



Methods and Techniques for Teaching Adult Learners

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Abstract : Adult education is a great program that will help adult student's who left their school for a long time. Adult basic Education (ABE) is to provide the basic skills of reading, writing, and mathematics for adult learners in order to prepare them for transitioning into the labor market or higher academic or vocational training. This program will achieve the community development. Community development is the process by which the hard work of the people themselves are united with those of governmental authorities to improve the economic, social, and cultural conditions of communities and to enable them to contribute fully to national progress.

Introduction: This program supports the item of lifelong learning. This item means the learning is not confined to the children, but adults can learn throughout their lives. In addition this program offer assistant to adult students to teach them how to find jobs. Susan (1986) "because career development is a lifelong process, adults frequently need career planning assistance:.. (Para-1)

There are many problems faced by adult students because they are non-traditional students and they have many responsibilities, such as jobs, being single parents, families, they cannot continue in their learning. These problems and challenges that can become contexts for applying critical thinking and problem-solving skills, as well as acquiring knowledge, essential concepts, and literacy skills. Teachers have to work hard with adult students for that reason . Also, successful programs of Adult learning depend on skillful and dedicated teachers and administrators working long hours with adult students in the classroom.

The role of the instructor is to engage in a process of inquiry, analysis, and decision-making with adult learners, rather than to transmit knowledge. Irving Lorge (1961) has said, “ Teachers of the adult must appreciate that the adult brings with him a past—a past of experiences with attitudes which may be capital to work with, or a deficit to be overcome. Using the capital or clearing the deficit may be the basis for the complete sense of satisfaction that teaching gives the teacher and that learning gives the learner.”

Successful techniques have to be employed to enroll the adult in the educational program. The leader or the an administrator of this programs will have to find effective techniques and methods to increase the number of adult learner.

The Problem of the Study

The purpose of this study is to show the four main points that will lead to successful adult education programs : understanding differences between the adults learning and children learning including explanation of the theory of adults learning, teaching techniques, teaching methods, and course design.

Different between children learning and adult learning

Belltti, Mihall (1999) talked about the differences between adults learning and

children learning. There are many differences between adult learning and child learning because the differences in their age, experience, and the adult learner have many responsibilities. The children cannot decide what they want to learn. They don't have experience in their life, but can learn the basic skill that they will need in their lives by parents, and school. Adult learners are diverse and have their own histories to consider. Adults have a more of experience, which is rich resource for learning and suggests that adult learners learn best through experiential techniques. Adults need to be self-directed in their learning because they are growing and moving away from the dependency of children. Brookfield (1995) states that "self-directed learning is the process by which adults take control of their learning". (p-2). Adults choose to learn something in order to meet more direct needs in their lives. They are told to learn things that will have some significance in the distant future. The instructors need to have open minds to the adult students and respect their opinion, and have to take care of their characteristics because the adults are coming from different backgrounds.

Andragogy Theory

The important theory in adult learning is Andragogy. Andragogy is a learning theory that describes the practical need for adults and it shows the difference for learning characteristics between adults and children. Knowles (1984) emphasizes that adults are self-directed and expect to take responsibility for decisions. Adult learning programs must accommodate this fundamental aspect. Knowles (1980) "Andragogy literally means leader of man (andr- is Latin for "man" and agogus is Latin for "leader of". (p.1). this theory includes four assumptions:

First assumption of this theory refer to adult learners ability to manage themselves and independent self-concept. The teachers need to work with adult to be more

self-directed to their learning, and Teach them how to build structure for their learning.

Since adults are self-directed, instruction should allow learners to discover things for themselves, providing guidance and help when mistakes are made.

Second assumption of this theory refers to the adult learners' experience. The adults get new experience and information through their learning. Adults become ready to learn. Adult students are ready to learn the new information to improve their selves with the development in the world.

Third assumption refers to what the adult students have to know, why they need to learn and how they will benefit from this learning in the future. The instructors need to explain why specific things are being taught.

Fourth assumption refers to the adults' motivation to learn. There are two factors that have the strong effect for the adults. The first one is internal such as good chance to find job, confidence, and adult looking for best life. The second is external such as promotions, higher salaries, support their families. Teachers need to be honest to each student and respect the experience for the entire adult student.

Teaching Technique:

Darlene Millard explained that teaching technique can be tied to the method of learning such as listing-seeing- and doing. The teaching techniques have to be interesting to the learner. The teachers may use these to help to change in the way an individual thinks. As adults education students need more power from the teachers to help them, The administrator of the adult learning program needs to be more directive. He/she have guide and choose plan according to the adult education's student's abilities and interest. The interests of adult learning students are different because they have different experience. Some adults may learn more by hearing; other may learn more by seeing; other by doing. Teaching technique listening involves listen to the lectures or

discussion, and questioning techniques. The students can get lower percentage from the information because the students may be forgetting some of the information after the class. According to Daniel Schugurensky this kind of technique is called teacher oriented technique because the main effort will be on the teachers. Seeing the students can get new information through watching some activity such as demonstration, tours, field trips, and exhibits. Doing involves the action that the students can do it in their hand, so they can feel it very well. They never forget the experience which came from doing things. Examples of teaching techniques include work sessions or workshops, role-play, case study, group study, programmed fieldwork, and cooperative learning. According to Schugurensky this kind of technique is called interactive techniques because teachers allow more interaction in class.

Sometimes we need to mix between two ways of teaching techniques to help the students such as between (Listening, seeing) and (saying, doing). The student can get stable experience and information if they watch and hear in the same time such as movies. The students get 50 percent of their learning by using these two techniques. Saying, doing some of the students prefer to get their information by doing and rapped the information loudly. Examples the students in chemistry lab doing their experience practically, so they get their information actively involved in saying and doing.

