effect these decisions can be divided into internal and external barriers.

External barriers are those that the individual can't control, the influences are external to the individual. These barriers can be divided into environmental and sociocultural. Environmental barriers consist of interruptions in the phase of education. These interruptions can be of any sort, e.g. health conditions, birth of baby. Another environmental barrier is lack of privacy. If the individual have privacy to study then the motivation level decreases and the individual is more likely to give up. There can also be a barrier of multiple stimuli. Sociocultural barriers consist of language, which is highly important. If the individual have the language capacity to complete a certain course or training program then he will have a tendency to quit. The educational background is also a very important barrier that prevents some individuals from continuing. If the individual have at least some basic knowledge about the field of study then it is hard for him to build on nothing. Another barrier considered is being forced to attend a certain workshop, conference or course. People must want to do it by their own initiative and not be forced into something. That way the outcome may be even more devastating [26].

Internal barriers most typically reflect the personal attitudes of an individual. These barriers can be divided into psychological and physiological. Psychological barriers can be summed up to anxiety, fear and depression and the inability to comprehend. Being anxious and concerned about not being able to succeed in a learning situation is strong barrier. Physiological barriers are pain, fatigue and sensory deprivation. Pain and fatigue often accompany both acute and chronic illnesses which leave adults with little energy or motivation to continue with education. [27]

Even though there are these barriers, adult learners at any stage of their life can learn and succeed if they are offered the opportunity, assistance and support needed.

4.2.1. Barriers in LLL

The essential barriers to adult education are the following [11]:

- Lack of finance: most people are aware of the fact that adult learning is financially demanding. The lack of finance is referred to as one of the biggest barriers amongst society, especially those without a job or women on maternity

leave, who have a strong need for further education, relatively a lot of time but the finances are limited.

- Lack of time is a problem for most adults, especially those employed.
- Absence of motivation (laziness): this barrier is classified as essential especially in smaller cities where the demand for higher qualifications is much lower than in lower cities. People do not want to get more educated because they do not feel the need to. This fact points out that the sense of urgency and importance of further education is relatively lower.
- Difficulty of education: for older people this barrier can be in the field of technology, which with the growing development exceeds the adaptability of older people, who often lack the relative context for such adaptation: the inability to flexibly monitor the development leads to a feeling of elimination and reluctance to learn new things.
- Mistrust in the effectiveness of further education while seeking new job opportunities: especially older people are sceptical to the idea that further education can effectively help find a new job opportunity.
- Low awareness, alternatively low motivation, to actively find the possibilities of further education can be a significant barrier.

5. Human Resource Management

5.1. Introduction

“...Human resource policies should be integrated with strategic business planning and used to reinforce an appropriate ... organizational culture, that human resources are valuable and a source of competitive advantage, that they may be tapped most effectively by mutually consistent policies that promote commitment and which, as a consequence, foster a willingness in employees to act flexibly in the interests of the ‘adaptive organization’s’ pursuit of excellence.”[28]

In today’s world of constant growth it is necessary to have a well organised Human Resource department. The department concentrates on the work of employees, how they are employed and how they are managed in an organization. Human Resource Management (HRM) works to ensure that the company is able to function and work properly with the correct employees in order to have success and prosper. [29] By hiring the correct employees and giving them the correct training, learning and development the effectiveness and capability of a company can be increased.

There are no guidelines as to how HRM should function. Each company has its own criteria and preferences which HRM should achieve. However there exists a distinction between ‘hard’ and ‘soft’ versions of HRM.

The hard version is concentrated mainly at the fact that employees are an important resource for the company, through which it can achieve a certain advantage. These resources therefore need to be attained, developed and deployed in order for the company to get the best of it. The concentration is on the quantitative side. [29]

The soft version concentrates more on humanism – a view that people are responsible and broad-minded beings. It is also in line with Elton Mayo who believed that productivity is based on the satisfaction that people get from their employment. The more satisfied people are in their job then there will be a greater output. A different view on the soft HRM is given by Storey who states that employees must be committed, adaptable and have high qualities. Their commitment should be gained through correct

leadership, communication among the company, involvement and developing a high-trust organization. [29]

Human Resource Management is also affected by the external and internal environment. The external environment affects the company/organisation from factors of the surrounding world. These are the constant developments in social, political and economic spheres and most of all the competition. The fact that today's technology system is growing at a large speed just adds to the process of how companies work. Organizations need to react to this international competition by being more customer oriented therefore being able to react to the demand faster and bring new innovations to attract the customers to choose them. The internal environment is affected by the type of business/organization – private, public, voluntary – the size of the business/organization, how long the company has been on the market, to concentration of the business, the financial position of the organization, the culture – values, norms, beliefs, attitudes – and the political and social climate. [30]

5.2. HR Policies

In order for HRM to function in line with the organization's culture there are several policies that need to be met. Human Resource policies act as guidelines for HRM on how to deal with certain issues to ensure the correct functioning of the organization. Overall HR policies determine how the organization achieves its social responsibilities for its employees. Overall HR policies may have the following requirements [30, 31]:

- Equity: making sure that every employee is treated fairly, providing equal possibilities for employees such as promotion and operating on a same financing system for all employees.
- Consideration: the need to take into account the individual circumstances when making decisions that might have or will have an effect on the employees.
- Respect: respecting every employee
- Organizational learning: allowing all members in an organization to get the correct learning and development by giving them the needed support.

- Quality of working life: increasing employee's satisfaction by reducing monotony, increasing responsibility and variety, no stress on the work place and providing a balance between work and private life.
- Working conditions: making sure the working place is a healthy and safe environment.

Apart from these overall HR policies there are also specific policies which are more precise [30,31]:

- Age and employment: There should be no age discrimination when applicants apply for a specific position. Age is not a good predictor of job performance as a younger applicant can have better experience through internships than a middle age applicant who had a constant job. Also the fact that in today's world people are starting to live healthier and active lives in older ages.
- Bullying: an anti-bullying policy is essential to have on a workplace. The policy should state that the organization will not tolerate any type of bullying or harassment on the workplace. The policy should state that any victim of bullying has the right to talk to the correct person and that if a complaint is passed on it will be investigated thoroughly.
- Discipline: this policy is based on informing the employees on what is expected from them and what should happen if they do not obey the disciplinary policy.
- Diversity management: in today's world organizations have employees which are different from each other. If these differences are managed properly then the efficiency can be increased to get the most of it.
- E-mails and use of internet: it is up to the organization to decide if there should be any restrictions on the workplace regarding internet access. If no restrictions are given, then the policy should state that any harmful or abusive information downloaded will be subject to a disciplinary procedure. The policy should also include the fact that the company has the right to access and monitor all e-mail messages stored on the company's system and also monitor internet activity if it is work-related.
- Employee voice: the company should have the opportunity for employees to have a say in matters which affect them.

- Equal policy: in today's world it is essential to not allow discrimination in an organization. Every employee regardless of age, sex, race, beliefs, disability or marital status should have equal opportunities.
- Promotion: in every organizations promotion policy should be stated the intentions of promoting from within the organization in order to accomplish a high quality staff.

5.3. Phases of hiring

Each company/organization reaches a time when employees leave for a different career, the company is growing and expanding or new positions are being opened. In most cases there is the internal possibility to promote someone from within the company to a better position but there need to be new candidates on the lower positions or even if there is no one capable in the company to be promoted, new employees need to be recruited. It never is an easy situation to select the correct candidate on the right position. There are key features that need to be met. [32]

One of the most important points that define what sort of candidates will apply is the correct job description. There are many cases when the description is just too short and contains only a brief description with no particular tasks. On the other hand, there are also those descriptions that are four pages long but do not contain any specifications about the position. Most job descriptions are written in a sense to protect the organization legally as some contain phrases such as 'whatever else is required'. This way they can throw any task on the employee. Job descriptions however need to be clear, fair and purposeful. They should bear in mind the present as well as the future and gaps in responsibilities. There should never be tasks with competing aims assigned. Job descriptions should be flexible in a way to encourage employees to grow within their position and be able to contribute over time to the company/organisation. Job descriptions should include [34, 35]:

- Job title
- Job objective or overall purpose statement
- Summary of the general nature and level of the job
- Description of the broad function and scope of the position

- List of duties or tasks performed critical to success
- Key functional and relational responsibilities in order of significance
- Description of the relationships and roles within the company, including supervisory positions, subordinating roles and other working relationships.

