

6-1-2018

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### Recommended Citation

Charungkaitikul, Suwithida Ph.D. and Henschke, John A. EdD (2018) "Creating a Global Sustainable Lifelong Learning Society: An Andragogical Approach," *Journal of International and Global Studies*: Vol. 9 : No. 2 , Article 5.

Available at: <https://digitalcommons.lindenwood.edu/jigs/vol9/iss2/5>

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## Creating a Global Sustainable Lifelong Learning Society: An Andragogical Approach

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### **Abstract**

Today, the world is changing, reestablishing the role of education in order to have a developed society. This study aims to explore the practical application of andragogy as a key element for creating a sustainable lifelong learning society, to propose strategies for developing a lifelong learning society using andragogical concepts, to enhance “andragogy” as a scientific academic discipline and to expand on the horizon of andragogical assumptions and processes put forth by Malcolm Knowles. The literature on andragogy demonstrates the need to consider the future of andragogy, which may strengthen the theory and allow for the assumptions and processes to further guide this aspect of adult education. While the journey towards a lifelong learning society will continue to evolve, the lessons learned may help to identify key facilitating factors as well as pitfalls to be avoided in formulating more comprehensive lifelong learning society development strategies in the future.

**Keywords:** andragogy, adult education, lifelong learning society, global/sustainable development

We are experiencing significant changes in the area of work and witnessing major shifts from the industrial age to the world of globalization, a knowledge-based economy, and technological evolution, where knowledge is considered as a country's most valued asset and primary source of power (Knight, 1995). In this period of change and transition, the competitive advantages of each country consequently depend on the availability and maintenance of a labor force with the necessary knowledge, practical skills, and ability to innovate. Therefore, many countries have respected the new developmental concept to promote the continual learning of individuals and society. Faure et al. (1972) stated the following in his preamble:

If learning involves all of one's life, in the sense of both timespan and diversity, and all of society, including its social and economic as well as its educational resources, then we must go even further than the necessary overhaul of 'educational systems' until we reach the stage of a learning society. (pp. xxxiii-xxxiv).

The learning society approach aims to balance economic, social, natural and environmental aspects, social responsibility, and resources of society; and the learning society and andragogy may also help in transforming the people into knowledge citizens and knowledge workers (Charungkaittikul & Henschke, 2014; Wildemeersch et al., 2000).

A definition of the learning society is the following:

individuals residing within one locality, an agency or a community engaged in single or multiple matters simultaneously. It involves preservation, nourishment, rehabilitation, protection, promotion, assistance, development, and distribution through information technology, learning resources, local wisdoms and knowledge that allow members of the society to create, share, and use knowledge, common skills, and opinions with fellow members of the same and other communities on a regular lifelong basis. They generate new knowledge and appropriate knowledge management systems, as well as making the best life decisions for the prosperity and well-being of its people. (Charungkaittikul, 2011, p. 45)

Leading employers and organizations in both public and private organizations have shown that investing in andragogical adult learning for their workers is indispensable for competitiveness and growth (Gelpi, 1999; Vatcharasirisook, 2011). Consequently, there needs to be a radical change in the adult education, if adult learning for all working populations is to be more than a demagogic declaration. Many issues are involved in this, namely devising flexible and continuous adult learning and training to meet the learning requirements of the entire labor market and society, including the informal sector and all active populations; building partnerships; and ensuring equitable access.

Andragogy is defined as "the art and science of helping adults learn, in contrast to pedagogy as the art and science of teaching children" (Knowles, 1980, p. 43). The term andragogy has a long and rich history of development and evolution. According to Merriam (2001), andragogy contributes to the understanding of how adults learn, in what context, and the process of learning. However, previous studies on andragogy (Hartree, 1984; Davenport & Davenport, 1985; Pratt, 1993; Merriam, 2001; Rachal, 2002; Heller, 2004) demonstrated various problems inherent in the concept.

Nevertheless, Cercone (2008) pointed out the four most popular adult learning theories: Experiential Learning, Transformative Learning, Self-Directed Learning, and Andragogy. She makes the case for each one's contribution toward understanding and supporting the adult learning internal process. Moreover, she declared that the theories of Self-Directed Learning, Transformative Learning, and Experiential Learning are all encompassed within the theory of

Andragogy; and concluded that andragogy is the most comprehensive theory of adult learning and education, by comparison with the other three—of the 13 characteristics of adult learners, self-directed learning and transformative learning each support three, experiential learning supports four, and andragogy supports 10. The 13 characteristics of adult learners (Cercone, 2008) are as follows:

