October 2024

Volume 13
Number 2

http://www.wojde.org

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Abstracting & Indexing

International Women Online Journal of Distance Education (intWOJDE) is currently indexed, abstracted and listed starting with the first issue in:

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From the Editor

Dear readers of intWOJDE

We present our Volume: 13, Number: 2 issue to our valuable readers.

In this issue, there are two articles. We thank our authors for their valuable contributions to our journal.

The first article prepared by Laura COCO and Susan BAINBRIDGE and entitled "Mitigating The Matilda Effect On Beatriz Fainholc: Triple E Model Framework". This paper examines Beatriz Fainholc's research, exploring how the Triple E Framework (Kolb, 2011) intersects with the Matilda Effect (Rossiter, 1993), mainly through the design of lessons that integrate technology to enhance learning outcomes. Scholars such as Beatriz Fainholc have shed light on the Matilda Effect (in brief, the systematic underrepresentation of women in various disciplines), emphasizing the significance of acknowledging and appreciating the contributions made by women and marginalized individuals in higher education and other disciplines.

The second article entitled is "A Learning Habit: Students and Graduates Enrolled in 3rd or More Programs in Anadolu University Open and Distance Educatıon System" written by Dr. İlknur ULUTAK, Dr. Özden CANDEMIR, Dr. Mediha TERLEMEZ, Dr. Serap ÖZTÜRK, Dr. Emine DEMİRAY. The aim of this study is to determine the profile of students and graduates enrolled in 3rd and more programs within the scope of the second university application in the 2023-2024 academic year from the perspective of lifelong learning and to reveal the rate of women benefiting from this system. The quantitative research method was utilized in the study, and the numerical data obtained from the Anadolu University Computer Research and Application Center were described by tabulation.

We would be very happy to publish your studies on women and distance education in our journal. We hope to stay in touch and wish to meet in our next Issue, on April 2025.

The research focuses

Cordially

Prof. Dr. Emine DEMIRAY
Editor in Chief

MITIGATING THE MATILDA EFFECT ON BEATRIZ FAINHOLC: TRIPLE E MODEL FRAMEWORK

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ABSTRACT

This paper examines Beatriz Fainholc's research and the relevance of the Triple E Model Framework in lesson design and technology integration to enhance learning outcomes. It acknowledges that the accurate measure of success in education lies in enabling every child to fulfill their potential, emphasizing the need for an inclusive learning environment where all students can thrive intellectually and emotionally. Central to this endeavour is addressing the Matilda Effect and other biases that may hinder the recognition and advancement of marginalized individuals in education and beyond. Cultivating students' curiosity and resilience, regardless of their backgrounds, is essential for creating a conducive learning atmosphere, and providing necessary support systems and resources. Thus, educational institutions and policymakers need to prioritize the accommodation of diverse learning needs, aid students facing challenges, and foster a sense of belonging and inclusion within the school community. By integrating Fainholc's research and the Triple E framework into lesson planning and educational policies, educators can create dynamic and inclusive learning environments conducive to facilitating the holistic development of every student, while actively combating biases, such as the Matilda Effect.

Keywords: Beatriz Fainholc, Information technology (IT), Matilda Effect, STEM, Tripe E Framework

INTRODUCTION

This paper examines Beatriz Fainholc's research, exploring how the Triple E Framework (Kolb, 2011) intersects with the Matilda Effect (Rossiter, 1993), mainly through the design of lessons that integrate technology to enhance learning outcomes. Scholars such as Beatriz Fainholc have shed light on the *Matilda Effect* (in brief, the systematic underrepresentation of women in various disciplines), emphasizing the significance of acknowledging and appreciating the contributions made by women and marginalized individuals in higher education and other disciplines. According to Adam Grant, an accurate measure of success in an educational system is when every child, regardless of background or resources, can reach their full potential, necessitating the creation of an environment in which all students can achieve intellectually, and emotionally thrive (Grant, 2023).

Fostering students' curiosity and resilience is paramount for establishing an optimal learning environment supported by robust systems, resources, and equitable educational opportunities. Hence, organizations and nations must acknowledge and address diverse learning needs, assist students encountering challenges, and cultivate an atmosphere of inclusivity and belonging within educational environments. During two interviews, conducted nearly a quarter of a century apart, Beatriz Fainholc consistently emphasized

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the critical importance of online education in mitigating student isolation and reaching students from various socioeconomic backgrounds (Bainbridge & Wark, 2023; Gayol, 2000). According to Fainholc, teachers and instructional designers must profoundly comprehend distance learning principles as they design and guide students through online learning experiences. To succeed in education, Fainholc believes that it is essential to confront systemic inequities and obstacles hindering some children from realizing their full potential. She advocates for the implementation of policy reforms, effective allocation of resources, provision of adequate teacher training, and community involvement to ensure equitable student achievement (Bainbridge & Wark, 2023; Gayol, 2000). A robust educational system nurtures children's sense of agency, resilience, and curiosity, laying the groundwork for them to become engaged citizens and lifelong learners.

Fainholc also advocates for a learner-centred approach to facilitate students' knowledge development, empowering learners to negotiate meaning as they actively deepen their understanding. In remote facilitation, it becomes imperative to challenge the conventional notion of contact solely as an exchange of information (Gayol, 2000). Additionally, Fainholc suggests that instructional designers shift their focus toward crafting engaging and pertinent methods to aid students in grasping intricate concepts and procedures (Gayol, 2000). To advance the integration of technology in education, a fusion of Fainholc's learner-centred approach and the Triple E Framework (Kolb, 2011)—emphasizing engagement, enhancement, and extension—holds promise in establishing an equitable post-pandemic learning environment for all students.

The Triple E Framework, developed by Liz Kolb in 2011 for K-12 settings, has also been adapted for adult education to help teachers achieve learning goals using technology. Unlike other integration frameworks, it places a higher importance on student engagement and the deliberate use of technology to enhance and broaden learning. Enhancement occurs when technology enables learning by aligning with the subject, rather than being used simply because it is available. This leads to an extension of technology by students outside of the classroom, linking their educational endeavours with their everyday experiences (Gaer & Reyes, 2022). This framework enables instructors to make informed technology decisions while using a learner-centred approach to create lessons that promote authentic, active learning, and social and creative skill development, while adhering to educational theories of constructivism and cognitivism.

BIOGRAPHICAL BACKGROUND: BEATRIZ FAINHOLC

Beatriz Fainholc, Director of Argentina's Centre for the Design, Production, and Evaluation of Multimedia Resources for Learning, has been teaching educational technology at the National University of La Plata since 1987. Throughout her career, she has conducted substantial research on educational technologies and distance education. In 1986, she advised Argentina's Ministry of Education on the country's first national distance education plan for rural technical and agricultural training. Fainholc has also helped Uruguayan provincial governments and educational organizations. Two of the five books that Fainholc wrote before 2000 include, *Education a Distancia* (1980), Argentina's first distance education publication, and *La Tecnologia Propia y Apropiada* (1990), a widely used teacher training textbook in Argentina and other Latin American nations. She also authored *La Televisión y Los Niños en la Argentina* (1984), *Education a Distancia en Canada* (1994), and *La Interactividad en la Education a Distancia* (1999; Bainbridge & Wark, 2023; Gayol, 2000).

Beatriz Fainholc's interview (Gayol, 2000) emphasizes the potential for distance learning educators to promote open education using information technology (IT) resources, aligning with the three goals of the Triple E framework (Kolb, 2011): engagement, enhancement, and extension. Beatriz Fainholc highlights the capacity of online teachers to level the

playing field in the classroom by embracing IT innovation. However, she thinks institutions should not place higher priority on technological prowess over content quality and moral principles. Continual engagement with content specialists should encompass these subjects, as they require more than technical skills (Gayol, 2000). She believes that content quality and ethical norms should be of higher priority than the development of learners' technical skills. Hence, she promotes ongoing dialogues with content experts to attain a well-rounded strategy for integrating technology.

Beatriz Fainholc highlights the fundamental challenge of effectively integrating technology into educational programs. She believes that educators across the globe should create and enhance educational techniques for incorporating IT, since using technology to improve meaningful learning might be beneficial in overcoming challenges, such as resistance toward technology (Gayol, 2000). Fainholc's observations emphasize the significance of aligning endeavours to integrate technology with learning objectives and offering sufficient assistance to instructors, which are vital components of the Triple E framework (Kolb, 2011). By incorporating these concepts, instructors can effectively leverage technology to enhance learning experiences for students in distance learning programs. Finally, Fainholc emphasizes that schools must ensure: (1)that teachers receive comprehensive technical and educational training to ensure IT proficiency and seamless integration of IT into their teaching, as well as (2) the evaluation of the quality of educational resources (Gayol, 2000).

The following review of some of Fainholc's most current work confirms her tireless promotion of the value of distance education and the technologies that enable it.

HYBRID LEARNING, ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI), AND POST-PANDEMIC EDUCATION

The following section highlights one book chapter and two articles that Fainholc recently published. The 2021 book chapter is on hybrid learning and education. Fainholc's 2021 article discusses the relationship between artificial intelligence (AI) and education, and her 2024 article considers the future of post-pandemic education.

Book Chapter: Hybrid Learning and Education

The COVID-19 pandemic has increased the demand on women's caregiving responsibilities. In response, several higher education institutions have introduced virtual and hybrid programs, enabling students to study remotely. Many of these courses are available asynchronously, giving students more flexibility to balance school, job, and family responsibilities. Because of their adaptability, online courses provide cost savings for institutions and students. These programs are especially appealing to women who are primary caregivers, because such programs are less expensive and allow for more flexibility in scheduling and participation (Cukier et al., 2023).