The next phase of hiring the perfect candidate is the evaluation of CVs. In most companies and organization a cover letter, certificates and reference may be requested. When choosing the correct candidate at this point the HR member does a pre-selection from reading the candidate's CV. This filters the candidates and avoids conducting useless interviews. Also the fact that a candidate has exchanged many positions in the past years gives a good picture of stability. Once the CV is passed as good the cover letter is then read. This gives a deeper idea on the candidate. The style and language of writing gives an indication of some skills but the candidates must also mention their interests and motivations for getting the specific job. The references can be used in the final stage when deciding between two candidates or to check the information provided is clear, the skills mentioned are true and that the candidate is capable and responsible [35].

The final stage is the interview itself. Here it depends on the employer how he draws up the interview. These can be approached in several ways. Some interviews can be made in just one round but some can have more rounds. When an interview has more rounds then the first round is usually a telephone interview where the HR member does the introductory interview in which he describes the position, the company/organisation and does a basic interview in which he gets a first impression about the candidate. If the candidate succeeds he is invited to a second round which is usually done with a member of the company and the HR member. [36, 37]

The third round is done most typically done with the head of the department or other members that will work with the candidate in order to see if he will fit into the culture of the department. At these face to face interviews it is essential to get the necessary information needed. It is certain that searching for hard skills is essential but there are also other characteristics that need to be present. Some organisations work with the 7 C's criteria to obtain the best candidates for their team. [38] These are:

- Character: the more features of a person's character that aligns with the organization's core values and those of the current team, the better the fit.
- Competency: ask hypothetical questions to show the creativity and experience of the candidate. Also shows if the candidate has the skills to meet the demands of the role in the team.
- Chemistry: since there is a close cooperation amongst team members it is necessary to have someone from the team at the interview to see how they click.
- Confidence: confidence is the basis for building trust. Everyone in the team must be confident about their abilities and mentoring others in their field.
- Collaborative: collaboration amongst team members is essential and leads to better results.
- Cheeky: creative and productive candidates usually have a sense of humour. It reduces stress, boosts morale and creates a pleasant environment.

6. The Situation in Czech Republic before 1989

6.1. Political Situation

The political situation in the Czech Republic has gone through many changes. For this thesis it is necessary to illustrate the situation before the Velvet Revolution in November 1989.

In early spring of 1948 the whole-nation coalition had collapsed. The abdication of seats in the Cabinet of the National Socialists, Christian Democrats and the Slovak Democrats tried to force a change of government organization. In the power battle the communists eventually triumphed which mobilized the public, in other parties they activated their allies, conducted purges and subsequently formed a new government, which formally acknowledged continuity with the after war politics of the National Front. In fact, political competition vanished in Czechoslovakia. It was formally presented in the parliamentary elections in 1948 when the National Front presented a unified list of candidates which gained 86% of votes. The Communist Party of Czechoslovakia became the sole political party. There were changes that arose in the other parties. For instance the Czechoslovak National Socialist Party transformed into the Czechoslovak Socialist Party and whilst the activity of the Czechoslovak People's Party continued, the Czechoslovak Social Democratic Party came to an end and in June 1948 merged with the prevailing Communist Party. [39]

Formally after 1948 there existed one dominant political party and two smaller parties, but actually it was a totalitarian system controlled by the Communist Party. Until 1990 all elections in Czechoslovakia were held under the National Front system with a unified list of candidates. The Communist Party of Czechoslovakia had a decisive political influence. Its highest body, the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia had, for example, professional and ministerial departments which covered all areas of state administration. [39, 40]

Let us also mention the political involvement in education as it is very crucial. We can state that the period of 1948-1990 was strongly centralised and directive. The communist education system suffered under horrifying ideologies, class approach and

egalitarian nonsense. The communist regime had gradually reduced and subsequently liquidated all state initiatives in the field of education as it interfered with the single ideological rape of the educational system to which the hierarchical education system was especially built for. At the same time the educational system was professionally quite good and generated good results. This accounts especially for the first half of the totalitarian regime when the teachers in schools were brought up in the era of the first republic. What was happening before was absolutely wrong. For example the proportionality of pre-November school was quite correct. But what was devastating was the class and party's key recruitment procedures. Gifted children of enemies of the system were sent to vocational school and incompetent students, whose parents were in the communist party, went to universities. [41, 42]

All education was subjected to prepare youth to meet the needs of the socialist society. The concept of a single school is starting to fade from terminology. The acceptance of students into higher education levels depends not on their skills, abilities and knowledge but on the cadre criteria and the political affiliation of parents. [43]

6.2. Economic Situation

The territory where Czech Republic lies today was at the beginning of the previous century one of the most economically developed parts of Europe where the industry of Austria-Hungary was concentrated. After the formation of Czechoslovakia, the independent state of Czechs and Slovaks in the year 1918, the economy reached between the top ten ranked developed countries in the world for the first twenty years of its existence. Textile, glass and shoe industries were on the top world level. The engineering, electro technical and energetic industries were also at the beginning of development. [44]

After the war there was a relatively quick recovery in the field of industry. While in 1945 industrial production reached only about half the level of production in 1937, a year later it was slightly over 70% and during the two-year plan (1947-8) the level of 1937 was exceeded by 10%. The light industry was decimated by the war which caused a holdout on development and the recovery of it progressed much more slowly than in heavy industry. Difficulties occurred during the restoration of agriculture, which still in

1953 reached only 88% of the level of production in 1937. The culprit was the collectivization process in particular which began shortly after the assumption of power by the Communist Party in February 1948. In several stages of collectivization private farmers were gradually wiped out. Growing area of uncultivated land and agricultural production has stagnated, which resulted in problematic supplying of food to the population. Nationalization (or as it was then called socialization) took place under the baton of communists in the industry. Businesses were gradually nationalized in the 50s. [44, 45]

The economy was managed by centrally set (typically five-year) plans that put emphasis on fulfilling targets of tangible performance. Basic economic effects of the market economy, such as supply and demand, inflation or economic cycle were not taken into account in the plans. An important factor shaping the structure of the economy (about 60% of total production accounted for industry and within it especially heavy industry, engineering and manufacturing for the military sector) was its involvement in the activities of the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (CMEA), founded in 1949. The economy of the Czechoslovak Republic was one of the strongest within the CMEA, as it benefited from the high proportion of industry, mechanized farming and a high-quality transport network in comparison with other member states. Concentration on heavy industry caused high dependency of the economy on export, high energy intensity of production and most importantly a negative impact on the environment. Lack of organization and low labour productivity, together with technological lagging led to a significant decline in the competitiveness of domestic products on world markets. [45, 46]

Insufficient supply of goods, especially luxurious, didn't show an increase in inflation with regards to the central regulation of prices, but hidden in a shortage of certain goods in the market and in the flourishing black market. There however did occur an increase in prices from time to time, but the adjustments to balance supply and demand on the market were by far insufficient. [45]

Reform efforts aimed at a change in control of the economy from a centrally directive to market principles, monitoring the value indicators and increasing the financial motivation of workers, which culminated in 1968-9, afforded an opportunity for

a certain recovery of the Czechoslovak economy. These efforts were suppressed after the invasion of the Warsaw Pact troops and the subsequent period of the so called normalization meant a return to the "old order". The situation slightly improved in the 80s, when some partial incentive was applied in practice. The socialist method of economic management could not exceed its shadow, which led to an increase in the general dissatisfaction and contributed to the overthrow of the socialist regime during the so-called Velvet Revolution in November 1989. [46]

In 1991 the new economic reform started which gradually transformed the centrally driven economy to market economy. [46]

7. Practical Part

For the practical part questionnaires and interviews were made, both based on similar questions. The questionnaires for Lifelong learners of course had some additional questions compared to today's learners but the outcome of both of the questionnaires allows us to compare the results. The respondents have agreed for the information to be used as given and were familiarized with the fact that all data will be processed anonymously. Respondents are given numbers.