1. Adults may have some limitations and these should be considered in the design of (the online) learning environment.
2. Learning styles need to be considered.
3. Adults need to be actively involved in the learning process.
4. Adults need scaffolding to be provided by the instructor. Scaffolding should promote self-reliance, and it should allow learners to perform activities they were unable to perform without this support.
5. Adults have a pre-existing learning history and will need support to work in the new learner-centered paradigm.
6. Adults need the instructor acting as a facilitator.
7. Adults need consideration of their prior experience. The instructor should acknowledge this prior experience. Adults need to connect new knowledge to past events.
8. Adults need to see the link between what they are learning and how it will apply to their lives. They want to apply immediately their new knowledge. They are problem-centered.
9. Adults need to feel that learning focuses on issues that directly concern them and want to know what they are going to learn, how the learning will be conducted, and why it is important. The course should be learner-centered rather than teacher-centered.
10. Adults need to test their learning as they go along, rather than receive background theory.
11. Adult learning requires a climate that is collaborative, respectful, mutual, and informal.
12. Adults need to self-reflect on the learning process and be given support for transformational learning.
13. Adults need dialogue and social interaction must be provided. They need to collaborate with other students.

In addition, Henschke (2011) mentioned that the literature on andragogy should demonstrate the need to consider the future of andragogy, which would strengthen the theory and allow for the assumptions/characteristics to further guide adult education into the future. None of the research studies in the past has ever mentioned the possibility of a relationship between these two main concepts: “Andragogy,” the art and science of helping adult learners; and “Learning Society,” an emerging logical development of society (Faure et al., 1972) that positions education and learning as the key to a nation’s economic and social development in a context of rapid change. Therefore, it would be beneficial to us all to consider andragogy from a different angle, especially the andragogical practices that drive individual learning and organizational learning, as well as societal learning.

It is essential to investigate the potential of the andragogical concept for the personal and collective development of people in general and for future societies. Our intention in this article is to propose a practical application of andragogy as a key vehicle for locally and regionally creating a sustainable lifelong learning society. The extensive background to this paper was provided by research studies (Knowles, 1990; Cooper & Henschke, 2003; Chan, 2010;

Charungkaittikul, 2011; Henschke, 2011, 2013a, 2013b, 2016; Savicevic, 2000, 2008; and Stiglitz & Greenwald, 2014) conducted by worldwide education recently.

### **Andragogy Foundation**

The theory of andragogy describes the uniqueness of adult learners. The andragogical model is based on six key assumptions about the characteristics of adult learners and eight process elements by which adults learn best—both are the foundation of adult learning. Among the most useful elements in Malcolm Knowles's work are the six assumptions and eight learning processes of andragogy (Knowles, 1990; 1995). The six assumptions are (a) adults need to know a reason that makes sense to them, for whatever they need to learn; (b) adults have a deep need to be self-directing and take responsibility for themselves; (c) adults enter a learning activity with a quality and volume of experience that is a resource for their own and others' learning; (d) adults are ready to learn when they experience a need to know, or to be able to do, something to perform more effectively in some aspect of their life; (e) adults' orientation to learning is around life situations that are task, issue- or problem-centered, for which they seek solutions; and (f) adults are motivated much more internally than externally. Experience is the most important as adults are focusing more on the process rather than the content being taught. "Andragogy is an organized and sustained effort to assist adults to learn in a way that enhances their capacity to function as self-directed learners" (Mezirow, 1981, p. 21). The eight adult learning process elements are: preparation, a climate conducive to learning, mutual planning, collaborative need diagnosis, mutually set objectives, contracted designing of learning plans, collaboratively conducted activities, and learner-directed evaluation. The process elements need to be part of a continuous cycle. These assumptions and process elements serve as a guide to the educational theory of andragogy (Risley, 2012). Therefore, Knowles' significant body of work provides numerous explanations, designs, and strategies that may be adapted for practical use.

During the past decade, andragogy has come into increasing use by adult educators around the world (Henschke, 2015, 2016). In this way, the past becomes unified with present knowledge and action for moving us toward the future. Knowles (1990) indicated that:

The field of adult education has long sought a glue to bind its diverse institutions, clienteles, and activities into some sense of unity; perhaps andragogy will give at least a unifying theory. And, extended in its application to the concept of lifelong education and learning, perhaps andragogy will provide a unifying theme for all of education. (p. 53)

### **Andragogy and Lifelong Learning**

Andragogy remains one of the dominant models of adult education (Blaszczak, 2012), especially in this knowledge-based society, where knowledge is, simultaneously, an autonomic value and powerful social capital. Hence, lifelong learning is very important, which can ultimately lead to the formation of a lifelong learning society. Andragogy has a role to play in contributing to lifelong learning (Henschke, 2016), and influencing economic (Henschke, 2013b) and social development. Charungkaittikul (2011) and Charungkaittikul and Henschke (2014) argued that lifelong learners are the main component in learning society development. We need to rediscover this—a not very visible value in the language of lifelong learning.

