

Overview on the Planning and Organisation of Adult Education

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Abstract: One of the primary goals of adult education is functional literacy. Beyond the basics, adult education is synonymous with continuing education. Adult education is the practice of teaching and educating adults. Planning and organization skills are essential if we want to achieve our goals. Good planning skills can greatly help to reduce the stress associated with Adult Education. There are many reasons why one may choose adult education classes. First, an individual may want to get a high school diploma, or close equivalent. Second, some people may be involved in professions which require a certain amount of continuing education every so often. Third, some may be working toward a college degree in a non-traditional setting. Fourth, some may choose to take such classes for personal enrichment. All of these would qualify as forms of adult education.

Key words: Pedagogy andragogy • Lifelong learning • Adult education • Cultural environment

INTRODUCTION

Adult education is the practice of teaching and educating adults. Adult education takes place in the workplace, through 'extension' school (e.g. Harvard Extension) or 'school of continuing education' or 'school of general studies' (Columbia General Studies). Other learning places include folk high schools, community colleges and lifelong learning centers. The practice is also, often referred to as 'Training and Development' and is often associated with workforce or professional development. It has also been referred to as *andragogy* (to distinguish it from *pedagogy*). Adult education is different from vocational education, which is mostly workplace-based for skill improvement; and also from non-formal adult education, including learning skills or learning for personal development [1].

Educating adults differs from educating children in several ways. One of the most important differences is that adults have accumulated knowledge, work experience or military service that can add to the learning experience. Another difference is that most adult education is voluntary; therefore, the participants are generally better motivated. Those adults who read at the very lowest level get help from volunteer literacy programs. These national organizations provide training, tutor certification and accreditation for local volunteer programs [2].

Adult education is a field of education that deals with the teaching of adults. There is no standard definition for

what qualifies as adult education beyond this broad definition. This type of education may involve adult basic education, such as curriculum materials used to prepare individuals for a high school diploma equivalent certificate, such as a GED. It can also include many other various types of continuing education classes, some of which get to be quite technical and complicated.

There are many reasons why one may choose adult education classes. First, an individual may want to get a high school diploma, or close equivalent. Second, some people may be involved in professions which require a certain amount of continuing education every so often. Third, some may be working toward a college degree in a non-traditional setting. Fourth, some may choose to take such classes for personal enrichment. All of these would qualify as forms of adult education.

What is adult education? So many adults are returning to the classroom that the term "adult education" has become somewhat confusing. Adult education in the widest sense is any form of learning adults engage in beyond traditional schooling. In the narrowest sense, adult education is about literacy, about adults learning to read the most basic materials so adult education encompasses everything from basic literacy to personal fulfillment as a lifelong learner, even the attainment of advanced degrees [3].

The General Conference of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, meeting in Nairobi from 26 October to 30 November 1976, at its

nineteenth session [4], described the definition of adult education as the entire body of organized educational processes, whatever the content, level and method, whether formal or otherwise, whether they prolong or replace initial education in schools, colleges and universities as well as in apprenticeship, whereby persons regarded as adult by the society to which they belong develop their abilities, enrich their knowledge, improve their technical or professional qualifications or turn them in a new direction and bring about changes in their attitudes or behavior in the twofold perspective of full personal development and participation in balanced and independent social, economic and cultural development; adult education, however, must not be considered as an entity in itself, it is a subdivision and an integral part of, a global scheme for life-long education and learning.

It is generally understood that the people themselves must participate in decision making, in considering, planning and implementing their development plan.

The complexity of organization, management and staffing is one of the worst problems of adult education programs. The variety of factors involves the organizational structures, chains of command, degrees of latitude, making decisions at different levels, geographic diversity, personal structure, integration, both horizontal and vertical, co-ordination, etc., that makes organization very difficult and accounts for isolated project.

Current educational activities in rural areas being out of the tight centralized planning programs are far away from the needs of rural people, the amount of education is often inadequate and quality below the national average. Increasing dissatisfaction with the efficacy of centralized planning led to alternatives being sought. Cliché's such as decisions at grass-root level, local assessment of learning needs, participatory planning, decentralization of planning, planning for adult education at the local level and 'integrated rural development planning' came into every day use.

For rural development greater attention to local involvement and to the development of rural institutions is needed. Local participation's may need involvement in planning, including the assessment of local needs. Participation in planning and implementation of programs can develop the self-reliance that is needed among rural people to accelerate development [5]. In Pakistan, participation of the rural people has been very limited. Rural development programs in Pakistan have been highly centralized. The hierarchical structure of the various ministries involved in the rural development has resulted in most decisions being made at central level

and then being passed down. It is also important to remember, when planning with local participation, that the assessment of the quality of the layout force should be taken into account. It is all very well to divide at the grass-root level, but most of the rural people are illiterate and live in absolute poverty [6].