According to Fainholc's (2021a) book chapter, *Una Educación Continua Híbrida Adaptativa Para Los Tiempos de Pospandemia y Más Allá*, hybrid education provides a modern approach that streamlines the modification and advancement of pedagogical concepts and communication processes. Combining virtual communication and traditional in-person teaching methodologies addresses important issues, such as the pandemic and resource inequality. Hybrid education places a high priority on efficient use of time and completing learning goals to engage students. The effectiveness of hybrid education depends not only on the technology itself, but also on the idea and execution of technology to accomplish particular educational goals. This undertaking requires the proficiency of instructional designers and capable instructors to coordinate content, evaluate learning results, and efficiently manage institutional administration (Fainholc, 2021a).

In addition, Fainholc (2021a) points out that the intricate and uncertain nature of adaptation requires substantial effort and guidance to help learners uncover meaning and navigate changing experiences; thus, there is a need to foster and cultivate critical thinking skills to support the growth of individuals and society. Hybrid learning should strive to balance in-person and online settings, effectively integrating and coordinating various learning experiences. This type of learning process encompasses flexible and adjustable techniques that facilitate developing, implementing, and evaluating educational encounters in synchronous and virtual learning environments (Fainholc, 2021a).

Finally, Fainholc (2021a) believes that formal education should actively recognize and address the intricate and unpredictable elements of the 21st century, while also assuming a prominent role in addressing the dynamics of society. Her book chapter argues that it is incorrect to view education as a passive element; it should be an active force shaping sociocultural progress. Consequently, higher education institutions must address the cost of pursuing education after the pandemic. According to Wall (2021), a decline in employment prospects may reduce young women's capacity to pay for their education and the total amount of student debt they are willing to accumulate. Based on a crowdsourcing survey conducted in the spring of 2020, 47% of college and university students reported experiencing substantial anxiety regarding the potential increase in their student debt due to the COVID-19 pandemic (Wall, 2021). Offering a low-cost hybrid postsecondary option demonstrates that education can promote positive change and social advancement, proving that education is not a passive agent, but a catalyst for social change.

Article 1: The Future of Post-Pandemic Education

To effectively address the challenges and leverage the opportunities of the digital age, distance learning programs must prioritize engagement, enhancement, and extension through the seamless integration of technology. Fainholc's (2021b) article, *Imaginar la Educación Post-pandemia es Imaginar un Futuro Desconocido*, proposes that this can be achieved by:

1. Creating a post-pandemic hybrid education system that employs technology to profoundly alter our lives through internal and external instruments.
2. Depending on the formative, social, and political-economic implications of higher education that go beyond institutions. Academic, institutional, and student ethics support critical engagement with biased interpretations, encouraging conceptual, social, and educational change.
3. Deconstructing concepts, processes, and words in formal, non-formal, and informal education that alter philosophy, epistemology, and language. Science, society, culture, technology, and education are inextricably linked, encouraging logical conversation and preparing people for digital and post-pandemic futures, and
4. Utilizing software analysis, artificial intelligence (AI), and big data in hybrid continuing education programs, which entails acknowledging the ability of technology to transform designs, language, and communication, and ultimately boosting education (Fainholc, 2021b, p. 19).

Working remotely, online learning, data analysis, AI, and cloud computing are some of the ways Fainholc highlights the significant influence of the digital era on society around the world. As Fainholc (2021b) points out, the pandemic has had far-reaching effects on political and social arenas worldwide, and technological advancements due to the pandemic's worldwide health catastrophe since 2020 have accelerated historical processes. According to a report from Statistics Canada, postsecondary enrolment among young

women aged 15 to 29 increased during the COVID-19 pandemic, from 29% in 2019/2020 to 32% in 2020/2021 (Government of Canada, 2021). Yet, although young Canadian-born women's postsecondary attendance rose, that of young immigrant women did not change (Government of Canada, 2021). While the pandemic presented opportunities for certain women in Canada, it also exacerbated the existing gender equality gap within a segmented group of women in the country.

With the acceleration of technical changes during the pandemic and the need for quick adaptations, the Triple E framework (Kolb, 2011) incorporates the importance of active participation, efficient time use, and well-defined educational objectives in distance learning programs. It implies an adaptable and dynamic approach to education that can effectively respond to the ever-changing digital environment (Fainholc, 2021b). Moreover, the declaration emphasizes improving educational designs by including other disciplines and philosophical perspectives, such as art, humanities, and post-humanist philosophy. This comprehensive approach promotes self-reflection and cooperative participation, highlighting the importance of genuine learning experiences and cultivating interpersonal skills (Fainholc, 2021b). Therefore, education should engage all women by integrating representation through relatable information.

Fainholc (2021b) asserts that as with the growing significance of hybrid learning methods, in terms of expansion and the rapid growth of AI, educational programs need to effectively convey knowledge and develop socio-cognitive abilities to navigate an uncertain future. Such changes highlight the evolving nature of education, which must adapt to incorporate digital technologies and prepare individuals for the complexities of contemporary society. Unfortunately, as elaborated upon below, there are few female role models for girls who choose to pursue careers in information and communication technology (ICT) and STEM (Daraz et al., 2022). Furthermore, high school students, whose parents do not work in the industry, either do not know about IT career paths or have false impressions of the field (Cukier et al., 2023).

Article 2: Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Education

In her 2024 article, *Colaboraciones Teórico-Prácticas De Investigaciones Sobre la Relación de Inteligencia Artificial (IA) y Educación*, Fainholc emphasizes the importance of using new technology to engage, enhance, and extend learning in the changing educational landscape. Fainholc states that:

1. Hybrid educational programs must be contextualized, reflective, and integrated into institutional, curricular, and ongoing teaching frameworks, which balance present and future requirements.
2. Higher education institutions should train teachers to choose wisely and blend physical and virtual techniques. While focusing on professional development, the goal is to map new knowledge categories in a changing educational setting.
3. Educators should teach the abductive method, using conjectures to resolve problems and find superior answers. Hypotheses are formed from processed data and verified to explain plausible causes, and
4. Students must develop critical reading skills to examine digital information, applications, and forms to reveal interpretations and refute preconceptions. This method challenges and disproves common beliefs (Fainholc, 2024, p. 19).

In 2019, Statistics Canada released a gender-focused study examining career pathways for STEM graduates (Daraz et al., 2022). This report stated that women accounted for only one-third, or 35.8%, of all STEM graduates in Canada in 2017 (Statistics Canada, 2019, as cited in Daraz et al., 2022). Moreover, only one out of five women pursued careers in STEM fields after completing their postsecondary education. The study identified several factors

contributing to the departure of many women from STEM occupations post-graduation, including family responsibilities, marital status, cultural influences, field of study, lack of confidence, and limited female role models (Daraz et al., 2022).

To mitigate the trend of women leaving STEM fields, and to enhance engagement and motivation, particularly among young women facing diversity challenges in Canada, educators should prioritize interactive and collaborative learning activities, foster self-directed inquiry, and employ technology for communication and collaboration (Fainholc, 2024). These strategies enable educators to establish inclusive and dynamic learning environments that empower students intellectually and emotionally, facilitating their pursuit of educational goals. While various models exist for integrating technology into teaching, Mujtaba Asad et al. (2022) highlight that only specific models, such as the Triple E Framework (Kolb, 2011), directly leverage technology to achieve learning objectives.

The objective of the increasing need for more female graduates specifically in AI programs is to enhance the representation of women in AI leadership positions throughout Canada (Daraz et al., 2022). However, addressing this issue alone may not fully address the gender disparity, as women still encounter significant obstacles in environments that are male-dominated. Although there has been a noticeable increase in women holding influential AI positions in different sectors, such as universities, it is essential to recognize that women may still face discrimination and obstacles in these environments (Daraz et al., 2022). These factors could discourage women from pursuing or maintaining leadership roles in AI. Additional clarification and support systems are necessary to ensure that the rise in female graduates in AI leads to consistent representation in leadership positions.

In her research, Fainholc (2024) examines the substantial impact of technological advancements on educational strategies, namely in pedagogical approaches and educational encounters in traditional, online, and blended learning settings. She emphasizes the notable transition towards informal learning, where individuals, particularly children and young adults, progressively interact regularly with diverse software applications. This trend has the potential to weaken the effectiveness of the traditional educational system (Fainholc, 2024). When it comes to expanding the use of AI in education, it is essential to find a balance between using AI for personalized learning, and maintaining the crucial aspects of human interaction and critical thinking. This highlights the significance of providing authentic learning experiences and developing soft skills, even in educational environments that rely on technology (Fainholc, 2024).

CONCLUSION

In summation, Fainholc emphasizes that increasing active interaction is crucial to the success of distance education efforts. These learner-centred approaches promote involvement, engagement, and critical thinking, and empower students to take control of their educational journey (Gayol, 2000). Rethinking our approach to education, especially in higher education, becomes imperative in this era of digital transformation. Education must evolve to impart knowledge, and to recognize and overcome biases, including those perpetuating the Matilda Effect (Rossiter, 1993), igniting curiosity and inspiring lifelong learning. Education should be a beacon of opportunity, leveraging individuals' doubts and curiosity to foster growth and development. However, despite technological advancements, disparities persist, as evidenced by the lower employment rates of young women compared to men in 2020 (Government of Canada, 2021). This discrepancy underscores the urgent need for inclusive and equitable educational practices that address and mitigate the Matilda Effect and other forms of bias.