The individual is at the heart of a lifelong learning system, and the realization of lifelong learning depends to a large degree on the capacity and motivation of individuals to take care of

their own learning (Tuijnman & Bostrom, 2002). Adult education is about being prepared in adult life to act in the cause of right because we are free individuals (Freire, 1972), even to be prepared to learn to resist (Newman, 2006) the powers that be. Henschke (2013a) pointed out that:

Andragogy may possibly be a scientific discipline for the study of the theory, processes, technology, and anything else of value and benefit including learning, teaching, instructing, guiding, leading, and modeling/exemplifying a way of life, which would bring adults to their full degree of humaneness. (p. 1)

Zmeyov (1998) indicated 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).

Additionally, an andragogical model focuses on procedures and resources aiding a learner in assimilating information and skills, aiming to improve the quality of adult life. Therefore, the role of andragogy in the 21<sup>st</sup> century is to support lifelong learning in three different aspects: economic progress and development; personal development and fulfilment; and social inclusiveness and democratic understanding and activity. With these triadic concepts of lifelong learning (Aspin & Chapman, 2001), the first element can be seen to represent the human capital perspective, the second element may represent both the personal and human capital perspectives, while the third is indicative of a social capital perspective on the concept of lifelong learning (Schuller and Field, 1998; Field, 2001; OECD, 2001b).

The two concepts of andragogy and lifelong learning are important in shaping an individual to enhance the capabilities in both personal and professional development. Nowadays, the combining of adult education and lifelong learning constitutes one of the most significant factors influencing individual growth, economic growth and social development (Blaszczak, 2013; and Henschke, 2013b).

### **Andragogy and Human Resource Development**

Human Resource Development (HRD) and andragogy share this interest in the facilitation of adults in their learning and professional development (Kessels, 2015), as well as to increase the human capital in knowledge, understanding, skill, attitude, value, and interest that an individual possesses to make an individual a productive worker (Besanko et al., 1996). Adult learning is defined as the process of adults gaining knowledge and expertise; it is inextricably intertwined with the practices and processes of HRD.

To obtain the aforementioned aim, Knowles (1980, 1990) emphasized that the organization needs to provide firstly, an educative environment which allows learning activities to adults and provide an environment that definitely facilitates learning (e.g., (a) respect for personality,; (b) participation in decision-making,; (c) freedom of expression and availability of information,; and (d) mutuality of responsibility in defining goals, planning, and conducive activities, and evaluating). Secondly, the organization should practice a democratic philosophy which is characterized by a concern for a person’s development, a deep conviction as to the worth of every individual, and faith that people will make the right decisions for themselves if given the necessary information and support. Lastly, in this globalized world, exemplifying change and growth is very much needed for the organization to keep up with those changes (Knowles, 1980, 1990). This proposition is based on the premise that an organization tends to serve as a role model for those it influences. If its purpose is to encourage its personnel,

members, or constituents to engage in a process of continuous change and growth, it is likely to succeed to the extent that it models the role of organizational change and growth. Therefore, an organization must be innovative as well as democratic if it is to provide an environment conducive to learning. Andragogy is a means available to organizations for furthering both individual learning and environment development purposes. Knowles (1980, 1990) suggests that successful change in corporations is somewhat dependent upon having a transforming environment of innovation, rather than having a static environment, in such dimensions as structure, atmosphere, management philosophy and attitudes, decision-making and policymaking, and communication (Knowles, 1980, 1990). Most people need a model for organizational transformation to take place. A teacher's most potent tool, for helping to transform learners and learning, is the example of her/his own behavior (and we would add his/her own way of knowing what he or she thinks she/he knows); then, it stands to reason that an organization's most effective instrument of influence for transformation and change in human capital management is the model of its own behavior and having a grasp of its own epistemology (how it knows what it knows). Moreover, an organization needs to be innovative in providing an environment conducive to the kind of learning (change) that leads to transformation into staying ahead of the curve in human capital management (Henschke, 2009).

HRD is based in learning, and every HRD practitioner should have the knowledge and understanding of the theories of adult learning (Nadler & Nadler, 1989). It also places a heavy responsibility on the manager. Knowles (1972) had earlier turned his attention to the role of the manager as an educator of adults, the one who can release and develop the potential of the human resources that are his company's principle asset. Consequently, andragogy can easily be viewed as one of the founding building blocks for HRD. Focusing on the learning and development aspects of adults in the context of their professional work, andragogy has offered valuable principles for organizing meaningful learning environments. HRD and andragogy share this interest in the facilitation of adults in their learning, professional development, and work setting.

### **Andragogy and Elements of Organizational Learning Capacities for Economically Flourishing**

In this section the authors elaborate the essential tools that underlie the andragogy concept which is not only the art and science of helping adults learn but a method that can increase the capacities of human resources in the organization using several past studies (e.g., Knowles, 1980; Henschke, 1989; Stanton, 2005; Chiva & Algre, 2009; and Vatcharasirisook, 2011).