7.1. Evaluation of questionnaires of Lifelong learners

The questionnaire for lifelong learners was short but contained the most important questions essential for this thesis. Some of the questionnaires were done on a personal meeting and the respondents were willing to talk more about the situation before 1989.

Identifying the gender is very important as there has been a long term debate on inequality of men and women when it comes to employment. In most cases men were favourite and offered a higher pay or better position. In the case of the thesis, we are trying to concentrate on the time before November 1989 and the representation of men and women getting their degree today.

The age range is essential to know as persons who were in primary or secondary school in November 1989 could not completely experience the influence of the communist regime regarding the allowance to attend university. However they could be influenced in some way when it comes to further education. It may have been the case that persons have finished secondary education and, being slightly affected by the regime, went straight into the working environment.

The current position is good to know. Seeing the difference between persons with a high quality job position and those sitting on lower positions is very interesting, as well as to see the difference in opinions on the situation before 1989. Those that had lived a longer time under the communist regime most often have negative memories than those that lived a greater part of their life after 1989.

Knowing the type of secondary (high-school, economic...) strongly determines the motivation one has to continue to tertiary education. When finishing high-school it is

most likely that the person has some intentions to at least try tertiary education. On the other hand, those finishing secondary school with some manual specialization tend not to continue with their education. The motivations behind going to university are not so high for them.

If the respondents went to university right after completing their baccalaureate is closely related to the motivations that were behind applying to university and the situation that was surrounding them. Some respondents did go straight after secondary to tertiary education but for other the situation was different. It could have been thanks to the communist regime that didn't give them the permission due to their background or the respondents felt that the baccalaureate was sufficient enough. Some respondents might have had to start working; they were lazy or other reasons. It is interesting to see the difference in reasons of not attending university.

The description of the political situation is very important as it determines shows us if the communist regime really did have an influence on the acceptance to university and if it was the reason why respondents obtained their degree in the years after the Velvet Revolution. During the communist regime students were granted permissions to study based on their political background, the membership in a specific political party or based on recommendations from teachers at secondary or primary school. Even if the students had excellent study results, it was not a reason to let them continue in their studies if their parents were members of the opposing political party.

The motivation of returning to university to gain a university degree after many years of being in the work sphere is highly important. The motivations differ with each respondent. Some respondents may have returned to university based on their own initiative, to deepen their knowledge and do something good for themselves. Other respondents may have felt a need to gain a university degree to get a better position, higher wage or even just to stay at their current position. Some respondents may have been motivated by their surrounding or it was a request from the employer. Whatever the motivation was to return to get a higher education it is a positive motivation.

To see the view of an adult on whether it is important to have a university degree is quite interesting. Since most respondents have probably finished their degree in later

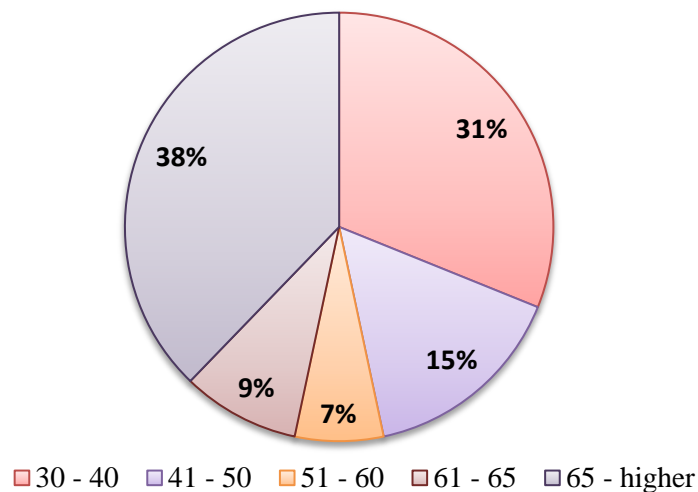
years it would seem logical that the responses would be that it is highly important to have a university degree in today's world. However, for some respondents it may not be the case. Some respondents may feel that having a university degree is good but not essential when looking for a job.

The respondents were mainly female. The percentage representation is 78% female and 22% male.

The age of the respondents differed. We can see the percentage representation in graph 1. Approximately 65% of the respondents were under the communist regime when they were in the stage of applying to university.

Graph 1: Age range of Adult Respondents

Age range of Adult Respondents



Source: own input

7.1.1. Current jobs of respondents

Current jobs of respondents are very different. Only a few respondents worked in the same sphere. You can see a list of some of the jobs below. The retirees were mainly employed as office workers, technicians or specialists. Two retirees had higher positions such as managers.

Respondent 1: age range 30 - 40; male; head of department

Respondent 2: age range 30 – 40; female; diplomat

Respondent 3: age range 41 – 50; female; controller

Respondent 4: age range 51 – 60; female; lawyer

Respondent 5: age range 41 – 50; female; head of department in the department of public diplomacy

Respondent 6: age range 30 – 40; female; specialist officer

Respondent 7: age range 41 – 50; female; senior assistant

Respondent 8: age range 30 – 40; male; deputy of mayor

Respondent 9: age range 30 – 40; female; officer at ministry of foreign affairs

Respondent 10: age range 30 – 40; female; head of the construction management department in Pilsner

Respondent 13: age range 41 – 50; female; credit controller

Respondent 14: age range 30 – 40; female; Methodist in insurance and executive discounts

Respondent 15: age range 51 – 60; female; consular at the Czech embassy

Respondent 16: age range 30 – 40; female; director, sales & operations

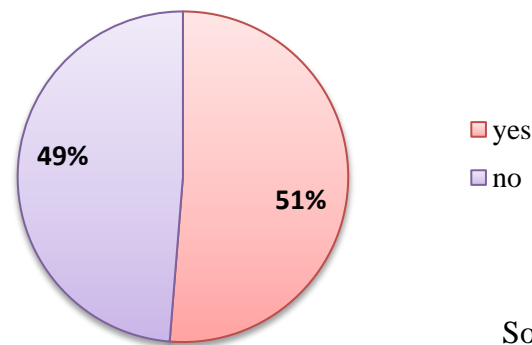
Respondent 24: age range 41 – 50; female; police officer

Respondents 26 – 39: age range 65 and higher; 4 male & 11 female; retirees

The respondents were also asked if they are working or worked in the field of study. As we can see in graph 2 the percentage representation for respondents working in their field of study is distributed quite equally. 51% of respondents replied that they are working or worked in their field of study and 49% of respondents are not working or have not worked in their field of study. The reasons for not working in the field of study can vary. One of the reasons could be that they were interested in a different field than they studied, especially those living in the communist era since they were not allowed to attend the school of their choice. Another reason could be that there are not enough positions on the job market for the specific field. Possibly the most important factor

Graph 2: Do you work in your field of study?

Do you work in your field of study?



Source: own input

why respondents work in a different field could be that, despite the fact that their field is very interesting, the financial award is not sufficient enough.

7.1.2. The political situation when applying for university

Several respondents applied for university after the Velvet revolution due to their age and so the communist regime did not have an effect on their acceptance to school. But for some the communist regime greatly affected if they were allowed to attend university.

Respondent 7 says that the communist regime affected her possibilities greatly, as the school she applied for accepted only those students that had recommendations, which was not the case for her. The situation was even more complicated by refusing her the possibility to take entrance exams and failing them the following year. She then decided that it is a waste of time trying and started working instead.

Respondent 8 states that her studies were more affected by the economic situation before 1989. She had to support her mother economically and so she started working. Also her brother was in secondary school and it was not economically possible for both of them to study at once.

Respondent 15's situation was following. Even though she had excellent study results and had passed the entrance exams to the University of Economics in Prague, she was not accepted to studies at the university. The reasons behind that were that she did not have the correct political background (both her parents were not in the communist party and she did was not from the working class).

