Commission for International Adult Education (CIAE) of the American Association for Adult and Continuing Education (AAACE)

Papers of the 2020 International Pre-Conference

October 27-30, 2020
Virtual Conference

American Association for Adult and Continuing Education
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Commission for International Adult Education (CIAE) of the American Association for Adult and Continuing Education (AAACE) Virtual Conference

CIAE Mission Statement

The Commission on International Adult Education (CIAE) of the American Association for Adult and Continuing Education (AAACE) provides a forum for the discussion of international issues related to adult education in general, as well as adult education in various countries around the globe. The following purposes summarize the work of the Commission:

- To develop linkages with adult education association in other countries
- To encourage exchanges between AAACE and associations from other countries
- To invites conference participation and presentation by interested adult educators around the world
- To discuss how adult educators from AAACE and other nations may cooperate on projects of mutual interest and benefit to those we serve

The Commission holds its annual meeting in conjunction with the AAACE conference.

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CO-EDITORS' NOTE

These papers are from the Commission for International Adult Education's (CIAE) 2020 Virtual International Pre-Conference. I have the permission of the Editorial Team to write this note in the first person because of the unique role COVID-19 and I played in the delay of the release of the *Proceedings*. In addition, I was the out-going Direction of CIAE as at Novemberr 2020.

The global aberration, called COVID-19, defined 2020 beyond national borders. COVID-19 reshaped the format of the 69th annual AAACE conference by replacing the traditional bustling human interaction with virtual meetings and presentations. The CIAE International Pre-Conference was deeply affected in several ways. One factor was that I was stuck abroad in Nigeria where internet service is not as guaranteed as in the U.S. I was behind--the pace being dictated by COVID-19.

As bad as COVID-19 is in terms of havoc and devastation, the global pandemic highlights what Dr. Marcie Boucouvalas aptly refers to in the Preface as "how connected we are," remindng us of the propriety of the global "Common Good". The reality of Covid-19 calls us to collaborate across borders - further sharpening our tools of adult learning and education (ALE) to be inclusive of intellectual and cultural divergence. Borderless problems require borderless solutions. The preeminence of COVID-19 in the 2020 International Pre-Conference papers demonstrates CIAE's commitment to being globally responsive and relevant. The word COVID appearing 88 times and COVID-19 appearing 86 times with mentions in two paper titles are, in my opinion, an acknowledgement of the common threads of humanity and of hope for a surpassing future as we pave a path forward.

These common threads embolded our authors, reviewers, and editors, to sustain and produce this compilation of research and make them available to the public through ERIC. The task of putting these papers out has been accomplished because our authors were resilient, persistent, patient, and understanding. Reviewing and editing papers from the rich diversity of authors and papers was quite a task. We are grateful to the authors and our reviewers who had to juggle the task of writing and reviewing with other tasks in the difficult times imposed by COVID-19. We gratefully acknowledge our reviewers. The paper abstracts were reviewed by Wendy Griswold, Simeon Edosomwan, Valeri Colon, Marcie Boucouvalas, and Phyllis Cummins. Valeri Colón, Phyllis Cummins and Marcie Boucouvalas also doubled as paper reviewers. I must thank Marcie in a very special way for kindly writing the Preface and especially for helping with fundamental editorial work. Valeri Colón, as in previous years, has done a fine job of formatting, grammar, technical details.

Finally, I want to thank members and leadership of the CIAE, including Presidents and past-Presidents of AAACE for the opportunity afforded me to be Director of the Commission from 2016 to November 2020. I am grateful for the tutelage that my predecessor as CIAE Director – Marcie Boucouvalas- has provided me. Her mentorship has been a continuum from the first day she left as Director, up until I write this note of

appreciation – part of why I call her the matriarch of the CIAE family. By the same token, I want to sincerely thank our new Director, Wendy Griswold- for her support especially when I was stuck abroad. She covered for CIAE at the Board level and ensured that CIAE was well represented.

Despite the fine contributions by the individuals above, I take total responsibility, as the outgoing Director of CIAE, for any inadvertent errors in these compilation of papers from the 2020 International Pre-Conference of the Commission for International Adult Education (CIAE).

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Preface by The Matriach of CIAE

Greetings Colleagues!

Welcome to the Commission for International Adult Education's International Pre-Conference Proceedings, 2020 style. As you know, 2020 has now become an infamous year in history when humanity on a global scale became besieged by a powerful microscopic virus that has raised havoc not only in individual lives, but also with societal institutions, infrastructure, and functioning. Despite cultural, linguistic, political, socio-economic and other differences that we honor as international adult educators, this pandemic that we share as a human species has illuminated ever so forcefully what many of us hold dear: how connected we are. COVID-19 presents a potent but basic lesson that what happens in one part of the word can reverberate in other parts.

As with most years, preparations were in full force during 2020 with a rigorous peer review process of proposals as well as review and editing of those papers accepted for presentation and publication in Proceedings. Although many of us eagerly awaited travel to Reno Nevada in October, site of the 2020 conference, as the year progressed it became increasingly clear that the advancing and raging COVID-19 pandemic that had already shuttered schools, workplaces, and most public events was taking its toll on the AAACE conference too, and accordingly the annual International Pre-Conference as well. While the main conference became virtual, matters became too complicated to host the International event in a virtual manner.

Yet, reviewers, editors, and authors had worked hard in bringing papers to fruition. Authors worked diligently in crafting their papers, often through multiple iterations in the editing process. Accordingly, it is befitting that we offer to you in this volume the final copy of full papers accepted and scheduled for presentation and publication in our annual Proceedings, and we are most pleased to do so. As always, but especially important this year, e-mail addresses are provided for communication with authors. Furthering engagement, dialogue, and learning from each other has always been a hallmark of the International Pre-Conference. Moreover, 2020 authors and papers hail from or focus on far-flung regions of the globe: Ghana, Nigeria, Saudi Arabia, Serbia, South Africa, as well as the United States.

We thank the authors, reviewers, and editors for their stalwart perseverance and commitment to international adult education during this difficult year. We also recognize, honor, and express condolences for all the losses experienced by so many during 2020. May 2021 be a healthier and healing year for both individuals and society, in general, and one in which we will ultimately be able to gather in person during the week of October 4, 2021 in Sandestin, Florida, site of the 2021 International Pre-Conference and the AAACE main conference.

In Colleagueship,

Marcie Boucouvalas

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Commission for International Adult Education (CIAE) of the AAACE International Virtual Pre-Conference 2020

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EMPOWERING SAUDI WOMEN THROUGH VOCATIONAL SKILLS AT EDUCATED-NEIGHBORHOOD PROGRAMS IN THE TIME OF COVID-19

Sarah M. Alajlan, Ph.D.[1]

ABSTRACT: Educated-neighborhood programs are lifelong-learning projects created by the Saudi government to achieve a positive effect on the economic, social, and cultural factors. These programs provide various training skills that should support Saudi Vision 2030 and help adults to deal with their lives. Therefore, this study aimed to discover how much Saudi women were empowered through the vocational skills being taught at educated-neighborhood programs during the time of COVID-19. The research also determined if there was a statistically significant difference, by marital status and the number of courses, for the Saudi women's responses about their empowerment through vocational skills at the educated-neighborhood programs during the time of COVID-19. The collected data were analyzed using descriptive statistics; a self-developed questionnaire was utilized to collect data. The study's sample was female, adult, Saudi learners who were enrolled in Makkah. Saudi Arabia's educated-neighborhood programs to gain vocational skills. The results indicated that Saudi women were empowered with the vocational skills obtained at educated-neighborhood programs. Moreover, the findings showed that there were no statistically significant differences among the women's responses due to marital status. However, there were statistically significant differences among the women's responses based on the number of courses taken. The benefit of the direction was for women who took 5 or more courses. One recommendation from this study was that vocational skills should design in a way that can encourage and empower women for the labor market for the 21st century.

Keywords: lifelong learning, Saudi Arabia, adult learning, women, vocational programs

Currently, Saudi Arabia has a great desire to be one of the developed countries and to obtain a considerable number of achievements. Therefore, the government of Saudi Arabia launched Vision 2030 to achieve its goals and aspirations. This vision consists of three themes: a vibrant society, a thriving economy, and an ambitious nation; these themes shape the vision's groundbreaking agenda. Through these themes, Saudi polices focus on the individual, society, the economy, and government efficiency. For example, the thriving economy is being utilized to stop the country's reliance on oil; therefore, the Saudi government invests in human capital development for future economic growth. Also, Saudi vision 2030 focuses on continuous learning and training, and it provides a chance for everyone to improve their abilities and skills in order to contribute to society's development (Saudi Vision 2030, 2016).

Moreover, Saudi Vision 2030 pays special attention to empowering women; according to the vision, women's participation rate in the labor market will increase from 22% to 30% by 2030. There are also over 50% of Saudi women who graduate from universities. To reduce unemployment, these graduates need lifelong training, developing a high-performance work team, and improving sustainable skills in order to build the country's society and economy. One of the most significant programs that offer various skills is educated-neighborhood programs. These skills include vocations, life, self-awareness, and reading and writing skills. According to Shah (2020), vocational training is an

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essential measure to develop an individual's skills; this instruction can establish a better future, reducing unemployment and migration to other countries. Also, vocational training helps to create a "culture of skills" (p.164) that ensures employee productivity, growth, competitiveness, social mobility, and poverty alleviation.

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) (2012a) stated that funding for vocational-skill development must be adequate to meet the demands of citizens and socio-economic growth as well as to avoid waste in education. Therefore, Saudi Vision strives to expand vocational training in all cities and regions of the Kingdom. In this study, vocational skills, which were taught by the educated-neighborhood programs, are the focus. These skills include painting and decor, fashion technology, establishing entrepreneurship and small projects, beauty and hair care, the food industry, repairing computers and mobile phones, and using computers.

In 2020 during the COVID-19 pandemic, the need for these vocational, sustainable skills appeared because the situation created global crisis across every aspect of society, including the economy, security, education, the labor market, and health. This crisis was a challenge for everybody, particularly women. According to United Nations (2020), the shutdown of many education systems and the effect of the economic sectors put additional stress and demands on women. For example, the demand for childcare and family care increased. As a result,1.52 billion students and over 60 million teachers were not their schools. Therefore, this study aims to discover how much Saudi women were empowered through the vocational skills being taught at educated-neighborhood programs during the time of COVID-19. The research also determined if there was a statistically significant difference by marital status and the number of courses for responses of Saudi Women about their empowerment through vocational skills at the educated-neighborhood programs during the time of COVID-19.

Educated-Neighborhood Programs

Educated-neighborhood programs are lifelong-learning projects which were created by the Saudi government to achieve a positive effect on the economic, social, and cultural factors. The programs are informal education and are under the adult education department. The first program was established in 2006. These programs aim to extend the concept of adult education from literacy to lifelong learning, preparing individuals, especially women who are less fortunate in terms of education, to contribute to society's development; qualifying women for the labor market; providing women with the necessary skills to obtain financial self-sufficiency; and enriching the work culture for women. To be accepted for the educated-neighborhood programs, individuals should be at least 15 years old and want to develop their skills. Trainees are only awarded a certificate if their absence rate for the training program does not exceed 20% of the total hours (Ministry of Education, 2018).

According to the Ministry of Education (2018), the criteria to implement and to select the appropriate training programs are fulfilling the needs of the labor market and the participants needs of each department, benefiting from community institutions and volunteers' experience as a community partnership, and achieving the programs' goals.

The training time is 4 hours in the evening for 5 days per week. The training programs have many variations, including educational programs, life skills, awareness skills, and vocational skills. For example, educational training helps individuals to improve writing and reading as well as to learn a new language. For life skills, trainees receive a set of life skills, such as critical-thinking skills, that enable them to deal and to adapt to different life situations. For awareness skills, individuals improve their religious, cultural, health, security, and social level; an example is maternal and child health. For vocational skills, programs are tailored to the labor market's needs, giving trainees the required level of competence. In this study, the vocational skills which were taught at the educated-neighborhood programs are examined.

Vocational Skills

The educated-neighborhood programs' vocational-skill programs pay attention to rehabilitating women for the labor market and providing them with sustainable skills. These programs also enrich women's work culture, including values such as enthusiasm and sincerity. The programs' objectives are to take advantage of free time and to invest it for the benefit of participants and their families; to promote a positive view of occupations, especially manual ones; to support economic and social growth as a factor that contributes to society's development; and to decrease unemployment. Examples of vocational skills include painting and décor; buffet preparation; fashion technology; establishing entrepreneurship and small projects; beauty and hair care; the food industry; repairing computers and mobile phones; and using a computer for programming, web design, marketing, and photography (General Department of Continuing Education, 2018).

With the emergence of a knowledge-based economy developing individuals' skills has become an urgent need for governments around the world. Any country's prosperity and growth depend on developing a skilled workforce. For example, there is a relationship between quality training and the labor market. In European countries, the data show that a 1% rise in training days leads to a 3% rise in productivity. Also, quality training empowers individuals to continue their training, to develop their full skills, to seize job and social opportunities, and to enhance innovation (International Labour Office, 2010; UNESCO, 2012b). According to Langer (2013), vocational skills are needed for specific professional tasks. For instance, the French Development Agency conducted a qualitative survey with a group of 110 association leaders from central Africa. The survey's result showed that 60% of students who completed their higher education join the labor market by enrolling in informal vocational training. Additionally, vocational programs support active labor-market policies by supplying necessary skills that help to find a job or to generate job opportunities (Acevedo, Cruces, Gertler, & Martinez, 2020).

There are several studies that confirm the important effect of vocational skills in people's lives (Johnson, 2015; Langer, 2013; Olagbaju, 2020; Wu, 2019). Johnson's (2015) study showed that vocational training programs have an essential role for empowering rural women to have new income and to eradicate poverty. In the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, it is significant for individuals to have vocational skills in order to empower them to deal with crises. According to the International Labour Organization (2020),

during crisis and epidemic situations, there some recommendations when the labor market faces challenges. One suggestion is that institutions should provide more training programs. People should also seek to create income-generation opportunities by developing their skills. During these complex circumstances, learners, especially women, have to be self-reliant to benefit from their skills in order to obtain opportunities and to take advantage of the resources and possibilities which are available within their families. United Nations (2020) said "Emerging evidence on the impact of COVID-19 suggests that women's economic and productive lives will be affected disproportionately and differently from men" (p. 4).

Theoretical Framework

Human capital investment is substantial for the sustainable development of any country. The investment could be skills, competencies, and knowledge that clearly improve economic growth and social development. Several research studies (Aldossari 2020; Alfarran, Pyke, & Stanton, 2018; Calvert & Al-Shetaiwi, 2002) indicate that there is a lack of Saudi women' participating in the workforce, especially in the private sector. Therefore, the Saudi government recognizes the important role of women's participation in social and economic development. Saudi Vision 2030 emphasizes women's rights to participate in the labor market and encourages them to work in either the public or private sector. Thus, women's empowerment programs are needed to achieve the vision's ambitions.

The educated-neighborhood program is an empowerment program that invests women's energy and talent as well as developing their skills so that they can be competent in the workforce and can obtain an appropriate job. The COVID-19 pandemic is now a global crisis with effects all over the world. The situation caused governments to close many services, to suspend social activities, and to practice social distancing. According to the International Labour Organization (2020), during COVID-19, the number of people who attended vocational and technical training courses to continue developing their skills was between 12 and 13 million. Vocational training is essential to improve living and working conditions. Hence, it is necessary to acquire and to apply vocational, sustainable skills in life and in crisis situations; this need is particularly important for women because they are more responsible for their families. United Nations (2020) pointed out that the closure of childcare services and schools put an additional strain and demand on women. These responsibilities require people to have self-directed learning that helps them to continue improving and to apply their skills in daily life.

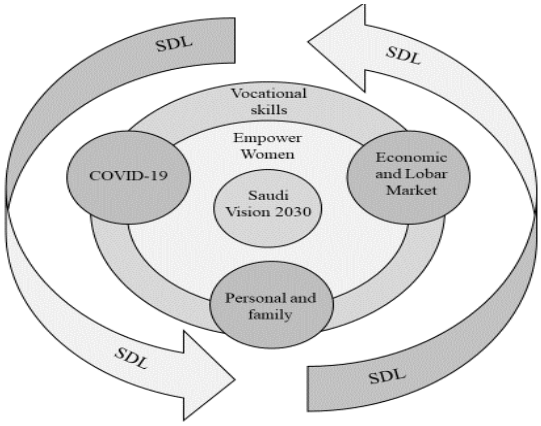
According to Knowles (1975), self-directed learning is known as "a process in which individuals take the initiative, with or without the help of others, in diagnosing their learning needs, formulating learning goals, identifying human and material resources, and evaluating learning outcomes" (p.18). Also, Garrison (1992) stated that control and responsibility for adult's learning are essential with self-directed learning. At educated-neighborhood programs, female adult learners should have self-directed learning because they have self-autonomy to select and to plan their course as well as to continue learning. Many adults' motivation to learn is self-directed learning that leads them to meet their needs and to achieve lifelong learning (Knowles, 1975; Mezirow, 1985). Mbagwu,

Chukwuedo, and Ogbuanya's study (2020) showed that self-directed learning is a positive predictor of lifelong learning tendencies.

This study is focused on female, adult, Saudi learners who enroll in educated-neighborhood programs to gain vocational skills in Makkah, Saudi Arabia. The meaning of vocational skills is the knowledge and skills, practical competencies, and attitudes which are necessary to perform a certain trade or occupation in the labor market or as part of people's lives (African Development Bank, 2008). Vocational skills help female students to become self-directed lifelong learners. United Nations (2020) pointed out that, during COVID-19, women would be the backbone of a community's recovery because they do a large amount of care work which is unpaid and invisible. Saudi women also have a lot of responsibilities for their family, work, and life. Therefore, this study aims to discover how much Saudi women are empowered through vocational skills at the educated-neighborhood programs during the time of COVID-19. Figure 1 displays the theoretical framework for this study.

Figure 1

The Theoretical Framework of This Study



Methodology

Instrument and Processes

This study is descriptive, exploratory quantitative research that utilizes a self-developed questionnaire. The instrument was designed through a review of related literature and the content of vocational courses at the educated-neighborhood programs. Some statements were modified to correspond with COVID-19 pandemic. The instrument was divided into two parts. The first part the respondents' demographic information related to marital status (married, single, or divorced) and the number of courses (1-2, 3-4, and 5 or more courses). The second part had 23 statements to discover how much the Saudi women are empowered through vocational skills at the educated-neighborhood programs during the time of COVID-19. This part had a personal and family scale (items 1-12) as well as an economy and labor market scale (items13-23). The responses were measured with a 5-point, Likert-type scale, ranging from (1) strongly disagree to (5) strongly agree.

The instrument was developed in English, and then, it was translated into Arabic by two bilingual individuals with educational backgrounds. They independently translated the English instrument into Arabic, and then, the researcher joined the copies into one Arabic translation. The Arabic copy was translated back to English and reviewed in order to ensure consistency and accuracy. After the review, the final Arabic version was given launched to participants.

Sample and Data Collected

The population was comprised of female learners who attended vocational-skill courses at educated-neighborhood programs across Saudi Arabia. The total population of learners was around 114, 939. The vocational courses at the educated-neighborhood programs were characterized by the similarity of content and organization. As a result of these similarities, the huge number of learners, the limited research resources, and the current situation during a pandemic, the study was focused in Makkah; there were a total of 525 female learners, (759) participating.

The study's data were collected by using the online instrument that was distributed to all female learners who only take a vocational skills course at educated-neighborhood programs in Makkah. The link to the instrument was sent via an email message and a WhatsApp message. Participation was anonymous, confidential, and independent. Data were collected between May 20 and June 30, 2020.

Reliability and Validity

The instrument was reviewed by a panel of education experts. As a result, minor instrument modifications, such as adding items to each scale were considered. Also, the questionnaire's test-retest reliability was examined with a pilot test that had 70 participants. Those individuals were excluded from the study. The pilot test's validity coefficient had a mean of 0.90. The time interval between uses was 2 weeks. The correlation coefficient between the items and the entire questionnaire was 0.49-0.88. The correlation coefficient between the items and each scale was 0.57-0.88. Therefore, the correlation coefficients had acceptable degrees and were statistically significant. According to Nunnally and Bernstein (1994), the acceptable values for Cronbach's Alpha range from 0.70 to 0.95. The result of using the Cronbach Alpha's coefficient to determine the instrument's reliability was 0.92, indicating high values of instrument reliability. Table1 clarifies the reliability's value in Cronbach's Alpha.

Table 1

The Value of the Reliability in Cronbach's Alpha

Scale	Cronbach's alpha
Personal and Family Scale	0.89
Economy and Labor Market Scale	0.83
Total	0.92

Data analysis

The data were examined by using SPSS for the descriptive analysis, including means and standard deviations. Additionally, an analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted to assess differences based on the respondents' demographic' information related to marital status and the number of courses. Post-hoc Scheffé tests were also utilized for multiple comparisons.

Demographics

The study's respondents were female learners who only attended vocational-skill courses at educated-neighborhood programs in Makkah. Data regarding the demographic information's statistics are summarized in Table 2. The majority of the sample (62.3%) was married, and 41.7% of the participants were taking 1-2 courses.

Table 2

Demographic Information

Demographic Information		N	%
Marital Status	Single	155	29.5
	Married	327	62.3
	Divorced	43	8.2
Number of Courses	1-2 courses	219	41.7
	3-4 courses	115	21.9
	5 and more courses	191	36.4
Total		525	100

Results

Findings for Research Question One

How much are Saudi women empowered through vocational skills at the educated-neighborhood programs during the time of COVID-19? To answer this research question, the means and standard deviations were determined. The total mean for the vocational skills that were obtained by Saudi women during the time of COVID-19 was 3.84. This statement indicated that women were empowered by using vocational skills during the COVID-19 pandemic. The highest-ranked skill scale was personal and family, and its total mean was 4.01. The practice level was high, and the means ranged between 4.37 and 3.80. The second skill scale was the economy and the labor market. The total mean for this scale was 3.60, and the practice level was medium. The means for the economy and labor-market scale ranged between 4.00 and 2.93. Table 3 presents the vocational skills that Saudi women obtained during the time of COVID-19.

Table 3

Saudi Women's Vocational Skills During the Time of COVID-19

Rank	Scale of Vocational Skills	M	SD
1	Personal and Family	4.01	.628
2	Economy and Labor Market	3.60	.664
Total Score		3.84	.599

Findings for Research Question Two

Is there a statistically significant difference by marital status and the number of courses, for Saudi women's responses about their empowerment through vocational skills at the educated-neighborhood programs during the time of COVID-19? To answer this research question, a one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used to see if there were a statistically significant difference based on marital status. The result showed that there were no statistically significant differences ($\alpha = 0.05$) among the women's perspectives based on their marital status for both scales (personal and family, and economy and labor market) and the entire instrument. Table 4 summarizes the result of the one-way ANOVA for marital status.

Table 4

The Result of the One-Way ANOVA for Marital Status

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Personal and Family	Between Groups	.231	2	.116	.292	.747
	Within Groups	206.419	522	.395		
	Total	206.650	524			
Economy and Labor Market	Between Groups	.569	2	.284	.644	.525
	Within Groups	230.330	522	.441		
	Total	230.898	524			
Total Score	Between Groups	.184	2	.092	.255	.775
	Within Groups	187.747	522	.360		
	Total	187.931	524			

Additionally, a one-way ANOVA was employed to discover if there were a statistically significant difference based on the number of courses. The results, as seen in Table 5, indicated that there were statistically significant differences ($\alpha = 0.05$) for scales (personal and family, and economy and labor market) and the entire instrument. To understand the differences among the arithmetic averages, post-hoc tests were utilized. The post-hoc analysis showed the existence of significant differences ($\alpha = 0.05$) between 5 and more courses, and 1-2 and 3-4 courses. The benefit of the direction was for women who took 5 and more courses.

Table 5

The Result of the One-Way ANOVA for the Number of Courses

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Personal and Family	Between Groups	16.138	2	8.069	22.110	.000
	Within Groups	190.512	522	.365		
	Total	206.650	524			
Economy and Labor Market	Between Groups	10.670	2	5.335	12.646	.000
	Within Groups	220.228	522	.422		
	Total	230.898	524			
Total Score	Between Groups	13.593	2	6.797	20.350	.000
	Within Groups	174.337	522	.334		
	Total	187.931	524			

Table 6

Post Hoc Comparison Results by the Number of Courses

		Mean	1-2	3-4	5 or more
Personal and Family	1-2	3.88			
	3-4	3.88	.01		
	5 or more	4.24	*.37	*.36	
Economy and Labor Market	1-2	3.51			
	3-4	3.48	.03		
	5 or more	3.79	*.28	*.32	
Total	1-2	3.72			
	3-4	3.71	.01		
	5 or more	4.05	*.33	*.34	

* significance at ($\alpha = 0.05$)

Discussion and Conclusion

Educated-neighborhood programs contribute to more community participation and empowering women with the necessary skills to achieve Saudi Vision 2030. These programs are implemented in neighborhoods to provide women with sustainable skills that help them to raise their awareness level about economy, society, and education (Ministry of Education, 2018). One of these skills is vocational skills, the focus of this study. The vocational skills aim to get unemployed women in the labor market and to help them become self-directed learners and active members of society. Therefore, this study is important because it may give decision makers insight about how to reform the programs. As far as the researcher knows, this study is the first one about COVID-19 and women's vocational skills at educated-neighborhood programs. The study is consistent with the directions of Saudi Vision 2030, which emphasizes participation by members of society in order to improve themselves and their country.

The study's results indicated that Saudi women have been empowered through their vocational skills at the educated-neighborhood programs during the time of COVID-19. This statement conforms with Saudi Vision2030 and the aim of the educated-neighborhood programs that focus on empowering women to benefit from their skills in their lives. Therefore, respondents showed that they practiced vocational skills which related to self-directed learning. According to Knowles (1975), self-directed learning presumes that individuals learn when they are required to perform life tasks or to cope with life problems.

For the personal and family scale, the total means and the means for all items were high. Therefore, women practiced these skills at the personal and family skills level often. Diwakar and Ahamad (2015) stated that vocational training makes a big difference for many women's personal and family lives. For example, the training helps them to

improve household productivity, to enhance food security, and to promote environmentally sustainable development and livelihoods. The participants confirmed that, during the time of COVID-19, their vocational skills empowered them to pay attention to their beauty and personal care, to improve their cooking skills when restaurants were shuttered, and to use technology to keep in touch with family members during the home isolation. This result stressed that, in the crisis time, women obtained self-sufficiency and achieved family bonding.

For the economy and the labor-market scale, the total means were medium, and the means for all items ranged between the high and average level. Therefore, in the economy and the labor market, women practiced these skills an average amount of time. Especially during this difficult time, women focused more on their family requirements According to UNESCO (2020), in the pandemic time, when schools were closed, working parents missed work in order to take care of their children, leading to negatively productivity. The participants confirmed that, during the time of COVID-19, their vocational skills empowered them to continue upgrading their skills through online courses, to share their skills with others, and to encourage others to take the initiative to develop their skills during this difficult time. These finding agreed with the essential goal of the educated-neighborhood programs and Saudi Vision 2030. This goal supports women to continue lifelong learning and to be self-directed learners. Also, the vision emphasizes a culture of volunteering and cooperation; to illustrate, the Saudi government seeks to have one million volunteers each year (Saudi Vision 2030, 2016).

Moreover, the second question showed that there were no statistically significant differences among the women's responses due to marital status. This result emphasized that all women (single, married, or divorced) were empowered through their vocational skills during the pandemic. According to Saudi Vision2030, the government supports and gives everyone, particularly women, the chance to obtain equal opportunities in order to improve their skills. Therefore, this encouragement may have motivated women to practice their vocational skills. However, there were statistically significant differences among the women's responses based on the number of courses that were taken. The benefit of the direction was for women who took 5 or more courses. This result is logical because, as Knowles (1975) mentioned, adult's experiences are rich resources to motivate them to learn and practice what they learn.

According to the findings, the items that participants mentioned least were "achieve self-actualization needs" and "contribute to their family's expenses." Therefore, women's needs should be considered when designing vocational skills at the educated neighborhood programs. It was also obvious that, in the labor market, women's participation was at an average level, so vocational skills should design in a way that can encourage and empower women for the labor market for the 21st century. For example, create training programs that help adults to practice their vocational skills during a difficult time. This study suggested that qualitative research should be done to have in-depth information about women's utilizing vocational skills in their lives. In addition, a periodic interview with adult learners should be conducted to understand their experiences and to improve the training programs.

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ENHANCING SOCIAL ENGAGEMENT IN NIGERIA THROUGH TEACHERS' PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT: A CASE OF TRCN

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ABSTRACT: The quality of teachers is an important factor in the achievement of educational goals, and this is why Wokocha (2013) asserts that the quality of the teacher could be determined through intellectual competence, mastery of content, teaching experience, skills and dissemination of knowledge. Thus, one of the best ways to raise the quality of teachers is by building their capacity through Mandatory Continuous Professional Development Programmes, (MCPD). Social engagement through teacher education and training has been one of the areas of emphasis of the Teacher Registration Council of Nigeria (TRCN). This paper uses secondary data analysis to discuss the activities of Teachers Registration Council of Nigeria. It examines how social dynamism and globalization demand emerging skills from education and educators. It argues that the new reality requires the need to incorporate new skills into teaching including social issues to encourage deeper connection to social engagement issues. It concludes that teacher education and training is one of the effective ways of ensuring social engagements. Using the experience of the TRCN, the paper shares some strategies and skills that can be employed to inculcate social engagement in teacher training and education.

Keywords: Nigeria, professional development, social engagement, teacher education, training

Education is a gateway to instituting and disseminating change; social engagement is one such change that can help snowball for advancement in the education of teachers as well as to help re-evaluate their approach to teaching and learning. The teachers view on teaching and learning really needs to be updated often especially that majority of them quite often become too attached to given methods and as such, become oblivious of other possibilities they could explore to assist learners connect to knowledge (Avoseh, 2006-2007). This is imperative as it is a known phenomenon that teaching and learning most often takes a one-way approach where the teacher is the one basically doing all the talking while the students just sit back and listen with little or no feedback/interaction as was succinctly affirmed by Hurst, Wallace & Nixon (2013, p. 376) thus, "the model of discourse in most classrooms is a one-way communication from the teacher to the students." One-way interaction is obviously against the philosophy of Dewey (1963) who posits that learning is primarily a social activity. To take the burden of teaching and learning off the shoulder of the teachers as Vacca & Vacca (2002) put it, everyone needs to be given a participatory opportunity to dialogue for real interaction, to ensure everyone is given the chance to be heard, after, Avoseh (2006-2007) says that dialogue is fundamental in any adult education methodology. Routman (2005, p. 207) affirms that "students learn more when they are able to talk to one another and be actively involved." The teacher's role in fostering social engagement cannot be under-estimated and this is why it is very important for the social engagement tenets to be fully incorporated into

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teachers' professional development programs. In short, social interaction is vital to the learning process because, a mired teacher education leads to serious disruptions in the society hence, the need for continued upgrading in teaching and learning methods, approaches and exposures since the teacher plays a critical role in instituting social engagement rules as they are the custodian of knowledge. As a matter of interest, culturally inclusive pedagogy, transformative education help instructors who facilitate learning in primary, secondary and undergraduate classrooms to transform their practice (Django & Alim, 2017; Hooks, 1994; Ladson-Billings, 1995, 2006).

Social engagement is a critical consideration for education, and this is why Darling-Hammond & McLaughlin (1995) uphold that teacher education is one sure way of incorporating social interaction/engagement issues into teaching and learning process. According to them, when social interaction becomes part of the classroom dynamics, classrooms become active places; teachers need to experience this for themselves, so they know how to create this type of learning environment in their own classrooms). Social engagement can be denoted to mean an interaction, engagement or enlightening discussion amongst learners, thus Vacca et al. (2011) theorized that, socially interactive learners are engaged learners (Vacca et al., 2011). Social engagement is described as an interaction often theorized within a framework of social justice, (Carpenter, 2019). It is a concept that has to do with the interactions between students and their peers as well as interactions between students and staff and this this nature of interaction is instrumental to students' success. Social engagement helps in inculcating some of the well desired change as it utilizes the approach of interaction and involvement. The sense of inclusion which social engagement entails in the long run births stellar performances and better outputs in education as upheld by Hurst, Wallace & Nixon (2013) who summed that social interaction improves students learning by enhancing their knowledge of literacy and teaching and their critical thinking and problem-solving skills. That culture of exclusion does not allow key stakeholders, that is the teachers to be involved in key decision-making process and this makes them to take the back seat in teaching and learning and as a matter of fact, education in entirety and this in itself abhors ownership and pervert's excellence, (Hammond, 2000). In the real sense, teachers can no longer be positioned in the rear in issues that concern them and then be eventually expected to implement such a change they were not part-of, (Broemmel, 2006; Ingersoll, 2003; Kirk & Macdonald, 2001; Markow & Pieters, 2010).

Education is one sure means of inculcating desired change in any upwardly mobile society and the case for social engagement is not an exception. The burden and expectation on education is huge as it is expected to help liberate the mind and empower it with the ability of critical thinking which in the long run allows for empowerment. Teacher education programs should have the goal of presenting curriculum in such a way to teach the necessity of social interaction. Pre-service and in-service programs need to model how social interaction encourages collective problem solving and knowledge sharing (Darling-Hammond & McLaughlin, 1995). For Bromley (2008, p. 111), active engagement helps create "a positive classroom environment and establish a community of learners who support each other." This process is very vital because of the demands of globalization and social dynamism, which is in tandem with the goal of education in Nigeria as stated by the national policy on education; thus, provide teachers with the

intellectual and professional background adequate for their assignment and to make them adaptable to changing situations (Federal Government of Nigeria (NPE) (2013). The world is confronted with unprecedented challenges and changes ranging from social, economic and environmental, all driven by hastening globalization and the dynamism in technological developments thus providing a myriad of new opportunities for human advancement (OECD, 2108). Education cannot be left out, hence the need to be prepared and ready to cope with the uncertain and ever-changing future. The future is uncertain, and we cannot predict it; but we need to be open and ready for it. The children entering education in 2018 will be young adults in 2030 and as such, they need the right knowledge, skills, capabilities, exposures and development to be able to function adequately in the global space. Therefore, education needs to devise the means to incorporate contemporary values such as the social engagement which gives a room for the engagement of all to ensure broad access and opportunity to all especially in expressive education. The goal of teacher education encourages dynamism and that is why it stated, thus, shall continue to take cognizance of changes in methodology and in the curriculum. Teachers shall be regularly exposed to innovations in the profession.

Education is a major concern for all societies. As the foundation and essential driving force of economic, social, and human development, education is at the heart of the change that is dramatically affecting our world in the areas of science, technology, economics, and culture. It is the reason behind social change and scientific progress, and in its turn, it is subjected to the results of progress that it itself has engendered, both with regard to content as well as methods and established aims (Gupta, 2017). The role of education in the face of globalization and dynamism is to prepare the present children for the oncoming future; for jobs that have not yet been created, for technologies that have not yet been invented, to solve problems that have not yet been anticipated, (OECD, 2018). Education is one of the means by which learners can be equipped with the requisite skills and competencies to face the daunting future as well as contribute meaningfully to it especially with the changed gold-post due to the unprecedented Coronavirus pandemic. “The entire world has been thrown into confusion with the scourge of the novel Corona virus also known as COVID-19. This virus that began in Wuhan China in November 2019 can now be said to have registered its presence in almost every country of the continent and its really dealing its blow as demonstrated in the exponential reported cases and deaths recorded across the globe. Because of this raging pandemic, every aspect of the human life has been affected” (Alimigbe, 2020). To engineer this change, the teacher will have a significant role to play in encouraging positive peer relationships and creating such identity and belonging to help nurture in a number of ways as help creating space within the academic milieu where students spend time together, staff organize social activities and peer mentoring and coaching, (Jones & Thomas, 2012).

As already identified, the teacher plays a very key role in fostering social engagement tenets and being open to ideas they say, is the way forward. The Nigerian education system is rife with situations where the teacher is seen as “alpha and omega” in the teaching and learning process. Most often, teaching and learning is usually a one-way approach, where the teacher stands as the reservoir and this is obviously against the philosophy of Dewey (1963) who believes that learning is primarily a social activity. A

great role therefore for the TRCN is to emphasis social engagement in their MCPD programs by fully incorporating it to ensure they reflect in the teachers teaching and learning. This is imperative especially since studies have found out that when students air their views, when they are given opportunity to contribute to what they learn, more understanding occurs, and more learning takes place. Nigeria, a creation of European imperialism with population of over 200 million, spanning over an expanse of land about 351,649 sq mi (910,771 sq km), has over 250 ethnic groups and widely varied culture and three regionally dominant ethnic groups: the Hausa in the North, the Yoruba in the west and the Igbo in the East (Infoplease, 2017). Fafunwa (1981) accounted that formal education can be traced to 1842 when the first primary school was established in Badagry, Nigeria, and then later spread to other parts of Nigeria such as Abeokuta, Ibadan, Ogbomoso, Oyo, Calabar and a host of other towns, particularly in the then Southern protectorate of Nigeria. It was the efforts of churches like Church Missionary Society (CMS), Roman Catholic Mission, and Wesleyan Missionary Society, that made the spread of Western education in Nigeria a reality, and since then the country's educational history has evolved to what it is in the present-day Nigeria. Nigeria has 36 states and the Federal capital Territory Abuja. The country is divided into (6) geo-political zones for political and administration purposes, South-South (6 states), South-East (5 states), South- West (6 states), North- Central (5 states), North-West (7 states) and North-East (6 states).

The Challenges of Education Post COVID-19

Prior to COVID-19, the phenomenon of globalization had always posed challenges to education because of what most authors have agreed is its intricate connection to the maximization of profit. Profit takes priority in a market economy which is the framework of globalization. Merriam (2010) noted that the market economy frame of globalization makes it more beneficial to countries that fall within the developed bracket. Conversely, it slants against countries that are outside the economically developed circle. Jarvis (2008) put the downside of globalization more poignantly asserting that "even in the first world, the poor continue to be excluded and get poorer" (cited in Merriam 2010, p. 402). Merriam further concurred with Jarvis's submission by emphasizing the extent to which marginalized groups have been overrun by uneven economic development that has causal link to globalization. In most communities of the developing world, social services – especially education – often suffer most the pangs of uneven economic development. What is true of any developing world is especially true in Nigeria where education – and teachers – have remained of second order importance.

The challenges of globalization prior to COVID-19 were borderless in their reach of vulnerable populations across the globe. COVID-19 certainly increases the downside of globalization and have further made "difficult-to-reach and underserved populations face further obstacles" to education (Boeren, Roumel, & Roessger 2020, p. 201). Researchers and authors are agreed that COVID-19 will widen the global inequity gap and that development education will suffer (McCann & Matenga, 2020 & McCloskey, 2020).

Beyond individuals, some countries and continents belong to the club of "underserved" in the comity of nations. McCann & Matenga (2020) were blunter in asserting that "the

impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the Global South will be formidable and will take decades to recover from" (p. 161). This is truer of Africa and Nigeria.

An expert on the African Union (AU) affirmed that one major post COVID-19 challenge is its propensity to increase 'cap-in-hand' diplomacy. There is now a risk that the COVID-19 crisis may make African countries more dependent on foreign assistance… and that "These effects in the health and economic sectors will expose and compound pre-existing social, political, and environmental vulnerabilities" (Cedric de Coning, 2020).

What is true of the global south is true of Africa. And what is true of Africa is especially true of Nigeria and more so of education in Nigeria. At the onset of the COVID-19 lockdown in March 2020, all federal educational institutions were closed. Seven months after, all federal universities and related institutions responsible for teacher education have remained closed with no viable option of online instruction. The downside of the closure with no alternate delivery options have left millions of students, teachers, teacher educators, and teachers-in-training vulnerable to all forms of social ills. Most private institutions across the country were forced to close or downsize their operations. Most young people have either become victims of crime or accomplices in crime. A recent week-long national protest against police brutality in Nigeria and the resultant violence – including loss of lives and property- are indicators of the challenges that await education post COVID-19.

Teacher Registration Council of Nigeria (TRCN)

The Teachers Registration Council of Nigeria (TRCN), according to the TRCN Act CAP T.3 (of 2004, section 1), was established by ACT 31 of 1993 now CAP T.3 of 2004 in fulfilment of the quest for the professionalization of the teaching profession. Nigerian Teachers had over the years clamoured for the establishment of a regulatory agency of their own as obtains for all professional groups to regulate the practice of the profession. They noted that the absence of such an agency was responsible for the low esteem of the profession, promoted the notion of teaching as an all-comers job; responsible for the deterioration of the material condition of teachers and its negative impact on the quality of education in the country.

Events preceding the establishment of TRCN included an unprecedented national strike by the Nigerian Union of Teachers (NUT) in 1992 calling for the establishment of the council, and a series of other agitations and interactive action by stakeholders to fully sensitize the nation on the need for such agency and the advantages that it portends.

The enactment of the TRCN ACT in 1993 did not however, materialize in its immediate take off. This had to wait for another six years before the Registrar/Chief Executive of the Council was appointed in April 1999. Even at that, the Council effectively commenced operation in June 2000. Thus, the phenomenal expansion of the education system in the country gave rise to a plethora of problems among which is the poor teacher quality and inadequate number of teachers who are also poorly remunerated and motivated hence the establishment of TRCN to control and regulate the teaching profession in all aspects and ramifications in Nigeria, (National Policy on Education)

This Act empowers the Council to among other responsibilities to;

- *Determine who are teachers in Nigeria,*
- *Determine what standards of knowledge and skill are to be attained by persons seeking to become registered as teachers under this Act and raising those standards from time to time as circumstances may permit,*
- *Secure in accordance with the provisions of this Act the establishment and maintenance of a register of teachers and the publication from time to time of the lists of those persons,*
- *Regulate and control the teaching profession in all its aspects and ramifications,*
- *Classify from time-to-time members of the teaching profession according to their levels of training and qualification,*
- *Perform through the Council established under the Act the functions conferred on it by the Act*.