*The Andragogical Modified Instructional Perspectives Inventory (MIPI)*. Using andragogical principles, supervisors/adult educators can perform an important role in supporting, facilitating, and helping subordinates/learners to achieve subordinates' and the organization's goals. The andragogical Modified Instructional Perspectives Inventory (MIPI) has been validated three times and used in 27 completed doctoral dissertations in five U.S. universities. As this inventory is understood and used appropriately, it shows participants' job satisfaction and desire to stay learning and working within their organization. Additionally, in Cronback's alpha validation, the factors show "Teacher Trust of Learners" as consistently the strongest factor in the inventory (Henschke, 2016). Moreover, this strength of trust has been consistent throughout using the MIPI. To be effective, an andragogue needs to combine the reciprocity among

empathy, trust, and sensitivity in concert with the ability and potential of learners for the same, to understand the learning process and interact with facilitators effectively in making the right choices. However, supervisor insensitivity toward subordinates was a direct predictor of employee desire to leave the company. Henschke believes that the MIPI, which was created based on andragogical concepts, is the best tool to investigate supervisors' characteristics to promote organizational learning capacity (OLC).

***The five elements of organizational learning capacity.*** The five facilitating OLC factors proposed by Chiva and Alegre (2009) to promote learning in organizations are experimentation, risk-taking, interaction with the external environment, dialogue, and participative decision-making.

The reciprocity of empathy, trust and sensitivity is being enhanced by the OLC factors to strengthen job satisfaction, and fosters learners', supervisees', and workers' desire to retain employment with their corporation, which may reduce costs of new learners, supervisees, and of all workers (Henschke, 2016). In fact, all seven factors of the MIPI influence the five dimensions of OLC and promote organizational learning and increase productivity.

***The four best strategies for leadership in organizational learning.*** In real work situations, it is not the work ethic which has declined. Rather, it is leaders who have failed to instill vision, meaning, and trust in deploying their followers; also failing to empower them. Vatcharasirisook and Henschke (2011) revealed that for those learning and innovative organizations to contribute to the productivity, well-being and economic viability of an enterprise in today's world, leaders and their strategies seem to be among the most important aspects for taking charge to move this idea into reality and make them flourish economically even in the down economy. Bennis and Nanus (2007) pointed out the four best strategies for leadership in organizational learning. The four strategies of management: strategy I: ATTENTION Through Vision; strategy II: MEANING Through Communication; strategy III: TRUST Through Positioning; and strategy IV: The Deployment of SELF Through Positive Self-Regard. The Wallenda Factor Leadership is the marshaling of skills possessed by a majority but used by a minority. Knowles (1990) indicated the form of leadership which releases the creative energy of the people being led. He described that creative leaders: (a) make a different set of assumptions (essentially positive) about human nature from the assumptions (essentially negative) made by controlling leaders; (b) accepts as a law of human nature that people feel a commitment to a decision in proportion to the extent that they feel they have participated in making it; (c) believe in and use the power of self-fulfilling prophesy; (d) highly value individuality; (e) stimulate and reward creativity; (f) are committed to a process of continuous change and are skillful in managing change; (g) emphasize internal motivators over external motivators; and (h) encourage people to be self-directing.

## **Learning Society Development**

The paper titled "Recommendation for adult learning and education" (UNESCO, 2016) indicated that adult learning and education constitutes a major building block of a learning society, and for the creation of learning communities, cities and regions as they foster a culture of learning throughout life and revitalize learning in families, communities and other learning spaces, and in the workplace. In this section the authors would like to connect the andragogical concept to a learning society development.

Knowles (1984) concluded his book *Andragogy in Action* by noting that:



We are nearing the end of the era of our edifice complex and its basic belief that respectable learning takes place only in buildings and on campuses. Adults are beginning to demand that their learning take place at a time, place, and pace convenient to them. In fact, I feel confident that most educational services by the end of this (20<sup>th</sup>) century (if not decade) will be delivered electronically . . . Our great challenge now is to find ways to maintain the human touch as we learn to use the media in new ways. (p. 7)

Although we had not reached that goal by the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, we are well on the way to moving in that direction as we are in the closing years of the second decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

The idea of developing Lifelong Learning Communities/Cities/Towns/Regions was a watershed in global thought about moving toward a knowledge-based economy and society, where economic benefits and the creation of wealth are directly based on the production, distribution and use of knowledge and information. It also includes business performance based on intellectual capital and the capacity for innovation and collaboration (Charunkaittikul, 2011). Since the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) funded a project to create the Educating Cities in the 1970s (IAEC, 2009; Longworth, 2006), the idea of developing Lifelong Learning Cities has expanded throughout the world. Many countries (e.g., England, Spain, Sweden, New Zealand, Ireland, Poland, Singapore, Japan, Korea, and China) have been recognized for their strategies to build knowledge societies (Cisco, 2010; Faris, 1998; Kwon & Schied, 2009; Ergazakis et al., 2006). These societies influenced the development of the learning society.

