ANDRAGOGY: PROSPECTS AND CHALENGES

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Abstract

It is well known that the central aim of education is transmission of knowledge and experience to new generations. However, at the same time, there is a constant and intensive search for new contents and new approaches to learning and teaching that correspond to the spirit of the time, and to the new educational needs of learners and society. The main goal of education today is to provide individuals with a multifaceted training, and principally with knowledge and skills for creative activities, for adapting to the changes in the natural and social environment and for lifelong learning (Zemyov, 1998).

In the literature of education there appeared two technical terms related to how learning and teaching take place, i. e. "pedagogy" vs "andragogy". The preset paper aims at accounting for the concept of andragogy, stating some of its salient features which distinguish it from pedagogy, and discussing challenges and strategies within the andragogical model. To fully grasp of the raised issues, the following aspects are to be presented and explained:

- Andragogy vs Pedagogy
- Andragogy as an Adult Learning Theory
- Challenges facing adults education within the andragogical model
- Strategies and methods used in teaching adults

Key words andragogy, bedagogy , learners, needs

Andragogy vs Pedagogy

Etymologically, Pedagogy and Andragogy are derived from Greek words. Pedagogy is derived from the Greek words "paid", meaning "child" and "agogus", meaning "leader/teacher of". Thus, pedagogy literally means the art and science of teaching children. The pedagogical model of education is a set of beliefs. As viewed by many traditional teachers, it is an ideology based on assumptions about teaching and learning that evolved between the seventh and twelfth centuries. The pedagogical model assigns to the teacher full responsibility for making all decisions about what will be learned, how it will be learned, when it will be learned, and know

whether it has been learned or not. It is teacher-directed education, leaving to the learner only the submissive role of following a teacher's instructions. Thus, it is based on these assumptions about learners:

1. *The need to know*. Learners only need to know that they must learn what the teacher teaches if they want to pass and get promoted; they do not need to know how what they learn will apply to their lives.

2. *The learner's self-concept*. The teacher's concept of the learner is that of a dependent personality; therefore, the learner's self concept eventually becomes that of a dependent personality.

3. *The role of experience*. The learner's experience is of little worth as a resource for learning; the experience that counts is that of the teacher, the textbook writer, and the audiovisual aids producer.

4. *Readiness to learn*. Learners become ready to learn what the teacher tells them they must learn if they want to pass and get promoted.

5. *Orientation to learning*. Learners have a subject-centered orientation to learning; they see learning as acquiring subject-matter content. Therefore, learning experiences are organized according to the logic of the subject-matter content.

6. *Motivation*. Learners are motivated to learn by external motivators (e.g., grades, the teacher's approval or disapproval, parental pressures) (Knowles, 1989).

In contrast, Andragogy is derived from the words "andra", meaning "adult" and "agogus", meaning "leader/teacher of". Thus, Andragogy literally means the art and science of teaching adults. The andragogical model is based on several assumptions that are different from those of the pedagogical model:

1. *The need to know*. Adults like to relate their learning program to their lives. They prefer active forms of learning that can be easily contextualized into their life activities.

2. *The learner's self-concept*. Adults have self-responsibility. They see themselves as individuals who have the capacity to make decisions for themselves and not be led or manipulated by others.

3. *The role of learners' experience*. Adults have a range of life experiences that impact on their learning. These experiences are used to express their self-identity and form valuable learning resources.

4. *Readiness to learn*. Adults become ready to learn things they need to know. This need can be created through models of superior performances, career counseling, simulation exercises, and other techniques.

5. *Orientation to learning*. Adults are motivated to learn because they are able to realize the worth/value of learning in enhancing their ability to address issues and problems in their daily lives.

6. *Motivation*. Most adults are intrinsically motivated to learn while some are also extrinsically motivated (Knowles, 1989).

Knowles made some distinctions regarding the differences between pedagogy and andragogy and these are detailed in the following table.