It is a fierce desire of every developing country to demonstrate immediately benefits which national governments have achieved. To mobilize all the resources of the nation and to attract others from abroad to supplement internal deficiencies becomes the first need. The adult population must be mobilized and quickly enlightened, to understand the nature of the problems and to participate most effectively in their solution.

Once can allocate resources to where they can best and most beneficially be used and avoid the duplication of services which lead to waste. Only national planning can give that degree of coordination which is required for the smooth flow of ideas and techniques from one field to another and provide the integration of work into some overall plan for their national development.

Objectives and Strategy: Generally speaking, the aims of adult education should be to contribute to:

- Promoting work for peace, international understanding and co-operation;
- Developing a critical understanding of major contemporary problems and social changes and the ability to play an active part in the progress of society with a view to achieving social justice;
- Promoting increased awareness of the relationship between people and their physical and cultural environment and fostering the desire to improve the environment and to respect and protect nature, the common heritage and public property;
- Creating an understanding of and respect for the diversity of customs and cultures, on both the national and the international planes;
- Promoting increased awareness of and giving effect to various forms of communication and solidarity at the family, local, national, regional and international levels;
- Developing the aptitude for acquiring, either individually, in groups or in the context of organized study in educational establishments specially set up, for this purpose, new knowledge, qualifications, attitudes or forms of behavior conducive to the full maturity of the personality;

- Ensuring the individuals' conscious and effective incorporation into working life by providing men and women with an advanced technical and vocational education and developing the ability to create, either individually or in groups, new material goods and new spiritual or aesthetic values;
- Developing the ability to grasp adequately the problems involved in the upbringing of children;
- Developing the aptitude for making creative use of leisure and for acquiring any necessary or desired knowledge;
- Developing the necessary discernment in using mass communication media, in particular radio, television, cinema and the press and interpreting the various messages addressed to modern men and women by society;
- Developing the aptitude for learning to learn.

Methods, Means, Research and Evaluation: Adult education methods should take account of: incentives and obstacles to participation and learning, especially affecting adults; the experience gained by adults in the exercise of their family, social and, occupational responsibilities; the family, social or occupational obligations borne by adults and the fatigue and impaired alertness which may result from them; the ability of adults to assume responsibility for their own learning; the cultural and pedagogical level of the teaching personnel available; the psychological characteristics of the learning process; the existence and characteristics of cognitive interests; use of leisure time [7].

- Adult education activities should normally be planned and executed on the basis of identified needs, problems, wants and resources, as well as defined objectives. Their impact should be evaluated and reinforced by whatever follow-up activities may be most appropriate to given conditions.
- Particular emphasis should be placed on adult education activities intended for an entire social or geographical entity, mobilizing all its inherent energies with a view to the advancement of the group and social progress in a community setting.
- In order to encourage the broadest possible participation, it may be appropriate in some situation; In addition, to locally base adult education, methods such as:
- Remote teaching programmes such as correspondence courses and radio or television broadcasts, the intended recipients of such programmes being invited to form groups with a view

to listening or working together (such groups should receive appropriate pedagogical support);

- Programmes launched by mobile units;
- Self-teaching programmes;
- Study circles;
- Use of voluntary work by teachers, students and other community members.

The various services which public cultural institutions (libraries, museums, record libraries and video-cassette libraries) are able to put at the disposal of adult learners should be developed on a systematic basis, together with new types of institutions specializing in adult education.

- Participation in an adult education programme should be a voluntary matter. The State and other bodies should strive to promote the desire of individuals and groups for education in the spirit of life-long education and learning.
- Relations between the adult learner and the adult educator should be established on a basis of mutual respect and co-operation.
- Participation in an adult education programme should be subject only to the ability to follow the course of training provided and not to any (upper) age limit or any condition concerning the possession of a diploma or qualification; any aptitude tests on the basis of which a selection might be made if necessary should be adapted to the various categories of candidates taking such tests.
- It should be possible to acquire and accumulate learning, experiences and qualifications through intermittent participation. Rights and qualifications obtained in this way should be equivalent to those granted by the systems of formalized education or of such character as to allow for continued education within this.
- The methods used in adult education should not appeal to a competitive spirit but should develop in the adult learners a shared sense of purpose and habits of participation, mutual help, collaboration and team work.
- Adult education programmes for the improvement of technical or professional qualifications should, as far as possible, be organized during working time and, in the case of seasonal work, during the slack season. This should, as a general rule, be applied also to other forms of education, in particular literacy programmes and trade union education.