Charunkaittikul (2011) provided the most extensive in-depth study that includes more than 600 pages detailing the results of a learning society development. The study revealed the five essential elements for enhancing sustainable lifelong learning development: the (a) components of a learning society, the (b) principles for the development of a learning society, the (c) steps in the development process of a learning society, the (d) strategies for the development of a learning society, and the (e) key success factors for developing a learning society. All components comprise details which can really be put into practice (Charunkaittikul, 2011). Thus, a learning society development is comprised of both social structure and institutional structure toward lifelong learning. The individual learning communities/cities/towns all operate in their own locally appropriate ways.

First, the components of a learning society include nine core themes: (a) Learners, (b) Learning Providers, (c) Learning Resources/Institutions, (d) Knowledge/Wisdom, (e) Lifelong Learning Activities, (f) Learning Climate, (g) Learning Network, (h) Knowledge Management, and (i) Learning Groups/Organizations. In addition, the extra components that are included, but are not found in each learning society, include: community size, community culture and tradition, sharing culture, various groups of people living together, close relationship and socialization, communication network, warm family and strong community, high quality of natural resources and environment, definite development plans and strategies, high respect for the essential of knowledge and lifelong learning, development of infrastructure, appropriate community design, IT network system, creation of community learning innovation, assurance of knowledge society right of citizens, active support of government and agencies, and setting-up of specific agencies (Charunkaittikul, 2011).

Second, the principles that characterize the learning society are informed by the demands of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, with emergent innovations at the very leading edge, and what we now know about how learning happens. The learning society principles include the concepts of (a) Partnership, (b) Participation and Collaboration, (c) Monitoring and Evaluation Process, (d)

Lifelong Learning Needs, (e) Community-Based Development, (f) Knowledge-Based Community Development, (g) Variety of Lifelong Learning Activities/Knowledge-Related Activities, (h) Learning Related to Life and Lifelong Learning, (i) Equity Process, and (j) Proactive and Continuous Process (Charungkaitikul, 2011).

Third, the steps for developing and transforming a community into a learning society can be well-developed at both the national and local levels. These include (a) Embracing the Learning Society, (b) Setting Up “Learning Society Development Committee,” (c) Diagnosing of Current Community’s Status, (d) Developing Learning Society Vision and Strategies, (e) Designing of Detailed Action Plan, (f) Integrating of Partnerships Collaboration, (g) Implementation the Developed Programs and Activities, (h) Carrying Out Monitoring and Evaluation System, (i) Sharing Knowledge/Lesson Learned, and (j) Promoting and Publishing of Communities (Charungkaitikul, 2011).

Fourth, the strategies for the development of a learning society comprise: Strategy 1: Development of Lifelong Learners, Strategy 2: Development of Learning Resources, Strategy 3: Development of Knowledge and Wisdom, Strategy 4: Development of Appropriate Community/City Design, Strategy 5: Development of Learning Community and Organization, Strategy 6: Development of Knowledge Management, Strategy 7: Development of Learning Climate and Knowledge Sharing Culture, Strategy 8: Development of Process Improvement, Strategy 9: Development of Infrastructure and Learning Facilities, and Strategy 10: Development of Network Competencies (Charungkaitikul, 2011).

Fifth, key success factors of a learning society development are (a) Community Leaders, (b) Active Funds Support, (c) Various Learning Networks and Partnerships, (d) Appropriate Community Size, (e) Definite Policy, Structure, and Direction, (f) Construction of Strategies and the Implementation, (g) Appropriate Community Design, (h) Community Members/Volunteer Groups, (i) Knowledge-Sharing Culture, (j) Close Relationship among Community Members, (k) A Variety of Learning Activities, (l) Infrastructure System, (m) Appropriate IT Networks System, and (n) Learning Insurance System (Charungkaitikul, 2011).

Thus, at the heart of the learning society is the commitment of all members to all the elements of a learning society (i.e., a set of values and the system of lifelong learning, and sharing knowledge with its members and others on a regular lifelong basis that enhances the opportunity of all community members to develop their full capacity of knowledge, skills, and attitude) (Charungkaitikul, 2011). Creating a sustainable learning society is to create a learning mindset for people and a learning environment that allows that society’s people to decide what to learn, respects people’s goals and desires, and offers hope for individuals to shape their own learning. Su (2010) described that “When people are respected as the ultimate decision-makers and their choices and preferences for learning are fully respected, the learning society is then understood as a foundation for people to use to develop themselves and flourish.” (p. 22).

### **Andragogy and International Work: Elements from Different Countries Around the World**

Andragogy has been proven to be a vital element in the process of nation-building, merging together with lifelong learning and education. This kind of work goes hand-in-hand with learning, building, actually getting people to band together to accomplish what they have not previously thought of doing together. This also influences the developing and advancing of their economy, education and governmental processes. The authors would like to share our international experience of and involvement in the very essence of exemplifying our conception

of the following in various countries around the globe—nation-building through andragogy and lifelong learning: on the cutting edge educationally, economically, and governmentally.