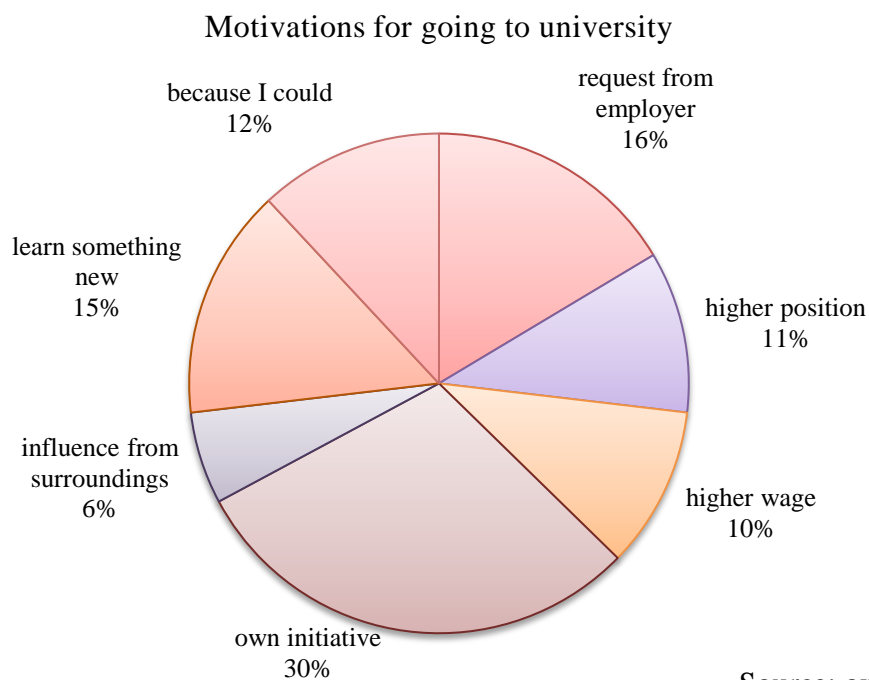
The situation of respondent 17 was that he managed to attend university but later on he was excluded as he was arrested for his ideas. When he was set free, he attempted to return to university, but since they knew he was arrested, he did not have the correct ideological thinking and so his second acceptance to university was refused. Instead he decided to proceed to another secondary school, have two baccalaureates and at the age of 38, after the Velvet revolution, attend university as a distance student.

A similar situation was with respondent 19. He too was excluded from university thanks to his different ideological thinking. When he attempted to enrol in university twice later on and failed, he had lost motivation and gave up.

7.1.3. Motivation for going to university

The motivations for adults to attend university are quite similar for most. The respondents had the possibility to choose more than one option from the following possibilities: higher wage, higher position, request from employer and own initiative, because they could or they had no motivations to attend university. They also had the possibility to add any extra comments to supplement the answers. We can see the results in the following graph and responses.

Graph 3: Motivations for going to university



Source: own input

In graph 3, we can see the proportion of answers for the motivation of why adults returned to university to gain a university degree. Surprisingly the main motivation for going back to university is the own initiative of the respondents. However, most of the respondents that stated own initiative as a motivation also mentioned a higher wage and higher position. Therefore we can say that an inner motivation of the respondents was to get a better position connected with a higher wage. I believe that is a positive motivation especially in later years.

The next popular motivation for getting a university degree was the request from the employer. In some cases, respondents were performing jobs that requested a university degree, especially in the state sector. The employer therefore requested for the respondent to get a degree otherwise he would lose his job. On the other hand, the employer had requested a university degree in connection to promoting the respondent to a better position.

Following that the next motivation of respondents, especially the older ones, was that they could. Having the ability to finally attend a university of your own choice and finish it without getting any negative recommendations or restrictions can be a strong motivation.

Some respondents were also exposed to external motivation from their surroundings. This choice was usually connected with own initiative and because they could. Not everyone has such a strong determination and needs to be supported by others.

Some respondents also chose the possibility to learn something new. Those that did not have the possibility to attend university after secondary school may be motivated to attend university to learn something new about their field of work or they want to learn something new about a different field which is closer to them and would like to change their field of work.

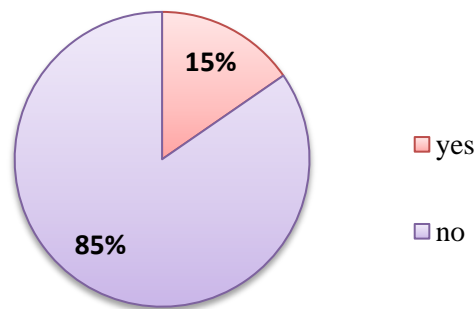
Respondent 2 stated that her motivation for getting a university degree was to get education as such and get to know more about the field of study.

Respondent 15 stated that her motivations came from the fact that the job position she was currently practicing was typically performed by university graduates. Since she

worked in the state sector, connected with tabulated salary, she could not be sufficiently rewarded for her job as university graduates would be, even though her work span covered all aspects of the position. Therefore her motivation was to get a higher wage in order to be paid adequately to her position and also an overall higher position in the business environment.

Graph 4: Did you attend university straight after secondary school?

Did you attend University straight after secondary school?



Source: own input

To supplement the motivation it is also interesting to see if the respondent had attended university straight after secondary school or not. As we can see in graph 4 85% of respondents did not attend university straight after secondary school. The reason for this is mainly due to the communist regime, as described in next chapters. Other reasons are that the respondent had reached a sufficient educational level which he was satisfied with. The 15% of respondents that did attend university after secondary school were the lucky ones that got good recommendations from their previous school, their parents were part of the correct political party or they had finished secondary school after the Velvet revolution and were given the possibility to continue with their studies and not have to jump into the working environment.

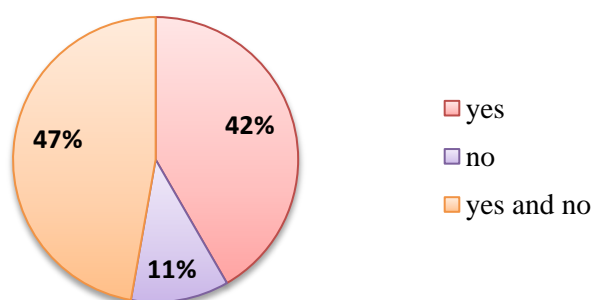
7.1.4. Is it important to have a university degree?

For the question about if it is important to have a university degree a total of 89% of respondents answered that it is important. Out of that 47% of respondents believe that it is partially important. Only 11% of respondents believe that a university degree is not important in today's world. We can see the percentage representation in graph 5. The different opinions of respondents whether or not it is important to have a university degree follow.

Respondent 7 says that having a university degree depends on the individual's career choice. She thinks that having a university degree is today more important in the entrepreneurial sphere than it was before, when everything could be done on the go. This has changed over time and the need for a university degree is not as important as the education itself and that is also in the fields where it was unnecessary, despite the fact that education is never unnecessary.

Graph 5: Is it important to have a university degree?

Is it important to have a university degree?



Source: own input

Respondent 9 says that having a university degree is not a guarantee for getting a good job but is a necessity especially in the state sector. Along with that the knowledge of language and some work experience.

Respondent 11 added that a university degree is required, even absurdly, and it does not matter from what field as long as you have a degree. She does not agree with this acceptance of university degrees.

Respondent 13 agrees with the fact that university degrees are needed in today's world. When she was attending secondary, the situation was that a baccalaureate was sufficient enough for the future. However, today a baccalaureate is not sufficient for job positions. This does not concern just managerial positions but also lower positions such as assistant positions, nurses, etc. On the other hand, with the growing number of university graduates, the number of persons working in the field of handicraft is decreasing, even when it still is an important sector.

Respondent 14 believes that it depends on the job position the person is performing on. For some positions it is necessary to have a university degree but for some only a baccalaureate is sufficient enough.

Respondent 15 states that in today's world great emphasis is placed on education in relation to the heavy workload and pressure of society. Today, the activities carried out twenty years ago by students with just a baccalaureate need to be carried out by university graduates. In her opinion, getting a university degree is highly important for getting a decent job position and a higher position in society.

