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        This collection of speeches and essays concerns
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first paper, Lifelong Learning: Problems in Research (Apps), examines
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Methodology for Adult Educators? (Griffith and Cristarella), answers
several questions about participatory research: (1) What is
participatory research? (2) How does it compare with established
methodologies? and (3) Should all adult educators be taught to carry
out such research? The third paper, Participatory Research: Breaking
the Academic Monopoly (Hall), also deals with the concept of
participatory research, especially with its future directions. Next,
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author's subject matter. (CT)

VIEWPOINTS ON
ADULT EDUCATION RESEARCH

edited by

John A. Niemi
Northern Illinois University

The ERIC Clearinghouse on Adult, Career, and Vocational Education
The National Center for Research in Vocational Education
The Ohio State University
1960 Kenny Road
Columbus, Ohio   43210

1979

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THE NATIONAL CENTER MISSION STATEMENT

The National Center for Research in Vocational Education's mission is to increase the ability of diverse agencies, institutions, and organizations to solve educational problems relating to individual career planning, preparation, and progression. The National Center fulfills its mission by:

- Generating knowledge through research

- Developing educational programs and products

- Evaluating individual program needs and outcomes

- Installing educational programs and products

- Operating information systems and services

- Conducting leadership development and training programs

FOREWORD

The Educational Resources Information Center on Adult,
Career, and Vocational Education (ERIC/CE) is one of
sixteen clearinghouses in a nationwide information system
that is funded by the National Institute of Education.
One of the functions of the Clearinghouse is to interpret
the literature that is entered in the ERIC data base.
This paper should be of particular interest to a broad
array of adult educators, including those in leadership
positions, teachers, researchers, and those in training
at the graduate level.

The profession is indebted to John A. Niemi for his effort
in the preparation of this paper. Recognition also is due
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assisted in the editing of the manuscript and Bonna Somerlott
and Cody Donaldson typed the final draft.

> Robert E. Taylor
> Executive Director
> The National National for Research
>   in Vocational Education

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DESC::*Adult Education; *Continuous Learning; *Older
Adults; *Research Projects; Educational Research;
Opinions

IDEN::*Participatory Research

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

A combination of social forces is making the public aware
of the needs of adult learners. Accordingly, increasing
numbers of individuals are moving into the field of adult
education as a career choice. The purpose of this paper
is to present viewpoints on research by outstanding American
and Canadian adult educators to those who are preparing
for the field by means of graduate work or independent
study. On the basis that research should guide practice,
this paper also is intended for those already engaged as
administrators, counselors, professors, researchers, and
teachers. Its value for persons in such related fields as
gerontology and social work also should not be ignored.

The monograph contains five papers based on a series of
lectures delivered to graduate students and faculty at
Northern Illinois University between 1976 and 1979. It
begins with an essay by Jerold W. Apps, who offers a preview
of some ideas developed more fully in his new book, *Problems
in Continuing Education* (published by McGraw-Hill in 1979).
His essay focuses on the problem that "the majority of adult
education research as now practiced is not consistent with
assumptions of the field of adult education." Apps begins
by suggesting nine reasons why the field is dependent on the
scientific method. He then examines several assumptions
of science and contrasts them with some assumptions of
adult education. On the basis of contradictions between
the two sets, Apps suggests that adult education research
should be broadened to include three basic research approaches:
scientific, intuitive, and rationalistic (deductive reasoning).

William S. Griffith and Mary C. Cristarella present a critical
review of the literature on participatory research in adult
education. According to their point of view, a new false
dichotomy has reared its head -- participatory research *versus*
traditional research. While granting the argument advanced
by proponents of participatory research against the negative

value of poorly conducted social science research, they
counter that it is wrong to condemn a methodology because
some researchers use it ineptly. In turn, they challenge
the principles and processes of participatory research by
suggesting that it lacks precision and clarity. In their
view, it would be more appropriately treated as a contribution
to community development.

This challenge to participatory research has not gone
unanswered. Budd Hall begins his paper by questioning
that aspect of the present structure for the production of
knowledge whereby "some people's common sense becomes
recognized as philosophy and other people's does not." After
suggesting that the production of knowledge is effectively
a commodity, he moves into a comparison of participatory
research and typical survey approaches and addresses the
criticisms of Griffith and Cristarella and certain Tanzanian
sources. He concludes with a discussion of the thinking
behind the concept of partipatory research and with themes
for elaboration and exploration.

Roger Boshier forecasts that the conduct of significant
participation research will assume increasing importance to
policy-makers and practitioners. He questions the need for
more descriptive clientele surveys and believes that the time
has come to reduce emphasis on *ex post facto* research on
participation and to turn to the development of theoretical
model(s) derived inductively through experiment. For needed
ex post facto research on participation, Boshier suggests
"multi-variate approaches sensitive to variable interactions
and ecological foundations of participation behavior."

Robert Boyd calls for the re-examination of basic conceptu-
alizations of learning as they affect the older learner. He
begins by exploring three positions taken by adult educators
on aging: decrement thesis, retention thesis, and adult
cognitive stage development. Concerning the latter, Boyd
envisions three main streams within human life: exploration
of the physical world, confronting and dealing with power,
and the spiritual dimension of life. Each stream forms a
basis for a conceptual framework which, in turn, forms a
basis for a theory of congitive development.

In conclusion, I wish to express deep appreciation to the
authors who so willingly accepted the invitation extended
by the NIU Graduate Colloquim Committee and the Adult and

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Continuing Program area within the Department of Leadership
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Finally, as always, I am indebted to my wife, Dr. Muriel
Tomkins Niemi, for her editorial skill.

John A. Niemi
Professor of Adult Education
Northern Illinois University

LIFELONG LEARNING: PROBLEMS IN RESEARCH

Jerold W. Apps

Professor of Adult Education
University of Wisconsin at Madison

Interest in lifelong learning continues to grow. The
idea that people can and do learn from birth to death
has wide appeal. But with any relatively new area, the
research necessary to describe and improve the activity
lags far behind the activity itself. Such is the case
with research in lifelong learning.

For the purposes of this paper, I would like to focus
on that part of lifelong learning which is concerned with
the adult learner.[1] Many of my comments do not have
application to lifelong learning for children and young
people. But because my training and interest lie in
adult education, it is in that context that I will frame
my remarks.

I could discuss a great many problems that affect research
in adult education: the pitifully inadequate monetary
support from both the public and the private sector; the
woefully inadequate number of persons who are actually
doing research as a major part of their professions; the
many small, independent projects being carried out that
have little relationship to each other or to larger efforts;
determining research priorities, with a seemingly large
number of efforts concerned with counting who is partici-
pating in what kind of activity, with little attention
given to such basic problems as the effect of poverty on
learning, the nature of adult learning, and so on; the
lack of attention by researchers to the development of
adult education theory; the confusion that continues to
separate those who are doing so-called "applied" research
and those who are doing so-called "basic" research. I
might spend some time discussing why I believe graduate
programs generally do an inadequate job of preparing
persons to be researchers. Finally, I could explore the

problem as to why so few persons in the field are interested in research as something satisfying and exciting to do.

However, I wish to concentrate on the most fundamental problem of all, namely, that *the majority of research as now practiced is not consistent with the major assumptions in the field of adult education.* I will describe what I see as the predominant research approach in adult education and why that approach is predominant. In order to illustrate contradictions, I will attempt to contrast the assumptions of that approach with some assumptions of adult education. Finally, I will comment on what I believe to be a satisfactory approach to solving this problem.

THE PREDOMINANT ADULT EDUCATION RESEARCH APPROACH

The predominant research approach in adult education is science; that is, most researchers in the field work toward following the scientific method in the carrying out of their research. I define science as an approach to obtaining knowledge based on general principles about phenomena derived from empirical or sense observation. The scientific method is the process of building a body of scientific knowledge through observation, experimentation, generalization, and verification.

Some years ago, when I began examining this problem, I had a feeling that something was wrong with how we went about doing research or, at least, tried to do adult education research. It did not seem to me that there was any alternative to science. When I mentioned this concern to several peers, the answers I usually received went something like this: "Our science in adult education needs much refinement, much improvement, but eventually, if we continue to work at it, we will be able to perfect it." It did not occur to me then -- and it did not occur to those with whom I shared my concerns -- that science itself was one of the problems. More important, it did not occur to me then that any alternative approaches to research existed beyond science itself. It also did not occur to me that science is only one approach for doing research in adult education.

As I reflected upon why the adult education field is so
dependent on science as its sole approach to research,
I came up with at least nine reasons:

1. The training of those who are supposed to do adult
   education research -- and of those who are supposed
   to train others to do it -- is almost entirely
   related to how to do *scientific* research. Even the
   methodology books often used in adult education
   research methods courses do not recognize an alterna-
   tive to scientific research. Hillway (1969) states,
   "When we use the term *educational research*, we mean
   the scientific investigation and solution of education's
   problems. To the extent that education may be called
   a science, we are able to employ research as a means
   of measuring, analyzing, and accurately describing
   its characteristics" (p. 3). Cox (1969) stated
   something similar: "All the methods used in modern
   research are based upon a general approach to human
   problems commonly referred to as the scientific
   method or scientific inquiry" (p. 3).

2. Many adult education researchers are not aware that
   it is possible to do research other than *scientific*
   research as science and research are synonymous to
   them. Some who are aware of other approaches
   discount them as unimportant, irrelevant, or even
   detrimental to moving research forward in adult
   education.

3. Graduate students in adult education who might wish
   to explore an alternative approach in their graduate
   projects often face a flurry of objections from their
   committees. Professors responsible for guiding
   graduate students' research discourage the use of
   approaches other than the scientific method for many
   of the reasons already cited.

4. Little information is available as to how one might
   do other types of research because so little work
   has been done to explore approaches as alternatives
   to the scientific research approach.

5. As a field, adult education tends to associate itself
   with social sciences and/or the behavioral sciences.

Because of this association, many researchers believe
that it is necessary to emphasize *scientific research*.
Their reasoning stipulates that if the field *is* a
science, researchers in that field should conduct
scientific research.

6. As a research approach, science over the years has
developed a methodology that has served many disciplines
well. It has moved forward such disciplines as
chemistry, physics, genetics, and biochemistry far
beyond what most people expected. If science has been
the vehicle to move those disciplines forward with
such great success, many adult education researchers
reason that science will provide the same assistance
to them.

7. Science has contributed directly to solving many
problems that people face, e.g., health, nutrition,
transportation, communication, and recreation. Thus,
it is generally seen as something "good" by those
who have responsibility for committing public and
private dollars. Parenthetically, it should be said
that science also has created many problems: environ-
mental pollution, deteriorating interpersonal relation-
ships, and the preoccupation with the accumulation of
material goods. On balance, however, most decision-
makers believe that science is much more "good" than
"evil." With this reality, adult education must focus
on scientific research to compete for private and tax
dollars.

8. A pragmatic reason for scientific research (with its
heavy emphasis on measurement and the resultant
numbers) is the use of numbers themselves. Numbers
are relatively easy to communicate. When someone
writes that "five things happened," it is not difficult
for the reader to understand exactly how many things
occurred. Also, because of their discrete nature and
lack of ambiguity, numbers can be manipulated by
computers to provide highly sophisticated outcomes.
This manipulation can be accomplished in a fraction
of the time it took scientists a generation ago to
attempt the same analyses.

9. Few researchers in adult education believe that the
assumptions of science are consistent with the

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assumptions of adult education -- and, hence, that
the problem I cited above does not exist.

ASSUMPTIONS OF SCIENCE
AND ADULT EDUCATION

Let us examine several assumptions of science and contrast
them with the assumptions of the field of adult education:

1. Science assumes that events and objects may be broken
   into discrete parts and that it is possible to study
   them in isolation. Furthermore, science assumes that
   what is learned when studying those discrete parts
   may be added together to provide an understanding of
   the whole from which the parts originally were derived.

   Adult education as a field of study is concerned with
   adult human beings. Within the field, most educators
   view adults holistically, that is, they have both a
   rational or thoughtful dimension and a feeling or
   emotional dimension. The rational dimension is
   constantly interacting with the feeling dimension.
   Adults also have physiological, psychological, social,
   and cultural dimensions. These dimensions cannot be
   viewed in isolation from each other or from adults to
   whom they relate. All of these dimensions are viewed
   by most adult educators as components of the totality
   of the adult. As long as the researcher is constantly
   aware of the relationship of the dimension being
   researched to other dimensions and to the total human
   being, it is possible to focus research attention on
   one of these dimensions at a time.

2. Science assumes that objects and events in the world
   possess many likenesses. Hence, events can be classi-
   fied according to their essential properties, functions,
   and structures. Most adult educators assume that an
   adult is individual and unique and at the same time
   different from all others and that he or she shares
   some characteristics with all other humans. Thus, it
   is possible to classify such characteristics of adults
   as age, sex, place of residence, years of formal
   education, and so on. However, not everything about
   adults may be classified in this manner. Each adult,

for example, has a world view that uniquely belongs
to him or her. Each personality is uniquely different
from that of any other adult. Physically no two
adults are alike. From a learning perspective, no
two adults learn in exactly the same manner. No two
adults have the same dreams, aspirations, fears, or
hopes.

3. Science assumes that phenomena that occur today are
determined by events that occurred previously. Hence,
scientists search for causes of observed events. Most
scientists do not believe that cause and event are
absolute. As a result, they deal with probabilities
and, for example, state that there is a ninety-five
percent probability that event "A" caused phenomenon
"B" to occur.

Within the field of adult education, adults are assumed
to be at the same time both free and determined. Their
culture and social situation determines who an what
they are. Yet, they are said to be free to act
independently of social and cultural influences in
determining who they are and what they are. It is,
therefore, impossible to predict all of human behavior
based on past occurrences.

4. Science assumes that direct observation and empiricism
are the primary ways by which knowledge is obtained;
that is, the scientist puts heavy emphasis on direct
observation of events and objects.

It is impossible to observe directly what has occurred
in the past. Yet, adult education recognizes the
importance of the history of the field in furnishing
insights for understanding the field as it is today
and making suggestions for the policies and practices
of tomorrow.

The adult education researcher also is interested in
many aspects of the adult that are not directly
observable, e.g., preferences, motives, dreams.

5. Science assumes that the subject researched is an
object for study and that the object does not partici-
pate in the research. Scientists attempt to be apart
from that which is researched, studying it (if you will)
from a distance.

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The field of adult education assumes that the adult
is a partner in the practice of adult education,
involved in the identification of needs, the deter-
mination of teaching-learning approaches, and the
evaluation of learning outcomes. It follows tha the
adult also is a partner in the research that concerns
him or her. A fundamental assumption held by many
within the field is that the adult has the ability
to understand the meaning of the situations in which
he or she lives and to communicate that meaning.
According to this line of reasoning, the adult should
be an equal partner in the research process. The
researchers and the adult work together on a research
problem that has been identified with considerable
input from the adult. Budd Hall (1975), director
of research for the International Council for Adult
Education, has developed this argument in some depth.

6. Science assumes that it (research) is objective and,
    for the most part, value-free. Scientific research
    is not concerned about the "goodness" or "badness"
    of situations but, instead, with describing situations
    as they exist and predicting what might occur. Many
    argue that this is an erroneous assumption, that
    science is not and cannot be objective or value-free.
    However, I do not intend to delve deeply into that
    argument here.

    Adult education researchers are fundamentally concerned
    with values. They are concerned with the development
    of theory and practice that serve to improve policy
    and practice. They are not content only to describe
    or predict. Researchers in adult education are not
    content with making statements such as given "A,"
    "B" is likely to occur. Adult educators are concerned
    about the nature and value of "B."

IMPLICATIONS

If we accept the existence of contradictions between the
assumptions of science and adult education, where does
that leave us in regard to adult education research? How
can we carry out our research so that it is consistent
with the assumptions of science?

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Let me start with what probably will be seen as a rather radical statement: the field of adult education is only partially a science. If the field is viewed totally as science, the assumptions of science must undergird all of its research.

What we in adult education research must do is conduct scientific research -- but we must go beyond science. In conducting our research, knowledge may be obtained from deductive reasoning, empirical research, and intuition. Scientific research often is viewed as some combination of deductive reasoning (rationalism) with empiricism. It is possible, however, to derive new knowledge by only following deductive reasoning or only observing (empiricism). Adult education researchers should seek to interrelate approaches that provide deductive, empirical, and intuitive knowledge.

Let us briefly explore each of these approaches as they might apply to adult education.

SCIENCE
(RATIONAL-EMPIRICAL RESEARCH)

We already have explored the assumptions of science and have indicated that the results of scientific investigation have an empirical origin. The process of scientific investigation is known to most persons who have studied research methodology. Generally, scientific investigation relates to John Dewey's framework (1933) of problem-obstacle-idea, hypothesis, reasoning-deduction, and observation-test-experiment forming the process. There are many texts that explain how each of these phases are carried out. Some writers identify the phases differently and have more phases than those indicated here. Nevertheless, there is general agreement about what constitutes the scientific method.

INTUITIVE RESEARCH

Intuitive research is much more controversial. Indeed, many may not include it as a legitimate research approach.

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The assumption of intuitive research is that intuition
is a legitimate knowledge source and that such knowledge
is of value. Intuition is that knowledge sometimes
referred to as insight. It often is considered to be the
outcome of creative activity and frequently is described
as the activity of combining existing ideas, factors, and
concepts in new ways. It also is described as *gestalts*,
whole situations, where previously a situation had been
perceived as a conglomerate of supposedly dissimilar
objects. How the process operates is not well-known, but
it is generally believed to be outside the area of
conscious awareness. (See Royce, 1964.)

I suggest three ways of carrying out intuitive research.
First, intuitive knowledge may be obtained by studying
carefully the creative outputs of novelists, poets, and
playwrights. At this point, other artists such as
musicians, painters, dancers, and actors are excluded
because the expression of their creativity -- their intui-
tive knowledge -- comes not in words but through other
symbols.

McKenzie (1975) has done some interesting preliminary work
in suggesting an approach for the analysis of literature
to derive intuitive knowledge from the work of novelists.
He has been interested particularly in adult human develop-
ment. When he goes to a novel with the intent of obtaining
intuitive knowledge about adult human development, he
would ask such questions as these: "When precisely in the
story did the character emerge from childhood? What events
or situational forces influenced the growth of the
character toward maturity? What was the learning style
of the character early in his life, as compared with later
in his life? What events or situational forces contributed
to a change of learning style? Can the character's growth
be charted according to well-defined stages? What are
these stages?" (p. 214).

Secondly, intuitive knowledge may be obtained by providing
situations and encouraging our creative juices to flow,
to tap our own intuitive knowledge. Bruner (1964)
suggested several conditions necessary for creative activity.
Two of them are detachment/commitment, and passion/decorum.
Detachment and commitment suggest that persons must divorce
themselves from the obvious ways of thinking about a

problem or situation but, at the same time, maintain an attitude of deep caring and the motivation to continue searching for an answer. Passion and decorum also must occur together. Passion characterizes persons who are completely caught up in some activity or problem. They are emotionally involved and excited about what they are doing. But this passion must be accompanied by decorum. It refers to the need for persons to recognize the importance of form, structure, and definition of words -- ways of making sense out of their excitement. Passion releases; decorum confines.

