Pedalling from Pedagogy to Andragogy: Engaging the Learner in the Process of Learning

Dr. Kashyapi Awasthi

Assistant Professor, National Centre for School Leadership, NIEPA, New Delhi

Abstract: *Learning is Life not just preparation for life. It is the life's experiences that facilitate learning rather than authoritarian instructions and we learn what we do and more often fail in doing all that we have learnt. Because, for learning to be lifelong and application oriented, it has to be learner centered and learner has to be internally motivated. However all the advancement in the pedagogical practices based on the different learning theories seem to be in contradiction to the term since pedagogy embodies teacher-focused education where learners are dependent, with pre-determined objectives, assumed to be inexperienced and uninformed and contributing little to the experience, learning chiefly being content centered and trainer/teacher a primary resource of ideas and examples. Unlike this, Andragogy – the art and science of helping adults learn is an alternative to pedagogy refers to learner-focused education. Here learner is a participant assumed to have experiences to contribute and learning is real life centered rather than subject/content centered where participants are seen as primary source for ideas and examples. The author in the present piece of work share the experience of using Andragogy as a teaching-learning model for facilitation workshops with in-service teachers and heads of schools in the area of school leadership development. The author is no way bidding farewell to pedagogy, however propose that teaching and learning exist along a continuum with pedagogy (directed learning) at one end and Andragogy (facilitated learning) at the other.*

Keywords: facilitated learning, Self direction, Learner centered, mind maps

1. Introduction

Learning is Life not just preparation for life. It is the life's experiences that facilitate learning rather than authoritarian instructions and we learn what we do and more often fail in doing all that we have learnt. Because, for learning to be lifelong and application oriented, it has to be learner centered and learner has to be internally motivated.

The great teachers of ancient times, from Confucius to Plato, didn't pursue such authoritarian techniques. They all saw learning as a process of active inquiry, not passive reception. Considering this, it is surprising that teacher-focused learning later came to dominate formal education.

Our academic system has grown in reverse order. Subjects and teachers constitute the starting point, learners are secondary. The learner is required to adjust himself to an established curriculum. Too much of learning consists of vicarious substitution of someone else's experience and knowledge. Psychology teaches us that we learn what we do. Experience is the adult learner's living textbook. Unfortunately, a century after Dewey proposed learner-focused education, most formal education still focuses on the teacher.

As a result, many learners leave school having lost interest in learning. Even good-intentioned educators can squelch naturally inquisitive instincts by controlling the learning environment. By adulthood, some people view learning as a chore and a burden rather it is more need based and interest oriented.

The Pedagogical Model:
The pedagogical model of instruction was originally developed in the monastic schools of Europe in the middle Ages. Young boys were received into the monasteries and taught by monks according to a system of instruction that required these children to be obedient, faithful, and efficient servants of the church (Knowles, 1984). From this origin developed the tradition of pedagogy, which later spread to the secular schools of Europe and America and became and remains the dominant form of instruction.

In the pedagogic model, teachers assume responsibility for making decisions about what will be learned, how it will be learned, and when it will be learned. Teachers direct learning. Thus the learning becomes teacher centered rather than learner centered and this increases the burden of cramming the knowledge which the learner feels is not his own. It is based on the assumption that learners need to know only what the teacher teaches them. The result is a teaching and learning situation that actively promotes dependency on the instructor (Knowles, 1984).

Up until very recently, the pedagogical model has been applied equally to the teaching of children and adults, and in a sense, is a contradiction in terms. The reason is that as adults mature, they become increasingly independent and responsible for their own actions. They are often motivated to learn, have an increasing need to be self-directing. In many ways the pedagogical model does not account for such developmental changes on the part of adults, and thus produces tension, resentment, and resistance in individuals (Knowles, 1984).

The growth and development of andragogy as an alternative model of instruction has helped to remedy this situation and improve the teaching of adults.