Respondent 16 comments to this topic by stating that today it is not only about getting a university degree. There exists an excellent person with two degrees as well as there exists a complete idiot with three degrees. In her opinion, universities prove that the student wants to achieve something in his life, he has certain discipline and he managed to successfully pass the entrance exams and magnificently complete university. Universities should be a symbol of self-development. From the motivation perspective, the student wants to get something out of his life. Following that, the respondent stated that universities should teach students how to think and work with information. If universities managed to support more the abilities of students, which candidates for jobs are missing, then it would be perfect. It would be prodigious if schools and universities started teaching what is really important for today's world rather than swot up with information.

7.1.5. How the educational system was affected by communism

Some respondents were willing to talk freely about the communist regime referring to the educational system, how it was affected and about the restrictions and possibilities that were present at that time.

Respondent 16 says that the educational system was completely different. Despite the fact that she was only in elementary, she had felt the effect of communism. She says that the decision makers on whether a student can continue in his studies were human resource managers, in that time "sifters". They were the ones that gave recommendations on whether an individual can go to secondary school or university, or if he has the right to buy a car. The respondent's mother had gotten extra points in her

entrance exams to university since her parents were active participants in the communist political party. However, her father hated communists and so his children had problems getting into school. Her grandfather was part of the opposing party. When the Visegrad's army entered in 1968, he was degraded from a managerial post to being a dissident at home. They did not have enough information to put him in jail. The family from her father's side was constantly being watched day and night. If there had been no Velvet revolution and the fall of communism then the respondent would most probably be working in some textile or automobile factory, without any secondary or tertiary education due to her background.

Respondent 18 had lived a much longer time under the communist regime. Her father was a public officer and her mother was a house wife. The family socialization was strongly marked by preferences for educational activities. The respondent had attended mathematical competitions and completed her primary education outstandingly. However, the family was strongly persecuted by the totalitarian regime since the respondent's brother was arrested for treason. After completing primary school, it was not recommended for the respondent to continue in further studies. The primary school and local national committee participated on writing a letter of non-recommendations for the respondent. When the family appealed, the reply was that the respondent did not sympathize with the ideology. However, when their relatives offered to take her into their family, the situation had slightly changed and she was accepted into secondary school with a one year delay. The same situation occurred when she tried to apply to university. She had passed the entrance exams and was accepted into the studies but after a month she was excluded as the university had written into her home town for recommendations which came back negative. Despite her exclusion from university, the respondent had at least continued in non-formal education.

Respondent 20 stated that her refused education was based on religion. In her recommendation letter stood that she had attended religion classes in primary school, which the communist regime did not support. Her parents had to come personally into school to sign her up to religion class and the teacher then wrote that the family was not aligned with religious issues.

Respondent 21 had also experienced the refusal of being accepted into secondary school. He had accomplished primary school with all A's and wanted to apply to a gymnasium, but he was refused since his father was against the regime. However, he did not want to go to training school, so instead he and his parents went to visit his class teacher, who sympathized with him, and instead of writing that his father has anti-communist sentiments, she did not write anything bad into his recommendations. Sadly, that still did not help and so he attended technical school.

Respondent 22 has a slightly happier ending. The beginnings were however tough. After primary he was not accepted into gymnasium due to his father's actions. Therefore he went to study as a pipe fitter and later on he was accepted to technical school. Since he was greatly qualified, the school recommended him to university. The regime could not stop him from doing so and so he accomplished university successfully during the communist regime without being part of the communist party.

7.1.6. Other comments

Respondent 7 points out, that her situation is possibly the most standard for the given period. Her life situation did not allow her to get a university degree earlier and the concern for age and time, which is expected to be devoted to studies, along with the combination of family duties, absolutely hampered her determination. She does not regret her decision of starting her studies, after completing first two semesters, in later years. She is not sure if her career will grow, but the feeling to prove that despite all obstacles she can achieve certain goals is worth it. And in a way, the doors open to the unknown and a whole different life becomes much more interesting with a vague sequel, which brings some adrenaline, but also joy and hope.

I asked respondent 16 on her opinion about what would happen if the communist party had won a majority in elections in today's world. Her response was not surprising. She stated that there are many educated young adults who should start getting engaged in politics but refuse to as no one wants to be pulled into such a marsh. They are afraid and disgusted by it. They are afraid of being pulled into the machinery of power and corruption. The Czech nation is capable to mobilize when things are starting to jam. Until then, they will just remonstrate about the situation.

7.2. Evaluation of questionnaires of today's learners

The questionnaires of today's learners consisted of twelve questions.

The first two questions concentrated on the basic information like sex and age range of the respondents. It is important to identify these parts as the ideas of females can slightly differ from the ideas of men. Today's generation does have slightly different thinking than older generations and concentrates on different problems. The age range is also important as some younger respondents, 22 – 25, may have more sophisticated views on today's world than older respondents. The age of today's learners does not necessarily determine how smart they are. It is possible to be a smarter individual with just a baccalaureate than a university student. It highly depends on what your priorities are.

Following that was the question asking about the highest gained education level. This was important to know especially for the upcoming questions about the difficulty of finding a job. Some baccalaureates might have found it easier than those with a university degree.

Asking the respondents if they have a job is closely connected to the previous questions about gained education and a question further on about how long it took to find a job. Some respondents may have the qualifications to get a decent job position but are not able to find a suitable position. The respondents could have chosen from not having a job, having a part-time job or a full-time job. In most cases, students at universities have part-time jobs to have at least some form of pay. It is definite that most part-time jobs are not at all related to the field of study. Most students find something that is time-flexible and not so time demanding to allow them time for studying. Having a full time job during studies is quite difficult as students are required full attendance in their lectures and seminars. However some respondents may have finished their studies and started a full-time job.

Following this question, respondents were asked whether they are working in the field of study. There are a high percentage of students at secondary school that do not have an idea on what they would like to study. They apply for a general study course, such as management, economics, international relations, courses from which you can do

practically in any administrative field. However, later they realise that the course does not fulfil their needs and wants and it is too late to change courses.

The time it took for respondents to find a job is interesting. The number of job opportunities on the job market is high. However, the length it took for some respondents does differ. For some it could have been a question of a couple days, for some weeks and for some even months. The reasons behind the length are various. It could be that the respondents are looking for a specific job in a specific sector. This could be a problem as specific jobs have strict requirements for the candidates and the other candidates applying for the position could have better qualifications. Some candidates could have chosen a lower position in a big company with the vision of growing thanks to internal recruitment. Some respondents could have taken time to search for a job as they wanted to enjoy student “after life” before going into the adult life of work.

The qualifications that were requested from the respondent when applying for a job position are essential. When we search through job offers we see that some positions have a list of qualifications requested and some have only three. The most typical requests are language requirements, university degree, detail orientation and work experience in the field. But in most cases, students do not have the time to gain any experience during their studies which makes it harder for them to find a job.

The level of satisfaction is also a good determinant. Some respondents may be satisfied in their current job, some may be rather satisfied, for others it may be difficult to say, some rather not satisfied and some definitely not satisfied. Whether respondents are satisfied or not can be determined by the job position they currently have. If the respondent has a part-time job during his studies just to have some sort of pay, then it is most probable that he may not be satisfied as it does not fulfil his satisfaction level. But even in a part-time job respondents can be satisfied if they found what they like. Those respondents that can't determine whether they are satisfied or not, it could be the case that they currently do not have a job or they are only a short period in the given job to assess.

Asking today's learners if they find it necessary to have a university degree is interesting to see for the comparison with adult learners. They may have a different position on this situation compared to adult learners. Also if they found it easier to find a job with a university degree or without it shows us what the market requests more.

