

# NECESSITY OF ANDRAGOGY IN THE MANAGERIAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS TO FACILITATE LEARNING OF THE PROFESSIONALS: A LITERATURE REVIEW

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## ABSTRACT

*The numbers of professionals from different job sectors are now increasing in college and university based education programs, specially managerial education programs with a hope of developing their knowledge, skills and career. Most of the cases, the traditional teaching styles of the educators may not be appropriate for them due to their dissimilarities from the regular students. The traditional teaching methods, so called pedagogy does not consider the physical and psychological differences of the professional students. For this reason, some educators proposed a different approach named andragogy to teach these adults as well as professional students. The aim of this paper is to review the literature in order to perceive and analyze the present scenario on this issue. Though many of the educators have adopted this method in different fields of teaching but a large number of educators are unfamiliar about the subject till now. The scenario of management education programs arranged for the professionals is nearly same. The educators and the authorities should be aware of regarding this issue in order to facilitate learning of these professionals as well as support in human resource development of the country.*

**Keywords:** Andragogy, EMBA, Professionals, adult

## INTRODUCTION

Most of the individuals continue their working life about 30 to 40 years or more than that (Pavlova & Sanger, 2016). Higher education in mid-life is expected to have positive consequences on professionals' career (Isopahkala-Bouret, 2017). Adult students are largely returning to the academy to advance or restart their careers after a break in their education. The career development needs of traditional and nontraditional students are different. Most strategies and resources were developed for the traditionally-aged students. The needs of the nontraditional students are different and based on their unique experiences in office and family (Stephenson, 2012).

Knowles noted that adults bring experiential knowledge to the classroom, are prepared to learn based on self-recognised need, are highly task and goal oriented, and have internal and external learning motivations compared with pre-adult students (Wuestewald, 2016). Adult learners prefer hands-on learning experience over lecture based ones (Strong, Harder & Carter 2010). Thus, professional students of MBA program may differ from the regular MBA students, because most of them are in middle age and enter into the classroom with their professional and personal lives (Han, 2015). Whether the academy is prepared to serve this adult learners society is an important matter of consideration today. Do the higher educational institutions like colleges and universities are adequately meeting the needs of older students in and outside of the classroom? (Caruth, 2014). Few researches have been conducted on understanding the needs of adult students in higher education (Eddy, 2001).

## **The Concept of Andragogy**

Andragogy is considered as a method, a theory, an approach, a philosophy, a set of principles, and a set of assumptions for the practice of adult education and learning (Caruth, 2013). Andragogy is the combination of Greek noun *andr* and *agoge* where *andr* means adult and *agoge* refers the activity of leading (Stowers & Barker, 2002). Malcolm Knowles, Eduard Lindeman and Rosenstock-Huessy are well-known figures in the field of adult education. Lindeman is referred to as 'the spiritual father of andragogy and Rosenstock-Huessy became a source of inspiration for adult educators in the inter-war and post-war period (Loeng, 2013). The concept of andragogy advanced by Malcolm Knowles in the 1970s has been widely adopted by educators from various disciplines around the world. The six assumptions: (a) self-directedness, (b) need to know, (c) use of experience in learning, (d) readiness to learn, (e) orientation to learning, and (f) internal motivation are the basic features of andragogy (Chan, 2010). Six basic principles of andragogy suggested what educators must do to successfully teach adult learners. These principles focus on learning needs analysis, curriculum design, delivery, and learner-centered approach. Andragogical process design elements also have an influence on the adult learning experience. The eight design elements including: preparing the learners, climate setting, mutual planning, diagnosis of needs, formulation of learning objectives, learning plan design, learning plan execution, and evaluation which occur before, during, and after the learning experience (Knowles, 1984 as cited in Holton, Wilson & Bates, 2009).