In fulfilment of these mandates, the Council's vision was aimed at regulating teacher education, training and practice at all levels and sectors of the Nigerian education system in order to match teacher quality, discipline, professionalism, reward and dignity with international standards. The Council thus promotes professionalism in the teaching profession through accreditation, monitoring and supervision of teacher education programs at all levels of the nation's education system. The Act further empowers TRCN to mount, monitor and supervise Mandatory Continuing Professional Development Programs and at the same time, maintain discipline among teachers at all levels of the education system in the country. Basically, the TRCN's activities have been geared towards achieving her mandates hence informing all the programs being executed to meet the yearning and improving the aspirations of the teachers, teachers' professionalism and the teaching profession in general for effective service delivery. TRCN has and continues to execute programs and activities in the areas of Professionalism, Quality Assurance, collaboration with donor agencies, access to teacher education and professionalism, professional conduct and enforcement and professional publications. Some of these activities include but not limited to:

1. Conduct of Professional Qualifying Examinations (PQE), Professional Qualifying Examination Integrated (PQEi) for final year students in education accredited institutions; and Professional Qualifying Examination for teachers in the diaspora (PQEd): this helps to ensure that the teachers not only possess certificates but continually update their knowledge through the administering, assessing and grading of prospective teachers before they are registered and licensed to be admitted into the teaching profession in the country. The examination ensures that only well-educated and qualified teachers are certified to teach in Nigerian schools.
2. Registration of teachers for certification: this is done in line with the Council's mandate of securing, establishing, and maintaining a register of teachers in the country. the Council has been able to register well over a million teachers who have successfully sat for and excelled in the professional qualifying examination.

Certification is the only thing that confers professional status as well as compels registered teachers to conform to the tenets of the profession.

3. Licensing of registered teachers: a distinguishing mark of a genuine professional is the possession of a valid practicing license at any point in time. The license is issued only to certified teachers who have passed the professional examination, and this is renewable after every (3) years based on evidence of successful attending of upgrade of knowledge by the teachers through the attendance of conferences and Mandatory Continuous Professional Development of which the Council keeps records and as well allocate points.
4. Mandatory Continuous Professional Development for teachers (MCPD): this refers to a set of developmental goals, capacity building and strategies and service delivery for ongoing, ceaseless improvement in the pedagogical and professional capacities of teachers. Mostly the council's MCPD programs entails annual general meetings, annual conference of registered teachers, workshops, seminars and relevant trainings approved by the Council. To this end, the Council developed as well as distributed MCPD manual to critical stakeholders and MCPD providers to guide their conduct and upgrading of teachers which is relevant for their license renewals after (3) years.

Other activities of the Council are: Professional standards for Nigerian teachers (stipulated standards for teacher/leaders in education system at all levels in the country); development of Continuous Professional Development Assessment Framework (CPDAF); harmonized national Benchmark for post graduate diploma in education (PGDE); Teachers Investigative Panel (TIP) and Teachers Tribunal (TT); Guidelines on accreditation and monitoring of teacher's education programs to monitor Professional Diploma in Education (PDE) and Post-Doctoral Diploma in Education (PDDE); Teachers code of conduct (to investigate, sanction and punish offenders); publication of *Nigerian Journal for Professional Teachers* (NJPT); Teachers Code of Conduct, professional diary, publication of Statistical Digest of Teachers in Nigeria; development of Career Path Policy for Teaching profession in Nigeria; issuance of Letters of Professional Standing to teachers willing to teach outside the shores of the country; Induction of students at point of graduation, World Bank collaboration on strengthening of mathematics & science education (SMASE) in Nigeria,

Teacher Training and Social Engagement

The teacher has an unquantifiable contribution to national development and that is why their training should often embrace dynamism and globalization to ensure equipping it with current trends for an upward development not only in education but national development in general. The Teachers Registration Council of Nigeria, in this regard, ensures quality of teacher education through the accreditation, monitoring and supervision of all courses and programs of teacher education institutions in Nigeria. They include the faculties and institutes of education in Nigerian Universities, colleges of Education, etc. To this effect, Abram (2012) asserts that social engagement is a strong factor in the elimination of problems associated to student retention which has plagued higher education for many years. Based on Abram's opinion, series of research have alluded to the fact that social engagement is instrumental to help in the improvement of the many students'

retention problems, since social engagement can determine to a large extent whether students will remain in school to complete their studies. In recognition of the place of the teacher and teacher education in political, economic and social development, the Nigerian National Policy on Education (NPE) in her catch phrase, "no education system may rise above the quality of its teachers hence teacher education shall continue to be given major emphasis in all educational planning and development" (Federal Government of Nigeria (NPE), 2013), exalted teacher education to her due place. Teacher education connotes a series of processes leading to the development of persons with requisite knowledge, skills and values to offer service as professional teachers, (Okebukola, 2001; 2007; 2015). To ensure that the teacher continues learning all through their professional and service years, this initial training to equip them with professional recognition does not stop hence the need for mandatory continuous professional development (MCPD). Thus, the Teachers Registration Council of Nigeria is saddled with that responsibility of coordinating, administering and regulating teacher education and of course, MCPD. These interventions are all done in accordance with the goal of teacher education in the country amongst which are; help teachers fit into the social life of the community and the society at large and enhance their commitment to national goals; provide teachers with the intellectual and professional background adequate for their assignment and to make them adaptable to changing situations; enhance teachers commitment to the teaching profession, Federal Government of Nigeria (NPE) (2013). These goals for teacher education resonate perfectly for social engagement since it connotes helping the teachers fit into the social life and this cannot be achieved if the teachers are not engaged, allowed to air their views or better still, allowed to be heard.

Teacher training is the opportunity for introduction of values, skills and knowledge that can be useful in the upgrading of the teacher's knowledge. it is the avenues the teachers have to have their say and make input to matters that concerns them. Many Nigerian teachers fail to incorporate social engagement rules into their teaching since on account of their own weak exposure to this during their own training.

Obviously, there is a connection between education and social engagement and Converse (1972) succinctly encapsulates this link thus:

> Whether one is dealing with cognitive matters such as level of factual information about politics or conceptual sophistication in its assessment; or such motivational matters as degree of attention paid to politics and emotional involvement in political affairs; or questions of actual behavior, such as engagement in any of a variety of political activities from party work to vote turnout itself: education is everywhere the universal solvent, and the relationship is always in the same direction. The higher the education, the greater the 'good' values of the variable. The educated citizen is attentive, knowledgeable, and participatory and the uneducated citizen is not. (p. 324)

The focus in the above quote points to the fact that "education is the universal solvent." Similarly, Almond and Verba (1963/1989, pp. 315-316) demonstrate the connectedness between education and social engagement as "…the uneducated man or the man with the limited education is a different political actor from the man who has achieved a higher

level of education." The relationship of education to social engagement is something reflected in all spheres as also noted by Marsh and Kaase (1979, p. 186) who noted the striking empirical regularity linking education and engagement thus:

> Education is one of the most important predictors – usually, in fact, the most important predictor – of many forms of social participation – from voting to associational membership, to chairing a local committee to hosting a dinner party to giving blood. The same basic pattern applies to both men and women and to all races and generations. Education, in short, is an extremely powerful predictor of civic engagement.

In all of these, the link between education and social engagement cannot be underemphasized because people attend school and their level of engagement is positively boosted and this is why Campbell (2006, p. 28) posits that; "one school of thought holds that, for at least some types of engagement, the content of education does not matter at all that education only serves to enhance an individual's socioeconomic status, which in turn increases engagement." Campbell in his analysis of the link between education and engagement explains that as much is yet to be learned of the connectedness between education and engagement:

> the preponderance of the existing evidence recommends moving forward with more analysis, including the development of indicators pertaining to the links between education and engagement. Such indicators might include individual-level measures of young people's civic and social engagement and extra-curricular involvement, as well as aggregated measures of the "ethos" or culture within a school. School ethos can incorporate the openness of the classroom climate, the degree to which students' opinions are respected by teachers and administrators, and the overall sense of community within the school.

The Case of TRCN

The Teachers Registration Council of Nigeria in keeping to her mandates have been executing as well as regulating the conduct of the Mandatory Continuous Professional Development programs in the country in a bid to constantly update the repository of the Nigerian teachers. Every profession can lead ideas within its field of expertise through continuous exploration of ideas and knowledge, hence a core role for TRCN.

Continuing Professional Development (CPD) refers to a set of developmental goals, capacity building and strategies and service delivery for on-going, ceaseless improvement in the pedagogical and professional capacities of teachers. Generally, TRCN's CPD programs cover annual general meetings, annual conference of registered teachers, workshops and seminars as well as other training programs approved by TRCN from time to time. It also includes training and education programs organized within and outside the education sector which is relevant to the teaching profession in meeting the CPD standards. To this end, TRCN has developed and equally distributed MCPD manual to critical stakeholders and MCPD providers like the National Teachers Institute (NTI), Local Government Education Authorities (LGEAs), Non- Governmental Organizations, etc.

The Teachers Registration Council of Nigeria (2015) enumerated the objectives of the MCPD thus;

- Helps to ensure teachers keep abreast of developments in theory and practice of the profession as well as provides a forum for cross-fertilization of ideas and experiences.
- Offers intellectual, social and emotional engagement with ideas, materials, and colleagues to be intellectually engaged in their discipline and work regularly with others in their field.
- The MCPD is a sure way to maintain competence and relevance of the education/teachers in economic, technological, political and social environment through keeping of teachers abreast with the latest innovations in the teaching profession and beyond which are all geared towards maintaining professional excellence at all times. This is an ongoing process of change in order to assist teachers adopt, contribute and participate actively in the implementation of challenges ahead and also to enhance the teacher's commitment to the teaching profession in general.
- MCPD serves as an on-going process of change in other to assist teachers adapt, contribute and participate actively in the implementation of challenges ahead.

TRCN is committed to professional development of teachers in that she collaborates with myriad of stakeholders in education to attract free training programs for teachers. So, the Council, in this regard, has organized joint capacity building workshops and seminars for teachers with the World Bank, UNESCO, and other international and National agencies. Similarly, every year, TRCN tours the entire country with experts from various fields training teachers in critical areas needing urgent improvement. The Council in cognizant of the fact that she is saddled with the responsibilities of determining the standards that must be attained by Professional teachers in the country and equally raising those standards from time to time, carries out series of professional developments activities to keep the teachers abreast of innovations in the teaching profession as well as help to enhance their skills for social engagement. Discussed below therefore are some of the activities that TRCN has executed in the recent past.

Capacity building training on Digital Literacy for Nigerian teachers at the basic and post basic levels

Because of education dynamism and the transformations that information technology is evolving, TRCN continually sees the need to expose the Nigerian teachers to new developments in Information and Communications Technology (ICT) innovations. TRCN embarks on digital literacy training programme for teachers to keep them abreast of national/global trends in innovations in ICT to enable them to bring the knowledge to bear in their teaching and learning processes. The training, which is usually organized concurrently in all the (6) geo-political areas, attracts (though a quite minimal number of teachers) 20 teachers from each of the 36 states of the Federation including the Federal capital territory who are later expected to cascade the knowledge received down to their fellow teachers.

Pedagogical Training for Mathematics and English Teachers

This program is an improvement workshop for teachers of mathematics and English language in Nigerian junior and senior secondary schools. In the Nigerian educational system, Mathematics and English language are two critical subjects that students must pass if they are to advance in the world of academics or even in the vocations and as such, teachers knowledge needs to be constantly updated in this regard, to ensure the students get the best in terms of innovations as well as improve their professional development. The workshop basically is to enhance the pedagogical skills of teachers of Mathematics and English Language at the junior and senior secondary schools through addressing issues relating to poor teaching methods and skills, poor teacher preparation in these subject areas, among other factors. The improvement workshop features international and local experts versed in the best practices of the subject areas who share experiences with the teachers about key variables for academic performances in other countries and the lesson for Nigerian and also, opportunity to disseminate basic findings and techniques for teaching of both subjects. Thus, during this workshop sessions, experts in the fields lead the teachers through.

Continuous Professional Development Workshop for Registered Teachers on the Professional Standards for Teaching Profession in Nigeria (PSTPN)

The Council haven recently embarked on a review of one of her critical documents, which encapsulates all that every teacher is expected to know and exhibit in the practice of the profession in terms of knowledge, skills, values and attitudes, to depict emerging issues in education and some gaps observed in the former edition, (Teachers Registration Council of Nigeria, 2019). The document defines what a professional teacher must know and put into practice as well as the core values, ideals and conducts that professionals must exhibit. The review is done to include four domains of professional standards for teaching and teachers thus: professional knowledge, professional practice, professional conduct and membership obligations. Also included are the professional standards for school leadership which includes (7) areas thus: Developing self and subordinates; leading professional knowledge service and conduct; managing resources in the school; generating resources internally and ensuring accountability; promoting school improvement, innovation and change; supporting learners' enrolment and participation; and engaging and working with the community. The review became imperative as a result of emerging issues and activities in the education sector and the need to standardize professional practice to meet international specification. In order to provide an inclusive framework, the Council invited stakeholders from Universal Basic Education Commission (UBEC), Nigeria Union of Teachers (NUT), Deans of Faculties of Education, Provost of Colleges of Education and Rectors of Polytechnics, National Association of Proprietors of Private Schools (NAPPS), School Based Management Committees (SBMCS), classroom teachers and Parents Teachers Associations (PTAs). After the Council Haven did the review, the need then arose to disseminate the content of the PSTPN to the teachers to ensure they were conversant with the contents and able to apply them to their teaching. To this effect, a two -day training was organized for basic and senior secondary school teacher on the contents and application of the Professional Standards for

their effective service delivery by TRCN. The training which was intended to train the teachers on the nitty-gritty of the document, was an interactive session where the teachers and their trainers deliberated on a series of issues or subject areas arising from the document, and everyone was equally given an opportunity to offer input on the direction of events for the new documents all in the bid of encouraging social engagement.

In all of the above TRCN programs, there are various strategies and skills that the Council utilizes to engender social engagement to help teachers in use for their teaching and learning process for values and principles and some of these are discussed below:

- **Free communication flow by involving everyone in the discussion** – TRCN in cognizant that effective communication is key and also that the teachers are valued and reliable voices in the execution of education objectives, school improvement and education outcomes. They are also res[ponsible for impacting teaching and learning, which allows for free communication flow in their Continuous Professional Development programs. To achieve this, all teachers are given level playing ground where they are made to know that their being selected to attend the program is not an accident and that their contributions are highly valued and respected and, as such, are welcomed to contribute to the discussions.
- **Encourage collaboration amongst teachers through group activities**- TRCN knows the teaching profession consists of a body of an intellectual community and as such uses her professional development programs to bring teachers together where they can freely discuss and share ideas on common subject matter which can help in progressing and sustaining the profession as it were. TRCN therefore prioritizes this community engagement by encouraging collaboration amongst the teacher through sharing them into groups to engender discussions. Through this community engagement and by TRCN making it a priority, teachers feel involved in their communities and build relationships by directly working with fellow teachers on education initiatives and progress and then also seeing themselves as part of the core group helping to set targets as key stakeholders. This kind of opportunities allows everyone to participate and see themselves as major players in initiating change in a system they are part of and this knowledge they can transfer and incorporate into their teaching.
- **Allowing for professional culture -** Professional cultures, they say, aid educators in committing to their growth and development, while a focus on collaboration promotes shared ideas and information, leading to a stronger in-school community of more effective and engaged teachers. TRCN being a Professional Regulator, ensures that her Professional development activities bring the teachers together in such a way that they can share professionally through social engagement. Through this way, teachers learn and share information on topical educational issues, ideas as well as interactive dialoguing and deliberations, which further develops their teaching and learning. TRCN MCPDs are usually avenue for learning where teachers come together to learn about and implement new initiatives through social engagements.

Conclusion

The paper has given a cursory look at enhancing social engagement in Nigeria through teachers' professional development using secondary data from the Teachers

Registration Council of Nigeria, a body tasked with regulating teaching in Nigeria. The paper looked at the imperative of social engagement, the role of education, the demands of globalization/social dynamism and especially post COVID-19, and the role of teachers in fostering social engagement especially given the peculiarities of Nigeria. The paper equally addressed the challenge of education post COVID-19, looking at the impact of globalization generally, especially on education and of teacher education. Similarly, the history, mandates, functions and activities of TRCN were x-rayed as well as showing the interconnectedness of teacher training and social engagement. Lastly, the paper used secondary data from the Teachers Registration council of Nigeria to connect the impact professional development has had in enhancing teachers' skills for social engagement as well as passing those skills on to reflect in their classes to students. The paper examined some documents and studies in adult education, sustainable development of cities and communities, and innovative technology. The paper highlighted that continuous development programs for teachers have the capacity of disseminating social engagement rules to teachers that they could use to impact their teachings, thus, there is, therefore, the need for TRCN to promote social engagement in their MCPD's for teachers by introducing social engagements tenets into her curriculum for sustainability of teacher education and of course, better outputs in teaching and learning.

Recommendation

The TRCN Mandatory Professional developments programs have proven to be real time opportunities for teachers to meet, relate and interact with their colleagues in such a way that makes them feel being carried along in issues concerning them. By this way, it makes them own outcomes of programs since they ascribe ownership. Although research has not been carried out to determine the effects the social engagement has on their teaching and learning, it is based on assumption that it has positive impact. Thus, studies could be carried out in this regard to relate relationship and possibly see how processes could be improved upon for the sustainability of the teachers as well as the teaching profession in general. Had a difficult time with this paragraph.

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THE ROLE OF EDUCATED NEIGHBORHOODS IN ACHIEVING THE NECESSARY LIFE SKILLS FOR ADULT LEARNERS IN SAUDI ARABIA TO CONFRONT THE COVID-19 CRISIS

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ABSTRACT: With today's world of accelerated progress and change, the skills to solve problems, think critically, communicate effectively, and manage lives in a healthy and productive manner are essential for people to flourish in the 21st century. The study's purpose is to explore the role of educated-neighborhood programs for achieving the necessary life skills that adult learners need to help them during the present pandemic. The research also investigates if there is a difference, by gender and number of courses, regarding the educated neighborhood programs' role when acquiring the necessary life skills that could enable adult learners to confront the COVID-19 crisis. The theoretical framework depends on John Dewey's perspective. A self-administered questionnaire was utilized. A total sample of 601 adult learners participated in this study. The results illustrated that the adult learners who enrolled in the educated-neighborhood programs perceived the benefit of the life skills by practicing these skills during the COVID-19 crisis. Additionally, the results revealed differences for both life skills based on the number of courses that learners had taken during the present pandemic. The benefit of the direction was for people who took 5 or more courses. Understanding adult learners' needs is essential to provide the necessary life skills that fit with today's world of accelerated change.

Keywords: 21st century skills, life skills, adultery learns, Saudi Arabia, COVID19

Today's events have been unusual. In the past, there were other epidemics; however, the way people reacted to coronavirus disease (COVID-19) is unique (Matias, Dominski, & Marks, 2020). The COVID-19 viral disease was discovered in December 2019 in Wuhan, central China. By March 11, 2020, the World Health Organization (WHO) classified the disease as a global pandemic (World Health Organization (WHO), 2020). On March 2, 2020, the first case of the corona-virus pandemic was reported in Saudi Arabia (Ministry of Health, 2020). Before that date, Saudi Arabia took several audacious and early precautions in order to prevent the spread of the virus. One of the most important precautionary decisions was to halt people who were outside the country from entering Makkah and to visit the Prophet's Mosque. The country also suspended all sporting activities; lounges; and commercial complexes, except for essential jobs and health regulations, to maintain social distancing. The Saudi Arabian government also suspended education at all schools and universities, relying on online platforms for all education levels (Ministry of Education, 2020). Not only has Saudi Arabia been negatively influenced by COVID-19, but countries also all over the world have been affected by this pandemic. To prepare learners very well, they should have the knowledge and skills that enable them to stay healthy, to have positive attitudes about themselves, and to actively participate in societies while effectively dealing with the challenges of everyday life (WHO, 1993). In Saudi Arabia, educated neighborhood programs provide many courses, such as vocational skills, literacy, and life skills, for adult learners. Because life-skill education for adults can be an effective tool to empower them to act responsibly, to take

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initiative, and to control stress and emotions, the research's purpose is to explore the role of educated neighborhood programs for achieving the necessary life skills that adult learners need to help them during the COVID-19 crisis in Saudi Arabia. The research also investigates if there is a difference, by gender and number of courses, regarding the educated neighborhood programs' role when acquiring the necessary life skills that could enable adult learners to confront the COVID-19 crisis.

Educated Neighborhoods

In Saudi Arabia, the neighborhood program learning first started in Jeddah City in 2006 in order to meet the local communities' needs, especially for women who were less fortunate in terms of education or vocational training (Alsuker, 2015). The program's goal is to support people who are upgrading their cultural, health, social, and economic level and to provide them with the skills that qualify them for the labor market, enabling people to participate in their families' and societies' economic and social growth. Neighborhood programs have played a very important role in education since they were established for both men and women. The neighborhood learning program provides many courses, such as foundation studies in literacy, numeracy, and recitation of the Holy Quran, in addition to professional programs, such as cosmetics, food processing, party planning, gift wrapping and flower arrangement. The program also teaches life skills, such as communication, critical thinking, and problem-solving as well as teaching languages, such as English (Ministry of Education, 2018). Courses are taught at public schools within the community; and are free anyone to can attend. Now, the neighborhood learning program has spread to all regions of Saudi Arabia for both males and females. (Alsuker, 2015).

The learning neighborhood programs are informal adult education programs, which are facilitated by some volunteers. More women than men participate in the learning neighborhood programs. The Ministry of Education enlists individuals, particularly teachers and school employees, with the necessary training; those individuals instruct classes for the Learning Neighborhood program. When necessary, the Department of Adult Education teaches people how to work with the adults who attend classes (General Department of Continuing Education, 2018).

The learning neighborhood program's vision is to provide a creative curriculum that reflects the different areas of life, therefore supporting people to be productive citizens and to obtain knowledge that can help them be more effective in their community. The program's objectives are to craft a plan to broaden adult education so that it includes basic literacy and continued study, to increase the literacy rate in the slums, to create more connections between teaching adults and promoting the national social growth, to create a pattern of volunteering that improves society, to encourage people to enhance their abilities, and to promote education as a tool for life and for addressing difficulties (Ministry of Education, 2018).

Life-Skills

Helping people to acquire life skills is hard. Instructors must have the expertise to utilize hands-on approaches (United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization [UNESCO], 2012). “Life skills education needs to adopt interactive, responsive, and participatory methods that challenge people to find new ways of relating to one another” (UNESCO, 2012, p. 87). Life skills is a modern concept in the Arab world. The concept of life-skills came in response to life, societal, and educational developments, and this idea keeps pace with the era of inclusive development and the technological knowledge revolution (Al-sabbagh 2004). Life skills refer to the abilities that everyone needs to make the most out of life. Usually, these life skills are linked to the way we manage our lives and live better, as well as helping people to achieve their aspirations (Altuwairqi, 2017). Life skills are defined by the World Health Organization (1993) as the capabilities of adaptive and positive behavior which enable individuals to effectively deal with the demands and challenges of daily life. Examples of these skills are managing emotions, solving problems, thinking critically, making healthy choices, communicating effectively, and managing lives in a healthy and productive manner (World Health Organization,1993).

These skills may include knowing how to keep a job; understanding why you are behaving in a specific way; or knowing how to deal with people, problems, circumstance changes, or daily stresses (Altuwairqi, 2017). However, the phrases “life skills-based education” and “skills-based health education” are frequently utilized in the same way. The variation is that the former term refers to health-related issues while the latter term addresses a wider range of topics, including goodwill training, nationality, and additional public concerns. The two methods focus on the actual usage of education, talents, and beliefs; both forms of learning utilize active instruction techniques, engaging both the teachers and the learners (World Health Organization, 1993). In fact, any competency that can be useful in our lives could be considered a life skill, whether the trait is utilized at school, at work, or in our personal lives. The study was designed to answer the following research questions: What is the role of the educated neighborhood program in developing life skills (solving problems, thinking critically, communicating effectively, and managing lives in a healthy and productive manner) for adult learners in Saudi Arabia to confront the COVID-19 crisis? Is the role of the educated neighborhood program to help adult learner develop life skills to confront the COVID-19 crisis differ according to gender (male or female) and number of courses?

Significance of the Study

This is significant for the field of adult education because it would provide new knowledge regarding the relationship between COVID-19 and the concept of life skills. This study may provide important information for educational policymakers and educational planners to consider adult learners' needs and interests in the educated neighborhood programs in Saudi Arabia. The educated neighborhood programs need to be in line with the challenges of daily life and must adapt to the changes taking place at the political, social, cultural, and health levels. This study is also important to identify the necessary life skills in a way that contributes to disseminating these skills and increasing their use in adult-education programs.

Theoretical Framework

John Dewey (1916) stressed the importance of enabling individuals to become lifelong learners because education does not stop at a certain stage or age. People who are working to the development of sustainable societies need analytical abilities in order to recognize the responsibilities for purchasing and creating things as well as being guardians and leaders for modifications due to the intricate connectedness among people (Glasbergen & Smits, 2003). Dewey believed that education is based on learning through "hands-on" dialogue, discussion, and critical thinking (Gutek, 2014). Therefore, individuals need to constantly develop their intellectual and practical skills in order to solve problems rationally and scientifically. Accordingly, John Dewey criticized the traditional "old school," which makes students passive learners, because this approach does not help learners in developing their knowledge or to face the challenges of daily life. Dewey believed that the lecture method is a limited education tool and that its benefits are limited because it does not allow the learner to explore reality, to collect information, to measure things, and to search for solutions (Dewey, 1915).

Dewey's teaching methods are based on dialogue, problem solving, and self-learning (Dewey, 1998). Dewey (1991) emphasized that the aim of education is to enable people to continue their learning as well as to provide them with the skills that can help them to grow, adapt to their environment, and face challenges and difficulties in life. Dewey thoughts are consistent with the goals for the life skills that adults learn in the educated neighborhood program. The life skills chosen for this study are solving problems, thinking critically, communicating effectively, and managing lives in a healthy manner.

Dewey believed that the main key in the learning process is teaching "problem solving" skills. Hence, through a problem-solving process, learners become ready for real-life situations (Dewey, 1991). Critical-thinking skills is a complex concept, which is related to a number of behaviors that are taken in different situations. Dewey (1933) defined critical thinking skills as "active, persistent, and careful consideration of any belief or supposed form of knowledge in the light of the grounds that support it, and the further conclusions to which it tends" (p. 118). There is a strong link among communication, problem solving, and critical thinking skills. According to Klassen and Dwyer (2015), "problem solving is the heart of critical thinking, but communication is its soul. If you can't communicate clearly, you can't think critically" (p.77). Also, critical thinking helps people to manage stress and can even improve their health as well as giving people more incentive to perform.

Research Methodology

The present study utilized the descriptive method of research, and the sample was comprised of adult learners who were taking a life-skills course in the educated neighborhood program. The study was conducted in Taif, a tourist city located in western Saudi Arabia. The total population consisted of 917 students (358 males and 559 females). Online questionnaires were used to gather the data between May 20 and June 30, 2020. The director for the Department of Adult Education in Taif provided a list of

individuals who were studying at the educated neighborhood programs in 2020. Individuals who agreed to participate were asked to complete the questionnaire by email message and social media, such as WhatsApp and Twitter. The measurement items utilized for the study were obtained from reviewing the literature. The questionnaire included 24 items and consisted of two parts. The first part of the demographic information asked about gender and the number of courses. The second part included four life-skill scales: (a) critical thinking, (b) problem solving, (c) communicating effectively, and (d) managing lives in a healthy and productive manner. To clarify, making a rational decision about what to do in a situation is a critical-thinking skill. Coping with issues encountered when trying to solve problems in a positive way, such as analyzing a situation, getting information, thinking of options, revising options, and applying the correct solutions, is problem solving. When people are able to present or to receive various types of information, such as thoughts and feelings, with others as well as express what is happening around them, they have effective communication skills. Skills managing lives in a healthy and productive manner based on daily habits that help people feel energetic, be healthy, stay positive, and be less stressed, reducing the risk of disease. A Likert-type scale (1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = undecided, 4 = agree, and 5 = strongly agree) was used for this study.

The questionnaire was developed in English. Then, the survey was translated into Arabic by translators who had mastered both languages in order to ensure that each item had equivalent statements in both languages. Creswell (2008) defined content validity as "the extent to which the question on the instrument and the scores from these questions are representative of all the possible questions that a researcher could ask about the content or skills" (p. 172). Thirteen expert panel members, specialists in the field of adult education, were asked to review the items. The expert panel members were asked to provide their opinions about the items' clarity or ambiguity as well as how these items represented each life skill. The panelists were given the study's goal and the meaning of each life skill so that they could provide any comments, suggestions, or corrections to improve the questionnaire. The items the panelists found acceptable were kept, and the confusing or ambiguous items were deleted.

After the panelists' review was completed, a pilot test was conducted using the revised survey; 20 individuals who had similar characteristics as the study's participants provided comments about clarity and ease of understanding. All 20 individuals completed the questionnaire and gave satisfactory comments about the items' clarity. The correlation coefficient for each item with the entire questionnaire was 0.39-0.86, and between the items and each scale was (0.44-0.88), indicating acceptable statistical significance. Cronbach's Alpha was calculated to examine the instrument's reliability. The overall Cronbach Alpha result was 0.86, indicating high reliability for the survey questions. Information about life skills is presented in Table 1.

Table 1

Life Skills and Items for the Life Skills Survey

Life Skill and Items	R-test	Alpha
Critical Thinking	0.91	0.71
1. I can assess the life situation and then behave accordingly.		
2. Face this pandemic in an effective way.		
3. distinguish between rumors and facts regarding the response to this pandemic		
4. Discuss issues with my family members in order to make the right decisions for our lives.		
5. Develop reflective thinking skills.		
Problem Solving	0.88	0.70
6. Solve my family's problems in a positive manner.		
7. Identify the problem.		
8. Analyze a situation or problem before forming judgments.		
9. Suggest the best possible solutions for problems by indicating the reason		
10. Get the necessary information to find a solution for the problem.		
11. Apply the best solutions with the given options.		
Communicating Effectively	0.86	0.74
12. Communicate effectively with others.		
13. Listen to other people's point of view carefully.		
14. Communicate positive messages to others during this pandemic.		
15. Persuade and negotiate effectively.		
16. Listen to my family members and hear their concerns about what is happening around them.		
17. Clarify any misconceptions that my family members might have regarding the pandemic		
Managing Lives in a Healthy Manner	0.90	0.81
18. Avoid unhealthy behaviors.		
19. Exercise regularly in order to confront the COVID-19 crisis.		
20. Stay calm under pressure during this pandemic.		
21. Stay positive during the home isolation.		
22. Encourage my family to take precautions during difficult time of COVID-19.		
23. Manage my time effectively.		
24. Realize the importance of adhering to precautions when leaving the house.		
Total	0.89	0.86

Results

Descriptive statistics, such as frequencies and percentages, were utilized to obtain the descriptive information for the study's demographic variables (gender and the number of courses). The T-test, means, standard deviations, one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA), and post-hoc Scheffé test were employed to describe and to analyze the data. The analysis for the 601 adult learners (206 males and 395 females) who participated in this study is given in Table 2.

Table 2

The Analysis of the Study Sample (Gender and Number of Courses)

		Frequency	Percentage
Sex	Male	206	34.3
	Female	395	65.7
Number of Courses	1-2	93	15.5
	3-4	196	32.6
	5-or more	312	51.9
	Total	601	100.0

Findings for Research Question One

What is the role of the educated neighborhood program in developing life skills (solving problems, thinking critically, communicating effectively, and managing lives in a healthy and productive manner) for adult learners in Saudi Arabia to confront the COVID-19 crisis? Means and standard deviations were used to answer research question one. The total mean score of 3.85 and a standard deviation of .172 indicated a high level of life skills that the educated neighborhood programs provided the adult learners to help people in Saudi Arabia during the COVID-19 crisis. The finding illustrated that communicating effectively was the highest-ranked item, with a mean of 3.88. The next-highest rated items were thinking critically, with a mean of 3.87; managing lives in a healthy and productive manner, with a mean of 3.84; and solving problems, with a mean of 3.81, respectively. The adult learners' perception about the role of the educated neighborhood programs for achieving the necessary life skills to help them during the COVID-19 crisis in Saudi Arabia is presented in Table 3.

Table 3

The Mean and Standard Deviation of the Four Life-Skills Factors

Rank #	Life-Skill Factors	Mean	Std. D.	Level
5	Communicating Effectively	3.88	.210	1
1	Thinking Critically	3.87	.226	2
3	Managing Lives in a Healthy and Productive Manner	3.84	.230	3
4	Solving Problems	3.81	.295	4
	Total Score	3.85	.172	

Findings for Research Question Two

Does the role of the educated neighborhood program to help adult learners develop life skills to confront the COVID-19 crisis differ according to gender (male or female) and the number of training courses? A T-test was employed to examine if there were a significant difference between males and females regarding the educated neighborhood program's role to help adult learners develop life skills to confront the COVID-19 crisis. The results revealed a statistically significant difference in communicating effectively, thinking critically, and solving problems due to gender, all in favor of males. On the other hand, there was no difference in managing lives in a healthy and productive manner (Table 4).

Table 4

Independent T-test Result for Gender

	Sex	N	Mean	Std. D.	T	df	Sig.
Thinking Critically	Male	206	3.94	.105	5.660	599	.000
	Female	395	3.83	.261			
Solving Problems	Male	206	3.91	.161	5.815	599	.000
	Female	395	3.76	.335			
Communicating Effectively	Male	206	3.93	.167	4.311	599	.000
	Female	395	3.85	.225			
Managing Lives in a Healthy Manner	Male	206	3.86	.303	1.306	599	.192
	Female	395	3.83	.180			
Total Score	Male	206	3.90	.115	5.917	599	.000
	Female	395	3.82	.188			

A one-way ANOVA test was utilized to see if there were statistically significant differences based on the number of training courses. The results revealed a statistically significant difference for all factors (thinking critically, solving problems, communicating effectively, and managing lives in a healthy and productive manner). The findings for the one-way (ANOVA) results are shown in Table 5.

Table 5

Summary of the One-Way ANOVA Table for Number of Courses

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Thinking Critically	Between Groups	2.143	2	1.072	22.429	.000
	Within Groups	28.569	598	.048		
	Total	30.712	600			
Solving Problems	Between Groups	5.125	2	2.563	32.518	.000
	Within Groups	47.127	598	.079		
	Total	52.252	600			
Communicating Effectively	Between Groups	.570	2	.285	6.598	.001
	Within Groups	25.848	598	.043		
	Total	26.418	600			
Managing Lives in a Healthy Manner	Between Groups	1.676	2	.838	16.717	.000
	Within Groups	29.984	598	.050		
	Total	31.660	600			
Total Score	Between Groups	1.988	2	.994	37.876	.000
	Within Groups	15.696	598	.026		
	Total	17.685	600			

To show the statistically significant differences between the means, a post-hoc analysis (Scheffé) was used. The results revealed that there was a significant difference at .05 level between 5 or more courses, and both 1-2 and 3-4, favoring 5 or more courses for thinking critically and managing lives in a healthy and productive manner. There were also significant differences at the .05 level between 1-2 courses and 3-4 courses. The differences favored 1-2 courses. The post- hoc analysis also showed significant differences at the .05 level between 5 or more courses, and both 1-2 and 3-4 courses for solving problems. The differences favored 5 or more courses. Finally, there were also significant differences at the .05 level between 5 or more courses and 3-4 courses, favoring 5 or more courses, for communicating effectively. The results of the post hoc analyses are shown in Table 6

Table 6

Post Hoc Comparison Results by the Number of Courses

		Mean	1-2	3-4	5 or more
Thinking Critically	1-2	3.79			
	3-4	3.82	.02		
	5 or more	3.93	.13*	.11*	
Solving Problems	1-2	3.79			
	3-4	3.69	.10*		
	5 or more	3.90	.11*	.21*	
Communicating Effectively	1-2	3.87			
	3-4	3.83	.03		
	5 or more	3.90	.03	.07*	
Managing Lives in a Healthy Manner	1-2	3.82			
	3-4	3.77	.05		
	5 or more	3.89	.07*	.12*	
Total	1-2	3.82			
	3-4	3.78	.04		
	5 or more	3.90	.08*	.13*	

Discussion and Conclusion

Life-related skills are multiple and comprehensive. The emergence of this concept is the result of life requirements that have resulted from scientific changes and cognitive acceleration. The life skills that were emphasized in this study are critical thinking, problem solving, communicating effectively, and managing lives in a healthy and productive manner. The study included both male and female participants who were taking life-skill courses at the educated-neighborhood program in Taif, Saudi Arabia. The study's purpose was to illustrate the benefits of the life-skill, which adult learners need to help them during the COVID-19 crisis in Saudi Arabia, provided by the educated-neighborhood programs. This study is important because it may generate interesting new knowledge and insight regarding the relationship between COVID-19 and the concept of life skills. Identifying the learners' necessary life skills is essential because that information may contribute to spreading these skills and increasing their use for adult-education programs. This study may provide a framework for educational policymakers to develop education plans that are compatible with the requirements for adults who attend the educated-neighborhood programs in Saudi Arabia.

The results revealed that the adult learners who enrolled in the educated-neighborhood programs perceived the benefit of the life skills by practicing these skills at a high level during the COVID-19 crisis. This result was consistent with the goals of Saudi Arabia's educated-neighborhood programs. Some of these objectives were to provide individuals with the life skills that enable them to become self-directed learners in order to empower them to contribute to society and to develop self-confidence as well as how to act when

facing difficulties (Ministry of Education, 2018). Kumar (2017) indicated that people need knowledge about life skills in order to act with confidence and competence.

Among the four life skills, adult learners who enrolled in an educated-neighborhood program had the highest mean for communicating effectively. Most survey respondents reported that their knowledge from a life-skill course in the educated-neighborhood program enabled them "to clarify any misconceptions that my family members might have regarding the pandemic" and "to listen to my family members and hear their concerns about what is happening around them." Dewey confirmed that communicating effectively with others is very important because it can help people to gain an active "mind" through the engagement process of "thinking" to resolve a problem as well as liberating people from the overwhelming pressure of events, enabling people to live in a world with a meaningful life (Nathan, 2004). Also, the ability to communicate effectively is very important in the Islamic perspective. In the Holy Quran, a verse stated, "We did not send any messenger except [speaking] in the language of his people so that he might clearly convey the message to them" (Quran, n.d., Ibrahim, Verse 4, p. 14). This verse indicated that achieving success and reaching others in order to achieve the mission requires effective communication. When communication is not clear and understandable, there may be misunderstandings; the listener may ignore the conversation, or conflicts may arise between individuals.

Thinking critically was the second-highest skill for the adult learners who enrolled in the educated-neighborhood program, followed by managing lives in a healthy and productive manner, and solving problems. According to Carlgren (2013), when giving hope to a generation to be a success in the 21st century, it is necessary to promote the skills for solving problems, thinking critically, and communicating effectively. "The acquisition of these skills would also help at-risk people gain the confidence to compete in the workforce, make healthy choices, overcome hardships, and persevere" (Carlgren, 2013, p. 12). According to Freire (1996), dialogue, critical thinking, communication, and problem-solving are strongly connected. For example, dialogue enhances critical thinking. When there is no dialogue, communication does not occur, and without clear communication, people cannot learn about resolving problems.

The second question found that there is a significant difference in communicating effectively, thinking critically, and the problem-solving skills that adult learners practiced in the educated-neighborhood programs in order to confront the COVID-19 crisis. The direction benefits males. According to the International Labour Organization (2020) almost 2.7 billion people, which represents around 81% of the world's workers, are affected by this pandemic. Traditionally in Arab communities, women do not participate financially, which makes the man the only breadwinner (Kia, 2019). Therefore, men used critical-thinking strategies and communicated with others more than women in order to find a solution to this problem during the COVID-19 crisis.

However, there is no significant difference for managing lives in a healthy manner, as perceived by the adult learners who practiced the life skills in the educated-neighborhood programs, to confront the COVID-19 crisis. This result is logical because, as a result of

fear surrounding this pandemic outbreak, whether on the personal or family level, both men and women may adhere to the instructions and precautions that the government put in place to confront the epidemic.

Additionally, the results revealed that there were statistically significant differences with the perception of adult learners who practiced life skills in the educated-neighborhood programs in order to confront the COVID-19 crisis; the differences were seen for both life skills based on the number of courses that students took. The benefit of the direction was for people who took 5 or more courses. The results indicated that continuity and succession planning for courses are great ways to help learners master these skills and to change for the better. Conducting a qualitative study to understand adult learners' needs is essential for providing the necessary life skills that fit with today's world of accelerated change.

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A HUNDRED YEARS OF ADULT EDUCATION IN SAUDI ARABIA

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ABSTRACT: The focus of this article is to highlight adult education in Saudi Arabia. It also investigates the roles of early official and volunteering initiatives that established the adult education and literacy system in Saudi Arabia. In addition, a brief overview of the development of adult agencies such as Night Literacy Schools and Adult Education Centers, Summer Campaign Program, and Social Development Centers in Saudi Arabia is discussed. This article focuses on the system of adult education and illiteracy in Saudi Arabia and how it developed through the 20th and the beginning of the 21st centuries. It also discusses the most important official plans to develop adult education and literacy such as the 20-year Plan. A brief history of adult education and literacy introduces how different adult education agencies have been created in Saudi Arabia. Each agency's vision, mission, and goals are covered as well as comparisons between them. The paper also reviews the innovative plans and strategies being used to enhance the awareness of the importance of adult education as well as some of the outcome of these innovations. Finally, it presents a brief overview **of** the role of higher education in supporting adult education in Saudi Arabia, and it discusses the recent university programs that provide graduate academic degrees in adult education.

Keywords: literacy, summer camps, night schools, social development centers

Adult Education in Saudi Arabia

The definition of literacy and adult education has changed several times in Saudi Arabia due to factors such as the continuous development of the educational system and ongoing criticism of the overlap between literacy and adult education, policies, and common definitions of both literacy and adult education in Saudi Arabia (AL Rasheed, 2000). According to Hindam et al. (1978) and Alsonbol et al. (2016), adult education is a broad concept and has differing methods, programs, and activities in developing countries. In the Arabian countries, adult education is especially synonymous with literacy, because illiteracy is the main challenge facing these countries. According to Fairaq (1981), as a response to the various factors impacting the educational system, the definition of literacy has changed from an individual who has basic skills and is able to read, write, and do math, to an individual's career-level needs as a new dimension to the previous definition. This education allows illiterate individuals to achieve an educational level that allows them to use new skills to their benefit on a daily base. According to Al Rasheed (2000), one of the main goals of literacy and adult education was to correlate literacy and career to improve illiterate individuals' lifestyles. It focuses on functional literacy that correlates economic status of illiterate individuals and their learning interests to their career level in many fields related to the individual's interests and needs to help them be productive individuals in society (Fairaq, 1981).

