THE ROLE OF ADULT LEARNING IN COMMUNITIES

Dr. Jyoti Bhaskarrao More

Assistant Professor, PVG College of Education and Research, Nasik (MS)

ABSTRACT

A circumstance in which an adult is actively engaged in learning is defined as adult learning. This may be done formally in a university, vocational school, or via an apprenticeship. Adults who desire to go back to school only to acquire a certain skill set might also benefit from this approach. Andragogy, also known as the Adult Learning Theory, is the study of the ways in which adults learn, as opposed to children. It was first developed by Malcolm Knowles in 1968. It's meant to illustrate the uniqueness of adult education and help find the most effective methods of instruction. There have been modifications and expansions to the idea throughout time. It is built on four tenets of andragogy and five underlying beliefs about adult learners. It's a notion that may be used in the corporate world, since it's effective for typical training programs like those that teach soft skills.

INTRODUCTION

A circumstance in which an adult is actively engaged in learning is defined as adult learning. This may be done formally in a university, vocational school, or via an apprenticeship. Adults who desire to go back to school only to acquire a certain skill set might also benefit from this approach. Many researchers have dedicated time and energy to the study of adult learning because of the wealth of resources available for understanding how to teach adults. Adults' learning styles vary greatly from those of children's, necessitating the usage of distinct methods if we're to maximize their potential.

ADULT LEARNING THEORY

Adult Learning Theory explained, how do you as a training provider use it practically for your corporate learning? Here are a few tips toward using this theory in your eLearning:

1. Analyze your learning with the theory in mind:" The analysis step is common to many instructional design approaches, including ADDIE. Everything from who, what, when, where, and how is examined within this framework. This is also a great opportunity to think about how andragogy may be used. You should now evaluate the efficacy of your past training and consider whether or not it was consistent with the overall strategy. Ask yourself how you can map out training's real-world applications to make the training more tangible to your workers, customers, etc.

2. Collaborate on the learning you're providing: As was previously noted, people like to take an active role in their education. Before designing training courses, for instance, it's a good idea to survey employees to find out what they need help with and how they want to be taught. Learning is enhanced when students and teachers work together and share their thoughts and ideas. Then, after training is complete, solicit comments on all aspects of it, including tests, course materials, and software. The students will feel more engaged in the learning process as a result.

3. Enable self-directed learning: In the past, corporate education has often been treated as a required weekly event. Using modern tools like a learning management system, you may give your adult students considerably more freedom and autonomy in their studies. You may give them the freedom to exercise whenever and wherever they choose, let them pick from a variety of available courses, and let them set their own individual objectives for the time spent in training.

4. Use real-world learning examples: According to the literature, adult learners are more engaged when they can see how classroom instruction will directly translate to real-world situations. Include as many relevant real-world examples as you can while developing your course materials. The best way to teach a consumer on your product is to take them through a real-world scenario in which they would be utilizing it, explaining why and how they would do each step along the way. The same holds true for staff training: explain the benefits to be gained, and then demonstrate those gains using real-world examples.

5. Let your learners figure it out themselves: Since adults value creative problem-solving more than just consuming information, content creators would do well to avoid spoon-feeding readers their solutions. Instead of using the same old boring methods, why not be innovative with your course design? Including evaluations and simulations that highlight particular challenges a student would really meet and then enabling your learners to apply their abilities to solve them is a simple method to achieve this goal.

EPRA International Journal of Research and Development (IJRD)

6. Experimentation is key: The applications of Adult Learning Theory in business training are many. The best way to learn, though, is to put what you've learned to the test. Use what you find useful from the theory to enhance the training you provide to your staff or customers.

DIFFICULTIES OF ADULT LEARNING

1. Lack of time. Adult students often have full-time employment and, in some cases, families to support. This might make it tough to fit in more study time. The mission of WGU is to aid in the solution of this problem. Our online degree programs are designed to be accommodating to your life and job obligations. Your education is in your hands, and you may go through courses as rapidly as you understand the subject, so there's no need to check in to class at a certain time or worry about missing a deadline. We realize that it may be challenging for students to carve out time for academics, and we want to alleviate some of that pressure and difficulty.

2. Self-doubt. Many students give up on their education because they believe they are too old to benefit from it. They could feel like they've lost their opportunity now. That is just false! It is never too late to go back to school and get the degree you always wanted. Whether you have five years or fifty years remaining in the job, you should do what makes you happy and pursue a career that excites you.

3. Neuroplasticity. The malleability of the human brain is a key factor in our capacity for education and development. Every time we think of anything, we're strengthening a connection in our brain. New information leads to the development of previously unexplored avenues. We are continually forging new neural pathways and reinforcing preexisting ones as our brain's connections strengthen and weaken. Change comes more naturally to younger individuals because their minds are more malleable. We grow less able to change our minds and more set in our ways as we become older. That's a major roadblock for students seeking to acquire new material and develop novel approaches. Because their brains are less malleable, adults may have more difficult time learning new information. Although this is a challenge, it is not insurmountable when it comes to teaching adults.