Need for pedaling from Pedagogy to Andragogy:
In the information age, the implications of a move from teacher-centered to learner-centered education are staggering. Postponing or suppressing this move will slow our ability to learn new technology and gain competitive advantage.

How can we expect to analyze and synthesize so much information if we turn to others to determine what should be learned, how it will be learned, and when it will be learned?

We must take it upon ourselves to meet our learning needs and demand training providers do the same. To know our demands, we must know how we process information. This demands a move from traditional pedagogical model to andragogical model which emphasizes on dialogue, discussions, inquiry and self learning. Moreover, it is the andragogical model that would take a learner to the higher order thinking (HOT) which in turn would lead to lifelong learning and research and development in the country while how so ever interactive teaching styles may be employed under the pedagogical model it still to a larger extent is limited to the lower order thinking (LOT) because while andragogy focuses on learning to think and thinking to learn, pedagogy is limited to at the most to thinking to learn.

Andragogy as a theory

Andragogy, initially defined as "the art and science of helping adults learn," is an educational theory that utilizes the adult's life experiences to teach and aid in learning rather than using someone else's experience in an attempt to teach. The term currently defines an alternative to pedagogy and refers to learner-focused education for people of all ages.

The andragogic model asserts that five issues be considered and addressed in formal learning. They include:
1) Letting learners know why something is important to learn
2) Showing learners how to direct themselves through information
3) Relating the topic to the learners' experiences
4) Developing readiness and motivation to learn
5) Helping overcome inhibitions, behaviors, and beliefs about learning.

If the above issues are addressed the learner will develop readiness to learn and according to Piaget's Cognitive theory will assimilate, accommodate, adjust and try to establish equilibrium with the new content thus promote self learning and motivation to learning. The andragogical model as conceived by Knowles is also predicated on five basic assumptions about learners, all of which have some relationship to our notions about a learner's ability, need, and desire to take responsibility for learning:
1) **Self-concept**: As a person matures his self concept moves from one of being a dependent personality toward one of being a self-directed human being.
2) **Experience**: As a person matures he accumulates a growing reservoir of experience that becomes an increasing resource for learning.
3) **Readiness to learn**. As a person matures his readiness to learn becomes oriented increasingly to the developmental tasks of his social roles.
4) **Orientation to learning**. As a person matures his time and curricular perspectives change from one of postponed to immediacy of application of knowledge, and accordingly his orientation toward learning shifts from one of subject-centeredness to one of performance centeredness.

5) **Motivation to learn**: As a person matures the motivation to learn is internal (Knowles 1984:12).
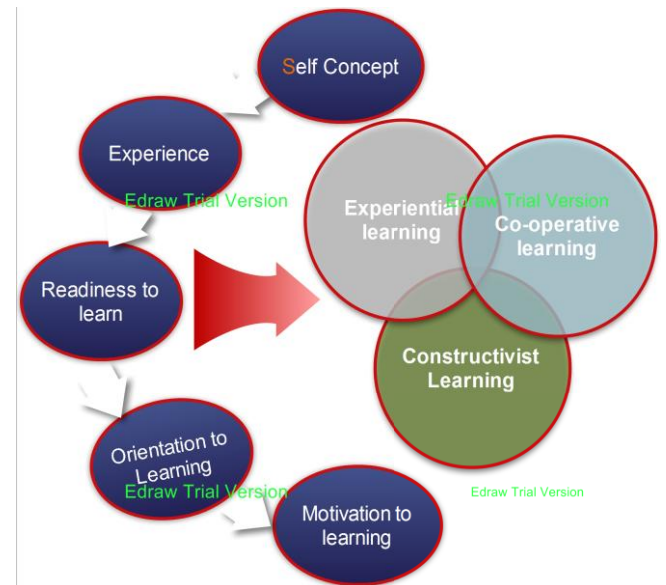