As Fainholc emphasizes, embracing socio-cognitive, artificial, and software tools is crucial to navigating the complexities of the digital age. It requires a multifaceted approach that

combines introspection with forward-thinking, acknowledging our history and our future possibilities. By adopting an open and democratic mindset, we can harness the potential of hybrid and continuous learning modalities, recognizing them as pervasive factors that shape our educational landscape.

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A LEARNING HABIT: STUDENTS AND GRADUATES ENROLLED IN 3RD OR MORE PROGRAMS IN ANADOLU UNIVERSITY OPEN AND DISTANCE EDUCATION SYSTEM

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ABSTRACT

Anadolu University Open Education System (OES) has been offering the opportunity to enroll in associate and undergraduate degree programs with the second university without an exam since 2002. Within the scope of the application, while students who continue to receive face-to-face undergraduate education in any higher education institution and students who graduate from distance and face-to-face education can apply to undergraduate and associate degree programs; those who receive associate degree education and graduates can only apply to associate degree programs. Within the context of Anadolu University OES second university, there are individuals who are registered and graduated from the 3rd program to the 15th program.

In the second university implementation, which enables continuous learning, there are students and graduates who are not satisfied with two diplomas but aim for more diplomas. The aim of this study is to determine the profile of students and graduates enrolled in 3rd and more programs within the scope of the second university application in the 2023-2024 academic year from the perspective of lifelong learning and to reveal the rate of women benefiting from this system. The quantitative research method was utilized in the study, and the numerical data obtained from the Anadolu University Computer Research and Application Center were described by tabulation.

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As a result, it is concluded that the opportunities offered to individuals by the Open Education System, just as the second university implementation, support lifelong learning and provide individuals with unlimited possibilities to receive the education they want.

Keywords: Open Education System, multiple utilization, second university, distance education, lifelong learning.

INTRODUCTION

Lifelong learning, in general terms, is the development of an individual's knowledge and skills by making use of all structured or semi-structured education and training throughout his/her life.

Lifelong learning is intertwined with life. In other words, real life is where knowledge is created and put into practice. Therefore, it would be appropriate to discuss lifelong learning in personal, social, and professional contexts. A lifelong learner encompasses all these three basic frameworks. Individuals can ensure their personal, social, and professional development through lifelong learning (Günüç, Odabaşı, & Kuzu, 2012, p. 311).

Lifelong learning is directed towards three main objectives. These are: to ensure the personal development of individuals by creating learning opportunities, to realize social integration, and to ensure economic growth (Güleç, Çelik, & Demirhan, 2012, p. 37).

The concept of lifelong learning has gained importance in the age of information and technology with the increasing need for individuals to add new skills to the ones they have acquired. Factors such as the speed of globalization in the world, changing living conditions, changes in the business world and economy, and the need for individuals to develop themselves in personal and professional fields in order to maintain or advance their position in employment have been the elements that trigger the continuity of education. The concept of lifelong learning is defined by different researchers and institutions as the extension of education to the whole life (Kulich, 1982), the acquisition of the necessary knowledge for individuals to manage their lives (White, 1982), the opportunity for individuals to bring their knowledge up to date, enabling them to enjoy activities that they have put aside for a long time or that they have always wanted to do but have not been able to do before, and trying activities and pursuits that they previously thought were beyond their current time or competence (Chapman, Gaff, Toomey, & Aspin 2005). The Organization for Economic Development and Cooperation-OECD (1996) states that lifelong learning encompasses all learning activities that individuals perform from cradle to grave for the purpose of developing their knowledge and competencies. Lifelong learning is not only the opportunity for non-formal education, renewal of education, and second education for adults. Lifelong learning is a way of seeing every part of teaching and learning, including formal, non-formal, and lifelong learning (Aksoy, 2013, p. 35).

In Bologna in 1999, education ministers from 29 countries agreed on a common vision for the European higher education area, emphasizing the need to provide ample opportunities for lifelong learning and recognition of prior learning in order to meet the individual needs of students in ongoing processes and to make lifelong learning an integral part of higher education activity (Bologna Process, 2015).

Lifelong learning is a "imperative" in the knowledge society and encompasses "all-purpose learning from cradle to grave" for a wide range of learner groups. The lifelong learning environment has specific characteristics and is strongly supported by information and communication technologies. The sustainability of the learning environment is a critical

issue. The increasing demand for lifelong learning will force educational institutions to change (Sasja et al. 2003, p. 1).

The opportunities of distance education are important for the dissemination and sustainability of lifelong education. In particular, the absence of time and space limitations is very meaningful for disadvantaged groups in society. Due to the unchanging (or widely accepted) idea that women's place in the social structure is centered on the home and family, the contribution of these opportunities to women's incomplete education process is crucial. This opportunity for education, starting from primary education and extending to higher education and beyond, will make a great contribution to women's qualification as self-confident, successful, and modern individuals in society.

Distance education is an educational practice that promotes lifelong education and offers individuals robust alternatives due to the flexibility it offers to learners, the possibilities offered by technology, inclusiveness, and self-education. As open and distance learning, which enables mass education, is seen as essential in meeting the lifelong education needs of societies, many responsibilities fall upon higher education institutions in this field. It can be stated that one of the examples of the services provided by higher education institutions within the scope of lifelong learning activities is the opportunity of second university (Kılınç, Altınpulluk, Fırat, 2020, p. 82).

Second university is a system that allows graduates of associate and undergraduate degree programs of higher education institutions and individuals who are currently studying in face-to-face programs or who will start new programs to enroll in programs in the open education systems of universities without taking any exams and to receive a second diploma.

The universities offering education in the second university format are Anadolu University Open Education Faculty (AÖF), Atatürk University Open and Distance Education Faculty, Istanbul University Open and Distance Education Faculty, Ankara University Open and Distance Education Faculty.

Within Anadolu University Open Education System, there are three faculties as Open Education, Economics, and Business Administration Faculties. Within the scope of the second university, there are 39 associate and 21 undergraduate programs in these faculties. The distribution of the programs is as follows: 39 associate degree programs and eight undergraduate programs in the Faculty of Open Education, eight undergraduate programs in the Faculty of Economics, and five undergraduate degree programs in the Faculty of Business Administration. (For information on the programs, see Anadolu University, 2024a)

There are 28 associate degree and 10 undergraduate programs under Atatürk University Open and Distance Education Faculty second university, 15 associate and 15 undergraduate degree programs under Istanbul University Open and Distance Education Faculty second university, four associate degree and two undergraduate degree programs under Ankara University Open and Distance Education Faculty second university.

When the literature is reviewed, the academic studies on the second university implementation are the studies on the opportunities offered by this practice to individuals; the reasons for choosing a second university; the age, gender, region, and program information of the students in the second university enrollment type; and the difference of second university students from other groups in educational attainment.

Objective and Methodology

The aim of this study is to determine the student profile within the framework of lifelong learning by obtaining quantitative data on students enrolled and graduated from 3rd, 4th, 5th and more programs after the second university in the 2023-2024 academic year, and to reveal the rate of women benefiting from this system. In line with this purpose, answers to the following questions were sought:

Students who are enrolled in and graduated from the 3rd or more programs after their second university degree in the 2023-2024 academic year;

- **What are their numbers?**
- **What is the gender distribution?**
- **What is the age distribution?**
- **How is their distribution by province?**
- **How are they distributed according to the programs they are registered in?**
- **How are they distributed over the years?**

In addition to this main objective in the study, it was also aimed to inform and encourage students who are willing on this subject and to emphasize the significance of providing the right to study and graduate from more than two universities in terms of lifelong learning.

In the study titled "A Learning Habit: Students and Graduates Enrolled in 3rd and More Programs in Anadolu University Open and Distance Education System", firstly, a literature review on the concepts of lifelong learning and second university was conducted. Then, numerical data on enrolled and graduated students and information about the Open Education System second university were obtained from Anadolu University Computer Research and Application Center and Open Education Faculty Central Office. A quantitative research method was utilized in the study. The numerical data obtained were tabulated by determining percentage values and described in the context of the variables determined for the purpose. Quantitative research is generally concerned with measuring certain variables in a sample. "Description is drawing a picture of what is what, how things begin and continue, or what a situation, person or event looks like." (Punch, 2020, p.16).

The study population consists of students who have completed at least two programs under the second university in Anadolu University Open Education System in the 2023-2024 Academic Year, enrolled in the third or more programs, and graduated from at least three programs and more. The study sample also covers the whole population. There is no quantitative or qualitative data in the literature on individuals who have or aim to have more than two diplomas. The study is significant in this context.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

I. Data on Students Enrolled in 3rd or More Programs

In this section, according to the 2023-2024 academic year data, numerical data on the gender, age, local bureaus, the enrolled undergraduate/associate's degree programs, and the enrollment years of the students enrolled in the 3rd and more programs are given.