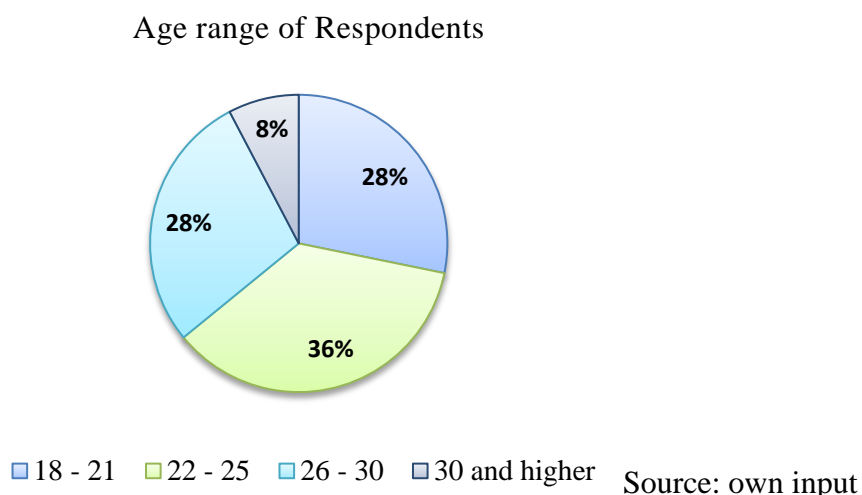
The motivations behind getting a degree are quite different from those of adults. Today's learners were given four possibilities to choose from: better working possibilities, interest in the field, the need to have a degree to work in a specific field or self-education. It is interesting to see the real motivations for getting a degree in today's world.

Respondents were also asked about their field of study and their dream job. It is fascinating to see the connection between these two. With these questions we can see if the respondent had chosen an adequate study course for his dream job or if he had chosen a course because he had to and realized that he wants to be something else. Students in today's world tend to change their ideas more frequently as new possibilities are opening up for them.

The respondents were mainly female. The percentage representation is 67% female and 33% male.

The age of the respondents was divided into three age groups. We can see the percentage representation in the following graph 6. The respondents were in majority in the age range 22 – 25. There were a same percentage of respondents aged 18 – 21 and 26 – 30. The lowest representation was by students aged 30 and higher.

Graph 6: Age range of Respondents



7.2.1. Highest gained education level

It would seem logical that depending on the age group the corresponding education level would be represented since university degrees seem important. However, the most represented education level was a bachelor degree. This corresponds with the age range as the given age range represents the adequate education level. On the other hand there are more students with secondary education compared to having a master degree. The difference between these two levels is 5%. This can be explained by the fact that students are too lazy to continue in their studies, they want to start working to have a regular pay, the students did not get into their desired university or they are not motivated enough from their parents.

The representation for higher degrees are the following: 23% of respondents have a master degree and only 8% of respondents were with a Ph.D. Students continuing onto a Ph.D. is much lower since it takes another four years to accomplish. In these four years the student has to work on his thesis and give lectures. Of course he has some sort of pay but sadly in most cases, he is not permitted to work in a different job. Therefore his options are quite limited.

Those that finished with a master degree have already started working. We can only hope that the percentage representation will increase once the bachelor students finish in their studies in the upcoming years. It is known among students that a bachelor degree is not sufficient enough in today's world. It is just a middle step and so if lucky enough, the students will soon have an honourable degree.

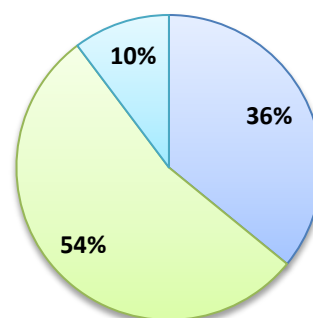
7.2.2. Job related questions

It was interesting to see which types of jobs the respondents had. It was surprising to see how many respondents actually had a full time job.

As we can see in graph 7 over half of the respondents had full time jobs out of which most of them were bachelor (33%)

Graph 7: Do you have a job?

Do you have a job?



■ part time ■ full time ■ don't work

Source: own input

and master (43%) graduates. There were only 10% of secondary students that had full time representing 2 out of 11 secondary students.

Part-time jobs are in majority occupied by bachelor students (50%). This may be due to the fact that the university they are attending is so time demanding that they cannot attend a full-time job. Also the fact that students in some cases want to enjoy life more and their allowance does not cover all the charges leads them to have at least a part-time job. With a 7% difference follow secondary students. For them the situation is that they are mainly motivated by their parents so they learn the value of money and how to manage money.

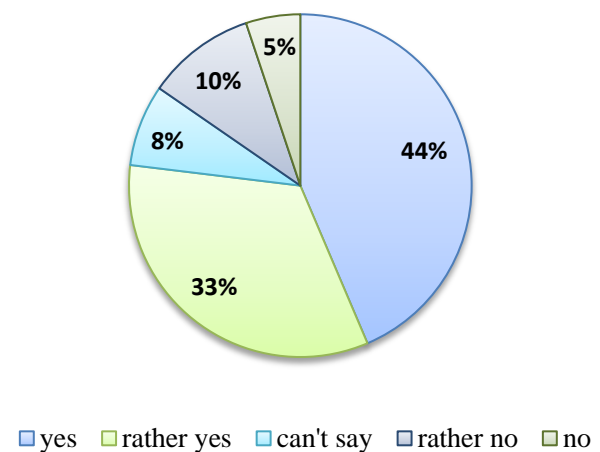
The 10% of respondents that are not working at all are secondary students who clearly do not have the need or are not motivated enough to find a job. Of course there could also be the factor of not being able to find a suitable job.

Overall it is observed that students have at least part-time jobs as the student life is not at all cheap and to go partying several days in a month can be quite expensive, especially in Prague.

Respondents were also asked about their satisfaction in their current job, which is illustrated in graph 8. We can see that overall the respondents are satisfied in their job. There is only a small representation (5%) of respondents that are not at all satisfied in their job. The 8% of respondents that cannot say if they are satisfied or not, are those, that do not have a job at the current moment. The rather not satisfied respondents are those that are in majority working in their field of study. This may point to the fact that they are not interested in their field of study or it is not what they expected.

Graph 8: Are you satisfied in your job?

Are you satisfied in your job?



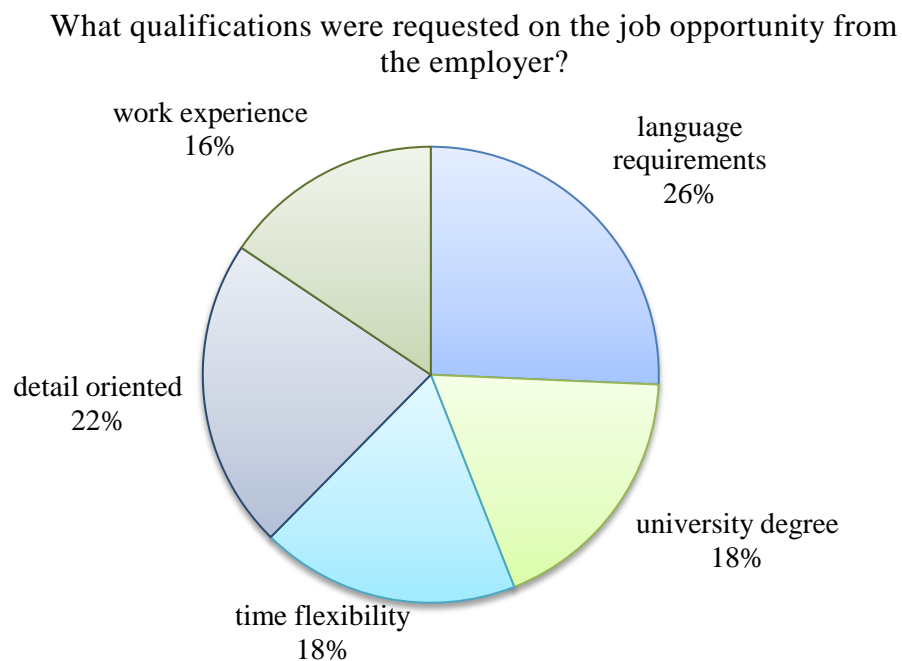
Source: own input

7.2.3. Requested qualifications from employer

Regarding the fact that the job market is overfilled with candidates it is hard to find the correct one. Filters are done by listing requirements for qualifications of the candidate. Candidates can then choose the position for which they have the correct qualifications. Sadly, some companies write exaggerated requirements for the candidate that the candidate is scared off by the requests.

Respondents were given the possibility to choose a combination from five of the most requested qualifications. The outcome is shown in graph 9.

Graph 9: What qualifications were requested on the job opportunity from the employer?



Source: own input

It is interesting to see that the highest represented qualification is not a need to have a university degree but language requirement (26%). In today's world of globalization and travelling there is no wonder. Having at least one more foreign language on a higher level is definitely a plus. There are more and more international companies entering the Czech market which adds to this. Also a lot of information can be found easier in English, for example.