A third approach to doing intuitive research involves processes the researcher may use in obtaining intuitive knowledge from persons who are the subjects of research. Several persons have suggested approaches to this type of research. Grounded theory research is explained by Glaser and Strauss (1967). Participant observations are described by Bruyn (1966). The annotated bibiliography developed by Ohliger and Niemi (1975) explains in some detail approaches that may be used to obtain intuitive knowledge from persons. Also, the recent emphasis on phenomenology, which is receiving close attention at the present time, relates to obtaining intuitive knowledge.[2]

In summary, there are three ways to do intuitive research: obtain intuitive knowledge from the work of artists; obtain it from our own creative acts; obtain it from those who are the subjects of our research.

RATIONALISTIC (DEDUCTIVE
REASONING) RESEARCH

Four approaches may be followed in doing rationalistic research: analytic, evaluative, speculative, and integrative. These may be thought of as levels, with integrative the highest one.

When following the analytic approach, we are concerned with the research problem itself. We explore the problem and attempt to determine the implied assumptions behind it. We search for the source of the problem and attempt to identify sub-problems that may lie within it. We search for the meaning of statements in the problem statement, the

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relationship of statements to each other, and the logical basis for statements.

The evaluative approach involves the act of criticism of policy and practice. This approach is preceded by the analytic approach and builds on it. The results are statements of judgment that speak to the extent to which certain adult education policies and practices meet criteria. One dimension of this approach is the development of criteria that can be used as a basis of judgment.

The speculative approach builds on both the analytic and evaluative approaches that precede it. The speculative approach is concerned with creating new hypotheses and developing new approaches for the practice of adult education. This approach often results in normative statements about the direction for adult education policy and practice.

The integrative approach results in a total view of adult education and is preceded by and builds on the analytic, evaluative, and speculative approaches.[3] A researcher following this approach attempts to determine, for example, the nature of the adult as a learner, the nature and aims of the teaching-learning process, the nature and aims of adult education agencies and institutions, and the nature and aims of the adult educator. Following the integrated approach, the researcher eventually will develop what is sometimes referred to as a philosophy of adult education.

SUMMARY

I have tried to analyze one major problem that adult education research faces, namely, that the majority of adult education research, as now practiced, is not consistent with the assumptions of the field of adult education. I have attempted to show how the assumptions of science, which is the predominant approach in adult education research, are inconsistent with the assumptions of the field of adult education. I also have explained briefly why I believe adult education has been overly influenced by the scientific approach. Finally, I have suggested that adult education research should be broadened to include three basic research approaches: scientific, intuitive, and rationalistic.

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Many questions obviously remain. The most significant
one is this: How do we carry out research in these three
areas, and what procedures might be used? This is a
question that researchers in adult education will have to
address. Other questions are these: What are the
relationships among the three approaches suggested? Must
all three approaches be followed at the same time? How
do the data obtained from the three approaches relate to
each other? It would seem possible to take data obtained
from following the rationalistic or intuitive approaches
and verify them through the scientific approach. But, *is*
it possible to think of the three kinds of knowledge
obtained from scientific, intuitive, and rationalistic
research as having equal importance? These questions
suggest that much more work needs to be done in this area.

NOTES

1. For a more indepth discussion of several of these
    issues, see Apps, J. W., *Problems in Continuing
    Education*. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1979,
    Chapters 13 and 14.

2. Phenomenology refers to an approach that attempts to
    suspend the biases and judgments of the observer and
    to describe faithfully the phenomena involved in the
    behavior of the individual, emphasizing perception
    and consciousness. See Chamberlin, J. G. *Toward a
    Phenomenology of Education*. Philadelphia: The
    Westminster Press, 1969; and Wann, T.W., Ed.
    Behaviorism and Phenomenology. Chicago: University
    of Chicago Press, 1964.

3. See Apps, J. W. *Toward a Working Philosophy of Adult
    Education*. Syracuse: Syracuse University, 1973; and
    Apps, J.W. "A Foundation for Action," in Klevins, C.,
    Ed. *Materials and Methods in Continuing Education*.
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PARTICIPATORY RESEARCH: SHOULD IT BE A NEW METHODOLOGY FOR ADULT EDUCATORS?

William S. Griffith
Professor of Adult Education
and
Mary C. Cristarella
Doctoral Candidate

University of British Columbia

Participatory research is a term which has been appearing
during the past several years at international adult
education conferences. Some commentators believe it
has the potential of redirecting research in adult
education. The International Conference on Adult
Education and Development, held in Dar es Salaam in June,
1976, proposed that "all adult educators should receive
training in the theory and practice of participatory
research as well as in complementary quantitative
research techniques" (Dar es Salaam Design for Action,
1976, p. 32). The UNESCO program action plan for 1977-
1982 includes the support of future participatory research
(Hurly, 1976). Cain (1977) stated that "the forces producing
the demand for something called 'participatory research'
are numerous and compelling" (p. 7).

THE PARTICIPATORY RESEARCH PROJECT

The network which is responsible for the coordination
and promotion of participatory research in adult education
throughout the world is the Participatory Research
Project centered in Toronto. This network arose within
the International Council for Adult Education (ICAE)
in 1976. The ICAE is a voluntary, non-governmental

council of about fifty members in all regions of the world
(International Council for Adult Education, 1977).
The coordinator of the project is Budd Hall, director
of research for the ICAE. Five regional representatives
have been designated to promote the development of
participatory research. These regional coordinators
are Francisco Vio in Caracas for Latin America;
Y. Kassam at the University of Dar es Salaam for Africa;
D. Sundaram at the University of Madras for Asia; A. Stock
and H. Calloway, *pro tem* at the National Institute of
Adult Education, England and Wales, for Europe; and
Budd Hall at the ICAE Headquarters in Toronto for North
America.

The overall objective of the project is to "investigate
methods of research in adult education and related
social transformation programmes which focus on the
involvement of the poorest groups or classes in the
analysis of their own needs" (Status Report on the
Participatory Research Project International Meeting,
1977, p.1). The project involves the following:
activities in research of a participatory nature;
analysis of the experience of others through examining
case studies and reviewing literature; producing
guidelines for participatory researchers; deepening the
theoretical framework surrounding this work; and
identifying the remaining practical and theoretical
problem areas (Status Report on the Participatory
Research Project International Meeting, 1977).

According to an ICAE news release, funding for the project
has been obtained through the research unit of the ICAE
and includes funds from the Edward W. Hazen Foundation,
the Kellogg Foundation, UNESCO, the Ontario Institute
for Studies in Education, the Canadian International
Development Research Centre, and the Rockefeller
Foundation.

The enthusiasm for participatory research raises a
number of fundamental questions. What *is* participatory
research? Who has been doing it? How does the
methodology compare with established research
methodologies? Is it of such potential utility that
all adult educators should be taught to carry out such
research? In this paper, an attempt will be made to
answer these questions.

BACKGROUND

Adult education is often regarded as a marginal activity
of educational institutions. It particularly is
susceptible to the rhetoric of passionate speakers and
writers who argue that the field can become more central
to education or that it can begin to lead other
university departments in teaching and research. Such
claims, which are put forth with great fervor, sometimes
divert adult educators from productive work into
activities that are romantic diversions.

Nearly twenty years ago, the adult education field gave
careful consideration to the claim that andragogy and
pedagogy are polar opposites. A comparison between
adult education and childhood or youth education was
presented as the central basis for establishing adult
education as a unique field of practice. The comparison
was not, in fact, between the education of children and
the education of adults. What was compared was the
formal in-school education of children carried out
according to a single stereotypic view of the process
and the out-of-school informal voluntary education of
adults in settings chosen by adults and carried out by
expert adult educators. Many adult educators believed
that the fundamental distinction which justifies the
existence of their field is a dichotomy between andragogy
and pedagogy. They appeared to give little consideration
to the informal education of youth in clubs, teams,
and other voluntary organizations or to the formal,
highly didactic education of adults found in business
and industry, the armed services, and other formal
settings. Many persons in the field believed that adult
education, indeed, was the polar opposite of youth
education.

The posing of a false dichotomy such as andragogy versus
pedagogy may succeed in calling attention to aspects
which had previously been overlooked. However, it also
tends to discourage thinking and research which might
develop a concept of lifelong learning. It would be
illogical to search for commonalities of effective
teaching and learning after one had accepted the notion
that adult and youth education are polar opposities.
It appears to us that to the extent an adult educator
internalizes the concepts of andragogy and pedagogy as

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dichotomous, the ability to examine the processes is correspondingly impaired.

The adult education field is now confronted with another dichotomy: participatory research versus traditional research. The posing of this dichotomy is insidious in that its sophistry deludes the naive and attracts the dilettantes in adult education research. Because the participatory research term has the endorsement of the International Council of Adult Education, has been enthusiastically embraced by an international conference, and has promoters on five continents, it cannot be taken lightly.

The dichotomy will be shown to be false because the term "participatory research" is a misnomer, applied idiosyncratically to activities not conducted primarily to advance knowledge but rather to promote community development. As such, it is clearly not a new kind of research. Instead, it is a variety of activity which aims to produce changes in people and communities as its primary purpose and which shows little potential of adding to knowledge.

In fairness to the International Council for Adult Education, it must be acknowledged that even though the Design for Action adopted at Dar es Salaam insisted that "research should be recognized as an integral part of adult education for development and be participatory in nature," the conferees also advocated that "all adult educators should receive training in the theory and practice of participatory research as well as in complementary quantitative research techniques" (Dar es Salaam Design for Action, 1976, pp. 31-32). To the credit of the International Council, although some of its spokespersons adopt a doctrinaire stance toward research, its major policy statement acknowledges the value of quantitative research rather than urging the cessation of all traditional research which employs conventional methodology.

AN ATTEMPT TO CORRECT WEAKNESSES
OF SOCIAL SCIENCE RESEARCH

Participatory research was developed, according to its
advocates, in an attempt to overcome weaknesses in the
use of conventional quantitative methods. Colletta
criticized traditional research designs, claiming that
they were based on preconceived theories, concepts,
categories, and modalities of analysis which lie outside
the frame of reference of the subjects being studied
(Colletta, 1976, p. 38). Pilsworth and Ruddock asserted
that the weakness of the questionnaire method so commonly
employed in survey research is that the investigator
imposes his or her own understanding and definition
of the system he or she investigates upon the subjects.
This imposition, even though unintentional, greatly
increases the likelihood that the responses will simply
confirm one's own preconceived view of the situation
(Pilsworth and Ruddock, 1975, p. 36).

Hall identified four so-called shortcomings of survey
research: the survey approach oversimplifies reality
and is therefore inaccurate; survey research is often
alienating, dominating, or oppressive in character;
survey research does not provide easy links to possible
subsequent action; and survey research methods are not
consistent with the principles of adult education (Hall,
1975, pp. 25-28).

Survey research, like all other kinds of traditional
research, concentrates on a selected number of variables
and attempts to obtain measures of those variables. No
competent survey researcher would ever pretend that his
or her instrument was capable of capturing all of any
social reality. Accordingly, to call a method inaccurate
because it is to some degree incomplete and, therefore,
not a perfect reflection of reality is a foolish criticism;
no method of study, including participatory research,
is capable of dealing with the large number of variables
in any social setting.

There can be little doubt that there have been adult
education researchers who have conducted their research
in alienating, oppressive, and dominating ways. Undoubtedly,
others have employed the results obtained through this

research. Nevertheless, these criticisms have to do with the way some individuals have employed survey research and with the findings produced by such research. There is nothing inherent in the methodology of survey research which compels it to be alienating, oppressive, and dominating. Accordingly, this criticism is misdirected and professes to describe the shortcomings of survey research; it, in fact, only identifies some researchers' misuse of the methodology.

Survey research does not provide easy links to possible subsequent action. Since the purpose of such research is only to obtain valid, reliable data as objectively as possible, the researcher does not commit himself or herself in advance to some application of the data. In this regard, all research in the ordinary sense is directed toward obtaining data to enlarge or refine the knowledge base in an area. To fault survey research or any other kind of well-established research procedure because it does not provide an easy link to subsequent action is to reject the basic purpose of research and to insist capriciously that another basic purpose must be served.

The notion that there is something wrong with survey research methods because they are not consistent with the principles of adult education is puzzling. Although one would be hard pressed to identify the principle of adult education, even if one of the arbitrary listings were employed, the principles would deal with the practice of adult education and not the conducting of research. It seems most unlikely that there are principles of knowledge generation which are peculiar to adult education knowledge.

The practice of condemning or rejecting a research methodology because it has been misused is scarcely an example of clear thinking. Critics of survey and other so-called traditional research designs delude themselves by confusing inept researchers with the basic characteristics of adult education. Rutstein addressed the ethical dimension of research designs succinctly when he stated:

> It may be accepted as a maxim that a poorly or
> improperly designed study involving human subjects--

one that could not possibly yield scientific facts (that is, reproducible observations) relevant to the question under study--is by definition unethical. Moreover, when a study is in itself scientifically invalid, all other ethical considerations become irrelevant. There is no point to obtaining "informed consent" to perform a useless study. A worthless study cannot possibly benefit anyone, least of all the experimental subject himself. (Rutstein, 1969, p. 524)

An account of the development of the idea of participatory research may be instructive. Hall (1973), attempting to apply what he regarded as standard social science research methods in an African country for four years, found himself trying to interpret data from questionnaires he had not designed about a culture that was alien to him. He concluded that an alternative approach to adult education research was needed which (a) avoids what he saw as oppressive ideological pitfalls, (b) provides what he regards as a more accurate reflection of social reality, (c) assumes what he believes is more complete involvement of the community, (d) is linked to principles of adult education, and (e) is "more scientific." He felt that participatory research is more scientific because it produces a more complex and, therefore, more accurate picture of reality than commonly accepted research methodologies. He explained that participatory research is a combination of the idea of community participation in decision-making and the methods of social investigation (Hall, 1977, p. 10).

PRINCIPLES OF PARTICIPATORY RESEARCH

Asserting that "adult education is rooted to a concept of social justice and equality in a way in which other disciplines are not," Hall (1975, p. 27) proposed the following set of principles of participatory research:

1. Research methods have ideological implications.

2. A research process *should* be of some immediate and direct benefit to a community and not merely the basis for an academic report.

3. A research process *should* involve the community or population in the entire research project—from the formulation of the problem to the discussion of how to seek solutions and interpret the findings.

4. If the goal of the research is change, the research team *should* be composed of representatives of all elements in the situation that have a bearing on the change.

5. The research process *should* be seen as a part of the total educational experience which serves to establish community needs and increase awareness and commitment within the community.

6. The research process *should* be viewed as a dialectic process, a dialogue over time, and not as a static picture from one point in time.

7. The object of the research process, like the object of the educational process, *should* be the liberation of human creative potential and the mobilization of human resources for the solution of social problems.(Hall, 1975, p. 28-30)

Six of the seven principles of participatory research include the use of "should," while only one is written in the "if...then" style. The fact reveals that the author is expressing a set of personal beliefs rather than attempting to provide a factual, objective description.

Cain offered cogent criticisms of these principles:

Involved in these principles are research, pedagogy, and mobilization and it is not clear what purpose is served by combining these three operations in one concept. Further, some of the outcomes described in these principles-- the goal of research is change, liberation of human potential, etc.--are not clearly the results of participation or of research. Neither research nor participation can produce change without appropriate action in an environment supportive of that action; humans liberate themselves in a time and space appropriate to

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themselves. To load 'participatory research'
with these mystical powers may make the package
too heavy to be functional and obscure the
usefulness of adding the dimension of participation
to research.(Cain, 1977, pp. 12-13)

CRITERIA FOR PARTICIPATORY RESEARCH

In formulating criteria for participatory research,
Cain concluded that what is required is a research
process which "changes the subject-as-object research
approach; asks questions concerning values and motivation
rather than or as well as quantifiable factors;
facilitates the design, implementation and interpretation
of research by insiders; provides for the development of
reciprocity among researchers, insiders, and agencies,
and permits the benefits of the research to be felt by
the insider/'native'" (Cain, 1977, p. 7).

The extent of involvement of the members of the social
system being studied in the planning, execution, and
interpretation of the study is a focal point for those
who write about participatory research. Hall asserted
that "we need not more highly trained and sophisticated
researchers...but whole neighborhoods, communities and
nations of 'researchers'" (Hall, 1975, p. 30). Yet, the
criticisms which are offered of traditional research are
typically directed at studies conducted in unsound
ways by researchers whose training was inadequate.

In one of his attempts to define participatory research,
Hall stated that "the term refers to the efforts along
several lines to develop research approaches which
involve those persons who are the expected 'beneficiaries'
of the research. The term deliberately focuses on
involvement of those who are traditionally the 'researched'
in the formulation, collection of data (widely
interpreted), and interpretation of information" (Hall,
1977, p. 10).

At the international planning meeting of the Participatory
Research Project in September, 1977, regional
representatives agreed "that participatory research means
a change in the status of the powerless who formerly
have been 'objects' of social science research"

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(Participatory Research Planning Meeting Announcement, 1977, p. 7). Participatory research was further defined as a three-pronged activity: a method of social investigation involving the full participation of the community, an educational process, and a means of taking action for development.

THE MEANING OF PARTICIPATION

It may be useful to examine the terms "participatory" and "research." Cain said that the words themselves offer little hint of what the developers of the concept are talking about. He observed, "Participation in our society can be much different from the participatory interactions of other societies. Since the concept depends on a relativistic view of all societies, it is impossible to say that participation means... the same thing in all cultures." And further, "The fact that participation is a North American, Western Europe ideal for a pluralistic society and the fact that research is defined through a rationalistic Western conception of science make the task of the participatory researcher even more difficult in societies that adhere to neither concept. They perceive neither the benefits of participation nor the desirability of research" (Cain, 1977, pp. 8-10).

Coletta's experience helped to point out the difficulty of applying the Western idea of participation in the traditional Indonesian culture. He wrote:

> First, and foremost, we learned to modify our Western ideas about participation. We found that we were not able to interact readily with the villagers themselves; instead we were forced to deal with a mediating group consisting primarily of village and district level persons frc the official authority structure. Although these persons participated in the discussions, this would not necessarily ensure their having a say in later decision-making pertaining to the overall project. If experience holds, it seems more likely that the traditional Indonesian way would prevail. The consensus of the group will be taken into consideration, but 'outsiders' will make the

actual decisions. Thus, a clear distinction must
be made between participation in discussions for
obtaining information from villagers (research), and
village level participation in planning,
implementation, evaluation and other key decision-
making phases of a project.(Colletta, 1976, p. 43)

Colletta, questioning the value of outsiders' encouraging
the subjective input of villagers, felt that it may be
another way of directing community development. Again,
he wrote:

> We had brought together a group that would probably
> never have collected to discuss ideas that may
> never have occurred to them. It was difficult
> to determine how much of the group participation
> really came from the group and how much came
> from the group's sensitivity to what we were
> attempting to have them do. In other words,
> is participatory research another exercise in
> self, and other, delusion, a new term for
> 'outsiders' directing community development?
> (Colletta, 1976, p. 44)

This last question is a penetrating one, for it directs
attention to the manipulative possibilities within
participatory research.

THE MEANING OF RESEARCH

Let us examine the term "research" as used in participatory
research. Cain felt that the term is used in a "fuzzy"
way and that its proponents are not talking about
research *per se* but community involvement in problem-
solving carried out within a development project (Cain,
1977, p. 10). This perception of participatory research
places it in opposition to existing scientific research.

