# The Significance of Andragogy in present day higher Education
# "Creating and Implementing with a learning Experience in an Atmosphere of Competency, Commitment & Credibility"

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**Abstract :-** **Adults learn effectively only when they have strong inner motivation to develop a new skill or acquire a particular type of knowledge. They are practical in their approach to learning and wish to learn how it would serve their current and future needs. Their goals and purposes for learning, their style and application of learning are unparalled. Adult Learning enhances a dynamic and collaborative interface of restored knowledge interfacing simultaneously with the internalization of the external imprints of knowledge captured in multifarious ways. Conditioning the adult learners' mind becomes a Herculean task for the stimulators of knowledge as they have to facilitate the desire for learning and concurrently supplement the knowledge reservoir of the adults with new and innovative methods. Traditional ways of facilitating knowledge in the classrooms have already been contested and defeated where knowledge flow was unidirectional and the biggest boon in the system of higher education, as presently the lecture halls have been equipped with technological aids to provide a helping hand to the instructor whose intelligent approach and usage of the same brings out the potentials of the learner inviting participatory learning in lecture halls. The study is to comprehend the significance of andragogy in present day higher education. This research is a conceptual study in nature.**

*Keywords:- Adult Learning, innovative methods, technological aids, participatory learning etc.,*

## Objective of the study

1. To initiate the climate of learning experience and to encapsulate learning as an act of participation

2. To focus and incorporate adult learning theories and relevant technologies into current structure of learning experience

3. To involve young minds in diagnosing their own learning needs

4. To captivate upon new ideas and fresh perspectives for enabling teachers to build strong learning communities

## I. INTRODUCTION

The study of adult learning—andragogy—has emerged as a learning framework due to its increasing popularity in the past four decades. The exponential increase of and the changes in the adult students' population have greatly swayed a sizeable number of education practitioners towards andragogy. Present higher educational institutions have realised the significance in transforming themselves from peadodgogy level of teaching to andragogical level. It is very decisive in this techno world as a teacher in teaching we must involve adults in their own learning and apparently glue our self to adult learning principles, introduce interactivity wherever possible into your instruction, look for opportunities to use case studies, brainstorming exercises, facilitated discussions, role-plays, problem solving, etc. To dwell learning practice , learners need opportunities to make a connection with the content relevance and connect the learning to practical life . Young Minds learn effectively only when they have an urge to discover they skill sets and will try to enhance there knowledge by interacting and gathering required information in relate with the area of interest. They are effective in their approach towards learning . Their goals and purposes for learning and application of learning is unique.

## II. ANDRAGOGICAL MODEL – FOR YOUNG MINDS

Andragogy is based on six main assumptions according to Knowles:

- Self-Concept: Adult learners are self-directed, autonomous, and independent
- Role of Experience: Adult learners learn effectively only based their experiences.
- Readiness to Learn: Adults learn only to their self satisfaction

- Orientation to Learning: Adults learn for immediate application in real life.
- Internal Motivation: they believe in themselves.
- Need to Know: Adults need to identify the purpose and its importance for learning and and must try to connect the learning with real life practice.

Thus Andragogy is an approach in participatory learning based on the premise that adult students are propelled to learn on real life situation based as they can bring they own experiences and knowledge into the classroom and they can immediately practice to their lives and careers.

## III. REVIEW LITERATURE

Since its inception in the 19th century and its popularization in the 20th century, andragogy has undergone timid but significant empirical inquiry by several researchers in various contexts. The following is a non exhaustive overview of the research based publications on andragogy.

Knowles initially based his andragogical model on the four pillars: (a) the learner's self-directedness, (b) his or her accumulated and growing experience for learning, (c) his or her readiness to learn, and (d) the educational shift from subject-centeredness to performance-centeredness. Further, he attributed the rise of andragogy first, to the adult students' high resistance to pedagogical methods and drop-outs; second, to the fast pace changing society that made new knowledge rapidly irrelevant making the need to learn newer things faster; and third, to the inadequacy between adult-focused and child-based learning characteristics.

Based on a causal-comparative methodology using both quantitative and qualitative survey methods, a study of 1800 adult learners in 542 distant learning enrollments for the 2007 fall in the USA concluded that neither age, nor level of external commitment, nor campus proximity but rather prior experience is the unique significant factor of learners' satisfaction .Ellis' study differed with earlier conclusions by Sorensen because of the specificity of its sample which comprised real adult learners—neither undergraduate nor community college—taking distance learning modality and living in real world and work situations.