Teaching method

Teaching adults is a big responsibility for the teacher because the adult students came from different learning style. The teachers are helping adult students to change themselves through the new experience. Adult can get their new experience through the activities during the class time. The first step for the teacher to teach them how to lean, this is a very important step in the teaching process. The teachers have to respect the

adult student's ideas, and accept and trust the learner as a person of worth. The teachers have to notice that the adult student is strongly motivated to learn, the learning activities should be done both independently and collaboratively. The adult teacher need to help the adult students become self –directed learners.

The important question is how to teach adult students and what method you have to use with them? There are many studies about the way of teaching adult students.

Jerrie said the teacher has to start with them in the bagging of the class to give them general idea to warn them because the adult students are non-traditional students and they different than the children and the college students. Adult students have their experience, so the teacher needs to ask them to write their reflection about the class and the topics which are offered through the classroom. An assessment of background knowledge provides important information. The important main methods of teaching are lecture, website, group work, and communication.

Lecture

The lecture is a talk by a person well informed on a particular topic. This method of teaching is a good way to fit in active learning into traditional course. It gives the adult students the chance to review the material during the time of the class. The teachers will spend more time in this method of teaching but teachers will know and notice how the adult students get the information from the teacher directly. The adult

students engage actively with the lecture. The teachers want to give an effective lecture by preparing for the lecture, becoming very familiar with the subject matter, identifying and preparing supporting aids to illustrate the points made, and providing examples to link the subject matter to the lives of the learners.

Online classes

The adult students can make contact with the lecture, question, and have discussions

with other students and the instructors through online classes. Ausburn (2004) explained

“course design elements most valued by adult learners in blended learning environments

that combine face-to-face contact with Web-based learning”. (p.1). they also have access

to online research libraries and services. Online classes are taking the place of the

traditional tutorial. The adult students can choose technology learning by distance

education. Wilson(2000) said” Distance education refers to the delivery of education and

training regardless of medium or media used.” (p.428). Online education is being used by

adults and should be based on the needs of adult learners.

Group work

The teachers divide the adult students by group and encourage them to have conversation about the material of the class. This method of teaching is increased social integration. One of the benefits of group work is to create a social environment because the adult students will work in small groups of peers at the same level of career

maturity. In addition the students will exchange their information and benefits from their skill in life. Group work gives confidence to the adult students who came from different cultures to work with the people from the dominant culture. Everyone has the opportunity to participate in the discussion, and feels like a significant member, and a part of the driving force of the organization. This method will increase the collaborative

learning between the students. The principle behind collaborative learning among equals to create new knowledge or solutions. When adults work together collaboratively, they share their understanding, opinions, and ideas as a group.

Collaborative learning is most effective for discussion of issues that do not have a clear right or wrong answer or solution. Collaborative classrooms seem to have four general characteristics. Tinzmann, et al. (1990). The first two capture changing relationships between teachers and students. The third characterizes teachers' new approaches to instruction. The fourth addresses the composition of a collaborative classroom. Group work includes team presentation. It creates team building and provides an ideal learning and review experience. In the presentation a team members look at the issue closely and create a way to explain or represent it. Also, participants will be able to understand the issue and convey it in a creative and entertaining way.

Communication

This method is improving the communication between the adult students and the teacher or between the adult students. There are four kinds of communication: discussion, argumentation, question teaching, and brainstorming. Discussion will be between persons, by email, and between the adult students through online class. This discussion is carried on by the learners the basis of their own past experiences, attitudes and values, from which they arrive at new knowledge and new insights. Argumentation is to make case for exacting perspective. Question teaching is a way of communication when the teachers posted question to the students and the adult students constructed response. Teachers can create an active learning environment by encouraging students to ask and answer questions. Brainstorming is a way to create ideas from the students, and improve their ideas to support them. It encourages better learning. Brian Cullen refers that “Brainstorming is an activity used to generate ideas in small groups. The purpose is

to generate as many ideas as possible within a specified time-period”. (Para-1).

Praxis

Praxis is Greek for action with reflection. The teachers teach the adult students to do while they are learning. This way allows the adult students to see practical application of the material and information during the class. Also it provides experiences for the learners and allow them to put up their individual information. For example, the adult students can do the experience in the lab and learn in the same time.

Course design

Adult students are different than the children and the college students, so they need different curriculum. Curriculum for adult might be organized to help adults to solve their problems in life. It must be inclusive in order to be relevant to learners. Susan (1995) referred that folks bring many viewpoint to a learning situation as a result of their religion, gender, ethnicity, class, age, sexuality, and/or physical abilities. Build a curriculum which acknowledges these viewpoints. An effective curriculum will include elements of active learning. Active learning means help adult students to make an outline from class notes, take a test to measure their abilities, and interests, and write a paper. Adults need to have some control over the process of their education. The courses have to include the group work. Self- directed learners rely heavily on peer learning group. The course includes the dissection between the students to exchange the information.

Conclusion

The teaching for adult students is big responsibility because they are coming from different backgrounds and learning styles. They have much dependability such as their job, families, and children. Adult students have experience in their life, so the teachers have to respect their experience. We may understand the difference between adults learning and children learning. There are many techniques and methods of teaching for adult learners. Basic to this question of method and technique of teaching is

the question how the teacher selects one of the methods and techniques to have a successful classroom. Some adult may learn more by hearing, by seeing, and by doing. The design of your course would be close to the adult interested. The adults program can solve all the problems for adult students. It will give them more experience in their lives.

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