

Essay on adult learners in higher education and training

[Technology](#), [Development](#)



Introduction

Education is a necessary tool in the development of the modern society. Adult education plays an essential role in ensuring the change in attitudes, behavior, knowledge, the skills and the thinking process in general. These changes are essential in allowing the adult learners gain some confidence when learning. The main aim still remains being furthering their education. As a matter of fact, pursuing the learning opportunities gives adults the chance to be immersed in their development professionally. The advantage of adult education may include job acquisition, improvements in their present jobs, promotions, retaining their jobs and other better alternatives that provide these adult learners with the growth opportunities. It is very important if the adult learners could tie their life experiences to the current environment. Besides improving their job opportunities, adult education makes them think critically, creatively and analytically (Abdi, and Kapoor, 2009). This is very essential because they bring their experience and conjoin it with the understanding of the environment that is around us. There are several learning/teaching theories as regards to the adult education. These may include the transformative learning theory and the critical reflection theory (Bélanger, 2011) These two theories talk exclusively on the adult learning/ education. For the purposes of this assignment, I will align my arguments mostly to the transformative learning theory. This theory was developed by Jack Mezirow, who to date is considered to be the father of transformative learning theory. According to Jack, the transformative learning process, which is for the emancipation of education, is the core of all the adult education (Mezirow and Taylor, 2009). This

approach to the learning of the adults worked wonders in inspiring several movements of women and even resulted to deep changes in the adults on how they saw themselves and the world they belonged to.

This theory is tasked with replacing a point of thought in the mindset with that which is more developed and mature. The main goal of this theory is the empowerment of the learners. This can be achieved through reflecting critically for an extra participatory learning culture. The transformative theory requires deep thinking on the assumptions that could change as a result of the triggering event. The learners have the responsibility of constructing a meaning of the experience they have from the current context which may be formed by the conversations with other people for the justification of their assumptions. This hence, leads to reflective action from the changes in the life knowledge.

There is a 10-step process that can explain this transformative learning. These steps may include that of experiencing of a disorienting dilemma, undergoing the self-examination, people conducting deep assessments of their personal role assumptions and the alienations that are created by the new roles, exploring the available options for the new acting ways, analyzing and sharing the personal discontents and the similar experiences by other people, building self-confidence and competence in the new roles, planning courses of action, acquiring the knowledge and skills of action required for the action, trying these new roles to assess the feedbacks and lastly and lastly, reintegrating them into the society with a new perspective.

However, transformative theory of adult learning has many implications. These implications may include the fact that the interdisciplinary crisis

solving could guide the transformation (Leonard, 2002). This could be so despite the dissemination of the content or the single discipline approaches to solving the problems. The transformative theory may also be responsible for validating the roles of the extension workers as the helpers and facilitators of learning. This helping role is more vital to the extension's position in tackling community problems. Lastly, transformative theory reinforces independence with accountability. This is because the transformed learners commit themselves to watch their development with each other and keep themselves with the current affairs.

However, this theory has some shortcomings. They may include the fact that the theory does not deal with the role played by the already established relationships in power which are in the process of learning. This is in spite the fact that transformative learning always disrupts the power relations. The process of transformative learning is also not as linear as always suggested and therefore, may lead to difficulties for the educators when orchestrating it. The transformative process of learning has also been discovered to be requiring elevated levels of the cognitive implementation which most adults always lack. These factors make the transformative theory of adult learning and teaching becomes impossibility.

In practice, the transformative learning theory enhances the private and the organizational effectiveness (Mezirow, 2000). Educators have always focused on the processing of the educational experiences with the learners. This happens when they include time for the critical expression on the assumptions about the learning process and the content.

In conclusion, it should be noted that the transformative theory should

always grind operations in the theories of the adult education. This is because the adult education has the impact of ensuring that the ageing workforce has the chance to make themselves aware of the trending information and the necessary skills. This is important in that it ensures that the adults have the chance to meet the current and up to date information on the needs they are serving.

The theories on the adult education and the transformative learning process are important in that they majorly focus on the developing of the participatory learning. These transformative learning should ensure that the learners have the opportunities to disorient the dilemmas and to critically reflect on the assumptions, and therefore facilitating on how learning should be, not just what should be learned.

References

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