According to Marzano the teaching and learning experience is about the collaborative interaction between the teacher-students-content trilogy. This trilogy, proponents of both pedagogy and andragogy seem to miss in their arguments. Hence, it is the eclectic position of this paper that meaningful teaching and learning occurs best in a moderate combination of the pedagogy and andragogy models.

Lo studied student satisfaction factors and perceived learning on a sample of 70 out of 114 registered students in a specific blended course in the USA. The study used a 22 questions 5-point Likert scale survey. The study concluded that instructor performance, students' own commitment to learning, and course policies are three key satisfaction factors that predict perceived student learning. Further, the

researcher emphasized the necessity for balancing "course designers' perceptions of students' skills and abilities with students' own perceptions of their skills and abilities" in order to improve learning performance of graduate students in American classrooms (p. 52). Though the smallness of the sample and the singleness of the research situation negatively affect the generalizability of the research results, this research can serve as a stepping stone for further research in the area of student satisfaction at the graduate level therefore reinforcing the need for the current study

A theoretical study by Houde aimed at refuting the assumption that andragogy is an atheoretical model. The researcher hypothesized that andragogy could be validated as a theory by the use of two motivation theories namely, self-determination and socioemotional selectivity. A striking feature in this research is the author's recommendation for the challenging comparative study of content and problem oriented methodologies and the satisfaction of the competency need—a cardinal component of andragogy. The current study suggests taking the challenge further by integrating other andragogical components in a more comprehensive way.

One of the three purposes of a study by Wilson was to scrutinize the impact of teachers' andragogical orientation on student cognitive (learning) and student affective (satisfaction) outcomes in a non-traditional post-secondary graduate context. The participants were students and teachers of either of five MBA accelerated courses. The findings suggested that, whereas "andragogy impacts student satisfaction in a non-traditional education setting" (p. 209) )"none of the andragogical constructs were significant predictors of learning" (p. 187). In other words, andragogy influences the affective but not the cognitive dimension. This conclusion is a direct challenge to the whole concept of andragogy which claims to help adults learn better and not merely feel better. Subsequent studies are therefore needed before validating such a finding. According to the previous analysis, the relationship between andragogy and learner satisfaction at the graduate level has not yet been thoroughly researched.

Kirkman, Coghlin, and Kromrey conducted a study comparing two sections totaling 39 out of 43 adult graduate learners of traditional with blended classrooms taught by the same instructor. The findings suggested that experience and Internet usage impacted learning satisfaction in web-enhanced classrooms more than in traditional classrooms; and that learning satisfaction was higher among students involved with a web-enhanced course format than for students in a traditional face-to-face course format. Of a particular interest is experience, which has been identified as one of the two key delineators between children and adult learners. Though experience contributes to a better understanding of the relationships between adult learners and learning satisfaction, this research fails to explicitly integrate andragogical components thus making the current study relevant.

## IV. AN OVERVIEW ON EVOLUTION OF ANDRAGOGY FROM PAEDOGOGY

In past times, teachers like Socrates and Plato had theories about the ends of adult education but nothing about the means of adult learning. Because of their cognizant with adults, they developed a very different concept of the teaching and learning process from what dominates formal education today (Knowles, Holton, & Swanson, 1998). The basic pattern of our educational system started to take shape between the American Revolution and the Civil War. Education was mostly viewed as a private responsibility. Over time the growth in manufacturing and urbanization, the rapid growth of cities, and the realization that the success of a democratic society depended on the intelligence of the population contributed to the shift in the responsibility of education from private to public (Knowles, 1962). As our education system developed, the basis of our organization followed assumptions about learning and strategies for teaching children. After World War I, views of education in both the United States and Europe suggested that adult learners did not learn the same way children learn (Knowles, Holton, & Swanson, 1998). Scholars in the field of education began to study characteristics, learning styles, and techniques of adults as learners in different levels of our educational system. The academic community recognizes Malcolm Knowles, known as the father of andragogy, for his dedication to adult education. Andragogy is an "integrated framework of adult learning" (Knowles, Holton, & Swanson, 1998, p.58). Knowles position was that andragogy presents core principles of adult learning that in turn enable those designing and conducting adult learning to build more effective learning processes for adults. Adult learners are an increasing population in higher education. Between 1969 and 1984, the number of adults participating in education programs increased 79 percent (Hill, 1987 in Imel, 1988). According to the Council for Adult and Experiential Learning (CAEL), 60% of Illinois resident's, ages 25-64 are participating in an undergraduate degree-seeking program. Adults therefore make up the majority of students in higher education institutions in Illinois (CAEL, 2008). Adult learners/non-traditional students are students who (a) no longer financially dependent on parents or guardians, (b) whose main are responsibilities outside schooling, (c) whose principal identities have evolved beyond the role of full-time student, or (d) usually 24 years or older (CAEL, 1999). In 2000, 39% of all college students were 25 or older and 56% were 22 or older (U.S. Department of Education, 2002, in Kelson &Lesick, 2005). This means that only 27% meet the definition of tradition, thus 73% of all undergraduates are non-traditional learners. The topic of adult education is a concern because even with increases in enrolment, the focus at colleges and universities continues to be the traditional student. Traditional students are considered college students who attend full-time immediately after leaving high school, are supported by parents, and may work only part-time if at all (Kelson & Lesick, 2005). By utilizing existing research relating to adult learning, institutions have an opportunity and an obligation to enhance adult learning programs. The development of higher adult education as an organizational

