

## Lesson Plans for Adults: methods and challenges

Sharareh Khodamoradi<sup>1</sup> and Mohammad Abedi<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Department of Agricultural Extension Education, Science and Research Branch, Islamic Azad University, Tehran, Iran

<sup>2</sup> Department of Agricultural Management, Islamic Azad University, Qaemshahr Branch, Iran

\*Corresponding author: abedi114@yahoo.com

**Abstract:** Though rarer today than in the past, some teachers discount the importance of learning styles. They continue to teach in their one major method without trying to vary instructional methods. This is a mistake that will lead to less learning in the classroom. On the other hand, many students and to a lesser degree some teachers make the mistake of thinking that they cannot learn using methods that are not focused on their learning style. This is also a huge mistake that in the end will result in less learning. If teachers do not help their students find ways to be successful learning information presented in any style, they are not helping them succeed in the future. The fact is that students will be faced with many different styles of teaching during the educational career. Only by finding ways to adapt and learn using other styles, will students end up succeeding.

[Sharareh Khodamoradi and Mohammad Abedi]. **Lesson Plans for Adults: methods and challenges.** Report and Opinion 2011;3(4):30-35. (ISSN: 1553-9873). <http://www.sciencepub.net>.

**Keywords:** adult learning, Lesson Plans

### Introduction:

Adult who is able to recognize their needs. He is who knows what will. Refers to individual adults in their lives cross and understand their responsibilities and has accepted the role is social. Adult learners are often those that distinguish each other and have many different targets at the same time and will follow a common challenge to fulfill the goals of building self motivation vectors as educational materials to learn and use the forge. Adult illiteracy is like a disease that infects virtually every dimension of Kentucky life. Adult illiteracy saps the energy and capability of Kentucky's people and its economy. Adult illiteracy feeds the state's unemployment, its welfare rolls, and the correctional institutions. Adult illiteracy severely hinders the life chances of young children, undermines school reform, and limits the opportunities for postsecondary education. Despite landmark reforms in public schools, too many Kentuckians continue to drop out of school, The field of adult education and literacy is plagued by confusion about definitions. Over the years definitions have evolved from provisions in federal law and initiatives of groups advocating particular methodologies or the needs of specific adult populations. The result is that definitions tend to merge statements about the goals to be achieved (e.g., improving the literacy of a particular population) with a particular means (e.g., adult basic education) to achieve the goal.

Therefore, it is helpful to distinguish between at least these dimensions of the issue:

1. "Literacy" refers to the knowledge, skills, and competencies of individuals. The federal Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (Title II of the Workforce Investment Act) defines literacy as "an individual's ability to read, write, speak in English, compute and solve problems, at levels of proficiency necessary to function on the job, in the family of the individual, and in society." Literacy is often defined in terms of specific domains such as "basic academic skills," "workplace skills," "life skills," "parenting skills," or skills necessary to exercise one's rights and responsibilities for citizenship. Different dimensions of literacy are often categorized by terms that cluster several dimensions of literacy important for different clients. Examples include workplace literacy (combining both basic academic skills and workplace skills), and family literacy (combining basic academic skills and other skills essential for successful parenting).
2. "Education attainment" usually refers to the numbers of years of schooling completed or the level of credential (e.g., high school diploma or associate degree) an individual has obtained. Despite concerns about the meaning of credentials, there is a strong correlation between educational attainment and literacy.
3. "Literacy initiatives" often are defined in terms of the needs of a particular target group. These may be parents of young children, youth who have dropped out of high school without earning a high school

diploma, welfare recipients, persons with limited English-speaking ability, incarcerated adults, or adults in the workforce.

Several definitions of adult education has been done Community

- Adult Education is a]in the following examples are given of them. conscious effort by public institutions or voluntary organizations to promote community awareness comes action.
- adult education teaching is typically specific age group above the legal age] limits as formal and informal, voluntary and at different levels of time, place
- Adult Education is a process in which people who]and education is presented. somehow been cut course they consciously to change or advance their skills in information and do organized activities.
- Adult education includes all formal and informal training and volunteer after] school, which by experienced educators and aware of the system.

Educational materials on adult education with daily life, needs, goals, aspirations and past experiences of adults and their relationship helps to results learned in life and career are used.

#### **Characteristics of adult education:**

##### **flexibility in time:**

In the past, usually one of the obstacles in the way of learning and development of adult education was being inflexible and time courses were programs. But now most countries have to consider that the speed limit of time and learning ability and facilities must be adults. Flexibility in time means that not only should the time classes and programs for adults is appropriate, but necessary facilities should be provided for independent study.