- The premises necessary for the development of adult education activities should be provided; depending on the case, these may be premises used exclusively-for adult education, with or without residential accommodation, or multi-purpose or integrated facilities or premises generally used or capable of being used for other purposes-in particular, clubs, workshops, school, university and scientific establishments, social, cultural or socio-cultural centers or open air sites.
- Member States should actively encourage co-operative research in all aspects of adult education and its objectives. Research programmes should have a practical basis. They should be carried out by universities, adult education bodies and research bodies, adopting an interdisciplinary approach. Measures should be taken with a view to disseminating the experience and the results of the research programmes to those concerned at the national and international levels.
- Systematic evaluation of adult education activities is necessary to secure optimum results from the resources put into them. For evaluation to be effective it should be built into the programmes of adult education at all levels and stages.

Organization: A well-planned and smooth operating planning is important to the success of adult education. No matter how good the teaching matter of an adult education course, or how good and capable the teachers are, unless the planning, which is the vehicle that carries teachings to the students and maintains two-way communication between the teachers and the taught, is efficient, the full value of good teaching will be lost.

The first task for the planning is to survey the local resources, in order to make the best educational and most economical use of services already available which can contribute to the provision of adult teaching.

The first step of planning is necessarily the establishment of cumbersome committee structure. Indeed, there are many things which need to be done which for higher priority, including the appointment of trained staff at all levels in the responsible ministries for adult education and the development of essential ancillary services which are known collectively as the delivery system.

In any planning exercise, it is essential to have quite clearly in mind the objectives which the plan is expected to achieve. It will give a clear guide to any sort of organizational structures which should be built up. The first to achieve is that the organization responsible for

planning should be built up. The first to achieve is that the organization responsible for planning should reach to very roots of the community. It is essential that as the planning it for the adult community. As a whole, the adult community feel that it has a voice in the formation of the plan and any subsequent planning which is undertaken should embrace all sectors of the adult community.

The planning must avoid duplication of teaching skills and services. Without planning of some sorts, duplication will always arise. This is undesirable and wasteful. The duplication will arise though lack of proper exchange of information and communication by the providing organizations. Planning must rectify this situation and provide machinery for maximum of communication to avoid this source of waste [8].

Any planned organization must concern itself with all aspects of adult education. The various field of adult education are not and cannot be independent units of operation. They are all closely inter-related. And almost all type of adult education is need in most of developing countries. The plan should not only cover the development with in the fields of adult education, but also concentrate on the supporting services such as newspapers, films, television, audio-visual centers and training programs for staff working in adult education. In this way a comprehensive plan of adult education can be drawn up, self-supporting, integrated and comprehensive.

A planning organization must have the ability to clear information and aid both upward from the base to the center and downward from the centre to the base. Where there is central authority, whether it has to executive power or is simply advisory, it must have in support a nationwide structure which can keep in constant and immediate contact with the name of the adult population. Thus, the needs and options of adult community, which must formed the basis of any planning, can immediately be informed to the central authority smooth and simply. Similarly, it is little use having a central authority charged with the execution of a nation wide job. Advisors and planners seated in the centre can do nothing unless they are supported adequately by the local executive bodies [9]. They will simply waste their time. They must be channel, through which plan and ideas can be easily translated into the action and channel through which local needs are seen and met speedily.

The organization which is instituted and any planning which is under taken must be simple and inexpensive. None of the developing countries are in the position to introduce lavish or expensive schemes of adult education. They got the financial and manpower

problems. Even through the problems which adult education can tackle are so vital and fundamental, it is probable that other projects will have a higher preference in any list of priorities especially where adult education is new experience. Therefore to gain the support which such countries deserve, plans and projects must be seen to be workable and must be seen to be inexpensive. These objectives must have an initial and coordinating body and projects which that body will be charged to draw up.

The structure must be comprehensive. It must be cheap and work as smoothly as possible such as organization should be set up only by the direct government action. It is suggested that initial action may be taken by the government but the complete control must not remain with the government. Indeed if there is room to be left for the development of self-help and the growth of voluntary agencies, they clearly as little government control as possible is the desired objective. This is also compatible with the objective cheapness.