4. Financial barriers. College funding for younger students often comes from their families. For the most part, that is not the case with adult students. Students may encounter financial difficulties while trying to realize their goal of obtaining a college education. WGU strives to ensure that cost is never an issue. Because of this, our low tuition is calculated per six-month term rather than per credit, so the more quickly you complete your coursework, the more you save. To further reduce the cost of attending our institution, we provide financial help and scholarships.

5. Contradiction. The things that adults learn in school may not always match up with what they already know. Adult students may find this concept challenging to grasp. They may need to make adjustments to their existing body of knowledge in order to accommodate new information, which requires effort.

6. Lack of support. Without assistance, pursuing higher education might seem like an insurmountable task. It's possible that students don't have the resources they need to study and thrive despite the challenges they face in the classroom. Whatever the case may be, we at WGU want our students to know they have our full support. That's why the program pairs each student with an individual mentor who will guide them through the whole process, from application to diploma. Each week, mentors in this program check in with their mentees to see if they have any questions or concerns and to see if they need any assistance.

BENEFITS OF ADULT EDUCATION IN THE COMMUNITY

1. Change in Behavior of the Individuals

A means to effect change, adult education is essential. It's useful for many different community-wide behavioral shifts. Strengthening one's capacity for critical thought is aided by this. It shifts people's habits toward production by teaching them the abilities they'll need to succeed in their chosen careers. People learn to value consistency and excellence as a result. The moral character of the individual is adjusted to meet the standards of the group. The threat or criminal activity of certain people, who are illiterate or otherwise uneducated, is mitigated as a consequence. It's a great way to foster originality and self-sufficiency in kids and adults alike. Adjustment helps a person fit in with his peers and flourish in his new environment.

2. Development of Economic Activities in the Community

Some local economies are very specialized and need a specialized set of skills and knowledge to thrive. Pluralistic economic activities in a society include a wide variety of specialized occupations from which people may draw the resources necessary to support themselves. Some of them entail the migration of individuals from one community to another in order to engage in economic activity, such as the trade of commodities and services necessary for survival. Understanding the requirements of clients, setting fair prices for goods, engaging in fruitful negotiation to increase profits, learning the language of others, respecting the customs and privacy of those with whom one interacts, and so on, are all examples of behaviors that may be indicative of social mobility. The ability to succeed in business by navigating the aforementioned differences demands a certain degree of culture, which may be attained via formal schooling.

3. Effective Participation in Political and Economic Matters Affecting the Community

When it comes to making important decisions about the economic and political future of his community and beyond, an educated person is expected to demonstrate the thinking habit, acceptable attitude, developed initiative, and managerial abilities necessary to do so (Oreh, 2001). The ability to control one's own financial situation is essential for minimizing waste and contributing to social cohesion via political means. Beyond his local surroundings, he should be able to help the community prepare for economic and political benefits. His ability to empathize with the financial struggles of others and his desire to assist others less fortunate in his community should both benefit from his participation in adult education programs.

4. Maintenance of Good Understanding and Healthy Relationship with other Communities

In most situations, members of a community engage with members of other communities who have quite different beliefs, policies, and cultures than their own. This is because many communities are both distinct and varied in terms of language, culture, political interest, economic development, social, and religious interest. Members of these communities need access to an education that promotes mutual understanding, unity, and progress without showing favoritism toward any one set of values or principles in order to ensure that the bonds of friendship and cooperation between the various subgroups within a given community are maintained.

5. Recognition of Community Rights

The cultural rights of some rural and suburban residents are so important to them that they see no other legacy they can leave behind. They guard these cultural privileges and conduct with a fierce possessiveness, and they lack the motivation to engage in other community activities (Olaitan, 2006). Such societies are seen as backward and ignored by progress. The majority of their customs and beliefs are archaic and traditional. That Adult Education's Crucial Function in Social Progress 57 is, they do not change, and the people of the community will fight against any efforts to alter the customs and beliefs that have been passed down from generation to generation. The community's members' increased exposure to adult education has led to a shift away from some of these behaviors and toward a more nuanced appreciation of their interdependence with other groups and the advantages they deserve from the government to which they are legally obligated to pay taxes. Members who have received more formal education tend to be more ambitious in terms of community growth and to feel resentful when they are denied opportunities that other communities enjoy. They are taught the proper way to petition the government for their rights. They may petition their government for the necessities of life because they have the education to do so. The community's educated adults want to demand basic services like electricity, water, good roads, security, markets, housing, communication equipment, higher education, agricultural technologies, and so on from the government, either individually or through delegation to government officials.

REFERENCES

1. *Akinola, B. Sarumi, A. & Majoyinda, J. (2000). An Introduction to Psychological Foundations of Adult Education. Ibadan: Gabester Education Publishers.*
2. *Lieb, S. (2005). Principles of Adult Learning from www.usdoj.gov/adr/workplace/pdf-html.*
3. *Nwizu, S. C. (2001). Factors Associated with the participation of men and women in Non-Formal Education programme. In N. Ogbazi, U. Azikwe, & I. Ifelumi, (Eds). Studies in gender Discription in the 21st Century (pp.219-223). Owerri: Cape Publishers.*
4. *Oreh, C. I. (2001). Democratic Participation of Rural Women in Community Development and Poverty Alleviation and Sustainable Development. Home Economics Research Association of Nigeria (HERAN), 2001.*