The proponents of participatory research are not the
only persons who have become disenchanted with the use of
conventional research methodologies and have attempted
to do something about it. A more disciplined approach
to the establishment of a methodology that deals
systematically with the complexity of the culture in
which the behavior of human subjects is to be studied is

exemplified by an approach known as "participant observation."

PARTICIPANT OBSERVATION

Participant observation is a research method which was devised, in the past, to overcome the problems resulting from the amateurish use of questionnaires by researchers who were only minimally acquainted with the population they were studying. Strictly speaking, such unsound social science research produced data devoid of meaning, because the terms intended to measure the dependent and independent variables that had quite different meanings to the researchers than they had for the subjects of the study.

Participant observation refers to "research characterized by a prolonged period of intense social interaction between the researcher and the subjects in the milieu of the latter, during which time data, in the form of field notes, are unobtrusively and systematically collected" (Bogdan, 1972, p. 3). The method is intended to develop informed understanding of complex relationships and social settings based on the investigators' immersing themselves in the social setting they wish to study. In some cases, the reports of participant observations are regarded as complete investigations. In other cases, the period of participant observation is used to generate hypotheses which are tested subsequently by rigorous quantitative approaches which possess both construct and content validity, that is, the major characteristics which are often judged to be lacking in simplistic quantitative field studies.

Qualifications of Researchers

The collection of valid data would seem to be a process that could best be conducted by trained and self-disciplined investigators. Bogdan placed great stress on the preparation and attitude of the researcher who engages in participant observation, emphasizing that the researcher must be trained in the craft of observation and analysis:

> He has become familiar with the problems of observation and has developed certain skills

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and techniques to help him. He has also
developed a unique perspective in which the
research act and the role of observer dominate
his interests while in the field.(Bogdan, 1972,
p. 5)

Bogdan's understanding of participant observation is in
marked contrast to Hall's understanding of participatory
research. Bogdan stated:

The methodology of participant observation... is
based on the assumption that a researcher can
enter a situation with the subjects' knowing
who he is and why he is there, and can establish
with them a relationship characterized by trust
and a free and open exchange of information.
Ideally, the researcher is perceived as a neutral
figure, having no special alliances with any
subject in the situation and having no
relationships outside the situation which might
hurt the subjects. The observer is passive
in the/sense that he does not change the
situation in any way that might affect the data....
The goal of the researcher is to see the world
accurately from the point of view of each subject
in the organization without affecting that
view.(Bogdan, 1972, p. 21)

THE PURPOSE OF RESEARCH

Bogdan believes, as do most researchers, that the primary
purpose of research activity is to add to the common
body of tested knowledge which is available to anyone,
regardless of one's goals. He cautioned against the
phenomenon of going "native in the field," that is,
becoming so actively involved in the activities and life
of the subjects that the researcher becomes one of them
and, hence, regards his or her research role as secondary
to active involvement as a partisan (Bogdan, 1972, p. 28).

Participatory research differs from research conducted
by the participant observation method in that the
former is primarily concerned with activity intended
to change the life situation of the lower socio-
economic class, whether or not any contribution is

made to the body of tested generalizable knowledge, whereas the latter is not intended to be used with any particular socio-economic level. Its most important product is defined as its contribution to knowledge. The responsiblity for applying the knowledge acquired through participant observation is not assigned to the researcher as it is in participatory research. Finally, the education of those being observed is not the responsibility of the participant observer; the participatory researcher sees the education of the members of the group served as one of the primary responsibilities.

Participatory Research as Education

The educational process proposed in the definition of participatory research reveals that the research process is "seen as a total educational experience which serves to identify community needs and to increase awareness and communication within the community" (Dar es Salaam Design for Action, 1976, p. 32). According to Swantz (1975a) participatory research has motivational and educational benefits related to community development:

> It shows that surveys can be planned so that their exploitative aspects are eliminated and they become both educational and motivational. (p. 51).

> The method was used as means whereby those participating could be motivated to greater action and educated to greater awareness of their potential and to find ways for solving their development problems. The whole process had an educational element. (p. 49)

Swantz identified the following six educational elements as outcomes of a participatory research project: (1) leaders learned more about communicating with people and about how to solicit people's own ideas and have them plan their own village; (2) coordinators learned skills in handling questionnaires and in processing data; (3) leaders and villagers learned the benefits of self-analysis and how to engage in the process;

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(4) people learned the skill of answering questions
and writing their thoughts; (5) people who were unable
to fill in the forms experienced negative learning,
and this experience turned out to serve as a
motivational force for self-improvement; and (6) in
those villages not operating as a unit, the beginning
of a common thinking process was created which prepared
people for future planning on a village basis. All
of these educational and motivational elements were
identified through reports made by the villagers
at the final meeting and from statements made by
participants.

Jackson (1977) identified some of the learning which
emerged in the land and occupancy participatory
research study material reported by Nahanni, et. al
(1976). No doubt such learning occurred. But what is
to be gained by blurring the distinctions between
research and education processes?

Participatory Research as Community Development

Another blurred distinction is the one between
participatory research and community development
approaches. Hall reported that the Community Development
Trust Fund in Tanzania began a process of participatory
research in June, 1976, in response to a local concern
about food spoilage. Attempts at what he reported as
the usual research approaches to this problem produced,
he claimed, inconsistent and expensive results. He
reported that an analytic team was organized, including
the people who were faced with the problems, and
they engaged in a guided discussion process which
produced an effective solution. No doubt this method
of problem-solving was effective, but the justification
for calling the procedure "research" is not persuasive.
A more appropriate term than "participatory research"
would be "participatory problem-solving." Jackson used
this at one point in his discussion of the participatory
research process (Jackson, 1977, p. 12). It is still
unclear what logic leads to the conclusion that
participatory research, as described in the reports
analyzed in the preparation of this paper, is not
adequately described under the name "community
development." The reason, apparently, has less to do

with the characteristics of the method than it has with the ideological baggage of its advocates and the enhanced possibilities of obtaining financial support from foundations and other sponsors who feel they are supporting innovative ideas and who may already have come to regard community development as traditional.

Components of Participatory Research

No definitive description of participatory research has been adopted by those who assert that they are engaging in that activity. However, in 1977, at a session of the Participatory Research Project International Planning Meeting in Canada, the following seven components of participatory research were agreed upon:

1. The problem originates in the community itself and is defined, analyzed, and solved by the community.

2. The ultimate goal of research is the radical transformation of social reality and the improvement of the lives of the people involved. The beneficiaries of the research are the members of the community itself.

3. Participatory research involves the full and active participation of the community in the entire research process.

4. Participatory research involves a whole range of powerless groups of people--the exploited, the poor, the oppressed, the marginal, etc.

5. The process of participatory research can create a greater awareness in the people of their own resources and can mobilize them for self-reliant development.

6. It is a more scientific method of research in that the participation of the community in the research process facilitates a more accurate and authentic analysis of social reality.

7. The researcher is a committed participant and learner in the process of research, which leads to a militancy on his or her part, rather than detachment. (Status Report on the Participatory Research Project International Meeting, 1977)

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Commitment to Community Involvement

The issues of who should be doing research and who should benefit from research activities and findings complicate discussions about participatory research. Hall asserted that social science research is done for administrators and policy-makers in order to get information to use in making decisions for those who are not permitted to do so or to produce reports as a commodity to be sold by researchers. He regarded the conducting of research or the creation of knowledge as a monopoly of the powerful which should be taught to the poor and powerless so they can employ participatory research against those who oppress them. Hall acknowledged that "the use of the term 'participatory research' will not prevent someone from using similar methods to help a group of landlords work out a set of 'tenant-tight' rules and living arrangements" (Hall, 1977, p. 13). Hence, on one hand, participatory research is presented as a new approach to conducting research. On the other hand, it appears that the major distinguishing characteristic is that, unlike traditional research which produces knowledge which may be employed by anyone who acquires the information for either selfish or humanitarian purposes, participatory research can, by definition, only be used properly by, with, or at least in the name of the powerless.

Commitment to Action

The basic problem is that the proponents of participatory research begin with the assumption that the proper role of adult education is to aid those who seem to be powerless in their struggle against their oppressors. This ideological commitment makes it impossible for them to deal with the process of research as a means of adding to the sum of tested knowledge. The participatory research enthusiasts fail to distinguish between a process of seeking useful data and a process of applying that data. It is this analytical deficiency which leads to so much of the legitimate criticism of the literature on this approach.

Commitment to an Atheoretical Approach

Lindsey, a sociologist at the University of British

Columbia, is critical of the approach taken by those who
say they are engaging in participatory research. He
characterized them as being idealistically well-intentioned
but doomed to failure in the achievement of their grand
objectives. Lindsey asserted that "especially in a
traditional society, a non-theoretical empiricist
approach.... leads to the maintenance of the status quo,
of the existing power relationships within the given
social structure, and hence, sooner or later, to
frustration and disillusionment" (Lindsey, 1976, p. 48).
In his critical analysis of the participatory research
approach, he characterized it as experimentation without
control groups. The direct involvement of the researcher
may lead him or her to have a feeling of significance
and importance. However, the belief that the existing
power relationships and social structures will become
apparent to a well-meaning outsider just because one
deals with those who seem to be the least powerful
members of a society is regarded by Lindsey as naive.
He warned that "one must define in the greatest possible
detail every facet of the theory of society beforehand
in order to be better able to confront it with empirical·
observations" (Lindsey, 1976, p. 49). He treated the
chronic amateurism of some researchers as a serious
factor limiting the advance of knowledge in this field.

An Attempt to Re-define Research

The champions of participatory research are engaged in
rethinking and redefining research, as the following
comment by Swantz (1975a) indicates:

> Research as an academic exercise is an elitist
> concept. The prestige attached to scholarship,
> the status of a scientist, and the financial
> outlay needed for carrying it out all tend to
> develop class-consciousness in those engaged in
> research, as well as those who become the object
> of research.... Research in its goals, methods,
> and approach can become a basic tool in the
> transformation process of a society. It does not
> need to be limited to those with higher education,
> trained in methods and techniques, in organization
> of thought or formulation of problems and
> discursive logic. Ordinary villagers, administrators
> and teachers can become participants in, not only

objects of, research (p. 45).

But what is left of research if one removes logic, competency gained through education, and training in its methodology and techniques, as well as organization of thought?

Swantz continued, "Research can become a means of communication, an education process in which the roles of educator and the educated are constantly reversed and the common search for solving common problems unites all those engaged in the common endeavor" (p. 45).

Why fuse education and research into a single concept, especially after ruling out the conditions essential for producing valid knowledge? If the activity which is being called "participatory research" is an educational process, why not call it "participatory education" or, perhaps, because of the emphasis on problem-solving, "participatory problem-solving"? Surely it is wiser and more precise to give the process an appropriate name than to make what will ultimately prove to be a futile attempt to redefine research.

Practical Considerations

Other practical considerations stand in the way of conducting participatory research. Lindsey (1976) offered reservations regarding the situation of the people who are to be participant researchers. He felt that the subjects are usually vitally involved in the process of production as a means of earning a living. This involvement leaves little time and energy for extensive participation in research. Another consideration is that the people lack "a perspective of the social structure in which they are imbedded and of possible alternatives to it" (p. 48).

Cain (1977) also posed this question: "How can participation, if accepted as a valid goal, be obtained from people not accustomed to such interaction? What methods can be used to insure participation?" (p. 7). She reasoned further that even if the goal is accepted of making the native the researcher, "we still come up with a big 'how.' To be unclear about what research is, what

we/they are looking for, makes the 'how' even more obscure. There must be a clearer understanding of what participation in research means before the 'how'can be adequately developed" (p. 3).

Participatory Research Studies

The criteria which distinguish participatory research are not particularly obvious or logically sound. A survey was employed in a study by Swantz which was self-proclaimed participatory research. What made it qualify as participatory research is that the questionnaire was administered and scored by African villagers, instead of by trained researchers. Apparently, then, the participatory researchers' dissatisfaction is not with the use of a survey method but with who is using the research tools. If a survey is designed and administered and the results analyzed by villagers untrained in research methodology, its value rises in the opinion of the advocates of participatory research. The opposite occurs when such tools are in the hands of trained researchers. The logic of the position is difficult to follow, especially in considering the results obtained from the participatory questionnaire: "As could be expected, rather serious inaccuracies occurred both in filling in the forms and in summing up the statistics" (Swantz, 1975a, p. 49). Participatory research advocates appear to have developed a survey research method which results in serious inaccuracies but which they believe is superior to conventional survey research methodology because it involves the villagers. Such an approach places a far higher value on participation than it does on producing sound data and conclusions.

Fordham et al. (1975) used a participatory research questionnaire which qualified as participatory research because it was "posted to all respondents but collected by a team of local volunteers in order to provide a human element in the survey" (p. 62). Using local volunteers to increase the rate of return of questionnaires is surely a way of obtaining survey data, but it does seem odd to regard the collection of questionnaires by volunteers as a characteristic which in itself changes survey research into participatory research.

Most of the participatory research studies utilize some
form of discussion in the design of a study, in its
implementation, or in the interpretation of the results.
This discussion may take the form of humanizing a
traditional questionnaire, or it may invoke the development
of a new-data collection instrument, its administration,
the interpretation of its results, or any combination
of these steps. Much the same sort of involvement
would be considered essential by rigorous researchers
as they pilot-test an instrument and assess its
construct and content validity in the best tradition of
social science research.

Native fieldworkers were trained in the use of interview
techniques in which responses were recorded in writing,
on tapes, or in both forms in a participatory research
project reported by Nahannie, et al. (1976). Outside
experts were used to help in the design of research
methodology and in training workshops. Outside experts
also were involved in translating the quantitative data
resulting from this study into "whiteman's tongue"
(Jackson, 1977, p. 9). Some participatory research
allows for the use of experts so long as they are
controlled by the otherwise powerless.

Colletta (1976) divided the people into discussion
groups to answer three questions posed about community
learning resources. The results were reported by each
group secretary, and a list was developed which identified
community resources. This list, when classified into
patterns such as human, institutional, socio-cultural,
economic, and natural mass media, formed the product of
the study. These opinion-gathering approaches seem
useful as educational and developmental processes.
However, they do not measure up to the demanding standards
of objectivity, reliability, and validity associated with
first-rate classical research studies.

Participatory research may be distinguished from other
kinds of research in part by its place on a continuum
of quantitative and qualitative research methods. Copeland
and Grabowski (1971) discussed two contrasting approaches
in adult education research. One emphasized rigor in
empirical experimental methodology; the other drew
heavily upon inductive approaches such as participant

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observation and case studies. The attention given to
qualitative strategies by those who profess to be engaged
in participatory research indicates that this method
belongs at the qualitative end of the continuum.

The processes of participatory research do not meet the
rigorous standards of objectivity required in properly
conducted quantitative or qualitative investigations.
Instead, the subjectivity of the process is put forth as
one of its strengths. Nevertheless, quantitative data
are sometimes produced by participatory research; decisions
are based on inferences drawn from these data.

Some distinctions can be identified between participatory
research and other qualitative research strategies.
Participatory research differs from grounded theory
(Glasser and Strauss, 1967), which is based on a general
sociological perspective with the purpose of generating
theory. Participatory research is concerned with a
specific problem, rather than theory generation, and has
the primary purpose of obtaining a solution to a problem.

There is confusion, or at least a lack of precision, in the
participatory research literature regarding the difference
between participatory research and participant observation.
Hall (1975) cited Pilsworth and Ruddock's 1975 study as
a participatory approach to research, yet their approach
is clearly that of participant observation. In
participant observation"... the researcher participates
in the situation under study either openly, in the role
of researcher, or covertly, and observes the behavior
of the people involved" (Pilsworth and Ruddock, 1975,
p. 39). The researcher is involved in prolonged interaction
with the subjects "...in the milieu of the latter,
during which time data, in the form of field notes, are
unobtrusively and systematically collected" (Bogdan, 1972).
While it is true that participant observation is a
methodology which is generally used to develop an
understanding of complex institutional forms, to generate
sensitizing concepts, and to study social change, it
differs from participatory research in a fundamental
way. Its primary purpose is to add to knowledge, not
to intervene in the functioning of a social system as
a means of producing change in the system. To overlook
this critical distinction is to fail to comprehend the
essential nature of participant observation.

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Pilsworth and Ruddock (1975), who contributed an article to
the issue of *Convergence* which featured participatory
research, did not propose to supplant all existing
research methodologies with participatory research.
Instead, they counselled:

> Whenever possible the researcher should
> "triangulate" or use more than one method.
> It should be acknowledged that all research
> methods involve valuations of behavior, and
> different methods provide different types of
> knowledge. We are not advocating a reliance
> on any single method; rather, the qualitative
> and phenomenological research methods should
> gain a wider acceptance in teaching and
> research in adult education (p. 41)

They acknowledged that both the purely quantitative and
the purely qualitative approaches have inherent limitations
and are only incomplete reflections of social reality.
Hence, logically, they urge the use of both approaches
as a means of obtaining two different kinds of perceptions
of any situation under study.

CONCLUSIONS

Given the nature of the literature describing or claiming
to be participatory research in adult education and the
growing popularity of the term, what inferences might
be drawn? The following eight conclusions are offered
for consideration by those engaged in research, those
preparing others to conduct research, and those enrolled
in such training programs.

1. The emergence of participatory research is partly
   explained by the chronic amateurism which characterizes
   an appreciable proportion of the research in adult
   education as well as in other social sciences.
   Dissatisfaction with the results of research or the
   lack of application of the results has understandably
   led to a desire for a more effective research
   methodology that is closely linked to the application
   of the findings.

2. Some critics of conventional social science research have not distinguished between the characteristics of various research methodologies, quantitative or qualitative, and the characteristics of the researchers who claim to be employing the methodologies. Accordingly, criticisms which should properly have been directed at the perpetrators of poor research have been misdirected at the methodologies.

3. Anyone who makes a serious effort to comprehend the research which has been conducted by presumably adequately prepared adult educators might be expected to exhibit some measure of humility and to conclude that the researchers, on the whole, were probably as well trained, technically skilled, and unselfish as their critics. Nevertheless, one of the hallmarks of the champions of participatory research has been hubris, not humility. It takes a fair amount of hubris for a researcher to proclaim that he or she has a method which is superior to all other methodologies. Yet, the participatory research literature is weighted down by such pronouncements.

4. It is not evident how participatory research activity differs from the activities which have been associated with community development. A possible distinguishing feature is that community development is not restricted to serving those of the lowest socio-economic status, as the ideals of participatory research require. Community development, in theory at least, may regard the involvement of representatives of all social levels in a given community in discussions and decision-making as essential, whereas participatory research seems directed toward involving only the powerless in an attempt to gain power.

5. The conducting of research and the application of the findings have traditionally been regarded as distinct processes. This assumption acknowledges that the findings of any investigation may be employed in either a humane or an exploitative manner. The proponents of participatory research acknowledge that their methodology could be used by oppressors, as well as by the oppressed. Hence, the process itself is not by nature any more humane than any conventional method of research. Working directly with the powerless is defined

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as true participatory research, whereas the use of the identical methodology with the powerful would be regarded either as a misuse of participatory research or as lying outside of its boundaries.

6. If the purpose of research is to make incremental additions to the body of tested knowledge, then the process called participatory research is improperly named, because its purpose is direct action to improve the lot of the disadvantaged.