Figure 1: Assumptions of Andragogy

Unfortunately, andragogy usually is cited in education texts as the way adults learn. Knowles himself concedes that four of andragogy's five key assumptions apply equally to adults and children. The sole difference is that children have fewer experiences and pre-established beliefs than adults and thus have less to relate. Furthermore, the models are probably most useful when seen not as dichotomous but rather as two ends of a spectrum , with a realistic assumption (about learners) in a given situation falling in between the two ends" (Knowles, 1980, p. 43). The following table represents this

Pedagogy	Andragogy
Learners are called "students."	Learners are called "participants" or "co-learners."
Dependent learning style.	Independent learning style.
Objectives are predetermined and inflexible	Objectives are flexible.
It is assumed that the learners are inexperienced and/or uninformed.	It is assumed that the learners have experience to contribute.
Passive training methods, such as lecture, are used.	Active training methods are used.
Trainer controls timing and pace.	Learners influence timing and pace.
Participants contribute little to the experience.	Participant involvement is vital.
Learning is content-centered.	Learning is real-life problem-centered.
Trainer is seen as the primary resource that provides ideas and examples.	Participants are seen as primary resources for ideas and examples.

Knowles (1975) offered some reasons for his evolving scholarship in the area of self-directed learning. One immediate reason was the emerging evidence that people who take initiative in educational activities seem to learn more and learn things better then what resulted from more passive individuals. He noted a second reason that self-directed learning appears "more in tune with our natural process of psychological development" (1975, p. 14).

Knowles observed that an essential aspect of the maturation process is the development of an ability to take increasing responsibility for life.

A third reason was the observation that the many evolving educational innovations (nontraditional programs, Open University, weekend colleges, etc.) throughout the world require that learners assume a heavy responsibility and initiative in their own learning.

Knowles also suggested a more long-term reason in terms of individual and collective survival: ". . . it is tragic that we have not learnt how to learn without being taught, and it is probably more important than all of the immediate reasons put together. (Knowles, 1975, p. 15).

Teaching-Learning Practices in Andragogy
Day and Baskett (1982) offer that andragogy should be understood not as a theory of adult learning, but as "an educational ideology rooted in an inquiry-based learning and teaching paradigm" (p. 150). Andragogical theory "suggests all kinds of humanistically desirable and democratic practices; and it separates educators and trainers of adults from their counterparts in childhood, secondary, and higher education" (Brookfield, p. 96).

Adult learners should be recognized for who they are and where they stand in achieving their educational goals. Their readiness to learn and orientation to learning are inexorably tied together, as both of these assumptions center on learners' life tasks and problems. Nontraditional learners have a life-centered orientation to learning, as opposed to the subject-centered orientation of traditional learners. Stimulating dialogue that is meaningful to the learner capitalizes on this life-centered orientation.

The most effective tools for generating dialogue are discussion questions, case analysis, and other application-oriented materials that put theory into practice. These tools, combined with group and team activities integral to the learning model, allow learners to synthesize theory with their own experiences to best demonstrate learning outcomes. Facilitators learn to design open-ended questions, constructed to require learners to draw and support conclusions based on this synthesis and analysis.

Knowles' concept of andragogy - 'the art and science of helping adults learn' - 'is built upon two central, defining attributes: First, a conception of learners as self-directed and autonomous; and second, a conception of the role of the teacher as facilitator of learning rather than presenter of content' (Pratt & Ass., 1998, p. 12), emphasizing learner choice more than expert control. Both attributes fit into the specific socio-historic thoughts in and after the 1970's, for example the deschooling theory (Illich, Reimer), Rogers person-centered approach, Freire's 'conscientizacao'.

The author in the present paper shares an experience of having employed andragogy to facilitate learners. The following is an example taken from 'Schools as Learning Organization' one of the topics studied by the Heads of schools in the course on – Perspectives on School Leadership Development. The following figure depicts the tactics to be used while employing andragogy as a theory of learning.