Thereafter this definition was extended to include public culture as a new dimension to foster citizenship by acquiring knowledge and skills to increase people's awareness of

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social roles and to allow them to participate effectively in society. According to Alsonbol et al. (2016), adult education in Saudi Arabia is defined as affordable opportunities and chances for adult students, who complete a two-year educational program *basic-level* or *illiteracy-level*, to achieve their educational and cultural needs to allow them to develop their skills and experiences to help them increase their social and economic status, which will enable them to participate in their communities effectively. This is the latest adult education definition in Saudi Arabia. The latest definition of an adult learner, according to Alfahad (2015), is an individual who is older than elementary school age and has reached a higher educational level in reading, writing, and math, and who has the ability to pursue a higher level of education and skills to increase their educational, social, and economical status.

Early Initiatives

All efforts to eliminate illiteracy and support adult education in Saudi Arabia moved through several phases and processes. According to Abdulhakim (2012), there have been two main phases to reduce illiteracy and to spread awareness about adult education in Saudi Arabia. The first phase was approximately 33 years between 1917 and 1949, which were individual efforts mainly conducted and financed by teachers and wealthy locals. Pioneers of this phase offered study circles, *Katateeb*, to teach reading and writing to children and adults at Mosques and their homes. These study circles expanded and developed to become the seed for the Night Schools Program system, especially in the west coast of Saudi Arabia (Alsarhani, 2003). Late in this phase, the Saudi government took a few initiatives to partially support these schools. This stage was considered an overlap period between the first and second phases. In 1950, the second phase started, and the Saudi government took full responsibility to combat illiteracy and support adult education (Alsonbol, 1997). These efforts were interpreted as official governmental development plans.

Volunteering Efforts Between 1917 and 1949

The volunteering phase was considered a major component and played a vital role in the success of several social programs. Adult education is one of the social programs especially in its initial implementation, even though there were challenges such as unclear understanding of the importance of adult education and insufficient funding and resources (Alsonbol et al., 1998). These volunteering efforts represented all the individual efforts to establish the Katateeb, which is known as small study circles to teach small groups of people, in small villages and cities in Saudi Arabia (Alsonbol et al., 1998). Study circles, which were the seed for private schools (Abdulhakim, 2012), included lessons in Islamic studies, Arabic, social science, history, and math, which usually took place in Mosques or teachers' homes to teach children and adults alike (Alsonbol et al., 1998). At this early stage, all study circles were funded by wealthy people's charities (Alaasaf, 2018). In addition, these initiatives were the beginnings of the Night Schools Program in Saudi Arabia in efforts to make learning available for people who could not attend Katateeb during the daylight hours. The *Success Elementary* night school was the first evening school built in Makkah in 1930 (Alsarhani, 2003). Katateeb, which is known

recently as *Halaqat*, continues until today; however, its role has diminished to include only memorizing the Holy Quran and learning Islamic studies.

Another example of an early school system was Alqarawi schools, which helped society to provide education (Alaasaf, 2018). Alqarawi schools were small schools prevalent in the southwest of Saudi Arabia and Yemen. Abdullah Alqarawi was the founder of these schools. In 1939, he started his first school in his grocery store in Jazan, Saudi Arabia. The curricula focused on religious studies, memorizing the holy Quran, reading, and writing (Alsonbol et al., 2016). By 1957, the total number of schools was 2,800 with 3000 teachers teaching 50,000 boys and 15,000 girls. However, by 1979, this number decreased and merged into the new formal education in Saudi Arabia (Alaasaf, 2018). These initiatives were the first step to establish the new governmental system of adult education and literacy program in Saudi Arabia.

Governmental Efforts After 1960: The *20-year Plan*

All individual and voluntary efforts played a vital role increasing awareness about literacy and adult education among people in Saudi Arabia. This passion of people for knowledge guided the government to start the Night School Program in 1949 to fulfill the educational needs of adult learners (Alsonbol et al., 2016). This program continued until 1953 when the Ministry of Education established the *Social Cultural* Department under the elementary school system (Alsarhani, 2003). Rapid growth of public literacy and adult education programs led to the establishment of a new system to cover the massive amount of its complicated responsibilities. As a result, in 1958 for the first-time, the Social Cultural Department became independent and separated from the elementary school system. In 1959, it became the Department of Adult Education and Literacy (DAEL). In 1976, the Ministry of Education created the National Center of Adult Education and Literacy for preparing adult teachers (Alsarhani, 2003). Then in 1984, the Ministry of Education changed the name of DAEL to the General Authority of Adult Education and Literacy (GAAEL), whose mission was to improve the literacy of 250,000 people as well as to review literacy rates and adult education policies, practices, and principles (Alsarhani, 2003).

In 1970, the Ministry of Education developed a 20-year plan to educate 500,000 illiterate Saudi citizens. Royal Decree number M/22 on July 1972 was issued to approve this plan and clarify its goals, admission, and allocation of incentives for students and teachers (Moghrabi, 2009). It also defined the framework for the Ministry of Education with other governmental and private organizations regarding literacy and adult education (Alsarhani, 2003). It was the most successful developmental plan improving and organizing the adult education and literacy system in Saudi Arabia. The 20 came from the implementation period, which included four phases between 1972 and 1995. The 20-year Plan was a general national development project that covered almost every corner of the Saudi governmental and private sectors. Under public education goals in this plan, there were several sub-goals to improve adult education and literacy. For example, improving illiteracy was intended to improve the social and economic status of individuals. Also, its goal was to educate people to the fourth-grade level and support individuals who wanted

to continue to finish elementary school (Alsonbol et al., 2016). Regarding adult education, the 20-year Plan encouraged fourth grade graduates to continue their education, as well as supporting working adults to continue their education (Alsarhani, 2003).

Four Phases to Apply the 20-yeat Plan 1972-1995.

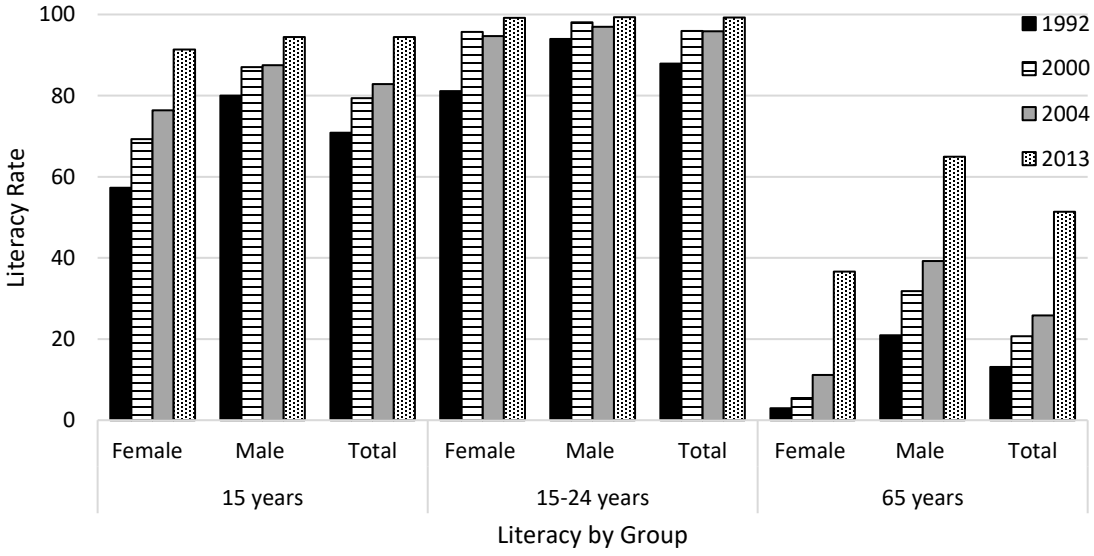
This plan consisted of four phases: *preparation*, *starting*, *expansion*, and *finalizing*. First, the preparation phase, which was one of the most significant developmental plans, included adult education and literacy in its agenda. This phase lasted between 1972 and 1976. It focused on general preparation for implementation of this plan (e.g., establishing curricula, preparing school buildings, and providing adult teachers training). The second phase was the starting stage. It was initially established to eliminate 4% of the illiteracy rate annually and 20% collectively (Alsonbol et al., 2016). This stage extended for five years from 1976 to 1980. The third phase was the expansion phase, which was the longest and extended from 1980 to 1992. This phase had three main goals. The first goal was a five-year plan to eliminate 5% of literacy per year. Five years to eliminate 6% of literacy per year was the second goal. Finally, the third three-year plan was to eliminate 8% of literacy per year in Saudi Arabia. The final phase was a two-year plan, which mainly focused on closing the gaps of previous stages. For example, one gap was to educate the rest of illiterate adults who were not educated. In addition, it targeted the elimination of another 1% of the remaining illiteracy rate (Alsonbol et al., 2016). See Figure 1, which illustrates the literacy rate in Saudi Arabia for selected years between 1992 and 2013 by gender and age group. The supervision of this plan was assigned to a high authority consulting panel, which was a group of experts from the Ministry of Education including the Minister of Education. This consulting panel was responsible for planning, mentoring, hiring teachers, establishing curricula, and allocating resources (Al Rasheed, 2000).

During the implementation of the 20-year Plan, the Ministry of Education was assigned the creation of educational policies for adult education and literacy agencies. The Ministry formed a joint committee to determine its function and identify the main issues and agenda (e.g., defining literacy and adult education, clarifying job responsibilities and a hiring system, applying requirements, studying and testing policies, and creating an incentives system for employees and students) (Alsonbol et al., 2016). The Ministry of Education made a major effort to organize the work and responsibilities across other ministries and organizations, which contributed to fulfilling the 20-year Plan goals regarding adult education and literacy. For example, the Ministry of Education led collaboration with other government offices and departments such as the National Guard, Ministry of Labor and Work, Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Defense and Aviation, and other organizations from the private sector. This collaboration included three illiteracy and adult education programs: illiteracy centers, summer camps, and social development centers (Alsonbol et al., 2016). These programs had an important impact on adult education and literacy in Saudi Arabia.

Several factors had controlled efforts to eliminate illiteracy and to encourage adult education in Saudi Arabia (Alsonbol et al., 2016). One of these issues was the scattered population of separated small villages and cities. As a result, it required special technical and financing efforts to address these issues. Saudi Arabia is considered one of the first countries in the Arab world to appraise literacy's effects on people and make it a national priority (Alsarhani, 2003). Several social, educational, and economic comprehensive developmental plans were established by the government and private organizations to include literacy as one of its goals (Abdulhakeem, 2012). In 1962, the Saudi government created strategies supporting adult education and spreading literacy among the Saudi populace. Three main programs were supported and considered as strategic solutions to support literacy and encourage adult education (Alsarhani, 2003). These programs included Night School, Summer Campaigns, and Social Development Centers. These three programs are differentiated by methods, styles, and applications regarding targets and goals such as community needs, social needs, and economic status of the community (Alsarhani, 2003).

Figure 1

Literacy Rate by Gender and Age Group in Saudi Arabia Between 1992 And 2013



Night Literacy Schools and Adult Education Centers (NLSAEC)

In 1946, the Ministry of Education established Night Literacy Schools and Adult Education Centers in almost all cities in Saudi Arabia. Students who graduated from NLSAEC could achieve a literacy program certificate, which was equivalent to the elementary level. Night Literacy Schools and Adult Education Centers included all programs initiated for elementary school-level learning. Also, it consisted of two stages: *Fighting Illiteracy* and *Follow-Up*. NLSAEC started as a four-year program and later was changed to a three-year program (Abdulhakeem, 2012). According to Alsonbol et al. (2016), between 1949 and 1962, all official efforts instituted by the Ministry of Education

were not intended for adults. These efforts were considered as educational experiments. However, in 1962, the Ministry of Education published its first curriculum targeting adult learners and their learning preferences, motives to learn, and social and psychological attitudes. This curriculum was updated in 1967 to correspond to the environmental, society, and adult learner needs. In 1972, the Ministry of Education established a new curriculum for literacy to align with the comprehensive vision of an adult learner curriculum and to improve studying experiences to help adult learners achieve their social goals (Alsarhani, 2003).

In 1977, within the efforts of developing and increasing the quality of services provided to adult learners to fight illiteracy, the Ministry of Education cooperated with the World Bank and conducted two field experiments in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. The first experiment was establishing an *accelerated program*, which was a three-year program to fight illiteracy to replace the old four-year program for illiteracy. The second experiment was a technical program to develop the literacy curriculum to fit the nature of adult learners' lifestyles, jobs, and the context of their life whether they were farmers, ranchers, or industrial workers. In addition, the second experiment aimed to replace the old curriculum, which was not suitable for adult learners. After gaining successful results gathered from these experiments, these programs were generalized to cover all Saudi cities (Alsonbol et al., 2016).

Alsonbol et al. (2016) defined the Fighting Illiteracy stage as a specific program initiated to help people to learn to read and write. The duration of this stage was two years and the daily schedule consisted of 15 classes per week. Students who passed this stage achieved a certificate equivalent to fourth grade and could continue to the Continuing Learning stage, which also called the Follow-up stage. This stage was a two-year program with the same daily schedule as the Fighting Illiteracy. It focused on supporting students who completed the first level to continue their education and encourage them to be lifelong learners. Students who graduate hold a certificate equivalent to the elementary certificate. In 1979, within the framework of the Ministry of Education's development plan, the Ministry of Education collaborated with the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development to conduct two educational experiments regarding adult education and illiteracy. Based on the World Bank's suggestions related to the 1977 Riyadh experiment, the Ministry of Education and the National Center of Adult Education in Riyadh changed the curriculum and the duration of the Fighting Illiteracy stage to a one-year program and 10 classes per week and kept the Follow-up stage as it was (Alsonbol et al., 2016). The number of Night Literacy Schools and Adult Education Centers for some years between 1975 and 2019 had changed significantly. Table 1 illustrates the number of Night Literacy Schools and Adult Education Centers, classes, students, and density per class for both males and females.

Table 1

Illiteracy and Adult Education Centers, Classes, Students and Density per Class in Saudi Arabia by Gender

Year	Centers		Classes		Students		Density per Class	
	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females
	n	*n*	*n*	*n*	*n*	*n*	*n*	*n*
1975	1020	485	2789	1425	62911	26721	22	19
1980	2208	1037	5726	3249	91280	46025	16	14
1985	1475	1547	3291	5221	70755	62015	21	12
1990	1265	1001	3110	4049	62930	61167	20	15
1995	1210	1434	2496	5821	41441	69301	17	12
2000	*3262		2339	7501	35168	74648	15	10
2012	1617	2041	5916	5415	132863	47648	22	8
2015	1547	1519	3935	4399	105008	53058	27	12
2017	1350	1448	4394	4308	87661	51838	20	12
2020	1509	1437	3797	3878	66681	52203	18	13

Note: For the year 2000, the total number of illiteracy and adult education centers was for both males and females' centers (Alsonbol et al., 2016).

Summer Campaign Program

Summer Campaign Program (SCP) was initiated in 1968 to serve Bedouins and farmers who usually do not live close to cities where public education is affordable and cannot attend the Night Literacy Schools and Adult Education Centers. The Ministry of Education prepared a comprehensive plan for SCP within the framework of the 20-year Plan and one of its aims was the domiciliation of Beddia (Alsarhani, 2003). The duration of SCP was 100 days during the summer. It took place in informal settings and usually near oases and springs where most Bedouins and farmers live (Alsonbol et al., 2016). Teaching methods of SCP included study circles, short lectures, and collaborative learning activities (Alsarhani, 2003). SCP's staff should have a doctor, veterinary doctor, agricultural engineer or technician, and adult teacher(s), social workers, and sometimes other professionals depending on the size and needs of the community. The Department of Adult Education and Literacy assigns SCPs' locations, staff, budget, and equipment. The Department also leads the collaboration with other governmental agencies involved in SCPs (Fairaq, 1981).

There are several goals for this program. First, increase literacy among Bedouin and farmers. Second, provide educational and cultural services such as religion studies, social studies, health, agriculture, and ranching. This includes helping individuals to increase their ranching or farming production. Finally, due to the continuous movement of Bedouin, skills and education provided by SCP increased the chance for people to settle in one place to provide them better services (Qamar, 2001). The lack of school buildings and educational materials forced SCP staff to deal with many challenges, such as the high temperatures and extreme environments, since most Bedouins live in desserts with no access to school (Fairaq, 1981). The first Summer Camp was held in 1968 in Khoaa, Al

Jouf province (Qamar, 2001) to teach 350 all men, which was one of the weaknesses of this program because no women attended this SCP (Fairaq, 1981), and the budget was only 140,700 Saudi Riyal equivalent to $37,520 (Alhilwah, 1980). Seventy-nine SCPs were offered between 1968-1990 and 126,000 individuals attended these programs (Alsonbol et al., 2016). After the first camp held in Khoaa, Al Jouf, each SC covered many nearby places around the main SCP location, which were called assisted places. These places assigned by the Department of Adult Education and Literacy as the most in need location for SCPs. The number of SCPs and students increased gradually every year between 1968 and 2018. See Table 2 for the number of summer camps, assisted places, and students involved with the SCP.

Table 2

Summer Camps (SC) in Saudi Arabia between 1968 and 2018

Year	SCs	Assisted Places	Students
	n	*n*	*n*
1968	1	1	350
1974	2	3	1628
1979	4	4	1108
1997	4	13	18690
2003	3	17	17489
2007	13	466	76540
2013	9	113	25546
2018	6	250	21551

Social Development Centers

The first Social Development Center (SDC) was opened in 1960 in Alderiah as an experimental center supervised by the Ministry of Education. In the first year, its committee established a cooperative association of youth and *Girl House*, which later became a school for girls (Ministry of Human Resources (HR) and Social Development website 2020). In 1961, the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs was established as the umbrella for SDCs in Saudi Arabia and took upon itself the responsibilities and the expansion of this project to establish several SDCs in urban and rural areas alike.

> SDCs, in the light of what is stated in the executive rules of SDCs regulation issued by the Cabinet resolution no. 161 on 28/05/2007, are considered social institutions based on convincing citizens with the needs of their communities to grow and develop, and involving them in examining their needs and problems, and planning the necessary reform programs and their participation materially and morally in the implementation of these programs (Bureau of Experts at the Council of Ministers Website, 2020, items 2, 3, and 4).

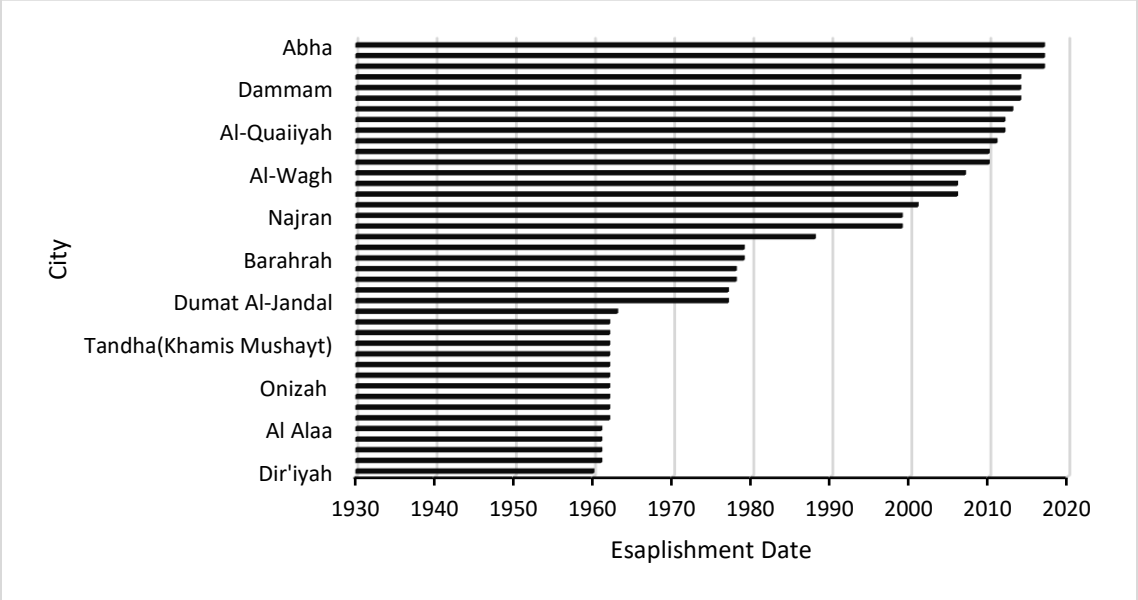
By 2017, there were 41 SDCs in Saudi Arabia serving 15,826,000 people (Alghamdi, 2018) and employing more than 502 committees for Social Development including 62 new committees not yet started (Ministry of HR and Social Development Website, 2020).

See Figure 2, which provides a historic timeline of SDCs for selected cities in Saudi Arabia.

SDCs mainly focus on activities that increase social awareness, encourage education, and develop social support. Also, SDCs focus on discovering local leaders, who can improve their leadership skills. It also focuses on how to enhance community lifestyle. For example, SDCs provide training programs in family lifestyle, learning English, typing, and other training courses that might be beneficial to improve the community lifestyle. SDCs have special adult education programs for people with disabilities, for example, social and vocational rehabilitation for people with disabilities (Alghamdi, 2018). These customized programs provide disabled individuals with training based on their needs and active involvement in the community (Alsonbol et al., 2016).

Figure 2

Social Development Centers Establishment by Date and Location



Recent Adult Education Degree Programs in Saudi Arabia

Higher education in Saudi Arabia started to support adult education after public education when King Saud University established the first Continuing Learning and Community Services Center in 1982 (Alsonbol et al., 2016). Most of the universities in Saudi Arabia, who do support adult education, provide training certification programs via Community Colleges to adult learners mainly to help them find jobs, to register for university, or to be certified in several areas such as computing, leadership, human resources, and so forth. (Abdulaziz, 2019). The first university to support adult and continuing education was King Saud University and is the only university, at the present, to provide academic degrees in adult and continuing education. The Adult and Continuing Education Department under the Department of Educational Policies at King Saud University was established in 1967. It is considered one of the oldest departments in the College of

Education at King Saud University. It provided some courses in philosophy of continuous education, illiteracy and its effects, the older learner, origins of teaching the elderly, and evaluation teaching the elderly programs in its curriculum for Masters, and Ph.D. programs. The Department of Educational Policies oversees one academic degree, which is a Master's for Adult Education and Continuing Education, and one academic degree, which is a Ph.D. in Adult Education and Continuing Education (King Saud University, 2020).

The department heads of the Department of Educational Polices at King Saud University were pioneers who played a vital role in adult education in Saudi Arabia. Among the pioneers was A. Alsonbol, who was the President of the Arabian Adult Education Association in Morocco and the Vice President of the Arab Organization for Education, Culture, and Science. Another one of the department heads was M. Al Rasheed who worked as the General Manager of the Bureau of Education for the Arab Gulf States and later became the Minister of Education in Saudi Arabia. H. Albader, who was one of the faculty in this department, worked in the General Secretariat of the Shora Council (King Saud University, 2020). These department heads and other faculty/staff of the Department of Educational Polices participated in the development of Adult Education in Saudi Arabia and the Arab world.

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MISSING THE MARK: EXPLORING PARTICIPATION RATES AND CHALLENGES TO ENGAGE LOW-SKILLED ADULTS IN EDUCATION AND TRAINING

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ABSTRACT: The demand for adult training opportunities is substantial as labor markets often require adult workers to obtain advanced skills. Opportunities to obtain advanced skills are often pursued by high-income and high-skilled workers whereas low-skilled or low-income adult workers are less likely to participate. For this study, we used data from the Program for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies (PIAAC) for the U.S., Canada, the Netherlands, Norway, and Sweden to compare participation rates in non-formal education (NFE) by high and low-skilled adults. Additionally, to gain insights of adult education and training policies that promote NFE, international key informant interviews (n = 33) and document reviews were conducted. Major findings include (a) as compared to high-skilled adults, low-skilled adults are less likely to participate in NFE; (b) as compared to the U.S., low-skilled workers in Norway and the Netherlands are more likely to participate in NFE; and (c) non-formal education is often more acceptable to low-skilled adults due to previous negative experiences with formal education. Countries were selected based on qualitative findings that will inform best practices.

Keywords: Low-skilled adults, adult education and training, PIAAC

Globalization, advanced technologies, and demographic changes are having a great impact on work and skills required to succeed in the labor market. The ability of countries, firms, and individuals to adapt to these changes will depend on the availability of adult learning programs that provide opportunities for people to maintain and develop new skills over their careers (OECD, 2019b). Automation and technological advances will impact all workers, but low-skilled workers are most at risk for experiencing reduced prospects in the labor market (OECD, 2019a). COVID-19 may hasten job automation, which could further impact low-skilled workers and workers who perform routine tasks (Chernoff & Warman, 2020). Workers are remaining in the labor force at older ages, increasing the importance of learning over the entire life course (Field & Canning, 2014).

The three categories of learning activities include formal learning (learning that results in a recognized diploma or credential), non-formal learning (takes place in the workplace or in an educational setting but does not typically lead to a formal credential) and informal learning (learning that takes place in everyday life and is not necessarily intentional but contributes to an individuals' knowledge and skills) (Commission of the European Communities, 2000). Most adults involved in learning activities participate in non-formal or informal learning rather than formal education (De Grip, 2015; Desjardins & Rubenson, 2013; Patterson & Paulson, 2016; Romi & Schmida, 2009). Opportunities for non-formal learning activities vary widely throughout the world. Availability of adult learning activities in Nordic Countries has long been recognized for providing multiple

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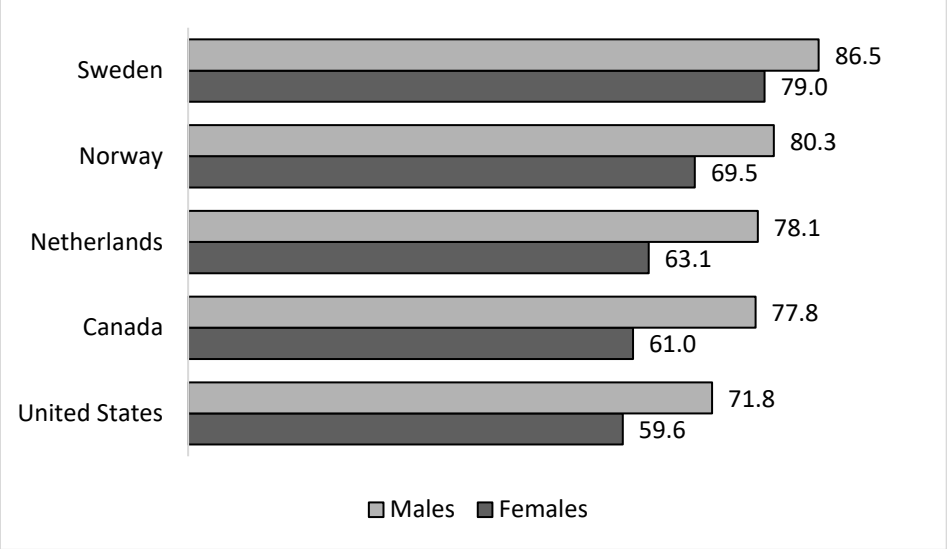
venues for participation in non-formal education, including employer-sponsored training, folk high schools, and study associations or groups (Desjardins & Rubenson, 2013; Laginder et al., 2013). Participation in adult learning has been linked to economic growth and high labor force participation rates (Desjardins & Rubenson, 2013). In this paper we compare opportunities for non-formal education (NFE) along with participation rates among five countries: Canada, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, and the U.S. In addition, we discuss the relationship between literacy skills and participation in NFE along with country-level programs and policies that support these learning activities. Participation in adult learning has been linked to economic growth and high labor force participation rates (Desjardins & Rubenson, 2013). We selected the Netherlands, Norway, and Sweden because the Nordic countries are long recognized for providing adult learning opportunities and Canada was selected because of its close proximity to the U.S. Of these countries, the Nordic countries (the Netherlands, Norway, and Sweden) have the highest labor force participation rates for both males and females, followed by Canada and the U.S. (see Figure 1).

Theoretical Framework

This study is guided by three theories or frameworks: human capital theory, practice engagement theory, and constraints to participation in adult education. Human capital includes knowledge, skills and abilities of individuals, whether innate or acquired (Baptiste, 2001). Expenditures on education, job training, and health care are examples of human capital investments (Baptiste, 2001; Schultz, 1961) and are becoming increasingly necessary due to technology advances and skill obsolescence (Bishop, 1998; Schultz, 1961). In this context, participation in adult education enhances productivity and increases employment opportunities (Becker, 1962). Employment opportunities will be limited for adults if they lack the skills desired by employers (Wanberg, et al., 2016). Lim et al. (2018) created a measure of expected human capital that considers educational attainment, learning or education quality, and functional health status for 195 countries in 1990 and 2016. Values ranged from 28 in Finland to 17 in multiple countries. Figure 2 compares this measure of expected human capital for the five countries. The U.S. had the lowest expected human capital in 2016 and experienced the smallest increase between 1990 and 2016. Understanding programs and policies that facilitate adult learning are critical to increasing human capital in the U.S.

Figure 1

Labor Force Participation Rates for Males and Females Ages 25 - 65 in 2019 (percent)

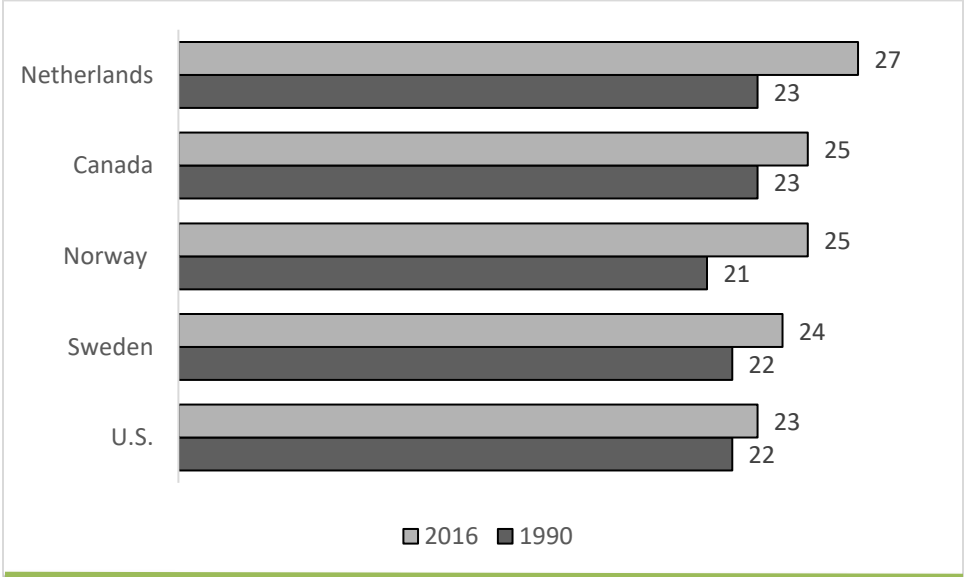


Source: OECD (2020).

Practice engagement theory proposes that skill proficiency and engagement in literacy strengthen each other over the life course and engagement can occur in multiple settings (Desjardins, 2003; Reder, 2008; Sheehan, et al., 2000). Interventions that promote skills use by low-skilled workers, both at work and elsewhere, can be a successful strategy to improve skill levels over the long-term (Grotlüschen, et al., 2016; Reder, 2015). Moreover, Desjardins (2003) and Reder et al. (2020) suggested that engaging in literacy practices in multiple settings (e.g., formal, non-formal, and informal) is associated with improved literacy skills over time. In recent years there has been an increased focus in developed countries to recognize participation in non-formal and informal learning activities by awarding college credits (Andersson, et al., 2013; Colardyn & Bjornavold, 2004; Klein-Collins, 2010), which has resulted in higher retention rates and reduced the time to complete a degree (Klein-Collins, 2010; McKay, et al., 2016). Thus, participation in non-formal learning benefits individuals in multiple ways: there is the potential to improve literacy skills over time and their learning activities may be recognized by awarding formal credits.

Figure 2

Expected Human Capital in 1990 and 2016 for Five Countries



Source: Lim et al. (2018).

Barriers or constraints to participation in adult learning activities play an important role in individuals partaking in all types of learning activities. Cross (1981) identified three classifications of barriers to adult learning: (a) ***situational barriers,*** which include the cost of education, lack of time, lack of child-care, unavailability of transportation, and lack of support from family and friends; (b) ***institutional barriers***, such as time required to complete an educational program, courses are not scheduled at a convenient time, lack of information about educational programs, difficult enrollment process, and strict attendance requirements; and (c) ***dispositional barriers*** which include lack of confidence in ability, concern about being too old, tired of school, and lack of enjoyment in studying.

Prior negative experiences in education at younger ages can influence the willingness of low-skilled workers to participate in training and is an example of a dispositional barrier. A triggering event, such as unexpected job loss, might be the impetus for a low-skilled worker to seek training and they often find non-formal learning to be less intimidating than formal education (Fouarge, et al., 2013; Illeris, 2006). Dispositional barriers are the hardest to overcome whereas situational barriers can be addressed through funding for training and offering programs and services (Desjardins & Rubenson, 2013). Country level programs and policies that address these constraints to involvement in adult learning are important to facilitate participation. The present study examines programs and policies in five countries that support adult learning, which can, in turn, result in increases in human capital and improvements in literacy skills.

Research Questions

To better understand the relationship between participation in NFE and literacy skills, we used data from the Program for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies (PIAAC) for Canada, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden and the U.S. In addition, we interviewed key informants and reviewed websites and documents to gain an understanding of policies and practices for adult learning in each of these countries. The research questions that were examined included:

1. What proportion of adults ages 25 – 65 in Canada, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, and the U.S. participate in NFE? Were there significant differences among the countries?
2. To what extent do adults ages 25 – 65 with low literacy skills participate in NFE as compared to those with high literacy skills in Canada, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, and the U.S.?
3. What programs and policies in Canada, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, and the U.S. facilitate participation in adult learning?

Methods

This mixed-methods project used data from the Program for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies (PIAAC) to address the first two research questions and newly collected qualitative data along with a review of documents and relevant research were used to address the third research question.

Data

We use 2012 international PIAAC data to examine the relationship between participation in NFE and literacy skills in Canada, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, and the U.S. PIAAC was coordinated by the Organization for International Cooperation and Development (OECD) and implemented by member nations. PIAAC is an international assessment of literacy, numeracy, and problem-solving skills in technology rich environments (PSTRE). PIAAC also includes an extensive background questionnaire. The background questionnaire includes basic demographic data along with information on participation in NFE (OECD, 2019c). In the present study, we focused on typical working age (25 to 65) adults. To correctly estimate nationally representative results, PIAAC data include the sampling weight and replicate weights. In addition, PIAAC provides literacy presidency in 10 sets of plausible values (0 – 500 points), which are derived from the estimated distribution of literacy performance. (National Center for Education Statistics, 2016; OECD, 2014, 2016). PIAAC defines literacy as "understanding, evaluating, using and engaging with written texts to participate in society, to achieve one's goals, and to develop one's knowledge and potential" (OECD, 2012, p. 3).

Measures

Five non-formal education participation measures were considered in this study. Each was recorded in a dichotomous variable indicating whether or not one has participated in the following non-formal education in 12 months preceding the survey.

1. Any non-formal education participation
2. Job-related formal education participation
3. Non-job-related formal education participation
4. Participation in seminars and workshops
5. Participation in open or distance education

Literacy proficiency levels were recoded as a dichotomous variable for low (Below level 1, and Level 1), and medium and high (Levels 2-5) proficiencies. A set of 10 plausible literacy proficiency levels was used in the analysis. The details about the proficiency levels in PIAAC have been published elsewhere (OECD, 2013).

Statistical Analysis

The IDB analyzer application (International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement, 2017) was used for all analyses. IDB analyzer is capable of applying the PIAAC sampling weights and replicate weights in statistical analyses to produce nationally representative figures and significance test results. The weighted proportions of education participation were computed by country and by the literacy levels (low vs. medium & high), and weighted significance tests were conducted to formally evaluate the research questions 1 and 2. The alpha level of 0.05 was used for the significance test interpretation. For the comparative purposes, the U.S. was considered the reference group.

Results

Research Question 1

The estimated proportions for five types of non-formal education participation were reported in Table 1. The proportions of any NFE participation ranged from 53.83% (Canada) and 60.61% (Sweden). While Canada had a significantly lower participation rate in any NFE, Netherlands, Norway, and Sweden had higher rates than the U.S. The differences across countries varied depending on the type of non-formal education participation. For any seminar and lecture participation, there was not a significant difference between Canada and U.S. However, Norway (33.58%) and Sweden (33.20%) had significantly higher seminar and workshops participation rates than U.S. (30.25%). Netherlands had the lowest seminar and workshop participation (27.81%). Notably, U.S. had the highest distance learning participation rate than all other nations. We note that the majority of NFE in all countries was job related, which is clearly shown in Figure 3.

Table 1

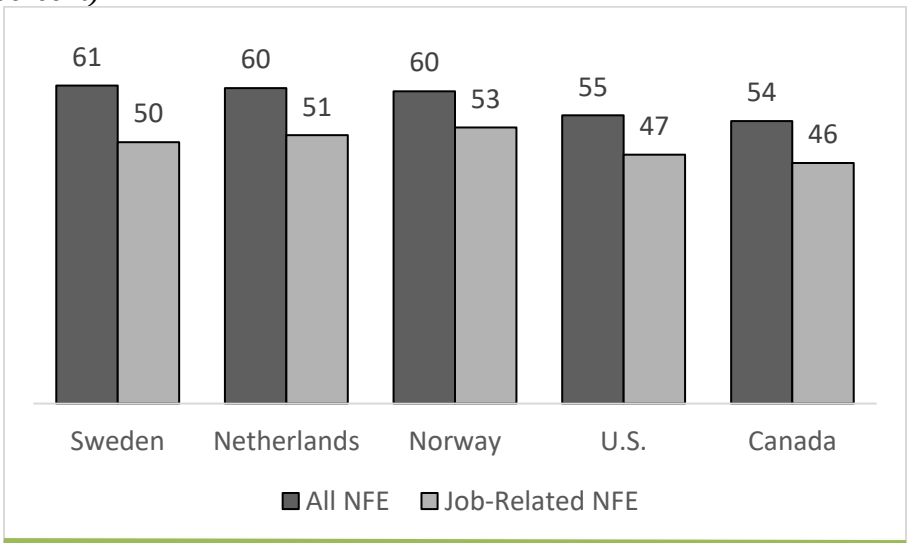
Weighted Descriptive Statistics by Country

	Canada	Netherlands	Norway	Sweden	U.S. (reference)
	n = 19,142	n = 3,638	n = 3,562	n = 3,207	n = 3,593
Any non-formal education participation	53.83%*	60.07%*	59.49%*	60.61%*	54.93%
Job-related non-formal education participation	45.81%*	51.08%*	52.59%*	49.83%	47.40%
Non-job-related non-formal education participation	8.00%	8.98%	6.61%*	10.79%*	7.54%
Any seminar and lecture participation	32.44%	27.81%*	33.58%*	33.20%*	30.25%
Any distance learning participation	10.48%*	14.04%*	5.52%*	14.04%*	16.15%
Literacy skills (0-500)	274.26	284.47	280.73	279.32	270.42
Literacy proficiency level (low)	28%	37%*	38%*	30%*	33%

* $p < 0.05$ (vs. U.S.)
Notes:
The estimation is based on the samples for ages 25-65 years old.
The sample size is unweighted.
*PIAAC's sampling weight and 80 replicate weights were applied.

Figure 3

Participation in all Non-Formal Education and Job-Related Non-Formal Education Ages 25 – 65 (percent)



Research Question 2

Table 2 presents the proportions of non-formal education participation rates and the significance test results for low vs. medium and high literacy proficiency levels. Overall, those with medium and high literacy proficiency were more likely to participate in non-formal education. As can be seen in Figure 4, there were large gaps in NFE participation rates between low vs. medium and high literacy proficiency levels in all of the countries. In Netherlands and Norway, there was no significant difference in the non-job-related non-formal education participation between low and medium & high proficiency levels.

Research Question 3

Research Question 3 was addressed through a review of scientific literature along with published reports by government and private organizations describing country level policies and practices for the provision of adult education, especially occupational and work-based activities in the five countries. In addition, key informant (KI) interviews (n = 33) with adult education experts were conducted between October 2, 2018 and August 14, 2020 in each of the countries. Interviews were web-based (e.g., Skype, Zoom, WebEx, etc.) and all were recorded and transcribed.

Figure 4

Participation in Non-Formal Education by Adults Ages 25 – 65 with Low and Medium & High Literacy Skills (percent)

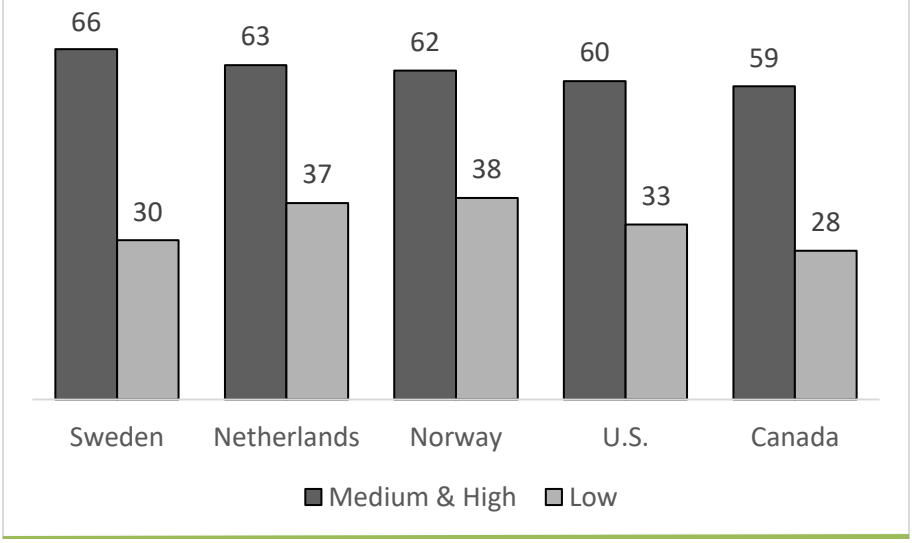


Table 2

Weighted Descriptive Statistics by Country and Literacy Skill Levels (Low vs. Medium & High)

	Canada		Netherlands		Norway		Sweden		US	
Literacy skill level	Low	Medium & high	Low	Medium & high	Low	Medium & high	Low	Medium & high	Low	Medium & high
Any non-formal education participation	28%*	59%	37%*	63%	38%*	62%	30%*	66%	33%*	60%
Job-related non-formal education participation	24%*	50%	28%*	54%	29%*	55%	24%*	54%	28%*	52%
Non-job-related non-formal education participation	4%*	9%	9%	9%	8%	6%	6%*	12%	5%*	8%
Any seminar and lecture participation	13%*	36%	9%*	30%	13%*	36%	7%*	38%	13%*	34%
Any distance learning participation	5%*	11%	11%*	14%	6%	6%	6%*	15%	8%*	18%

* $p < 0.05$ (low vs. Medium & High literacy skill level). A weighted significance test was used for each type of education participation within a country.
Notes: The estimation is based on the samples for ages 25-65 years old.
PIAAC sampling weights and replicate weights were applied.
A more detailed table with two decimal points is available upon request.

