

The study of adult attitudes towards education is a journey into the depths of human psyche to uncover the secrets of one of the most important aspects of our individuality. Why? Because attitudes are the central part of everyone's individuality; they keep changing and moulding all throughout life, in the development process of each person.

WHY SHOULD WE STUDY ATTITUDES?

ADULT EDUCATIONAL BELIEFS AND THEIR SOCIAL SIGNIFICANCE

To use a metaphor: just as rivers shape the landscape, attitudes not only influence the personal development of the individual but also shape society as a whole. In a dynamic world where information is ubiquitous and change is rapid, education is becoming a key tool in the fight against prejudices and stereotypes, as well as with regard to meeting the fundamental and development needs of the individual and society.


Learning about and understanding adult attitudes towards education takes on particular importance when considered in the context of lifelong education, which involves continuous development of competencies and skills and is a response to the challenges of the modern world. Currently, it is not so much the level of education as the attitude of adults towards education that may determine their place in society. As Hanna Solarczyk-Szwec, PhD, DLitt, Associate Professor of Nicolaus Copernicus University (educator, andragogy expert, and adult education researcher) points out, the attitude of adults towards education will determine their social inclusion or exclusion. Thus, attitude is crucial for active participation in society.


Understanding and exploring adult attitudes towards education is therefore essential, as they reflect societal values and influence future generations. Adults, who are role models for younger generations, have a huge impact on shaping the attitudes and behaviour of children and youth. Their involvement in the learning process includes not only the transfer of knowledge, but also sending a strong signal to stimulate the development of young people's minds. On the other hand, negative attitudes towards education can make it difficult to motivate the younger generation to pursue knowledge. Adults' attitudes play a linking role, connecting the generations, and their involvement in the learning process provides a strong example to follow.

In an era of globalisation, the ability to critically evaluate and acquire knowledge becomes essential. Having information is one thing, but being able to use it effectively in practice is a whole other issue. Technological developments and societal changes make lifelong learning a necessity not only to attain professional success but also for personal development. Adult education also plays a key role in combating

social exclusion and discrimination. Through access to education, adults are given the opportunity to better understand diversity and build a more tolerant society. In this context, education becomes a tool that builds bridges between different social groups.

However, we have to keep in mind that adults' attitudes towards education are shaped by many factors, such as childhood experiences, social environment, access to educational resources, as well as personal beliefs and values. Negative beliefs and attitudes towards education can have a significant impact on society, both at an individual and structural level, generating a range of social problems. This phenomenon can lead to social inequalities, lowering the overall level of education in society, which in turn can limit its economic and social development. People who have a negative view of education may be less inclined to participate in educational processes and, as a result, contribute to the perpetuation of attitudes of withdrawal from professional activity and lack of commitment to personal development. This, in turn, leads to an increase in unemployment, the disappearance of a work culture

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and entrepreneurship, lower level of social trust, an increase in crime, and even deterioration in mental health. A lack of investment in education can result in more individuals with low social skills and lacking abilities to cope with difficult situations. Negative beliefs about education can inhibit the development of creativity and analytical thinking skills in society, limit the potential of individuals, and affect the development and competitiveness of society as a whole. Therefore, it is crucial to create a space where adults can develop positive attitudes towards education for their own benefit and for future generations, bearing in mind that investment in the education system is a key factor in the development of society.

Adult attitudes towards education are a great measure of societal values. They influence professional development, promote lifelong learning, and set a good example for future generations. By understanding and shaping these attitudes, we can strive to create a more informed, flexible, and engaged society ready to face the challenges of the future.