7. If those who are enthusiastic about participatory research are interested in communicating effectively with other social science researchers, then they have made a poor choice of a name for the process they advocate. They are apparently expecting everyone else to abandon existing definitions and conceptions of research and to accept a radical definition which lacks both precision and clarity.

8. The enthusiasm with which the participatory research approach is being accepted by adult educators in the third world countries suggests that those who have employed traditional research methodologies in these settings have not succeeded in relating to the indigenous adult educators whose primary interest is in development. Whether rigorous adult education research will be sacrificed for action-oriented community development schemes under any label cannot be predicted. The outcome will be determined not only by those who propose a methodology inseparably tied to an ideology but also by those who are conducting rigorous research on variables influencing the quality of life and development.

The proponents of participatory research have performed a useful service in calling attention to the negative value of poorly conducted social science research in the developing world. In doing so, unfortunately, they have made rash claims for a kind of community development approach which they erroneously call "research." If what they advocate can be appreciated for what it is, rather than for what it is purported to be, then the approach may yet make a significant contribution to community development and to the process of adult education.

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PARTICIPATORY RESEARCH: BREAKING THE ACADEMIC MONOPOLY

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The purpose of this paper is to discuss some of the
emerging thinking surrounding the concept of participatory
research. In order to do that, first it is necessary to
place this discussion within a wider context and value
orientation. This author shares the conviction of Gunnar
Myrdal and C. Wright Mills that social science is not
free of values and that -- whether stated or not --
values are implied in research. Secondly, this author does
not believe in the neutrality of technique or method
and holds that if one can find a "hidden curriculum" in
teaching, one can find a similar "hidden process" in
research. Thirdly, this author believes that the most
important question to be asked on a global basis during
these days of widely and officially recognized inequalities
is this: *Whom does our work serve?*

In order to examine the discussions surrounding participatory
research, the following questions will be raised:

- Is there monopoly in the production of knowledge?
- Has knowledge become a commodity?
- How is knowledge created?
- What is participatory research?
- What are its origins?
- What are some criticisms and responses?
- What are the directions for further work?

IS THE PRODUCTION
OF KNOWLEDGE A MONOPOLY?

Here I stand, my name is Jowett.
There's no knowledge but I know it.
I am the Master of this college
And what I don't know isn't knowledge.

> Attributed to Professor B. Jowett,
> former Master of Balliol.

Have we created a structure for the production of
knowledge which has nearly ensured that it is impossible
for a worker in Illinois or a farmer living in Bwakira
Chini, a village in Tanzania, to contribute to the
world's store of information? The standard for research
that is put forth by the various influential academic
societies and intellectuals has been shaped necessarily
by the needs which the state has for research. We have
created a set of requirements in terms of techniques and
style which requires years of specialized training, most
likely a Ph.D., to achieve. This practice, it has been
suggested, has resulted in a situation where a few persons
of middle- and upper-class positions are working on the
theoretical and practical academic discussions and are
creating knowledge about the entire universe of people
and problems.

What is important to recognize is that some people's
common sense becomes recognized as philosophy while
others do not. Gramsci (1971) has suggested that "all
men are intellectuals...but not all men have in society
the function of intellectuals" (p.9). He described two
groups of intellectuals. There are "traditional"
intellectuals, the scholars and scientists, who although
seemingly detached from class positions, nevertheless
are the result of specific historical class formations.
There also are the "organic" intellectuals, the thinking
and organizing persons in any class. These persons are
not usually recognized as intellectuals or, in our terms,
as persons capable of creating knowledge; they are the
union leaders, community organizers, and farm organizers.
Gramsci pointed out that the working class is capable
of producing its own intellectuals and that one of the

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functions of those engaged in organized working-class
politics should be to make links between the intellectuals
of both types and foster the recognition of workers'
right to create philosophy and knowledge.

Let me illustrate this in a very concrete form.   I
worked in a university in Africa as head of a research
unit in adult education.   I worked on a team with
Tanzanians, studying the educational needs of peasants
and rural workers in various parts of the country.
We were struggling with the identification of problems
which might be solved in part through educational programs.
Through our research, we dealt with questions of shortage
of water and food, absence of preventive or curative
medical care, and a high incidence of disease.   We
attempted to interpret and analyze various kinds of data
about the lives of these people and their concrete
problems.

At the same time we were working on the concrete problems
of these people in their villages, our own lives continued.
Our problems continued--but they were not the same
problems.   My problems had to do with finding butter,
which was scarce, taking the car to be serviced,
inviting someone to supper, and the like.   My colleagues'
problems had to do with similar situations, compounded
by requests from and obligations to the extended family
(a cousin needed school fees; an aunt had died and
needed proper burial).

Why is this important? The point is that with all the
best intentions in the world, we were never going to
fully comprehend, much less intuitively grasp, the
conditions and the priorities for survival and growth
in the villages. We were not even likely to understand
the problems of our fellow urban dwellers living in the
shanty towns.   In the end, our ability to plan educational
programs depended on the closeness of *our* interpretation
of *their* world to reality. By virtue of our class
positions and class interests, the knowledge which w
"created" about their lives was bound to be in error.
Blum (1971) explained the problem differently.   He
indicated that if our analysis shows that knowledge
is constructed to serve the interests of its producers,
then, by definition, knowledge is constructed by those
who do not share the interests of the masses.   Furthermore,

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if we relate our concept of reality to the world of the masses, the knowledge which as been created is obviously biased and invalid.

We have come dangerously close to creating a situation in the social sciences which effectively denies recognition of the knowledge-creating abilities in most of the peoples of the world. Modes of indigenous education in Africa which have provided structural frameworks and interpretations of the world are missing from what we represent as a universal body of knowledge. What are the implications, for example, of the fact that the peoples of southern Venezuela have a precision in naming the types and colors of grass that grow there, a precision that is beyond the scope of common English or Spanish? What is the importance of the fact that the vocabulary for ants found in Hausa in Northern Nigeria is far richer than in any European language, or that the Maasai have concepts for cattle exchange relationships and physical types which even Texans cannot match? In North America, workers in industrial plants knew about work-related illnesses years before they were recognized by the medical profession. People on welfare knew more about the psychological effects of economic dependency than did the psychologists. A search through each person's experiences will produce many more examples of detailed knowledge which has not been created by professional researchers.

THE PRODUCTION OF KNOWLEDGE
AS A COMMODITY

> The class which has the means of material production at its disposal has control at the same time over the means of mental production, so that in consequence the ideas of those who lack the means of mental production are, in general, subject to it.
>
> Karl Marx (German Ideology)

The production of knowledge throughout the world has become big business. Evidence can be found in the size and structure of the university and research

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establishments with which we deal. As early as 1962,
estimates were that nearly 28.7 percent of the current
American gross national product was concerned with the
production or dissemination of knowledge (Machlup, 1962).

The important point about these observations is that if
the production of knowledge has become a business, then
knowledge itself has, to some extent, become a commodity.
Commodities, as products for exchange, are directly
subject to the influences of the market economy. This
implies that the type of knowledge created is determined,
by and large, by the material social relations.

John Horton (1975), in discussing sociology as a focus
of social scientific knowledge production, described
the situation as follows:

> A reifying scientific consciousness expressed
> the commodity organization of scientific labour.
> Sociologists have escaped neither the commodity
> market nor commodity thinking.... Like other
> workers in a capitalist society, intellectuals
> survive by producing commodities for exchange .
> (p. 175)

That there is at least a form of commodity production
is clear. As individual academic, our ideas are
"packaged" in the form of papers, books, journal articles,
and reports which are exchanged directly or indirectly
through seminars, international conferences, and symposia.
Departments within universities are developed and
supported by "selling" their services to the state or
directly to industry. Within the many industrialized
capitalist states, international studies as a specialization
has come about directly through the initiative and
support of national governments which have a need for
a knowledge base about Third World countries. The
"institution building" grants of the United States Agency
for International Development, grants by the Ministry
of Overseas Development in the United Kingdom to
institutions such as the Institute for Development Studies,
and at least partial support for various university
departments through CIDA in Canada are examples of how
the economic need stimulates production.

In an earlier paper, I characterized the situation as

follows:

> For a person working in a university or a
> research institution, knowledge is effectively
> a commodity. In the narrowest sense, researchers
> gather or "mine" ideas and information in order
> to survive and advance economically. Priorities
> are given to collecting data in a central point,
> summarizing it and then packaging it in such
> a way that it can be marketed. The need to serve
> policy-makers is also recognized by some as an
> additional market (usually the best funded projects).
> The need to serve the people from whom the
> information has been gathered (the unemployed,
> urban immigrants, poor farmers, etc.) is indirect
> and by necessity of low priority. These groups
> will not buy the results and perhaps didn't
> want the research in the first place.(Hall, 1977,
> p. 23)

But is knowledge, strictly speaking, a commodity? Are
intellectuals workers in the academic form of a capitalist
mode of production? Shaw has argued that the products
of the knowledge industry are, in fact, "pseudo-
commodities." He argued that the prices of the objects
exchanged -- the books, articles, and so on -- are not
as important as the act of publication itself. Most
academics are content to have articles published with no
direct payment at all. The role which knowledge
production plays has much more to do with the career
structure within the academic world. Nicholaus (1972)
described the American social science picture in the
following way:

> In the post-war era, the road to prominence,
> hence, office within the profession, has been
> paved with research publication. Once he obtains
> financing for a research venture, the sociologist
> builds up, through publication, his professional
> reputation. This form of capital is then convertible
> into academic promotion, which yields better access
> to more research funds, permitting further
> publication and so on up, until, as supervisor of
> graduate students, the successful sociological
> entrepreneur is in a position to start and
> manage younger persons on the same spiral.(p. 56)

While Shaw seemed sensible about the pseudo-commodity
relationship of the products of individual academics,
knowledge was seen in dir ; commodity form as
consultancies done either on an individual basis or by
a university department and specialized agencies.
Large groups of consultants operate in Europe and North
America and elsewhere in the international sphere.
Consultants do not aspire to political or academic
independence, but they do respond to the direct needs
of the state or private industry. Their commodities
are clear and obvious. And while there is not space
enough at this juncture to expand this issue, it is
quite evident that within both the national and
international spheres, the influence and power of these
firms is substantial.

If one carries the analysis of knowledge as commodity
production further, the parallels with general commodity
production within capitalism become clearer. Three
characteristics of commodity production are the tendency
towards monopoly production, the creation of uneven
development, and the facilitation of economic penetration
and dependency. The tendency toward monopoly production
has been dealt with already.

To what extent is there an uneven development of knowledge
production within the international sphere or even
among the universities within countries such as the United
States? Is there not a tendency for the large or
already important universities to attract more funds for
research by virtue of their reputations? Nearly all the
books used in sociology courses in African universities
are written in the United States, Britain, or France.
The sheer volume of knowledge production is absurdly
tipped in the direction of those nations which dominate
the international economic markets. Cultural dependency
results directly from the uneven development characteristic
of other forms of capitalist development. This extends, as
we will see, into the questions of legitimatizing research
and research methods.

Do researchers and faculty at the universities of Nairobi,
Madras, and Peru have more in common with other academics
in the international academic world than they do with
the people and problems in their nations? Has the
pattern of knowledge transfer, which is still on-going,

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exported more than institutional structures? Does the
fact that most academics at the University of Dar es
Salaam in Tanzania have been educated in the United States,
Canada, or the United Kingdom have wider implications
than have been generally acknowledged? What does this
say about the kinds of people who product our world's
knowledge?

HOW IS KNOWLEDGE CREATED?

> A voyeur gets private satisfaction from watching
> other people's sexual activity. Voyeurism is
> self-indulgent, parasitic and sterile. "Academic
> voyeurism" may be defined as the study of other
> people's problems for the self-gratification of
> the student. It, too, is self-indulgent, parasitic
> and sterile. Both types of voyeurism are
> pathological and need treatment.
>
> S. Goodlad (1976)

Discussions about how knowledge is created -- in this
interpretation, how research is conducted -- must
inevitably begin with some concept of what knowledge is.
To avoid the pitfalls of epistemological debate, I
will refer to the definition of Maurice Cornforth (1955),
who wrote from a dialectical materialist position: "We
gain knowledge...only insofar as we develop our ideas
in such a way that their correspondence with reality is
proved and tested" (p. 149). It is with the question of
proving and testing correspondence with reality that social
science has been engaged in one of its most vigorous
debates.

By far the most heated criticism of research methods has
focused on the use of the various forms of survey research,
due in part to its ubiquitousness as a form. While not
needing to dwell at length in this paper on a subject
which has been widely covered elsewhere, it is important
to review some of the cititcisms to see how alternative
approaches differ.

1. *The survey research approach oversimplifies social reality.* In
addition to the arbitrariness of instrument construction

or the class bias of such specific tools as semantic differential tests and various other tests devised by those who work from a primarily psychological base, these approaches have other weaknesses. A research process that extracts information from individuals in isolation from one another and aggregates this into a single set of figures does so at the expense of reducing the complexity and richness of human experience. Social responses to problems by groups of people are not necessarily the same as the total of individual responses of people acting alone. It is, of course, correct to say that the use and interpretation of the figures "depends on the institutional and social context within which the research is embedded" (Carr-Hill, 1974, p. 30). But even given an institutional framework that encourages popular participation or control of decision-making, the representation of needs by a set of figures, such as "22 percent of those interviewed said that their home environment has had the most influence on their career choice," or "42.6 percent of teachers report problems," is unsatisfactory The illusion of accuracy through numbers has long been perpetuated by many of us, resulting at least partly in a hiding, obscuring, or mystifying research.

2. *Survey research is often alienating, dominating, or oppressive in character.* If one accepts Freire's point that teaching methods have ideological implications, then the same holds true for research methods. If one is concerned with increasing people's capacity to participate fully and gain some degree of control over their lives, then research methods themselves can be part of this process, as Swantz has shown. Questionnaires or interviews designed in an office of a university or adult education institution are by nature one-sided. This process regards people as sources of information, as having bits of isolated knowledge; however, they are neither expected nor apparently assumed able to analyze a given social reality. At the extreme, researchers often take up people's time with badly formulated questions, make interpretations based on little experience in the area, or make social class the basis of programs which are expected to be useful and relevant. As C. Wright Mills (1959) noted:

> The style of abstracted empiricism (and the
> methodological inhibition it sustains) is
> not well suited to a democratic political role.
> Those who practice this style as their sole
> activity...cannot perform a liberating educational
> role.... To tell individuals and publics that
> they can "really" know social reality only by
> depending upon a necessarily bureaucratic kind
> of research is to place a taboo in the name of
> science upon their efforts to become independent men
> and substantive thinkers...it is precisely the job
> of liberal education *and* the political role of
> social science *and* its intellectual promise to
> enable men to transcend such fragmented and
> abstracted milieux (the social sciences) to
> become aware of historical structures and of their
> own place within them.(p. 89)

Research approaches of this style often create the
illusion among those who are the suppliers of information
that research is rigorous, highly technical, scientifically
"pure," and that it can only be done by the university-
trained. The abilities of people to investigate their
objective realities are not stimulated, and the pool
of human creativity is kept within narrow confines.
Those most familiar with the problems and whose daily
existence is affected by poor health, poor nutrition,
low levels of production, or past failures in education
are effectively taken out of the active process of
making the changes which might lead to improvements.
Control is left to those who, by definition and levels
of training, are outside the experiences within which
change is sought.

3. *Survey research does not provide easy links to possible
subsequent action.* Much research in adult education is
action-oriented. It may represent an attempt to determine
a community's educational needs or to modify existing
programs through an evaluation/research process. In
either case, it is expected that when changes are made, the
people in the community or the participants in the adult
education program will participate more actively, more
efficiently, or will gain increased benefits over what had
existed before. Basic principles of planning stress that
the likelihood of full and effective participation in any
venture -- educational, political, or social -- is improved

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by involving would-be participants in the decision-making process. In addition to resulting in a poor source of information, research which has alienated respondents, or at best treated them as sources of primitive information, has little likelihood of creating the active and supportive environment essential for change.

A research team dealing with questions of vocational education in Tanzania reflecting on their work accurately described this problem:

> The data-gathering methods were not strictly participatory ones and imposed questions upon the respondents, thus leaving them in a passive role. This antagonized their active participation in the research and hindered, therefore, the creation of a base of action and interaction within the research and after the research. (Christian Council of Tanzania, 1977, p. 17)

This lesson was taken seriously by the researchers. In the meantime, local research teams were formed in the areas where work was being done, and they have continued their research.

WHAT IS PARTICIPATORY RESEARCH?

It should be emphasized that participatory research is an emergent concept. It is not the "property" of any single person or group; it belongs to those persons, both professional and nonprofessional, who work with and share ideas on many practical issues and problems. It is one aspect of the continuing search for effective research tools that has originated in its present form in the field of adult education. At present, there is a loose international network of several hundred persons with which the International Council for Adult Education cooperates. Overall direction of the network is in the hands of five regional coordinators: one each in Caracas; Dar es Salaam in Tanzania; Amersfoort in the Netherlands; New Dehli; and Toronto.

At the first planning meeting of the Participatory Research Project (1977), participatory research was described as a three-pronged activity: a *method* of social investigation involving the full participation of the

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community, an educational *process*, and a means of taking *action*. A number of components of participatory research were identified:

1. The problem originates in the community itself, and the problem is defined, analyzed, and solved by the community.

2. The ultimate goal of research is the radical transformation of social reality and the improvement of the lives of the people involved. The beneficiaries of the research are the members of the community itself.

3. Participatory research involves the full and active participation of the community in the entire research process.

4. Participatory research involves a whole range of powerless groups of people: the exploited, the poor, the oppressed, the marginal, etc.

5. The process of participatory research can create a greater awareness in the people of their own resources and mobilizes them for self-reliant development.

6. It is a more scientific method of research in that the participation of the community in the research process facilitates a more accurate and authentic analysis of social reality.

7. The researcher is a committed participant and learner in the process of research which leads to a militancy on his/her part, rather than detachment.

This definition and list of components were collectively arrived at by a group of fifteen researchers from eight countries who are engaged in work of this nature.

COMPARISON OF RESEARCH APPROACHES

ISSUES/ACTIONS	PARTICIPATORY RESEARCH	MOST COMMON SURVEY APPROACHES
Problem Identification	community or group experiencing the problem	most often researcher or other outside person
Locus of choice of methods for gathering data	community	researcher
Methods of data gathering	.wide variety, including group meetings, use of videotape, seminars, workshops, surveys, use of drama and photographs .developmental and reformable .focus on collective response	.some variety, but most often based on some form of survey .fairly static .focus on individual response
Analysis and interpretation of data	emphasis on collective analysis and interpretation by those involved in the problem	individual analysis by researcher, sometimes with limited "feed-back" from clients
Use of results	direct, planned for, and applied by the community	serendipitous, not usually an integral part of the process

What Are Its Origins?

It is important to recognize that while we may be using
the term in a different context today, the concerns we
are expressing have a history and continuity in social

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science. Many of the ideas which are finding new
opportunities for expression can be traced to the early
field work of Engels as he aligned himself with the
working classes of Manchester during his early periods.
Marx's use of a structured interview, the *Enquête Ouvrière*,
with French factory workers was another sometimes
forgotten antecedent (Bodemann, 1977). More recently,
aspects of the work of Dewey, George Herbert Mead, and the
Tavistock Institute in London have outlined methods
of social investigation which are based on other than
a positivistic epistemology.