Table 1. Distribution of students enrolled in 3rd or more programs by gender

Number of programs enrolled in	Woman		Male		Total	
	Number	**%**	**Number**	**%**	**Number**	**%**
3rd program	22817	44.30	28675	55.70	51492	100
4th program	6340	38.60	10174	61.40	16521	100
5th program	1614	33.40	3225	66.60	4839	100
6th program	397	30.12	921	69.88	1318	100
7th program	95	25.40	279	74.60	374	100
8th program	27	22.70	92	77.30	119	100
9th program	6	17.15	29	82.85	35	100
10th program	2	18.19	9	81.81	11	100
11th program	0	0	5	100	5	100
12th program	1	20	4	80	5	100
13th program	1	100	0	0	1	100
14th program	0	0	1	100	1	100
15th program	1	100	0	0	1	100
Total	**31308**	**41.90**	**43414**	**58.10**	**74722**	**100**

As seen in Table 1, there are also students enrolled in the 15th program in the system. When the distribution of students enrolled in 3rd or more programs is examined according to the programs, it is naturally seen that the number of students decreases as the number of programs enrolled increases.

From the same table (Table 1), when the distribution of enrolled students by gender is examined, it is seen that the number of male students is higher in the 3rd program and then in the 12th program. In total, the rate of males is 58,1% and the rate of females is 41,9%. It was observed that one student enrolled in the 14th program was male and one student enrolled in the 13th and 15th programs was female.

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Table 2. Distribution of students enrolled in 3rd or more programs by age groups

Number of programs enrolled in		Age groups							
		80-89	70-79	60-69	50-59	40-49	30-39	20-29	Total
3rd program	N	1	64	229	5661	16024	24012	5501	51492
	%	0.002	0.124	0.444	11	31	47	10.44	100
4th program	N	0	34	319	2367	6691	6501	609	16521
	%	0	0.006	1.93	14.32	40.49	39.34	3.68	100
5th program	N	0	9	106	947	2202	1503	72	4839
	%	0	0.2	2.2	19.6	45.5	31.0	1.5	100
6th program	N	0	8	48	286	640	330	6	1318
	%	0	0.60	3.64	21.6	48.55	25.0	0.45	100
7th program	N	1	0	29	110	176	57	1	374
	%	0.27	0	7.75	29.41	47.05	15.24	0.27	100
8th program	N	1	1	6	33	59	19	0	119
	%	0.84	0.84	5.04	27.73	49.57	15.96	0	100
9th program	N	0	1	4	9	11	10	0	35
	%	0	2.85	11.42	25.71	31.42	28.57	0	100
10th program	N	0	0	3	4	3	0	1	11
	%	0	0	27.27	36.36	27.27	0	9.09	100
11th program	N	0	0	1	0	1	3	0	5
	%	0	0	20	0	20	60	0	100
12th program	N	0	0	0	2	2	1	0	5
	%	0	0	0	40	40	20	0	100
13th program	N	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
	%	0	0	0	0	100	0	0	100
14th program	N	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
	%	0	0	0	100	0	0	0	100
15th program	N	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
	%	0	0	0	0	0	100	0	100
Total N		3	117	745	9420	25810	32437	6190	74722
	%	0.004	0.15	1	12.6	34.54	43.4	8.2	100

When the distribution of students enrolled in 3rd and more programs according to their age groups is examined (Table 2), it is seen that there are three students in the 80-89 age group enrolled in the 3rd, 7th, and 8th programs. This data is very significant regarding lifelong learning. It was observed that while the 30-39 age group enrolled in the 3rd program had the highest number of students, the 40-49 age group outnumbered the students enrolled in the 4th, 5th, 6th, 6th, 7th, 7th, 8th, and 9th programs. Both age groups include young and middle-aged individuals who can be considered in the active working life. For this reason, it is noteworthy that they can continue their working life while continuing to attend three or more university programs and devote time and effort to it. It is also seen that students in the 20-29 age group, who may be at the age of attending the formal departments of universities, are also enrolled in the 3rd and 4th programs in OES.

Table 3. Distribution of students enrolled in 3rd or more programs by local bureaus they are registered in

Local bureaus	Number of programs enrolled in													Total
	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	
İstanbul	22538	7723	2296	635	181	56	16	7	2	2	0	0	0	33456
Ankara	4820	1546	466	104	37	10	2	2	1	1	0	0	0	6989
İzmir	4242	1387	413	116	32	4	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	6195
Antalya	1097	322	110	29	7	6	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	1574
Kocaeli	1072	315	83	25	6	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	1503
Bursa	967	306	77	21	2	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1379
Adana	972	209	92	22	7	3	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	1307
Eskişehir	831	234	73	13	3	2	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1157
Diyarbakır	681	168	52	16	6	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	926
Konya	670	186	43	13	0	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	915
Gaziantep	612	175	43	17	6	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	854
Mersin	570	174	45	7	3	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	800
Samsun	509	158	39	11	4	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	722
Kayseri	479	152	37	17	4	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	690
Balıkesir	484	122	42	7	7	5	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	669
Muğla	438	142	42	22	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	648
Şanlıurfa	439	120	47	7	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	614
Aydın	394	132	36	16	3	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	582
Tekirdağ	387	118	35	7	3	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	552
Manisa	374	110	41	11	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	539
Sakarya	349	100	32	5	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	488
Trabzon	308	102	33	10	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	455
Hatay	318	99	23	9	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	453
Denizli	319	88	37	3	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	450
Malatya	293	94	21	12	1	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	424
Kahramanmaraş	287	92	28	4	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	413
Çanakkale	255	93	29	7	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	386
Mardin	258	67	14	7	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	348
Elâzığ	238	75	13	7	2	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	338
Van	244	68	18	3	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	334
Yalova	155	51	13	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	323
Osmaniye	217	77	20	6	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	321
Batman	222	71	16	7	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	317
Ordu	205	66	10	5	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	288
Edirne	193	47	23	6	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	270
Sivas	199	48	17	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	267
Aksaray	188	53	13	9	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	265
Adıyaman	170	58	13	10	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	251
Isparta	162	61	17	3	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	244
Tokat	183	35	15	8	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	244

Zonguldak	177	52	7	6	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	244
Afyonkarahisar	177	51	11	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	240
Çorum	166	51	12	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	232
Rize	148	57	6	6	2	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	220
Kütahya	160	39	15	4	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	219
Erzurum	139	51	16	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	207
Giresun	144	40	19	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	205
Kırklareli	145	47	6	5	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	205
Düzce	137	35	8	4	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	185
Amasya	121	44	11	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	179
Bingöl	127	31	10	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	171
Bolu	124	30	8	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	165
Kırıkkale	116	36	8	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	163
Karaman	120	30	7	3	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	161
Uşak	142	5	9	4	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	161
Kastamonu	107	28	6	4	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	147
Şırnak	106	23	13	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	144
Niğde	102	27	6	2	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	139
Nevşehir	97	25	13	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	138
Siirt	102	23	6	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	132
Yozgat	90	17	8	4	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	121
Erzincan	90	22	6	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	120
Karabük	83	25	3	5	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	117
Bilecik	78	28	7	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	116
Iğdır	86	18	5	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	112
Kırşehir	73	23	5	0	1	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	107
Sinop	78	19	6	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	107
Bitlis	70	27	9	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	106
Burdur	69	25	9	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	104
Muş	67	31	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	102
Ağrı	69	19	6	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	96
Bartın	69	18	7	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	96
Bayburt	27	7	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	96
Kilis	67	18	6	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	92
Artvin	63	16	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	85
Kars	66	9	10	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	85
Hakkâri	63	14	5	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	84
Çankırı	48	16	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	67
Tunceli	46	12	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	62
Gümüşhane	43	10	4	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	58
Ardahan	34	13	3	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	52
Keşan	24	9	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	37

When the distribution of students enrolled in 3rd or more programs is examined according to the local bureaus where they are enrolled (Table 3), it is seen that the highest

proportions of students enrolled in 3rd programs are in major provinces such as Antalya, Kocaeli, Bursa, Adana, and Eskişehir, apart from the three major cities of Istanbul, Ankara, and Izmir.

In Anadolu University Open Education System, which has a total of 93 offices within the borders of Turkey, the fact that 82 (88,2%) offices have students enrolled in a third or more program, indicating that the tendency to benefit from the system in terms of lifelong education has been adopted almost throughout the country.

Table 4. Distribution of students enrolled in 3rd or more programs by bureaus they are registered in abroad

Enrolment and exam centers	Number of programs enrolled in			Total
	3rd program	4th program	5th program	
TRNC	64	22	6	92
Western Europe	16	2	0	18
Saudi Arabia	4	0	0	4
Bulgaria	2	0	0	2
Kosovo	2	0	0	2
North America	2	1	0	3
Moldova	1	0	0	1
Qatar	1	0	0	1
United Arab Emirates	0	1	0	1
Uzbekistan	1	0	0	1
Total	93	26	6	125

Anadolu University operates 56 enrollment and examination centers in 39 countries. After providing education and teaching services in the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus and Western European countries, it has started to deliver education services to Azerbaijan, Kosovo, Macedonia, Bulgaria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Albania, North America, Saudi Arabia, Central Asia, and South Africa (Anadolu University, 2024b).

Students enrolled in the 3rd, 4th, and 5th programs abroad are shown in Table 4. There are no students abroad who are enrolled in more programs than the 5th program. Most of the students are located in TRNC and Western Europe. According to Table 4, it can be said that students who are interested in having a diploma from the 3rd and more programs are spread over a wide geography abroad.