Sweden

For low-skilled adults in Sweden, Komvux (Komvux Norrkoping, 2020), an adult education organization mentioned by several KIs, provides adult education from first grade level, basic education, up to upper secondary education for adults. Many immigrants in Sweden take advantage of education provided by Komvux. These services are free after meeting certain requirements and are also incentivized. For example, one cannot receive social benefits unless they attend the required courses.

Popular education, such as folk high schools, also plays an important role in advancing opportunities for low-skilled adults. Regarding folk high schools, one key informant indicated:

> We have courses that could give you access to higher education. For instance, if you failed at upper secondary school and you could get the new chance to get not a degree but something similar that could give you access to university studies. That's, therefore, general courses. So, you attract people that have had, for instance, difficulties in formal education before, and they are giving them new shots, so to speak. … This typically includes those who have failed upper secondary or high school, or they haven't had access, or have immigrated, or have some kind of problems.

In general, there are no fees for students to pursue education and training opportunities, including non-formal education, in Sweden. Several KIs indicated there are occasional fees for study circles that provide individual interest classes such as a class to learn a foreign language, or how to play a musical instrument, or paint. Even when there is a fee, it is typically minimal due to government subsidies provided to the study association. Further, loans and financial aid are available to support living expenses while pursuing education, and adult learners can take paid leave from employment while they study.

> We haven't had fees in higher education … for a long time. But it was … a matter of class if you could go into universities, because you couldn't finance studying entirely without having a job on the side. But from the 1960s, we had … state-funded loans and aids for students. So, it's free to go to university, and it's also free to get loans to be able to make a living during those years as a student.

This is supported by another KI who said, "An employee has the right to take a leave [from work] to re-educate themselves and get subsides for that. These grants allow someone a modest living while studying." Although the first quote speaks specifically to higher education, the opportunity for study leave extends beyond academic courses at institutions of higher education and includes vocational, trade union courses, and even recreational courses (Gould, 2004).

Norway

Skills Norway is a directorate for Lifelong Learning and belongs to the Norwegian Ministry of Education and Research (also known as Competence Norway and formerly known as VOX) with a vision of lifelong learning for an inclusive economy and society, and they work to ensure that adults have access to the skills and training they need (Norway Ministry of Education, n.d.). The Skills Norway website assists citizens in identifying training opportunities and needs and also recommends policies to the government. Several KIs mentioned or worked for Skills Norway. One said:

> The program that Competence Norway runs gives an opening for people. And most of it is connected to the workplace. So, they are partly working on the basic skills of course, but also in skills more directly connected to the daily work. But, there

> have been a lot of investments in these programs, and well, they have problems of course, but compared to what we had in the 1990s it's good progress.

In Norway, for those who want to complete their upper secondary education, they have statutory rights to do so, and it is 100% subsidized. A KI indicated:

> Of course, adults have the right to get basic education if they haven't completed the school, especially migrants. So, they have the possibility to participate as adult students in the ordinary school education to get the degrees, getting the certification that they completed school."

Another KI noted, "… compared to lower educated, twice as many higher educated individuals participate in different learning opportunities in Norway." This might indicate lower educated individuals have more barriers. However, participation rates are still higher in Nordic countries than in the U.S. and other OECD countries (Desjardins & Rubenson, 2013). One KI indicated this is not because barriers are different but because "there are policies in place that help individuals, and in some cases, employers also, to help people overcome the barriers."

Yet another KI indicated low-skilled adults are the least inclined to participate in adult learning because they are not motivated to participate, which is consistent with "dispositional barriers" described by Cross (1981). Several organizations/programs attempt to address this problem; Competency Plus program, a competence reform sponsored by the government, provides financial support for employers who offer employee basic skills training (numeracy, literacy, and digital skills). Support is provided by the national public institution tasked with stimulating adult and lifelong learning. One KI indicated the need to determine what incentives should be in place to motivate low-skilled workers to participate in workforce training.

The Netherlands

Similar to the Nordic countries, the Netherlands has programs and policies in place to support lifelong learning for the low-skilled, but there are still major challenges with participation.

> And I did find that there's a huge difference in the willingness, so higher educated workers are far more willing and have a higher intention … to show this learning behavior than the less educated workers do, and I've been looking for the cause of that difference, and I found that the main reasons for this or one of the main reasons would be the building of negative learning experiences in the past, in initial education, for instance, which did not suit their learning ... preference.

There has been an effort over the last 10 to 20 years to recognize previously acquired competencies (EVC) similar to the U.S.'s prior learning assessment (National Knowledge Center EVC, 2020). Initially it was meant to be used by adults in later life who had been "let off" from their jobs and needed to have some kind of credential or certificate to increase their chances of finding employment and remain active in the labor market. "But

it was hugely administrative … This EVC trajectory is one of the examples of instruments that we are trying to simplify in order to use them throughout the career in relation to the lifelong learning thing."

As stated by a KI, an initiative, House of Skills (n.d.), of the metropolitan area of Amsterdam is mainly funded through European subsidy schemes such as European Regional Development Fund (ERDF). The aim is to find ways to reach the self-employed and the employed, as well as the employers, to prevent skills mismatches through skills assessments (House of Skills, n.d.). According to the KI, "Every citizen … can … be advised on their labor market value currently and people will be presented with advice on how to build a future-proof skill set …"

Finally, although programs like individual learning accounts (and other program mentioned by other KIs) are available and intended for low-skilled adults, studies on these programs show that they do not reach low-skilled adults with these programs. They reach those who already have a willingness to learn. Strategies are needed to ensure the programs are reaching the intended audience – low-skilled adults.
An interesting note - one KI indicated there is now an intentional effort to use the term "practically educated" verses low-skilled or less educated.

Canada

As opposed to KIs in other countries, one KI in Canada does not believe additional support for low-skilled workers is needed. Interestingly, that KI indicated, "… of all the groups in need of services right now, it's not the low skilled workers." She shared that low-skilled workers have access to workforce development programs, and there's a huge network in Ontario of free or very affordable employment services/providers. Services include meeting with a counselor, building a resume, building literacy and basic skills, and gaining access to English language training. In addition, there is "quite generous" funding to support attending a college or vocational program. It is important to note that adult education in Canada is under provincial jurisdiction, so there is not one policy across the country. A key informant noted that "Ontario recently had a provincial change in government last June, June 2018. The focus of this new government has great interest in experiential learning, skills and competencies for the workplace, ensuring that graduates have those workplace skills and competencies."

There are programs available for literacy and basic skills. "Quite often if they have really low skill levels, they'll start at a community-based program and once their proficiency is such, they can get into a pre-credit program." For post-secondary training, programs tend to be more foundational, "so we also tend to work with a lot of unemployed or displaced workers that find themselves in a situation where in order to get back into work or to get a better job [they need to] upgrade their skills."

A KI indicated:

> In our legislation, it says there are two reasons a person can return to school. Number one is to complete their high school diploma, and number two is to complete a prerequisite to further education … if someone knocks on a school's door, and says, "I need this," the school board is … required to support those students whether they are 18 or whether they are 55.

Further, these programs are free-of-charge for adults returning to get their high school diploma or a prerequisite. KIs indicated there are many adult high schools, mainly in bigger cities. In some cases, they might share a facility or utilize night school. Some have separate adult learning centers. If there is not an adult school, learners may take classes in the regular school, although this is fairly rare. Adult learners have exactly the same requirements as traditional students for high school graduation. Our KIs indicated the current challenge is making the process flexible for adult learners.

Although programs and supports are available, especially when it comes to preparing the workforce for skills upgrades needed due to automation, it is not without challenges:

> I mean, it seems to me that it has to be a workplace culture issue, primarily - that the workplace has a responsibility to talk with the people who are there about how things are changing. And the opportunities to upgrade their knowledge and skills will help them not only advance, but to kind of keep their, you know, keep a job in a particular industry as it changes.

The United States

The more than 48 million workers with foundational skills (literacy, numeracy, spoken English, and digital skills) gaps in the U. S. create a drag on the economy. More effort and funding are needed as only 30 states currently fund incumbent worker training (IWT). The demand for training has increased as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic (Bergson-Shilcock, 2020). In addition to non-formal training offered through employers, more than five million students are enrolled in non-credit training (offerings that do not yield academic credit) in community colleges across the U.S. This represents approximately 40% of all community college enrollments. These non-credit offerings can be placed in four categories: occupational training paid for by individuals, occupational training paid for by employers, precollege remediation, and personal interest. Some institutions receive state funding to cover portions of these programs (D'Amico et al., 2017). Adults enrolled in non-credit programs at a community college are less likely to receive federal funding (e.g., Pell grants or Workforce Investment Opportunity Act training funds) compared to those enrolled in a credit program that leads to a certificate (Xu & Ran, 2015).

One KI, working for an adult education provider shared they largely focus on Adult Basic Education (ABE). They start with ABE 1 students, "folks who have never even really learned to read and we go all the way up to folks who already have their high school

diploma or even some college (ABE 6), especially if they're not from the US." These programs may include essentials reading, essentials math, work-like math, working life reading, academic math, and academic reading. In addition to ABE, they have two credential options. One is the GED (General Education Degree), and the other is the National External Diploma Program, developed in 1970. It is a competency-based program. Instead of taking the GED or a multiple-choice test, it looks at eight broad fields, and the competencies need to be achieved in all those fields:

> Think of it almost as an online portfolio, lots of questions, and you're kind of doing these things one by one and you could go out and you send it out to some people, they tell you what's wrong, you'd need to redo it. So, people could do it 10 times or so, and it takes people … six months to 10 years or so."

Another KI shared that her organization uses in-depth labor market information to assist clients in determining how much a specific educational path will cost, how long it will take, and the return on investment – how many jobs are available in that field in the area, and how much it pays. "It can inform you not only on what jobs there are and what they pay, but what credentials are needed and how much they're worth." This type of information needs to be available broadly. The next step is to prepare a one-page plan that tells the adult learner the exact steps needed to reach their goals. The challenge, she indicated, is that education providers need to look at the entire ecosystem [the family], not just the learner. The cost of the education itself is not usually the barrier. The barrier is the cost and arranging of childcare, securing transportation, and managing a household, which might be overcome with additional supportive services.

Research Question 3 Summary

There are wide variations in the provision of non-formal education across the countries included in this study. Nordic countries offer a variety of venues for non-formal learning including folk high schools and study groups or associations. These programs are publicly funded and there is generally little or no cost for these activities. Depending on the nature of the learning, which may include vocational, employer-sponsored job training, and even personal interest courses, participants are eligible for paid leave from their employer. Employers who offer basic skills training may also receive government funding to support these efforts. Although the Netherlands have similar types of programs in place as Sweden and Norway, such as provisions for adult basic education, recognition of previously acquired competencies, ILAs, and skills matching, the administrative burden of these programs and the lack of uptake among the low-skilled seem to hinder progress.

Canada has opportunities for non-formal learning that includes workforce development, literacy and basic skills training, and employment services, all provided for free or with generous funding. As with the Netherlands, the primary challenge seems to be uptake. In the United States, non-formal learning is often provided through employers or via enrollment in community colleges. Although some courses at community colleges may be funded by employers, many are self-funded by the learner. Adult education

organizations offer basic skills training, although often subsidized, the learner still pays an out-of-pocket fee. Across the board, KIs indicated more support, funding, and opportunities are needed to assist the low-skilled, including accurate labor market information.

Discussion and Implications for Policy and Practice

Continuous skill upgrading over the entire life course has become increasingly important to ensure employability and to have skills desired by employers. In this paper we focused on non-formal learning activities and compared the U.S. to four countries. As compared to the U.S., adults in Sweden, the Netherlands, and Norway participated in NFE at higher rates while adults in Canada slightly lagged the U.S. Moreover, as compared to Canada, Sweden, and the U.S., the Netherlands and Norway had higher rates of participation in NFE by adults with low levels of literacy skills. Low-skilled adults are more likely to experience dispositional barriers to participation in adult education, often due to poor experiences with education at younger ages (Rubenson & Desjardins, 2013; Illeris, 2006). Situational barriers, such as the cost of an educational program or the lack of transportation or child-care are easier to overcome through the implementation of supportive services and public funding for education. The Netherlands, Norway, and Sweden have been successful in implementing programs to address situational barriers, especially program funding, which is likely the reason for their higher participation rates. While the U.S. funds educational programs through Pell grants and WIOA, they do not generally cover expenses for non-formal training programs, which results in low-skilled workers either relying on employer-funded programs or funding the programs themselves. Low-skilled adults are often also low-income and may not have the resources to fund NFE. Expansion of Pell and other programs to fund NFE is especially important for low-skilled workers.

Rising unemployment rates and a changing labor market resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic have increased the demand for training and at the same time created additional barriers to participation. Lack of child-care services and virtual learning for children has resulted in student parents facing additional obstacles in participating in NFE and other learning activities (Strada Education Network, 2020). Affordable and convenient child-care and other supportive services are necessary for many adult learners to enroll in and complete educational programs. In addition, paid leave to participate in NFE, similar to that available in Sweden, could facilitate participation. As noted earlier, dispositional barriers to learning are perhaps the most difficult to overcome, especially for low-skilled adults. Efforts to reinforce the importance of NFE along with programs that improve the self-confidence of adults in their ability to succeed might increase participation (Roosma & Saar, 2017). Gaining self-confidence through participation in NFE could also result in greater participation in formal education, especially if the NFE is recognized for college credits. Implementation of these and other programs to support adult learners is necessary to increase participation in and completion of educational programs and training.

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DUSAN M. SAVICEVIC– WORLD's BEST ANDRAGOGY RESEARCHER: INSPIRATION FOR MY ANDRAGOGICAL RESEARCH PERSPECTIVE

John Henschke, Ph.D.[1]

ABSTRACT: Dusan M. Savicevic has been a towering figure working, researching and publishing in andragogy for more than a half-century. Dusan's prism of world-wide experience has been connected very vitally with helping establish it as a science, self-directed learning, work, and has inspired others to develop their own andragogical perspective, including, but not limited to, learning contracts. He linked andragogy with mass media, various countries, ancient leaders, other learning theories, and a panoramic overview of it around the world. In this article, I seek to bring together aspects of his presence and work in andragogy, self-directed learning, learning contracts, that have inspired me to invest myself in this fertile field, which encompasses adult education. Subsequent to when Dusan passed from this earthly world in June 2015, I was requested to bring some of my perspectives on andragogy inspired by his prolific worldwide efforts in this regard. This task I humbly accepted and trust it will do him honor in some small way. Thanks, Dusan for being who you are.

Keywords: andragogy, self-directed learning, learning contracts, antecedents, learning theories

As I move forward to convey the message I wish, I am providing an outline of what is to follow. This needs to be kept in mind, so that while the reader may see what may seem like lengthy sections *[on an unrelated topic]* this outline will be kept in mind so that honor of and tribute to Dr. Dusan M. Savicevic *[a colleague I consider to be the world's best andragogy researcher and an inspiration for my andragogical research perspective]* will be considered a part of every element and spin-off element concerning leadership in and contribution to research in andragogy around the world. Other leaders have influenced me, but this piece focuses on Dusan. *[Other concepts related to honor and tribute include respect, admiration, praise, commemoration, congratulations, applause, ovation, revering, prizing, etc.]* The major focus of this paper follows an outline, which provides my background as a writer and indicates the experience from which I am drawing that justifies my focusing on the topic while providing my views on andragogical research and brings in some andragogical and self-directed learning works of others that directly or indirectly relates to the impact of Dusan Savicevic. I have worked with andragogy academically in 19 countries around the globe. I have occupied many roles employing my andragogical competencies with the items I present – a university professor of andragogy, an administrator of various portions of higher education institutions, an educational consultant to national and international higher education subsection departments, and an administrator of various entities, such as: The International Adult and Continuing Education Hall of Fame (IACEHOF), The American Association of Adult and Continuing Education (AAACE), The Commission on International Adult Education (CIAE) of AAACE, The Missouri Valley Adult Education Association (MVAEA), and The Missouri, USA / Para, Brazil Partners of the Americas (MO/PA - POA).

Overview

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If there is one thing, I would say about Dusan Savicevic, a treasured friend who passed from this world in June 2015, it is that he is the most clearly researched person in andragogy anywhere around the globe. Not only that, he had what I consider a very stalwart character regarding his understanding of and taking a stand regarding andragogy. My initial meeting and first personal contact with Dusan were at the 1988 American Association for Adult and Continuing Education [AAACE] Conference in Tulsa, Oklahoma. It was a special privilege to listen and watch his interaction with the world outside of where he lived/worked in a Communist country – Yugoslavia. When he was asked by inquiring scholars at AAACE, how he was able to deal with and work within that situation, his response was striking to the point that I never forgot it, "Don't take those people so seriously." He had learned how to live within a restrictive system, but he did not allow himself to be controlled by it. That made an indelible impression on me, which inspired me to seek that kind of a stand in my own life; to not be controlled by others but be in charge of my own life.

Dusan in his writings on the history of andragogy, draws a line of andragogical ideas, which has been overlooked or disregarded in the writings of other parts of education. He considered the importance of the roots of andragogy as springing from things other than pedagogy; that the learning and education of adults have always been an integral part of human activity and of the human aspirations to learn. His study of the roots and evolution of andragogical ideas, included a panorama from andragogical antique civilizations up to the present time. He understood andragogical ideas as thoughts and concepts of persons about learning and education of adults, system of andragogical institutions that appeared in certain civilizations, as well as andragogical practice in which such ideas were realized.

In my estimation, the most important foundational ideas of andragogy brought together by Dusan in some of his writings (2000, 2008, 2012) were the impacts of: (a) Hellenistic culture and civilization, which in turn influenced the development of the Roman civilization, (b) the ancient Jewish civilization of both formal and informal institutions of adult learning and education; and (c) The position that spiritual development and values, aims of education, learning, conceptions of an adult person, andragogical ethical reflection of theory and practice, need to undergird research in andragogy, which cannot be reduced to research techniques. These concepts seemed to merge into an overall Roman andragogical perspective of learning within institutions, concepts, and practices that spawned higher education, rhetoric schools, libraries, reading rooms, public bathhouses, dramas, comedies and forums. The Jewish perspective of adult learning took place in homes of gathering, homes of meetings, forums, temples named synagogues that were centers of learning, and homes where adults learned in a life-style and kind of prayer, not only as intellectual activity and religious experience, but also became communities of learning, schools, academies, part time learning activities, all of which enabled the combination of learning and work. The first schools founded by Christians were aimed at adults. This part of the Christian aspect of andragogy was a new and different sort of up-and-down ride.

Savicevic Shared Andragogy with Adult Education U.S. Colleagues

Although Lindeman (1926) and another educator were the first to bring andragogy to the USA from Europe and the Workers' Educational Movement, it never took hold in the USA from their efforts. In the USA, the concept of andragogy is tightly connected to the name of Professor Malcolm S. Knowles. The process of development of andragogy in the USA, however, is usually ignored (Savicevic, 2008). Knowles formulated his approach after his and Savicevic's longstanding discussion on andragogy, after their mutual correspondence and exchange of andragogical sources. Savicevic was aware of the importance of attracting Knowles to the concept of andragogy. He was the first university professor who stood for the idea of considering the need to form andragogy as a scientific discipline, articulated at the National Convention of the American Association for Adult and Continuing Education, held in the fall of 1966, in Chicago. Savicevic says he explained this process in detail in his 2006 study on pages 54-67 (Savicevic, 2006: *Andragoske Ideje u Medjunarodnim Okvirina)* (Beograd: Institut za pedagogiju). (*NOTE: Henschke has been unable to access this book in order to get the pages 54-67 translated from Serb to English).* Savicevic said that he and Knowles corresponded after his return to Belgrade 1967. Savicevic and Knowles planned to write a book together but that never came to fruition. The title was to be *Andragogy in Historical and Comparative Perspective.*

Knowles had his own explanation of how he received the concept of andragogy from Savicevic. Henschke says it was very special to have met face-to-face with the man from whom his mentor [Malcolm S. Knowles – his major Professor in andragogy at Boston University (BU) from 1967 to 1969] had received the term and concept of andragogy. Malcolm had talked about Dusan Savicevic and developed/adapted his own brand of andragogy in the doctoral program and courses at BU. Malcolm declared in his book (Knowles, 1989, p. 79) "… in 1967 *[*NOTE see below]:* I had an experience that made it all come together. A Yugoslavian adult educator, Dusan Savicevic, participated in a summer session I was conducting at Boston University. At the end of it he came up to me with his eyes sparkling and said, 'Malcolm, you are preaching and practicing andragogy.' I replied, 'Whatagogy?' because I had never heard the term before. He explained that the term had been coined by a teacher in a German grammar school, Alexander Kapp, in 1833 *…" [*NOTE] The year this happened was actually 1966, not 1967. Sopher (2003) had researched and reported the findings in her dissertation at the University of Wisconsin-Madison.*

However, as years have rolled along, I became more interested in andragogy and continue my research to the present, and will in the future', in a large measure due to Dusan's encouragement and sharing of his thoughts on andragogy almost to the years just prior to his death in 2015. He will be missed but he will still be with me because of his legacy of being a warm person and of his writing. I adapted my own version and application of andragogy in scholarship and practice over the years since my studying with Knowles. Nonetheless, it was not until 1993, where I was presenting a conference paper (Henschke, 1993) at Wadham College, Oxford University, United Kingdom, on some aspects of my practice of andragogy, that a man by the name of H. Hinnekint from Belgium, attending that same conference at Oxford, called my attention to Savicevic's

(1991a) article on some extensive andragogical research Dusan had conducted and published. I went to the Oxford University Library, found the paper and made a photocopy of it.

The fact of Savicevic (1991a) asserting that the history of considerably older sciences than andragogy bears witness that much time is needed for a science to come into existence, (thus also the need with andragogy for it to come to a full-blown scientific study) piqued my interest of wanting to contribute in a small way to the already more than 150 years of history concerning andragogy, about which I knew very little. As I studied Savicevic's (1991a) work on the history of andragogy in ten different countries in Eastern and Western Europe, I put into capsule form what I garnered from his paper. This became my initial inspiration for beginning to investigate Dusan's prolific work in andragogy. I describe some of his work in the following paragraphs.

Savicevic (1991a) provided a critical consideration of andragogical concepts in ten European Countries – five western (German, French, Dutch, British, Finnish), and five eastern (Soviet, Czech-Slovak, Polish, Hungarian, Yugoslav). This comparison showed common roots but results in five varying schools of thought: (a) Whether andragogy is parallel to or subsumed under pedagogy in the general science of education, (b) Whether agology (instead of andragogy) is understood as a sort of integrative science, which not only studied the process of education and learning but also other forms of guidance and orientation, (c) whether andragogy prescribes how teachers and students should behave in educational and learning situations, (d) the possibility of founding andragogy as a science is refuted, and (e) that endeavors have been made to found andragogy as a fairly independent scientific discipline. Moreover, he clearly aligned himself with the fifth school of thought in that the kind of research he was conducting aims toward establishing the origin and development of andragogy as a discipline, the subject of which is the study of education and learning of adults in all its forms of expression.

In addition, I found that Savicevic (1991a) also suggested that Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, the Sophists, Ancient Rome, the epochs of humanism and the renaissance, all reflect thoughts and views about the need of learning throughout life, about the particularities and manners of acquiring knowledge in different phases of life, and about the moral and aesthetic impact. He also credited J. A. Comenius in the seventeenth century with being regarded the founder of andragogy with his primary wish to provide comprehensive education and learning for one and all to the full degree of humaneness, and urging the establishment of special institutions, forms, means, methods and teachers for work with adults. In addition, he theorized that the institutional basis for adult education actually formed in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries in Britain and other countries with the emergence of Mechanics' Institutes, workers' colleges & educational associations, university extensions, board schools for adult instruction, correspondence education, and people's universities.

Savicevic (2006) expressed his realization that almost 50 years of experience with andragogical ideas acquired in different social, cultural and educational environments, are reflected through the prism of his personal experience. Very importantly, he also

observed that since his first visit to the USA in 1966, up through 2006, the identifiable trace of andragogy on USA universities is that there had not been a single serious study on adult education and learning that did not refer to andragogy as a conception. Savicevic addressed the diversity of andragogical ideas in an international framework, which also became obvious in the expanding depth, breadth, worldwide nature of this research in andragogy. Savicevic (2007) also affirmed that links between work and learning/education, in addition to combining the creation of theory with advancement of practice, will only be improved through serious research that reduces what is unknown or less well known in andragogy.

Difficulties and Disappointments with Travel and Exchanges

Knox (2015) said that one of the tragedies in Savicevic's life was when he became excluded from the international exchange through the breaking up of Yugoslavia and the war when Serbian passports did not allow travel abroad. This was especially hurting for a polyglot scholar: Beside other places throughout Europe he had been a visiting professor at Simon Rodriguez University of Venezuela, University of Wisconsin, Madison, and People's Normal University, Beijing, China. He received fellowships from the Danish government, Chilean government, Ford Foundation and Fulbright Foundation to study adult education; he also participated in many national and international conferences and projects, and helped in founding some international non-governmental organizations, working with UNESCO, OECD and Council of Europe. That all became blocked through the sad political situation in and after the 1990's. However, someone said that the day came that the travel restrictions were removed and Savicevic was able to resume speaking around the world.

At one point along the way, Savicevic was said to have had misgivings about Knowles' seeming inconsistency in determining andragogy that had generated some confusion and misunderstanding regarding its application to younger / non-adult learners. His misgivings even went as far back as in the late 1960s and early 1970s. Some conversations characterized the problem as being 'Knowles didn't get it [meaning 'andragogy'.] Knowles named his learning theory andragogy, just after his encounter with Savicevic in 1966 mentioned above because it made sense to him to make use of it in the manner he did. Had he not learned the term from Savicevic, he would have introduced his theory at about the same time anyway and called it something else. "Malcolm had been developing all of his expertise in teaching adults, adult learning, and adult education for numerous years, which was in his 1950 book titled *Informal Adult Education* [which Savicevic had read] and other materials after that. When Savicevic told Knowles he was practicing andragogy, Malcolm attached the 'andragogy' label to many ideas he had on adult learning and education for some years, and to all his previous expertise, even though Savicevic, who had been 'observing' and reading Malcolm's ideas for numerous years, did not know or understand all of Malcolm's accumulated expertise. Consequently, Malcolm got out of 'andragogy' what Malcolm wanted to get out of it. despite the fact that Savicevic thought 'Malcolm didn't get it', whatever the 'it' was that Savicevic thought Malcolm (or anyone else ought to get" (J. Henschke, Personal communication with Marti Sopher, November 1, 2002, posted in Henschke, 2006, p. 27).

Dusan's understanding of andragogy was different and is shared widely in Europe: "andragogy as a discipline, the subject of which is the study of education and learning of adults in all its forms of expression' (Savicevic 1999, S. 97). Moreover, he criticized Knowles:

> Where did Knowles go wrong? In Savicevic's view, the ***first*** mistake pertains to the definition of andragogy as a "science and art." He followed the traditional school of thought that pedagogy, as defined by J. Dewey, is "science and art." The ***second*** mistake is that he defines andragogy as the science and art of "helping adults to learn." This way andragogy is reduced to a prescription, that is, to issuing recipes for how a teacher should behave in the process of education and learning of adults. The ***third*** mistake is that Knowles declared andragogy a "model" for teaching that can be applied even in preschool institutions. In this way, confusion was increased as regards andragogy. By adopting such stands, Knowles moved away from the original stand on andragogy as "science and art." The ***fourth*** mistake was in the fact that he directed andragogy only towards the problems of learning, thus neglecting other dimensions (social and philosophical) without which learning could neither be studied nor understood successfully. The ***fifth*** mistake is in his individualistic approach to education and learning of adults by glorifying the "self-directed learner" and the teachers as "facilitators of learning," without linking this to existent circumstances, the level of education, the nature of contents and other factors on which education and learning of adults depended. Knowles's ***sixth*** mistake has to do with an insufficient, incomplete study of the historical roots of andragogy, both in American and in European, literature. Such an attitude toward historical data has prompted him to conclude that he is the "first" to use the term andragogy in the American literature. (Savicevic 1999, S. 114)

There is not enough space here to consider and address each one of the five mistakes Savicevic asserts that Knowles made. Nonetheless, regarding the ***fifth*** mistake Knowles supposedly makes suggests that Savicevic overlooked all of Knowles' educational materials published prior to 1968, which had a distinct lifelong learning orientation with very strong emphasis on the group, community and society (Boucouvalas, 2019, pp. 259 – 264).

Savicevic (2006, 2008) garnered a long-range view about Knowles' and andragogy somewhat later than his earlier skeptical view and reflected about his perception of Knowles' position in sustaining andragogy over the long range of its history into the future:

> Forty years in development of a science is not a long or ignorable period. I met Professor Knowles four decades ago and argued on term and on concept of andragogy. Since then, the term and the concept of andragogy enlarged and rooted in the American professional literature. There is no doubt that Knowles contributed to it, not only by his texts, but with his spoken word and lectures. He

> was a 'masovik'-, i.e., a lecturer on mass events. He told me that he lectured on 10,000 visitor stadiums. As if he was inspired by an ancient agonistic spirituality! – *gung-ho, tough, sporting, contending, grappling, challenging, vying, surpassing* - His contribution to the dissemination of andragogical ideas throughout the USA is huge. The history of andragogy will put him on a meritorious place in the development of this scientific discipline (2006, p. 20; 2008, p. 375).

I believe Dusan Savicevic, a University Professor from Belgrade, Serbia (from whom Malcolm received the concept of andragogy) is right when he said that the world-wide "…history of andragogy will put Knowles on a meritorious place in the development of this scientific discipline." (Henschke, 2014c, p. 22).
Mary Cooper (a colleague at University of Missouri-St. Louis (UMSL), deceased in June 2009] joined Henschke in 1999 at the faculty of UMSL and happily collaborated with him in studying andragogy in-depth, to take it beyond what Malcolm Knowles did or did not do with it. Henschke had already discovered a few of Dusan's articles that expanded his perception of andragogy's scope, depth, breadth and horizon. Cooper and Henschke wrote a small article on andragogy and sent it to Savicevic for possible publication in their Yugoslavian, *Andragoske Studije Journal.* Shortly after the article was sent to Savicevic, Henschke received a personal letter from Savicevic, dated December 11, 2001. He asked and was granted permission to have the article translated from English into Serbian. He had it translated from English into the Serb Language, and it is referenced below. In that 12/11/01 letter, Savicevic also said that he was glad to learn from our paper about our broader conception of Andragogy as a discipline and an area of research. He also asked if there was any chance to get a book of his translated into English and published in the USA? Unfortunately, I was never able to find someone to do that at a price I could afford. The title of the book is *The Roots and Evolution of Andragogical Ideas.*

The next occasion I met Dusan Savicevic was September 26-30, 2006, in Bamberg, Germany. It was at the *11th Standing International Conference on the History of Adult Education (IESVA).* Dusan Savicevic did what seemed natural, and that was to offer us his generous compliment that because of our 2001 research article in andragogy which they published, we had helped to build a bridge, that no one else had accomplished, between the American and European perspectives on andragogy, which up until that time America and Europe seemed to hold each other at quite a distance regarding their views on andragogy. Savicevic's invitation to Henschke after that humbling comment was, that when Henschke was ready to publish something else in andragogy, Savicevic would welcome it to be published in the *Andragoske Studije Journal,* located in the same city (Belgrade), but listed as being in Serbia, since the break-up of the Yugoslavian Empire. However, he said that the article would be published in English, because in the intervening nine years since publishing in their journal in 2001, their readership had become so much more fluent in English. The article was published in 2010 and is referenced below.

Early Connections Between Self-Directed Learning and Andragogy

An early attempt at a comparison between andragogy and self-directed learning needs to include a historical look at the work of Dusan Savicevic (2008) in his panoramic articulation of ideas on the convergence and divergence of andragogy in various contexts. He goes back in this historical document into ancient times and brings the discussion to the present time. In this work he mentions 'self-directed learning' [SDL] three times; with each time it is within the context of other aspects of andragogy: mass media, a set of self-directed learning competencies, and the complex of different theories relating to various aspects of the education of children and various aspects of the education of adults.

SDL and Mass-Media

Savicevic (2008) indicates that from the standpoint of learning of adults' mass-media is a special problem; mass-media have a special role in adult education. It shows power and dispositions for manipulation of information. Clearly, all these problems are *reflections on* adult learning and education. This problem overlaps the contents of learning. The selection of contents is interconnected with philosophical questions: What to learn? Who makes decisions about it? Neither pedagogy, nor the traditional (inflexible) system of education offer satisfying answers. Supporting sustainability and expansion of open, various, self-directed learning of adults should make progress. It is impossible to build a free and democratic society without accomplished issues for adult education. Creating different possibilities enables adults to manage their own learning according to their needs and interests. Learning aims toward formulation, making decisions on place for learning and on learning resources are of special importance for carrying out an integral educational policy.

SDL – A Set of Competencies

Savicevic (2008) declared that until 2008, most of the education and learning decisions on mass-media were regulated by educational institutions, which generated rejection of adults to participate in formally organized learning activities. The increased demands for adults created the need to develop a complex set of *competencies* for self-direction in learning such as defining the learning goals with the possibility for *evaluating* attained scope, planning of learning activities, predicting of consequences of (un)attained scopes and fulfilling of educational obligations, defining of criteria for self-evaluation in learning and reconsidering and reflection of the learning experience. The whole organization of learning should *encourage* and stimulate continued learning of adults after they finish an educational activity, not only in the field of personal and public interests, but wider than educational institutions promise. The *promotion* of continuing education among others, for the sake of learning outside educational institutions is expected from the individuals who accepted this philosophy. Because of that the learning and education of adults should be *heterogeneous*, differentiated, and decentralized to the level of a local community. The local community should become an *andragogical center*. Public (governmental) educational policy should identify and support all opportunities for learning of the least included, the least competent in planning, organization and evaluation in their own learning.

SDL and a Complex of Theories of Child and Adult Education

Savicevic (2008) undertakes some observations concerning a few theories of adult learning, all of them in the essence of andragogy, originated in the last decades of the twentieth century. It is necessary to be acquainted with them so as to analyze and critically evaluate them. The abundant science production on *differences* between the education of children and the education of adults could be found in the last decades of the twentieth century. The research shows the complexity of these two phenomena; but differences exist not only between the education of children and the education of adults, but also within the conception of adult learning. A lot of external factors affect the learning of adults; especially the *convergence* of work and education, motivation and learning, teaching concepts in andragogy, the distinctive role of andragogical practitioners, the phenomenon of self-directed learning, as well as the future of adult learning.

Adult Learner Characteristics Served by Various Adult Learning Theories

Savicevic's arguments stated above, are buttressed by the historical and contextual emergence of SDL coming into the wider educational discussions. Furthermore, regarding the section above on the issue of *mass-media and online learning*, Cercone (2008) adds to that part of Savicevic's (1991b) discussion that the development of andragogy in the future will depart from differentiation of scientific integration towards the creation of theoretical models and the scientific synthesis of knowledge. This has a very a startling comparison to make regarding the strength of a number of learning theories related to adult learning or 'andragogy' as Cercone indicates. She focuses on the four most popular adult learning theories: Experiential Learning, Transformative Learning, Self-Directed Learning, and Andragogy. She makes the case for each of the four and their support of adult learner characteristics but asserts that there is no one theory that explains all of how adults learn, just as there is no one theory that explains all human learning.

Existing theories provide frameworks or models which contribute something to our understanding of adults as learners. In light of the fact that learning is an internal process of the learner, the focus of theory is on what happens when real learning takes place. Adult learning theory helps faculty to understand their students and to design more meaningful learning experiences for them. There is not one adult learning theory that successfully applies to all adult learning environments. Learning is about change, and adult learning is also about change. Cercone (2008) developed a framework in which all four theories need to include the physical/bodily elements and learning style elements in the development and support of learning experiences, but they are givens of all human beings (or learners), not just unique to adult learners. However, there are 11 adult learner characteristics which Cercone (2008) recommends that need to be taken into account for mass media and online adult learning course development.

1. Adults need to be actively involved in the learning process.

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

For each of the Adult Learner Characteristics listed above, Cercone includes numerous strategies and recommendations for implementing them [which I will not list here because of space limitations]. She identifies each theory with characteristics addressed along with the number of strategies/recommendations [SR] for implementing and supporting each. Experiential Learning (EL) - #s 5, 9, 10, 11 for a total of four (4) Characteristics with 24 SR; Transformative Learning (TL) - #s 1, 2, 10 for a total of three (3) Characteristics with 32 SR; Self-Directed Learning (SDL) - #s 1, 2, 5 for a total of three (3) Characteristics with 34 SR; and, Andragogy [A] #s 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10 for a total of 10 Characteristics with 68 SR. Consequently, all of this shows Andragogy to be the most comprehensive theory of adult learning and education, by comparison with Self-Directed Learning, Transformative Learning, and Experiential Learning. In fact, Cercone declares that the theories of Self-Directed Learning, Transformative Learning, and Experiential Learning are all encompassed within the theory of Andragogy. Moreover, within this study, I am only including the calculation of Self-Directed Learning which has three (3) Characteristics & 34 SR; and, the calculation of Andragogy which has 10 Characteristics & 68 SR. In light of this finding, all three adult learner characteristics and 34 SR included in the Theory of SDL are included in the ten adult learner characteristics and 68 SR of andragogy. This means that the Theory of Andragogy includes seven additional adult learner characteristics and 34 additional SR that the Theory of SDL does not include. This appears to support the contention that Andragogy would be foundational to both andragogy and SDL as well as Andragogy providing additional support for implementing adult learning.

Eras, Themes, and Other Backgrounds of Andragogy

During the 20 years that I have been researching, writing and publishing in andragogy, there are 17 major eras and six (6) themes that I have discovered and articulated. These eras include more than 500 articles in the English language, thus covering a span of 187 years, from 1833 to 2020. Other backgrounds were included.

Major Eras in the History and Philosophy of Andragogy Around the Globe

1. Early Appearances of Andragogy 1833-1927;
2. Andragogy's Second American Appearance and its Foundation Being Established 1964-1970;
3. Movement Toward Applying Andragogy to Human Resource Development 1971-1973;
4. Emergence of Self-Directed Learning Skills as A Major Way to Implement Andragogy 1975-1981;
5. Strengthening the Numerous Uses of Andragogy Along with Growing Controversy and Resistance Toward It 1981-1984;
6. Identifying the Stronger European Base of Andragogy in Comparing it with the American Base 1985-1988;
7. The Foundation of Trust Undergirds Andragogical Learning Despite the Andragogy Debate 1989-1991;
8. Scientific Foundation of Andragogy Being Established Amid Skepticism and Misunderstanding 1992-1995;
9. Momentum Gained Against Andragogy While Counter Arguments Assert Its Value 1996-1997;
10. Antecedents to an Historical Foundation of Andragogy Being Extended and Broadened 1998-1999;
11. Empirical Research Being Pressed for Investigating Andragogy's Value While Objection Remains 2000-2002;
12. Bringing European and American Andragogy Closer Together as Distance Education Emerges 2003-2004;
13. The Hesitation Concerning Andragogy Continues While Many Still Stand by Andragogy 2005-2006;
14. Knowles' Prominent Long-Range Contribution to Andragogy's Continuance into The Future 2007-2008;
15. Applying Andragogy Ideas and Learning Techniques Successfully in the USA, Foreign Countries and with Cutting-Edge Technology 2009-2011.
16. Clearer Emphasis on Congruence between Scholarship and Practice Accompanied by Contribution to the Shaking World Economy 2012-2015; and,
17. On the Cutting Edge of Additional Developments in 2016 and Beyond into the Future past 2020. (Henschke, 2015c)

Major Themes of Andragogy

I have also discovered in these more than 500 English language documents, but arranged in a different way within this 187 year span, that there are Six [6] Themes of Andragogy encompassed as follows: (a) Evolution of the Term Andragogy, (b) Historical Antecedents Shaping the Concept of Andragogy, (c) Comparison of the American and European Understanding of Andragogy, (d) Popularizing and Sustaining the American and World-Wide Concept of Andragogy, (e) Practical Applications of Andragogy, and, (f) Theory, Research, and Definition of Andragogy (Henschke, 2015b). Although the

eras and themes of andragogy date back to 1833, there are implications that andragogy predates this back into the 17th century, and perhaps as far back as ancient times.

Comenius' Ideas Declared as Basis to Consider Him Founder of Modern Andragogy

According to Savicevic (2008), Comenius, in the 17th century (antecedent to the 1833 first published appearance of the term and description of 'Andragogy), was the first to draw the demarcation line between pedagogical and andragogical ideas; but he drew this line in the *Panpedia* (Comenius, 1910 – Translation of his *Panpedia* by M. Keating] written at the end of his life, not in his earlier writings. He urged for distinctive 'schools' for adults, for distinctive contents, textbooks and teachers for learning and education of adults, who are prepared to function in these schools for adults. Andragogical ideas and practice (understood as a conception, institutions, new forms, means, methods) were created in the period of social, scientific and technological changes brought about by the industrial revolution; they were created under the wing of the workers' movement, constituted in England. Here he mentions that the andragogical ideas stated by Comenius are the constitutive foundation of andragogy as a science. The nature and importance of his thoughts about the possibilities, needs and organization of education and learning of adults are a basis to consider him as a founder of modern andragogy. In *Panpedia*, Comenius developed the philosophy of life-long education, and proclaimed equal frames for living and for learning; that it is not enough to say that it is never too late for learning; he emphasized that every period is dedicated for a life and for learning.

Savicevic Explores Antique Antecedents as Sources of Andragogy

Digging back into ancient times, Savicevic (2000) also explored various antecedents to and backgrounds of andragogy before the term came into publication in 1833. He added another component to the scientific foundation and design of andragogy in this book. While published in the Serb language, he has provided a summary in English. The summary indicates this study as dedicated to search for the roots of andragogical ideas starting from the antique civilizations up to the present time. We understand the term andragogical ideas as thoughts and concepts of persons about education and learning of adults, system of andragogical institutions that appeared in certain civilizations, as well as andragogical practice in which such ideas were realized. The structure of the study is made of several chapters that are interconnected and logically linked and divided into the following five parts. (a) Conceptual and methodological frames of research that includes The nature and characteristics of research of andragogical ideas; and, methodological frame of researches, (b) Searching for the roots of andragogical ideas of some authors, which includes adult learning before literacy; ancient Greek civilization; activity of sophists; Socrates, Plato, Aristotle; diffusion of Greek culture and science; ancient Rome; Jewish cultural heritage; Middle Ages; and, reversal which brings New Century, (c) Andragogical ideas in the international context includes the work of Jan Amos Komensky, ideas of Gruntdvig and their practical realization, thoughts of E. N. Medinsky, view of E. C. Lindeman, Thorndike's comprehension, and thoughts of Freire, (d) Andragogical ideas in Yugoslav frame and context includes practical realization in Yugoslav cultural space, social philosophy of Svetozar Markovic, Radovan Dragovic,

Dimitrije Tucovic;,Dusan Popovic, Filip Filipovic, activities of the Serbian social democrats in practice, and thoughts of Vicentije Rakicc, (e) Andragogical comparisons and conclusions included a final general discussion.