##### **Flexibility in the location:**

One of the aspects of flexible space is that individuals can, regardless of their residence to the study and advancing their knowledge and skills pay. For example, adults in remote villages should like people who live in the city use of educational programs. After flexibility in other places is that the issue of

specificity of location is not considered primarily educational.

##### **Flexibility in age:**

Educational opportunities for certain age should not use it for all regardless of their age, is possible. In fact, educational programs must use people of different ages to prepare.

##### **Flexibility in admission:**

No adult should not only be deprived of education because of the necessary conditions for admission in the class does. Of course this is not such a person without academic records to participate in university classes is accepted, Adoption order is that the adults in educational programs at different levels, according to the possibility of using the opportunity that is provided must be based on the experience and knowledge and their knowledge is.

##### **To combine education and job responsibilities:**

Adults should be able to work during that time engaged in training classes take them. In other words, their presence in the class should be considered part of their work. This means that low-literate or illiterate working people who are allowed to work an hour of your daily spending surpassed participation in educational programs.

#### **Lesson Plans for Adults:**

Lesson plans for adult education don't have to be difficult. Follow these easy steps and see how effective you can be. Every good course design begins with a needs assessment. For our purposes here, we're going to assume you've completed this assessment and you understand what your students need and what your objectives are for the course you're designing. If you don't know your objectives, you're not ready to design your course. With your objectives in hand, course design can be easy. Like any gathering of people for any reason, it's good to begin at the beginning and address who is there, why they've gathered, what they hope to accomplish, and how they'll accomplish it.

#### **Welcome and Introduction:**

Build in 30 to 60 minutes at the opening of your class to conduct introductions and review your objectives and agenda. Your beginning will look something like this:

1. Greet participants as they arrive.

2. Introduce yourself and ask participants to do the same, giving their name and sharing what they expect to learn from the class. This is a good time to include an ice breaker that loosens people up and makes them feel comfortable sharing.
3. Write their expectations on a flip chart or white board.
4. State the objectives of the course, explaining why certain expectations on the list either will or won't be met.
5. Review the agenda.
6. Review housekeeping items: where the restrooms are, when the scheduled breaks are, that people are responsible for themselves and should take a restroom break early if they need one. Remember, you're teaching adults.

### Module Design:

Divide your material into 50-minute modules. Each module will contain a warm-up, a short lecture or presentation, an activity, and a debriefing, followed by a break. At the top of each page in your teacher's guide, note the time needed for each section and the corresponding page in the student's workbook.

### Warm-Up:

Warm-ups are short exercises (5 minutes or shorter) that get people thinking about the topic you are about to cover. It can be a game or simply a question. Self-assessments make good warm-ups. So do ice breakers.

For example, if you're teaching learning styles, a learning-style assessment would be a perfect warm-up.

### Lecture:

Keep your lecture to 20 minutes or less if possible. Present your information in full, but remember that adults generally stop retaining information after about 20 minutes. They will listen with understanding for 90 minutes, but with retention for only 20.

If you're preparing a participant/student workbook, include a copy of the primary learning points of your lecture, and any slides you're planning to use. It's good for students to take notes, but if they have to

furiously write *everything*, down, you're going to lose them.

### Activity:

Design an activity that gives your students an opportunity to practice what they just learned. Activities that involve breaking into small groups to complete a task or to discuss an issue are good ways to keep adults engaged and moving. It is also a perfect opportunity for them to share the life experience and wisdom they bring to the classroom. Be sure to build in opportunities to take advantage of this wealth of relevant information.

Activities can be personal assessments or reflections that are worked on quietly and independently; they can be games or role playing; or they can be small group discussions. Choose your activity based on the best way to provide the adults in your class with an opportunity to experience what you just taught.

### Debriefing:

After an activity, it's important to bring the group back together and have a general discussion about what was learned during the activity. Ask for volunteers to share reactions. Ask for questions. This is your chance to make sure the material was understood. Allow for 5 minutes. It doesn't take long unless you discover that learning hasn't happened.

### Take a 10-minute Break:

It's important to get adult students up and moving every hour. This takes a bite out of your available time, but it'll be well worth it because your students will be far more attentive when class is in session, and you'll have fewer interruptions from people who have to excuse themselves.

Tip: While breaks are important, it's crucial that you manage them well and begin again precisely on time, regardless of stragglers, or chatter will get carried away. Students will learn quickly that class begins when you said it would, and you'll gain the respect of the entire group.