Table 5. Distribution of students enrolled in 3rd or more programs by associate/undergraduate degree programs they are enrolled in

Number of programs enrolled in	Enrolled program				Total	
	Associate Degree		Undergraduate			
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
3rd program	36867	71.6	14625	28.4	51492	100
4th program	12405	75	4116	25	16521	100
5th program	3316	68.5	1523	31.5	4839	100
6th program	880	66.8	438	33.2	1318	100
7th program	269	72	105	28	374	100
8th program	92	77.3	27	22.6	119	100
9th program	30	85.7	5	14.3	35	100
10th program	7	63.64	4	36.36	11	100
11th program	3	60	2	40	5	100
12th program	2	40	3	60	5	100
13th program	1	100	0	0	1	100
14th program	1	100	0	0	1	100
15th program	1	10	0	0	1	100
Total	53868	72.1	20848	27.9	74722	100

The associate and bachelor's degree programs the students are enrolled in are given in Table 5. When the distribution in the table is examined, it is seen that students are enrolled in associate degree programs at a rate approximately three times that of undergraduate degree programs. Associate's degree programs offer learners the chance of a diploma for their professional lives and a wide range of department selection opportunities for those who want to improve themselves. In particular, the business world provides more opportunities and flexibility to employees with more than one diploma, and versatile education places the employee in an advantageous position in competitive conditions. Some associate degree programs also allow transition to undergraduate education. The short two-year duration of associate's degree programs offers an appealing opportunity for those who demand different diplomas. The highest rate of enrollment in associate degree programs was observed in the 9th program (85,7%) and the highest rate of enrollment in undergraduate programs was observed in the 12th program (60%).

All face-to-face or distance education programs are determined by the Higher Education Council (YÖK). The Council of Higher Education (CoHE) can make changes in accordance with the conditions of either the country or the era and with the belief that it can open, close, or transform employment-oriented higher education programs and replace them with new ones. The programs Open Education System are also determined by the decision of the higher education institution in line with the needs of the country. Programs may change due to these decisions. It is useful to evaluate the program lists below from this point of view.

Table 6. Distribution of students enrolled in 3rd or more programs by associate degree programs they are enrolled in

Associate Degree Programs	Number of programs enrolled in													Total
	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	
Occupational Health and Safety	3295	1065	311	66	23	7	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	4769
Medical Documentation and Secretary Training	3666	703	147	25	0	3	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	4546
Computer Programming	2781	906	269	68	24	5	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	4055
Agricultural Technology	2646	903	325	86	28	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	3990
Real Estate Management	2326	938	309	88	27	8	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	3697
Justice	2253	616	165	40	0	3	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	3078
Culinary Arts	1869	738	189	55	9	7	3	0	1	0	0	0	0	2871
Theology	1307	384	0	33	0	2	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	1728
Social Services	1298	0	104	0	11	2	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	1417
Human Resources Management	1255	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1256
Social Media Management	0	364	109	44	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	520
Web Design and Coding	0	363	110	0	0	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	478
Laboratory and Veterinary Assistance Services	0	0	0	30	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	31
Securities and Capital Markets	0	0	0	25	0	4	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	30
Emergency and Disaster Management	0	0	0	25	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	27
Cultural Heritage and Tourism	0	0	0	0	9	4		2	0	0	0	0	0	15
Photography and Camera Operation	0	0	0	0	11	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	13
Geographic Information Systems	0	0	0	0	9	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	11
Geriatric Care	0	0	0	0	10	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	10
Management of Health Care Organizations	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
Retailing and Store Management	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
Total	22696	6980	2038	585	161	54	16	7	3	2	1	1	1	32545

When the distribution of students enrolled in 3 or more programs according to associate degree programs (Table 6) is reviewed, the most preferred program by students is Occupational Health and Safety. Following this, Medical Documentation and Secretary Training and Computer Programming come in third place.

The Occupational Health and Safety Associate Degree Program, which ranks first in terms of the number of graduates, aims to train qualified personnel for the operations that are mandatory in all public and private workplaces and work areas in accordance with the Occupational Health and Safety Law No. 6331. Graduates of this program receive the title of occupational health and safety technician (Anadolu University, 2024c).

The aim of the Medical Documentation and Secretary Training Associate Degree Program, which ranks second, is to train qualified human resources who are familiar with the basic

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principles, processes and management of health services and who communicate effectively (Anadolu University 2024d).

The third ranking is the Computer Programming Associate Degree Program. The aim of this program is to train qualified human resources needed in this field. Computerized systems, automation, computer networks, and Web services are used in almost every industry. This has made computer programming one of the most needed professions of today (Anadolu University, 2024e).

Table 7. Distribution of students enrolled in 3rd or more programs by undergraduate degree programs they are enrolled in

Registered undergraduate program	Number of programs enrolled in													Total
	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	
Sociology	2862	1014	350	82	27	7	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4342
Healthcare Management	1608	594	157	41	6	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	2407
Management Information Systems	1727	478	141	32	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2381
History	1433	579	176	48	18	5	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	2261
Turkish Language and Literature	1023	313	102	30	9	2	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1480
Political Science and Public Administration	866	294	86	21	5	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	1276
Philosophy	767	318	94	29	7	3	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1211
Visual Communication and Design	631	260	83	23	4	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1002
International Relations	618	231	74	0	6	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	930
International Trade and Logistics	812	0	67	0	2	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	884
Public Relations and Advertising	634	0	0	22	7	3	2	0	0	1	0	0	0	669
Tourism Management	0	91	0	0	2	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	94
Social Work	0	0	0	37	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	37
Labor Economics and Industrial Relations	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
Aviation Management	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
Economics	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	4

When the distribution of students enrolled in 3 or more programs is reviewed according to the undergraduate programs they are enrolled in (Table 7), the most preferred programs are Sociology, Healthcare Management, and Management Information Systems, respectively.

The sociology undergraduate program has been accepting students with ÖSYS (Student Selection and Placement Examination) since 2009 within the Open Education Faculty of Anadolu University. This program is aimed at students to gain the ability to think sociologically, and to use this ability to better understand the society they were born into, and moreover, their own individuality. Students who graduate from the sociology program have the same rights as sociology graduates in formal education. If they wish, they can pursue a master's and doctorate degree in sociology or a closely related social science field. Graduates can have professions in both private and public institutions by meeting the requirements for employment (Anadolu University, 2024f).

The Healthcare Management program was established to meet the need for qualified personnel in the health sector and provides students with education on topics such as

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health enterprises, health policies, and human resources management (Anadolu University, 2024g).

The Management Information Systems program deals with the processes of planning, designing, establishing, and managing the methods, processes, and systems used to meet the needs of businesses and individuals to produce, store, share, and access information that gives its name to the age and society lived in. Graduates are employed in companies serving in areas such as financial services, retail services, logistics and transportation, tourism, communication, and information technologies in producing information technology solutions, determining customer needs and product marketing, and in determining the information technology needs of the organization in public institutions (Anadolu University, 2024h).

Table 8. Distribution of students enrolled in 3rd or more programs by year of enrollment

Years of registration	Number of programs enrolled in													Total
	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	
2003	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
2006	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
2009	7	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	10
2010	7	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	12
2011	4	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	6
2012	44	11	4	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	60
2013	89	20	4	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	116
2014	114	29	8	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	145
2015	184	38	8	9	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	239
2016	367	98	10	15	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	490
2017	603	150	24	32	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	811
2018	782	224	38	106	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1153
2019	2032	599	84	167	10	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2895
2020	5569	1648	270	298	26	5	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	7817
2021	7455	2391	422	683	45	23	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	11022
2022	12092	4005	752	1	75	25	6	1	1	1	0	0	0	16959
2023	22141	7318	1604	3	213	63	27	8	4	4	1	1	1	31388

When the distribution of students enrolled in 3rd and more programs according to the years of enrollment is examined (Table 8), it is observed that the demand for having a 3rd and more diploma on a second diploma has gradually increased from 2003 to 2023, following the year when the second university implementation started. In 2023, the number of students enrolled in a third university reached 22141, while it was one person each in 2003 and 2006.

II. Data on Graduates of 3rd or More Programs

In this section, according to the 2023-2024 academic year data, numerical data on the gender, age, local bureaus, the enrolled undergraduate/associate's degree programs, and the enrollment years of the students graduated from 3rd and more programs are given.

Table 9. Distribution of students graduated from 3rd or more programs by gender

Number of programs graduated from	Woman		Male		Total	
	Number	**%**	**Number**	**%**	**Number**	**%**
3rd program	19027	38.2	30781	61.8	49808	100
4th program	4212	31.56	9133	68.44	13345	100
5th program	774	25.3	2281	74.7	3055	100
6th program	146	20.56	564	79.43	710	100
7th program	37	22.15	130	77.86	167	100
8th program	5	12.2	36	87.8	41	100
9th program	1	12.5	7	87.5	8	100
10th program	0	0	3	100	3	100
11th program	0	0	1	100	1	100
12th program	0	0	1	100	1	100
13th program	0	0	1	100	1	100
Total	24202	36.1	42908	63.9	67140	100

In Table 9, it is seen that the number of programs graduated from is 13. It is also seen that as the number of programs graduated from increases, the number of students decreases. In terms of gender distribution (Table 9), it is evident that the number of male students is higher. In total, the ratio of males is 63,9%, while the ratio of females is 36,1%.