Savicevic Being Inducted into the International Adult & Continuing Education Hall of Fame

When Dusan was inducted in 2006 into the IACEHOF, the following was said:

> For nearly 50 years, Dusan Savicevic, Ph.D., has made major contributions to the field of adult and continuing education and is regarded as one of the leading experts in andragogy (adult education) in South-Eastern Europe. He has worked internationally, in institutions for the development of modern adult education, participating in efforts aimed at enabling all categories of adults to assume greater responsibilities in their professional life and society.
>
> Savicevic's greatest theoretical contributions in the field of lifelong learning are in clarifying the concept of andragogy and education and learning of adults, in setting up strategies for recurrent education, in comparative education of adults, in methodology of research in adult education, in the concept of educational needs of adults, in contemporary concepts in andragogy, in history and evolution of andragogical ideas, and in the philosophical basis of andragogy, as well as in clarifying the process of learning and aging.

Henschke Cites Ancient Hebrew & Greek Languages as Sources and Other Items

Henschke (1998) asserted that long before the term andragogy appeared in published form in 1833, ancient Greek and Hebrew educators, if not others, used words that although they were antecedents to andragogy, included elements of the concept that has come to be understood as some of the various meanings and definitions of andragogy. He attempted a descriptive definition of andragogy that moved in the direction of calling it a scientific discipline of study. This he posed in contrast to what others considered to be a fading influence of andragogy. He went back earlier in history and claimed that the language of the Hebrew prophets, before and concurrent with the time of Jesus Christ, along with the meaning of various Hebrew words and their Greek counterparts -- learn, teach, instruct, guide, lead, and example/way/model -- provide an especially rich and fertile resource to interpret andragogy. He expected that by combining a probe of these words and elements with other writings, a more comprehensive definition of andragogy may evolve. So, he attempted a definition of andragogy, as follows: "Andragogy is a scientific discipline for the study of the theory, processes, technology and anything else of value and benefit including learning, teaching, instructing, guiding, leading, & modeling/exemplifying a way of life, which would bring adults to their full degree of humaneness" (p. 8).

The Hebrews/Jews in ancient times, received the Ten Commandments, which were considered to be the most important text in the Hebrew Bible, or as some call it, the Old

Testament. From the book of Deuteronomy, chapter six, verses four through seven, these words of instruction are included: "Hear, O Israel; the Lord your God is one Lord. You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your might. These words, which I [*God*] command you this day shall be in your heart: And you shall teach, or sharpen them diligently to your children and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up." This is an illustration of their mode of teaching and learning – quite andragogical, long before (about 1423 BCE, or Before Christ – BC) prior to when the word andragogy was invented or published in 1833 by Kapp.

When Jesus Christ of Nazareth, was 12 years of age (about the year eight CE – Common Era, or eight A.D., as some call it After Christ), he was taken by his parents to the annual Feast of the Passover in Jerusalem (Luke 2:41-52). In an exchange sitting with the teachers in the Temple, he was both hearing them and asking them questions – quite andragogical, about 1825 years before the word andragogy was first published by Kapp. Henschke (2004) was inspired to adapt a poem that depicts how andragogy caught hold of him and has maintained its grip. He also found deep involvement in andragogy, when he paraphrases Robert Frost's Poem [*Our Gift Outright*] delivered at the USA 1961 Presidential Inaugural Ceremonies of John Kennedy and Lyndon Johnson. The paraphrase follows:

> Andragogy belonged to me before I belonged to Andragogy.
> Andragogy was my longing desire in living, teaching and learning for a few decades
> Before I was her educator.
> Andragogy was mine
> In undergraduate school, in graduate school, in theological seminary, in clinical training, in parish ministry, in doctoral studies, in university faculty, in consulting with various organizations throughout society,
>
> But I belonged to Pedagogy, still captive,
> Possessing what I still was unpossessed by,
> Possessed by what I now no more possessed.
> Something I was withholding made me weak
> Until I found it was myself
> I was withholding from the dynamic, vibrant idea of Andragogy,
> And forthwith found new educational and living possibilities in surrender.
> Such as I was, I gave myself outright (The deed of gift was many deeds of dialoguing with others about Andragogy)
>
> To Andragogy vaguely realizing a new idea embodying teaching, learning, and living,
>
> But still unstoried, artless, unenhanced,
> Such as Andragogy was, such as she will become.

Knowles' Structure for Andragogy and Changes Toward SDL

The main structure of Knowles' (1970, 1980, 1990) andragogical expression, which was initially activated through his Summer, 1966 contact in Boston with Dusan; and, in Chicago the fall of 1966 at the National Conference of the American Association for Adult and Continuing Education. The Boston event was where Dusan acquainted Knowles with the concept and term, Andragogy; and the Chicago event was where Knowles was the first university professor who stood for the idea of considering the need to form andragogy as a scientific discipline. From there Knowles' main andragogical structure took the form of a process design instead of a content design, with assumptions and processes. The assumptions about adult learners at that time were: (a) They need to know a reason that makes sense to them as to why they should learn any particular subject matter content, (b) they are inclined toward and have a strong desire to be self-directing in their learning, (c) their experience is a learning resource for themselves and others, (d) their learning needs are focused on the developmental tasks of their social roles, (e) their time perspective is a need for one of immediate application, and (f) their motivation is much more intrinsic [internal] rather than extrinsic [external]. The learning processes adults want to be actively and interactively involved in are (a) preparation of the learners for what is coming in the andragogical learning experience, (b) establishing a climate conducive to learning, c cooperative and mutual planning; (d) needing help in self-diagnosing their learning needs, (e) setting objectives, (f) designing the sequence of learning activities, (g) mutually conducting the learning activities, and (h) learners evaluating their own learner progress.

Transition from Andragogical Orientation Toward Including Self-Directed Learning

Knowles (1975) published his guidebook for learners and teachers on the topic of Self-Directed Learning. This was the first time that he labeled pedagogy as 'teacher-directed' learning and andragogy as 'self-directed' learning. Previously, pedagogy was for children and andragogy was for adults. Now his perspective was that where new, unfamiliar content was involved with children and adults, pedagogy was appropriate; and, where adults or children had some background in the content, andragogy was appropriate. He attached the term 'self-directed learning' to his six andragogical assumptions and his eight andragogical processes. Andragogy was the underlying and overarching philosophy, and self-directed learning was the major way andragogy was to be implemented. Beyond giving equal footing to andragogy and SDL, it was the first time that he illustrated and implemented the Learning Contract (LC). He did this by having the LC focus on the idea of becoming and/or improving competence as a Self-Directed Learner, while using the contents and processes throughout the book to assist the learner to become and improve self-directedness. Within the book, Knowles also presented a set of nine *Competencies of Self-Directed Learning,* which may be considered as the essence of a LC in and of itself, as follows:

1. An understanding of the differences in assumptions about learners and the skills required for learning under teacher-directed learning and self-directed learning, and the ability to explain these differences to others.
2. A concept of myself as being a non-dependent and a self-directing person.

3. The ability to relate to peers collaboratively, to see them as resources for diagnosing needs, planning my learning, and to give help to them and receive help from them.
4. The ability to diagnose my own learning needs realistically, with help from teachers and peers.
5. The ability to translate learning needs into learning objectives in a form that makes it possible for their accomplishment to be assessed.
6. The ability to relate to teachers as facilitators, helpers, or consultants, and to take the initiative in making use of their resources.
7. The ability to identify human and material resources appropriate to different kinds of learning objectives.
8. The ability to select effective strategies for making use of learning resources and to perform these strategies skillfully and with initiative.
9. The ability to collect and validate evidence of the accomplishment of various kinds of learning objectives. (p. 61)

Three Major Instances of Henschke Using Andragogical Learning Contracts to Enhance SDL

First

As a Continuing Education Specialist in the University of Missouri Extension, a Professor of Adult Education with the University of Missouri-St. Louis College of Education, and a Professor and Chair of the Doctoral Emphasis Specialty in Andragogy at Lindenwood University School of Education, St. Charles, Missouri, Henschke applied and used learning contracts in numerous ways (Fedeli et al., 2012). I began using them in 1975 and continue using them until the present time of this writing and will continue during the remainder of my educational career. The structure I most regularly used was Knowles' (1986) five columns as follows: What are you going to learn (objectives), How are you going to learn it (resources and strategies), Time span of when you will learn (schedule), How will you know that you learned what your objectives specified (evidence of accomplishment), and, what standard will be used and who will validate that you learned what you indicated (proving that you learned what you said you would learn)?

Second

I used the Learning Contract (LC) with a small Convent of 50 Roman Catholic Sisters who had not had a new novitiate enter into the Order in more than a decade. The average age of the sisters was increasing one year each year this continued. They expressed concern that if this pattern continued, their Order would soon 'die-out'. The Superior General and Council worked together with me for 75 days over a period of almost three years, during which each member of the Order developed and used a LC for herself, and the total group developed and implemented a LC for their future. In the process they looked at their past and considered options for their future. The happy result was that they initiated a merger with another Order and successfully came together to form a new Order. They are alive and vibrant today – 32 years later – looking toward a bright future

and are receiving new members along with carrying on active contributive ministries (Fedeli et al., 2012).

Third

I engaged the participants in Learning Contracts (LC) as part of an adult education program I conducted with the manager and 15 members of the educational and human resource division of a major corporation serving two US states (Fedeli et al., 2012). They had not received an update on education in about 16 years and requested my university to provide the update. I was selected to address this issue. We worked together for two and one-half years on this project. Each one of the participants became engaged in developing, writing and implementing a learning contract that served their learning needs throughout the duration of the project. The total group along with their manager developed and implemented a learning contract that would help to guide them in assuring that they received and internalized the updating goal. As the time progressed, each person and the team gained the competence that helped them become the most effective team in the corporation. They were involved in changing the function of the corporation's education division toward performance support. They used to carry on the education of the workers the traditional way of taking them off the line for a week or two and then sending them back to their job with the workers saying, "I am glad that is over with; now we can get back to our work and forget all this stuff." As they received and internalized the educational update, they made some changes. They were expressing themselves in a way that made one perceive them as being delighted that they were contributing to their organization and to their community.

The manager of the above group decided to take a Master's Degree in Andragogy to learn how to do what I had been conducting with them during the update. At the end of his degree program, he designed and implemented what he wanted to do for his 'capstone / internship' experience. He elected to do the research within his corporation, to analyze all of the current training / educational programs being conducted and determine the time, costs, etc., for them. Then, he used that data, redesigned and recalculated the cost in time, costs, etc., for all of them so that they would be conducted with an Andragogical, self-directed, learning contract approach. Then, he compared the two. His conclusion was that if the new approach were actually implemented in the corporation, in a five-year period of time, they would save $5 million US Dollars. Since he had the data from inside the corporation, he was able to do a thorough analysis (Fedeli et al., 2012).

Research Combining A Charter for Andragogy with Ten Elements of SDL

Mezirow (1981) connected with Knowles in andragogy stemming from Savicevic, and added to the discussion on andragogy, developed a critical theory of adult learning and education, and laid the groundwork for what he called a charter for andragogy. That included twelve core concepts that would help with an organized and sustained effort to assist adults to learn in a way that enhances their capability to function as self-directed learners. Suanmali (1981), a doctoral student of Mezirow, focused his dissertation research on the agreement he found that 174 adult educators, including professors and practitioners, had on ten of those twelve core concepts of Mezirow (1981) that all related

to self-direction in learning. All items except numbers eight and twelve were included. The major theme that came out of his research was that to assist adults to enhance their capability to function as self-directed learners, the educator must (a) decrease learner dependency, (b) help learners use learning resources, (c) help learners define his/her learning needs, (c) help learners take responsibility for learning, (d) organize learning that is relevant, (e) foster learner decision-making and choices, (f) encourage learner judgment and integration, (g) facilitate problem-posing and problem-solving, (h) provide a supportive learning climate, and (i) emphasize experimental methods.

Developing Phases and Phase Transitions for Learning SDL in the Classroom

Taylor (1986) discovered the sequential and circular process of learning for andragogical self-direction in the classroom and used Knowles' (1975) book on self-directed learning as an andragogical foundation to her outline and implementation of learning for self-direction in the classroom. The results came as follows: The study reveals four different seasons or phases of the experience in learning. The phases occur in a consistent order and eventually display a thematic problem being worked on. For six of the eight participants the problem was how to behave and understand oneself as a self-directed learner in a professional educational setting where one expects to be directed and evaluated. For two of the learners, it was the problem of how to be a helper to others' learning without having to be an infallible and *only* source of direction. In all cases, learners were challenged to make a major reorientation in their assumptions and expectations about learning and teaching.
The four phases and the phase transition points through which this change of perspective occurred are briefly summarized as follows.

1. *Disconfirmation (Phase transition).* A major discrepancy between expectations and experience. *Disorientation.* A period of intensive disorientation and confusion accompanied by a crisis of confidence and withdrawal from other persons who are associated with the source of confusion.

2. *Naming the problem (Phase transition).* Naming the problem without blaming self and others. *Exploration.* Beginning with relaxation with an unresolved issue, an intuitively-guided, collaborative, and open-minded exploration with a gathering of insights, confidence and satisfaction.

3. *Reflection (Phase transition).* A private reflective review. *Reorientation.* A major insight or synthesis experience simultaneous with a new approach to the learning (or teaching) task.

4. *Sharing the discovery (Phase transition).* Testing out the new understanding with others. *Equilibrium.* A period of equilibrium in which the new perspective and approach is elaborated, refined and applied.

The sequence is most adequately represented as a cycle since the disorientation phase arises out of an experience of equilibrium similar to the final phase described here.

Henschke's Experiences in SDL Early in Life and Combining with Andragogy in Later Time

Henschke's two early experiences of Self-Directed Learning (SDL) took place before I knew there was such a thing as SDL. First, at three [3] years of age, I refused to say my piece during the church Christmas Program, although I had it definitely memorized to deliver. Second, I convinced a Theological Seminary Professor to allow me to take an Old Testament Book Study Course in place of taking an additional required semester course in Hebrew. I did not realize until a few years ago that these two anecdotes exemplified SDL. However, our research instrumentation on this is based on more than just a couple of anecdotes. Guglielmino's (1978) study out of which was developed the Self-Directed Learning Readiness Scale (SDLRS) (later renamed "Learning Preference Assessment") and Henschke's (1989) andragogical Modified Instructional Perspectives Inventory [MIPI] are examples of our having researched in the respective areas of Self-Directed Learning and Andragogy. I believe that the SDLRS or LPA has been used well into the hundreds of completed doctoral dissertations. The MIPI to the present in 2016 has been validated three times and used in 30 completed doctoral dissertations. As well, it is in progress of being currently used in at least 12 doctoral dissertations in the process of being completed. Copies of each may be considered for use in various research projects by contacting the author of each.

Reciprocity Among Empathy, Trust, and Sensitivity Between Andragogues and Learners

To be effective, an andragogue needs to combine the reciprocity of empathy, trust, and sensitivity in concert with the ability and potential of learners for the same, to understand the learning process and interact with facilitators effectively in making the right choices. This reciprocity takes the form of the facilitator initiating and maintaining the combination of three elements. Insensitivity may get in the way/ block the process of modeling reciprocity of the three.

Two crucial elements of Organizational Learning (Chiva & Algre, 2009) that strengthens this process are Dialogue and Risk-Taking. Dialogue is defined as sustained collective inquiry and interaction conducted among the participants – andragogues and learners -- into the processes, assumptions, and certainties that make up every day experience, which creates an understanding of communication. Risk-Taking is defined as tolerance of ambiguity, uncertainty and possible errors – effective organizations accept and learn from failure and mistakes]. The 'D' and / or 'R' letter(s) is/are added to each item below where Dialogue and / or Risk-Taking strengthens it.

Empathy- The andragogue:

- Feels fully prepared to teach; *D*
- Notices and acknowledges to learners' positive changes in them; *D*
- Balances her/his efforts between learner content acquisition and motivation; *R*
- Expresses appreciation to learners who actively participate; *D*

- Promotes positive self-esteem in learners. *D R*

Trust – The andragogue:

- Purposefully communicating to learners that they are each uniquely important; *D*
- Believing learners know what their goals, dreams and realities are like;
- Expressing confidence that learners will develop the skills they need;
- Prizing the learners to learn what is needed; *R*
- Feeling learners' need to be aware of and communicate their thoughts and feelings; *D*
- Enabling learners to evaluate their own progress in learning;
- Hearing learners indicate what their learning needs are; *D*
- Engaging learners in clarifying their own aspirations; *D*
- Developing a supportive relationship with learners; *D R*
- Experiencing unconditional positive regard for learners; *D R*
- Respecting the dignity and integrity of learners. *D*

Sensitivity- The andragogue (with reciprocity, leans much more toward sensitivity):

Makes certain to understand the learner's point of view; *D*
Takes pains and time to get her/his point across to learners; D
Exercises patience in helping all learners progress; *R*
Overcomes any frustration with learner apathy; *D R*
Will use whatever time learners need to grasp various concepts; *R*
Thoroughly allows learners to ask all questions they need addressed; *R*
Resists in her/himself any irritation at learner inattentiveness in the learning setting. *R*

Insensitivity- The insensitive educator (without reciprocity, leans toward insensitivity):

- Has difficulty understanding learner's point of view;
- Has difficulty getting her/his point across to learners;
- Feels impatient with learner's progress;
- Experiences frustration with learner apathy;
- Have difficulty with the amount of time learners need to grasp various concepts;
- Gets bored with the many questions learners ask; and,
- Feels irritation at learner inattentiveness in the learning setting.
- (Henschke, 1989; Henschke, 2014b; Henschke, et al, 2015 b, c, d, & e).

Dimensions of Maturing in Life

Henschke (2014a) at 83 years of age, includes both andragogy and SDL in developing his story on living a long, healthy life. This is part of the long-range development of Henschke from pessimism to optimism inspired by Savicevic. Henschke has used the following growth process in a self-directed way for a number of years. It follows a plan

that Knowles developed for systematically functioning in life for adults and children at any stage of their maturing. Knowles (1959, 1970, 1980) contrasts what happens with learners in early stages and what happens with learners in the more maturing stages of life. The idea of maturity as a goal of healthy living within adult and community education and learning, needs to be divided into various dimensions, if it is to serve as a guide for facilitating continuous learning. Out of the psychological literature Knowles identified the notion that there are several dimensions of the maturing process in healthy living, each with its own unique cycle of development and growth. If the really critical dimensions of the maturing process could be listed, then adult and community education could have some yardsticks against which to measure the accomplishment of its mission that is to be accomplished in helping bring about healthy living. As a starting point, Knowles (1959 & 1961) found the following fifteen dimensions of maturing provided in the list below which are nominated for consideration. (Note that these dimensions describe directions of growth, not absolute states of being to be achieved.). The movement of the learners on these dimensions would be:

From		Toward
Dependence	→	Autonomy
Passivity	→	Activity
Subjectivity	→	Objectivity
Ignorance	→	Enlightenment
Small abilities	→	Large abilities
Few responsibilities	→	Many responsibilities
Narrow interests	→	Broad interests
Selfishness	→	Altruism
Self-rejection	→	Self-acceptance
Amorphous self- identity	→	Integrated self-identity
Focus on particulars	→	Focus on principles
Superficial concerns	→	Deep Concerns
Imitation	→	Originality
Need for certainly	→	Tolerance for ambiguity
Impulsiveness	→	Rationality

Although no stage is completely fulfilled at any point in life, one would seek to move along the path of each dimension through SDL. Some educators would be more inclined to control and direct the person seeking a healthy and long life, thus seeking to maintain them in the earlier stage of each dimension. The andragogue (the adult educator who practices the art and science of facilitating adults in their learning for a healthy and long life) would be more inclined to support and encourage the person seeking to become more self-directed and creative in the solutions they are willing to experiment with and implement. Thus, they would be seeking to help each adult, and even each child, move forward through SDL toward the expanded enactment of an individual dimension or combination of dimensions in her/his maturing and developing healthy living. Of all the

dimensions, most important with the author at this time centers in developing deep concerns within himself and doing it in a SDL way.

On Becoming and Continuing to be a Winner in Life

From my background, I have had a tendency in my life to be a bit pessimistic. Nevertheless, the first time I met Dusan Savicevic in Tulsa, OK, at the 1988 American Association for Adult and Continuing Education Annual Conference, he told me about his life in Yugoslavia, which was within an oppressive Communist Regime. He was determined not to allow them to dictate how he would live his life, but he would decide how he would live his life, and he did. On hearing Dusan's story, I determined to work on becoming 'optimistic' and leave my 'pessimism' behind. It did not happen immediately. Gradually, however, little by little I worked on it and I have finally developed the Self-Directed Learning habit to practice consistently some of what Waitley (circa, 1988) suggests, a system for living which he calls qualities of a total winner – he has ten of them. It all has to do with the 'self' of the person who would be a winner in life. These qualities are all involved with growth/learning, which when combined with the self, could be aspects of self-direction in learning, or 'self-directed learning'. In one adopting attitudes and implementing actions, there is learning that takes place on the part of the person in adopting or implementing. Since Knowles (1970) suggests that learning is an internal process, it is and has to be chosen by the person internally and not dictated or governed by someone other than the self-the person. So, Waitley's ten qualities are paired with five personal attitudes, which lead into five personal actions. *First,* the attitude of *self-expectancy* is expressed as: 'I was good today; I'll be better tomorrow'. *Second,* this attitude leads to the action of *self-motivation* and is expressed as: 'want to…and I can'! *Third,* the attitude of *self-image* is expressed as: 'I see myself changing, growing, achieving, and winning'. *Fourth,* this attitude leads to the action of *self-direction* and is expressed as: 'I have a plan to make it happen; and I'll do what is necessary to get what I want'. *Fifth,* the attitude of *self-control* is expressed as: 'I'll take the credit or the blame for my performance'. *Sixth,* this attitude leads to the action of *self-discipline* and is expressed as: 'of course I can do it; I've practiced it mentally a thousand times. *Seventh,* the attitude of *self-esteem* is expressed as: 'I do things well because I'm that kind of person'. *Eighth,* this attitude leads to the action of *self-dimension* and is expressed as: 'I live every moment, enjoying as much, relating as much, doing as much, giving as much as I possibly can'. *Ninth,* the attitude of *self-awareness* is expressed as 'I know who I am, where I am coming from and where I am going'. *Tenth,* this attitude leads to the action of *self-projection* and is expressed as: 'tell me what you want, maybe we can work on it together'. This frame takes constant concentration and attention. One reason is that as human beings, it is too easy to slip into the negative side and think we cannot do anything correctly. Nonetheless, as this frame becomes habitual, we move ourselves forward quite positively. Besides, the connection of attitudes leading to actions, serves to strengthen self-directed learning. It is not only surprising, but also encouraging to experience the positive results of speaking winning ideas into one's life.

Using an Andragogical Self-Directed Learning Model with Medical Education

Ramnarayan and Hande (2005) indicate that Self-directed learning (SDL) has been identified as an important skill for medical graduates. To meet the challenges in today's healthcare environment, self-directed learning is most essential. Several health care institutions have made SDL a part of the curriculum. In self-directed learning, learners take the initiative in making use of resources rather than simply react to transmissions from resources, thus helping learners to learn more and learn better. The main purpose of education must now be to develop the skills of inquiry, and more importantly to go on acquiring new knowledge easily and skillfully the rest of his or her life.

The concept of self-directedness in learning was first discussed in educational literature as early as 1926 (Lindeman). From this writing, a preliminary description of self-directed learning emerged. Self-directed learning, in its broadest meaning, describes a process in which individuals take the initiative with or without the help of others, in diagnosing their learning needs, formulating learning goals, identifying resources for learning, choosing and implementing learning strategies and evaluating learning outcomes (Knowles, 1975). It is no longer practical to define the purpose of education as transmitting what is known. In a world in which the half-life of many facts and skills may be ten years or less, half of what a person has acquired at the age of twenty may be obsolete by the time the person is thirty.

One may ask a question such as: Why Self-Directed Learning? One reason is that there is convincing evidence that people who take the initiative in learning, learn more things and learn better than people who sit at the feet of teachers passively waiting to be taught. The second reason is that self-directed learning is more in tune with our natural processes of psychological development; an essential aspect of maturing is developing the ability to take increasing responsibility of our own lives to become increasingly self-directed. The third reason is that many of the new developments in education put a heavy responsibility on the learners to take a good deal of initiative in their own learning. To meet the challenges in today's healthcare environment, self-directed learning is most essential.

Thus, it is important to attain new knowledge easily and skillfully the rest of his or her life: Lifelong. Ramnarayan and Hande use the andragogical approach for Self-Directed Learning originally designed by Knowles (1975), which carries with it the six assumptions and eight processes originally formulated in Knowles' conception of andragogy. Self-directed learning (SDL) has been identified as an important ability for medical graduates (Harvey, 2003).

Providing the Forward to the Italian Translation of Malcolm's Self-Directed Learning Book

It is a high honor and privilege to be asked to provide the 'foreword' to the Italian translation of Malcolm's Self-Directed Learning Book. It took extensive thought to make certain I would do it justice. Here is a part of it (Henschke, 2014).

SELF-DIRECTED LEARNING: A GUIDE FOR LEARNERS AND TEACHERS

By Malcolm S. Knowles

Introduction to the Italian Translation of the Book to be published

By John A. Henschke

*Malcolm S. Knowles stands as a giant catalyst at the juncture – past, present, and future – of andragogy (the art and science of helping adults learn) and self-directed learning (taking increased responsibility for one's learning) within the field of Adult Education and Human Resource Development. *Note: Malcolm considered andragogy to be his overarching concept of adult learning and self-directed learning as the strategy for implementing andragogy. I began learning with Malcolm more than 47 years ago at this writing in 2014, and in many ways have continued even to the present day. I anticipate that my learning with him will continue for many years to come. Though decades have passed, I can recall my first learning experiences with Malcolm S. Knowles as if it occurred yesterday. (He always liked everyone to call him Malcolm.) I remain captivated by each of my experiences of learning with Malcolm for a variety of compelling reasons.*

For more than 50 years until his death in 1997, Malcolm devoted his personal and professional life to exemplifying the theory and practice of andragogy and self-directed learning: as a speaker to audiences of 10,000 or less; as a university professor with a multiplicity of adult learners (his students); as a consultant to numerous institutions and corporations in countries around the world; as a writer of 19 books and 225 articles; and, as a very caring human being for any person with whom he happened to be meeting. I observed him being sought out at national conferences, studied with him in my doctoral program, and worked with him in various educational settings. Malcolm was just Malcolm through and through. Eight successfully defended doctoral dissertations have been written about various aspects of Malcolm's work in andragogy. I believe Dusan Savicevic, a University Professor from Belgrade (from whom Malcolm received the concept of andragogy) is right when he said that the world-wide history of andragogy will put Knowles on a meritorious place in the development of this scientific discipline.

My Personal Experience of Learning Andragogy & Self-Directed Learning with Malcolm

My personal and professional learning relationship with Malcolm that blossomed and came to flower over the years started in 1967. During the summer of that year, I made preparations to move in September, half way across the USA from Jacksonville, Illinois, to Boston, Massachusetts with my pregnant wife, Carol, and two daughters in our automobile pulling a U-Haul trailer. Also, during the summer of 1967, Malcolm convened an impromptu doctoral admittance committee meeting and approved my application for officially starting in the program that fall semester. From that beginning, I was the beneficiary of a series of actions by Malcolm who consistently expressed a caring attitude toward students. Such caring was a miracle to me and I was deeply touched. I was learning in the core of my being.

The second night after my arriving at Boston University (BU), Malcolm invited all the Adult Education students to an informal gathering to talk and share. He asked each of the approximately 25 people present to tell about his/her background, how he/she came to BU, what each hoped to gain from the program and anything else each wished to share. When it came my turn to share, one aspect of myself I indicated was that I was taught in my Christian upbringing that the days of miracles had passed immediately after the generation that Jesus Christ and the Apostles lived on earth. Nevertheless, I already experienced the miraculous when Malcolm's efforts led to my becoming a doctoral student at BU. Here I was, not as yet in a formal class with Malcolm, and I had already experienced learning with him. Katz and Lazersfeld (1955) explained this in their research suggesting that it is the personal relationship that teaches.

Three Anecdotes Show More Work Needed for Strengthening Both Andragogy & SDL

There is still much work needed in strengthening each: andragogy and SDL. In addition, it is my opinion that improving the cooperation between them could be beneficial to both of them. Moreover, the constituencies each and/or both serve may greatly enhance the long-range interests of both. Three dated clear visionary and descriptive statements appear to be quite 'up-to-date' in what is proposed and worth considering for the future of andragogy and SDL: Combs (1966); Niebuhr (1981); and Savicevic (1991b). Combs (1966) fosters a movement toward self-direction in learners by outlining four things that are needed: (a) We need to believe this is important, (b) We need to trust the human organism to be able and willing to self-direct, (c) We need to adopt an experimental attitude toward supporting them as they learn (and make some mistakes as well as successes) to grow in self-directing, and (d) We need to provide the opportunity to practice and become very competent in self-direction.

Niebuhr's (1981) paradigm shift leans very much toward what he asserts: Coherence – a balanced way of life – is a species requirement. However, he cautions that the agencies that once provided it have been disintegrating. Nonetheless, he identifies some promising strategies and ventures: Two Constructs, and Three Tasks are necessary in order to improve the human learning system paradigm. *First, the Two Constructs*: (a) It is time to

conceptualize, comprehend, and make the human learning system an object of policy and program, (b) It is also time to conceptualize, comprehend, and specify in broader yet more explicit terms the individual's role and responsibility within the human learning system. He proposes that *self-directed development* be used to describe the individual's learning tasks in achieving a coherent and balanced strategy or theory of living. To this he adds that the construct of the human learning system is a useful reminder to (a) all the institutions and professions in the system that they are part of a larger societal process; and (b) individuals that their personal responsibility is crucial in the process of constructing and living their lives. *Second, the Three Tasks* which flow from the two constructs: (a) educating the citizenry on self-directed development; (b) adjusting institutional processes to support self-directed development; and (c) developing institutional coalitions to synergize the process locally.

Savicevic (1991b) proposes that the chief pre-conditions for the future development of andragogy are the intensification of research and the further professionalization of educating and learning of adults. The study of education and learning of adults is more and more frequent in all countries and will, no doubt, result in a more comprehensive establishment of andragogy. There are still present and arising in research inadequate and incomplete preparedness of researchers enrolled in graduate studies, especially connected to sufficient theoretical deliberation in the studied phenomena – andragogy, both the subject and the preparation of andragogical professionals, which are inter-dependent processes. He declares that the significant task of andragogical research is the creation of a fundamental theoretical basis, which would be valid in all fields of educating and learning of adults. Andragogy needs to form its philosophical basis. It would be best if, in research, efforts were invested in achieving a merging of epistemological, historical, theoretical and empirical research. Such methodological orientation necessitates in solid methodological competence and calls for systematic andragogical studies.

Conclusion

Savicevic (2008) puts forward a sweeping, panoramic view of the foundation and history of andragogy, which he traces back to ancient times before the common era [BCE], or as some call it, times before Christ [BC]. Henschke (2014b, 2015b) extensively addresses 17 eras of the history, philosophy and six major themes of andragogy, which stems back to ancient BCE times. Other things have been included in this review and analysis. Savicevic's publishing in andragogy also addresses (2006) international perspectives in andragogy over a 50 year period of his international involvement around the world in Denmark and Sweden; North America; Canada; Great Britain; International Council of Adult Education; UNESCO; European Society for Research on the Education of Adults; Open University; Council of Europe; Yugoslavia; India; China; Africa; Tanzania; Latin America; Brazil; Chile; Venezuela; Workers Education Association; OCED; and, England and Wales National Institute of Adult Continuing Education. Moreover, I could continue on extensively by bringing in various aspects of Dusan Savicevic's published works on conceptions of andragogy and the fact that he emphasizes the 21st century as being the century of adult learning. This article in its main purpose seeks to honor

Savicevic in his immensely broad scope of contribution on the research and practice of andragogy around the world.

This article also offered, as well as highlighted some of the comparisons and the complementary relationship between general research and publishing on Andragogy and Self-Directed Learning. I could go on-and-on in presenting much more about Savicevic's contribution to andragogy and the comparisons and complementary relationship between andragogy and SDL. It also illustrated how Andragogy, SDL, and Learning Contracts are combined to further advance the learning process in adults, which supports Savicevic's (2007) notion that the 21st century will be the century of adult learning. Nevertheless, time and space will not permit us to go on here. Moreover, I will continue these ventures for some time to come. This is my first attempt; but it will not be my last. I am firmly planted in both Andragogy, SDL, and Learning Contracts. For that I am extremely grateful and privileged to do this work and to present some of my work in studying Savicevic's and Knowles' work in andragogy, SDL, and Contract Learning.

Savicevic (2012) asserts that research in andragogy cannot be reduced to research techniques. He suggests, rather almost insists, that the theoretical and philosophical need to undergird research techniques, methods and procedures – such as spiritual values, aims of education, learning, conceptions of an adult person, andragogical ethical reflection of theory and practice. My research on andragogy exemplifies this. I am not aware if SDL has proposed such a point of view as has Savicevic regarding andragogy. I offer that as someone who has worked in andragogy, self-directed learning (at times with LCs), and with Malcolm S. Knowles, one of the major movers and shakers in both, I agree with Malcolm's proposing that andragogy is the overarching concept related to adult learning; and, that SDL is the most important way of enacting andragogy – a complementary relationship between the two – Self-Directed Learning and Andragogy.

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EFFECTIVENESS OF IDIA RENAISSANCE SKILL ACQUISITION PROGRAMME AMONG WOMEN IN BENIN CITY

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ABSTRACT: The study was carried out to access the activities of Idia renaissance skill acquisition programme in enhancing livelihood among women in Benin City. The need for the study arose as a result of the rising cases of unemployment, poverty, human trafficking, experienced in Benin City. The study was guided by four research questions and three null hypotheses. A descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study. The population of the study consisted of 150 women, 135 of them were adult learners who were registered in the programme, while 15 of them have graduated and established their businesses. The researcher used the entire population for the study because they were readily accessible and manageable, no sampling was done. The data for this study was obtained using a questionnaire. The findings revealed that IRSAP was effective in providing skills in hair dressing, cosmetology and bead making. It was recommended among others that the Government should expand and extend IRSAP programme to all the 18 local governments in the State. Finally, The State Government should continue to assist the trainees with micro credit loan after learning a skill at the Centre. This will encourage many vulnerable people in our society to enrol in the programme.

Keywords: women, renaissance skills, unemployment, poverty, human trafficking

Many young people in Nigeria have basic education but limited access to skills, information, and resources that they require to tackle the myriad of social, health and economic problems they face. This has resulted in the critical situations threatening the survival, development, protection and the participation rights of adolescents and young people in societal development. Toward ensuring the protection of the rights of children, young people and women in Nigeria, UNICEF, in collaboration with the Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA) and Idia Renaissance, established the Youth Resource Centre in Edo State. Idia renaissance is an organization set up by the Edo State Government for the purpose of building local capacity and empowering children, young people and women with information, skills and services to reduce their vulnerability to child trafficking, sexual exploitation, violence and HIV/AIDS. Idia renaissance was established on the 8th of July1999. The organization was officially registered with the corporate affairs commission (CAC), on the 22nd of October 2003. It was formally commissioned on the 15th of December 2004.

Idia renaissance is an initiative of Mrs. Eki Igbinedion (Former Edo State First Lady). It was conceived out of her determined effort to combat the disturbing scourge of human trafficking, prostitution, maternal mortality, drug abuse, cultism, youth restiveness, prevalence of HIV/AIDS and other social and health problems prevalent especially among children, youths and women in the society. It is a non-governmental, non-political, non-religious and non-profit organization working through research, education and enlightenment towards the restoration of the dignity of women, youths and children

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in Nigeria. The scourge of human trafficking and its attendant problems have been a major concern for all Edo indigenes both at home and in diaspora. In recent past, Edo State was notorious for human trafficking activities. This situation gave a lot of concern to Mrs Eki Igbinedion who saw this as a challenge. In 1999, she used the programmes of Idia renaissance to rejuvenate and spearheaded the campaign against human trafficking in Nigeria especially in Edo State where the trend was believed to have assumed an unimaginable dimension. It is estimated that over 90% of trafficked persons in Nigeria are from Edo State (UNESCO, 2006).

In Edo State, several NGOs have dedicated themselves to providing assistance to victims of human trafficking through the provision of skills acquisition programmes as a measure to reduce poverty in the State**.** One of the prominent skill acquisition centres in Benin City was the Idia renaissance skill acquisition programme (IRSAP) on women empowerment. IRSAP empowers victims of human trafficking; vulnerable persons, women and youth organizations involved in skills acquisition and organize income generating activities such as soap making, candle making, paint making, shampoos, hair creams and mattress making. In addition, IRSAP offers trainees skills in hairdressing, cosmetology and bead making. IRSAP adopts a preventive and curative approach in seeking to resolve the problem of human trafficking and other related socio-economic and health issues.

The objectives of the programme include:

1. Eradicating human trafficking
2. Promoting sexual health of women
3. Promoting positive cultural values and eradicating harmful traditional practices against women and children
4. Protecting the fundamental human right of women and children to develop their capacity
5. Advocating for mobilization of relevant organs to promote gender equity and equality
6. Sponsoring and lobbying for legislative framework to fight human trafficking and other social vices
7. Rehabilitating and integrating victims of trafficking into society, equipping youths with information to guide against drug abuse, restiveness, human trafficking, sexually Transmitted Infections and HIV/AIDS.
8. Promoting legal migration and providing assistance services to voluntary returnees (Igbinedion, 2014).

The ultimate target of the organisation was to help alleviate growing scourge of poverty among women and young people in the state. In this regard, the organization provides loans to several victims of human trafficking through the Edo State Micro Credit Scheme, the United Nations Office on drugs and crime (UNODC), United Nations Inter-Regional Crime and Justice Research Institute (UNICRI), Micro Credit Programmes. IRSAP collaborated with Microfinance Banks, Philanthropist and well-meaning individuals to establish businesses for young girls and women.

One of the most fundamental imperatives for ensuring and fostering development is helping women to evolve the necessary capacity to meet their basic needs. Such needs include skill development, job creation, education, health, environmental sanitation among others. How to empower women so as to improve their lives and meet their basic needs for enhanced livelihood remains a major challenge in contemporary society. Enhanced livelihood connotes that the needed capabilities, assets and activities to enjoy better quality of life are strengthened (Adepoju & Olawuyi, 2012). In this study, enhanced livelihood includes provision of skill acquisition centres and programmes by promoting self-reliance skills among women. It includes promotion of health care services and reduction of poverty among women in Edo State. The growth and development of the economy depend largely on the kind of skills that the women and youths are equipped with. This underscore emphasis and interest in skill acquisition programme for women and youth in Edo State.

Skill acquisition is a process used to equip individuals or a group of individuals with training that can lead to self-sustenance. Skill acquisition is the manifestation of idea and knowledge through training, which is geared towards inculcating in individuals, the spirit of entrepreneurship needed for meaningful development (Donli, cited in Ikon, 2004). It involves training of people in different trades. The acquisition and effective utilization of these skills would enable the beneficiaries to become self-reliant and economically independent. It is based on this fact that this study strives to determine the effectiveness of IRSAP in enhancing livelihood among women in Benin City. Effectiveness is one of the vital keys to successful management of every organisation. According to Obiiegwu (2014), effectiveness means completing a task appropriately by fitting the square pegs in square holes and round pegs in round holes. IRSAP effectiveness refers to its ability to provide veritable skills for enhancing the livelihood of women in Benin City. The respondents to this study were literate (Qualification above O' level) and non – literate (Qualification below O' level) women involved in IRSAP who may differ in their responses on how effective IRSAP has been in enhancing the livelihood of women. The two groups may differ in their responses because of their perceptive level. Hence, the researcher used the two groups to determine how effective IRSAP is in providing specified skills for women in Benin City.

Statement of the Problem

One of the major challenges every responsive government must be concerned with is how to make life better and more meaningful for citizens. Edo State government has approached the problem of poverty by using different policies and programmes to reduce the challenge. However, despite the efforts made by the Edo State government using IRSAP, many Edo youths and women are presently unemployed and poor (Oyitso & Orobator, 2005). More worrisome is that there are still incidences of trafficking and re-trafficking among the populace. This unsatisfactory situation affects the health and wellbeing of the people; hence, so many die untimely. It is, therefore, the aim of this study to assess the effectiveness of IRSAP in enhancing the livelihood of the people of Edo State so that gaps in actualizing the objectives of the programme could be identified for subsequent filling of such gap through appropriate planning and decision taking.

Purpose of the Study

The study assessed the effectiveness of Idia Renaissance skill acquisition programme in enhancing livelihood among women in Benin City. Specifically, the study assessed the effectiveness of IRSAP in:

1. Providing skills on hairdressing among women
2. Providing skills on cosmetology among women
3. Providing skills on bead making among women
4. Determining the possible strategies for improving Idia renaissance skill acquisition programme.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

1. How effective is IRSAP in providing skills on hairdressing among women?
2. How effective is IRSAP in providing skills on cosmetology among women?
3. How effective is IRSAP in providing skills on bead making among women?
4. What are the strategies that could be used for improving the Idia Renaissance skill acquisition programme?

Hypotheses

The following three null hypotheses were formulated to guide the study and tested at 0.05 level of significance:

H1: There is no significant difference between the mean rating of Literate (Qualification above O' level) and non-literate (Qualification below O' level) women on the effectiveness of IRSAP in —providing skills on hairdressing among women in Benin City.

H2: Literate (Qualification above O' level) and non-literate (Qualification below O' level) women do not differ significantly in their mean ratings on the effectiveness of IRSAP in providing skills on cosmetology among women in Benin City.

H3: There is no significant difference between the mean rating of Literate (Qualification above O' level) and non-literate (Qualification below O' level) women on the effectiveness of IRSAP in providing skills on bead making among women in Benin City.