### Evaluation:

End your courses with a *short* evaluation to determine whether or not your students found the learning valuable. Emphasis on the short. If your eval is too long, students won't take the time to complete it. Ask a few important questions:

1. Were your expectations of this course met?
2. What would you have liked to learn that you didn't?
3. What was the most helpful thing you learned?
4. Would you recommend this class to a friend?
5. Please share comments about any aspect of the day.

This is just an example. Choose questions that are relevant to your topic. You're looking for answers that will help you improve your course in the future.

### Conclusion:

In traditional programs that the principles of psychology and curriculum planning, less attention is the form of content presentation ie codification and providing books, original format and have the dominant form, while for adult content that could have valuable experience in addition to writing, other ways also be provided Affect the selection of pictures and images related to the concepts and content produced by including them.

Learning activities such as activities outside the classroom, dialogue, role playing and ... Another type of content is presented. Duties are placed on the learner, a resource for developing knowledge, skills and insights he considered.

Curriculum content only from the training provided to learners or not, but put together their learning through activities that can inform or does, skills and attitude to achieve. In this case, apart from learning that the essays taught learners directly to sustainable and effective learning occurs in his.

Another way of providing content that is educational activities outside the learning environment possible for learning more and better enables adult learners. For example, hits, field trip experiences for learners or transfer is provided, develop knowledge, insight and skills they will.

To ensure that science curriculum and educational aspects, according to community needs and audiences, application form is provided or not, the content selection criteria should be considered. These criteria is being include knowledge, effectiveness, flexibility, diversity, relevance and practical learning.

Some research findings that can be a learning process for the Guidelines for training operations are applied, is given below:

- 1- To maximize learning, information must be provided an organized manner. Entries can be simple or complex can be arranged around related concepts are organized. Starting point for organizing content knowledge for adults and adults is linked to past experiences
- 2- Learning, especially regarding skills development, will be added frequently.
- 3 - Duties and meaningful content than meaningless subjects are learned more easily and are later forgotten. This issue, especially for older adult learners is true. Challenges of adult learning facilitators by the way that content was significantly associated with the experiences and needs of learners is.
- 4- Passive than active participation in learning activities, learning increases. Adult educators are allowed to participate actively in India, a stable and meaningful learning to help
- 5- Environmental factors affect the learning. Tangible things such as noise, crowded places, temperature, light and ... Learning process can be prevented. Other factors such as stress, ridicule, pressure, fatigue and low health can also reduce learning.

### \*Corresponding Author:

Mohammad Abedi  
Department of Agricultural Management, Islamic Azad University, Qaemshahr Branch, Iran  
E-mail: abedi114@yahoo.com

### Reference:

1. Birzea, C. (2001), The social impact of the continuous professional training. Bucharest, The National Romanian Observer.
2. Brookfield, S. D. (1996). Understanding and Facilitating Adult Learning. San Francisco: Jossey- Bass.
3. Brookfield, S.D. (1997). Developing Critical Thinkers: Challenging Adults to Explore Alternative Ways of Thinking and Acting. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
4. Fabry, D. L.,&Higgs, J. R. (1997). Barriers to the effective use of technology in education: Current status. Journal of Educational Computing Research, 17(4), 385-395.
5. Fletcher,W. E.,&Deeds, J. P. (1994).Computer anxiety and other factors preventing computer use among United States secondary agricultural educators.