Assumptions, Pedagogy, and Andragogy

Assumption	Pedagogy	Andragogy
The need to know	Learners need to know that they must learn what they need to know	Adults need to know why they need to learn something before

	to pass and not what will apply to their lives	undertaking to learn it.
The learner's self concept	Dependent on the teacher	Adults want to be viewed as capable of self-direction but are not sure how to do that in a classroom setting
Role of experience	Learner's experience is of little importance	Adults have a larger quantity of experiences and a different in quality of experiences
Readiness to learn	Learners become ready to learn what the school requires them to learn if they want to pass	Adults are ready to learn things they need to know or to be able to do in order to cope effectively with their real-life situations
Orientation to learning	Subject-centered: acquiring subject-matter content	Adults are life task centered/problem centered
Motivation	Motivated to learn by extrinsic motivators—grades, teacher's approval/disapproval, parental pressure	Adults respond to extrinsic motivators such as promotions, salary increases but the stronger motivators are intrinsic—increased self-esteem, quality of life, and job promotion

Andragogy as a Theory of Adult Learning

Until fairly recently, there has been relatively little thinking, investigating, and writing about adult learning. Shortly after the end of World War I, both in the United States and in Europe, a growing body of notions about the unique characteristics of adult learners began emerging. But only in the past few decades have these notions evolved into an integrated framework of adult learning (Knowles et al, 2005).

As far as could be found, the term (andragogy) was first coined by a German grammar school teacher, Alexander Kapp, in 1833. Nevertheless, the most prominent name in adult learning and the person responsible for defining the theory of adult learning (andragogy) is Malcolm Shepherd Knowles. Knowles devoted most of his life to adult education and pioneered the field of adult learning in the United States during the second half of the 20th century. He was a significant factor in reorienting adult educators from "educating people" to "helping them to learn" (Smith, 2002). Andragogy was defined by Knowles as "the art and science of helping adults learn", and he specified that andragogy is premised on at least four crucial assumptions about the characteristics of adult learners that are different from the assumptions about child learners on which traditional pedagogy is premised. These assumptions are that, as a person matures:

1) his self-concept moves from one of being a dependent personality toward one of being a self-directed human being;

2) he accumulates a growing reservoir of experience that becomes an increasing resource of learning;

3) his readiness to learn becomes orientated increasingly to the developmental tasks of his social roles; and

4) his time perspective changes from one of postponed application of knowledge to immediacy of application, and accordingly his orientation toward learning shifts from one of subject-centered to one of problem-centered.

Debate about the status of andragogy as a theory, a set of assumptions, a definition of adult education, or a philosophy has continued since Knowles' initial development of the term. Since the earliest days, adult educators have debated what andragogy really is. Spurred in large part by the need for a defining theory within the field of adult education, andragogy has been extensively analyzed and critiqued. It has been described as a set of guidelines (Merriam, 1993), a philosophy (Pratt, 1993), a set of assumptions (Brookfield, 1986), and a theory (Knowles, 1989).

Finally, it is worth mentioning that the term 'andragogy' has been used in different times and countries with various connotations. Nowadays there exist mainly three understandings:

1. In many countries there is a growing conception of 'andragogy' as the scholarly approach to the learning of adults. In this connotation andragogy is the science of understanding (= theory) and supporting (= practice) lifelong and lifewide education of adults.

2. Especially in the USA, 'andragogy' in the tradition of Malcolm Knowles, labels a specific theoretical and practical approach, based on a humanistic conception of self-directed and autonomous learners and teachers as facilitators of learning.

3. Widely, an unclear use of andragogy can be found, with its meaning changing (even in the same publication) from 'adult education practice' or 'desirable values' or 'specific teaching methods,' to 'reflections' or 'academic discipline' and/or 'opposite to childish pedagogy', claiming to be 'something better' than just 'Adult Education'(Reischmann, (2004) .