system can be viewed from two perspectives; structures for management among universities at the national, regional, and state levels and structures for operation within individual institutions (Knowles, 1969). The focus of this study was to look at the operation of continuing education programs in individual institutions. Within adult education, the term continuing education refers to "education that is pursued beyond the period of one's formal education and to the non-degree credit education that is offered by degree-granting institutions" (English, 2005, p. 148).Reischmann (2000, 2004 & 2005) represented a shift of understanding in the direction of andragogy; Adande & Jegede (2004) hold that andragogy is one of the new sciences of education that is now gaining ground in many areas; Merriam (1999) claims that andragogy derived from adult education practice and not from research in other disciplines; Merriam (2001) posited that scholarship on andragogy is one of the two major pillars of adult learning research and theory; Reischmann (2000,2004,2005) offered some historical perspective on the various periods that the term "andragogy" emerged and later receded; Merriam, et al. (2007) present the six assumptions of Knowles' andragogy [selfdirectedness of learners, experience as a resource for learning, needs based on tasks adult seek to accomplish and desire for immediate application, motivation mostly internal rather than external, and need their own reason why to learn something] .Reischmann (2005) made a clear distinction in his definition between andragogy and adult education. He defined andragogy as the science of the lifelong and lifewide education/learning of adults. Adult education is focused on the practice of the education/learning of adults. He suggested that not until the reality of andragogy has sound university programs, professors, research, disciplinarian knowledge, and students, would it be shown whether the term andragogy would be needed for clarification of the reality. Another definition is that of Zmeyov (1998) who aptly defined andragogy differently from others. He said that andragogy is "the theory of adult learning that sets out the fundamentals of the activities of learners and teachers in planning, realizing, evaluating and correcting adult learning" (p. 106)

## V. DIMENSIONS OF TEACHING LEARNING TECHNIQUES FOR YOUNG ADULTS:

*A. Deconstructing Conventions*

- **Psychology – Lecture hall equation balancing between teacher teaching Vs learner learning**

With the defined term andragogy as "the art and science of helping adults learn" - As educators one would expect that teachers should be experts on the best most effective and efficient methods of getting large groups of children to understand, learn, and use information responsibly to create more information . An adult will get a great deal more if he/she is part of the presentation as a conversationalist where they can be a balancing equation between the teacher and the student . In that way they will be respected and able to not only impart their expertise, and experiences, but also

address their specific needs on the topic. This makes the session personally relevant and more self-directed. Another important part of adult learning is to be able to learn something today that can be used tomorrow. The goal in professional development should never be to show how much the speaker has learned, but how much we can get the participants to learn.It is commonly understood that students, particularly adults, learn differently. "The learning styles, attitudes, and approaches of high school students differ from those of eighteen- to twenty-two year old college students. The styles, attitudes, and approaches of adult learners differ yet again" (Oblinger, 2003, p. 37). Instructors must be aware of these differences with selecting course activities and planning class sessions to better attend to the needs of all of their learners.