The following description shows the application of andragogy (the art and science of helping adults learn) that the authors have worked on with many developed and developing countries (e.g., Brazil, South Africa, Mali, Thailand, Austria) andragogically between 1985 and 2009. Most of the activities in Brazil, South Africa, and Austria included workshops, seminars, consultant works, conferences, and lectures; and were using andragogical approach to help adult educators, practitioners, high school teachers, and faculty and administrators become more effective and productive in their educational processes. Furthermore, the adult education methods and techniques could create a sustainable lifelong collaboration in several projects, especially building a learning society in Thailand. The following details in-depth information on andragogy and international works in several countries and continents around the globe (Henschke, 2012).

### **Brazil in South America**

When totaling all eight trips, I (the author John A. Henschke) have made to Para, Brazil, within the time span of 25 years, I have worked with educators and agencies andragogically between 1985 and 2009, the numbers related to adult education activities that I have conducted (all focused on andragogy) are as follows: 1,150 adult educators from Brazil participated in 29 workshops or courses on using adult education methods and techniques involving 453 hours of instruction in all the courses engaging 21 partner states from Brazil and the United States, represented by 36 educational, corporate, industrial, social service, religious, healthcare, NGO, commercial, and governmental agencies and institutions, including preparation and follow-up activities. These programs have been through the Partners of the Americas, Inc., through which Missouri, United States, and Para, Brazil have had a 51-year partnership (Henschke, 2009b).

The programs that I designed and conducted with the participants in Brazil were without exception focused on the methods and techniques of facilitating the learning of adults, with the goal of helping them move toward becoming a Sustainable Lifelong Learning Society. Using these processes has helped garner some excellent growth on the part of the Brazilian participants, leading to nation-building through andragogy and lifelong learning, and has placed them on the cutting-edge educationally, economically, and governmentally.

### **South Africa in Africa**

I, John Henschke, began this Lifelong Learning educational work in South Africa during 1999 during extended research focused on helping higher educational institutions and other institutions in various countries to reorient themselves toward a lifelong learning focus, and placing this within the support and context of lifelong learning and education around the globe, to contribute toward building a Learning Society. Global support was especially prominent from the United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO).

This information was shared as one backdrop for a worldwide conference on the topic of “Lifelong Learning, Higher Education and Active Citizenship” held in Cape Town in October 2000. There were 95 adult educators from 19 countries at the conference. This was also a follow-up and continuation of the work begun at the UNESCO Fifth International Conference on Adult Education [CONFINTEA V] in Hamburg, Germany, in 1997. This gathering of adult

educators resulted in the formulation of The Cape Town Statement on Characteristic Elements of a Lifelong Learning Higher Education Institution (2001). They named six major elements. The next step in the process saw two universities, The University of the Western Cape from South Africa and The University of Missouri from the United States, change those six elements to seven major elements, and develop measurable performance indicators (MPI) for the practice of lifelong learning in higher education institutions. The elements included: (a) Overarching Frameworks, (b) Strategic Partnerships, (c) Research, (d) Teaching and Learning Processes, (e) Administration Policies and Mechanisms, (f) Decision Support Systems, and, (g) Student Support Systems and Services.

### **Mali in Africa**

My first contact with Mali was in 2004. I (Henschke) met Mr. Dantouma Koita, a businessman from Bamako, the capital city (1 million people) of Mali at the request of the Washington, DC, office of the American Association for Adult and Continuing Education (AAACE). Mr. Koita is also vice-president of the Association for the Development of Rural Integration in the Republic of Mali (ADRIIM). I indicated to him that AAACE is not a foundation giving grants, but would do all possible to help them accomplish things related to helping advance the cause of adult education, toward helping them become a Learning Society. I travelled to Mali in 2008 and 2011. During these trips I conducted 60 education, learning, and infrastructure sessions with 2,500 people, which was especially focused on helping people from a very poor nation (they live on an average of \$1 USD per day) to find ways in education, community, and government to raise the level of their standard of living and to catch a vision of possibilities they had not previously considered—such as moving in the direction of becoming a Learning Society. I have called this “Nation Building.” We met with members of ADRIIM concerning infrastructure for helping education and other things to move forward—they are as follows:

- We had a long-range strategic meeting to discuss and develop our work together in Mali between ADRIIM and AAACE.
- We gave the money for them to build a birthing room in a village that had no safe or clean place for women to give birth (location: Segetembougou, 35 miles from Bamako, Mali, on a dirt path seven miles off a paved road).
- We provided a rotating loan fund for ADRIIM to administer loaning money to 10 individual families or communities for solar cooking.
- We provided a rotating loan fund for ADRIIM to administer loaning money to individual families or communities to fund five Kick-Start Irrigation Pumps.
- We provided the means for digging 10 toilets that will help greatly to stem the spread of disease.
- We worked with Rotary Clubs to provide a pure water well and reservoir in Djoliba, a village of 6,000, that serves 15,000 people in the surrounding area and will for many decades to come.
- Throughout my Mali trip in 2011, I met with many additional groups to talk with them about things they carried forward since my 2008 trip.