Challenges Facing Adults Education within the Andragogical Model

The emergence of Andragogy as an independent discipline dealing with adult education with its innovative principles has imposed many challenges not only on learners, as it is a learner-centered approach, but also on teachers, educational institutions, and curriculum planners/designers. Knowles et al, 2005 are of the view that learning is a complex phenomenon which defies description by any one model. The challenge has been, and continues to be, to define what is most characteristic of adult learners, to establish core principles, and to define how to adapt those core principles to varying circumstances. Benshoff and Lewis (1992) state that nontraditional students present some major challenges for institutions of higher learning whose programs and services have been geared to the traditional age student population and identified a number of additional services to better meet their needs. Maxwell states that any professional involved in the education of adults can attest to the fact that once an adult is in a class, the real challenge is keeping him or her focused and involved. Whether in search of professional training or seeking a degree, adults are more successful in an environment where their life experiences and maturity are recognized, respected and incorporated into the learning process.

Challenges facing learners

The most important challenge facing learners in such a model is identifying their needs. Majority of adult learners are not sure about what they need and why they are involved in a particular program. Supposing the learners are able to identify their needs, it is a fact that learners come to a program with varied needs, attitudes, motives, background, and purposes. As a result, it will be very difficult to come to an agreement on what needs to be taught. Furthermore, there will be changes in needs for direction and support during the learning experience. Andragogy emphasizes the role of experience to the extent that learner's experience is seen as equal to teacher's knowledge. It is stated that the keys to adult learning are to allow the students to direct themselves through the instructional process by integrating new and relevant information with previous experiences (Green, 1998). However, practically, many students have experienced an academic background consisting of teacher-controlled learning (i.e., the instructor tells one what to learn, how to learn, and when to learn) and lower-level learning (i.e., studying factual learning—who, what, when, and where) with limited exposure to the academic demands that require persistence in the face of difficulty and failure. Thus, students are not accustomed to directing their own learning when the tasks are demanding and when their initial efforts do not result in success. Thus, another challenge that learners face is lack of ability to make connections between the previous learning experiences and the new expected demands. Brooks (2004) identified challenges in learning to teach as:

1-The personal challenge (examine your own values, beliefs, prejudices and assumptions)

2-Teaching and one's sense of self (learning to teach is challenging that it involves giving of oneself in a way that entering many other occupations does not entail

3-The cognitive/intellectual challenge (Subject knowledge and understanding)

Challenges facing teachers

1. Coping with the andragogical principles that contradict the main stream of teaching (teacher-centered) used for a very long period requires willingness to change teacher beliefs on the one hand and extensive training on the other hand.

2. Recognizing individual differences, attitudes, motives, and experiences of their learners and taking them into consideration as an essential part of facilitating learning.

3. Understanding learning development well enough to recognize which dimensions are most relevant to a particular group of learners in a particular learning situation.

4. How to structure lessons which enable learners to make personal sense of the meaning that the teacher is trying to communicate.

5. How to design activities that give adult students a high chance of promoting autonomy, practice, and motivate them to learn.

Challenges facing educational institutions

1. Adults are more likely to be interested in learning information that can be applied in very practical ways, such as solving problems they face in the learning setting. The challenge for the in-service educator is to consistently show how knowledge can be applied in common situations that confront learners.

2. One of the challenges for schools is to find ways of making judgments about the reliability of information available and about methods of deploying information to support good teaching and learning.

3. Education should assume responsibility for four key aspects of development:

(a) Develop the individual domain,

(b) Teach basic skills in the people and organizational domain,

 (c) Build awareness of the entire scope of learning tasks, and

(d) Develop organizational learning skills (Knowles et al 2005).

Design Challenges

Vella (2002) argues that in designing any educational program, these questions should be addressed:

• How do you discover the learning needs of the participants?

• How can the WWW question help you: Who needs what as defined by whom? Who are some of the definers of learning needs in your situation?

• What difference would it make to you, as a student in an educational program, to be invited by the professor to share your perception of your own learning needs?

How would it make that program more immediate for you if you could do so?

• What are some innovative ways you have used to do a learning needs and resources assessment? •How have you tried to be inclusive?