It would be a unrealistic to assume that government would not play a great part in the work of the organization. Government must maintain some control for adult education must be with in the framework of oral national planning. Also government support will be required for availability of finance and the personal. Most of the voluntary agencies will be neither strong enough, nor willing, to take the initiative for the whole field of adult education. It will be almost certain that the initiative will have to come from the government.

The essential elements required for planning and organization of adult education are determining needs and interests of the community, objectives, staffing the organization, provision of good physical resources, financing the program and implications of planning and organization.

Lalage Bow [10] highlighted the conception of planning and administration components of adult educational organization, varieties of adult education activity, general principles of programming, financing and importance of personal training is the below referred book which is worth reading.

Adult educators can argue fruitlessly for year about which definition or other is better and not come to any kind of resolution. What is more important, however is not that every one agrees on what constitutes true needs assessment, but rather that informed education realize that the data obtained from any needs assessment is dependent on the stated and unseated definition of need used by the need assessor. One should not except that needs inferred under one definition of need' should be similar to those inferred under another definition of need.

Scissions and Misanchuk, Misanchuk and Scissions [11-12] deemed to warrant attention at last practitically dependent on how such needs are defined. As the definition varied with in the same sampled population, so did those deemed to be meet important? It is matter of argument, not fact, as to which definition realized the best results.

We must be very clear on the definition which is being used in any given needs assessment and to be able to justify this definition. There could be compiling reasons to use any variety of needs assessments definitions and the problems is not so much one of choosing but ignorance the necessity of choice. The job of any and user of needs assessment data is to be certain that the definition of needs used to compile the estimates of needs are well known and that they are in agreement with the necessity of the situation in which they are being used. Generalization across-definitions, even with the same target population, are hazardous at best.

Malcolm [13] says to a measurement philosophy that one type of method, usually self assessment, is best. The other way is to look for methods to obtain varying perspectives of the situation, as well as some methods to combine information that may at first glance appear to become tradictory. The problems in needs assessment is not different from that in all other areas concerned with the measurement of human attributes, political polling, clinical psychology and the liked and needs assessors would do well to consider the finding of years of research in these areas before attempting to reinvent the wheel.

The study conducted by Scissions and Misanchuk [14] in which it was demonstrated that coefficients of needs were decidedly different if approached from an individual perspective than say, for example, from the perspective of a supervisor ratings subordinate. This is to be expected and remain something that the informed needs assessors must take into account in designing a needs assessment study.

The needs should only be applied to individuals rather than groups of institutions. That is fine as a philosophical principle but breaks rather quickly when applied to practical situation. It is only in combining needs assessments of individuals that a program for an organization can be developed. The question for most needs assessors is "are there enough people with a need in a particular area to warrant an intervention program", not does individual X needs an intervention program. The second question is important and remains at the crux of the uses of the psychometric needs assessment approach [15], but is minor interns of frequency of usage is applied needs analysis.

The other issue dealing with the inferring of needs based on indicators of need concerns how one combines different measures of need. For example, one might wish to have an individual competence on a task, relevance of the task and employee motivation all taken into account in arriving at an indicator of need. Or one might wish to combine the judgments of several people on a simple element of need. Either problem is much more complex than it initially appears and has been addressed most completely by Misanchuk [16]. One cannot argue much that has been reported by Brackhaus [17]. However the bulk of what has been reported is neither hopelessly out of date, has already been more completely covered elsewhere, or presents vague wish to try and do better.

With the above mentioned reaction on the needs assessments in adult education it is pointed out that any adult education program shouldn't be planned only on the basis of the vision of adult educators. Such program will untimely sure to fail. To do able to succeed we must gather relevant facts about the area and needs of the people for whom the adult education programs is intended. And are must keep in mind these facts as the basis for our planning.

It cannot be stated in general terms how carefully we should research into the facts about an area or with facts should be picked out. It all depends on the situation. Questionnaires, how to we know that the questions set for obtaining facts are relevant? We do not / But we cannot ask everything. We have to make a selection of question and we can get some guidance about it different ways. One way is to use our imagination and try to anticipate a possible program. Our anticipation must not in any way effect our planning later on, just as little as our visions or wishful thinking must affect it. Our program is to be based on answer we got to our questions. Another way to select questions is to ask people who have run program for a similar purpose or who are engaged in some way in the particular field.

The adult education program will be failed if we gathered inadequate facts. However, assessing needs interests in program planning has great significance. The question like the nature of needs, basic human needs, educational needs the nature or organization/communities and adult.