- Journal of Agricultural Education, 35(2), 16-21.
6. Frye, N. (1993). *The Educated Imagination*. Toronto: Canadian Broadcasting Corporation.
  7. Ginsburg, L. (1998). Integrating technology into adult learning. In C. Hopey (Ed.), *Technology, basic skills, and adult education: Getting ready and moving forward* (Information Series No. 372, pp. 37- 45). Columbus, OH: Center on Education and Training for Employment. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 423 420).
  8. Habermas, Jurgen. (1991). *Knowledge and Human Interests*. Boston: Beacon Press.
  9. Hair, J. F., Anderson, R. E., Tatham, R. L., & Black, W. C. (1998). *Multivariate data analysis* (5th ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.
  10. Hanson, Karen. (1988). Prospects for the Good Life: Education and Perceptive Imagination. In K. Egan and D. Nadaner (Eds.), *Imagination and Education*. New York: Teachers College Press.
  11. Hardy, Barbara. (1998). *Towards a Poetics of Fiction: An Approach Through Narrative*. *Novel*, 2, 5-14.
  12. Hartree, A. (1994). Malcolm Knowles' theory of andragogy: A critique. *International Journal of Lifelong Education*, 3(3). 203-210.
  13. Hopey, C. (1999). Technology and adult education: Rising expectations. *Adult Learning*, 10(4), 26-29.
  14. Isahak Haron & Doraisamy, J. (1992). *Lifelong education in Malaysia: A general survey*. Thesis Mas. UM. 10. 1-13. Kuala Lumpur: Universiti Malaya.
  15. Kim K. (2000). *Participation in adult education in the United States, 1998-1999*. U.S. Dept. Of Education, Office of Educational Research and Improvement.
  16. King, K. P. (1999). Unleashing technology in the classroom: What adult basic education teachers and organizations need to know. *Adult Basic Education*, 9(3), 162-175.
  17. Knowles, M. S. (1999). *The making of adult educator: An autobiographical journey*. 1st Edn. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Inc. Pub.
  18. Kolb, David A. (1993). *Experiential learning: Experience as the source of learning and development*. 1st Edn. United States: FT Press.
  19. Kotrlík, J.W., & Smith, M. N. (1999). *Computer anxiety levels of vocational agriculture and other vocational teachers*. In M. F. Burnett (Ed.), *Proceedings, national agricultural education research meeting* (pp. 1-9). Columbus, OH: American Association for Agricultural Education.
  20. Krajnc, A. (1999). Andragogy. In Collin, J. T. (Ed.), *Lifelong education for adults: An international handbook*. 1st Edn. New York: Pergamon Press.
  21. Lang, J. M. (1998). *Technology in adult basic and literacy education: A rationale and framework for planning* (Research report). Cheney: Eastern Washington University, Instructional Media and Technology. Retrieved on November 14, 2003, from <http://cehd.ewu.edu/education/GraduateExamples/JML98Educ601.html>
  22. Lawler, P. A., & King, K. P. (2003). Changes, challenges, and the future. In K. P. King & P. Lawler (Eds.), *New perspectives on designing and implementing professional development of teachers of adults*. *New directions for adult and continuing education* (Vol. 98, pp. 83-91). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
  23. Jaffee, L. L. (2001). Adult literacy programs and the use of technology. *Adult Basic Education*, 11(2), 109-124.
  24. Jordan, W. R., & Follman, J. M. (1993). *Using technology to improve teaching and learning. Hot topics: Usable research*. Palatka, FL: Northeast Florida Educational Consortium, Southeastern Regional Vision for Education. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service ED 355 930).
  25. Mazanah Muhamad & Associates. (2001). *Adult and continuing education in Malaysia*. 1st Edn. Kuala Lumpur: Universiti Putra Malaysia.
  26. Merriam, S.B., Baumgarther, L.M., & Caffarella, R.S. (1999). *Learning in adulthood: A comprehensive guide*. 2nd Edn. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Pub.
  27. Mezirow, Jack and Associates (Eds.) (1990). *Fostering Critical Reflection in Adulthood: A Guide to Transformative and Emancipatory Education*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
  28. Moore, M. G., & Kearsley, G. (1996). *Distance education: A systems view*. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.
  29. Office of Technology Assessment, U.S. Congress. (1993). *Adult literacy and new technologies: Tools for a lifetime* (Final Report No. OTA-SET-550). Washington, DC: Government Printing Office.



30. Russell, A. (1995). Stages in learning newtechnology: Naive adult email users. *Computers and Technology*, 25(4), 173-178.
31. Timmermann, S. (1998). The role of information technology in older adult learning. In J. C. Fisher & M. A. Wolf (Eds.), *Using learning to meet the challenges of older adults. New directions for adult and continuing education* (Vol. 77, pp. 61-71). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
32. Sava, S. (2001). Adults' education in Romania: Educational, cultural and social politics. The volume of the first National Conference on Adults' Education, Timisoara, The Almanack of Banat Printing House.
33. Schifirnet C. (1997). *Changing Adults' Education*. Bucharest, Fiat Lux Printing House.
34. Sutton-Smith, Brian. (1988). In Search of the Imagination. In K. Egan and D. Nadaner (Eds.), *Imagination and Education*. New York, Teachers College Press.
35. UNESCO. (1999). *The Hamburg Declaration. Fifth international conference on adult education (Confitea V)*.Paris: UNESCO
36. Williams, Oscar. (Ed.) (1990). *A Little Treasury of Modern Poetry* (3rd Edition). New York: Charles Scribner's.

4/13/2011