Detail orientation is also essential. Being a requirement for 22% of respondents is pretty good. Detail orientation is essential as it then represents the company or business. If working on a certain paper, program or report, it is essential to make sure that there are no mistakes, grammatical or numerical, as it is then distributed through the company, on the internet, to clients or stakeholders. If there were some mistakes then the company's profile may decrease.

Having a university degree was ranked on the same level as time flexibility (18%). Having a university degree is becoming a must in today's world. The schools are promoting themselves on every corner fighting for the most students. But the quality of education is, sadly, slightly declining as the universities do not have the capacities to hold such large numbers of students. University degrees are also being required because it shows that the candidate has perhaps greater knowledge than someone with a baccalaureate. It depends on the employer and his position on the situation. Time flexibility is mainly requested in the private sector but is also becoming popular in the state sector. Being time flexible is essential especially when it comes to meeting deadlines. Time flexibility is closely related to time management. If the candidate can manage time efficiently then it is definitely a bonus.

It is also very surprising to see that the respondents did not come across the requirement for work experience so often. Only 16% of respondents encountered this requirement. Many companies request some past work experience, most typically a minimum of one year. But not all students are able to fulfill this requirement. They perhaps have experience but not in the field in question. On the other hand there are many job opportunities that are tailored for fresh graduates which makes it much easier.

7.2.4. Necessary to have a university degree

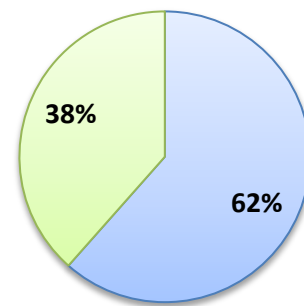
Having a university degree has become a trend with today's and future generations. Since we are told from all sides that it is important to have a university degree, that life will be much easier, then we listen and enrol in a course. But not all respondents agree with this fact. As we can see in graph 10 only 62% of respondents think that it is important to have a university degree and the rest believe that it is not necessary.

Respondent 3 thinks that a university degree is not important, however, the society requires it.

Respondent 15 said that from the perspective of today's society it is important to have a degree. On the other hand, having a degree is degraded by the period when it was given "for free" and almost anyone could obtain one. Also the division of studies to an intermediate level, gaining a bachelor degree, does not account to the quality as almost everyone has a bachelor degree. Historically, having a university degree carried more weight than today.

Graph 10: Do you think it is necessary to have a university degree?

Do you think it is necessary to have a university degree?



■ yes ■ no

Source: own input

Respondent 19 says that having a university degree is important in today's world but, since the amount of people that have a degree is growing every year, it is more important from what school the persons have their degree as that can be strong determinant.

7.2.5. Motivations for getting a university degree

It is essential to know what the motivations of today's learners are to get a university degree. The universities accept thousands of new students each year and thousands come out as graduates. But the motivations as to why to get a degree are not so hard to point out. As we can see in graph 11, then most respondents are attending university to get better work possibilities. As we read in a couple of the adult learners responses, a university degree is essential in today's world.

There are the types of jobs for which it is necessary to have a degree; otherwise the student would not have the sufficient knowledge to proceed with the job. There were 26% of respondents that were/are studying in a specific field to get the job that field.

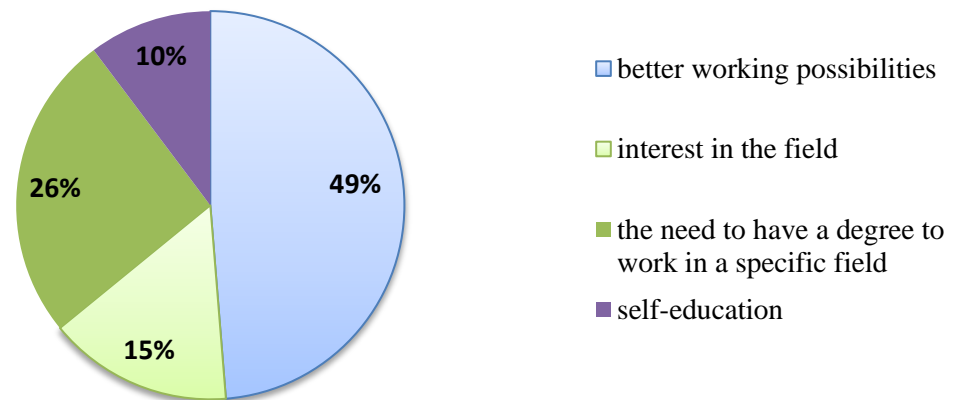
There were only 15% of respondents that were motivated for getting a university degree by actually being interested in the field of study. The number is low because students

may not have gotten into the course of their choice and had a back-up which was more general; therefore they were not interested in the field. Also in most cases the students do not have any specific interest in a field.

It is shocking that only 10% of respondents attend university to get self-educated. People are being educated every day and unless they are studying something specific, for example medicine, then all the information can now be found on the internet.

Graph 11: What are your motivations for getting a university degree?

What are your motivations for getting a university degree?



Source: own input

The pros of having a university degree are that you are a bit closer to getting a job compared to those without a degree. Also the phenomenon that employers prefer university graduates as they may seem more intellectual. Another pro is that with a university degree the candidate is able to get a position with a higher position to suite his educational level. Without a degree, the candidate would have to work really hard to get to the same position. This however does not apply in the state sector with tabulated salary.

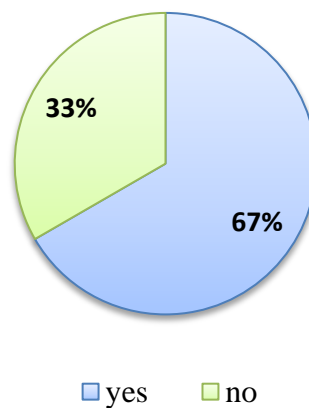
However, for every plus there is a minus. The most typical is that students graduate from a very common course, such as economics, and then they have to compete with many candidates as they are on the same level. Another minus to having a university degree is that the candidate may have problems finding a job in his field and then he looks like a person who does not have university degree. This could be the case of law

students – if they cannot find a job in their field then it is much harder to find a different job as they do not know much about the field.

Asking respondents whether they think it is easier to find a job with a university degree is closely related to the previous question. One would assume the percentage representation would be the same but 67% of respondents think it is easier to find a job with a university degree. This clearly indicates that having a university degree is helpful when applying for a job. However, there still are a 33% of respondents that think a university degree does not help the process of getting a job, as illustrated in graph 11.

Graph 12: Do you think it is easier to find a job with a university degree?

Do you think it is easier to find a job with a university degree?



Source: own input

Succeeding in the process of hiring as we know can have several rounds. Despite the fact whether a candidate has or does not have a university degree can in some cases be inessential. The employers may be looking for some sort of character which a university degree candidate may not have and therefore the candidate with a baccalaureate would succeed. Getting a job does not necessarily have to depend on the educational level.

7.2.6. Future job

The final question that respondents were asked was about what their dream job is. Since we had some respondents that were not satisfied in their job, the dream jobs that some wrote were definitely interesting. My only suggestion for those that want to be something completely different, based on what they are studying, then they should start

thinking and take some action until it is not too late. Below is a list of the field of study of respondents and the dream job.

Diplomacy

- Personal assistant to director
- Owner of a café
- Entrepreneur 2x
- Location independent entrepreneur
- Have a horse farm

Economics and Management

- Event manager
- UN job
- HR business partner
- Traveller with own successful company
- To establish own business
- Financial manager
- Cosmonaut
- Work with financial derivatives
- Analyst
- To be a coach/mentor for kids and youth

Finance

- Porn star
- Establish own business

Law

- Lawyer

Marketing

- Marketing department of an international company

Hydrogeology

- Constructor of own sports cars

Students from gymnasium

- Doctor
- Car racer
- Dog-man
- Establish own business

As we can see some of the dream jobs do correspond to the field of study but some of the jobs really are just dream jobs. It is clear that when applying to university some students still are not sure on what they would like to do in their life and so they apply to a common field of study and go on with life. Perhaps in the future their dream job will come true.