Table 10. Distribution of students graduated from 3rd or more programs by age groups

Number of programs graduated from	F	Age groups							Total
		80-89	70-79	60-69	50-59	40-49	30-39	20-29	
3rd prog.	N %	5 0.01	123 0.24	1389 2.85	7513 15	20638 41.5	19179 38.5	961 1.9	49808 100
4th prog.	N %	1 0.007	38 0.2	436 3.26	2837 21.25	6450 48.33	3507 26.27	76 0.5	13345 100
5th prog.	N %	1 0.03	18 0.6	127 4.2	821 26.9	1549 50.7	535 17.5	4 0.1	3055 100
6th prog.	N %	0 0	4 0.6	42 5.9	223 31.4	358 50.4	82 11.5	1 0.14	710 100
7th prog.	N %	0 0	1 0.7	18 13.2	60 43.8	44 32.1	14 10.2	0 0	137 100
8th prog.	N %	0 0	1 2.43	7 17.07	19 46.34	12 29.26	1 2.43	1 2.43	41 100
9th prog.	N %	0 0	1 12.5	1 12.5	2 25	4 50	0 0	0 0	8 100
10th prog.	N %	0 0	1 33.33	0 0	2 66.66	0 0	0 0	0 0	3 100
11th prog.	N %	0 0	0 0	0 0	1 100	0 0	0 0	0 0	1 100
12th prog.	N %	0 0	0 0	0 0	1 100	0 0	0 0	0 0	1 100
13th prog.	N %	0 0	0 0	0 0	1 100	0 0	0 0	0 0	1 100
Total N %		7 0.01	187 0.3	2020 2.98	11480 17.11	29055 43.3	23318 34.75	1043 1.55	67110 100

When the distribution of students who graduated from 3rd and more programs is viewed according to age groups (Table 10), it is seen that there are seven students in the 80-89 age group who graduated from the 3rd, 4th, and 5th programs. This data is very important concerning lifelong learning. There is also a large number of graduates in the 60+ age group, which is particularly important in the context of active aging. It is seen that 43,3% of the graduates are in the 40-49 age group and 34,75% in the 30-39 age group. Both age groups include individuals who can be considered in active working life as young and middle-aged. For this reason, it is remarkable that they can continue their working life while continuing to attend a third or more university program and devote time and effort to it.

Table 11. Distribution of students graduated from 3rd or more programs by local bureaus they are registered in

Local bureaus	Number of programs graduated from											Total
	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	
İstanbul	11685	3183	780	191	52	12	2	0	0	0	0	15905
Ankara	6615	1761	407	75	18	6	1	0	0	0	0	8883
İzmir	3372	961	202	46	7	1	1	1	0	0	0	4591
Antalya	1519	424	117	33	13	3	1	0	0	0	0	2110
Bursa	1490	372	82	25	9	1	0	0	0	0	0	1979
Adana	1150	330	76	18	3	2	0	0	0	0	0	1579
Kocaeli	1060	284	50	12	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	1409
Eskişehir	956	277	54	8	4	1	1	0	0	0	0	1301
Konya	958	230	51	16	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	1258
Diyarbakır	898	239	59	9	4	1	0	0	0	0	0	1210
Mersin	846	228	48	14	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1136
Kayseri	772	186	42	10	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	1013
Gaziantep	769	184	43	11	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1008
Samsun	699	202	45	9	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	956
Şanlıurfa	704	167	37	11	2	0	0	1	0	0	0	922
Balıkesir	639	179	43	11	4	1	0	0	0	0	0	877
Muğla	596	158	53	4	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	814
Aydın	555	141	36	11	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	746
Kahramanmaraş	576	126	24	6	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	734
Manisa	532	155	33	3	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	725
Denizli	527	136	28	8	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	700
Tekirdağ	535	127	19	8	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	691
Malatya	525	127	19	8	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	681
Hatay	508	103	30	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	647
Sakarya	497	125	18	4	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	646
Trabzon	387	105	23	8	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	523
Van	362	104	23	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	494
Çanakkale	357	105	23	4	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	491
Osmaniye	351	81	15	5	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	454
Elâzığ	316	94	18	8	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	439
Mardin	309	93	16	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	424
Sivas	317	69	11	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	398
Adıyaman	289	80	26	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	397
Isparta	296	82	15	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	397
Afyonkarahisar	300	63	16	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	382
Ordu	278	73	17	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	374
Yalova	271	79	17	4	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	373

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Batman	266	74	22	4	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	368
Erzurum	280	70	16	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	368
Çorum	257	69	14	4	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	345
Zonguldak	254	69	13	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	338
Kütahya	255	64	16	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	337
Edirne	244	64	22	3	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	336
Tokat	237	82	11	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	334
Rize	233	69	15	7	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	325
Amasya	197	60	16	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	276
Giresun	201	54	6	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	266
Yozgat	183	54	17	3	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	259
Aksaray	189	56	8	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	256
Karaman	161	82	11	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	255
Uşak	188	52	12	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	255
Kırklareli	178	49	14	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	244
Bolu	178	47	10	3	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	241
Kırıkkale	187	43	11	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	241
Bingöl	174	50	12	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	238
Düzce	179	43	10	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	233
Niğde	155	49	18	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	225
Şırnak	158	52	8	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	221
Kastamonu	169	32	4	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	208
Bitlis	154	42	9	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	207
Erzincan	128	43	17	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	191
Siirt	138	39	7	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	185
Karabük	135	35	8	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	181
Nevşehir	119	44	7	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	171
Burdur	125	35	6	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	170
Kırşehir	123	24	10	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	159
Muş	121	25	7	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	153
Iğdır	100	35	9	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	147
Sinop	113	22	8	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	145
Hakkâri	90	38	9	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	140
Bartın	101	24	7	1	0	1		1	1	1	1	138
Ağrı	97	32	4	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	136
Kars	103	28	3	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	135
Çankırı	95	27	5	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	130
Bilecik	111	12	3	2	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	129
Kilis	83	18	6	3	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	111
Gümüşhane	71	17	4	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	93
Artvin	69	15	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	88

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Tunceli	**66**	**18**	**3**	**0**	**1**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**88**
Ardahan	**69**	**14**	**4**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**87**
Keşan	**54**	**17**	**2**	**2**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**75**
Bayburt	**50**	**7**	**3**	**2**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**62**

When the distribution of 3rd and more program graduates according to the offices where they are registered (Table 11) is reviewed, it is seen that the distribution is similar to that of the registered students. Graduates of the 3rd program have the highest rates in major cities such as Antalya, Bursa, Adana, Kocaeli, and Eskişehir, apart from the three major cities of Istanbul, Ankara, and Izmir.

In Anadolu University Open Education System, which has a total of 93 offices in Turkey, 82 (88,2%) offices have students who graduated from a third or more programs. This situation demonstrates how effective Anadolu University OES is in terms of lifelong education.

Table 12. Distribution of students graduated from 3rd or more programs by bureaus they are registered in abroad

Enrolment and exam centers	Graduated programs				Total
	3rd prog.	**4th prog.**	**5th prog.**	**6th prog.**	
TRNC	109	25	6	2	142
Western Europe	32	7	1	0	40
Bosnia and Herzegovina	1	0	0	0	1
Kosovo	2	0	0	0	2
North America	4	2	0	0	6
North Macedonia	3	0	0	0	3
United Arab Emirates	2	0	0	0	2
Saudi Arabia	1	1	0	0	2
Total	154	35	7	2	198

The registration locations abroad of the students who graduated from the 3rd and more programs are shown in Table 12. There are no students who graduated after the 6th program. The majority of the students are located in TRNC and Western Europe.

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Table 13. Distribution of students graduated from 3rd or more programs by associate / undergraduate programs they are enrolled in

Graduated number of programs from	Graduated programs				Total	
	Associate Degree		Undergraduate			
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
3rd program	43573	87.48	6235	12.52	49808	100
4th program	11653	87.32	1692	12.67	13345	100
5th program	2726	89.2	329	10.8	3055	100
6th program	624	87.9	86	12.1	710	100
7th program	149	89.2	18	10.8	167	100
8th program	37	90.2	4	9.7	41	100
9th program	8	100	0	0	8	100
10th program	3	100	0	0	3	100
11th program	0	0	1	100	1	100
12th program	1	100	0	0	1	100
13th program	1	100	0	0	1	100
Total	58775	87.54	8365	12.45	67140	100

When the distribution of students who graduated from 3 or more programs is examined according to the associate and undergraduate programs they are enrolled in (Table 13), it is seen that students mostly graduated from the associate programs. It is possible to say that this situation is similar to the number of undergraduate and associate degree programs. While the rate of associate degree graduates is 87,54%, the rate of undergraduate graduates is 12,45%.

Table 14. Distribution of students graduated from 3rd or more programs by associate degree programs they graduated from

Graduated associate degree program from	Number of programs graduated from											
	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	Total
Justice	14349	3441	701	148	26	3	0	2	0	0	0	18670
Agricultural Technology	2681	844	209	58	11	2	1	0	0	0	0	3806
Theology	2946	605	120	26	0		0	0	0	0	0	3697
Real Estate Management	2172	720	205	47	13	3	0	0	0	0	0	3160
Occupational Health and Safety	2170	700	202	54	14	8	1	0	0	0	0	3149
Social Services	2285	499	116	0	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	2906
Medical Documentation and Secretary Training	2124	538	98	26	6	0	1	0	0	0	0	2793
Culinary Arts	1801	539	145	31	14	4	1	0	0	0	1	2536
Web Design and Coding	1665	591	150	38	5	1	0	0	0	0	0	2450
Lab.and Veterinary Assistance Services	1037	0	0	0	0	2	1	0	0	0	0	1040
Photography and Camera Operation	0	308	73	18	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	401

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Geriatric Care	0	0	0	14	5	2	0	0	0	1	0	22
Geographic Information Systems	0	0	0	13	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	13
Social Media Management	0	0	0	0	8	1	1	0	0	0	0	10
Cultural Heritage and Tourism	0	0	0	0	5	0	0	1	0	0	0	6
Human Resources Management	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	2
Sports Management	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	2
Banking and Insurance	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
Home Economics	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
Tourism and Hotel Management	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Foreign Trade and Logistics	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
Local Governments	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1

When the distribution of students who graduated from 3 or more programs is reviewed according to the associate degree programs they are enrolled in (Table 14), it is seen that the programs they mostly prefer are the Justice Associate Degree Program, Agricultural Technology Associate Degree Program and Theology Associate Degree Program. The student intake to the Justice Associate Degree Program, which was initiated within the framework of the 'Human Rights Action Plan' of the Ministry of Justice, was suspended in the Higher Education Institutions Examination in 2022. The vertical transfer opportunity of this program to law faculties was also abolished in 2021 (eleman.net, 17.07.2024).