Scope of the Study

The study was delimited to Benin City where IRSAP is located. IRSAP runs five departments, namely: Computer, Catering and Hotel Management, Fashion Designing and Tailoring, Hairdressing, Cosmetology and Bead making, and Videography and Photography Department. This study is focused specifically on the effectiveness of IRSAP in enhancing acquisition of skills on Hairdressing, Cosmetology and Bead making among women in order to enhance their livelihood. It also focused on the strategies that

could be used for improving the Idia Renaissance skill acquisition programme in Benin City.

Methodology

This study employed the descriptive survey research design. The target population for this study consist of all female apprentices who are currently enlisted in the Department of Hairdressing, Cosmetology and Bead making, under the platform of IRSAP in Benin City. The population of the study consisted of 150 women, 135 of them were adult learners who were registered in the programme, while 15 of them have graduated and established their businesses. The researcher used the entire population for the study because they were readily accessible and manageable; no sampling was done. The data for this study were obtained using a questionnaire. The questionnaire was organised into five sections. The items in the questionnaire were structured using the modified Likert scale comprising four levels of measurement; strongly agree, agree, disagree and strongly disagree. It was validated by two lecturers in the Department of Adult and Non–Formal Education, University of Benin.

The Cronbach alpha approach of estimating reliability was used to ascertain the reliability coefficient of the instrument. (See attached Appendix D, pages 26 - 29). A correlation index of 0.79 was obtained for hairdressing variables, an index of 0.86 was obtained for cosmetology variables, while 0.62 was obtained for bead making variables and 0.75 for IRSAP strategies' variables. An overall reliability index of 0.79 was obtained for all the variables. Cronbach alpha was used because there are multiple likert items in the questionnaire that forms a scale and the researcher wishes to determine if the scale was reliable. Mean and t-test statistics were adopted for answering research questions and testing the hypotheses respectfully. Hypotheses were tested using t-test at 0.05 level of significance. 2.5 mean value was used, a mean score of 2.50 and above was regarded as agree, while values 2.49 and below were regarded as disagree. A null hypothesis was accepted when the t-cal is less than the t- critical and rejected when t-cal is equal to or greater than t-critical at 0.05 level of significance.

Empowerment Theory

Empowerment theory refers to the experience of personal growth and an improvement in self-definition that occurs as a result of the development of capabilities and proficiencies (Staples, 1990). This theory can be applied to community development by empowering the people within the community to develop their own community. Similarly, it brings about individual empowerment. As people gain skills in assessing their needs, it will help them to set their priority right and take control of their environment (Kreuter, Lezin & Young, cited in Elekwa, 2019). The empowerment theory is related to this study, because it lays emphasis on individual empowerment by gaining skills that will enable people to assess their needs and take control of their environment. In line with this theory, IRSAP has empowered many women with hairdressing, cosmetology and bead making skills which has really improved their livelihood. Interestingly, many of these women empowered, have established their businesses and are now training others in many veritable skills, thereby contributing to the growth of their communities.

Results

Research Question One

How effective is IRSAP in providing skills on hairdressing among women?

Table 1

Mean Ratings of Respondents on the Effectiveness of IRSAP in Providing Skills on Hairdressing among Women

N = 150

S/N	Items	X	SD	Remark
1	IRSAP has enabled me to learn weaving skill	3.20	.65	Agree
2	IRSAP has enabled me to learn braiding skill	3.42	.78	Agree
3	IRSAP has enabled me to learn hair colouring skill	3.07	.57	Agree
4	IRSAP has enabled me to learn hair styling skill	3.01	.74	Agree
5	IRSAP has enabled me to learn barbing skill	2.07	.77	Disagree
	Cluster Mean	**2.95**		**Agree**

Table 1 indicates a grand mean of 2.95. It shows that following the decision rule of 2.50 as the criterion mean, the respondents agreed that IRSAP was effective in facilitating the learning of skill of hairdressing which would enhance their livelihood. However, item 5 with a mean point of 2.07 shows that IRSAP was not effective in facilitating barbing skill. The value of the SD equally shows similar responses among the respondents, hence less deviation from the mean.

Research Question Two

How effective is IRSAP in providing skills on cosmetology among women?

Table 2

Mean Ratings of Respondents on the Effectiveness of IRSAP in Providing Skills on Cosmetology among Women
N = 150

S/N	Items	X	SD	Remark
6	IRSAP has enabled me to learn facial make up skill	2.93	.57	Agree
7	IRSAP has enabled me to learn facial treatment skill	3.07	.57	Agree
8	IRSAP has enabled me to learn eyelash fixing skill	3.20	.65	Agree
9	IRSAP has enabled me to learn pedicure skill	3.40	.71	Agree
10	IRSAP has enabled me to learn manicure skill	3.64	.63	Agree
	Cluster Mean	**3.27**		**Agree**

Table 2 indicates a grand mean of 3.27. It shows that following the decision rule of 2.50 as the criterion mean, the respondents agreed that IRSAP was effective in facilitating the learning of skill of cosmetology, which would enhance their livelihood.

Research Question Three

How effective is IRSAP in providing skills on bead making among women?

Table 3

Mean Ratings of Respondents on the Effectiveness of IRSAP in Providing Skills on bead making among Women.
N = 150

S/N	Items	X	SD	Remark
11	IRSAP has enabled me to design different traditional attire.	3.40	.57	Agree
12	IRSAP has enabled me to use bead to design different traditional caps	3.07	.71	Agree
13	IRSAP has enabled me to learn necklace beading skill	2.93	.65	Agree
14	IRSAP has enabled me to use bead to design different kinds of shoes	2.93	.71	Agree
15	IRSAP has enabled me to learn purse bead weaving skill	2.80	.63	Agree
16	IRSAP has enabled me to use bead to design earrings	2.98	.57	Agree
	Cluster Mean	**3.0**		**Agree**

Table 3 indicates a grand mean of 3.02. It shows that following the decision rule of 2.50 as the criterion mean, the respondents agreed that IRSAP was effective in facilitating the learning of skill of bead making which would enhance their livelihood.

Research Question Four

What are the strategies that could be used for improving Idia Renaissance skill acquisition programme?

Table 4

Mean Ratings of Respondents on the Strategies for improving Idia Renaissance Skills Acquisition Programme
N = 150

S/N	Items	X	SD	Remark
17	Creation of awareness on the activities of IRSAP.	3.01	.53	Agree
18	Regular training and proper remuneration of the trainers.	3.40	.71	Agree
19	Encouraging donor agencies to assist IRSAP by providing equipment and helping in establishing the trainees after learning a skill at the centre	3.20	.54	Agree
20	Provision of necessary facilities for IRSAP trainees by Government.	3.54	.50	Agree
21	Providing financial assistance to IRSAP by Traditional rulers	3.27	.57	Agree
22	Provision of necessary micro credit loan for IRSAP trainees by Government.	3.73	.44	Agree
23	Provision of necessary equipment for IRSAP by Government.	3.33	.47	Agree
Cluster Mean		**3.36**		**Agree**

Table 4 indicates a grand mean of 3.36. This implies that the respondents agreed that all the identified strategies would improve the IRSAP programme for enhancing the livelihood of women in Benin City.

Hypotheses Testing

The results for testing of hypotheses 5, 6 and 7 are shown in Table 5, 6 and 7 below.

H01: There is no significant difference between the mean rating of Literate (Qualification above O' level) and non-literate (Qualification below O' level) women on the effectiveness of IRSAP in ––providing skills on hairdressing among women in Benin City.

Table 5

*The t-test Difference Between the **Mean Ratings of Literate and Non-Literate Women on the Effectiveness of** IRSAP in Providing Skills on Hairdressing among Women in Benin City*

Variables	N	X	SD	Df	t-cal	Sig.	Decision
Literate women	111	9.23	3.71				
				148	1.72	.086	
Non-Literate women	39	8.00	4.18				Accepted

P< 0.0.5

Table 5 shows that the t-value is 1.72, degree of freedom (df) is 148, while the level of significance is 0.086 which is greater than the set alpha level of 0.05. Hence, the null hypothesis is not rejected. This shows that **t**here is no significant difference between the mean rating of Literate (Qualification above O' level) and non-literate (Qualification below O' level) women on the effectiveness of IRSAP in providing skills on hairdressing among women in Benin City.

H02: Literate (Qualification above O' level) and non-literate (Qualification below O' level) women do not differ significantly in their mean ratings on the effectiveness of IRSAP in providing skills on cosmetology among women in Benin City.

Table 6

The t-test Difference Between the Mean Ratings of Literate and Non-Literate Women on the Effectiveness of IRSAP in Providing Skills on Cosmetology among wWomen in Benin City

Variables	N	X	SD	Df	t-cal	Sig.	Decision
Literate women	111	9.29	3.80				
				148	1.89	.060	
Non-Literate women	39	8.05	2.57				Accepted

P< 0.0.5

Table 6 shows that the t-value is 1.89, degree of freedom (df) is 148, while the level of significance is 0.060 which is greater than the set alpha level of 0.05. Hence, the null hypothesis is not rejected. This shows that Literate (Qualification above O' level) and non-literate (Qualification below O' level) women do not differ significantly in their mean ratings on the effectiveness of IRSAP in providing skills on cosmetology among women in Benin City.

H03: There is no significant difference between the mean rating of Literate (Qualification above O' level) and non-literate (Qualification below O' level) women on

the effectiveness of IRSAP in providing skills on bead making among women in Benin City.

Table 7

*The t-test Difference Between the **Mean Ratings of Literate and Non-Literate Women on the Effectiveness of** IRSAP in Providing Skills on Hairdressing among Women in Benin City*

Variables	N	X	SD	Df	t-cal	Sig.	Decision
Literate women	111	9.27	3.19				
				148	1.36	.176	
Non-Literate women	39	8.46	3.20				Accepted

P< 0.0.5

Table 7 shows that the t-value is 1.36, degree of freedom (df) is 148, while the level of significance is 0.176 which is greater than the set alpha level of 0.05. Hence, the null hypothesis is not rejected. This shows that there is no significant difference between the mean rating of Literate (Qualification above O' level) and non-literate (Qualification below O' level) women on the effectiveness of IRSAP in providing skills on bead making among women in Benin City.

Discussion of Findings

Findings in Table 1 indicated that IRSAP was effective in facilitating the learning of hairdressing among women in Benin City. This implies that most women have acquired the skill of hairdressing; hence, some of them used for the study have established hairdressing shops. This made it possible for them to earn some income and as a result, enhance their livelihood. The findings of this study are interesting because according to Olomukoro and Aghedo (2015), a family where a woman earns an income is more sustainable than a household where a woman has no source of income.
Olomukoro and Aghedo (2015) also opined that non – formal education provides women and girls with vocational skills that will make them self - reliant, self - employed and economically independent. This can raise their economic status and free them from being trafficked and enable them to live a rewarding life.

The result of findings in Table 2 revealed that IRSAP is effective in providing skills in cosmetology. A majority of the respondents agreed that they acquired cosmetology skills taught at the centre. Findings also revealed that some of the respondents who were graduates from the centre have established their businesses and are also training other people. Aruma (2004) supported this view when he said that non – formal education programmes provide skills and training for women, girls and youths to enable them utilize their potentials and capabilities to the fullest for improvement of life and to solve their immediate and general problems. Such skills acquired can enhance gainful employment and also promote self - employment among the people. This is of interest

because it is hoped that this programme will build families and empower the State and most of the social ills will be stories of the past.

The result of findings in Table 3 showed that a majority of the respondents agreed that IRSAP was effective in imparting bead making skill; this can be attributed to the efficient and effective way the centre is being managed. This is in line with Obidiegwu (2014) who was of the view that success in any programme requires both efficiency and effectiveness of all stakeholders.

The result of findings in Table 4 revealed that the following strategies will improve the activities of IRSAP. They are creation of awareness on the activities of IRSAP, regular training and proper remuneration of the trainers, encouraging donor agencies to assist IRSAP by providing equipment and helping in establishing the trainees after learning a skill at the centre, provision of necessary facilities for IRSAP trainees, provision of micro loan for IRSAP trainees and provision of necessary equipment for IRSAP which requires huge amount of money. This implies that the government has the main responsibility for financing programmes such as IRSAP. Funding such programme demands favourable budgetary allocation. According to Aghedo (2019), poor budgetary allocation hinders effective implementation of programmes in Nigeria.

The result of findings in Table 5, 6 and 7 showed that literate and non- literate women in the programme do not differ in their responses on the effectiveness of IRSAP. This may be as a result of the way the programmes are organized, vocational skills are combined with literacy skills, and this has helped the non – literate participants to become empowered literates. This affirmed the view of Kazeem and Aghedo (2015) that non – formal education programmes can become the tool for girls, women and youths to acquire the relevant knowledge and make them literates.

Conclusion

IRSAP is effective in equipping women with veritable skills for improved livelihood and empowerment. One of the most fundamental imperatives for ensuring and fostering development is helping women to evolve the necessary capacity to meet their basic needs. Such needs include skill development, job creation, education, health, environmental sanitation among others.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations were made:

1. Government of Edo State should expand and extend IRSAP programme to all the areas in the State. Presently, there is an increased demand for skill acquisition at the centre, however, only 200 participants can be admitted at a time
2. IRSAP should improve the effectiveness of the 22 respondents in facilitating barbing skill. This is because barbing skill enables an individual to earn his/her living and improve livelihood. Many other veritable skills can be integrated into the existing ones.

3 The State Government should continue to assist the trainees with micro credit loans after learning a skill at the centre. This will encourage many vulnerable people in our society to enroll in the programme

4 There should be budgetary allocation from the State Government to the centre in order to guarantee continuity of the programme. Donor agencies should continue to assist IRSAP by providing equipment and helping in establishing the trainees after learning a skill at the centre

5 The relevant stakeholders should always combine literacy education with vocational skills at skill acquisition centres, this will enable the non – literate trainees to cope easily with the training, equip them with knowledge that will enable them to withstand the pressure of being exploited by others and provide them with all - round empowerment.

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IMPROVING SOCIAL ENGAGEMENT THROUGH A CULTURAL INSTITUTION-BASED ADULT EDUCATION: A CASE STUDY OF THE "KGOTLA"

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ABSTRACT: Depressive symptomatology, loneliness and hopelessness are dominant issues among elderly Africans. Yet, it is commonly assumed, and, perhaps, agreed that the elderly African should physically and socially remain active and continue to be the custodian of the people's traditional norms and values reflective of the traditional social transfers for which African culture is known. Exploring ethnographic data from the extant literature, this study attempts to understand the possible relationship between social engagement (based mainly on social activity) and the functional capacity of the Kgotla. Kgotla is a traditional court made up of community council chief and elders who meet at the public square to reach a consensus on public issues. It originates from Botswana. The data reveal that the informal adult learning functional activities that is dominant in the Kgotla, considerably help in social engagement among the elderly Tswana-speaking Africans. It was found that social activity is significantly enhanced by the elderly Africans' participation in kgotla meetings; and, that the degree of satisfaction with the mitigating role of this medium may be differentiated somewhat because elderly males seem to dominate discussions and activities taking place at the Kgotla. However, it was also true that the functionality of the Kgotla tend to lower the degree of loneliness and hopelessness for all the participants. Based on these findings, it was recommended that the African Kgtotla should be further enhanced as acceptable informal adult learning cultural institution for cognitively stimulating and socially integrating social engagement activities that could promote the psycho-social well-being of elderly Africans.

Keywords: Adult learning, cultural institutions, ethnography, hopelessness, informal, loneliness, social engagement, Tswana-speaking Africans

Tswana-speaking South Africans constitute about 8.9 per cent of the entire population based on the 2017 national census figures (Africa: SOUTH AFRICA CIA: The World Factbook). Ordinarily, this could be a minority population, but it is significant because it is expected that the elderly should play very visible and dominant roles in the daily social transfers that should bridge "the unwholesome" generational gap between the younger and older generations of Tswana-speaking South Africans.

The social stability pursuits of the South African nation would demand that, all valuable informal adult learning cultural institutions capable of mediating the process should be well documented and studied. To date, there are very few studies that have ever and specifically examined from a research point of view how well the Kgotla functions as an informal adult learning cultural artefact for improving social engagement, especially as it relates to reducing loneliness, hopelessness, and symptomatic depression. Thus, this study becomes very relevant because quite often the South African national census like others in Africa hardly pay attention to or report on elderly person's physical complaints

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like loss of interest in ordinary social activities and physical engagements indicated among this population. In fact, issues that relate to the expression of anxiety, loneliness, and feelings of emptiness and hopelessness (Kolb, 2010) do not feature in national censuses in South Africa as it is in almost all the other African nations.

What is mostly observable among African elderly persons is the degree of their engagement in local and national politics. Even in this aspect, it is the educated elderly Africans that feature somewhat visibly. The illiterate elderly Africans are simply assumed to be playing purely supportive roles in politics. Yet, the Kgotla, as an exemplary informal adult learning cultural institution among others, is known to have been the traditional medium for stimulating physical (including rudimentary cognitive) and socially integrating propensities of the Tswana-speaking elderly South Africans over the years. The Kgotla might have been playing these valuable roles of reducing the elder persons' feelings of loneliness and hopelessness and promoting their psychological well-being in such ways that have remained shrouded in mystery, or even pure ignorance. This study, therefore, aims to explore the extent to which the informal adult learning functionality of the Kgotla helps in improving social engagement among the elderly Tswana-speaking South Africans.

Background

Social engagement has been defined in several ways as the individual's myriad of activities performed within the context of his or her geographical space (Herzgog, Ofstedal & Wheeler, 2002) and by way of connecting with others through social relationship networks in order to create and produce goods and services of value, whether or not these are paid or not (Rowe & Khan, 1998). However, Zhang, Liu & Tang (2018) have reported Glass, De Leon, Bassuk & Berkman (2006) as having proposed that we should simply define social engagement as the performance of meaningful social roles for leisure and productive activity. In all these conceptualizations, the cultural value of existing cultural institutions such as the one being focused upon in this study has not been taken into consideration. This is one major reason why this study could be critical in the sense that it might extend the pool of research-based knowledge on the enduring value of the Kgotla in traditional Tswana communities to date.

On the other hand, some scholars argue that the term *social engagement* should be used to refer to the maintenance of social connections and participation in social activities (Bassuk, Glass, & Berkman, 1999). Recent research suggests that older people who are more socially engaged tend to have a higher level of cognitive function (Barnes, Mendes de Leon, Wilson, Bienias, & Evans, 2004; Bassuk et al.,1999; Holtzman et al., 2004; Yeh & Liu, 2003; Zunzunegui, Alvarado, del Ser, & Otero, 2003) compared to less engaged persons.

But then, Bassuk, Glass and Berkman (1999) have maintained that our conceptualization would be incomplete unless we add the dimensions of maintaining many social connections and high participation level in social activities (Cheng & Chan, 2004). Consequently, social engagement has been conceptualized and applied in this study as any given individual's active involvement in such meaningful and productive activities as

are relevant and lead to social integration and, perhaps, informal learning cognitive stimulation using available social relationship networks, and, in this context, the Kgotla.

In this study, the Kgotla has been singled out as one of the few existing informal adult learning traditional cultural institutions that has been subtly mitigating loneliness, hopelessness and physical mobility and thus enhancing social engagement in ways that have not been closely studied and reported upon over the years. It is argued in this study that social engagement is not just one of the three components of the successful aging paradigm proposed by Rowe and Khan (1998), but it is actually a vital depicting of the quality of life (Mor et al., 1995) that should ideally be made available to any individual in Africa.

Before and after the scramble for and the partition of Africa following the 1884/85 Berlin Conference at which Britain, France, Portugal, and to some extent Spain, agreed on the formulae by which different geo-political spaces could be taken by them, the Kgotla served as a cultural institution that provides avenue for the adjudication of disputes that are capable of causing social tension among Tswana-speaking people in modern day Botswana and South Africa. Up until now, the Kgotla has functioned in such way that it does not only settle disputes. It has become part and parcel of the Setswana culture that promotes social cohesion among the people.

Managed by the traditional chief or the village head, in some instances, the Kgotla brings the elderly heads of different family groups together. They come to discuss issue of common interests to the people.

Research Questions

Based on the introduction and background above, the study sought to find answers to the following questions:

1. What is the nature of the informal adult learning functionality of the Kgotla that might not have been thoroughly studied and reported?
2. What kinds of social engagement actions and possibilities does the Kgotla deal with?
3. What are the possibilities for abuse in the determination of such actions?
4. What legitimate grounds does the person determining the actions hold at any point in time?
5. What cultural procedures exists in determining and implementing the set of actions?
6. What does the Tswana culture prioritize in terms of social engagement?
7. In terms of social engagement in this informal adult learning institution, who has been identified to accept the responsibility and accountability for the relevant social engagement action?

It is hoped that finding answers to these questions would help us in appreciating better the relevance of the Kgotla as an existing informal adult learning cultural institution as

social stabilizing modicum that deserves research and policy attention in terms of the assumed significant role it has been playing to enhance social engagement among elderly Tswana-speaking South Africans. Then, of course, other cultures should be able to strengthen similar existing cultural artefacts that have been neglected in research and social policy development over the years. And the possibility of the emergence of whatever gaps in this present effort brings out should assist other researchers who are engaged in decolonizing social research in Africa in framing their studies, with the possibility of strengthening or expanding the pool of knowledge in this area. This study itself has derived strength and foundation in similar ones that have been conducted elsewhere to enlighten the processes and procedures of social engagement research as depicted in the literature.

Assessment of Social Engagement: Elements and Scales

Social engagement was assessed with measures of social activity frequency, size of social networks, and perceived social support. Frequency of social activity was assessed by asking how often during the past year, have participants engaged in six common types of activities that involve social interaction (a) go to restaurants, sporting events, or teletrack, or play bingo; (b) go on day trips or overnight trips; (c) do unpaid community=volunteer work; (d) visit relatives' or friends' houses; (e) participate in groups, such as senior center, VFW, Knights of Columbus, Rosary Society, or something similar; (f) attend church or religious services (Mendes de Leon, Glass, & Berkman, 2003). Persons rated each activity on a 5-point scale, with 5 indicating participation in the activity every day or nearly every day, 4 indicating participation several times a week, 3 for several times a month, 2 for several times a year, and 1 for once a year or less. Item responses were summed and averaged to yield a total score. In prior research in this cohort, higher scores on this measure have been associated with higher levels of socioeconomic status (Wilson, Scherr, Schneider, Tang, & Bennett, 2007) and psychosocial functioning (Barnes et al., 2007).

I quantified social network size with standard questions (Cornoni-Huntley, Brock, Ostfeld, Taylor, & Wallace, 1986) about the number of children, family, and friends each participant had and how often they had seen them. Social network size was the number of these individuals seen at least once per month, as previously described (Barnes et al., 2004). Social support was assessed with four questions (items 1, 2, 5, 10) from the Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support (Zimet, Dahlem, Zimet, & Farley, 1988). These four items (e.g., ''There is a special person who is around when I am in need'') make up the Significant others subscale of the questionnaire, as established in factor analytic studies (Cheng & Chan, 2004; Zimet, Powell, Farley, Werkman, & Berkoff, 1990). Participants rated agreement with each statement on a 5-point scale, and item scores were averaged so that the total score ranged from 1 to 5, with higher scores denoting more social support.

Assessment of Other Covariates

Depressive symptomatology was assessed with a 10-item version (Kohout, Berkman, Evans, & Cornoni-Huntley, 1993) of the Center Social Engagement and Cognitive

Function 49 for Epidemiologic Studies Depression Scale (Radloff, 1977). Using this 10-item version, persons were asked if they had experienced each of 10 symptoms (e.g., ‘‘I felt sad’’) much of the time during the past week. The score was the number of symptoms experienced. Scores on this scale have been shown to correspond well with scores on the original version of the scale (Kohout et al., 1993) and to predict dementia (Wilson, Barnes, et al., 2002; Wilson, Mendes de Leon, Bennett, Bienias, & Evans, 2004) and mortality (Wilson, Bienias, Mendes de Leon, Evans, & Bennett, 2003) in old age. The personality traits of neuroticism, indicative of distress proneness, and extraversion, indicative of sociability, were measured with 6-item versions of the standard 12-item scale of each trait from the NEO Five-Factor Inventory (Costa & McCrae, 1992). Persons rated agreement with each neuroticism item (item numbers 1, 6, 21, 36, 41, 51; e.g., ‘‘I often feel inferior to others’’) and each extraversion item (item numbers 2, 7, 17, 27, 37, 52; e.g., ‘‘I like to have a lot of people around me’’) on a 5-point scale. Item scores ranged from 0 to 4, with higher scores denoting a higher level of the trait. Item scores were summed and multiplied by two to make the total scores (range: 0 to 48) more comparable to the standard 12-item scales. In a separate group of 932 older persons without dementia from the Rush Religious Orders Study (Wilson, Bienias, Evans, & Bennett, 2004), the 6-item neuroticism measure had a correlation of 0.90 with the standard 12-item scale, and the 6-item extraversion measure had a correlation of 0.91 with the standard 12-item scale, supporting the validity of the brief measures.

Persons rated their current frequency of participation in nine cognitively stimulating activities (e.g., reading a book, visiting a library) on a 5-point scale, with 5 indicating participation in the activity every day or about every day and 1 indicating participation once a year or less. We focused on common activities in which seeking, or processing information was central, and which had minimal social or physical demands. Item scores were averaged to yield a summary measure of cognitive activity that has been shown to have adequate short-term temporal stability and positive associations with education and cognitive ability (Barnes, Wilson, Mendes de Leon, & Bennett, 2006; Wilson, Barnes, & Bennett, 2003; Wilson et al., 2005).

Frequency of physical activity was assessed with questions adapted (McPhillips, Pellettera, Barrett-Connor, Wingard, & Criqui, 1989) from the 1985 Health Interview Survey (1985 Health Interview Survey, 1985). Persons were asked if they had participated in each 50 K. R. Krueger et al. of five activities (e.g., walking for exercise, calisthenics) during the past 2 weeks, and if so, the number of times and mean time per occasion. Minutes in each activity were summed and divided by 120 to yield a summary measure of hours per week of physical activity, as described elsewhere (Wilson, Mendes de Leon, et al., 2002). The presence of seven chronic medical conditions was determined from medical history (i.e., diabetes, hypertension, heart disease, cancer, thyroid disease, head injury) or from history plus examination (i.e., stroke). The number of conditions present was used as a measure of chronic illness, as described elsewhere (Wilson, Mendes de Leon et al., 2002; Wilson, Beckett, Bienias, Evans, & Bennett, 2003).

Disability was assessed with the Katz scale (Katz, Ford, Moskowitz, Jackson, & Jaffe, 1963). Participants indicated whether they could independently perform each of six daily living activities: walking, bathing, dressing, eating, getting from bed to chair, and

toileting. The score was the number of activities that the person was unable to perform independently.

Adapted Elements and Measures of Social Engagement

Deriving constructs from the psycho-social measures of social engagement indicated in the existing literature, informal adult education for social engagement has been conceptualized and adapted in this paper to social stability, sociability, frequency of physical activity and the absence of physical disability. Each of these elements has its constituents from the point of view of the researcher.

Social stability was understood and applied as the frequency of social activity, size of social networks, and perceived social support. Sociability was understood and used in this context as a gauge of the absence of depressive symptomatology. However, the researcher is ruling out in this case elements of neuroticism, distress proneness and extraversion, the measurement of which are beyond the competence of this researcher. Frequency of physical activity has to do with the number of times the elderly engages in the physical activities of movement and exertion of some form of energy. Absence of physical disability is understood and used in this discourse to imply expressions of ability by the elderly to walk, bath, and dress up, eat, toilet and get out from bed to sit on the chair.

These measures become even more intricate when it comes to relying essentially on the use of scientific literature review techniques to derive all the information the researcher would need to reach valid conclusions on the viability or otherwise of the role cultural institution-based informal adult education play in promoting social engagement among elderly Tswana-speaking South Africans. Be that as it may, the value of this pioneering efforts cannot be underestimated when it comes to building up scientific pool of information on this subject.

Design and Methodology

Design

The study utilized phenomenological research design to describe experiences at the Kgotla.

Method

The study adopted the phenomenology observation method that is based on the theory of phenomenology. In consonance with this method, the researcher deemed it necessary to construct and narrowly define the relevant research questions to facilitate the timely syntheses of evidence on the improvement of social engagement in a cultural institution – based informal adult education setting.

The specific research question was ‘How did the intergenerational exchanges prevailing in the structure and processes of the *kgotla* improve considerably social engagement among the elderly Tswana- speaking South Africans?

The researcher selected the elderly Tswana-speaking South Africans because most existing studies had tended to under-estimate and under-value this area of creating social stability over the ages. In this time of widespread use of technology and social distancing induced by COVID-19, it is probably useful to give due reverence to elderly South Africans whose contributions to social engagement are often under-valued and under reported in the literature on informal adult education in Africa. Using systematic review method which entails interpretative understanding of real-life event in a community and this was limited to the population under study. This was done by formulating the research questions to understand the experiences of people. This is necessary to restrict the scope of the literature review. This method was, thus, used mainly for pragmatic reasons.

To answer the main research question, I decided to follow the search strategy of using only articles published in English (I did not include non-English studies because of time and human resources constraints). I engaged with the literature review between June and November 2019 and stepping back to the year 1884/1885. This was the year that the Berlin Conference, which took place in Berlin (Germany), partitioned Africa into different European language groups classified as Anglophone, Francophone, and Lusophone.

Major citations on databases were searched and outcomes customized to fit the main research question. The search was then truncated to include title and abstract searches for keywords including the *Kgotla, informal adult education, institutions, and social engagement*.

The search results were initially imported from each database into Endnote (See the reference page) and the duplicate citations removed along the lines suggested by Khangura, Konnyu, Cushman, Grimshaw and Moher (2012) and the Center for Reviews and Dissemination (2008).

Following the use of this approach, the titles and abstracts for the articles included were screened for inclusion using the criteria of direct relevance and relatedness to the research questions framed at the beginning. The articles that met these criteria were then subjected to 20% double checking for validity of inclusion/exclusion by three colleagues who were very familiar with the Tswana culture. Ten studies out of a hundred studies met the criteria. The ten studies were expectedly selected based on impact factor (greater than 1.5) and on the results of the databases searches available to us at the time we undertook the systematic review. The full texts of each of the ten studies selected were retrieved for closer examination.

All other studies have been tactically excluded for the main reason of questionable generalizability as it applies to the focus of this paper. Thus, the perception of and use of clear exposition of the studies was the final determinant of the evidence I have relied upon and navigating the scope with the use of deductive and inductive arguments, where necessary.

Apart from following the criterion of clear exposition, we applied the criteria of triangulation, crystallization, respondent validation, scientific data collection and analysis

techniques, the reflexivity of the researcher, attention to negative cases, fair dealing and relevance as consideration for reaching valuable analyses discussions and recommendation. It was the ten articles based on this study that constituted the cohort used in this systematic review.

This systematic review typically followed the PRISMA flow diagram of papers selection recommended by the PRISMA Group led by Moher, Liberati, Tetzlaff and Altma (2009) and which is made available and used subject to the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution (See http://www.prisma-statement.org/usage.htm).

The studies were coded using an inductively developed thematic framework that responds to the main research question. Thus, the themes that were commonly discussed in the literature were developed further relying on coding consistency. The results of the review are herewith presented in line with the framework we had articulated here.

Results and Discussion

The strategies for assessing social engagement implies the need to rely essentially on both deductive and inductive techniques.

Applying the deductive technique enabled me to reach some conclusions by reasoning from general cultural beliefs to particular cases of social engagement. It helped me to determine the implications of specific actions in the social transactions taking place in the Kgotla.

Inductive techniques enabled me to reach conclusions by reasoning from particular facts or examples in order to identify and highlight general assumptions guiding social engagements in a typical Kgotla.

These strategies applied in analysing the data derived from the literature provide the basis for "tentative" positions articulated in this results and discussions section as follows:

The Nature of the Informal Adult Learning Functionality of the Kgotla that Might not Have Been Thoroughly Studied and Reported

Basically, the kgotla performs social stability activities that frequently allow the younger members of the community to participate in the role of observers to a great extent. The adult members of the community are assumed to be the custodians of the culture and traditions of the people from time past. In fact, traditional African worship systems frequently saddle them with the primary responsibility for connecting the younger generations to the ancestors. In this way, the younger adult populations may be allowed in to observe the interactions and decision-making processes. Of course, there are opportunities for asking for explanations as to why certain things are done in a particular way; but, in this case, there is normally not much ambience created for very critical analysis of the systems and processes as any attempt to move in such a direction may be interpreted in a different way.

In a very determinant way, the kind of adult learning that is afforded by the kgotla is largely informal. It is not based on any systematically arranged or planned, implemented, and evaluated curricula as it is often found in the non-formal and formal adult learning formats. But, even at that, it is useful for the valuable reason that helps to bridge the often-yawning gap in social transactions between the older and younger generations of community members.

The Kinds of Social Engagement Actions and Possibilities with which the Kgotla deal

Social engagement that occurs in the kgotla was qualitatively assessed by way of observations of the transactions happening in the immediate neighbourhood where the elders are assembled. Qualitatively, one observed the frequency of social activity taking place in the kgotla. The serious lull, from observations and data reported in the literature, is that the meetings held at the kgotla are not as frequent as one has expected. However, where the kgotla takes on responsibility for allocating lands for development purposes, the meetings may take place almost every four weeks.

The kgotla is very prominent in expanding and sustaining the social networking activities of the elderly. The elderly frequently visit the kgotla to socialize with their peers even when their is no meeting. This kind of engagement ensures that loneliness among the elderly is reduced to the barest minimum.

Perhaps by far the most dominant social engagement manifestation of the kgotla is noticeable in the aspects of the perceived social support. In line with existing literature on this subject, the researcher was interested in the frequency of social activity, which was assessed by asking how often during the past year participants engaged in at least three common types of activities that involve social interaction like adjudication in family disputes, misunderstanding between or among different persons or families in the community. It was frequently indicated that the elderly's engagement outside the kgotla meetings frequently add value to social stability among the people.

The Possibilities for Abuse in the Determination of Such Actions

When the kgotla sits, the circle of elders is poised to watch out for any signs of abuse in the determination and settlement of communal disputes arising from land matters or family squabbles. One way of guaranteeing this protection is to ensure that the most elderly persons presiding over the affairs of the kgotla do not make decisions all by themselves. There is therefore this system of checks and balances on the holders of power and authority in the Kgotla.

The Legitimate Grounds Held by the Person Determining the Actions at any Point in Time

The legitimate authority that the elder presiding over the kgotla business usually comes from the generally accepted lineage structure of the community. In that way, nobody would be expected to question the authority of the elderly person presiding over the transactions at any point in time.

Should there be any stalemate in the transactions of the kgotla, opportunity exists for referring such disputes to the Kgosi who is held in the position of the king. That way, fairness is maintained in the community.

Cultural Procedures that Exist in Determining and Implementing the Set of Actions

Generally, disputes among family members are to be amicably resolved with the most elderly person presiding. When this fails, such disputes can be referred to the kgotla. That way, other elderly persons in the community come together to help resolve such disputes to the satisfaction of everybody.

The kgotla that meets over any specific issue ensures that all the heads of families in the community are brought in the specific sitting of the elderlies. This also creates opportunity for the elderly to be much more regularly involved in social engagements taking place in the community.

Decisions reached are expected to be strictly implemented. The elderly person presiding over the kgotla is free to delegate the supervisory function to another elderly person who is expected to report back at the end of implementing the decision reached at the kgotla meeting.

The Tswana Culture Prioritization of Items in Social Engagement

In the first place, the kgotla plays the role of serving as the custodian of the people's culture. It is easier for the younger people to learn from the collective wisdom of the elders sitting at the kgotla than for one to get all the information needed about the community from one's family head alone. This has become even more daunting in the advent of modernization and tendency for the younger generation to settle outside of one's immediate community for reasons of scouting for means of living and the search for modern education.

Settlement of disputes arising from members of the community comes into the second position in the deliberations of the kgotla. Of course, disputes have the potential of upsetting the social stability of the people. The course of arguing cases relying on the prevailing cultural history and tradition brings the elderly into the procedures of serious engagements for all times, and therefore the people get to understand their common interests and values even more.

The Person Identified to Accept the Responsibility and Accountability for the Relevant Social Engagement Action

Overall, the **Kgosi** of the families making up the community is the designated person responsible and accountable for relevant social engagement actions. However, the Kgosi cannot be everywhere, and very often the headman of the villages making up his kingdom are expected to hold office in situ. In playing this role, the village headman reports frequently all matters over which he presided. Should any need arise for a review of such matters, the Kgosi is expected to seek for the intervention of the other senior

elders in the community. Overall responsibility and accountability should therefore be residing on the Kgosi.

Conclusion

The kgotla is a very critical cultural artefact that features informal adult learning activities that are mainly interactive. Measuring the quantitative impacts of the kgotla in terms of its functionality in social engagement, becomes difficult to a great extent. But even at that the kgotla provides a social stability and sociability caveat that other cultures in Africa may not easily pick on in these days of technology. The kgotla offers profound opportunities for promoting the sociability propensities of the elderly. The researcher had indicated from the very onset that concern was not over the search for the qualitative measures of neuroticism, distress proneness and extraversion, which are obviously outside my competence.

Beyond the indication of social stability and sociability, it was clear to me that the fact that the elderly would have to walk some distance to and from the kgotla meetings surely involves some amount of the frequency of engagement in physical activity.

The fact that the elderly would have to appear frequently in kgotla meetings suggests to me that those who walk such distances are expected to be neatly dressed as well. Getting out of their homes and actively engaging in discussions at the kgotla suggests to me, to some extent, the absence of physical disability.

More critically, in the contexts of this paper, is the fact that the kgotla has survived the onslaught of modernity over the ages. With the emergence of COVID-19 changing the normal way of doing things, the relevance of the kgotla hangs precariously on a social scale that can swing either way. However, the fact that the kgotla had similarly survived globalization and technology over the years, somewhat suggests that this is one cultural artefact that the Tswana culture and Tswana-speaking people would want to sustain by every means, including policy framing to a remarkable extent.

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IMMIGRANTS AND TECHNOLOGY: HOW 5G WILL TRANSFORM AND ENHANCE MOBILE EDUCATION

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ABSTRACT: As our society becomes more globalized and interconnected, technology adoption to support lifelong learning presents a continuous challenge for immigrants who need to acquire, update or adjust their learning and skills to the requirements of the host country. Consequently, technology adoption has become an important factor for immigrants to fulfill their specific educational needs with mobile devices allowing ubiquitous access to knowledge at anytime and anywhere. Besides the technical characteristics required for new services that challenge current network architectures, COVID-19 has become an accelerator to immigrants' technology adoption. Social distancing regulations have added pressure to technology adoption for educational purposes. In this paper, we explore how 5G technologies meet these requirements establishing a benchmark for immigrant's mobile learning strategy. Our descriptive framework aims to contribute to the understanding of educational uses of mobile technologies by migrants and the technical requirements to be provided by 5G technologies that will enhance the use of technology for educational purposes. Some 5G applications will be discussed emphasizing their contribution to the learning of immigrants and the actual distance regulations.

Keywords: immigrants, covid-19, mobile learning, 5G technologies, forced migration, social distancing

According to the International Organization of Migration (IOM, 2018) there are around 244 million international migrants in the world. Migration has different causes such as escaping from armed conflicts, civil unrest situation, persecution, environmental disasters, climate change, poor economic situation, oppressive poverty, or threat of physical safety (Aihonsu, 2017; Morrice, Shan & Sprung, 2017). Over the years, immigrants' composition has become more diverse bringing to host countries a wide range of educational backgrounds (Teranishi, Suárez-Orozco & Suárez-Orozco, 2011). Immigrants face different challenges for continuing their education in a host country using technology as a way to fill the occupational requirements and gaps. The COVID-19 pandemic has forced education to move to an online approach accelerating the global online transition. Consequently, the use of technology in education for immigrants provides opportunity for enhancing their learning experience by adding different multimedia layers of richness such as videos, podcasts, infographics, concept maps, and others (Johnson & Lock, 2018). This poses an opportunity for institutions, instructors, and immigrants to embrace technology and to foster online immediacy to cope with the distancing and isolating effects of online education. The purpose of this study is to explore how 5G Technologies and their related developments support immigrant learning.

Theoretical Framing

This research explores from a human-technology standpoint the manner in which 5G technologies can support immigrants to identify gaps in their knowledge and promote learning to achieve their educational goals with the aim of integrating to the local

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economy. This combination brings to the analysis how immigrants approach education and enables the study of how migrants might employ 5G technologies to support their learning needs. Our descriptive framework aims to contribute to the understanding of educational uses of mobile technologies by migrants during the integration phase and the technical requirements to be provided by 5G technologies that will enhance the use of technology for educational purposes.

Literature Review

Adult Education

Globalization is a worldwide phenomenon. Consequently, today's classrooms have become a demographic amalgamation of people with different cultural backgrounds, race, ethnicity, economic status, disabilities, and gender. Most adult immigrants bring many formal and informal learning experiences to the host country and are eager to continue their education expecting from the local educational institutions and practitioners an educational proposition that will positively impact their actual situation. Andragogy as defined by Knowles (1984) is "a theory of adult learning that takes into account what we know from experience and research about the unique characteristics of adult learners" (p. 40). The andragogical theory developed by Knowles (1984) relates to immigrants because it is based on the main assumptions that adults (as most immigrants) are ready and oriented to learn, bring experiences to the classroom, and should have an active role in their learning practical experience. Practice is an important part of learning for adult educators, and simulation techniques offer the opportunity to apply knowledge and improve skills in a hands-on approach before facing a real education setting. Consequently, to support immigrant learning, institutions and practitioners can use different technologies such as software simulation, virtual and augmented reality, tactile internet, and internet of skills to effectively adapt their practices to adult learning.

Technology and Immigrants

Collin, Kanserti, and Calonne (2015) found that information and communications technologies (ICTs) play an important role as a catalyzer during the different stages of migration. Specifically, during the post-migration phase, migrants use a myriad of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) to integrate to the host society (Collin, Kanserti & Calonne, 2015). The use of mobile applications enables more immigrants to support their social integration through a personalized experience with the aim of fulfilling their specific educational needs (Morrice, Shan & Sprung, 2017). Moreover, the use of mobile learning can be targeted both to formal and informal learning activities.

Technology has been used for many purposes including education and has opened more opportunities for ubiquitous interaction among students and instructors. The pandemic has accelerated the transition for online instruction confirming that the actual system of education is close to expiring Technology in education can be used for improving students' engagement, enhancing participation, improving critical thinking and problem solving, having immediate feedback, performing hands-on learning, and increased

technology skills. Technology also improves student collaboration, which is a highly effective tool for learning.

5G Technologies.