Strategies and methods used for teaching adults

Before explaining learning methods/ strategies used for teaching adults one might ask: what is the difference between the two terms? More or less, learning strategies is another form of learning methods. Learning strategies are the methods students use to acquire information. Underlining, summarizing, and outlining are examples of learning strategies. Common methods of instruction include lectures, audiovisual materials and suggested readings. Andragogy, on the other hand, emphasizes an informal, collaborative learning environment in which instructor and learner work together to develop objectives and program content. Group discussions, workshops, and the case method are used to promote learning. Corder (2002) lists teacher-centered methods as:1) lecture, 2)lecturette,

3) explanation, 4) talks and presentations, and 5) demonstrations. His belief is that though these are teacher-centered methods, skillful teachers should bear in mind the following tips to make good practice and avoid pitfalls:

- Prepare thoroughly
- Emphasize key points
- Speak up
- Don't bore your audience
- Know your audience
- Learner comfort
- Punctuality
- Questioning and quizzes
- Debates and panels

Regarding learner-centered methods he mentions:

- Simulation
- Role pay
- Games
- Discovery learning
- Experiential learning
- Facilitation

- Tutorials
- Brainstorming, buzz groups, and snowballing
- Case study and problem-solving
- Flexible learning, open learning, and distance learning
- Group discussion
- Seminars, displays, and projects.

It is worth mentioning that the distinction does not mean one method is good and the other is bad. However, it is advocated that andragogical methods work better with adult learners. For example, Professor Carol Kauffman of Harvard Medical School has summarized the research on how much people retain from various methods of instruction as follows:

Retention Percentage

Method	percentage retained
Lecture	5
Reading	10
Audio-visual	20
Demonstration	30
Discussion	50
Practice	75
Teaching others	90

Adapted from Rogers 2007

Harold Fields (1940) (cited in Knowles 2005) declares that:
Not only must the content of the courses but the method of teaching also be changed. Lectures must be replaced by class exercises in which there is a large share of student participation. "Let the class do the work" should be adopted as a motto. There must be ample opportunity for forums, discussions, debates. Newspapers, circulars, and magazines as well as textbooks should be used for practice in learning. This view has been supported by Marilyn Lewis (2001) who offers teachers new ways of looking at tasks for adult learners by adapting activities from various sources and involving students in creating some others. These activities are drawn from news media, academic materials, written texts, worksheets to complete, word prompts, nonverbal stimuli, etc. The topics selected for those activities are of interest to learners to encourage and motivate them to learn more effectively.

As a matter of fact, it will be difficult to discuss the above methods in detail. The aim here is to shed light on some tips which might help teachers as well as planners to fulfill the goals of adult education as proposed by the andragogical model. The principles of Andragogy have been taken into consideration while writing the present paper. It is argued that to be effective many elements need to be incorporated thoughtfully into a program of learning. In a project funded by the Council for National Academic Awards, Gibbs (1992) monitored and reviewed innovations designed to improve the quality of student learning. From these case studies he outlined nine strategies which, through the use of various teaching methods, can foster a deep approach to learning:
 1. Independent learning.
 2. Personal development.
 3. Problem-based learning.
 4. Reflection .

5. Independent group work.
6. Learning by doing.
7. Developing learning skills.
8. Project work.
9. Fine tuning.

As learners are put at the center of the andragogical model, both teachers and planners should rely on methods of building freedom to learn. This includes:

-Use and build upon problems or issues that are perceived as real and relevant by the students and to the course.

-Imaginatively provide all kinds of resources that can give students experiential learning relevant to their needs.

-Develop learning contracts – allow each student to negotiate jointly with the teacher the objectives, duration, format, resources, evaluation, etc.

-Divide the class into two groups – one self-directed, the other conventional – where some want freedom and others prefer instruction.

-Divide the class into small groups and encourage each person to facilitate and contribute to the learning of the whole group as well as themselves.

-Encourage inquiry by posing problems and then allow the students to investigate and make autonomous, self-directed discoveries.

-Provide short programs of instruction, based on experiential learning, which students can use when they wish to fill a knowledge gap.

-Set up encounter groups – small groups with no preconceived structure – and allow the group members to determine the function and purposes under the facilitation of a leader.

-Use self-evaluation to enable each individual to decide what criteria are important, what goals are to be achieved, the extent to which goals have been achieved (Rogers, 2007).