The aim of the Agricultural Technology Associate Degree Program is to issue graduates who have all the knowledge and skills related to the process of agricultural production starting from seed, production and preparation of products to the market and valorization of agricultural production related to field crops, horticultural crops and greenhouse cultivation (Anadolu University, 2024i).

The Theology Associate Degree Program carries the aim of training personnel for the relevant institutions by providing the right basic information about the Islamic religion to those who need it (Anadolu University, 2024j).

Table 15. Distribution of students graduated from 3rd or more programs by undergraduate degree programs they graduated from

Graduated undergraduate program from	Number of programs graduated from											Total
	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	
Sociology	2345	604	102	18	5	1	0	0	0	0	0	3075
Healthcare Management	825	279	64	11	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	1181
History	571	188	39	12	4	1	0	0	0	0	0	815
Turkish Language and Literature	446	105	21	8	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	581
International Relations	341	94	22	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	460
Philosophy	258	0	22	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	282
Aviation Management	166	58	9	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	235
International Trade and Logistics	182	41	0	4	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	230
Public Relations and Advertising	161	53	13	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	229
Management Information Systems	0	107	25	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	137
Business Administration	99	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	99
Political Science and Public Administration	0	52	8	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	64
Tourism Management	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	2

When the distribution of students who graduated from 3rd or more programs is examined according to the undergraduate programs they are enrolled in (Table 15), the three most preferred programs are Sociology, Healthcare Management, and History, respectively. Sociology and Healthcare Management are the most preferred programs among registered students. Within the History program, it is aimed to meet the information needs of large populations by reaching them and to provide the necessary educational opportunities to those interested in history from all walks of life and levels. (Anadolu University, 2024k)

Table 16. Distribution of students enrolled in 3rd or more programs by year of graduation

Graduation years	Number of programs graduated from											Total
	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	
2003	20	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	22
2004	13	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	13
2005	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	6
2006	10	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	10
2007	9	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	12
2008	23	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	23
2009	31	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	33
2010	47	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	49
2011	77	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	79
2012	436	80	11	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	529
2013	614	76	17	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	709
2014	1722	194	51	7	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1975
2015	2246	274	80	17	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2617
2016	2717	334	97	22	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	3173
2017	2231	318	102	19	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	2671
2018	2725	370	149	25	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	3273
2019	4079	618	228	46	2	1	0	0	0	1	0	4975
2020	9161	1490	548	130	10	3	1	1	0	0	0	11344
2021	9936	1892	689	153	26	8	2	0	1	1	0	12708
2022	6555	1328	480	123	14	9	2	1	0	1	1	8514
2023	7150	1442	600	163	16	18	3	0	0	0	0	9392
Total	48808	8424	3054	709	74	41	8	3	1	1	0	62127

When the distribution of students who graduated from 3rd or more programs is reviewed based on the years of graduation (Table 16), it is seen that 20 people graduated from the 3rd program and 2 people graduated from the 4th program in 2003 after the start of the second university implementation. This is an indication that before the second university implementation without exams, there were students who took the exams again, enrolled in two or more programs, and graduated. Similar to the number of enrollments, the number of graduates has increased over the years.

CONCLUSION

According to the results of this study, which aims to determine the profile of students who enrolled/graduated in the third or more programs within the scope of the second university of Anadolu University Open and Distance Education System and the rate of female students benefiting from this system; 15 programs were identified for enrolled students and 13 programs for graduates. These numbers are limited to those enrolled or graduated from Anadolu University Open Education System as of the 2023-2024 academic year. It does not include students or graduates enrolled in Atatürk, Istanbul, and Ankara University Open Education Faculties, which offer second university programs.

In terms of gender, male students are enrolled in 3 or more programs at a higher rate than female students with a difference of approximately 16%. In terms of graduation rate on the other hand, men graduated from three or more programs at a rate of 27,8% higher than women. In other words, in terms of lifelong education, it is observed that men benefit from the second university opportunity more than women.

In terms of age distribution, it is observed that both student and graduate groups have students or graduates ranging from their 20s to their 80s. While the predominant age range for enrolled students is 30-39, for graduates it is 40-49. Considering that both age groups are in active working life, it can be said that there are indications that open and distance education opportunities are used together for personal development and professional development. Other age groups, especially those over 60, can be associated with lifelong education.

While the concentration of students and graduates in the offices where they are registered in the three major cities of Istanbul, Ankara, and Izmir is considered to be a normal result, the fact that both groups are spread almost all over the country and that the registration rates in a large number of offices abroad lead to the conclusion that the lifelong education approach is adopted and that open and distance education opportunities offered through universities are utilized for this purpose.

When we look at the distribution of students enrolled in and graduated from 3rd or more programs according to the associate and undergraduate degree programs they are enrolled in, it is seen that students are mostly enrolled in and graduated from associate degree programs. The rate of enrollment in associate degree programs is 44,2% higher than the rate of enrollment in undergraduate programs. For graduates, this difference increases to 75,1%.

The most preferred associate degree program by students enrolled in more than one program is Occupational Health and Safety, while Justice Program stands out at a very high rate among graduates. The decrease in the number of those enrolled in the Justice associate degree program over the years may be associated with the fact that the opportunity to transfer from the Justice associate degree program to the Law undergraduate program with the Vertical Transfer Exam (DGS) was abolished in line with the decision taken in 2021.

No scientific research has been conducted on individuals who are enrolled in and graduated from three or more higher education programs. Although there is no scientific data on the motivations and reasons that led people to complete three, five, or ten programs, many people have been featured in newspapers and news websites due to these characteristics that lead them to be newsworthy. According to the results of a study on the reasons for choosing a second university (Kılınç, Altınpulluk, & Fırat, 2020), the majority of the participants did not give a single reason for choice but gave multiple answers. Among those who gave a single answer, "career development" was the leading reason for preference, followed by "to gain knowledge in the field of interest" and "to change their profession". When the related news items were analyzed, it was observed that the reasons for participating in many different programs were different from the reasons for enrolling in a second university.

Prof. Dr. Oğuz Basut, born in 1964, is an Ear, Nose and Throat (ENT) Diseases Specialist at Uludağ University Faculty of Medicine, who completed four other programs in addition to his own field. Basut's main reason for completing these four programs was his hobbies. His statement on the subject is as follows:

> "Every person should have a hobby outside of work. I believe that every person should have a hobby. I take my hobbies as seriously as I take my job seriously. I try to do my hobbies as full and knowledgeable as possible. I love cooking, so I enrolled in a culinary school and got my diploma. I completed the Photography and Camera Operation Associate Degree program because I am interested in photography and I used to be a photographer. One of my main hobbies is to work with the soil. For this reason, I first studied agriculture associate degree and received the diploma of agricultural technician, and with the vertical transfer exam, I transferred to Uludağ University, Faculty of Agriculture, Department of Plant Protection. Thus, I became an agricultural engineer. I love agricultural engineering and working with both the soil and its theoretical part. If it is fortunate, I will continue this subject with a master's degree." (Sabah Newspaper, 14.05.2021).

Basut stated that he tries to motivate his students by associating his graduations with lifelong education:

> "We chat with students from time to time. I try to say here that this is a challenging process for all of us, not only in medicine but in all professions. In this challenging process, passing the time or passing the class is not the issue. The important thing is to educate ourselves. The contributions we will make to ourselves in this stagnant period will make a difference. I try to explain that they will experience the advantage of this in the future. My advice to all my student friends is this; they should not forget that this is a period that should not be spent idle and that they can take a step or two ahead if they work" (Sabah Newspaper, 14.05.2021).

Alpaslan Yüksel, Principal of Bafra Vocational and Technical Anatolian High School, is 47 years old and graduated from 12 universities. As of the 2023-2024 academic year, he continues 4 different programs at 4 different universities. Looking at the subject from the window of lifelong education, Yüksel evaluates his graduations in this context and aims to break the Guinness record:

> "While doing our profession with pleasure and love, a sentence remained in my mind while reading a book: 'When a teacher stops learning, he stops teaching, thus he becomes fixed. He becomes a road signpost that cannot show the way. The phrase 'a teacher must remain a student in order to become a teacher' affected me a lot. Based on this quote, I decided to study at university again. And I have completed 12 universities from physiotherapy to public administration, from history to social media management. I am currently studying 4 different departments at 4 different universities. My next goal is to break the record of 16 universities in the Guinness Book of Records, which is currently held by an Italian citizen, and to bring the 17th university and more universities to my country." (Yeni Şafak Newspaper. 27.02.2024).