- **Developing Participatory Learning  - Aesthetic usage of technology facilitating collateral learning in adults.**

Higher education has given priority to the integration of technology into the curriculum.  Faculties need to focus on learning theory in the design of instructional technology so that they can create lessons that are not only technology-effective but that are meaningful from the learner's perspective. Malcolm Knowles' theory of andragogy states effective methodologies for adult learning. When this theory is integrated into the design of technology-based learning environments it is possible to create lessons that not only serve the purpose  of students to use the latest technology but also focus on their requirements as an adult. Andragogy includes ideas such as an adult's readiness to learn, the role of the learner's experiences, the faculty member as a facilitator of learning, an adult's orientation to learning, and the learner's self concept.  Lecture has a place in any presentation, but how much time it is given even with a glitzy Power Point Presentation should be a major concern of any presenter. To ensure higher success, technology is integrated into the instructional activities of the class. The development of technology-related skills is a valued and is playing a prominent role in today's E-world. To support learning, technology applications are used to articulate teaching in a practical manner.  The form and content of instruction is completely determined and controlled by the instructor and the computer technology is used by teachers and learners as they might commonly be used in everyday environments such as a workplace, home, or library . The added value of the technology within this approach is that educational activities can be enriched and extended with the use of technology in ways that are virtually impossible without technology. Imparting technology into instruction by using technological tools to support learning activities gives learners opportunities to develop technology skills and experiences in contexts that are similar to those in which technology is used outside the classroom which will apparently develop a participatory learning among the young minds.

## VI.  CONFRONTATIONS

The occurring challenges for  adapting andragogical methods for young adults  in educational institutions is the absence of a orderly approach towards the implementation of  Information  &  Communication  Technology, administrative support, technical support, staff development and inadequate funds.

Teaching Fraternity  often feel challenged when it  comes in preparing and delivering materials online that were originally designed for the regular classroom , all study materials  graith  by the facilitator, as part of the course, need to be made accessible online.

Faculty must spend  time in  learning how to use the technology and ensuring that adequate institutional support is present to make the technology work.

Instructors must focus on learning theory in the design of instructional technology so that they can create lessons that are not only technology-effective but that are significant from the learner's view.

Educators are only   competent in subject specific knowledge, but  lack in  adapting competent in the best techniques that subject should be taught.

Learners are self-directed depending on the situation, handling such individuals will be a herculean task as they will not be ready to grasp the importance of the subject as a whole.

A. *Recommendation for adopting andragogical method in classrooms*

Andragogy is applicable in multiple contexts. The andragogical approach has changed the teaching philosophy of educators around the world.  In the  present educational scenario, the pedagogical approach has become less effective in teaching adult learners.

- The Adults need to be involved actively in the learning process to construct their own knowledge through participatory learning.

- The teaching fraternity should be exposed to  gain mastery in many new and emerging technologies and they should incorporate adult learning theories into current structure of learning

- It is very essential for the instructors  to accept the changes within the educational sector, be adaptive in order to cope with the ever-changing cultural and technological environment; and be innovative, and must  maintain  an effective instructional environment within an evidence-based teaching approach.

- The educational institutions must organise various training programmes and workshops for their staff members for enabling them to integrate technology into classroom instruction which can result in increased retention and comprehension of presented course material resulting in higher performance of participatory learning.

- The policy making bodies can make the approach more effective by inducing the teaching fraternity to adapt andragogical environment.

Thus, the transformative power of technology in learning is so phenomenal. Educators need to constantly respond to a shifting educational context – with the introduction of new technologies, practices, and open resources.

## VII. CONCLUSION

The andragogical approach has changed the teaching philosophy of educators around the world. To seize the current adult educational needs, the pedagogical approach has become less effective in teaching adult learners. Educators teaching adult learners need to know the concepts of the adult learning theory and be able to incorporate them into their teaching style. Educators as well as the educational systems world-wide should provide all learners, both children and adults, with the opportunities to be actively engaged in participatory learning to enhance young minds in diagnosing their own learning needs & their experiences. It is understood that the traditional teacher-centered teaching style has been well mirrored in educational systems world-wide. Educators need to become facilitators of adult education by tailoring the adult learners to set and achieve goals, they need to be involved actively in the learning process to construct their own knowledge, to make sense of the learning, and to apply what is learned.

Thus, it would be in the best interest of the learners if educators were to overcome traditional teacher-centered practices and consider adapting and applying andragogical principles, learner-centered approaches, and constructivist principles in the classroom. The use of these strategies will create a more engaging and practical learning environment, which can lead the young minds to creativity, innovation and competent in the classroom and it will help them to enhance their capability to compete in workforce. Thus, Andragogical teaching is not just meant to be teaching, its meant to be an awakening. Educators are expected to be most effective and efficient in enabling young minds to understand, learn and use information shared responsibly to better oneself, solve problems, create innovations, build and nourish social change.

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