Tactics of Andragogy
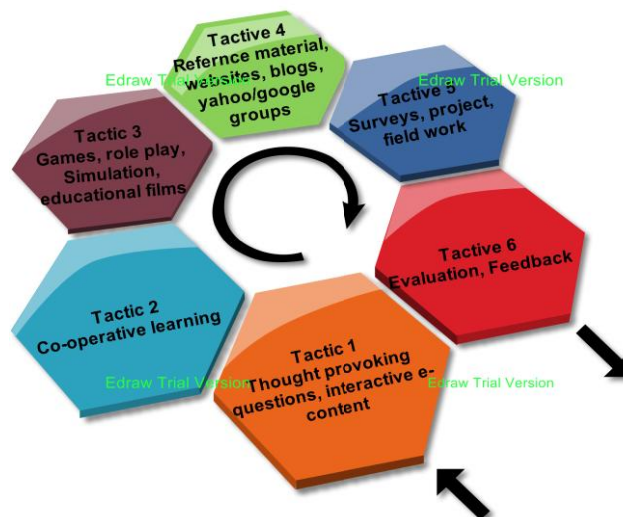
The first tactic to teaching through andragogical model is to put content in the form of thought provoking questions facilitating learners to learn to think and think to learn through series of questions. This would facilitate brainstorming and learners would develop clarity on the concept through inquiry, sharing of experiences, analysis and reference reading. On the basis of this exercise learners prepare a mind map of the concept. This will facilitate the retention of the concept since the knowledge gained is owned by the learners and based on one's own experience and understanding. This facilitates independent learning developing self concept, motivation, readiness to learn and joyful because the involvement of the learner is at it s core. The teacher is more of a facilitator than the source of knowledge. This exercise if combined with field work, games, and role-plays would strengthen learning making it a joyful experience. Here is an example from a topic on 'Environment Education (EE)' followed by a mind-map on teaching-learning in EE.

Listed below are examples of both a simple question as also thought provoking question

Simple question	Thought provoking question
What do we understand by environment education (EE)?	Why environment education is an issue? Do we really need to study on it?
What should be the objectives of environment education	Should there be different set of objectives of teaching environment education at elementary and secondary and/or higher secondary level. If yes, write at least three at each level.
Should EE be taught as a separate school subject or integrated with other subjects?	Will the objectives of teaching the same content differ if introduced as a separate subject? If Yes/No, why and how?
What learning experiences can be	Analyze the content in your respective method courses and list out topics which have a