Researchers developed an instrument, the most successful attempt to measure andragogical principles, process design elements and their effect on student satisfaction and learning outcomes. The instrument was embedded by several factors. The first factor is learner centered activities that exercise control over the learning environment determines educational objectives for each student, support in collaboration, and encourage students to take responsibility for their own learning. The second factor, personalizing instruction applies a number of methods, materials, and types of assignments as well as supports in cooperation rather than competition. The third one is learning relating to experience that encourages students to relate their new learning to experiences, make learning relevant, and organize learning episodes according to real-life problems. The fourth factor is student needs assessment that includes the extent to which an instructor assists students in assessing short- and long-term objectives through student conferences and formal as well as informal counseling. Climate building is the fifth factor where the instructors facilitate student exploration and experimentation related to their self-concept and problem-solving skills via a friendly and informal setting and eliminates learning barriers, propose dialogue as well as encourage interaction in the classroom. Under the sixth factor, participation in the learning process, instructors encourage in relationship building between teacher and student, involve students in developing criteria for assessing classroom performance, and allow students to determine the nature of content material. The level of rigidity and sensitivity to students, openness to adjusting classroom environment and curriculum to meeting changing needs of students consider by the instructor under the seventh and final factor named flexibility for personal development (Holton, Wilson & Bates, 2009). Andragogy, the study of adult learning has established as a learning framework due to its increasing popularity in the past forty years. Large numbers of educators are now interested towards andragogy because of the exponential increase and changes in the adult students' population. The significance in transforming from pedagogy level of teaching to andragogical level has been realized by the present higher educational institutions. The teachers must involve adults in their own learning, follow the adult learning principles, introduce interactive instruction, look for

opportunities to use case studies, brainstorming exercises, facilitated discussions, role-plays, problem solving, etc. Learners need opportunities to make a connection with the content relevance and connect the learning to practical life (Joshi, 2017).

Andragogy, a more engaging learning environment method prepares students successfully for the current competitive workplace. Andragogy helps in directing the learning process as well as incorporating past experience of older students. In managing learning process, andragogy develops a relationship between the learners and the educators (Caruth, 2014).

### **Andragogy and higher education programs for the professionals**

In higher education, 25 years old and older are the fastest growing segment of the student body. But, most of the administrators have little knowledge about educating these adult students unfortunately. College and university administrators should have knowledge on andragogy (Tannehill, 2009 as cited in Caruth, 2014). Andragogy, a teaching style for the adults is not being used in the higher education classrooms. Higher education is not considering the distinct teaching styles for the older learners (Caruth, 2014). Pedagogy, the teaching methods and practice used in teaching, especially for the child is unable to meet the need of these professional students in classrooms today (Forrest & Peterson, 2006). Active learning methods for the adults were not often followed by the educators. In the current adult education program, the use of different teaching methods by the educators was below the expected level. The educators may have shortage of knowledge on exercising active learning methods in the class room (Seyoum & Basha, 2017). Often, the lecture-focused approach is ineffective for many adult students as there is less opportunity for question-answer or absence of collaborative exploration of differing viewpoints. Again, there is no attempt to make some links between the learners' experiences and the topic under the lecture method (Brookfield (1986) as cited in Panacci, 2015). Adults face many barriers from beginning or completing a degree program (Hunter-Johnson, 2017). The programs arranged in Ghana for the older students in higher education institutions are not plausible in meeting the educational needs of the professionals (Owusu-Agyeman, 2018). There are some inequalities noticed in the process of adult university education in most of the countries (Zmas & Sipitanou, 2009).

Research consistently indicates that the development of many adult students is best supported when classroom learning is connected to their career-related roles and goals and when active, collaborative, and interactive classroom approaches are employed (Panacci, 2015). Universities need to innovate pedagogy and learning system for the adult non-traditional students to create opportunity for the diversity of learners. Traditional concept of university education was basically tuned only for young but universal access means that the adults may become students with various careers. The new universities have already accepted many adult part-time, non-traditional learners in the UK (Yoshimoto, Inenaga & Yamada 2007).

Adult learners 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 instead of passive transfer of knowledge from one person. The pedagogical approach has become less effective in teaching to meet the educational need of adult learners (Chan, 2010).