Taner Ödemiş, a doctor of 30 years working as a family physician at Atıcılar Family Health Center in Osmangazi district of Bursa, received diplomas from 6 different programs. Ödemiş, who attributes the main reason for his graduation to the lack of knowledge he felt while practicing his profession, explains as follows:

> "While working as an administrator at İnegöl State Hospital, I needed business administration knowledge. For this reason, I graduated from Anadolu University Faculty of Business Administration and completed my master's degree at Sakarya University. Again, when I realized that I had problems with computer programs during my administration period, I studied Computer Technology and Programming at Sakarya University. Then I graduated from Anadolu University Department of Justice in order to have knowledge in the field of health law. One of my children became an architect and the other is in the last year of architecture. For this reason, I wanted to study real estate, which is finishing this year. The departments I studied are useful both in my professional and social life. Especially in the region where I work, the rate of university education is low. I try to set an example for them in this way" (NTV. 15.07.2019).

Mehmet Ferit Avcı, 41, a father of 5 children living in Diyarbakır, has 7 university degrees. He graduated from Anadolu University Public Administration, Anadolu University Economics, Dicle University BMYO Organic Agriculture, Atatürk University Occupational Health and Safety, Anadolu University Justice, Anadolu University Geriatric Care, Istanbul University Sociology. For Avcı, who also holds certificates in Teaching Pedagogical Formation, Student Coaching and Educational Counseling, and Computer Training of Trainers, the main reason for graduating from so many departments is lifelong education:

> "I am a person who adopts lifelong learning as a principle and recommends it to society. I have instilled this in many individuals who had no intention of learning and many people have graduated from primary school, secondary school, high school, and university. There were difficulties in education. The hardest thing was to struggle with people's prejudices. However, I was reading and learning with the idea of lifelong learning, not necessarily because I would work in the department I studied!" (Yurt Newspaper. 13.08.2019).

Mustafa Çiftçi, who serves as the governor of Çorum (13.04.2022), has 7 diplomas (4 faculties, 1 higher school, and 2 master's degrees) and is a student of Law Faculty as of 2022. Stating that education has become a hobby and a lifestyle for him and that his life philosophy is 'Lifelong Education', Çiftçi aims to continue his educational life with new departments:

> "If it is fortunate, my new goal after this is to study History and Literature. These were the departments that I was interested in. I have a special interest in History and Literature. I even enrolled in the History Department of Istanbul University. I finished the first year. When the amnesty law came out in 2018, I thought that I could not finish two universities together, so I enrolled in Ankara Faculty of Law." (Ege Lobisi.13.04.2022).

Şakir Kayadan, who works in a public institution in Ankara, stated that he graduated from 5 programs at the age of 51. Stating that he has not completed his educational goals, Kayadan made the following statement from the perspective of lifelong education:

> "The important thing is to apply what we have studied well in life and pass it on to the next generation. Young people use their energy and old people use their experience. It is much better if energy and experience are used together. From now on, I want to rest for a short time and complete law school with the vertical transfer exam. I will not give up studying until I finish law school. I am very happy, I recommend this to everyone."(Öğrenci kariyeri, 03.06.2017)

Hayati Ortaeskinazi, a Neurosurgery Specialist working in a private health institution in Bartın, has completed 11 higher education programs in 33 years and continues one program (2017). After completing his military service following his education at the Faculty of Medicine, Ortaeskinazi first received his specialty diploma. Afterward, he completed the Department of Economics at Eskişehir Anadolu University, and at the same university, he received his diplomas completing the departments of Office Management, Tourism and Hotel Management, Business Administration, Laborant and Veterinary Assistance Services, Public Relations and Advertising, Photography and Camera Operations, and Justice, respectively. Ortaeskinazi also continued his professional education by completing his master's degree with a thesis in the Department of Biology of the Institute of Science, which is jointly conducted by Bartın University and Zonguldak Bülent Ecevit University, while continuing his education at the Open Education Faculty. Finally, he studied the Department of Justice. Using the advantages of open and distance education, Ortaeskinazi stated that he made use of this opportunity to fulfill lifelong education and complete his professional development:

> "You can continue studying like this at any age. I love studying very much, I have my interests. I read what I like and enjoy. I plan to continue studying in the future. If my lifetime allows, I plan to finish a few more universities. Some of the departments I study, such as economics, business administration, public relations and justice, are subjects that every citizen should know about. It is a pleasure to learn them with academic discipline, by taking their courses and having a diploma" (Haberler.com, 17.07.2017).

Mustafa Göksöz, 51, a computer and software company owner living in Çorum, has 18 diplomas at associate, undergraduate, and graduate levels as of 2023. After graduating from Erciyes University Kayseri Vocational School, Department of Computer Programming in 1991, Gökgöz completed his undergraduate studies in Public Administration, Computer Engineering, Business Administration, Industrial Engineering, International Relations, Labor Economics and Industrial Relations, International Trade and Logistics; associate degrees in Foreign Trade, Justice, Media and Communication; and graduate degrees in Computer Engineering, Occupational Safety, Occupational Health and Safety, Forensic Sciences, Quality Management, Management and Strategy, Political Science and Public Administration. Gökgöz, who continues his education in Sociology at Istanbul University and Visual Communication Design undergraduate programs at Anadolu University within open education, stated that he aims to study in the fields of Law and Psychology after completing these programs. He also attended more than 50 vocational trainings and received certificates in various subjects in order to improve himself. Emphasizing that learning is a philosophy of life for him, Göksöz expressed these thoughts as follows:

> "Mine is a quest. I will continue on this path until the end of my life. As long as God gives me life, as long as my mind is open, as long as my eyes see, as long as my hand holds me, I will continue on this journey. The day I don't learn something, I can't sleep well. I absolutely have to learn something. What I learn is useful to me throughout my life. It is necessary not to give up learning, not to stop learning, not to say 'I am done'" (NTV. 30.01.2023).

Mehmet Şükrü Gündüz, the vice principal of Batman TPAO (Turkish Petroleum Corporation) 100. Yıl Primary School is 30 years old, has graduated from 7 higher education programs, and is continuing one more program as of 2022. Since 2012, 30-year-old educator Mehmet Şükrü Gündüz has graduated from Classroom Teaching, Marmara Faculty of Law, Department of International Relations, Political Science and Public Administration Master's Degree, Department of Sociology, Department of Political Science and International Relations Master's Degree with thesis and is currently studying at Ankara University Faculty of Science, Department of Astronomy and Space Sciences. As an educator, Gündüz expressed his belief in the necessity of lifelong education as follows:

> "The reason why I finished so many departments at the same time is that education is not a process, I became a person who believes in the importance of lifelong education. Most of the people who are successful in life are people who succeed in lifelong learning. I also chose this goal for myself in this path. At the same time, some friends ask about teaching, law, sociology, sociology, political science, public administration, and international relations, and they question their relevance. I think these are all intertwined fields as multi-disciplines. As an educator, a social scientist, and a lawyer, I believe that my perspective on life has broadened a lot from my evaluation of events to my approach to issues. People who know how to enjoy the things they do throughout their lives are happy. I have been very happy in this process." (İhlas News Agency (IHA). 20.07.2022).

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Ferda Sarıyer, 68, a teacher and lawyer from Izmir, holds 14 diplomas, namely associate, undergraduate, and graduate degrees. Saying that studying keeps her fresh, that her next educational goal is to study a department in agriculture, and that she will continue to study until her life is enough, Sarıyer explained one of her goals in this regard as follows:

> "Sometimes I get confused when I list the departments I have studied. A 72-year-old Italian holds the world record with 15 university degrees. In June, I will graduate from the department I am studying and break the record. I will come head to head with the world record." (Akit, 01.04.2024)

Within the lifelong learning process, open and distance learning is considered as a structured system that can respond to the lifelong learning demands of individuals with its capability to offer a wide range of content options, efficient educational environments, and unlimited access opportunities. In other words, it is the formal dimension of the lifelong learning process, which also includes informal activities. In its 2007 report titled "Turkey's Higher Education Strategy", the Council of Higher Education (CoHE) made the following observation about Anadolu University, which was the sole provider of open and distance education in those years: "Anadolu University's open education programs will continuously increase the importance of lifelong education functions in its programs over time while improving its teaching potential by diversifying its programs. Considering that the principle of lifelong education will gain a more central position in determining education systems over time, it will be easier to comprehend the increasing significance of open and distance education systems (YÖK, 2007, p.149). It is seen that the expected contribution of open and distance education to lifelong education, which is emphasized in this report, is realized with the figures revealed by the research.

The numbers given in this study consist of those who were enrolled or completed the program within the Anadolu University Open Education System. It does not reflect the total numbers including the data of the other three universities that offer second university opportunities through the same system. Considering the sum total of these data, it is clear that open and distance education opportunities offered through universities have made great contributions to lifelong education and will continue to do so with the addition of new options.

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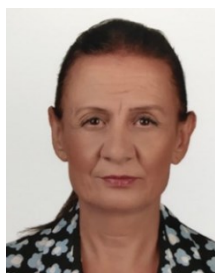
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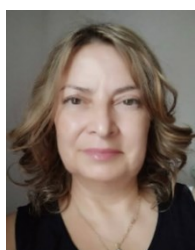
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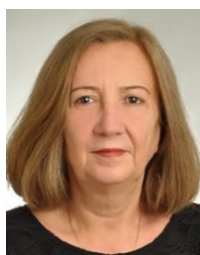
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