Designing Program of Adult Education: An adult education program/comparing must be an organized large scale series of activities, forced with some intensity on a set of objectives to be achieved with in some predetermined period of time. A campaign suggests urgency and combativeness; it is in

the nature of an expedition; it is something of a crusade. Thus a literacy campaign is markedly different from a literacy program which touch also planned systematically to meet certain objectives may launch both urgency and favor. A literacy program may seek to provide a useful service.

Many of campaigns were with in campaigns and some were expanded incrementally over a long period of time. All had an intensity of purpose expressed in a series of mobilizations and all were lightly emotive in trying to achieve their goals. The fact that they range over half a century, from the Soviet campaign in 1919 to the Somali campaign in 1973, adds to the richness of the comparative analysis and makes the suggestions widely applicable.

A potentially successful mass literacy campaign has to be, at the same time, an educational and a political event. A useful theory of the mass literacy campaign must, therefore, include both ideological and technological dimensions.

The prevailing ideology of a society will, first of all, determine whether universal adult literacy is indeed considered central to the achievement of overall national development goals. Ideology will also determine the articulation and maintenance of the political will to achieve universal literacy in a society which is a necessary condition for a successful mass literacy comparing. At another level, the prevailing ideology will reflect a particular political culture which in, in return, will determine the organizational, mobilisational and technological choices that can be made in the planning and implementation of a mass literacy comparing with in a particular society [18].

Leaving aside the discussion of planning and implementation of mass literacy comparing, we come direct to the designing of program of adult education. The planning refers the process of determining the ends to be pursued and the means employed to achieve them.

Recommendations: The present government should declare a national educational emergency and involve the whole nation, including the army, in waging a war against illiteracy. Some steps that the government might consider taking in this regard are:

- Declare education as the highest priority of the government. Explain that unless the impediments of illiteracy and lack of education are removed, the road to democracy will remain fraught with the danger of exploitation of the masses by the select few and that in the absence of political will in the ruling classes to do something tangible in this arena, it seems that it is

up to the army to defend the country against illiteracy and lack of education, for there is no factor more important to the well-being of a nation than human resource and no negligence worse than ignoring its development.

- Make it mandatory for government and army officers at all levels to do stints at various educational institutions in relation to their skills and national requirements.
- Make it a mandatory requirement for various degree programmes that the candidates, after taking their exams, shall spend a specified period of time [for specified hour(s)] in teaching at assigned institutions. (These assignments should be given in a judicious and practical manner).
- Ask for volunteers with specified qualifications to contribute their services in their areas of work or residence under organised bodies that can be formed for this purpose by the government.
- Ask the public to contribute financially for this purpose. Modern marketing and fund raising techniques can be adopted for this task.
- Many government school buildings can be converted into commercial schools of good level. The government can consider offering many of these schools to private sector organizations in the field of education on the condition that a specified percentage of bright students from the lower and middle classes will be granted admission and scholarships. Tax benefits/exemptions may also be made part of the deal to encourage entrepreneurship in this area.
- Offer tax benefits/exemptions and other such incentives to private sector groups to invest in education in rural and less developed areas.
- Make it mandatory for each industrial unit/agricultural estate of an area above a specified limit to provide for a school within the premises/area. Alternatively, the owner can be asked to share costs with the government for setting up such school. Another option is giving various financial/tax incentives.
- Introduce standardisation of curricula and licensing and certification of teachers to improve standards (as is done in the USA).
- Introduce high quality selection procedure for higher level teachers and offer the candidates better incentives.
- Use electronic media more extensively for educational purposes. A channel could be devoted to just education. In this regard,

- Teachers of high calibre can take classes for different subjects at various levels,
- These lecturers can be telecast as well as recorded,

The lectures can be delivered by telecasting them or by playing recorded cassettes even in schools in far flung areas where quality education is usually not available,

- Later on computers can also be used with sufficient data banks and with internet and e-mail facilities for more interactive education and.
- If an appropriate system is designed, more students can be taught in one school using cassettes, discs, etc. with relatively less teachers.
- In rural areas, provide each school with at least one army man to ensure that people face no resistance from the feudals in educating their children.
- Provide people with incentives to educate their children. This can be done in various ways. For instance.
- Even lower level government jobs as for clerks, peons, constables can be linked to a minimal level of education and entrance tests.
- Various loans (e.g. agricultural loans) can be linked to whether an applicant has educated or is educating his children.
- Link agricultural loans/tax benefits to feudal landlords with a specified number of people they have helped in obtaining a required level of education.
- Similarly, link industrial loans to education.
- Similar linkages can be made in relation to adult education programmes.

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