By the late 1950s and early 1960s, the dominant
international research paradigm was a version of the
North American and European model based on empiricism
and positivism and characterized by a high degree of
attention to instrument construction and rigor defined
by statistical precision and replicability. Through
the elaborate mechanisms of international scholarships,
cultural exchanges, and training of researchers in
Europe and North America, this dominant paradigm was
extended to the Third World. Research methods, through
an illusion of objectivity and scientific credibility,
became one more manifestation of cultural dependency.

The reaction from the Third World, beginning in Latin
America, has taken many forms. Dependency theorists
such as Dos Santos, Frank, Amin, and Leys have outlined
some of the mechanisms of economic and cultural
dependency. Education has been analyzed from a cultural
dependency viewpoint by Freire, Carnoy, and others.
Hence, in the field of research methods, Third World
perspectives have grown out of a reaction to approaches
developed in North America and Europe which not only
have been created in different cultural settings but
which contribute to already existing class distinctions.
The Third World's contribution to social science research
methods represents an attempt to find ways of uncovering
knowledge which work better in societies where
interpretation of reality must take second place to
changing that reality. If social science is to serve
the majority of people in Asia, Latin America, and
Africa, then it must be linked to a process by which
that majority can achieve not only a voice in determining
the future, but the physical means by which to survive.

In a personal sense, the author's awareness of the necessity for alternative approaches to research came from working four years in Tanzania, a nation which was committed to a socialist transformation by means of full participation of people at the base in all decisions which affect their lives. The attempts to take an unbiased, objective, and distant research stance toward such radical social transformation produced obvious contradictions. Working in the field of adult education with a heavy emphasis on mass-based programs, research needed to be practical, accurate, and linked to the overall ideological positions. It also needed to lead to subsequent action.

In Tanzania, the practice of community development, adult education, political education, and agricultural education provided experiences which contributed to a new approach. The tasks which a village adult education committee or an Ujamaa village committee were undertaking provided concrete examples of local analysis of problems. As usual, the intellectuals were somewhat surprised to find that villagers were able to conduct very sophisticated and strategic political or economic analyses of their own situations. Villagers worked out elaborate marketing and planting strategies around their own crops and their construction needs.

The social sciences had some contributions to make to the search. Historically, anthropology had been non-action-oriented and elitist in practice and had a negative connection with the colonial period. But anthropology also had had a tradition of in-depth (if often secretive) community level work, although it had not shared either its analyses or its information with the communities which had supplied the information.

The Tanzania Bureau of Resource Allocation and Land Use Planning through Dr. Marje-Liise Swantz and teams of students and village workers, in working on questions of youth and employment in the Coast Region of Tanzania and later on studies of socio-economic causes of malnutrition in Central Kilimanjaro, provided practical experience in what was becoming known as participatory research. A visit by Paulo Freire to Tanzania in 1971 acted as a stimulus to many social scientists who might not have been as impressed by the already existing experience

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of many adult educators or community development workers.

The basic requirements for participatory research as outlined by Swantz (1975) are as follows:

1. It needs to be planned so that at least part of it is of immediate interest to the people in the studied community and so that the community can expect to benefit from its results.

2. It should involve the people for whose benefit it is carried out in the process research, both in formulating the immediate problems and in finding solutions to them.

3. Research should incorporate into itself as many as possible of those working locally toward development of that community, be they village leaders, administrators, educators, or extension officers.

4. The educational and motivational potential of such an engaged research method should be fully utilized for the benefit of everyone involved in it.(p. 45)

What was happening in a small way in Tanzania already had begun in Latin America in the early 1960s. Stimulated in part by the success of the Cuban revolution, Latin American social scientists began exploring more committed forms of research. One of the most useful roles of Paulo Freire has been to bring some of the current ideas of Latin American social scientists to the attention of persons in other parts of the world. His work on *Thematic Investigation* (1973), first in Brazil and later in Chile, was an expression of this search. Others, such as Beltran and Gerace, have explored alternatives through concepts of horizontal communication (Beltran, 1976; Gerace, (1973). Fals Borda and others in Columbia have been engaged in "investigacion y accion," while Reed and the Darcy de Oliveras have made us aware of militant observation (Darcy de Olivera, 1975).

NOT THE THIRD WORLD ALONE

While the specific term "participatory research"
developed in the Third World because of crises
precipitated by dysfunctional concepts of one-way,
detached research in a world of urgent immediate problems
to be solved, a consciousness also was growing in
Europe and North America. The "Frankfurt School" was
rediscovered through Habermas and Adorno. "Action
Sociology" was placed on the agenda of most academic
meetings. In Switzerland, researchers working in
curriculum development adapted methodologies from
political research to their needs (Moser, 1977). In
Canada, Stinson developed methods of evaluation along
action research lines for community development work
(Stinson, 1977). In the Netherlands, de Vries has
explored alternatives from a firm philosophical base.
And the National Institute for Adult Education pioneered
participatory research through its evaluations of the
British literacy project (Holmes, 1976).

It seems as though work in alternative research methods
has a much greater sense of equal international
participation than did the earlier social science work.
In dealing with problems of social inequities, extreme
class differences, and wide imbalances in income and
resource allocation, the Third World has very much to
offer. It is entirely appropriate that we recognize both
the existence and the power of these contributions.

CRITICISMS OF PARTICIPATORY RESEARCH

In a network devoted to the development and refinement
of complex and controversial ideas, there is a constant
process of criticism and evolution. By far the most
thorough and tough-minded criticism comes not from
the professional academics but from many nonprofessional
people with whom we work in communities, neighborhoods,
and villages. But, often, these comments and criticisms
are not written and circulated and, therefore, do not
reach the offices of scholars. Of the various written
comments, two critiques have been particularly thoughtful
and thorough, one from the right by Griffith and
Cristarella (1978) and one from the left by members of
the participatory research network in Tanzania. Both

critiques contain some valid and important points; both make statements which need responses, if not answers.

Let me begin with several points raised by Griffith and Cristarella.

1. The basic problem is that the proponents of participatory research begin with the assumption that the proper role of adult education is to aid those who seem to be powerless in their struggle against their oppressors.

2. Critics of survey and other so-called traditional research designs delude themselves and others by confusing the inept researchers with the basic characteristics of research models.

3. The distinction between learning and research has been blurred; it is the same thing as community development.

4. It fails to distinguish between the process of seeking knowledge and the process of applying that data.

5. The use of the word "should" reveals that the author is expressing a set of personal beliefs.

6. Participatory research is weighted down with hubris and oracular pronouncements.

In response:

This author cannot help noting that Griffith regularly has taken it upon himself to defend the status quo; he does it thoroughly and with conviction. Hence, it is with a distinct sense of pride that participatory research joins George Counts and Paulo Freire as a subject of critique.

(1) The basic *problem* with participatory research -- as viewed by Griffith and Cristarella -- represents the basic *difference* between them and advocates of the approach. The former insist that research is neutral, objective, and value-free (or at least it *should be*).

Research is no different from any other human
activity. It operates within a social context
and is subject to the same forces and pressures
as any other activity. To hope for a research
process outside of social and political forces
is naive at best.

To posit as the basic problem the advocacy of
the rights of the powerless in the world we
inhabit is more than naive. It is dangerous.
But it may be that this point is less clear
to those working in the relative security and
well-being of academic life in North America.
It is certainly clear to those working elsewhere.

(2)   Advocates of so-called traditional research
       often defend themselves by pointing out that
       the weaknesses of their models "is due to
       ineptness of researchers." There are two
       points to be made here: a) that a model which
       defies correct use by nearly all practitioners
       is in any case defective; and (b) that even if
       it were possible to do a *perfect* piece of
       survey research, a number of problems would
       remain in a model that is based on individual
       data, individual analysis, and confusion of
       detailed statistical precision with scientific
       accuracy.

       However, a very good point which Griffith,
       Cristarella, and others have made is that too
       much emphasis has been put on positing participatory
       research as a substitute for survey research
       methods. The first formulations of participatory
       research mistakenly, this author now believes,
       placed too much of the burden of the argument on
       the weaknesses of survey research methods. In
       fact, a number of examples of participatory
       research make use of a survey. The key
       difference, however, is that the surveys are used
       as tools for *collective* analysis by those
       experiencing the problem.

(3)   The issue of the blurring of the lines among
       research, learning, and community development
       is important. It deserves and will receive

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much more serious reflection over the next
few years. Based on varied experiences by the
North American team in Toronto, one would have
to conclude that, at the action level or at
the individual or community level, very little
difference exists between research and learning.
What is it called when workers study the health
conditions in their work places or when learners
reflect systematically on learning needs? Is
it learning or research? Some might say that
if professionals do it, it is research; if
nonprofessionals do it, it is learning.
Others might say that the degree of systematic
or logical analysis is the key difference. But
since much learning is carried out as systematically
as some research, or more so, the question needs
to be turned around and rephrased: What is lost
in blurring this distinction or who separated
research from learning in the first place?

The second part of this issue is whether
participatory research is the same thing as
community development. Griffith and Cristarella
seem to answer by saying it is not, i.e.,
community development is interested in the
development of the *entire* community, whereas
participatory research is interested in the
marginal or neglected segment. I expect that
most community development professionals would
quickly jump on their statement and point
out that there are parts of a community which
one does not in fact want developed, such as
slum lords, corrupt businessmen, or the super
rich. And, further, (they would point out) that
only the short-sighted would fail to see that it
is in the interest of the entire community to
ensure that the poorest reach a minimum level
of basic survival before the richest pad their
own levels still more.

The lines remain somewhat blurred because, when
an activity is based in and with a community,
the subtle linguistic and theoretical differences
possible in the abstract are less visible.
Participatory research could well be seen as

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the first stage of a community development
process in theory. In practice, participatory
research places more emphasis on systematic
collective analysis of problems and refinement
of interpretation than does community development;
however, for most advocates of either, it is
the results which count rather than the
terminology.

(4)   The criticism that participatory research fails
to distinguish between the process of seeking and
applying knowledge points out another
fundamental difference in approaches to analysis.
Griffith and Cristarella seek knowledge and
facts in an either/or situation. Seeking and
applying knowledge and subjectivity and
objectivity are seen as distinct and separate
processes. From a dialectical point of view,
there is a necessary interrelationship and
interaction. Seeking and applying knowledge
are both parts of the dialectic of knowledge
creation. Knowledge is produced through the
interaction of reflection and action.

(5,6,7)   A minor response to a minor criticism in point
5 is this: in criticizing this author for the
use of the word "should " as evidence of the
possession of personal beliefs, Griffith and
Cristarella imply that I *should not* use it.
As to our penchant for "hubris" and "oracular
pronouncements," I would say that enthusiasm
on our part, particularly in the first papers,
combined with a defensiveness on their part
may have produced that impression. Let me
apologize if that is a more general impression.
It is only too clear to all of us that we
know very little and have only begun this
exploration. We are neither first nor unique;
we are simply engaged. We have from the
beginning urged involvement and criticism, and
we continue to do so.

Their final point (actually one of their first
in the paper) is that our pleas will sway the
"guideless" adult educators. That kind of
paternalism and elitism is particularly

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disturbing. It would seem to me that adult
educators will do what anyone else will do.
They will try new ideas and, if they work, they
will use them. If they do not work, the ideas
will be discarded -- with or without some kind
of protective professionalism from on high.

Points Raised and Responses
to the Tanzanian Critique

1. Advocates of the approach have rarely questioned the
    class interests that the researcher objectively
    serves and the false consciousness or ignorance
    of the oppressed, who are blinded by ruling class
    ideologies or their own petty property interests
    (in the case of the peasantry).

2. Participatory research is eclectic, open-ended, and
    effused with humanistic idealism.

3. Participatory research has disregarded the importance
    of detailed theory-building.

4. A more effective route to the goals claimed by the
    advocates of participatory research is the method
    of historical materialism, which defines social
    transformation in terms of the progressive development
    of the class struggle.

In response:

For two reasons, the criticism from Tanzania of the
early developments of participatory research have played
a very important role in shaping our work: (a) because
Tanzania was central to the beginning of the participatory
research network, and (b) because the Tanzanian critiques
share a common commitment to improving the conditions
of life and access to power of the poorest classes.

(1) Reaction to this point has produced two results:
     (a) a more explicit and thorough analysis of
     the role of research in the state from a class
     framework and a more self-critical look at the
     role of middle-class researchers in overall
     social transformation; (b) this point has
     stimulated a recognition of the importance

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of continuing *micro* and *macro* research.
Effective action is based on effective analysis.
Participatory research can produce detailed
knowledge about the ways in which certain social
conditions function, but some kinds of
information are only known outside the community.
The ideal situation would appear to be a
combination of a political-economic view with
the detailed and mobilizing potential of
participatory research.

(2)   Participatory research is still eclectic; it is
      still evolving and still seeking new expression.
      At this stage, many feel that it is still
      important to maintain that openness and
      eclecticism, at least regarding modes of
      collective analysis and means of involving
      people in common actions. As with most activities
      which begin in a humanist mold and try to
      confront social reality, realism, humility, and
      cynicism have grown as our work as taken us
      into many concrete and complex situations.

(3)   Again, this point is well taken. The question
      raised in response must be this: *How is theory
      built?* People like Glaser and Strauss, working
      on grounded theory, demonstrate one approach.
      Theory from a dialectical materialist point of
      view is the synthesis of theory and practice.
      A more thorough analysis of what constitutes
      practice is necessary because the universities
      of the world are replete with Marxist scholars
      who are removed from action and change and as
      isolated from working men and women as the most
      ardent neo-classical economist.

(4)   This last point remains to be explored more
      thoroughly. At this point, most advocates of
      participatory research would not agree that
      the method of historical materialism is sufficient
      in itself to bring about the goals of structural
      transformation. The creation of class consciousness
      does not occur entirely by outside researchers'
      analysis of class structure and social formations.
      This needs to be refined and confirmed by people
      themselves in the analysis of their own situations.

DIRECTIONS FOR FURTHER WORK

During the past year and a half, the Participatory
Research Project has concentrated on becoming engaged
in a variety of direct participatory research experiences.
It is the intention now to begin a new phase of
reflection based not only on direct and personal
involvements but rather on shared analysis of others'
experiences. A number of the following themes have been
identified as useful for elaboration and exploration:

- Examination of experiences in visual modes of
  collective analysis

- Examination of the means by which community-
  based analysis contributes to the development
  of theory

- Examination of the interrelationships between
  the roles of middle-class professionals and
  the issues of control of research and collective
  analysis

- Examination of the question of scale in
  participatory research (Must it be local/small
  scale?)

- Examination of the workings of participatory
  research in the variety of different social
  and historical contexts: formal groups, paid
  work, unpaid work, supportive and non-supportive
  environments.

- Examination of the use of collective analysis
  in the user choice of alternative technologies

- Examination of epistemological implications for
  adult learning theory of results from participatory
  research

CONCLUSIONS

One of the strongest impressions I have after working with
people in many countries who are engaged in social

struggles is that the knowledge which is most central to
their success is that which exists in the minds of the
men and women who *keep going*. All the years of organized
professional social science research and all the vast
heaps of print which have somehow contributed to that
mystical body of knowledge have offered little direct
help either to the reduction of suffering or to the
improvement of the welfare of the world's population.
This recognition is, at the same time, the means of
maintaining our humility and the stimulus to keep working.

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A CONCEPTUAL AND METHODOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE CONCERNING RESEARCH ON PARTICIPATION IN ADULT EDUCATION

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INTRODUCTION

The last five years have witnessed a phenomenal growth in
the adult education enterprise and almost universal
adoption of lifelong education as the master concept for
the organization of educational systems. Accelerating
social change, ecological perils, and the existence of
problems that cannot be met through schooling have created
a situation where adults must continue to learn. Learning
is required for successful living. It is essential to the
maintenance of democratic societies and life-support
systems (Boshier, 1978a). For adults to learn successfully,
they must have opportunities to participate in programs
where conditions have been arranged to result in high
levels of learning.

Education should not be limited to children and adolescents.
Policy-makers must realize that social, economic, and
cultural goals cannot be achieved without coherent social
policies that place a high premium on participation in
adult education. In some parts of the world, governments
are creating new legislation and operations designed to
improve learning opportunities for adults. Many Third
World governments view partic.pation in adult education as
essential to social and economic development; governments
in developed parts of the world are placing particular
stress on "open learning" or distance education. But
everywhere the danger exists that the burgeoning field of
adult education and innovations flowing from lifelong
education will flounder because of inadequate participation
research.

Policies based on the notion of lifelong education have
numerous goals, e.g., to result in many forms of formal
and informal opportunities for learning; to erode barriers
between segments of the education system; to link educational
policies to national and international aspirations for
social, economic, and cultural development; and to eradicate
barriers which impede access to educational opportunity.

Democratization

A fundamental principle of lifelong education concerns
democratization. The concept consists of two elements:
the involvement of participants in the planning of their
own learning experiences and the removal of barriers that
impede access to opportunities for learning. These elements
of a democratized learning society are demanded by the
authors of the Faure (1972) report, by international
conference delegates (UNESCO, 1972; UNESCO, 1976), and by
others wanting to harness community resources for education
and learning. De-schooling advocates such as Illich (1970)
also want education democratized; however, they argue that
while most resources for education are poured into institu-
tions, democratization is not likely to occur.

Although calls for democratization became strident in the
1960s, adult education traditionally has manifested concern
for learners from the lower socio-economic groups and has
shown awareness that participants should be involved in
the program planning process. These themes emerged in the
Adult Education Committee Report presented to the British
Ministry of Re-Construction (1919), in literature produced
by the founders of the Workers' Educational Association
(Mansbridge, 1920), by Lindeman (1926), and in the first
"textbook" of adult education (Bryson, 1936). Authors of
the 1919 report confidently suggested adult education was
a "permanent national necessity" and should be "universal
and lifelong."

The first element of democratization (involving the learners)
is incorporated into program planning through the needs
analysis and objective-setting processes. At the instruc-
tional level, good adult educators actively engage partici-
pants in instructional design and management. An effective
instructor adapts external conditions for learning to the
characteristics of the adult learner (Knowles, 1970). The

second element of democratization involves removing
barriers that inhibit and creating incentives that enhance
the participation of persons in lower socio-economic groups.
As yet, few adult educators have developed reliable ways to
eradicate socio-economic barriers to education.

Participants in adult education institutions that have
conducted clientele surveys appear to be drawn in dis-
proportionate numbers from the upper socio-economic groups.
Twenty years ago, Verner and Newberry (1958) bemoaned this
situation and noted that adult education was widening the
gap between the educated and the educationally under-
privileged by encouraging the former to continue learning
and, therefore, keep in step with changing conditions,
while the latter group was left in a growing state of
maladjustment. Since the problem was not ameliorated in
the 1960s, the educational needs of disadvantaged persons
emerged as a major theme of the Third World Conference on
Adult Education (UNESCO, 1972).

Controversy surrounds the implications for democratic
government as a consequence of social apathy among certain
segments of the population (Dahl, 1963; Walker, 1966).
But adult educators agree that high levels of participation
should be encouraged. Advocates of participatory democracy
argue that participation is synonymous with power and,
hence, that social apathy should be discouraged. Adult
educators' traditional concern for participation will be
heightened as policies flowing from principles of lifelong
education are adopted. It also is apparent that lifelong
education and the future of adult education will be in-
hibited if researchers cannot create and test new ways to
involve lower socio-economic groups in learning and
education.