5G is a network technology that will provide unlimited access to information with the ubiquity capacity to share data (Ericsson, 2014). The advent of 4G technologies allowed people to experience broadband services with their mobile devices (Yu, Lee, & Yeon, 2017). However, users increased their requirements for high speed, rapid response, high reliability, and energy efficiency, which is difficult to provide with the current 4G/LTE networks (Yu et al., 2017). New services such as virtual reality in education can be potentially developed using 5G services capabilities such as unlimited data transmission, a massive number of active connections, and new types of mobile devices, especially sensors (Yu et al., 2017). Consequently, 5G services can support immigrant's educational requirements by extending its focus on technology educational improvement through the use of mobile phones, wearable devices, robots, and so on. Additionally, 5G technologies support many user's requirements becoming the key infrastructure that will provide a technology platform for continuous educational innovation.

According to Yu et al. (2017), some of the most important megatrends related to educational technology that can be possible by using 5G technologies are

- The increasing use of mobile data traffic
- The rapid increase in connected devices
- The convergence of services in the cloud

According to Cisco (2019) the amount of monthly mobile traffic in 2022 (77 Exabytes per month, 1EB 1,000,000 TB) will be 6.7-times higher than in 2017 (11.5 Exabytes per month) with smartphones surpassing 90 percent of mobile data traffic and video accounting for 79 percent of total mobile data traffic. This traffic is due to the new types of multimedia services such as augmented reality, virtual reality and holograms, which all require huge traffic volumes (Cisco, 2019). The Global System for Mobile Communications Association (GSMA, 2017) reported that by 2020 there will be 12.3 billion mobile-connected devices such as wearable devices, sensors, vehicles, drones and robots which also will increase the mobile data traffic. Regarding mobile cloud traffic, this will increase year by year from 35% in 2013 to 70% by 2020 and is expected to be fully integrated with the mobile services in the 5G era. Also, services like Augmented Reality (AR)ad Virtual Reality (VR) will be completely enabled under 5G technologies (GSMA, 2017)

Relevant aspects of 5G

Faster Data-Transfer Speed

One of the key changes with 5G is the increase in speed. According to the European Commission (2016), 4G evolution scenarios data rates are about 3 Gb/s. However, according to the Generation Partnership Project (3GPP), the first phase for standardization foresees ultra-fast mobile broadband solutions capable of delivering

speeds of 20 gigabits per second. The most demanding service for the highest speeds is usually driven by video consumption with 4K video (video with roughly 4,000 pixels of horizontal resolution) requiring around 20 Mbps. (Webb, 2018). With multiple occupants in the home, however, requirements might peak at around 60–80 Mbps (Webb, 2018).

Latency

This is the second key feature of 5G related to instant response time. According to the European Commission (2016), while 4G provide a latency of 10–20 ms., 5G will meet low-latency requirements of as little as 1ms. Most applications where latency is seen as a critical issue involve video— such as Virtual Reality VR or remote-control applications (Webb, 2018).

Increased Data Volume

1,000x increase over current levels allowing to send large files and to transact across a wireless connection without performance impact (Ericsson, 2014).

More Devices Connected

10-100x devices. 5G intends to increase the number supported in a given area by a factor of between 10x and 100x sometimes stated as one million devices per square kilometer – with devices able to travel at up to 500km per hour (Ericsson, 2014).

Energy Efficiency

The 5G initiative aims to extend device battery life by a factor of 10 and reduce core network consumption by 90% (Ericsson, 2014).

100% coverage

The ability to provide good coverage in all areas is another aspirational goal of 5G – the extent and achievability of this is highly debatable (Ericsson, 2014).

Rapid Service Deployment

One goal is to rapidly reduce the time it takes to deploy 5G network connections, using self-organizing network technology (Ericsson, 2014).

Benefits of 5G to Immigrants.

The 5G communication will provide better and faster Internet connectivity. Consequently, ICT in education can better serve the educational system providing the opportunity for a self-directed learning (SDL) approach for Immigrants. Individual access to a mobile device holds the promise to connect each learning adult into an intelligent personalized system that can cluster adult learners in different groups and suggest

different multimedia content. Then, by capturing adult learners' experiences, technology applications can update and redefine adult's education pathways.

Video Learning

Nowadays, the advancement in technology has made possible to adapt different improvements to the learning and teaching activities. According to a recent study in *Statista*, the number of online video platform viewers will amount to 1.86 billion in 2021 (Clement, 2018). In a survey conducted by Pearson and Harris Poll, it was found that 59% of Generation Z -those between ages from 14 to 23 years-, and 55% of Millennials -those between ages from 24 to 40 years- prefer YouTube videos over other forms of instruction based on the quality of images, sounds, special effects, animations, and interactivity they provide (Schaffhauser, 2018). Therefore, the main value of video games is that it allows "people [to] participate in new worlds" allowing players new ways of thinking and creating powerful contexts for learning (Shaffer, Squire, Halverson & Gee, 2005, p. 105). Based on this, educators are prone to find ways to adapt case-based activities into a video approach as a way to boost motivation and student engagement. Video Game Based Learning (VGBL) are video games used as alternative educational models in which players by inhabiting virtual worlds learn to develop core skills and work as socially valued practitioners (Shaffer et al., 2005). Additionally, case-based learning is used as an educational tool aimed to foster analytical and problem-solving skills and to expand personal perspectives by putting in practice conceptual knowledge (Goeze, Zottmann, Vogel, Fischer, & Schrader, 2014). High-quality video applications can be used to teach immigrants to develop entrepreneurial skills with the aim of improving those marginalized minorities that cannot improve their economic situation otherwise.

Virtual Reality

Technology can be used as an enabler element to foster SDL among individuals and institutions opening the opportunities for a richer experience using virtual environment (Merriam et al., 2007). Virtual reality (VR) has high relevance in education and training for Immigrants. Virtual Reality technologies allow users to fully interact with virtual 3D environments and objects providing audio, visual and even haptic feedback (Allcoat & Mühlenen, 2018). All of these requirements including very high bandwidth and very low latency can be supplied by 5G. VR's interactivity and instant feedback would be more valuable traits for teaching specific subjects as it promotes active learning (Allcoat & Mühlenen, 2018). A study by Allcoat & Mühlenen (2018) found that compared to other forms of learning such as lectures or videos, participants in the VR condition showed a better performance for 'remembering', a higher engagement, and can improve learning experience. VR capacity of visual, audio and movement tracking integration allow three types of learning styles such as visual, auditory and kinesthetic that can be targeted in one application matching a variety of instructional methods and Immigrants' learning preferences (Allcoat & Mühlenen, 2018). Consequently, VR application can be used to teach immigrants engineering science concepts, or procedures related to specific vocational occupations. Also, VR can open new learning possibilities for immigrants that have not been explored. By tailoring these services to adult's specific needs, the learning process can be target on developing specific skills. This also can bring new opportunities

for distance learning, enabling the virtual presence of immigrants (e.g., located in a specific area) in the classroom. Immigrants can create an avatar to interact with other immigrants in a VR environment. An avatar is virtual characterization that will represent real people during their interaction in the virtual environment. According to Cryss Brunner, Hitchon, & Brown (2002) virtual reality offers the opportunity for immigrants to learn and promote social justice. As the authors suggest, if our real race, gender, and sex defines how we interact with each other in a society, avatars will allow immigrants to remove or alter factors related to our personal real identity Consequently, immigrants can have the opportunity to learn and interact in a more equitable environment (Cryss Burner et al., 2002). Also, underrepresented groups can use virtual reality to construct and interact within environments and roles where they normally feel alienated such as minority women virtually working in leading positions in academia or technology providing reassurance on the opportunities to occupy such positions (Cryss Burner et al., 2002).

Telepresence

Telepresence services gives the users the experience that they are at the same place as a remote user (Yu, 2017). Usually, telepresence services consist of big screens connected to cameras that project in real time and with great video and audio quality what is happening in a room to other multiple and interconnected remote sites. Participants have instant interaction among them and are able to instantly catch human expressions, gestures, voice, and eye contact. Telepresence services need to be more realistic by offering the capability to use the five senses (Yu et al., 2018). In this case, 5G will secure the higher transmission rate and low latency required for effective telepresence services. Because of the benefits provided such as reducing travel time, access to wider audiences, and reduced costs (Loera, Kuo, & Rahr, 2007), telepresence can provide to underrepresented communities the educational access that would not be possible under other circumstances. Also, telepresence would meet the learning of these communities providing remote and multiple training for immigrants for discussion, lectures, or demonstrations, under a self-directed learning approach. Self-directed learning (SDL) refers to the ability of some immigrants for looking and acquiring knowledge by themselves approaching learning in a deep and meaningful way with the goal of improving their self-image and performance and creating an inner empowerment to change (Garrison, 1997; Merriam, Caffarella, & Baumgartner, 2007; Morris, 2019). Morris (2019) has argued that self-directing learning "is as a fundamental competence for immigrants living in our modern world" (p. 634). As stated by Merriam et al. (2007), the three main goals of self-directed learners can be grouped as means to improve their self-learning ability, to foster transformational learning, and to promote social actions. The authors added that self-directed learning presents a new paradigm for immigrants to take full responsibility for the impact of the new knowledge on their performance, to learn at their own pace without the need of an instructor, and to design their own educational program based on their specific needs. Therefore, facilitators that are unable to be physically in the place of lecture, can use telepresence to provide the initial guidelines to learners so that they can take further control of the direction of learning (Hiemstra, 1994). Finally, telepresence services can be used to train rural educators, to hold conferences,

and to connect with global educational institutions to increase the portfolio of courses and training.

Augmented Reality

As defined by Rosenblum (2000), augmented reality (AR) superimposes computer-generated imagery above real world scenarios using a see-through display. AR supplements reality and can enable new ways of learning because technically can be used to enhance all five senses (Kipper & Rampolla, 2012). According to Radu (2014), AR allows a better learning when compared to other tools such as printed media such as textbooks or desktop software. Also, the author states that students exhibit better short-term and long-term memory after learning using AR technology. The interactive 3D visualization plays an important cognitive role that improve learning (Radu, 2014). In fact, the combination of a real environment combined with the overlying virtual scenarios make AR as one of the best options for transferring knowledge to a real-life situation (Radu, 2014). The intense requirements about latency, speed, and bandwidth for real-time AR are fulfilled by 5G. Free AR platforms provide the opportunity for teacher to meet the needs of Communities of Color (Hidalgo, 2015). By using augmented reality glasses and a wearable computer, AR can be used as of portable way for learning about historical places (Rosenblum, 2000). Thus is, AR can be used to create stories connected with location-triggered applications to promote marginalized populations' cultural learning and social heritage (Hidalgo, 2015; Jones et al., 2017). Hidalgo (2015) created some Augmented Fotonovelas aimed at providing "alternative narratives that counter established narratives, and for raising consciousness by acknowledging the Latina/o community's cultural wealth and resilience, while advocating for social justice and social transformation" (p. 312).

AR is strongly appropriate for influencing learning through embodied interactions (Radu, 2014). Consequently, AR can be used to create a better knowledge of our bodies to address imbalances in social power through recreating virtual environments to "evoke a tolerable amount of bodily sensation in relation to issues of power, privilege, and difference" (Johnson, 2018, p. 106). On the other side, AR can be used to make people aware of their oppressive behavior (Johnson, 2018). Additionally, the physical immersion of AR fosters the conceptual understanding of educational content making people with low literacy to understand difficult theoretical concepts (Radu, 2014).

IoT

The Internet of Things (IoT) involves a myriad of interconnected digital devices and humans able to interact anytime and anyplace via the Internet (Tzafestas, 2018). According to Gartner (2017), by 2020 there will be more than 20 billion of IoT devices that will shape our future in different and novel ways. Wearable devices worn on the human body include sensors that collect and transmit information about the surrounding environment and are considered a special class of IoT devices (Tzafestas, 2018). IoT devices are any kind of computing devices that connect wirelessly to a network to transmit specific data (Tzafestas, 2018). Some of these devices can be found in health technologies to monitor the health of patients, textile technologies that allow clothes to change their color on demand, and consumer electronics that allow connection with the

surrounding environment (Tzafestas, 2018). Wearable devices and network-connected home devices that communicate with each other generate much exchange of information that can be used to support immigrants' educational needs. By tracking immigrants' real-time feedback and behavior, IoT applications will support instructors to concentrate on those immigrants' specific needs, thus enhancing learning and teaching experience (Bower & Sturman, 2015). Anxiety based on class assignments can be detected allowing the instructor to reach the student immediately. Google glasses can be used can be used during adult training role-play activities to provide a first-person viewpoint and recordings (Bower & Sturman, 2015). Also, consumer electronic devices can help immigrants to connect with other immigrants in order to cooperate in solving an assignment or to discuss a specific topic (Bower & Sturman, 2015). IoT can support long-term monitoring and management of health and chronic illness in minorities. Adult health's parameters such as heart rate, respiration, blood glucose and body weight can be monitored by wearable devices alongside with behavioral parameters and be sent to a central hospital or caregiver facility (Mittelstadt, 2017). Also, fitness or well-being wearable devices can be used as a reminder for immigrants to take medicine or to exercise according to their physician recommendation (Mittelstadt, 2017). In the case of a health issue, an alarm can be triggered and sent to a nearby hospital along with the patient history. This will provide adult minorities who cannot afford hospitalization or specialized care with an affordable alternative to eliminate the need for in-person care, to keep track of their health issues, and to regain independence (Mittelstadt, 2017).

Robots

5G will provide networking functions leveraging the robot evolution (Yu et al., 2018). According to Buller et al. (2018), robots are computers capable of sensing, thinking, and moving all on their own. Robotics motivation is to modify their environment based on their capabilities to move objects (Simoens et al., 2018). Adaptive learning systems acting as a robotic tutor can provide a personalized instruction and assistance to adult students adjusting the pace of learning and matching student capabilities (Ford, 2018). Cloud-based robots can be considered as a full- time assistant and can be precisely controlled dynamically in near real-time and be connected to people and machines locally and globally helping disabled immigrants interact with the educational environment and their peers (Yu et al., 2018). Immigrants who need to acculturate in a host country but have a lack of language abilities, can use robots to learn a second language (Toh et al., 2016). In fact, robots can create an interactive and engaging learning experience increasing the motivation of learners through extensive repetition and gesture recognition (Toh et al., 2016).

Conclusion

Learning is not anymore, a transaction between a teacher and a student, but an interaction between the technology and the sensorial capacity of learners. Technology is at the center of the learning process and teachers act as facilitators that provides the most useful sources of information. Given the advance of technology as well as the growing numbers of immigrants who need to adapt their educational background to the changing requirements of a globalized society, 5G technologies will provide the technical requirements that will enhance the use of different applications to reduce educational

gaps among immigrants and foster their empowerment. Some of the main challenges faced by instructors teaching in an online environment is to keep students engaging in their learning activities. However, the multimedia layers provided by 5G will keep the richness during the instructional sessions to immigrants despite the isolation forced by the COVID-19 pandemic.

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POST-TRAUMATIC GROWTH AND SOCIAL ENGAGEMENT THROUGH MEMORY NARRATIVES FOR WOMEN SURVIVORS OF ABUSE RETURNING TO COLLEGE

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ABSTRACT: The purpose of this self-directed learning (SDL) project for my doctoral level *Adult Learning in Social Contexts* class in the fall of 2018 was to develop an idea to use photography, music, and writing to tell a person's trauma story. Memory Narratives (MN) as a creative method for women survivors of abuse returning to college (WSARC) to choose how to talk about a painful passage in their educational and life journeys can be an effective arts-based and narrative approach in adult education. I was able to explore from both an emic and etic perspective my own positionality and subjectivity as a qualitative researcher in relationship to future research interests with both educational and therapeutic implications.

Keywords: post-traumatic growth, self-directed learning, memory narratives, women survivors of abuse returning to college, arts-based, reflexivity, positionality, subjectivity

As part of doctoral coursework and a self-directed learning (SDL) project in my *Adult Learning in Social Contexts* class in the fall of 2018, I developed an idea to use photography, music, and writing to tell a person's trauma story. I named the project *Memory Narratives Using Photography & Music* and thus the concept, process, and product of Memory Narratives (MN) was born. As a nontraditional adult learner and survivor of abuse, I returned to college in 2015 to pursue my doctoral degree. The intersections of who I am as a learner include a love and passion for writing and creative arts, extensive experience as a trauma-informed clinical mental health therapist, along with a zest for lifelong learning and a keen research interest in the lived experience of abuse. I created a MN as a prototype to learn first-hand what the experience was like from a SDL (Knowles, 1975) perspective. Linking SDL with positive psychology, post-traumatic growth, and wellness have implications for lifelong learning in education (Brockett, 1985; Knowles, 1975). As part of the reflexive process, I considered the intersections of other significant adult learning theories such as experiential learning theory (Kolb, 1984), Howard Barrows' problem-based learning (Walker et al., 2015), and Mezirow's transformative learning theory (1978; 1991) in relationship to my positionality and subjectivity as a researcher. I furthered the exploration by drawing on my professional journey as a mental health clinician that has spanned over twenty years and has incorporated the use of arts-based practices throughout my career across educational and mental health settings, and across populations. The use of photographs, music, visual arts, and writing to help people tell their stories of abuse, grief, loss, and trauma is well documented across disciplines that include psychology, sociology, social work, counseling, nursing, medicine, art, literature, and education for example (Hadley, 2013; Hahna, 2013; Pennebaker, 1997; 2013; Pennebaker & Evans, 2014). Art as a creative and critically reflective process connects people across cultures not only to themselves, but to others in a universal way. Of particular interest moving forward is how the use of a MN as a creative and critically reflective educational and therapeutic practice can help foster

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post-traumatic growth (PTG) and social engagement for women survivors of abuse returning to college (WSARC).

Trauma and Abuse

Literature exists across disciplines about trauma and abuse (Chang, 1996; Gelles, 1975; Hague, 1999; Resko, 2010; Thomas & Hall, 2008; Vidourek, 2017; Walker, L. 1979; 1984; 1989; 1991; 2015; 2016; Walker, M, 1999; Zink et al., 2006). The language changes depending on the context and perspective. For instance, trauma and abuse can be referred to as Domestic Violence (DV), Intimate Partner Violence (IPV), bullying, battering, harassment, and sexual harassment, along with variations of abuse including childhood, physical, sexual, psychological, emotional, verbal, financial, and spiritual abuse. Over the past thirty years, much has been written about physical, sexual, and childhood abuse, along with trauma, PTSD, IPV (Hague, 1999; Resko, 2010), DV, Lateral Violence (LV), sex offenders, perpetrators, and abusive personality, for example. Yet, qualitatively researched narrative accounts of emotional abuse of adult women without physical, sexual, or childhood abuse is difficult to find and may not exist.

Current literature across fields on emotional abuse either links emotional abuse with the prevalence of physical and/or sexual abuse, as a pre-cursor, as part of an escalation of types of abuse, and/or with childhood abuse; however, emotional abuse can exist without these other forms of abuse. Emotional abuse is a form of psychological trauma that is underrepresented and often missed across fields and settings (Gelles, 1975; Walker, 1979). In 2015 in the Encyclopedia of Clinical Psychology, Walker defined battered-woman syndrome as "the psychological effects of domestic violence" on women who are the primary victims ((p. 271). Emotional abuse is just as destructive as other forms of abuse such as physical, sexual, or childhood, yet emotional abuse often is insidious in nature, embedded within the social construct of one's cultural context, is minimized, rationalized, denied, dismissed, and often goes unnoticed and undetected. As a "little t" trauma experience emotional abuse is underrepresented in evidence-based research (Zink et al., 2006). This is in contrast to the attention in the literature and available resources in communities and at the federal level for victims of "big T" trauma to include rape, war, natural disasters, and sexual, physical, and childhood abuse, along with treatment for disorders such as PTSD.

While all forms of abuse are destructive and can have long-reaching consequences for men and women as adult learners, my overall research interest is women survivors of emotional abuse returning to college and their experiences of abuse.

Consider what was written approximately twenty-five years ago when Loring stated in 1994, "People suffering from emotional abuse seldom recognize themselves as victims; for them, emotional violence has become a way of life" (p. 8). It can take years for victims of emotional abuse to realize the reality of their situation (Walker, 1979). Victims of emotional abuse often experience shame and may feel confused, helpless, alone, and silenced (Walker, 1979). In 1996 Chang wrote:

> Twenty years ago, we began hearing women telling the truth about the physical abuse they were experiencing in their lives. Ten years ago, we began hearing women telling the truth about the sexual abuse in their lives. Recently we began hearing women telling the truth about the psychological abuse in their lives. (p. 11)

DeGregori and Follingstad, cited in Chang (1996), found that "the study of psychologically abusive relationships that are not also physically abusive is still exploratory" (p. 7). Previous books written in the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s began to explore psychological and emotional abuse in adult women. Yet, where are we today? In the field of adult education there is no current qualitative literature on the experience of, or the impact of emotional abuse on a female student and learning, yet the effects of emotional abuse have long consequences on a woman (Thomas & Hall, 2008). Even experienced educators, administrators, and counselors can miss or discount a woman's experience as a victim of any form of abuse while systems perpetuate abusive patterns already in place.

Trauma and abuse can create significant problems for adult learners returning to college and impact a woman's ability to be successful academically. A better understanding can contribute to the field of adult education to help educators, counselors, and policy makers recognize abuse, respond appropriately, and know how to effectively help to provide support, resources, and appropriate services to students. In turn, a deeper awareness of an often silent and shame-based experience can empower students to not only complete their degrees, but to take the necessary steps to change their lives in the process.

Abuse and the Intersection with Higher Education

Education creates opportunities for growth and change often through self-discovery and self-growth (Belenky, 1986). Education has the power to change people, and to change peoples' lives. With education, possibilities expand. Globally, the pursuit of higher education and an advanced degree is the ultimate way a woman can improve her circumstances financially while investing in herself outside of other relational roles. In many cultures internationally today, women's access to higher education may be different from their male counterparts (Boucouvalas, 1993; 2002; 2005). Female students may enter college juggling home, relational, work, and childcare duties along with their educational responsibilities. If a woman is also a nontraditional or marginalized student in higher education, she will bring added stressors, challenges, and demands that may affect her time, health, or ability to study and to focus. She may never let on the stress she is under or disclose experiences of abuse in her life. She may overcompensate. She may try to prove herself. She may be afraid to ask for help. Women as adult learners may also experience a lack of support of their educational pursuits by friends and family members. Their efforts to succeed may feel sabotaged by those closest to them.

Post-Traumatic Growth

Post-traumatic growth (PTG) emerged from second wave positive psychology (SWPP) (Ivtzan et al., 2015). Concepts such as wellbeing and flourishing, which came from first

wave positive psychology (PP), remained important (Ivtzan et al., 2015). Also, of interest in PP are the constructs of resilience and happiness (Ivtzan et al., 2015). Resilience arose from developmental literature and studies around protective factors for children and is important today in adult learning (Hall et al, 2009). From a SWPP framework both positive and negative attributes or dialectics contribute to a person's overall wellbeing (Ivtzan et al., 2015)). The complex process of PTG is of particular interest in PP and for the scope of this paper (Ivtzan et al., 2015).

After the Vietnam War and with the introduction of posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-III) by the American Psychiatric Association (1980) the concept of trauma and trauma related issues began to emerge in the fields of psychology and medicine (Lomas & Ivtzan, 2015). O'Leary and Ickovics (1995) "identified four possible responses to adversity: succumbing (drastically impaired functioning); survival with impairment; resilience (returning to pre-adversity baseline levels of functioning); and thriving (people recovering to experience even higher levels of functioning than pre-adversity)" (Lomas & Ivtzan, 2015, p. 1763).

PTG is defined as a positive psychological change resulting from struggling through a significant and challenging circumstance in life (Tedeschi & Calhoun, 1996; 2004). Many studies have been conducted since the original research and emergence of concepts arose from PP and SWPP (Lomas & Ivtzan, 2015). From a SWPP framework, an important aspect of PTG is how it is dialectical in nature (Lomas & Ivtzan, 2015). This is due to how positive changes that occur as a result of PTG only occur because of a difficult situation or trauma that has occurred in one's life first (Lomas & Ivtzan, 2015). Boniwell (2012) refers to PTG as occurring after a traumatic event or negative experience when an individual grows and has gained something new. Many people emerge feeling stronger after the adversity, have more confidence in themselves and their capacities, and discover meaning and spirituality (Boniwell, 2012). From a spiritual perspective, growth can also mean that a person gains awareness of self in relationship to the world in a way in which one feels a sense of gratitude and appreciation for life in a new way (Tedeschi & Calhoun, 2004). A transformative growth process is not easy while meaning making or cognitive restructuring is occurring to help make sense out of a trauma experience (Boniwell, 2012). PTG is fostered when a person has a support system or interpersonal support to help them get through (Boniwell, 2012). We do not live in a perfect world and there is no perfect person or relationship. Healthy adjustment is accepting that distress in one's life along with growth can co-exist (Tennen & Affleck, 2002). Even though we do not ask for bad things to happen to us, recognizing that we can grow, learn, and become wiser is an important aspect of PTG (Boniwell, 2012; Tennen & Affleck, 2002).

The focus and framework for this paper are the three aspects of PTG from the work of Tedeschi, Park, & Calhoun (1998) summarized in Lambert and Lawson (2012). The first aspect looks at the self-perception of the individual and includes one's vulnerability, self-reliance, and the ability to shift from victim to survivor (Lambert & Lawson, 2012). The second aspect considers the individual's interpersonal relationships and includes emotional expressiveness, compassion, giving to others, and self-disclosure (Lambert & Lawson, 2012). The third aspect reflects one's life philosophy and includes priorities, life appreciation, existential themes, spiritual development, and meaning making (Lambert &

Lawson, 2012). Of particular interest for the scope of this article and for future research implications is how the emergence of PTG as part of PP and SWPP intersects with the trauma and abuse literature.

Transformational growth and PTG emerging from trauma, abuse, and "difficult and painful times can lead to positive transformation" (Ivtzan et al., 2015, p. 83). To better conceptualize what PTG is and link dialectically the positive with the negative, one must also consider a working definition of trauma. Ivtzan et al., (2015) acknowledge that different definitions of trauma exist in PTG research. The Shattered Assumptions Theory from the original work of Janoff-Bulman (1992) claims that trauma shatters our core sense of safety and security (Ivtzan et al, 2015). "Trauma is defined as those events that have a seismic impact on the individual's assumptive world," according to Calhoun and Tedeschi (2013, p. 16). Also noteworthy is Tedeschi and Calhoun's (1996; 2004) explanation that the event is unexpected, creates a 'before and after,' interrupts a person's narrative, and brings long-lasting problems (Ivtzan et al., 2015). Women, individually and collectively, can then gain insight through critical reflection making a connection to personal strength, relationship with others, reflection, changed priorities, and shifts in spirituality (Calhoun & Tedeschi, 2013; Hefferon et al., 2009; 2011). That one can grow and rebuild after a traumatic event takes time and a resilient soul.

Social Engagement

What is the relationship between post-traumatic growth and social engagement? A person who is socially engaged is connected to the world in which they live. When a person experiences an event in one's life that is traumatic, or lives with relationship trauma human connection can be disrupted (Dayton, 2007). PTG and social engagement is necessary as the antithesis of what McFarlane and Van der Kolk (1996) refer to as social isolation as an effect of trauma and victimization. The experience of a traumatic event can keep a person off balance and functioning emotionally in the extremes (Dayton, 2007). With PTSD a person's stress response is elicited even when the realized danger is not currently present keeping a person in a heightened state of fear and anxiety (McFarlane & Van der Kolk, 1996). Stress, trauma, and abuse effect relationships and one's ability to connect with others in a positive way (Dayton, 2007). PTG and social engagement can be impeded if a person is not able to move on in a meaningful way from a trauma event. An inability to move forward in one's life would also interfere with a person's ability to grow in a transformative learning way and to experience PTG. A positive social support system including the person's perceived connection to their family, friends, co-workers and work identity, along with engagement within one's community can contribute to a person experiencing PTG. The seminal work of Jack Mezirow (1978, 1991), which uses disorienting dilemmas, critical reflection, and transformative learning theory further links and reinforces the constructs of PTG, resiliency, and social engagement together in an important way for future research in adult education to gain a better understanding of women survivors of abuse returning to college.

Arts-Based Approaches

Incorporating creative arts therapies (CATs) as a feminist pedagogy in adult learning creates opportunities for emancipatory practice (Hahna, 2013). Dominant narratives are examined through a critical theories lens and can be explored using CATs (Hadley, 2013). Through Mezirow's (1978) transformative learning theory model and the use of arts-based methods to connect adult learners to personal areas of grief, loss, and trauma from abuse, nontraditional and marginalized students across cultures can gain greater self-awareness. Through critical reflection and sharing personal narratives, the contextual aspect of one's life can unfold in a way in which transformational learning can occur. English and Peters (2012) assert the important role critical reflection has in transformative learning. The significance of individual narratives and stories set within one's own cultural dimension and context are factors that play a role in transformative learning (Fritson, 2008; Hall et al., 2009; Perkins & Zimmerman, 1995).

The use of expressive arts and methods that allow space for a person to process their thoughts and feelings in nonverbal ways can create an excellent outlet for expressing and healing from painful emotions (Pennebaker, 1997; 2013; Pennebaker & Evans, 2014; Pennebaker & Seagal, 1999). Through Mezirow's (1978) transformative learning theory model, along with the use of arts-based methods adult learners can experience educational approaches that allow them to process grief, loss, and trauma from abuse. In this way both traditional and nontraditional students across cultures can gain greater self-awareness through the use of arts-based methods. Transformative learning can occur through the use of arts-based methods to share personal narratives along with critical reflection (English & Peters, 2012). English and Peters (2012) assert the important role critical reflection has in transformative learning. The significance of individual narratives and stories set within one's own cultural dimension and context are factors that play a role in transformative learning (Fritson, 2008; Hall et al., 2009; Perkins & Zimmerman, 1995).

Giving voice to silence is the work of Belenky et al. (1986). How a person makes meaning of their experience is critical to their ability to grow (Belenky et al., 1986). In this way, the intersectionality (Crenshaw, 1991) of using arts-based methods to deconstruct trauma narratives in the lives of women survivors of abuse returning to college enables them to construct new ways of knowing. Engagement in higher education creates opportunities for transformative growth and change through self-discovery and self-growth (Belenky et al., 1986; Mezirow, 1978; 1991). Through PTG, transformative learning, and arts-based approaches meaning making, engagement with self and others, and critically reflective practice is achieved (Mezirow, 1978; 1991). Implications for students and faculty in adult education programs, as well as for practitioners, include the benefits of intersecting arts-based approaches with adult learning, adult education, and research methodology. Art is universal across time and crosses international boundaries.

With the prevalence of abuse across cultures and in the intersection of how the use of arts-based approaches can aid in the telling of one's story, it would make sense for educators to find ways to implement experiential and arts-based methods as an integral part of educational instruction (Comstock et al., 2008; Gill & Niens, 2014; Kolb, 1984). In this way, traditional and nontraditional students would have educational opportunities to express themselves creatively, giving voice to perhaps an unspoken part of who they

are as a person, which in turn can promote a more empowered self and learner. An empowered student recognizes choices otherwise not seen. In sum, a student who can make meaning out of their grief, loss, and trauma experiences can change their narrative to one of educational and personal success. In the next section the use of arts-based practice will be further explored through the construction of a MN as a creative way for women survivors of abuse to socially engage when returning to college.

Memory Narratives

The concept of a Memory Narrative (MN) was born out of my own story of abuse. I am a nontraditional first-generation female doctoral student survivor of emotional abuse. I developed the idea to use photography and music as a SDL project as a requirement in my doctoral level *Adult Learning in Social Contexts* class during the fall semester of 2018, one year after my dismissal from the Counselor Education program. After I was dismissed, I felt silenced and afraid. I had lost what felt like my whole identity as a person. During the period from the dismissal until I was admitted into the Educational Psychology & Research, Adult Learning doctoral program and began to feel valued as an adult learner, I took several creative writing courses in the English Department, which I believe to this day are what saved me along with a short list of supportive people I trusted during that devastating period. It took a very long time for me to heal and begin to slowly emerge and regain my sense of footing, identity, self, and voice.

Women Survivors of Abuse Returning to College and Subjectivity

Who are the women survivors of abuse returning to college (WSARC) and what are their stories? This is a fascinating question for me because I am one of these women. My educational journey navigating through higher education, for each of my earned degrees as a nontraditional student, has required hard work and sacrifice. All four of my grandparents were Sicilian immigrants. My father, whose mother died when he was ten, never completed high school. My mother, the youngest of six, was the only one of her siblings to graduate high school only because one of her brothers obtained permission from their father allowing her to finish school before she was required to work full-time in the family produce market. Soon after high school my mother married my father. Only when my mother was in her later years did I learn that she had wanted to be a teacher. I remember thinking, “How come I never knew that before?” Instead, it was an era in which my mother chose marriage and motherhood over education and a career. In a way, in the social and cultural context of my mother’s life, she never really had a choice. Her path had been chosen for her.

January of my senior year in high school my father died after eight years of declining health leaving our family in financial ruin. Even though I had been accepted into all four of the out-of-state colleges I had applied to, I chose not to go to college because there was no money for me to do so. By the time I would return to college to complete my undergraduate degree, a BA with Distinction in Literature-Creative Writing from the University of North Carolina after a *Summer-in-Oxford Program* at the University of Oxford in England, I was in my late twenties, had been married and divorced having attempted college unsuccessfully during those earlier turbulent years, had managed to

earn a certificate in Horticulture from a community college, and had waitressed my way through to earning a bachelor's degree working two part-time jobs while a student. When I decided to return to college to pursue a master's degree I was in my mid-thirties and in my second marriage with two young children. With the acceptance letter for graduate school that January, I was also surprised with the news that I was pregnant with my third child. I earned a Master of Science degree from the University of Tennessee in Educational Psychology with a Concentration in Community & Mental Health Counseling with three children under the age of eleven. The year my youngest child graduated from the University of Tennessee, in May of 2015, I began my doctoral journey in a program that at the time made sense after over twenty years of experience working in the field of clinical mental health. As a Licensed Professional Counselor-Mental Health Service Provider (LPC-MHSP), I had worked across agency, educational, private practice, and specialized settings with various marginalized populations and across the developmental lifespan with ages that ranged from young children to elderly adults.

In January 2017 I was selected as a Fulbright Semi-Finalist with the University of Crete, Greece, Department of Psychology for the proposal *Finding Voice and Identity Through Creative Arts in Counseling.* Not only was it shocking to learn that I had made it through to the Semi-Finalist status, but I was also beginning to realize how punitive, unsupported, and discredited I had felt in my original doctoral program. As a victim of relational trauma outside of academia the abuse I felt was not easily recognizable. It was subtle. For the first time, I began to feel old. I would observe other students and listen to their conversations in ways in which I began to feel marginalized. I often felt dismissed and discounted even scolded and reproached. I thought, "It's because it's a rigorous program." Now I think differently. Now I know I became a smaller version of who I am as a highly motivated and self-directed adult learner. My experience in the initial doctoral program was one in which I found myself lacking confidence and second guessing myself as an academic because I never truly felt supported. Upon the dismissal my GPA was a 4.8; I had successfully completed all coursework; I had been named a Fulbright Semi-Finalist; I was about to begin my dissertation, third year, and second year as a Graduate Teaching Associate; and had earned two Graduate Certificates in Grief, Loss, and Trauma, and Cultural Studies in Education. My life and identity shattered. No one in my life outside of the university and even my peers and colleagues within who were still brave enough to speak to me could understand what had happened. I remember thinking during those dark months that followed while I felt like I was living in a silent shame and fear-based abyss that it was a good thing I had never been suicidal in my thinking. I would think this when I would turn the deadbolt to my front door each night.

When I returned to college in the fall of 2015 to pursue a doctoral degree, I had left a full-time position as a trauma-informed therapist working with adults in residential treatment for substance abuse. In my very first semester I began writing, exploring, and expressing an interest in research that involved women, trauma, abuse, addiction, and creativity. I did not yet know the language and concepts I would come to know through the courses taken primarily in adult learning and cultural studies. Words like transformative learning theory, disorienting dilemma, critical reflection, marginalization, power, privilege, hegemony, reflexivity, subjectivity, positionality, and post-traumatic growth were not yet

words in my vocabulary. I came into a doctoral program as a nontraditional student, but as an experienced clinician who knew first-hand what it was like to not only work with women survivors of abuse, but to be one. I know what it is like to live with relational trauma and abuse because I have lived it. I also know what it is like to work in a toxic culture and emotionally abusive job setting waiting for the next paycheck to pay tuition for my own children. As a new doctoral student in 2015, I had not yet learned what emotional and psychological abuse in academia would look or feel like. I know now.

Self-Directed Learning Project in *Adult Learning in Social Contexts*

Linking self-directed learning (SDL) with PP, PTG, and wellness have implications for lifelong learning in education (Brockett, 1985; Knowles, 1975). The overall goal of the project was to learn how to use personal photographs set to music to make a video. The idea to create a video narrative account of people, places, and events meaningful to me and constructed as a MN became a reflexive learning process and lesson in subjectivity. Basic learning objectives included an increased skill level using my camera and computer (MacBook Pro). As a nontraditional adult learner, a non-digital native, a woman survivor of abuse returning to college, and with no special training in photography, I incorporated aspects of SDL (Knowles, 1975), experiential learning theory (Kolb, 1984), Howard Barrows' problem-based learning in which solving a practical problem is the educational focus (Walker et al., 2015), and Mezirow's transformative learning theory (1978; 1991). I had many questions even in how to get started. What follows is an accounting from my proposal, mid-term project report, and final reflections that will illustrate part of my process as I responded to the instructor's statements (please note the tense shifts).

Learning Objectives

(a) to learn how to use my camera and computer in synchrony with Photos, iTunes, GarageBand apps, and videography techniques on my MacBook Pro to create the MN, (b) to create one prototype example of a MN set to music. The length will be equal to one selected song to represent the theme of the MN, and (c) to critically reflect on the SDL experience of this project by keeping a field journal. Additional learning objectives were to learn how to use MN as an arts-based technique to create a MN, to gain personal insight about myself, and then to draw on my experience as a clinician to reflect on the work of women I have worked with over the years in treatment settings in which arts-based methods were used. In this way, I reflected on the process and the art created by women I have known, especially the women I worked with when I led an arts-based weekly trauma group for women in residential treatment for substance abuse. I wrote in my field journal and used critical reflection to consider the therapeutic and educational benefit of women constructing art to make sense and give meaning out of situations that make no sense to them. I have witnessed personally and professionally the powerful effect of using arts-based methods across ages and cultures in therapeutic and educational settings. In 2018 I wrote in previous arts-based autoethnographic work, "From a personal and vulnerable emic perspective, an etic point-of-view emerges to address universal issues and societal phenomenon" (Truett, 2018).

Learning Resources and Strategies

I plan to accomplish the learning objectives by reading, researching, and experiencing creating a project using photos, music, and videography techniques to tell a story. I will complete a minimum of one creative project using photographs, music, and videography this semester. Learning resources include learning applications on both my computer and camera that I already have access to but have not taken the time to learn. I will also use the library to search for articles pertaining to my SDL project. I will ask advice from others who have experience with photography, music, and videography.

Criteria for Accomplishment

I will submit a completed MN project set to music. I will use excerpts from my field journal to bring in a subjectivist perspective in adult learning. I will spend a dedicated amount of time per week in order to accomplish my goal and successfully meet the learning objectives for this SDL project. Since creative work can be difficult to predict a projected amount of time, and since I am a very busy doctoral student with many other demands, I will dedicate a minimum of 2 hours and a maximum of 6 hours per week to this project until the completed target date. Criteria for accomplishment will include the finished creative MN that will be able to be viewed on my computer and shared with others.

Bibliography

I will draw from resources that include photography, music, videography, adult learning, and SDL articles and books, and the intersections between the different domains. I will also check resources through Apple, YouTube, Pinterest, and other online sources.

How Your Project is Going. Reflect on Your Learning Resources and Strategies

My project is going very well. I have made my first MN. It took me probably six times longer than it probably will in the future because I felt like I was fumbling about trying to learn how to use the software on my computer to integrate music and photos to tell a story. I picked out a song and then learned how to manipulate the photos to be in synchrony with the music. I also wrote in my field journal during the process of learning how to make my first MN. My learning resources are my computer, photographs already taken that are stored in my computer in Photos, along with music stored in iTunes. I read from my research resources to learn how to use the program I wanted to use to create the MN. My strategy was to begin by doing a first MN as a prototype. In this way, I learned by doing. I already mentioned that this first MN took a long time because I was learning how to use the materials in conjunction with the software and my computer. In the future, as I continue to create new MN, I will learn to work more efficiently and will be able to help others construct their own MN.

Field Journal Entry from September 20, 2018

I have no idea what I am doing. I am trying to learn how to use GarageBand, iTunes, and iMovie with my photos. I am trying to figure out which application will be best to create the first Memory Narrative for my Self-Directed Learning project for my Adult

Learning in Social Contexts class. I need to check the songs I have saved through Shazam and Spotify and look at Amazon Prime music. Not sure how to get started.

What You Have Been Able to Do for Your Project so Far. Reflect on Your Project Goal

I have been able to make my first MN, which I am very proud of. I used photos from my first day on a trip to Sicily, Italy with my friend, Darlene, in May 2018. I had a lot of fun making this first MN and was excited to share it with my friend. I believe that I am on target for my project goal.

What You Have Learned So Far from Your Project

I have learned a lot so far from this SDL project. I have learned to do something that I had been wanting to learn to do for a long time. I love photography, music, and narrative, and I also love creative projects. I feel proud of myself for learning how to make my first MN. I also found that learning something new that seemed overwhelming at first instead can be a lot of fun!

What I Learned from My Project

On a surface level, my learning objectives included wanting to learn how to better use my camera and computer (MacBook Pro) to create narratives of people, events, and places using photographs, music, and videography as an experiential learner, and to use as a prototype for future research. Initial questions addressed how to begin the process to gain the necessary skills to learn how to use photographs and music to create a prototype MN. I learned how to use the applications on my computer to create the MN using photographs, music, and videography techniques. I also realized how much I enjoyed this project because I truly love photography, writing, and creative projects and how much the creative process can aid in catharsis and healing (Pennebaker, 1997; 2013). With this project I was able to incorporate my passion for the use of arts-based techniques not only to use photography and music in a creative, fun, and satisfying way, but to also reflect critically on where I am on my own transformative and healing journey. Creating a MN to commemorate a person and event with photographs and music allowed me to further engage in my own PTG process in a critically reflective manner.