According to Brooks, Abbott and Bills (2004), teachers of all subjects can and do promote development through their teaching methods. These methods need to be of the kind that encourages learners to think for themselves and design activities which enable pupils to reflect privately. Moreover, teachers need to create a learning environment in which learners feel sufficiently secure and confident to express and explore their views, feelings and experiences. Examples of both kinds of activity are:

• expressing opinions and listening to those of others;
• exploring and discussing issues from a range of perspectives;
• simulations, for instance, role plays;
• working collaboratively, for instance, to solve problems;
• reflecting privately on issues, experiences and feelings;
• sharing experiences and feelings in 'safety', for example, in friendship pairs.

Motivation is found to be the most important factor in adult learning as mentioned earlier. It could be 'extrinsic' (as in Pedagogy) or 'intrinsic' (as in Andragogy). Although what, how, and why learners learn are beyond guarantee or total prediction, suggestions which might be effective strategies and guidelines to use with adult learners can be made. Karen Jarrett Thoms of Cloud State University suggests the following strategies to help motivate adult learners:

- put materials into "bite-size chunks" which people are able to understand.

- use the whole-part-whole concept, showing the overall picture followed by the details and then a refresher with the overall picture.

- make the material relevant, as close to the actual requirements of that person's job.

- explain why certain assignments are made and their relevance to the overall course or training sessions.
- provide plenty of documentation for the learner, usually in the form of hands-on experience and paper documentation.
- let the students work in groups, since they would rather ask other students for assistance rather than ask the course instructor.
- add a little "spice to their life" by giving them some degree of options and flexibility in their assignments.
- create a climate of "exploration" rather than one of "prove it."
- keep the course requirements in perspective to the amount of time for the course (credit hours, for example).
- make certain the student is equipped with enough knowledge and skill to complete the assignment, rather than setting the person up for failure.
- bend the rules, if necessary and appropriate, so that the adult learner can "push the envelope" and try new things.

To sum up, trying to cover all the aspects related to emergence, development implementation of Andragogy in this paper seems to be difficult. However, it is attempted to do so as much as possible. It has been found that in spite of the huge number of journals, books, research work and conferences devoted to adult learning across the world, we are very far from a universal understanding of adult learning. There have been varied attitudes towards the concept of Andragogy as a theory of adult learning among teachers, learners, and trainers. Claiming that Andragogy is used in learning and training, even in the developed countries, these questions need to be answered:

- Are learners' needs really taken into consideration before and during course or programme design?
- Is all adult learning defined by the learner rather than the teacher?
- Are the principles of adult learning (andragogy) realistic given time and funding constraints?

Several issues need to be addressed if research on adult learning is to have a greater influence on how the education and training of adults is conducted. Brookfield (1995) mentions ten important issues:

First, much greater definitional clarity is needed when the term 'learning' is discussed particularly whether it is being used as a noun or verb and whether it is referring to behavioral change or cognitive development. Second, the interaction of emotion and cognition in adult learning needs much greater attention. Third, adult learning needs to be understood much more as a socially embedded and socially constructed phenomenon. Fourth, many more cross-cultural perspectives are needed to break the Eurocentric and north American dominance in research in adult learning and to understand inter-cultural differences in other societies. Fifth, the role played by gender in learning is as poorly understood in adulthood as it is at other stages in the lifespan. Sixth, the predominant focus in studies of adult learning on instrumental skill development needs widening to encompass work on spiritual and significant personal learning and to understand the interconnections between these domains. Seventh, a way should be found to grant greater credibility to adults' regarding of the experience of learning from 'inside'. Most descriptions of how adults experience learning are rendered by researchers' pens, not learners themselves. Eighth, the growing recognition accorded to qualitative studies of adult learning should be solidified. In speaking of research that has influenced their practice, adult educators place much

greater emphasis on qualitative studies as compared to survey questionnaires or research through experimental designs. Ninth, research on adult learning needs to be integrated much more strongly with research on adult development and adult cognition. And, finally, the links between adult learning and learning at other stages in the lifespan need much more attention

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