## **Thailand in Asia**

Chulalongkorn University (CU) in Bangkok, Thailand, stands as an outstanding example in recent years of adding to and becoming especially prominent in supporting, researching and bringing lifelong learning and cultural learning forward in Thailand. Some of this has been orchestrated through faculty collaboration between Dr. Archanya Ratana-Ubol, current chair of the Department of Lifelong Education, Faculty of Education, at Chulalongkorn University; and myself, Dr. John A. Henschke, retired faculty member and chair of Andragogy at Lindenwood University in St. Charles, Missouri. Our relationship originated in 1983, as faculty and student in adult education/andragogy at the University of Missouri – St. Louis, United States, and has been sustained through various threads up to this writing in 2017, and is anticipated to continue for many years to come. Many lifelong collaboration and exchange activities between CU and LU transpired by way of Suwithida Charungkattikul coming from CU to LU for one year to work with Professor Henschke as a doctoral assistant in andragogy and lifelong learning (LLL), and continue work on her doctoral dissertation (Charungkattikul, 2011b) on The Learning Society Model proposed, which was worked through one community in each of the five regions of Thailand, to bring about a paradigm shift in each toward a Learning Society.

There are five threads of LLL collaboration between CU and LU: (a) the exchange program for graduate students coming to LU to study andragogy and LLL with faculty member, Professor John A. Henschke; (b) the international video interactive workshop with more than 100 faculty, students, and networks participating in Faculty of Education, Chulalongkorn University, Bangkok, Thailand; (c) the learning society development research projects and publications by the authors, Dr. Suwithida and Dr. Henschke; (d) the visiting professors arrangement for LU professor (Dr. Ryan Guffey, LU's head of the International Office) to do a Fulbright Scholarship at CU in 2012, and LU professor Henschke to spend five weeks in the summer of 2013 teaching at CU in LLL and Andragogy while working with eight faculty and numerous students; and (e) a combination of Conference Presentations, Papers which are included in Conference Proceedings, Research Papers Published in a Book, Research Papers Published in Refereed Journals, and Conferences focused on LLL and Andragogy. This collaborative effort on LLL is continuing. Moreover, recently Henschke was invited by Dr. Suwithida Charungkattikul to be a supervisor of her National Research Scholarship Grant Project. The research is titled: "Strategies to reorient a traditional higher education institution toward a lifelong learning higher education institution." It is a one year and six months process using the Ethnographic Delphi Future Research (EDFR). It is expected that the new body of knowledge gained from the research will be highly beneficial for higher educational institutions that aim to develop sustainable lifelong learning. It is anticipated that this collaboration will continue for many years to come. In addition, it brought to reality Dr. Suwithida Charungkattikul coming to Lindenwood University for a Post-Doctoral Fellowship Research year in 2017.

## **Austria in Europe**

My first time to work in andragogy with people from Austria was when I (Henschke) was invited in the summer of 2009 to Feldkirch, Austria, a mid-sized city at the eastern end of Lake Konstanz. I conducted a public lecture on one evening for three hours. This involved faculty and administrators from the Feldkirch Teachers College, corporate personnel, community citizens, city officials, and students in the Master's Degree Cohort studying andragogy at the college.

There were 55 people who participated. They were interested in linking the andragogy academic program and students/faculty/administrators with citizens of the community, government entities, and corporate interests. The structure of the public session was similar to what I used in Brazil, "Using a Dynamic, Living, Interactive Lecture to Help Adults Learn" (Knowles, 1970).

During the following two days, I conducted an andragogical workshop for a cohort of 19 master's degree graduate students at the Feldkirch Teacher's College. It was part of the coursework in this academic program. It focused on the topic of "Building Blocks for Adult Learning" (Henschke, 1987a & 1987b). At the end of the two-day workshop, I added the question: What idea[s] from the session would you like to try out back home and how do you intend to carry that forward? There was an adjustment made (in accordance with andragogical principles) in which the participants asked some questions that were not part of the agenda and we addressed those. This is all part of helping a community or organization move in the direction of becoming a Learning Society.

To sum up, andragogy has much to contribute to the future of adult education and lifelong learning, which would bring adults to their full degree of humaneness. They may also find merit in the concept of nation-building for the enhancement of the lives of the many constituencies they serve, thus helping them move toward becoming a sustainable learning society.