Another way of framing the MN work includes autoethnographic and ethnographic ways of knowing in which I looked both inward and outward in an emic and etic way to engage in self-reflection. I was able to critically reflect on positionality and subjectivity in relationship to my work as a clinician and as a doctoral student. I considered the role of SDL in my life, as well as PTG, and my level of social engagement as a survivor of abuse. I thought about how I create levels of safety in my clinical and academic work. I also thought about how writing and the creative process for me is dialectical in how I both engage and disengage with others. In this way producing a MN was introspective and safe, yet to be authentic and honest it had to have elements of truth evident in the work. Constructing a MN as a SDL adult education project provided a vehicle for voice through an externalized product, which felt empowering.

Accomplishment of Learning Goals

I accomplished the learning goals I established for myself at the beginning of the project. I completed one prototype example of a MN and plan to make many more to commemorate people and occasions and to help others process trauma, abuse, grief, and loss feelings using arts-based and creative expression.

How I Accomplished My Learning Goals

I accomplished my goals by first engaging in reading about photography and videography in general to gain a basic understanding of photography and videography. Then I began to explore existing software on my computer to use for this creative endeavor. Once I established what tools were available to me, I studied the various applications. I used an excerpt from my field journal as part of the mid-term report to bring in a subjectivist perspective as an adult learner. I spent a dedicated amount of time per week in order to accomplish my goal and successfully met the learning objectives for this SDL project. At the outset of the project, I anticipated that creative work absorbs a lot of time and knew that in reality I could not give the project more time than I had allocated due to many other demands. I chose to dedicate approximately two hours per week on this project, yet there were weeks that I spent much more time reading before and after creating the first prototype. Throughout this project, I was mindful of time knowing that there is much more for me to learn. I stumbled through the process at first. The prototype took a lot longer than I thought it would. I will become more efficient as I make more MN. I plan to continue to learn how to use music and photography in educational, therapeutic, and creative ways to help others.

Criteria for accomplishment included the finished creative MN that was able to be viewed on my computer through iMovie. As part of the project and as a learning goal, a completed MN set to music was submitted to my instructor. I also shared the MN with my friend, Darlene, to whom I dedicated the MN because not only was our trip together healing for me as I was going through a difficult time, but it was also healing for her. In sharing the MN my own PTG process, relational connection, and social engagement with a trusted friend was increased. I felt an exhilaration and excitement in transforming a difficult personal passageway of time for each of us into a creative endeavor and project. Through our pictures and memories traveling together, and as a metaphor for our own individual journeys, using a critically reflective perspective, not only did I honor our friendship, but who we each are as women and as people on our own PTG journeys.

My Overall Experience of the Project

My overall experience of the project was very positive. I enjoyed learning how to use my computer to engage in a creative project. There is so much more that I want to learn about photography and videography and how to use arts-based methods to help others on their own PTG and social engagement journeys.

Things that Went Well in the Project

I really enjoyed the satisfaction of putting the MN together and viewing the finished product. I was also happy to share the MN with my friend, Darlene. The MN prototype made for the class project captured the first part of a trip with my friend, Darlene, to Italy. Darlene traveled with me on business to Naples, Italy in May 2018 when I was President of the European Branch of the American Counseling Association (EB-ACA). Prior to arriving in Naples, we flew from Rome to Palermo, Sicily. We spent a week driving a little 5-speed Fiat all around the island of Sicily. As a person who keeps a daily journal, and in my own ethnographic and autoethnographic way, it was important in my own healing journey for me to travel to Sicily at that time. I wanted to connect to a part of my heritage. I needed to experience, see, taste, feel, hear, and touch where I come from. Each of my four grandparents, people I never knew, immigrated from Sicily to the United States in the early part of the century. I wanted to visit Termini Imerese, the town in which my paternal grandfather was born.

Things that Needed to be Changed

I do not think anything needed to be changed necessarily, just that having more time to continue the work started and to be able to work in a consistent manner would have been nice. The semester overall was a very busy one with coursework, GRA duties, travel, and other obligations.

How I Did

From my perspective, the project went very well and was very interesting. I learned a lot about a topic that I am very interested in. I took the first steps toward accomplishing learning a skill that I had been wanting to learn for a long time. I really enjoyed engaging in a SDL activity. The project was challenging in many ways because it required me to learn how to do things with my camera and computer that I had not taken the time to learn before.

From a critically reflective perspective, I learned first-hand how to do something new and to experience using an arts-based technique in an educational way as a vehicle for my own self-reflection, growth, and learning. As a nontraditional doctoral student adult learner going through my own personal challenges, I am learning to be more resilient, intentional, and self-aware as I traverse on my own transformative learning journey.

Future Implications

As an adult learner researcher, I want to know more about how to help empower women through the use of creative expression and arts-based methods. Using creative methods to invoke voice can help women learn to express their feelings in transformational ways (Ali, 2014; Belenky et al., 1986; Gilligan, 1977; 1982; Jack, 1991). From a narrative inquiry reframe perspective (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000), learning to transform abuse into something new through connection with self and others, tapping into personal strength, and fostering positive and life-affirming relationships with others can contribute to PTG. This in turn leads to critical reflection, insight, growth, increased self-esteem, changed priorities, and shifts in spirituality (Tedeschi et al., 1998). An overall learning

objective moving forward is to help empower women to become advocates for themselves through arts-based methods, critical reflection, and sharing their stories and process in collaborative ways in the context of community (Dutt & Grabe, 2019; Hadley, 2013; Hahna, 2013). By using Dutt and Grabe's (2019) work to frame the micro, meso, and macro contexts to frame future research, women can shift from individual to relational to the societal contexts of one's life in the telling of their story through an arts-based MN. Women survivors of abuse returning to college who tell their stories can help deconstruct dominant culture ideology in which silence and fear reside.

Conclusion

Much work remains to be done in the field of adult education. Moving forward the use of arts-based approaches such as MN as a creative and critically reflective educational and therapeutic practice can help foster PTG and social engagement for women survivors of abuse returning to college and has the potential to contribute to the field of adult education both in teaching and in practice. In this way, a better understanding of abuse and its impact on learning can raise awareness to increase resources and support not only for women, but for everyone.

Education, awareness, and support are needed to help women move from the confusion and helplessness of a victim to a more empowered self as a survivor. College educators, administrators, and Title IX staff, counselors, physicians, nurses, police, clergy, and community agencies in which women seek support services through all need to work together collaboratively to better understand and be able to identify abuse in culturally sensitive ways to support women. Younger women need resources to see patterns in which they are vulnerable, and women of any age need to recognize long-standing patterns in which abuse exists and is cultivated.

Nontraditional and marginalized adult learners in the field of adult education, both male and female, can benefit from the use of arts-based approaches in addressing grief, loss, and trauma from abuse across cultures. Much work remains to be done on how the effects of abuse, at any point in a person's life and across relational, work, or academic settings can significantly impact education, learning, growth, and success.

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TUTOR SERVICE QUALITY AND STUDENT SATISFACTION: A STUDYOF DISTANCE EDUCATION STUDENTS AT UNIVERSITY OF GHANA LEARNING CENTRES

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ABSTRACT: This paper explores student satisfaction of tutor services provided at the University of Ghana Learning Centres specifically, Koforidua Learning Centre. A simple random sampling method was used to select current 150 undergraduate students pursuing varied degree programmes at the Koforidua Learning Centre. There was an observed significant relationship between the dimensions of service quality namely reliability, responsiveness, and empathy and student satisfaction in relation to tutors' service quality. Generally, the findings indicate that students for some specific programs were dissatisfied with tutor services at Koforidua Learning Centre. Overall, the findings indicate that the use of SERVQUAL outcomes may lead to improved tutor performance at the undergraduate level. Findings may also guide other Learning Centres of public higher education institutions in Ghana to put in place measures that will enhance the quality of services tutors provide.

Keywords: tutor services, Ghana, learning centre, satisfaction, SERVQUAL

In every higher education institution, the students are its major customers. Thus, the satisfaction of students relating to services provided is of paramount importance since there is competition for students both in the private and public sectors. The satisfaction of a customer is of paramount importance to any institution that provides service, and it is linked to the quality of service. Service providing institutions 'emphasize' the importance of service quality because in that situation, the relationship with existing customers is enriched while drawing new customers (Ugboma, Ogwude & Nadi, 2007). In higher education settings, it has been noted that a student is satisfied when expectations are met (Mark, 2013). A satisfied student will consistently attend lectures of a particular tutor and even encourage other students to sign up for modules of that particular tutor (Banwel & Datta, 2003). Thus, a satisfied student will invariably market the programs of a higher education institution and is thus regarded as a student ambassador. Research indicates that the quality of a service provided, will determine a customer's satisfaction (Hoisington & Naumann, 2003).

This survey is aimed at undergraduate students at a public higher education institution, namely University of Ghana Learning Centres (specifically, Koforidua Learning Centre). It explores the satisfaction of students about tutoring services provided at the Centre. Ghana currently has 24 public higher education institutions (www.nab.gov.gh). Second, the number of students enrolled at this higher education institution has been fluctuating and the study's outcome may indicate measures, if any, that has to be put in place to enhance the tutoring process that may invariably increase enrollment figures at the Koforidua Learning Centre.

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The study attempts to determine student satisfaction with tutor services in a public higher education institution based on the five dimensions of the SERVQUAL research instrument, namely: reliability, assurance, tangibility, empathy, and responsiveness (Parasuraman et al., 1988).

Administrators of higher education institutions may find the outcome of this study 'beneficial'. Further, faculty members may also know what strategies to put in place in order to satisfy their students who are the clients of the higher education sector. Thus, the focus of this study can be defined as to what extent tutor service quality affect student satisfaction in a higher learning institution in Ghana.

Literature Review

Students of higher education institutions can be satisfied or dissatisfied depending on the quality of service received, be it academic or support services. The quality of service a student receives will determine whether they will be retained and invariably become an ambassador for the institution by drawing other potential students. Varied research has been undertaken regarding student satisfaction in an academic institution.

Satisfaction is defined by Kotler and Keller (2012) as the 'feeling of pleasure or disappointment resulting from comparing perceived performance in relation to the expectation.' Thus, customers will be satisfied when services provided is in consonance with expectations. However, the satisfaction of students in relation to the academics has been variously indicated. According to Appleton-Knapp & Krentler (2006), personal and institutional effects impact student satisfaction in the higher education environment. The personal factors include preferred learning style, employment and gender, while institutional factors refer to teaching style and quality of teaching. In Wilkins & Balakrishnan (2013) study, they identified quality of lecturers, physical facilities and effective use of technology as factors indicating student satisfaction. Further, student satisfaction in higher education institutions is impacted positively by course content, quality of feedback, lecturer-student relationship, interaction with fellow students, availability of learning materials, and library facilities (Garcl a-Aracil, A., 2009; Sojkin et al., 2012].

To increase student satisfaction in a higher education institution it is essential that faculty embrace a student-centered learning approach where students become active learners rather than passive ones (Coskun, 2014). As a result of this, students will be more engage not only in academic work at the university but other aspects of university life which may lead to increased retention of students throughout the college years and thus increase graduation rates and low dropout rates. The positive impacts of a student-centered environment with supportive faculty include higher retention and graduation rates, which in turn impact the higher education institution when it comes to recruiting new students in the future.

According to the Danjuma & Rasli (2012) and Son, et al. (2018), there has been a recent trend in higher education institutions where institutions even publicly funded universities are embracing a private education model. In other words, institutions are found to be

leaning towards a privatization method where the university is the seller and student is the buyer (Coskun, 2014; Son et al., 2018). In this regard, while it may seem that the university is the only beneficiary of this model/system, the student is also a beneficiary given that they are able to obtain a return on investment in their education either in the form of completing their education, getting a job right after graduation or setting up their own business after graduation (Coskun, 2014). For a higher education institution, whether private or public, to remain competitive in the education market place, they must have a set of constructs that they abide by to improve their service quality, which will in turn increase student recruitment, higher retention rates, low dropout rates and, from a larger perspective, create a more educated society (Coskun, 2014). These constructs that higher education institutions must adhere to include the SERVQUAL scale that helps measure service quality under the themes of tangibility, reliability, responsiveness, assurance and empathy (Danjuma & Rasli, 2012).

Conceptual Framework

The SERVQUAL model serves as a guide to this study about tutor service quality and satisfaction of students at University of Ghana's distance education unit at Koforidua Learning Centre. The SERVQUAL model was developed by Parasuraman et al. (1988) over a five-year period to assess quality in the service sector. The quality of service was acknowledged to consist of five dimensions, namely: reliability, assurance, tangibles, empathy and responsiveness. Thus, institutions use these dimensions to evaluate their quality of service. Thus, in applying this framework, Koforidua Learning Centre will apply these dimensions of service quality by focusing mainly on tangibility, empathy and responsiveness to evaluate the quality of service provided. When a student's expectations from a tutor in terms of tangibility, empathy and responsiveness are lower than what is perceived to have been received then the service quality is adjudged to be high. Notably, the outcome of this study will inform administrators and faculty about what can be done to enhance tutor service quality and student satisfaction. Invariably higher education institutions will have more data and information to increase enrollment by improving on tutor services to enhance student satisfaction.

Using the SERVQUAL model three hypotheses were tested:

H1: Reliability has positive effect on students' satisfaction with tutor services.

H2: Empathy has positive effect on students' satisfaction with tutor services.

H3: Responsiveness has positive effect on students' satisfaction with tutor services.

Methodology

This research adapted Parasuraman et al (1988) SERVQUAL dimensions by examining reliability, empathy and responsiveness. The participants were distance education undergraduate students of the University of Ghana, specifically, Koforidua Learning Centre in the Eastern Region of Ghana. They consisted of 150 Bachelor of Arts, Bachelor of Science in Administration, Bachelor of Science in Information Technology and

Bachelor of Nursing of varied levels namely 100, 200, 300 and 400. Institutional Review Board requirements were adhered to before questionnaires were distributed to the students. The questionnaire was piloted with 12 students drawn from all four levels at one of the Regional Learning Centres of the University of Ghana. The pilot enabled the researcher to indicate the reliability of the questionnaire items using the computation of Cronbach's alpha. In this study, the reliability of the constructs was above 0.7. Consequently, a simple random sampling was used to select 150 undergraduate students. Every third student for each level was randomly selected during an end of first semester tutorial session for the 2019/2020 academic year. This procedure provided each student with a fair chance of being selected. Paper questionnaires were administered to the students at the end the first semester's tutorial sessions that the students had with various tutors at the Centre. On average, each participant completed the questionnaire within 20 to 30 minutes. Upon completion, the participants handed over the questionnaires to the researcher. The questionnaires focused on tangibility, empathy and responsiveness. Students' satisfaction with tutor services was a dependent variable while the service quality dimensions such as tangibility, empathy and responsiveness were the independent variable. The questionnaire that was administered to the students at the end of tutoring for the semester also contained Likert scale questions. A few of the questions were open-ended and students were offered the opportunity to provide narratives.

Findings

A total of 150 undergraduate participants consisting of 55% male and 45% females responded to the questionnaires. The study used the Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient (*r*) to test the nature of the relationship between the key variables of interest as stipulated in the hypotheses.[1] The majority of the correlational output analysis indicated a positive and significant correlation between undergraduate students' satisfaction with tutor services and the three dimensions namely, reliability, empathy and responsiveness. This resonated with majority of undergraduate participants of varied levels at the Koforidua Learning Centre, University of Ghana. Thus, in some instances such as the Bachelor of Science in Administration courses, participants preferred some level of improvement in the services provided by tutors. There were further indications of dissatisfaction from participants regarding tutoring provided for some of the courses. Invariably, some of the level 200 Bachelor of Arts participants were dissatisfied by the services that some of their tutors provided for their courses. Participants indicated more practical hands-on activities which some of the tutoring lack. Majority of level 400 participants in the Bachelor of Arts class indicated that they would have preferred practical demonstrations of some the theories learnt. Another level 200 Bachelor of Science in Administration participant wanted an increase in time slots given to tutors to teach. Overall participants indicated the need to improve the output of the SAKAI Learning Management system that is used to complement the limited tutor face-to-face teaching. In Wilkins and Balakrishnan's (2013) study, they identified quality of lecturers, physical facilities and effective use of technology as factors indicating student satisfaction.

[1] The test was conducted at 0.05 confidence level.

Conclusion

A positive student satisfaction model at a public higher education institution is a salient feature that enhances an increase in the enrollment figures of institutions. Students are now considered clients or customers that need to be satisfied. Assessing tutor service quality and undergraduate student satisfaction at University of Ghana's Koforidua Learning Centre has enabled the institution to know what services to improve upon as well as what its students require in order to be competitive. Further, increasing privatization of higher education institutions has led to competiting forces among public higher education institutions. It has further improved service quality, physical facilities, branding and a more empathetic, reliable and responsive learning environment.

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INCLUDED BUT EXCLUDED: THE USE OF MOBILE PHONES AMONG DIGITAL IMMIGRANTS

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ABSTRACT: Research on digital divide is on the ascendancy; however, there have been relatively few studies assessing digital inclusion focusing on how technological savvy was acquired by digital immigrant mobile phone users to explore the myriad opportunities of their mobile phones. Using semi-structured interviews this paper assesses digital inclusion as it explores how market women in Accra acquire technological savvy to use their mobile phones. The study findings show the importance of informal learning in the acquisition of digital literacy among digital immigrants: as majority of these women were able to use their mobile phones for the first time based on the informal teachings they received from their children. However, they appear to be digitally excluded as they under-utilized the mobile phone they own. They use their mobile phones predominantly for calling due to their low educational levels. For a fully digitized economy to be realized in Ghana, these women need adult literacy and market-based programmes that focus on developing digital literacies to enable them fully to join the digital society. Hence, there should be a call for adult education practice by promoting lifelong learning opportunities for all digitally excluded to attain 21st century skills to become part of the digital economy.

Keywords: mobile phone, market women, digital literacy, digital inclusion

Since Dr. Martin Cooper incorporated telephones into a portable mobile handset and marketed to the public (Öztaş 2015), mobile phones have become one of the most important Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) worldwide. Mobile phone subscriptions continue to increase as there will be 710 million people joining mobile phone subscribers in the world by the end of 2025. It is therefore expected that there will be almost 6 billion mobile phone subscribers in the world by the end of 2025 (Stryjak & Sivakumaran, 2019). Mobile phones have thus become prevalent globally and they have been hailed in Africa as the answer to improving telecommunication access (Castells, 2007). Their rapid adoption has led to the inclusion of all, including the perceived 'illiterate' and semi-literate, lower income earners to become part of digital society (Velghe, 2014).

Mobile phones are no longer merely devices for sending and receiving telephone calls as they have migrated from an exclusively voice facility – first generation network (1G) and second generation (2G) networks to an increasingly multifunctional purpose – third, (3G) through to five (5G) generation networks. Chan (2013) thus writes that there are "1001 uses" for mobile phones beyond the communication function, making mobile phones valuable for both communicative and non- communicative uses. Individuals must therefore develop broader digital literacy and skills to fully utilize their phones' multiple functions (Deen-Swarray, 2016). This suggests that exploring the myriad opportunities ICTs have to offer is dependent on forms of digital literacies one possesses. This implies that those with the necessary digital literacy and skills will be able to fully utilize the functions and services their mobile phones have to offer to be digitally included.

However, studies (e.g., Deen–Swarray, 2016) have indicated that adults find it difficult to use their mobile phone effectively because about 56% of the adult population have no

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ICT skills or have only the skills necessary to fulfill the simplest set of tasks in a technology-rich environment (OECD, 2016). This implies that one must develop broader digital literacy to fully utilize their phones' multiple functions (Deen-Swarray, 2016). Therefore, being digitally included is not influenced only by material access but also by other factors such as literacy and age. This led to an expansion of digital divide research and consequently these studies led to diverse interpretations and reconceptualization of the digital divide, generating a multiplicity of the terms such as – media literacy (Ofcom, 2018) digital participation (Dooley et al., 2016), and digital inclusion (National Digital Inclusion Alliance (NDIA), 2019) – which have similar meanings but with slightly different emphasis on issues. The concept *digital inclusion* will be used in this paper to explain the multiplicity of divides. NDIA (2019) defines digital inclusion as the activities necessary to ensure that all individuals and communities, including the most disadvantaged, have access to and use of ICTs. Digital inclusion is noted to include three broad facets: access (i.e., availability and accessibility), adoption (digital literacy), and application (work force development, education, health care and civic engagement (Digital Inclusion Survey, 2013). In agreement and in line with the Digital Inclusion Survey (2013) approach to understanding digital inclusion, this paper focuses on the second facet of digital inclusion, digital literacy (adoption) as a way to measure quality of use of digital technologies (in this case mobile phone) in assessing digital inclusion. To situate this article in its context, it is important to clearly explain digital literacy and the multiple interpretations and dimensions of the concept.

Conceptual Considerations: Digital literacy

The term digital literacy was coined in 1997 by Paul Gilster who defines digital literacy as "the ability to understand and use information in multiple formats from a wide variety of sources when it is presented via computers and, particularly, through the medium of the Internet" (Gilster, 1998: 1). Glister thus argues that digital literacy is a special kind of mindset, "about mastering ideas" (Gilster, 1997: 1)**.** Ng (2012) adds that digital literacy is developmental; that is, progressively builds on foundational and achieved skills and knowledge. In addition, Ng (2012) notes that digital literacy consists of three dimensions (a) technical, (b) cognitive, and (c) social-emotional literacies. The technical dimension of being digitally literate means possessing the technical know-how and operational skills to use ICT proficiently, thus a digitally literate should be able to operate technologies efficiently by possessing the needed skills to explore technology proficiently. The second dimension, cognitive literacy focuses on having the ability to critically search, evaluate and synthesis digital information as well as being aware of the online ethical, moral and legal issues. The last dimension social-emotional concerns the individual possessing the necessary skills to socialise properly online by being aware of issues such as netiquette and privacy.

From these dimensions outlined by Ng (2012), being digitally literate requires the development of a set of key skills that are technical, cognitive, and social-emotional. Hence developing these three dimensions should enable individuals to operation digital technology proficiently, critically search, identify, and assess information effectively,

develop competency to use the most appropriate features to his or her benefit and engage appropriately in online environments. In other words, possessing these skills will provide the opportunity to fully explore the digital technology such mobile phone owned effectively and benefit from myriad opportunities it has to offer. This research is underpinned by the aforementioned digital literacy framework of Ng (2012).

Digital literacy possession has been overlooked in the adoption of mobile phones as they have been rapidly adopted in Africa irrespective of one possessing digital literacy or not. Today the perceived illiterate and semi-literate own mobile phones and are using them. This is conspicuous in Ghana as mobile phones have reached the perceived illiterate actors, including women of the Ghanaian informal economy. Women constitute about 51 percent of Ghana's population, and illiteracy is more prevalent among women than men as there are more women (53.0%) than men (40.5%) with Primary and JH as their highest level of education. Education and literacy are closely linked in Ghana because English is the official language and the medium of instruction in Ghanaian schools. Being literate is therefore associated with one's literacy level in English, which is then also associated with formal education. Literacy rates in Ghana (total 74.1%) are much higher among men (80%) than women (68.5%), In Ghana, literacy is higher in Greater Accra (89.3%) with men (93.6%) having higher literacy rate than women. To this end a majority of Ghanaian women are found in the lower echelons of economic activity with most of their activities in the informal economy. The informal economy thus serves as a large source of income for women. Ghana's informal economy is characterized largely by self-employment with the majority operating Micro and Small-Scale Enterprises (MSEs), in form of sole proprietorships. Most of these female sole-proprietor enterprises are in the form of trade (Dzisi et al., 2008), and trade forms the largest sector of non-agricultural activities (46%) accounting for almost half of the Ghana's working population and more than half of the female working population (53%) (Budlender, 2011). Trade is considered as the dominant enterprise within Ghana's non-agricultural activities with market trade comprising the main occupation of self-employed women (Awo, 2012). Trade comprises the largest single sector (31%) of urban employment (Ghana Statistical Service, 2008). In Ghana's urban areas, market trade constituted the major source of employment for the majority (78) of women (Dunne & King, 2003).

Market women despite their low levels of education and perceived as illiterate have not been exempted from the adoption of mobile phones suggesting that they have not been left out of the digital society. Is that really the case? Are they digitally included? This makes it interesting to explore the use of mobile phones among these women and assess their extent of digital inclusion. This paper therefore focuses on this concern by drawing on Ng's (2012) three types of digital literacies--technical literacy, cognitive literacy and socio-emotional literacy--and explores how these women acquired tech-savvy skills to use their mobile phones. What are the features and services of the mobile phones that they use? Do they utilize the mobile phones owned proficiently? These are some of the questions the study seeks to explore to assess their inclusion in the digital society.

Data Collection Methods

Data for this article are derived from a broader study (Ussher, 2015), which employed a multi-sited case study that includes four major markets – Makola, Agbogbloshie, Kaneshie and Madina markets – in Accra. In Ghana, each region has its major markets. Greater Accra has about forty markets but Agbogbloshie, Kaneshie, Madina and Makola are the four well-known major markets. In Ghanaian markets, both men and women are involved in trade however women predominate in the sale of most commodities ranging from vegetables, foodstuffs, clothes, textiles etc. The exception is the sale of meat, chicken and mobile phones, where men predominate. Women in vegetable and textile trade in these four major markets were thus chosen considering the study aim of assessing how perceived illiterate users acquire digital literacy to use their mobile phones.

Although market women constitute a predefined social group in Ghana, there is no existence of a list or register of these women who own mobile phones in Accra markets. For this reason, participants were selected with a specific purpose in my mind. Following Bernard's (2017) argument that in studies where participants are hard to find, purposive and snowball sampling are most useful, they became the most practical and appropriate sampling techniques used to select these women from the four major markets for the study. Women who were engaged in perishable goods (vegetables - cabbage, carrots, lettuce, green pepper, cucumber, spring onions, tomatoes, onions, and pepper) and non-perishable goods (textiles) were interviewed. In total seventy-two (72) interviews were conducted with women from the four major markets selected. The fieldwork component of this study lasted for five months.

In the four markets chosen for the study, 29 women trading in textiles and 43 women engaged in the vegetable trade were interviewed. The number of women traders engaged in vegetables interviewed was higher because Agbogbloshie market is predominantly a vegetable market. Semi-structured interviews were conducted using an interview guide. These women were interviewed at their marketplaces as they engaged in their trading activities. The interviews conducted lasted for about forty-five minutes to an hour and a half, however, some interview sessions lasted for more than an hour and a half as there were interruptions by customers to whom the women attended. Before the commencement of interview sessions, informed consent was sought, and confidentiality was also assured.

The women were asked to choose the local languages (Ga or Twi) that they preferred and in which they felt comfortable expressing their views and experiences when interviewed. Most of the women opted for a local language (Twi or Ga) with the exception of seven traders who opted to speak English. There were 23 interviews conducted in Twi, forty-two (42) in Ga and seven (7) in English. Only in Agbogbloshie market did no woman traders opt to speak English. All interviews conducted were recorded. Some notes were taken during the interviews highlighting the key areas of significance to enable analysis of the data.

Thematic content analysis was employed to uncover themes from the interview transcripts. The analysis started by translating and transcribing all interviews into English

with the assistance of a Ga and Twi translator. All the translated transcribed interviews were transferred to Atlas-ti software as primary documents. Codes were then generated and also transferred to Atlas-ti to facilitate the analysis process. The coding took the form of a three-stage process. First, the transcriptions were read to become familiarized with them. Secondly, there was a work through the dataset in a more detailed manner to identify how technical know-how was acquired and the features of the mobile phones use among these women. At the third stage, preliminary codes were collated and sorted into meaningful units depicting possible themes. There was a review and refinement of these themes and then extracts selected from the texts associated with these themes.

Findings

Demographic Background of Participants

Age

The interactions with these market women show that most of these women were not born in the era of digital technologies as a majority of them were at least forty years of age. In Ghana, mobile phones were introduced in the 1990s with the majority acquiring mobile phones late 2003 and early 2004 and are therefore now getting the knowledge and adapting to these new technologies.

Education

The study findings also show that a majority (42 out of 72) of the market women have basic education (i.e., Primary, Middle School and JHS are considered basic education in Ghana). Only a little under one third of the women traders have secondary or higher education and about one sixth of them do not have any formal education (never attended or dropped out), a reflection of educational disparities among these women.

Mobile Phone Acquisition

The access to mobile phones among these women was mainly due to gifts received from family members. These women owning mobile phones show their inclusion in the digital society as the initial debate of measuring one's digital inclusion and not being left behind focused on access. This could be the reason why children and husbands bought mobile phones for their mothers/wives when introduced in Ghana.

The rest of the participants (27 out of 72) bought their mobile phones themselves and the choice to buy a particular model and brand was not based on the mobile services associated with the model - the choice was essentially based on how attractive the mobile handset was and on how expensive it was. Those who bought their mobile phones themselves argued that mobile phones that cost hundred Ghana cedis (GHC 100) and more were costly and therefore they claimed to trust such mobile handsets to be durable. This point was reiterated by numerous women (24 out of 27 traders) who purchased their mobile phones themselves. A tomato trader in Kaneshie market reinforces this position and states that:

> You know we market women prefer to buy the [most] expensive and latest mobile phone even though we do not have adequate knowledge [digital literacy] about how to use it. When I went to buy this one, I said I wanted the one that is very expensive and the latest model, I was told this one is 100 Ghana cedis and is expensive. I am also told it the latest model, so I bought it. We are not really concerned about how to use all the features and applications on our mobile phones, so far as we can make call[s] it is fine (interview # 12).

This finding suggests that most participants are not concerned about how much knowledge they have to explore the myriad opportunities of mobile phones bought. They acquired mobile phones because they realised the necessity to become part of the digital era reflecting that mobile phones though have become prevalent, among these women, they are still status symbols.

Technical Literacy Acquisition

Call Making

In exploring how these women acquire technical know-how to use their mobile phones, it was noted that informal education/learning played a vital role. To use their mobile phones for the first time those who bought the phones themselves (27 out of 72) learnt how to use their mobile phones all by themselves as they follow the instructions on the phone manual/menu. These women have secondary or higher education than their other trading colleagues. These traders being able to learn how to use their mobile phones all by themselves shows that they can read in English. This is because mobile phone manuals are in a variety of international languages for users to choose the language with which they are conversant. English being the official language in Ghana and the predominant means of social interaction, mobile phones brought to Ghana have language features set to English. In choosing to read the manual of your mobile phone in Ghana, the English language is the option chosen.

The vital role of informal learning to acquire technical literacy was also reflected among many of the women traders (33 out of 45) as they were taught how to use their mobile phones for the first time by their children:

> My third born child taught me how to answer a call, check on a missed call and make a call. I did not go to school to a higher level, so I was not able to use it easily at first (interview # 38).

Children taught their mothers how to differentiate between the green and the red button on 2G (and 2.5G, 3G) keypads to make calls all by themselves. This is because the keypad of 2G (and sometimes 2.5G, 3G) mobile phones has green and red key icons which are used to make and receive calls, and these are easily identifiable. The green and red icons on the keypad are not combined with any other letters or numbers, therefore easy to use when taught. The green and red keypad is one of the main interfaces of most 2G mobile phones: the type of mobile service that predominates among the participants. 3G mobile phones have complicated interfaces: they sometimes have the keypad with the red and green button keypads, but most have more complex visual interfaces, often with touch screens. 3G mobile phones with touch screens are not common among market

women as they claimed that they cannot easily operate these mobile phones, as the keypad is hidden or embedded. From this finding it appears that the complex nature of keypads or mobile phone interfaces, apart from educational status and age, play a significant role in acquiring technical literacy in assessing of mobile features and services.

The acquisition of technical literacy was also developed as informal training was also received from husbands and younger siblings. Less than a third of the women were taught how to use their mobile phones by their husbands. A little less than one tenth also learnt how to make calls from their siblings and from mobile phone traders or the shop owners from whom they bought their mobile phones:

> (*She laughed*) my younger sister taught me how to make call the very first time, she has a higher education than I do (interview# 26).
>
> The person I bought the mobile phone from taught me how to receive and also make calls (interview# 49).

All the participants who receive the informal training from their husbands and or younger sibling argue that they gain such education from them because they have higher education compared to what they have. The need for such informal training from husbands and younger siblings to use the basic calling function of their mobile phones for the very first time reflects the exclusion of these women.

Over the years the market women interviewed have developed technical literacy as they demonstrated their capabilities to make calls to me during the interviews:

> … my children and sometimes my grandchildren teach me how to make the call, if I want to make a call and they are around, I call them to assist me to search for the contact's name and then they dial or make the call for me. I can make calls now (interview # 20).

It is clear that the technical literacy levels of these women is low and, given that most of them were born before the era of the new digital technologies, they face challenges in using mobile technologies and services available on their mobile phones owned. However, via the informal training received from their children to use the basic function, making calls, they have developed their digital literacies to become digital immigrants (Zubieta, 2010). We may therefore describe these children of women as 'digital natives' and the market women as 'digital immigrants' (Zubieta, 2010). This study finding reflects intergenerational differences in the use digital technologies as well as obtaining of digital inclusion status due to developing technical literacy via informal learning practices.

Texting

Texting, another basic function of the mobile phone requires technical literacy. Texting was not entirely out of the domain of these women as a small proportion of women (19) interviewed can send and reply to texts. They also did so by learning informally as they follow the guidelines given by their children, for instance by differentiating between the

alphabets and numerals on their keypads. From this finding, using mobile phone services such as texting could be due to the complicated nature of mobile interfaces (i.e., 2G owned by the majority women) coupled with the complex task of navigating such complicated keypads. The finding may also suggest that the type of contacts one has influences one to be engaged in SMS/texting as contacts should be able to read or decipher messages sent to them and to reply.

Loading Airtime

Women developing their technical literacy via informal learning were also noted in the context of loading airtime onto mobile phones. Here informal training was also received from children and husbands (in some cases younger siblings) in the loading of airtime for the very first time. All the women who receive such teachings from their husbands (or younger siblings) opined that their educational level is higher than them, the market women, reflecting the reason why they can grant them such support. The differences in education (coupled with the complex mobile interfaces) are what have led to the receiving of informal training among these women. Nonetheless, based on informal learning practices from children and husbands or younger siblings the majority of market women (30 out of 45) appear to have developed the technical literacy to navigate their complex mobile interfaces to load airtime on their mobile phones.

Storing Contacts/Phonebook

With reference to storing contact numbers and names, adequate technological know-how has not been attained by the majority (61%) of the women interviewed because they find it a bit complicated. Some of the women explained that they have been taught several times by their children how to store their contact numbers and names but were still unable to do so. They usually make the one who wants his or her number to be stored dial the number on their mobile phone and then they beep the person once (flash) which enables the number to be stored automatically in their dialled numbers menu. They then keep the last two digits of that person's number and name in memory and when they go back home, the women ask their children (or grandchildren) to store it in their contacts or phonebook. Another way is that they write the number down in a book and when they are home, ask their children (or grandchildren) to store it into their contacts or phonebook:

> My children store the numbers on my mobile phone for me, I do not. When someone gives me her number, I write it down and when I get home, I call my son, hey 'Junior' this is one of my customer's number and she is called so and so, and then I give it to him and he stores it. Or I call my daughter to do it (interview # 7).

Informal learning was noted among other market women as they receive training from their husbands to store their contact numbers for them. Attaining technical literacy is therefore developed among these market women based on knowledge they received from informal education via their social relations: their children, husbands and younger siblings. Even though the majority of the women interviewed cannot store their contact

numbers all by themselves, they can easily identify their contact menu or phonebook to make calls. Some of them are able to keep in memory the last two digits of their contact numbers which enable them to easily identify who to call when they scroll through their contact list or who is calling whenever they receive a call. The ability to keep numbers in memory explains the good knowledge women traders have in numbers or figures, which suggests that these traders are not entirely illiterates as they have understanding of numbers that enable them to keep their own records.

It was, however, realized that those women (27 out of 72) who learnt how to use their mobile phones all by themselves can easily make calls on their own, store their contact numbers and load credits on their mobile phones. This suggests that learning on one's own paves the way for one to acquire more knowledge and hence gain technological know-how in using a technology. The finding in relation to these women suggests that educational status play an important role in the using of mobile phones.

Other Features of the Mobile Phone Used

Alarms and clocks

With the development of technical literacy via informal learning among these women, they acknowledged that beyond their call logs or phonebooks, they use the calculators, alarms and clocks for their trading activities: They were able to to use these features based on the informal learning they did. They received informal teaching from their children in particular as they guide them to set the alarms and clocks on their mobile phones. The alarms were very vital for these women as it helps them to wake up on time to meet any schedule meetings to purchase their goods.

Calculators and Camera

The calculator feature of the mobile phones was also not ignored as they used them to sum up the prices of goods bought. A majority of them argued that calculators bought needed battery which does not last longer and sometimes such calculators are not durable. Hence, they prefer to use their mobile phone calculators, and this was made possible as their children taught them how to navigate through the menu and easily locate their calculators, some even have them as short cuts icons on their phone interfaces. The camera feature of the mobile phones among these women was not exempted. They also use these cameras often during functions such as marriage and naming ceremonies. They use these cameras to enable them to snap photos to use as wallpaper on their phones. They also argued that being able to take a selfie makes them feel proud to become part of the digital era.

Discussion and Conclusion

The study findings show that utilisation and enjoyment of all the mobile features and services one's mobile phone could offer are determined by having adequate knowledge and various forms of digital literacies. The inability to enjoy the full benefits from one's mobile phones compared to others who enjoy the full benefits shows a disparity--that is, inequality in use, therefore being digitally excluded. Digital literacies can be developed

outside the classroom, that is through informal learning (Ito et al., 2008) to utilize digital technologies such as mobile phones. Mobile phones have been noted as user friendly and require little or no special training in employing their basic functions (James, 2011). This appears to be so as these women were able to enjoy the basic functions of their mobile phones due to the informal training they received from others – and particularly their children. The first dimension of Ng (2012) digital literacy, technical literacy has been developed by these women, thus being digitally included with respect to having mobile phones and using the basic function, calling. They find it easier to make and receive calls because they are able to identify and differentiate between the green and red icons on the keypad of their complicated 2G mobile phone interfaces; they do this based on the teachings they received from their children.

Despite these traders owing mobile phones, it is evident that inequality exists among them as only a few of these women are able to go beyond the voice features and navigate the keypads of their mobile phone interfaces to text. While these women are taught by their children how to send texts, a majority of them find it difficult and complicated due to a lack of technical literacy. Those who are able to text are younger and have technical literacy owing to having secondary or higher formal education. Hence a 'usage divide' has been created due to education and intergenerational differences associated with using ICTs. It is therefore clear that a lack of higher education attainment can restrict the quality of use of ICTS. Those with higher educational achievements will benefit more by accessing mobile phone applications such as mobile banking and will be able to browse for information; store and process data; unlike the one with a low educational attainment because such applications involve cognitive (information) literacy. These market women appear not to be fully aware, beyond calling, of the services they might gain from mobile phones. Mobile services such as mobile money services and internet domain benefits (in Ghana) would be appreciated by these women when educated on the various literacies they lack. They will then tend to appreciate and purchase/own smartphones (3G and 4G networks) to utilise the myriad opportunities these smartphones have to offer to the development of their economic activities and lives.

Education, age and the forms of digital literacies are not the only associated factors that limit the use of mobile phones beyond calling, the perceived ease of use its features and application is attributed to the type of handset model owned. The complex nature of mobile interfaces (e.g., 2G) loaded to accommodate all the available alphabets, letters, numbers and punctuations requiring multiple key presses and taps to use applications could restrict the full utilization of mobile features and services such as SMS and Facebooking. This therefore suggests that one needs technical and cognitive literacies to be able to navigate the keypads to enter text on such mobile phones. Mobile phone manufacturers/designers therefore need to take cognizance of factors such as education, age and digital literacies as they develop mobile phone interfaces.

Technical literacy development associated with informal learning was also evident in the use of another basic function of mobile phones: the storing of contact numbers onto one's mobile phone. Majority of women in this study lack the technical literacy required to navigate their mobile phone interfaces and store their contact numbers on their mobile

phones; these numbers are stored into their contacts or phonebooks by their children (or grandchildren), a reflection of digital exclusion.

It is evident that even though most the women traders are unable to store their contacts numbers all by themselves, they do not lack absolute knowledge in using their mobile phones. This is because they are now able to make calls on their own and use their phonebooks, alarms, calculators, cameras as well as load airtime based on the informal trainings received from children, husbands, and siblings. Informal learning should therefore not be ignored in the developing of digital literacy as in recent times, digital technologies such as the mobile phones have been adopted by all including perceived illiterates.

Many of the traders (being at least forty years of age) receiving technical support from their children in using their mobile phones, shows that age or intergenerational differences appear to be associated with the quality of use of mobile phones. All the participants who receive the support of husbands and/ or siblings argued that they are able to gain this support because of a family member's higher education. Whereas those with secondary or higher education and younger do not need the support of others, a reflection of digital exclusion of other market women without higher education. The data presented here, therefore, support other findings (e.g. Basu & Chakraborty, 2011) that age and educational differences are closely associated with the quality of use of mobile phones features and services.

The finding that a majority of the women depend on the informal training from their children, shows that age differences appear to be associated with acquiring the different levels of digital literacies required to use one's mobile phone. It is argued that young people who grow up in the era of mobile phones and associated ICTs are said to be 'digital natives' because they are familiar with these technologies and, seemingly, are able to effortlessly adopt and adapt to changes in the digital landscape (Prensky, 2001). These children of the women are born in the era of digital technologies and grew up with them – hence their familiarity with mobile phones. It is worth noting that tech- savvy could be facilitated by children. Such technical literacy provided by the children has given these women an image and a feeling of sense of belongingness in the digital era. They have acquired to an extent digital inclusion status; however, they are still digitally excluded as they have not gone beyond the technical literacy dimension, to develop their cognitive and socio-economic literacies. Thus, they lack the full abilities, skills and knowledge to use ICTs to fully participate in the digital society.

The paper positions itself in the ICT4D policy and reflects on the importance of higher education, digital literacies and informal learning and their implication to use digital technologies. Government thus needs to invest in digital literacies by establishing market-based programmes as well as adult literacy programmes to enable the full utilization of mobile phones. In addition, the teaching of ICTs from the basic education level through to tertiary level as well as higher formal education particularly for girls/women should be upheld. Such attainment of ICT knowledge will help in achieving the SDG goal 10: inequality reduction associated with ICT use.

This study has contributed to knowledge of the various forms of literacies associated with quality of use of ICTs as the dimensions of digital inclusion, which is important for understanding the use of mobile phones among market women in Accra. The study has also assessed the role of education and age as well as informal learning in exploring the quality of use of mobile phone to get the deeper understanding in redefining digital inclusion. In addition, a contribution has been made to research on the characteristics of market women in Accra informal economy more specifically on their educational, age and extent of inclusion in the digital society.

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