In most parts of the world, participation in adult education
could be dramatically increased and socio-economic barriers
diminished by passing legislation to make better provision
for satisfying adult learning needs, for example, paid
education leave, "educredits," entitlement, and improved
opportunities for informal education. In other words, the
extent to which participation remains a "problem" for adult
education depends partly upon the attitudes of governments
and policy-makers. In turn, policy-makers and practitioners
depend upon researchers to provide reliable and valid

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information concerning adult education phenomena. Hence, the need to conduct significant participation research will remain. Moreover, because adult education is moving from marginality to centrality, research findings will be more directly linked to policy than has been the case in the past. Thus, it becomes essential to eliminate conceptual and methodological problems that have weakened research on participation in adult education. Researchers should question the extent to which more descriptive, clientele surveys are required. They should employ multi-variate paradigms which portray variable interactions impelling people into and away from adult education. They should attend to models such as those provided by Boshier (1973), Knox and Videbeck (1963), and Miller (1967), which view participation as a transaction between variables.

STUDYING PARTICIPATION

Knowles (1973) listed six phases associated with development of fields of practice: definition, differentiation, standard-setting, technological refinement, respectability and justification, and understanding the dynamics of the field. Early meetings of the Commission of Professors of Adult Education (1955, 1957) were primarily concerned with definition and differentiation. Considerable effort was expended on formulating fundamental concepts for the identification and classification of adult education processes (Verner, 1962) and on developing strategies to measure the magnitude of the adult education enterprise. In a project resulting from Commission activities, Brunner, et al. (1959) observed that the voluntary nature of adult education makes participation a major problem because of the failure of many people to take advantage of opportunities provided. They noted the need to conduct experimental research with "differing groups, using varied approaches, materials and teaching methods" in order to facilitate particip _on.

Ex Post Facto Research

Despite these and other exhortations, attempts to facilitate understanding, prediction, and control of participation behavior have typically involved ex post facto and not experimental research. As Dickinson and Blunt (1979) noted,

the focus of adult education research over the last twenty
years has been concerned with describing the extent and
nature of the enterprise. They noted that an inevitable
consequence of this emphasis has been the predominance of
survey methods over other strategies employed to acquire
or create knowledge. Even Hudson, as far back as 1851,
noted that the public should be placed in possession of
such facts as can be collected in order to afford a just
estimate of the nature and ex   of the efforts of adult
education.

Participation surveys will continue to help shape local
and national adult education policies, to identify "target"
clienteles for adult education institutions, to establish
the extent to which institutional clienteles overlap, and
to identify potential participants not now involved in
adult education. Although diverse types of surveys are
attempted, they can still be classified into the categories
used by Brunner et al. (1959):

- Studies of participants in particular institutional
   programs

- Comparative studies of participants in different
   programs

- Community studies based on sampling to determine
   the extent to which particular programs reach
   various segments of the population

- Studies comparing participation in adult education
   ir corresponding samples drawn from selected
   communities

- State or province-wide studies of adult education
   participants in particular institutions or
   programs

- National studies of participants in one or more
   types of adult education institutions

Some adult education institutions collect participation
data for purely administrative purposes. These studies
have little or no impact on the discipline or agencies
other than the agency conducting the survey. However,

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other participation studies, such as the massive project conducted by the National Opinion Research Center (NORC) have had considerable impact on researchers, politicians, and practitioners. In fact, the NORC study (Johnstone and Rivera, 1965) was cited in the journal *Adult Education* more often between 1968 and 1978 than any other book or article (Boshier and Pickard, 1979).

Many of the early clientele surveys established benchmark data which demonstrated the nature and extent of the adult education enterprise; however, few proceeded with what Knox and Videbeck (1963) called an "analytic eye." Most were atheoretical. They failed to capture important variable interactions which determine participation. They also did not lead to properly conceived experimental research designed to dismantle barriers which impede or create circumstances which enhance participation. Despite the exhortations of Knox and Videbeck (1963), researchers have largely been unable to view participation within a conceptual framework which encompasses the total range of activities in which individuals participate. Few attempts have been made to go beyond reciting correlations between static variables and participation. Relationships between participation in adult education and other closely related domains remain largely unexplored. Furthermore, despite the promise of "ecological" approaches mentioned by Brunner et al. (1959) nearly twenty years ago, few researchers seem attracted to powerful multi-variate paradigms which have the potential to capture the reality of why people participate in adult education.

Johnstone and Rivera's (1965) very comprehensive study was an explanatory survey which provided a model for other researchers. As one of the best adult education participation surveys performed, it demonstrated the magnitude and dispersed nature of adult education. Yet, despite these exemplary qualities, it resulted in a bookload of contingency tables and frequency counts which failed to accurately represent variable configurations which impel people into or away from adult education. The analysis portrayed participation as stemming from variables such as age, country of birth, occupation, religious affiliation, and so on. Although tables showed variables in three or four dimensions, the analysis was not sufficiently focused on variable interactions, and the researchers eschewed powerful

parametric statistics in favor of less powerful non-parametric approaches. Although powerful multi-variate paradigms have emerged since the NORC data were analyzed, Johnstone and Rivera could have employed regression, factor, or other multi-variate statistical analyses. Furthermore, their variable-by-variable analysis created a situation whereby other researchers and practitioners have drawn what might be erroneous conclusions from the NORC survey.

One example concerns the "typical" adult education partici-pant. In *Volunteers for Learning*, Johnstone and Rivera (1965) described the typical participant in these terms:

> ...as often a woman as a man, is typically under
> forty, has completed high school or more, enjoys
> an above average income, works full-time and most
> often in a white-collar occupation, is married
> and has children, lives in an urbanized area
> but more likely in a suburb than in a large city,
> and is found in all parts of the country, but
> more frequently in the West than in other
> regions. (p. 8)

This participant profile was not based on a study of variable interactions. Indeed, it is possible that no participant in their sample manifested all of the character-istics listed in the profile. There are ways of generating conceptually acceptable descriptions of the participants and nonparticipants. If the dependent variable is dichotomous, a discriminant function analysis would create variable combinations used to classify participants and nonparticipants. The percent of the sample correctly classified would measure the extent to which variables used account for variance in participation. If the dependent variable is continuous, there are procedures to reveal the separate and interactive effects of independent variables.

Participation appears to occur as a function of interactions between psychological and social variables and opportunities presented by institutional or noninstitutional arrangements for education. Variables such as those studied in the Johnstone and Rivera and other surveys account for some variance in participation. But relationships between participation and single social or demographic variables

are rarely powerful enough to persuade adult education administrators to change policies. Furthermore, the atheoretical nature of the early clientele surveys ensured that they had limited long-term utility. Participation occurs as a function of variable interactions, and therefore researchers should employ multi-variate paradigms. Indeed, if Johnstone and Rivera's data were reanalyzed within frameworks provided by multi-variate paradigms, it is possible that the effects of some hallowed and allegedly powerful variables might disappear.

Variable Interaction

About the same time as the NORC analysis was conducted, Knox and Videbeck (1963) published a paper which should have influenced the direction of participation research. These authors noted that previous research had largely been descriptive. They outlined the extent to which adult educators were conducting clientele surveys, and, most importantly, they observed that participation occurs as a result of an interaction between an individual and his or her environment. In their theory of "patterned activities," they distinguished between discrete actions (such as going to a store, reading a newspaper, and eating dinner) and "recurrent behavioral sequences" in which individuals engage. "Patterned participation" occurs not because of single psychological or environmental variables but rather as a result of person/environment transactions. The theory of patterned participation

> ...incorporates within a single conceptual scheme
> not only psychological orientations but also
> social systems and environmental factors in such
> a way that they can be jointly brought to bear
> in examination of variations in participation.
> (p. 105)

Participation was viewed as resulting from an interaction between an individual's "subjective orientation" and the "objective organization or behavioral settings contained within an individual's life space." Hence, "participatory responses" would be critically affected by changes in an individual's life-space or life-circumstance. Knox (1977) subsequently organized a book around this idea but, in a 1963 research report, argued that the transactional orientation requires that variables impelling participation be

considered "in concert rather than singly." In the
accompanying data analysis, the interactive effects of
five "statuses" (sex, socio-economic status, martial
status, employment, number of children) were considered.
This study was available four years before Miller (1967),
presented his force-fields, and was a precursor of later
attempts to portray participation as a phenomenon with
multi-variate origins.

Most of the early participation surveys focused on
institutional forms of adult education, but, during the
last decade, the promotion of lifelong education has
spawned investigations concerning participation in self-
directed adult learning projects (e.g., Tough, 1971) and
concerning education occurring in noninstitutional
settings. Unfortunately, proponents of self-directed
learning have employed research methodologies which largely
emulate the weakest features of traditional participation
studies. The utility of their research also has been
inhibited by a failure to adequately reflect variable
interactions which determine self-directed learning behavior.
Researchers (largely graduate students) are continuing the
practices of their professors, producing contingency tables
and correlation coefficients that show the strength of
association between frequency of learning projects and
such variables as age, occupation, and socio-economic
status. Few employ anything as complex as a regression
equation or Automatic Interaction Detector (AID) (Sonquist
et al., 1971) algorithm capable of identifying variable
combinations that cause some participants to engage in
many adult learning projects and others to engage in only
a few. It is perhaps a forlorn hope to expect that
researchers will use powerful parametric and multi-variate
statistics. Proponents of self-directed learning sometimes
denigrate institutional forms of adult education, but, in
their research, appear trapped in the same analytical
dead-end as their "traditional" colleagues.

DROPOUT

In 1814 Thomas Pole recommended that "conductors" of adult
classes visit the homes of dropout participants "to prevent
the learners from laxing their attendance." Pole might
be surprised to le.   that the problem is just as acute

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today and likely to worsen as advocates of lifelong
education experiment with new and untested methods of
delivering educational services to adults.

Dropping out can be viewed as related or unrelated to
nonparticipation. From one perspective, dropout can be
viewed as a continuation of nonparticipation; thus,
variables which impede participation are assumed to be
the same as or similar to those that cause dropout. An
alternative view portrays dropout occurring as a function
of variables that do not impel participation. With few
exceptions (e.g., Sainty, 1971), dropout research also
has been inhibited by overattachment to bi-variate
contingency tables and faulty conceptualization. Although
dropouts often "explain" their behavior by reference to
single variables such as "the weather," "tiredness,"
"transportation difficulties," and so on, most practitioners
sense that, like participation, dropping out is a complex
and subtle process that rarely has single-variable origins.
It occurs as a function of interactions between several
variables.

The first researchers seeking to understand, predict, and
control dropping out adapted analytical strategies which
failed to capture important variable interactions. Few,
if any, portrayed dropout as a phenomenon occurring as
a function of an interaction between more than two variables.
It appears that the earliest researchers attributed the
"blame" for dropout to internal participant variables.
People drop out because they lack intelligence, are too
anxious, lack motivation, and so on. Studies conducted
from this frame of reference yielded some significant
correlations. But when each variable was considered
separately, it did not account for sufficient variance
to warrant administrative action. Program planners were
unwilling to screen participants using psychological
variables that account for trivial amounts of dropout
variance. When this frame of reference yielded little of
practical relevance, researchers turned to social variables.
When these were apparently exhausted, the "blame" shifted
to environmental variables. Researchers tried to explain
dropout variance using variables such as transportation
difficulties, distance travelled, class size, weather
conditions, and so on. Environmental variables also
accounted for some dropout variance, but the amount was
insufficient to justify administrative action.

Toward the late 1960s it became apparent that participation
and dropout research was approaching a dead-end. It was
largely atheoretical, impeded by lack of common definitions
identifying the phenomena, complicated by the burgeoning
interest in self-directed learning and education occurring
in noninstitutional settings, and studied with analytic
strategies that failed to portray variable interactions.
The atheoretical nature of the research was partly mitigated
by the massive nature of the data collection enterprise.
Johnstone and Rivera gathered data on 24,000 adults, 1,900
married youths, and 11,554 children. Boshier (1970; 1971;
1971a) secured more than one million items of data from
3,000 New Zealand adult education participants. In
California, London et al. (1963) administered questionnaires
to or conducted interviews with 4,929 persons. But it was
apparent that new directions were needed.

NEW DIRECTIONS

When the present writer conducted pilot studies (Boshier,
1969) on aspects of participation and dropout in New
Zealand, the need to do two things became obvious: (1)
check the cross-cultural generality of findings derived
from overseas participation surveys such as those by
Johnstone and Rivera (1965), London et al. (1963), Hanna
(1965), and Dickinson (1966); and (2) develop a theoretical
mode. and instrumentation that would portray the phenomena
of interest in a manner more closely approximating reality
than had been the case previously. The isolation of New
Zealand facilitated rather than impeded the process, since
there was no national adult education research tradition
to emulate. Thus, it did not take much effort to conceive
of participation and dropout as involving a transaction
between participants and environments. This conception
was not novel; it had been stated earlier by Knox and
Videbeck (1963) and had provided the foundation for Beal's
(1956) analysis of "dynamic" determinants of participation.

The task force confronted also was assisted by Miller's
(1967) force-field analysis which provided a framework
for understanding and controlling participation behavior.
Using Lewin's (1936) field theory, Miller suggested that
participation in adult education occurs as a function of
interactions between personal needs and social structures.

When needs and social structures both "push" the participant toward an educational objective, participation in programs relevant to that objective is likely to occur. When needs push a person toward an objective but are not complemented by sustaining social structures, participation behavior will be nonexistent or erractic. When needs are low and social structures strong, participation will be high but will drop off after an initial period. When personal needs and social structures conflict, participation will depend upon the strength of the social force -- but there will be tension within the program. Miller summarized the personal needs and social forces assumed to influence the participation behavior of people from four major socio-economic groups. His force fields were intuitive attempts to show how personal needs and social class values and structures combined to determine participation behavior. This was an important analysis because it stressed the interaction between internal and external variables. It also showed that an increase in forces pushing toward or a decrease in forces pushing against participation could upset equilibrium and change behavior. The force-field analysis has not led to much empirical research but seems well suited to magnitude estimation scaling techniques developed in psycho-physics (Stevens, 1951) and recently applied to adult education (Blunt, 1977).

Miller's analysis was congruent with theoretical and empirical developments in psychology and organizational behavior that became evident during the 1960s and early 1970s. Miller (1967) indicated that he was not attempting to build a theory, noting that "we can do little more at this point than sketch some hypothesized relations among the variables which appear to have some bearing" on partici-pation (p. 1). Although Miller never completed the task, his analysis remains one of the better theoretical models available to adult educators.

Congruence

In addition to Miller's analysis, other models have helped shape the notion of congruence eventually employed by Boshier (1973) in a study of participation and dropout. For example, Festinger (1957; 1964) showed that cognitive dissonance is an uncomfortable and debilitating psychologi--cal state which humans try to avoid or resolve quickly.

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Attitude researchers (e.g., McGuire, 1968; Scott, 1968; Simons et al., 1970) showed that the extent to which people are willing to change attitudes varies as a function of the degree of perceived similarity between themselves and the change agent (hence, the advertising industry's use of the "plain folks" device). Researchers investigating interpersonal attraction (e.g., Lott and Lott, 1965) produced results resembling those in the attitude-change literature. Transactional psychologists performed an array of experiments (e.g., Ames, 1951) throughout the 1950s and 1960s, showing that an apparently veridical view of the world is distorted by internal psychological variables.

Lewin (1936) earlier had warned that scientific activities must have regard for whole situations, that is, the state of both person and environment. He wrote that "this implies that it is necessary to find methods of representing person and environment in common terms as parts of one situation" (pp. 12-13). Stern (1970) later noted that while the need for a holistic or transactional position was often stated, few researchers had managed to bridge the gap between abstract theorizing and formal operations. Herein rests the weakness of the Miller (1967) force-field; conceptually it was suggestive but not converted to research operations. In psychology, attempts to convert transactional frameworks into formal operations are found in the need/press model of Murray (1938), the person/ environment congruence notions of Stern (1970), the theories of attitude structure and change (Heider, 1958; Newcomb, 1959), and the writings of cognitive consistency theorists who demonstrated the human preference for stability, homeostasis, balance, consistency, and consonance. Almost any of these formulations represent a body of theory that could be used as a tool to facilitate understanding, prediction, and control of adult education participation and dropout behavior. [Note: Theory has both tool and goal functions. Theory development is the ultimate goal of science, but theories are also used as tools to guide the research process. For a further discussion of this distinction, see Marx (1970); and for its relevance to adult education research, see Boshier (1978b).]

The notion of congruence finally employed by the writer was primarily based on the personality theories of Rogers

(1959) and Lecky (1945) which elevated the self-concept to a central position. The self-concept, like any group of attitudes held by a person, is subject to organizing principles. New Zealand psychologists (Wilson, 1973; Bagley, Wilson, and Boshier, 1970) used factor analysis to show that social attitudes are organized into a general factor. A person who favors the death penalty also has harsh and punitive attitudes towards immigrants, minorities, and so on. Attitudes are internally consistent. An individual's self-concept is organized in a similar fashion. As Lecky (1945) noted:

> ...all of an individual's values are organized into a single system, the preservation of whose integrity is essential. The nucleus of the system, around which the rest of the system revolves, is the individual's valuation of himself. The individual sees the world from his own viewpoint, with himself as the center. Any value entering the system which is inconsistent with the individual's valuation of himself cannot be assimilated; it meets with resistance and is likely, unless a general reorganization occurs, to be rejected. (p. 82)

According to Lecky, the human organism is a unified system with two sets of problems -- to maintain inner harmony *and* harmony with the environment. The second problem can be resolved only by keeping interpretations consistent with experience. Similarly, in Murray's (1938) need/press model a *dissonant* relationship arises in an unstable needs/press combination which must lead either to modification of the press in a more congruent direction or to a withdrawal of participants -- unless artificial equilibrium is maintained through coercion.

It appeared that dropout from adult education involves person/environment transactions. Earlier researchers attended to appropriate variables, but few of the analyses captured variable interactions. A similar situation led Knoell (1966) to exhort researchers to have more regard for environmental press as a factor in dropout from college and Pervin (1960) to stress the importance of achieving a match or fit between participants and educational environments. An earlier observation by Cronbach (1957) seemed

particularly apt. He noted that "if for each environment there is a best organism, for every organism there is a best environment" (p. 679). There was nothing novel about this orientation; however, developments in high-speed computing, advances in multi-variate statistics, and exhortations to view the world from ecological perspectives made it easier to study person/environment transactions than had been the case throughout the 1950s.

At a broad level, the entire field of adult education is founded on the notion of congruence. Adult educators are supposed to be democratic; they diagnose needs and plan programs congruent with participant needs and expectations. As applied to participation and dropout, congruence refers to the goodness of fit between a participant and his or her educational environment. In operations which flowed from this conceptualization, the focus was on the extent to which participants perceived themselves to be congruent with other participants and their instructor (Boshier, 1973). It was found that participants who dropped out of adult education classes perceived themselves to be signi- ficantly more incongruent than participants who persisted.

The semantic differential concepts and scales used to investigate this conceptualization do not capture the full significance of congruence states observed in most adult education environments. The focus in the initial attempt (Boshier, 1973) to employ this notion was on congruence states that develop between people (participants and instructors) in adult education environments. Although crucial, these psychological congruence states are sometimes transcended by the dismal nature of physical facilities provided for adult learners. An unfortunate concomitant of policies designed to implement principles of lifelong education is that adults often are required to sit in classrooms and use furniture designed for children. Whereas proponents of community education regard the education of adults as a desirable use of school facilities, many adults feel incongruent in child-oriented environments. It is little wonder that adults, as volunteers for learning, vote with their feet.