designed to facilitate EE?	scope of being taught through an interdisciplinary approach and design learning experiences for any one of the topics.
Discuss role of teacher in imparting environment education.	Enumerate the factors contributing to the irresponsible attitude towards environment and the role of teacher in inculcating responsive behaviour.
Analyze the designed learning experiences vis-à-vis objectives?	Will the designed learning experiences help you to observe the desired learning outcomes with regard to the content as also EE in your students? How do you intend to check those?
How do you evaluate the students?	What items would you design to measure the different levels of learning outcomes in different domains?
Give feedback on the methodology of teaching-learning.	Did the methodology of teaching-learning motivate you to learn, provide scope for sharing of experiences, and provoke thinking, joyful learning experience free of the burden of cramming? If yes rate it on a 1 to 5 scale and justify.
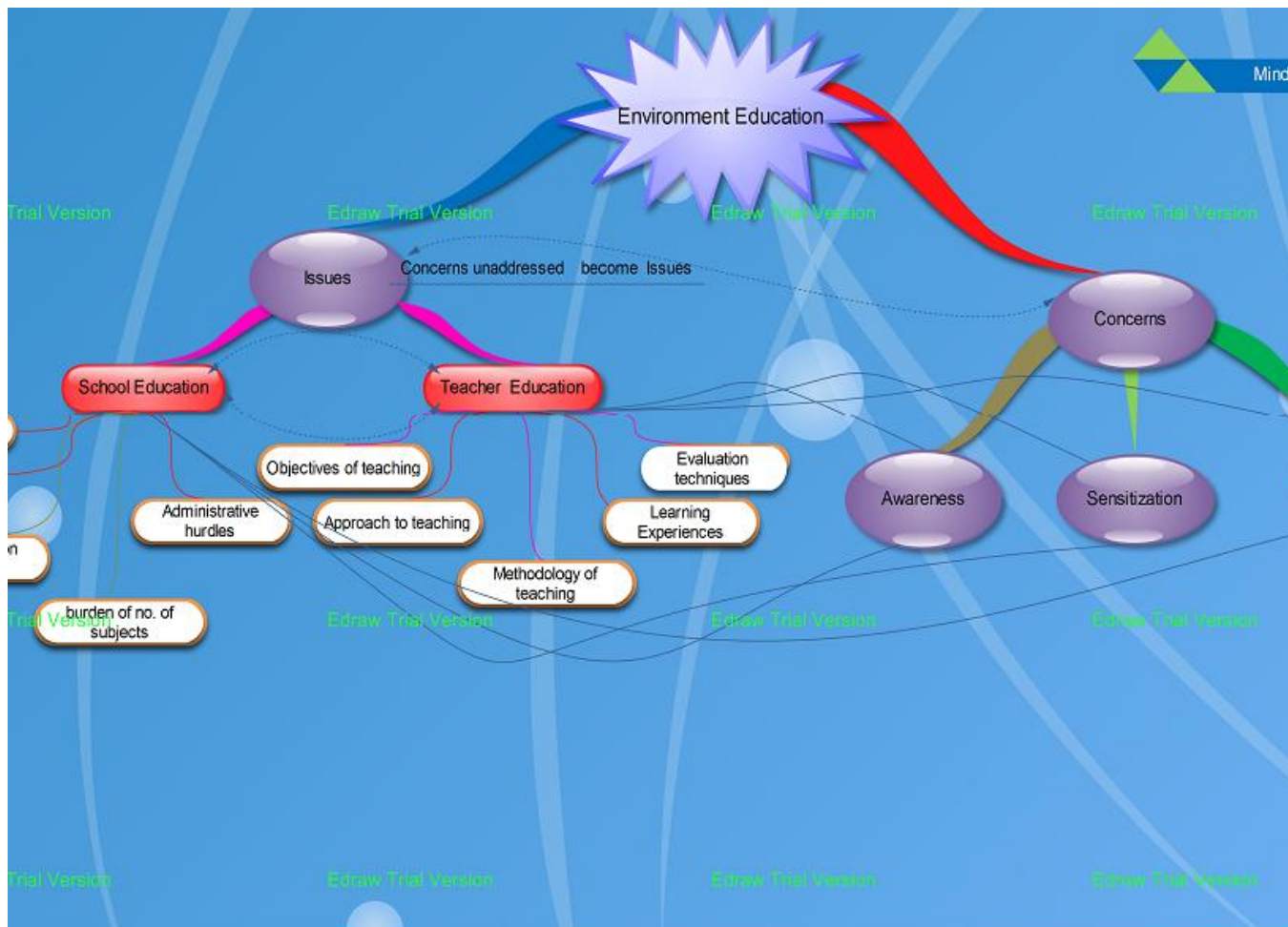
2. Conclusion

"It is the Supreme art of the teacher to awaken joy in creative expression and Knowledge."
- Albert Einstein

The author through her experience earlier as a teacher and then as a pedagogue working with pre-service trainees and now as a facilitator working with heads of schools; has learnt that pedalling i.e gradual marching from Pedagogy to Andragogy in a long run would help in grooming inquisitive minds with urge to construct knowledge and make them self learners. While innovations in Pedagogy may facilitate thinking to learn Andragogy facilitates learning to think. It is engagement of the learner with his/her own thoughts and experiences that makes learning life-long leading to behavioral changes not only in self but also in school and society.

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