7.3. Comparison of adult learners and today's learners

Throughout generations, the ideas, values, thinking and adaptability change. The views of adult learners and today's learners on some of the questions are quite different.

It is interesting to see that the sex of the respondents was slightly similar for both generations. In both cases there were a higher proportion of women compared to men. The representation of men was slightly higher in today's generation (36%) than in adult learners (22%). It can be assumed that men tend to have lower motivations to attend university while working as it takes away their time for other activities and they feel that they are not harmed in their job, unless requested from employer.

Another difference between adult learners and today's generation is the question of working in their field of study. Adult learners tend to work in the field study more (51%) compared to today's generation (46%). Of course we cannot always see behind the reasons for why someone is not working in the field of study, but since adults have more work experience, they could have worked themselves into their field. On the other hand, we know that today's generation has part-time jobs which do not always

correspond to the field of study. More often it is a question of having some money than getting experience in the field.

Another interesting comparison between adult learners and today's generation is their view on whether it is important to have a university degree or not. It is important for 42% of adults to have a university degree, 11% think it is not necessary and 47% think that it is important in some sphere but not important in other fields. If we take the yes and no answer of adult learners and divided it between yes, it is important and no, it is not important then the outcome would be that 65.5% of respondents think it is necessary to have a degree and 34.5% think it is not necessary. There are 62% of today's learners that believe a university degree is important and 38% think it is not important. The idea does not differ so much among adult learners and today's generation. Today's learners are being greatly influenced by their parents in constantly hearing that a university degree is important in today's world. Of course there are areas in which a degree is unnecessary, but most of today's generation will still attend a university just to get a degree and be better off.

The motivations of getting a university degree are the same with both adults and today's learners. Both of these groups study to get better working possibilities. Today's world is expanding and developing and the economy is adapting. The job market is seeking educated and talented individuals that are capable of keeping up with the speed and qualified. Sadly, the weight of university degrees from common courses is decreasing as the amount of graduates from these courses is increasing every year and the market is not able to supply a sufficient amount of positions. Adults are lucky in that they already have a job but need to keep it or have the possibility to grow once they attain a degree.

8. Conclusion

In today's world of globalisation, constant growth, and technology development, individuals need to keep up with the educational level. It does not matter whether an individual visits formal, non-formal or informal forms of education. All of these forms educate the society in some way. In some cases, informal education can teach us more than formal education. It depends on us, how we work with information and what we do to receive and process it.

Today's generation has access to a greater amount of information than thirty years ago. Today, we can look up anything we want from how to calculate a derivative to how surgeries are made. Today, we can choose which source of information is the most educative and most precise. We are not limited by choice. Older generations that had lived under the communist regime were not so lucky and had to work with the information that was available. Under the communist regime, sources were very limited and if someone got hold of information from western countries, he had to be very careful not to get caught. There existed only the correct society that shared the communist ideology and then those that disagreed with their practices. It was in their (communist) hands if an individual was allowed to study a specific school or not.

The motivations that push us to get educated are very important. Without them, society would stagnate and the level of education would drop dramatically. Of course, along with motivations, we also have barriers that prevent us from getting educated. The pressure from the constant growth and development should however be stronger and support the motivations. Individuals tend to crave for a better style of life. This can be achieved by getting a higher wage connected with a higher position. The motivation to develop one-self is very high. Having the possibility to attend an educational system in later years gives adults a reason to push themselves into getting higher education and therefore making themselves more desired on the job market.

Today's generation knows that having higher education is essential for competing on the job market. Without higher education the road to a successful career is full of obstacles. With so many universities in the Czech Republic, students are able to choose

one that will satisfy their needs and give them the adequate education they find sufficient for competing on the job market.

For the Czech Republic it is essential to maintain a high level of education to have a strong labour force. Institutions should concentrate on the ageing population and adjust their curriculum to the needs of the population. The concentration should of course start at initial education, but it should also work as a motivation force to get more students educated in the tertiary sector. The courses should however be tailored to teach what is really needed and important in today's world. There are many study programs which consist of courses that are irrelevant for the student. Combined studies are the best solution for adult students getting their degree in later years. The amount of study programs offered in this sphere is large. In most cases it does not necessarily matter from what field the degree is from as long as the individual has one.

Without education, the country would be on a completely different economic level and the style of life, the society would live, would bring us back many years. Thanks to the constant growth of markets, globalisation and technology developments, persons want to keep up with the growth and grow themselves. We are looking at a society that will perhaps one day become overeducated.

“Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world.”(Nelson Mandela)

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Appendix 1: Questionnaire for adult learners

Proč si dospělí zvyšují své vzdělání vysokoškolským studiem a proč jej neabsolvovali hned po střední škole?

Why are adults upgrading their studies with a university degree and did not do so after secondary school?

Veškeré údaje budou zpracovány zcela anonymně a podklady následně zničeny

All data will be handled anonymously and documents subsequently destroyed

1. Věk/Age (můžete být konkrétní)

30-40 41-50 51-60 60 a výše konkrétně:

2. Pohlaví/Sex

Muž Žena

3. Nynější pracovní pozice/Current work position

.....

4. Pracujete v oboru, který jste vystudoval/a? Do you work in your field of study?

Ano Ne

5. Druh střední školy/Type of secondary school (gymnázium, ekonomické lyceum,)

.....

6. Vystudoval/a jste vysokou školu ihned po ukončení středoškolského studia?

Did you attend university straight after finishing secondary school?

Ano Ne

7. Jaké byly důvody, kvůli kterým jste nepokračoval/a v dalším studiu? (můžete zvolit více možností)

What were the reasons for not continuing in your studies? (more than one option is possible)

Dosáhl/a jsem dostatečného vzdělání v té době/The level of education was sufficient

Musel/a jsem pracovat /I had to work.....

Rodinné důvody /family reasons.....

Nebavilo mě dále se učit/I was tired of further learning.....

Nedostala jsem se na školu dle svých představ/I wasn't accepted to the school of my choice.....

Odešel jsem na vojnu/ I left to military services ...

Perzekuce v rodině/persecutions in family.....

- Zákaz kvůli zájmu o náboženství/I was prohibited due to my interest in religion.....
- Nedoporučení od předchozí školy/I didn't get recommended from my previous school...
- Odmítnutí kvůli politickému pozadí rodiny/refused due to my family's political background.

8. Jaká byla politická a ekonomická situace v době kdy jste dokončili střední školu? Měl komunistický režim nějaký vliv na to, zda budete moci dále studovat?
What was the political and economic situation like when you finished secondary school? Did the communist regime have any effect on allowing you to get further education?

9. Jaká byla vaše motivace ke studiu vysoké školy? (můžete zvolit více možností)
What were your motivations to study at university? (more than one option is possible)

- Vyšší mzda/higher wage
- Povýšení/promotion
- Požadavek z práce/request from employer
- Snaha o osobní rozvoj/own initiative
- Podnět od lidí z vašeho okolí/influence from surroundings
- Naučit se něco nového/learn something new.....
- Protože jsem mohl/a/because I could.....

Jiné důvody/other reasons:

10. Myslíte si, že je důležité mít v dnešní době VŠ titul?
Do you think it is important to have a university degree in today's world?

Appendix 2: questionnaire for today's learners

University and work

sex *

- female
- male

age range *

- 18 - 21
- 22 - 25
- 26 - 30
- 30 and higher

highest gained education level *

- secondary
- bachelor degree
- master degree
- PhD.

Do you have a job? *

- full time
- part time
- I don't have a job

Are you working in the field of study? *

- Yes
- No

How long did it take to find a job? *

- couple days
- a few weeks
- months
- don't remember

What qualifications were requested from the employer? *

- work experience of at least 1 year
- work experience of at least 2 years
- University degree
- language requirements
- time flexibility
- detail oriented

Are you satisfied in your job? *

- Yes
- rather yes
- can't say
- rather no
- no

Do you think it is necessary to have a university degree in today's world? *

- Yes
- No

Do you find it easier to get a job with a university degree? *

- Yes
- No

What is your field of study? *

What is your dream job? *