Recent Research

Researchers have been slow to conduct studies based on force-field analyses or the notion of congrue.ce. But one

project (Boshier and Baker, 1979) involved an attempt to conduct research in a manner conforming to some of the exhortations described above. These writers acknowledged that attempts to facilitate the participation behavior of lower socio-economic groups could be enhanced through the weakening of forces pushing against and strengthening of forces pushing for participation. Stated another way, it was suggested that participation could be facilitated by inducing congruence between participants and educational environments. The most powerful results would accrue from strategies simultaneously modifying both the "participant" and "environment" ends of the participant/environment transaction. Research of this nature would require major controls and interventions which many adult education organizations might be unwilling to tolerate.

Boshier and Baker chose to modify adult education fees. In support of the research strategy adopted, they noted a persistent belief in the fact participation rates can be changed and new clientele attracted by the modification of such major environmental variables as fee policies. The belief stems from clientele surveys which habitually distinguish participants from nonparticipants according to variables related to socio-economic status. Fees act both as a psychological and a financial barrier to participation. Poor people do not participate because they are unwilling to pay for something which they perceive as being of low value (psychological barrier); they literally cannot afford money to buy educational services (financial barrier). The situation for members of the middle or upper socio-economic groups is one where moderate or small fees are not a financial hardship but, acting jointly with other variables, represent a psychological barrier to participation. Following this line of reasoning, it could be argued that non-fee courses would attract more participants (of all socio-economic levels) than would fee courses. It also could be argued that because a major financial barrier had been removed, the non-fee courses would attract a greater proportion of people from the lower socio-economic groups than would fee courses.

In developing the problem, the researchers noted that despite the urgency accorded demands for democratization, educational entitlement, paid educational leave, and other policies flowing from principles of lifelong education, few adult educators have experimented with free programs

because their marginality usually requires fee income to support staff and other services (Clark, 1958). Boshier and Baker's project was conducted in an institution where administrators were willing to sacrifice fee income for research purposes. The project was concerned with studying the effects of fees on adult education participation patterns (the number of people enrolled) and on the characteristics of participants attracted to fee and non-fee classes. The study was significant because: fees can be systematically controlled by both administrators and researchers, the effects of fees on enrollment patterns are largely unknown, and educators are under pressure to implement policies congruent with the notion of educational entitlement. Accompanying pressure for entitlement is a concern that elimination of fees might benefit only the traditional, that is, "well-heeled," participant. The task of the project was to remove fees systematically from one-half of the courses in an entire school board adult education program in an attempt to examine enrollment patterns; the number of participants attracted to fee and non-fee courses; and the social, demographic, and motivational characteristics of participants attracted to such courses.

Subjects for this study were 721 adults enrolled in fifty-two courses sponsored by two British Columbia community schools. The design resembled a quasi-experimental design, involving random assignment of subjects to treatment and control groups. However, courses -- not people-- were randomly assigned to a fee and non-fee condition. The situation can be portrayed as follows:

$$R_c \qquad X_i \qquad 0_1$$

$$R_c \qquad X_{ii} \qquad 0_2$$
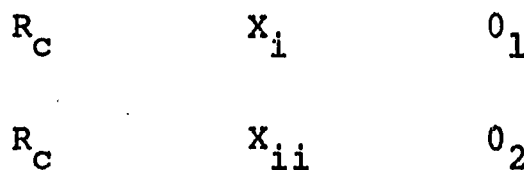
This diagram employed Campbell and Stanley's (1963) nomenclature. (R_c) indicates the random assignment of courses to a fee (X_i) or non-fee (X_{ii}) condition. (0_1) and (0_2) were observations of participants undertaken during the second session of their fee or non-fee course. Subjects were not randomly assigned to fee or non-fee courses; they selected their course (presumably) on the

basis of their own needs and interests and information
contained in the brochure. In Campbell and Stanley's
nomenclature, R means randomization of subjects to
treatment groups. To reinforce that, in this study,
courses and not subjects were randomized; the letter "c"
is used to indicate randomization of courses. (O_1) and
(O_2) involved administration of the Education Participation
Scale (E.P.S.) (Boshier, 1971) and a questionnaire eliciting
"threshold" fee information and data on twenty-seven social
and demographic variables.

Although the randomization process resulted in the
advertising of an approximately even number of fee and
non-fee classes, nearly 500 of the 721 participants opted
to enroll in non-fee courses. There were 499 (69.21
percent) participants in non-fee and 222 (30.79 percent)
participants in fee courses. The 499 non-fee payers were
enrolled in thirty-one courses, with an average of 16.10
participants in each course. The 222 fee payers were
enrolled in twenty fee courses, with an average enrollment
of 11.10 participants per fee course. (Nine fee courses
and only one non-fee course were cancelled because of
insufficient enrollment.) Thus, non-fee courses attracted
greater numbers of participants, had a higher enrollment
per course, and were less likely to be cancelled than were
fee courses. It appears, then, that the absence of a fee
is a powerful inducement which influences gross enrollment
rates.

A single variable analysis showed that on six ordinal (or
interval) variables and three nominal variables, fee and
non-fee-paying participants differed significantly. But,
in general, the analysis resulted in a fee-paying partici-
pant "profile" which strongly resembled the "profile" of
the typical non-fee-payer. In pursuit of variable con-
figurations that would more adequately predict fee status,
a decision was made to employ the multi-variate algorithm
embodied in the AID3 sub-routine of OSIRIS. AID3 is a
regression-like procedure employing independent variables
in a stepwise manner in attempts to account for variance
in a dependent variable. It has several features which
make it more attractive than the usual stepwise regression
procedures. Apart from its ability to detect variable
interactions, AID3 was well suited to the problem because
it can accept a mixture of nominal, ordinal, and interval
data as input. It can cope with variables which have an

effect mediated by other variables. A total of 35.1 percent of the variance in fee status was explained by the configurations of variables in the AID3 analysis. Of the seventeen independent variables split, the five most powerful predictors of fee or non-fee status were "day of the course," "family income," "neighborhood or residence," "types of accommodation," and enrollment for "cognitive interest." These five variables in their various configurations accounted for 19.6 percent of the variance in fee status.

Although the free courses attracted significantly more participants than did those which required fee payment, and although more than a third of the fee-status variance could be explained, the non-fee participant group was not significantly more "disadvantaged" than the fee-paying participant group. This study is cited here as an example of research conducted in the general frame of reference suggested by Miller's force fields and Boshier's notion of congruence. The results must be treated with extreme caution, and it should not be used to debunk free courses because the study involved a leisure-centered adult education program where the mean fee was only $9.10. Until further research is conducted, it would be prudent to assume that the situation could vary as a function of program type, fee size, and other variables. Nevertheless, the results suggested that attempts to increase the participation behavior of lower socio-economic groups will probably require modification of both person and environment variables that make up transactions which impel or inhibit participation.

OUTSTANDING ISSUES

Since the heyday of the large clientele surveys, the nature of the participation problem has changed. Powerful multi-variate approaches, advances in statistics and computing, and the adoption of ecological approaches (Warren and Warren, 1977) to social research have emerged and should engender novel and conceptually sound ways of viewing participation. Nevertheless, the changing status of adult education (from marginality to centrality), the importance ascribed to non-institutional settings, rhetoric extolling the virtues of self-directed learning, lack of attendance

to canons of social research, and reluctance to conduct
experimental research are still impeding progress. One
continuing problem stems from an inability to define the
phenomenon of interest. Another stems from the need to
conduct experimental participation research.

Problems of Definition

One of the first tasks tackled by the Commission of
Professors of Adult Education (1955; 1957) concerned the
need to identify fundamental concepts of adult education.
The systematic collection of data about and the study of
participation in adult education is dependent upon the
ability to define adult education. Verner (1962) provided
an operationally useful, if somewhat contentious, definition--
adult education is planned and organized, provided by
some social instrumentality, and has as its purpose the
facilitation of adult learning. Verner's definition has
been modified since it was first proposed, delimiting
boundaries around the phenomenon of interest and acknowl-
edging the importance of self-education (see Dickinson,
1978).

Verner's definition rests on an important distinction
between education and learning. Learning is an internal
psychological process. Education involves the systematic
arrangement of external conditions for learning. Despite
this crucial distinction, there has been a tendency to
debunk the notion of adult education because it is "tired"
(Lowe, 1978); implies an elementary, secondary, and adult
education sequence; or only denotes learning which occurs
in institutional settings. Some definition problems stem
from attempts to place adult education concepts and processes
on single continua, with self-directed learning and institu-
tional education discussed as if they formed the extreme
ends of a single continuum. The situation can be clarified
by distinguishing between education and learning, self-
directedness and direction-by-others, institutional and
non institutional settings for education, and program
planning and instruction. Little (1978) acknowledged these
distinctions and has shown that education occurs in both
institutional and noninstitutional settings, that both
institutional and noninstitutional forms of education
vary in the extent to which the learner is self-directed,
and that adult education is not synonymous with adult
learning.

Some proponents of self-directed learning want to extend
the boundaries of adult education to encompass all human
performance and behavior change. It is conceptually
unsound and operationally impossible to encompass all
casual and incidental learning occurring through exposure
to mass media, friends, and chance encounters under the
rubric of "adult education." Furthermore, "conclusions"
derived from dubious research instruments and designs
impede progress and damage the practice of adult education.
Statements concerning the extent of self-directed learning
based on possibly unreliable and invalid "depth interviews"
should be treated with considerable caution. "Depth
interviews" which require a respondent to report on learning
projects conducted fifty years ago should be disregarded
entirely (see Boshier, 1978). Literature produced to
buttress the notion of self-directed learning also evokes
the following causes for concern: the authors allow
emotional commitments to obscure crucial conceptual and
methodological questions; researchers do not consider the
extent to which instruments are reliable or valid; massive
generalizations are made on the basis of interviews with
few subjects; and there is little consistency in the way
researchers define dependent and independent variables.
The danger exists that the need to encourage self-directed
learning will be submerged beneath methodological wrangles
that must inevitably accompany attempts to synthesize
relevant literature. Nevertheless, it is clear that
researchers must and should attend to the participation
behavior of learners who choose natural societal or non-
institutional settings to engage in learning or education.

The definition problem is heightened by the emergence of
new clients for adult or other branches of education. For
instance, adults are returning to universities in increasing
numbers. Are they engaged in higher education for adults,
adult higher education, adult education, or higher education?
Some tension in graduate departments of adult education
arises from the fact that they teach adult education (as
a subject) but operate within the constraints of a higher
education institution. The same problem of definition
applies to adults returning to high school. They are
adults and involved in education, but the character of the
processes employed suggests that those adults are more
involved in youth education for adults than in adult
education. These perennial issues are discussed in the

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introduction to an Organisation for Economic Cooperation
and Development (1977) study and a study by Little (1978).
They represent key problems for participation research.

Need for Experimentation

Large-scale clientele surveys helped measure the magnitude
of the adult education enterprise, alerted practitioners
to processes which result in elitism, and eroded a
persistent belief that education is necessarily synonymous
with schooling. They also helped illustrate the institu-
tionally dispersed nature of adult education (see Schroeder,
1970) and showed that adults learn from a variety of
educators ranging from enthusiastic amateurs to paid
professionals (Houle, 1970). Through surveys it was
possible to describe the nature of adult education and to
make predictions concerning variables which, if manipulated,
might result in increased levels of participation. There
is a strong survey tradition in adult education. Some
graduate departments of adult education (such as the
University of British Columbia) have conducted more than
a hundred participation surveys. However, benefits
resulting from large-scale surveys no longer justify the
costs associated with conducting them. Participation in
adult education can be established by surveying instru-
mentalities that provide adult education; however, so many
agencies and institutions are involved that it is impossible
to identify them all. As a result, "conspicuous" providers
are surveyed, and the results are biassed or incomplete.

Several years ago, both Boshier (1973) and Douglah (1970)
wanted to declare a moratorium on *ex post facto* participa-
tion research. Nearly twenty years ago, Brunner et al.
(1959) stated that experimental participation research
was needed. But there is little evidence to suggest that
experimental research has filled the vacuum. *Ex post
facto* research produced valid predictions concerning
adult education participation; now it is time to identify
and manipulate variables hypothesized to impede or enhance
participation. If researchers are not satisfied with
current theoretical models, they can proceed inductively
through experiment. It would be desirable if future
doctoral dissertations reporting participation research
consisted of five or six experimental projects, each
involving manipulation of one, two, or three crucial

variables in some sort of factorial design. If circum-
stances in the field constrain the logistics, one or
more c⁻ the acceptable quasi-experimental designs (Campbell
and Stanley, 1963) may be employed. Some *ex post facto*
research is bound to continue. It should not be modelled
on previous studies, such as Johnstone and Rivera, but
should employ multi-variate approaches sensitive to variable
interactions and the ecological foundations of participation
behavior. Experimental participation research or well-
designed *ex post facto* research represents a good opportun-
ity for cooperation between researchers and practitioners.

In conclusion, it appears that adoption of lifelong
education principles requires the systematic collection of
adult education participation data. This task should be
routinely performed by national, provincial, or state
government authorities. Adult educators should certainly
consult with government authorities concerning the conceptual
foundations of questions to be included in census forms or
other large-scale collection exercises. However, they
should carefully consider the extent to which they should
themselves undertake further large-scale descriptive
research.

Finally, the difficulties and costs associated with large-
scale descriptive research *and* an apparent inability to
develop a commonly acceptable definition of the phenomenon
of interest and new imperatives associated with adoption
of lifelong education policies have created a situation
which requires that scarce resources should be given to
research where --

   • the project is guided by or will result in
     a coherent theory or model which has
     utility beyond the immediate problem;

   • the investigator intends to manipulate
     variables in an attempt to facilitate
     participation;

   • the theory or model has the power to explain
     (and will lead to policies designed to
     ameliorate) the nonparticipation behavior
     of people from the lower socio-economic
     groups;

- the investigator proposes to employ an analytic strategy which reflects participation occurring as a function of variable interactions; and

- the theory or model employed is parsimonious, significant, and testable.

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THE OLDER ADULT LEARNER: A RE-EXAMINATION OF BASIC CONCEPTUALIZATIONS OF LEARNING

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An inquiry into the older adult cannot ignore the views
society has towards aging. In one way or another, these
views shape our thinking and, therefore, our research.
There is one concern, particularly, that has influenced
much of our thinking on aging, namely, death. Let us
be simple and direct. As a culture, we are repelled by
aging and frightened by death. There i, ample evidence
that illustrates in obvious and subtle ways, our attempts
to postpone aging and to avoid the ultimate reality.
Adult education has not escaped being drawn into this
orientation.

There appear to be two opposing positions taken by adult
eduactors on aging. On one hand, there are those who
would have us be "hard-skinned" realists. We must face
up to the fact that older adults cannot be expected to
learn and perform as well as they did when they were
younger. On the other hand, there are others who dismiss
such a position as being without firm scientific evidence.
In fact, they provide evidence to support claims that
little, if any, difference exists in learning ability
between older and younger adults. The central thesis of
each position must be understood in order to move past
the mistakes of each.

Educators and researchers who support the first position
are realists. Their argument is straightforward. Growth
and development can be pictured as a flat-topped mountain.
Starting at the base, the beginning of life, the individual
advances upward with increasing abilities until the summit
is reached. It is attained at different times in different
areas, but the pattern is consistent. The high level of
performance is maintained for a time. Then a process of
decline begins. The pattern in obvious. Individuals
age, and in doing so, they progressively lose the abilities

that had been developed. Th realist's position can b$_\text{}$
recognized as the *decrement thesis*.

Educators and researchers who take the second posi⁺lon
are romantics. Their position is not as unconditi⁄ al
as that of the realists. Aging obviously occurs b٪ ٢o
in the universal and unalterable pattern that realis ⸱
claim⸴ They contend that, given certain conditions,
no significant differences exist in learning ability
between older and younger adults. This position can Ŀ
recognized as the *retention thesis*.

Although the two theses appear to be opposing, in the
final analysis, they are rooted in the same basic point
of view of human development. Both operate on the
assumption that the mental processes involved in learnii ٫
are common to all adults over the life span. If this
were not the case, romantics would reject the comparison
between younger and older adults as inappropriate on the
grounds that different cognitive processes characterize
different age groups. They do not. They examine the
variables of time, previous educational experience, training,
and meaningfulness of the learning material.

I do not want to speculate on the motivations of those
who pursue the second position. Their public position is
clear for anyone to see. They reject the findings of the
realists on the basis of what they view as inappropriate
methodologies. Yet in principle, their unstated position
accepts the decrement thesis as a correct theory in the
final stages of life. This latter point is evident in
the hypothesis of the loss of cognitive abilities prior
to death (Birren, 1970).

There is a third position quite different from the two
stated above. The two former positions assume that cognitive
processes are the same throughout the life span. Realists
argue that the cognitive processes decline as adults age.
Romantics posit that this decline is not a function of
aging *per se* but of other conditions and circumstances.
Neither position considers the possibility that older
adults think in a different manner than do younger adults
and that this different mode of thinking could account
for much of the variance between the two age groups.
The failure to perceive this idea, in light of existing
theory and observations, is surprising. Piaget's work

should have evoked the idea. The growing body of knowledge
on human development based on a life-span perspective
should have provided evidence for such an idea. It was
Schaie (1977-78) who finally wrote about a stage theory
of adult cognitive development. He is cited not because
he was the first to propose the idea, but because he was
the first among the recognized authorities writing today
who proposed the idea in a published paper.

Before we explore the third position, we should examine
several methodological aspects of research on learning
by older adults. First, we should review the quality
of the questions raised to guide research endeavors.
Second, we should consider the appropriateness of
techniques for measuring achievement in learning. We
should then examine the methods and findings of several
research studies. We must realize the obvious fact that
the questions we ask initially determine the direction
of our inquiry. Therefore, the questions should be
carefully examined. They could be wrong; they may
be based on inadequate observations, erroneous assumptions,
or faulty reasoning. Without careful examination, a
line of research may be pursued that, at worse, would
mislead us and, at best, would prove to be fruitless.

To consider the issue before us, it appears that the
realists have initiated their studies by asking this
question: Does the decrement in cognitive abilities
present a serious barrier to learning for the older adult?
Evidence on cognitive decrement can be traced to two
sources at the empirical level. First, teachers have
stated that they have found it is easier for younger people
to learn. They support their claims with case studies
and test scores. The second source is based on a line
of reasoning grounded in a common observation. It is
obvious that if aging occurring over the life span results
in observable physical decrement, then it is reasonable
to conclude there must be a concomitant cognitive decre-
ment.

If we examine these conclusions as we should, we find that
the proposed inquiry should not begin with the question:
Does the decrement in cognitive abilities present a serious
barrier to learning for older adults? The research instead
should begin by examining questions on cognitive stage
development.

The decrement thesis predicts that older adults will have
increasing difficulties in learning. Research should begin
by testing this proposition. Accordingly, the primary
question should be: Do older adults have serious
difficulties in learning? Some may ask: In comparison
to whom? It is this line of thinking that lies behind
the research comparing young and older learners. The
question need not be a comparison question between age
groups. We do not see the question as an "age question"
when we are teaching elementary or high school students.
Yet, when some educators see older learners having
difficulties in grasping new learning, the issue of
comparing is raised. Why did we not look at the
difficulties the older adult was experiencing as we
would have done with a young learner? Obviously, we are
deeply concerned with the process of aging and would prefer
an answer in this area rather than in the area of learning
and instruction. Unfortunately, we find little research
on instruction as a part of the literature on the decrement
thesis dealing with learning.