### **Strategies for Developing a Lifelong Learning Society Using Andragogical Concepts**

There are three strategies on which the andragogical model is based to create a sustainable lifelong learning society: assumptions, process design, and development steps. An immediate implication for a lifelong learning society is that the assumptions about the learner must be completely reconsidered. Knowles (1990) described the eight most important assumptions for creating lifelong learning communities. This model of a lifelong learning resources system is based on the following assumptions:

1. Learning in a world of accelerating change must be a lifelong process.
2. Learning is a process of active inquiry with the initiative residing in the learner.
3. The purpose of education is to facilitate the development of the competencies required for performance in life situations.
4. Learners are highly diverse in their experiential backgrounds, pace of learning, readiness to learn, and styles of learning; therefore, learning programs need to be highly individualized.
5. Resources for learning abound in every environment; a primary task of a learning system is to identify these resources and link learners with them effectively.
6. People who have been taught in traditional schools have on the whole been conditioned to perceive the proper role of learners as being dependent on teachers to make decisions for them as to what should be learned, how it should be learned, when it should be learned, and if it has been learned; they therefore need to be helped to make the transition to becoming self-directed learners.
7. Learning (even self-directed learning) is enhanced by interaction with other learners.
8. Learning is more efficient if guided by a process structure (e.g., learning plan) than by a content structure (e.g., course outline).

Furthermore, the implication for applying the above assumptions to planning and conducting a series of learning activities to engage individuals in the process of lifelong learning involve the following elements: (a) a broadening and deepening of the skills of self-directed inquiry; (b) the diagnosis of learning needs (or perhaps even better, competency-development needs); (c) translation of these needs into learning objectives; (d) identification of human and material resources, including guided experiences, for accomplishing the objectives; (e) designing of a plan of strategies for using these resources; (f) executing the plan; and (g) evaluating the extent to which the objectives have been accomplished (Knowles, 1990).

Achieving a learning environment for people by identifying all the learning resources in a society; incorporating information about these resources; establishing a mechanism for policymaking and administration; and designing a lifelong learning process, is another main development aspect to foster a sustainable lifelong learning society.

It is important to see the society as one system. As Capra (1982, p. 23) put it, “Systems thinking is process thinking; form becomes associated with process, interrelation with interaction, and opposites are unified through oscillation . . . The system view is an ecological view.” The learning and education of adults have always been integral parts of human activity and of human aspirations to learn (Savicevic, 2008). A climate conducive to learning is a prerequisite for effective learning. Two aspects of climate are important: physical and psychological. Physical climate needs to be comfortable, bright, colorful, and exciting. As important as physical climate is, psychological climate is even more important (Knowles, 1972). The psychological climate for learning needs to be infused very deeply with support, mutual respect, pleasure/fun, humanness, openness, authenticity, mutual trust, collaboration, and critical thinking. Together, members learn and come up with solutions to problems or learn to meet the communities’ real needs. All parties should be aware of the significance of the learning as well as the varieties of learning activities that include all activities in the formal and informal education systems (Charungkaittikul & Henschke, 2014).

Andragogy recommends that educators, especially adult educators, need to become more aware of how to build a flexible structure based on andragogical functional collaboration; to create a people-centered learning atmosphere; to use and transfer knowledge; to share expertise and know-how; to emphasize developing and using resources; to participate and work with various networks; to furnish collaborative decisionmaking and policymaking; to engage in continuous training and learning development; and to provide open and multidirectional communication (Knowles, 1990). Similarly, Cunningham (1996) saw that adult educators should work in socially responsible and relevant ways to actively promote continuous societal change by promoting the ideals of participatory democracy defined as full citizen participation, freedom, equality and social justice.

This is the major challenge for governments, policymakers, adult educators, and all community citizens/members as they seek to conceptualize andragogy as a strategy to exploit the best in a human being at whatever age s/he is and to utilize all sources of information—after all, it helps create the places where people learn, live, and work. The difficulties in creating such a system are significant, therefore suitable policy options appropriate to the local context in terms of a developing rather than a developed learning society rationale need to be considered (Stiglitz & Greenwald, 2014). The use of these strategies will create a more engaging and practical learning environment and, ultimately, one that is vibrantly alive/engaged and contributing in the 21st century learning society.

### **Conclusion and Suggestions for Further Research**

The role of andragogy in creating a sustainable learning society can be divided into two specific dimensions: first, the dimension related to the development of human beings, in the sense that every person will be in a position to keep learning throughout her/his life; and second, the operational dimension, in which all agencies of the society become recipients and providers of education and learning with each other.

Finally, development of a lifelong learning society using the andragogical concept is a sustainable way to create lifelong learning that will result in the development of quality in people's lives, community and society well-being, democratic participation, and social inclusiveness and cohesion, which will act as a social force driving the development of the country's economy and national growth (OECD, 1998, 2001a; Stiglitz & Greenwald, 2014).

Obviously, an andragogical model of learning is applicable in multiple contexts (Chan, 2010). Future research studies could focus more on (a) an in-depth investigation of the roles of andragogy as an adult education concept in enhancing the capacities of different stakeholders, (b) helping all institutions to continuously apply andragogical concepts in increasing organizational learning capacities, and (c) comparative research and development of the application of andragogical concepts in real-life settings to examine various practices from different countries around the world.



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