### **Management education programs and the professionals**

University-based executive education programs occupy a unique niche in the executive education domain since they operate as legitimate educational institutions and not merely as lucrative side businesses of colleges and universities. Professionals seek to continue their professional education long where executive education programs seem destined to thrive and are based on evidence-based outcomes (Hou & Chen, 2018). Professional education program helps the practitioners to become informed about the latest developments in their respective

fields. A person's ability to adapt, collect and analyse information, develop and use quantitative models, plan for the use of this information and technology enhanced by professional education (Wittnebel, 2012). The MBA program has a similar impact like other fields of professional education (Boyatzis & Case, 1989). MBA programs prepare the students for increasingly complex organizations and careers (Datar & Garvin, 2011). MBA program increases several skills to its participants that are not generally obtained through work experience alone (Kretovics, 1999). To invest time, effort and cost in different knowledge and skills building education program does not go in vain. It brings success for both the individual and society (Pavlova & Sanger, 2016). Though a major investment of time and money is required in accomplishing an Executive MBA but it plays a significant role at a pivotal time in an adult's life. Professional progression and skills development are the main expectations of mid-career managers when enrolling on an Executive MBA program (Dalton, 2018). EMBA creates an opportunity to the working executives to obtain an MBA degree in their leisure period. A range of electives and work-related projects along with compulsory modules in EMBA program help the students to develop soft skills that will help them immediately in providing solutions to problems in their organizations and receive career progression in various functional areas. Therefore, senior management in organizations has been attracted by the university-based executive education program (Joshi, 2019). Whether part-time or full-time, An MBA programme provides an individual with time and space away from work to think about their career orientation and aspirations (Baruch & Peiperl, 2000 as cited in Sturges, Simpson & Altman, 2003). The MBA degree is recognized as an asset in career development of the mid-career students (Grzeda & Miller, 2009).

The MBA adds value to both MBA alumni as well as the organizations by helping alumni to acquire tools which help them contribute deeply toward the success of their organizations (Gupta & Bennett, 2014).

### **Andragogy and managerial education programs for the professionals**

A rapidly growing segment of the management education is executive MBA program differs from traditional MBA programs by enrolling more experienced participants or arranging classes on weekends like Fridays and Saturdays (Doren, Smith & Beglin, 1986 as cited in Keys & Wolfe, 1988). The universities began executive education program in order to provide advanced management training to mature, highly motivated, and experienced managers (Crotty & Soule, 1997). An EMBA program is primarily designed to educate working executives, managers, entrepreneurs, and other business leaders who are in their mid to late 30s with having 6-15 years of working experience at a managerial level (Joshi, 2019). Participants in EMBA programs have to face broad responsibilities and multiple roles both inside and outside the office. The learning experiences of EMBA students may differ from those of undergraduates and regular MBA students because they are middle-aged people at a transitional stage have experience of major challenges in both their professional and personal lives (Han, 2015). Executives typically come to programs with particular business problems in mind and are less motivated by broad intellectual concerns than by pressing practical dilemmas. Executive teaching requires conscious and explicit connections to the problems executives are struggling with daily as well as the instructors need to be more directive, explicit, and conclusive (Garvin, 2007).

Administrators and faculty face a unique challenge to teach managers in MBA program since executive students are more demanding and critical than students in undergraduate or MBA programs. Executive students want to understand management in a more holistic way compared to regular MBA students. They want to see the linkages between subject matter



taught by different academic disciplines and issues related to their professional work (Boehner & O'Neil, 2010). Educators for professionals might consider the utility of problem based learning to help balance disciplinary conceptual knowledge and theoretical foundations with some focus on self-knowledge and relational skills and understanding, particularly at the graduate level where mid-career learners seeking continuing education are more prevalent (Fenwick, 2002). Adaption of andragogy is suggested in management classrooms today to ensure congruence with the emerging management teaching methods.