We must be very careful, at this point, not to equate
learning with achievement. This idea must be fully
understood, for it is crucial to the criticism of much
of the research on the decrement thesis. Equating
learning and achievement has lead to fallacious conclusions
and detrimental implications. In large part, this problem
exists because researchers focused on the comparison
between age groups rather than on the difficulties the
learners were experiencing. The demarcation between
learning and achievement is crucial.

Let us begin by taking the situation in which an adult
has been given a set of facts to learn, for example,
and then tested on whether he or she is judged on
the extent of learning by the number of facts recalled.
This is a measure of the achievement of the task, but
it is only inferentially a measure of the individual's
learning. It could be argued and, indeed, it is proposed
that this is the correct meaning of learning. That is,
learning is defined by the level or degree of achievement
a learner attains in mastering a given task. That appears

to be a reasonable position. This position can be described in the following illustration. We set out to help an individual understand how an electric motor works. After a period of time spent on examining the motor and seeing how the various parts function, he or she can correctly explain how the motor works. There is no argument here that the ability to explain how the electric motor works is clear evidence that learning has taken place. The learning is reflected in the achievement.

Let us take another situation. An adult is requested to learn a paired set of words, e.g., "handy" is paired with "tree," "happy" with "red," and so on. This type of task is frequently used in so-called learning experiments and is known as a paired-association learning task. The learning studies which employ paired-association tasks follow an established design. In general, the experiments take the following pattern. After a given amount of time in studying the paired-associates (i.e., handy-tree, happy-red, etc.) the adult is asked to engage in an activity unrelated to the learning task. Such activities are introduced to provide an experimentally controlled period between learning and recall. At the end of this unrelated activity, the adult is given one member of the paired set of words and is asked to recall the missing word that forms the pair. The measure of the person's ability to learn is determined by the number of correct pairings recalled.

The defense of such an approach is based upon the proposition that the amount of achievement is in direct corresponderce with the measure of the ability to learn. In simplest terms, achievement is a measure of learning ability. This position is indefensible. The conclusion that can be drawn from such investigations is far narrower than has been asserted. The conclusion that can be affirmed is that the achievement scores give a reading of the individual's learning of a specific task at a particular time. This realization can be stated in another way. In such investigations, there are only the most tenuous inferential relationships which would allow us to speak about the individual's ability to learn, except as learning is restricted to that specific task at that particular time.

I am not rejecting the idea accepted earlier that learning is determined by measuring achievement. The crucial point is that there must be a direct and testable link between measures of achievement and statements about learning

ability. By *direct*, I mean links which can withstand
the most rigorous attempts to falsify the stated linkages.
The point that is being made here can be readily illustrated
by reexamining the paired-associate learning task described
above. Adults may be learning a great deal during the
period when they are supposedly busy with learning the
paired-associate task. The adults may be gaining insights
about themselves, developing perceptions about such research
studies, and even getting to understand the motives of the
researcher. The measurements designed for the paired-
associate learning will not provide any evidence of these
learnings. However, it is reasonable to propose that there
is a good possibility that these other types of learning
could be identified in discussions with the adults following
the experiment.

The above discussion has been aimed at underscoring one
major idea: learning and the measurement of achievement
of a learning task are not always synonymous. That is,
learning (as an outcome) may occur as a result of intentionally
directed learning (as a process), but learning outcomes
may occur which are quite apart from what was intended.
In other words, little or no learning may take place on the
content that was intended to be learned. Even when achievement
measures can be directly related to learning behaviors, such
measures should be thought of only as measures of specific
aspects of the learning which may or may not have been
taking place. If we keep in mind the distinction between
learning and achievement, then we can examine the research
studies on adult learning without equating learning with
achievement measures. The failure to keep this demarcation
clear may lead to unwarranted assertions and erroneous
conclusions.

There is a growing body of literature on the older adult
learner. The extensiveness of this research literature
is beyond the scope of this paper. Yet, it is necessary
for us to reexamine this literature in light of both the
third position that has been proposed and the issues that
have been set out. Since a comprehensive review is not
the goal, exemplars of the type of research will be presented
briefly.

Hutchison's (1974) study serves as an exemplar of a group
of studies that attempted to structure a rigorous experimental
design. He compared two groups, one composed of older

adults (mean age of 73.9) and the other of younger adults (mean age of 19.7) on a paired-associate learning task. The younger group did significantly better than the older group. There have been several similar studies, all of which can be criticized for failing to find out about the perceptions, motives, values, and cognitive processes that may have had great effects on the behaviors of older adults. To speak about learning under these conditions is presumptuous at best.

Witte and Freund (1976) investigated stimulus concreteness and presentation method with a younger group and an older group of adults. In a comparison of the two, the older adults did not perform as well as the younger group. The paired-associate technique was used. The study, however, does represent an advance over those which simply gather data on achievement. Here we find the investigators examining methods of presentation. Such studies focus our inquiries on variables that should provide insights into the achievement behaviors of learners, young and old.

There are few studies on the problem-solving behaviors of older learners. Young's (1966) study is notable as one empirical study in this area. She compared a young set of subjects (median age 33 years) with an older group (median age 67.5 years) on a series of problem-solving tasks. Problems were posed to develop solutions for the operation of an experimental mechanical device. The performance of the older group was inferior at every level of problem-solving. The older subjects also were characterized by a high degree of redundancy (making similar types of unproductive behavior) and an inability t apply a solution strategy which was repeatedly demonstra ed. It is unfortunate that Young did not attempt to find out why these older adults had such difficulties. From our knowledge of older adults, it seems likely that there could have been concern with and rejection of the experimental mechanical device.

Variables which may affect performance have been investigated by Okun and DiVesta (1976) who studied cautiousness as a condition affecting performance in older adults. They reported that older adults appear to choose relatively easy tasks in order to protect themselves from self-evaluation. This, however, was a conjecture and not a finding. The

major finding is that older adults, given the type of task the researchers administered, were more cautious, that is, they chose less difficult tasks. The conjecture may be correct; however, one should be cautious in over-generalizing.

Botwinick (1966) structured an investigation of cautiousness which showed much awareness of the psychology of the aging individual. He presented older adults with twelve cases of life situations that older adults face. They were asked to check the probability of success that they would want before they would select a particular solution or line of action. This design shows a sensitivity to the meaningfulness of a task to a given individual. This condition has not been characteristic of the majority of the studies of the older adult learner.

A number of studies attempt to control for or at least report on several concomitant variables, e.g., health, economic status, and education. Labouvie-Vief (1976) has spoken to several shortcomings of the research on aging. She has discussed differences due to generational conditions, distance from death, motivational factors, and learning of congnitive skills. Among other pertinent variables, it is interesting to note that she did not specifically address the possibility that different congnitive processes could be operating at different periods in adult life. Schaie's article postdated Labouvie-Vief's review and, therefore, was not available for Labouvie-Vief to review.

As noted, Schaie was the first writer in the circle of recognized authorities to propose the idea that there may be stages of adult cognitive development. If such a conjecture were corroborated, we would have a basis for understanding some of the differences that were found between the young and older adults. We may have been not only selecting problems more appropriately designed for younger adults but structuring our expected answers from the view of a younger problem-solver. Now it is an accepted fact that we do not expect young children to think in the manner characteristic of a young adult. Why, then, do we find it difficult to consider the possibility that the older adult thinks in a different manner than younger adults?

A study by Labouvie-Vief and Gonda (1976), designed to test the effects on giving instruction to older adults, suggests the possibility of corroborative data for the

cognitive stage conjecture. They provided training to
strengthen covert self-monitoring strategies in dealing
with reasoning problems. Significant increments in
intellectual performance were observed. Hence, the
question may be raised: Are the differences which have
been observed between younger and older adults a condition
of instruction rather than a function of aging? Thus,
if we train the older adult to think in a given manner
than we desire, we may eliminate any differences between
age groups. This, of course, does not directly help us
answer the question of whether or not there are stages of
cognitive development. However, the results of this
study have encouraged the exploration of the cognitive
stage conjecture in demonstrating the effects of specific
instruction.

Schaie did not offer empirical studies to support his thesis
of cognitive stage development through the adult years.
He bases his position on the following line of reasoning:
the initial stages of cognitive growth deal with acquisition,
but acquisition must have a goal other than itself. Thus,
the growth of those cognitive skills in the first twenty
years or so of our lives must be followed by other cognitive
skills in the application of our knowledge to situations
we continue to encounter. Schaie (1977-78) summarized
the essence of this thesis:

> For if it be the purpose of the first part
> of life to acquire the intellectual tools
> needed to fully participate in the human
> experience, it then becomes necessary to
> postulate, if only on teleological grounds,
> that such preparation must have some further
> goals.(p. 131)

Schaie posited four major cognitive stages of development.
Childhood and adolescence is the stage of acquisition.
Young adulthood is characterized by achieving. There are
two cognitive stages in the middle years. All individ-
uals go through the responsible stage, but only some go
through the other cognitive stage at this period of life.
This Schaie named the executive stage. The last stage,
which occurs in old age, is the reintegrative stage.
However, since my purpose is to document the existence
of theories that propose stages of cognitive development
throughout the life span, I will not describe in depth
the qualities of these four stages.

Schaie is not the first to have proposed such a theory. Neumann (1970), building upon the work of Jung (1934), described two major stages of cognitive development. Analytical psychology posits that cognitive or intellectual de,elopment arises from the separation of consciousness from states of unconsciousness. The first stage in this separation is called differentiation. In this stage, individuals develop awareness of themselves and their relations to the world, as the name implies, through differentiating and demarcating. These are cognitive orientation... Ego functions are made use of to work on the task of achieving knowledge about the world through the cognitive orientation of differentiation. A second stage begins in the middle years of adulthood and lasts throughout the rest of adult life. The orientation of this stage is centroversion, a term used to connote an holistic form of synthesis. In this stage, the individual attempts to tie things together, seek relationships between ideas and basic values, and is concerned about how things fit together rather than how things are different. While the first stage operated upon the basis of separating things in the learning to know, this stage is concerned about the relationship of things as the means of knowing. If this theory can be corroborated, we may have an answer to why it takes an older learner more time to respond. The older learner has to differentiate, as does the younger adult, but the former must develop some means of synthesis before he or she can feel comfortable in responding. The younger learner places little or no demand on himself or herself to produce such synthesis. Analytical psychology presents a wide variety of case studeis to support this theory. However, there has been no experimental research to test the theory reported in the literature to this date.

It is strange that the thesis of cognitive stage development during adulthood has not received serious consideration. We have not found it difficult to accept the idea of cognitive stage development during childhood and adolescence. But we apparently have had some difficulty in accepting that there may be further stage developments throughout the life-span. Since the popularization of developmental tasks by Havighurst (1952), most educators have accepted the notion that adult life is characterized by a progressive series of developmental stages. These stages have been conceptualized as social, biological, psychological, and cultural. Cognitive stages of development have not been

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an explicit part of the developmental conceptualization
of adulthood. It should be noted that at different times
throughout an individual's life span, one is confronted
by different tasks and a different set of conditions,
expectations, and goals. It is difficult to see how all
these component elements, which vary from stage to stage,
would not in some manner affect the way the individual
thinks. Yet, the continuity of cognitive processes is the
assumption upon which we have operated. The old man
thinks in an identical manner to the young man. When we
put the assumption in the form of this bold statement, some
of us may have second thoughts before accepting the
continuity thesis. It is difficult to ignore the commonly
held perception that older people do not see things in the
same way younger people do. Obviously, the way we see things
reflects the way we think about things. If elements of a
problem are combined in different ways, it would seem a
logical deduction that cognitive processes must correspondingly
differ.

At the same time Havighurst was writing about developmental
tasks, the work of Erikson (1950) was beginning to receive
attention. In his epigenetic theory of development,
Erikson proposed a series of eight critical crises, or
ego stages, from birth to death. His psychosocial theory
of development provided an account of the ego's development.
Although cognitive development as a discrete function of
the ego was not explicitly addressed in his work, there
is some evidence to support the existence of cognitive
stage development within the epigenetic theory. The child
moves from a narcissistic (egocentrism) stage, through
stages of cooperation and caring, to the final stage of
wisdom. Wisdom, for Erikson, is the quality of reintegration,
which Schaie described as the basic quality of the final
stage of cognitive development.

I believe we are at a stage of our knowledge about human
life where a bold integration of a compatible set of
powerful theories should be attempted. This proposal has
immediate relevancy because the integration of these
theories provides the basis for the conceptualization of
developmental stages. These stages are differentiated
as to how the person thinks and what the person thinks about.

There appear to be three main streams within human life,
each having a particular period of ascendency. These
dimensions of life have been extensively investigated

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and thoughtfully presented in the contribution to three
conceptual frameworks. I will speak to each of the
three streams and its corresponding conceptual framework.
My treatment will be brief as my purpose in introducing
it is solely to substantiate the possibility of stages in
intellectual development.

The first stream of life has to do with the exploration of
the physical world. We come to know the world by touch,
taste, sight, and sound, that is, we "feel" ourselves into
a knowable existence. Piaget (1953) spoke of the sensori-
motor and the concrete phases of life. Erikson talked
about modes and zones. Psychoanalytic theory has provided
much understanding of this dimension of life. The insights
this theory has given to the biological dimension of human
life have enabled us to understand the person as a psy-
chosocial organism. Much of the energy and attention during
childhood and adolescence is directed at coming to know,
and establishing some workable relationships, with the
biological dimension of life.

Our senses tell us not only what the world is; they also
are the means by which we gain information about the world
and develop our basic feelings towards the world and about
ourselves. The relationships go beyond touch and manipu-
lation. They also involve basic feelings of good and
bad, helpful and harmful, right and wrong.

This biological dimension of psychosocial development continues
throughout life; however, from early adulthood its significance
declines. A second stream becomes increasingly evident in
early adulthood and reaches its ascendency in the late twenties.
For some individuals it lasts well into the fifties, but
for most it begins its decline in the late forties. The
individual's primary relationships to life in this period
are framed in confronting and dealing with power. White
(1963) spoke of efficacy, while Adler (1946) described this
dimension as a basic orientation towards feelings of
superiority and inferiority. I believe the term "power"
to be a more inclusive label for the qualities included in
this second stream of life. There is a sense of power in
being competent. Controlling one's life and the conditions
which affect it give us a feeling of power. A sense of
independence is manifest in this power, just as a sense of
dependency characterizes its absence. We either come to
demand control or we seek security through dependency.

Fromm's (1941) discussion of our escape from freedom is further documentation of this central and primary dimension of life.

The third stream is the spiritual dimension of life. This stage reaches its ascendency in the late fifties. There is evidence of this dimension in our lives from the late teens onwards. The spiritual stream can be readily distinguished from the other two. The first stream of life is centered around the physical being of the person; the third stream is focused on extending the meaning of the person's immediate existence to more holistic perspectives. The third stream is different from the second in that power is no longer a central and pervasive concern. In the second stream of life, the individual asked: What is it that I want to accomplish? In the third stream, the individual asks: What is the meaning of accomplishments?

The spiritual dimension may be expressed through religious behaviors, although these two terms are not necessarily synonymous. Spiritual denotes that quality of being which extends the individual beyond his or her immediate preoccupation with self to transactions involving the development of a sense of wholeness with the world.

It seems evident, based only on informal observations, that many people try to avoid getting into this stream of life. But it is equally evident that their vain attempts to hold to the pursuit of power result in tragedy. Macbeth was not the first or last of such tragedies. Other individuals avoid the pains and struggles by seeking a ritualistic dependency on God. In my view, this route escapes the empty victories of power, but it leads to a narrow and restricted understanding of being with and in the world.

These three streams have been proposed as a foundation for a theory of cognitive development.

What implication does the thesis of cognitive stage development have for adult education? Before implications are suggested, we should point out that although there is much evidence which indirectly supports the thesis, the thesis nevertheless must be tested. The conducting of such research studies should be a high priority for adult education. Let us assume, for the present, that there *are* cognitive stages, the three major ones described above.

Educational programs for the elderly should be planned
around the theme of helping the older learner to realize
more fully his or her spiritual identity. In the case of
some older learners, it will be helping them to learn to
move from their preoccupation with power to an involvement
in the spiritual existence. For those adults already
experiencing their spiritual life, adult education should
serve to enrich and extend it. The realization of such
programs is difficult to achieve because the programs
generally are designed by younger adults who are struggling
with concerns that have their meaning in the development
of competencies and the exercise of power. Few of these
adult educators are aware that older adults may have a
fundamentally different orientation to life.

This problem is not corrected by asking older adults what
they would like to have included in their educational
programs. It is very likely that those who were not
successful during the middle years of life will ask for
projects demanding demonstrable competencies. Whether
such projects are helpful or not can only be judged on
the criterion that these activities have made possible
the obtainment of the last stage. It is not sufficient
for these learners simply to prove that they can be
competent. To learn how to refinish furniture is not the
goal but only the means to the goal.

For those who were successful during the years of achievement
and responsibility, the adult educator may make a similar
type of mistake. The adult educator may believe his or
her job well done when he or she meets the request for
a class in oil painting. The learners are being helped
to develop skills in oil painting, and everyone appears to
be enjoying the activity. The joy does not lie alone in
the mastering of an expressive form but in the application
of a previously unexplored medium that illustrates another
form of unity of life. The learner may not be conscious
of this insight; nevertheless, its existence can be readily
tested by exploring the learner's perceptions. The
relationship of the learner to the flowers in the still
life is more than the sense of having achieved a level of
skill. The flowers manifest the beauty that lies within
and that must now be expressed as a completion of a cycle.

The conclusion is not that adult educators stop offering
the regular array of programs, but that they take into

account the meaning these activities have for the participating adult.

What has been said about programming applies equally to the manner in which instruction is handled. The mastering of skills unquestionably has a place in adult education for the older learner, but it does not have the same meaning as it has for the younger adult. The emphasis is not on the power it gives, that is, the sense of accomplishment over another aspect of life but rather on the expression of another mode of relating self to the unity of life. The instructor helps the older learner to bring out the fullness of the rose in the still life painting as a means of helping the individual tie his or her own life to the existence of life as a whole. It is not that the rose is realistic so much as it expresses the individual's link to the world. These are the roses he or she has known

in life, and both are tied together by the perceptions developed over a lifetime. Through skills in using oils, that individual has made concrete the feelings he or she has had towards roses. The painting is a visible symbol for the older learner to the unity with life that he or she is struggling to reveal. A poor painting is unacceptable not because it demonstrates lack of skills, but because it fails to symbolize correctly the unity he or she is trying to express.

It goes without saying that the younger instructor cannot go all the way with the older learner. The instructor can help in providing the tools and the information, but it is up to the older learner to carry on the integration. Older learners may be able to help each other. The instructor, indeed, should encourage interactions within the group.

Wisdom is dependent on integration and synthesis. These two processes can be fostered by instructors who listen carefully, are aware of the psychosocial concerns, and are open, honest, and accepting. I am well aware that these qualities have been proposed before. There is one major difference. What we have proposed here is an awareness of psychosocial concerns related to cognitive stage development.

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