Transformative Learning & Adult Education

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1. Write a 5-page paper based on one (1) of the three (3) items below:

● List and discuss the fundamental principles of adult education theory. Identify elements of the OGS degree program that correspond to each principle.

● Explain Jack Meirow's transformative learning theory. How does the OGS approach to transformative learning promote critical reflection for transcending barriers to personal growth and social impact?

● Assess Jane Vella's 12 Twelve Principles for Effective Adult Learning and the application of quantum thinking. Discuss how OGS promotes quantum thinking (holistic, integrated, spiritual, and energetic).

2. Paper Outline

a. Begin with an introductory paragraph that has a succinct thesis statement.

b. Address the topic of the paper with critical thought.

c. End with a conclusion that reaffirms your thesis.

d. Use a minimum of seven scholarly research sources (two books and the

remaining scholarly peer-reviewed journal articles).

Adult Learning Theory, also known as Andragogy, is based on six fundamental principles. The following paper will briefly introduce these principles and elements that correspond to OGS.

For Adult Learners looking to further their career, or in my case restart after raising kids as a single parent, the OGS Program is one to be considered. Traditional college settings are not set up for adults, who are no longer passive learners. Adults bring their baggage (good and bad) with them. They typically are looking for a program that meets their needs (e.g., self-directed, flexible, and no-nonsense). While online learning gave traditional colleges the opportunity to pivot in order to offer more to the adult learner, it still misses the mark because it operates on a business (i.e., research) model approach.

This in part is what sets OGS apart and makes it a better option for adult learners. OGS adopted the principles of Adult Learning Theory and combined them with biblical principles to form a transforming foundation that equips students to be changemakers for the Kingdom.

The first principle is meeting student needs (i.e., being self-directed, flexible and no-nonsense). OGS recognizes that Adult Learners need to know how their chosen program will benefit them, as well as how to use school resources. To address this, OGS has created a unique program with operational systems that apply to all students, as well as program specific requirements. Students are introduced to their program and Academic Advisor whom they will work with on the journey to earn their degree. Procedures describing operational systems like the library system and financial aid are presented to all students. The systems are simplified and the staff are available, reducing the anxiety that typically accompanies being in college, as well as enabling students to focus on coursework.

OGS recognizes an “individual’s ability to self direct is of great importance to the society, working life, and social development” (Loeng, S. (2020). p10). As such administrators designed the programs to be manageable for student success. This design is optimal and should be researched as an option for younger andragogy style learners.

The second principle of Andragogy (i.e., self-concept) is often overlooked by those trained in the traditional college model. OGS, however, does not see students as passive learners and instead accounts for a student’s self concept. For this reason, even students with a lower level of positive self-concept can thrive at OGS. In 2022, Van der Aar, L., et al., found that “self-concept clarity and social self-evaluations positively predicted social adjustment to college and academic performance 6 months after training.” While OGS does not provide specific “training”, their Adult Learning Theory foundation, combined with Christian biblical principles, creates a supportive environment where students at every level can thrive.

Diversity is a buzzword in today’s culture, but is also the third principle of Adult Learning Theory. It is also ingrained in the foundation that is OGS. Faculty and staff recognize students come from around the world and that they have diverse backgrounds and experiences. This diversity is celebrated at OGS and students are encouraged to incorporate their past experiences into their assignments. Broughton (2023) found that “graduate program learning was enhanced by the relevance of assignments to learners' needs and interests” (p53). This is exemplified at OGS where Adult Learners who haven’t studied in a long time can receive support as they navigate their studies.

The fourth principle of Adult Learning Theory is readiness to learn. Loeng, S. (2020) cited Knowles’ work that states **“**that there is convincing evidence that people who take the initiative in learning learn more and learn better than people who are passively being taught” (p5). It is important for schools to consider the Adult Learner’s style of learning. OGS recognizes that their students want to learn and have taken the initiative to apply and enroll. OGS developed its program with this assumption and established procedures that support the student who is ready to learn.

Motivation is another principle. It is one taken very seriously by some countries. In fact,“students schooled in the Singapore education system are expected to have 21st-century competencies, and student outcomes include the need for civic literacy, global awareness and cross-cultural skills” (p165). This out of the box experience has proven successful. Schools and systems need to evolve with the changing world. Today’s global economy and struggling education system are falling behind. OGS, however, stands out and encourages students to think outside the box, even asking how they plan to become a social changemaker.

Students today are lost as a result of a failed education system that does not prepare them for the career they are called to. **“**The fact that educational decision-making can be challenging, especially at a relatively young age, is reflected in an increasing number of adolescents who are postponing this choice by taking one or multiple gap years before starting a major in higher education” (p 341). OGS should be considered as a model program for Christian K-12 schools.

Future research recommendations include studies focused on younger Andragogy style learners, who can benefit from an Adult Learner Theory based program. As a student who never really fit in, but was provided with “gifted” classes, I can identify with Andragogy and encourage schools to start putting like minded/skilled students together. Let them grow together and explore! As an OGS student I am thankful my class assignments build on each other and that I am allowed to integrate my experiences as supportive evidence in what I believe. Moreover, it is encouraging to be able to be at a Christian institution that celebrates me and encourages the vision I have to be a changemaker.

**Works Cited**

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