A self-directing self-concept; use of experience; a readiness to learn; and a performance-centered orientation to learning are four assumptions focuses on the adult learner and creation of an independent, adaptable individual. These andragogical assumptions are very beneficial to the management educators to align the philosophy of management with the current dynamic instructional strategies already in use (Forrest & Peterson, 2006). MBA educators should design an MBA course with substantial practical value so that the MBA graduates feel confidence and interest to apply what they have learned on their jobs. Positive transfer of knowledge may enhance MBA students' satisfaction (Cheng, 2000). Many management educators exercise andragogical approach unconsciously. The master degree program of American Management Association's is structured around andragogy and competency-based education (Knowles, 1984 as cited in Caruth, 2014).

### **Andragogy and the role of educators**

Educators involved in adult learning must have a comprehensive understanding of how to teach adults (Conner, 2018). Educators should ensure learner-centered educational system to engage active participation of the adults (Chan, 2010). But many educators do not have sufficient knowledge about how adults learn (Martin & Omer, 1990). Facilitators need to be encouraged to consider adult learner preference and select exercise based content for them. Facilitators should have better knowledge on andragogy to help adults to lead better life (Seyoum & Basha, 2017). In adult learning situation, the role of the educators should shifts from a disseminator of information to a mentor. Besides traditional lectures and seminars, educators should provide practical exercises, often experimental in nature, discussions, role plays, case studies, addressing specific industrial challenges. Group formation and discussion can be very effective most of the cases. Andragogy turns theoretical knowledge into practical application of the knowledge. Typical techniques used in the andragogic approach are: case studies, critical incidents, peer to peer round table discussions (Pavlova & Sanger, 2016). By considering the present demand of education, educators should abandon traditional teacher-centered assumptions and consider adopting 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 for the individuals to prepare them and compete in the 21st century workforce (Chan, 2010). The andragogy mode is emphasized on the relevant knowledge and skills of older and/or mature learners. The role of the teaching staff is learning support rather than teaching in andragogy.

Thus, the mode of andragogy is crucial to develop and make it universalize (Yoshimoto, Inenaga & Yamada 2007). Teachers seem to engage more in responsive behaviors for their adult students, such as adjusting instruction to student experiences and classroom feedback, and less in controlling and structuring behaviors since the adult students are more motivated, task-oriented, self-directed, and pragmatic than pre-adult students (Beder & Darkenwald, 1982). Outcomes Based Education (OBE) and Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) are often described as 'learning-centered approach used in adult education where learning goals, teaching and assessment processes, content and pace of learning are mutually determined by the tutor and student. To develop a more skilled and flexible workforce, South African

educators considered OBE and RPL in the 1990s (Cretchley & Castle, 2001). Role-plays, group work, reflective exercises, simulation activities, debate are some popular adult education methods that engage the participants in the learning process. Group based learning may also help in overcoming cultural barriers of the participants as well as clarify and support the learning needs of each other (Seyoum & Basha, 2017). Educators have to be encouraged to adopt and apply andragogical methods to ensure effective learning for the adult students (Caruth, 2014). The role of the faculties may significant in creating supportive learning environments for adult learners both by incorporating theory and research on adult learners into their own classrooms (Blair 2010). The more the educators will inform about adult learners, the problems they face at the time of learning would be helpful for them to engage all learners to stimulate their personal growth and reflection (Falasca, 2011).

## **CONCLUSION**

There is a disconnection found between what management education providers offer in MBA programmes and what the students are actually receiving, especially when compared to student expectations, needs and outcomes (Ly, Vickers & Fernandez, 2015). The Higher Education Institutions, facilitators and industry need to be aware about unique educational needs of adult learners, a different pedagogy could be used in addressing the unique knowledge and skills needs of these adult learners (Owusu-Agyeman, 2018). The pedagogical approach has become obsoleted and less effective in meeting the current educational needs of adult students. The teaching fraternity should incorporate adult learning theories into current structure of learning. The educators involved in teaching adult learners should have knowledge about adult learning theory and capability to incorporate it into their teaching style. The authority needs to generate policy for adapting andragogical environment in the teaching community (Joshi, 2017).

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