Transformative Learning & Adult Education

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**Assignment #2**

### *Developmental Readings*

Create Developmental Readings from seminal sources and scholarly peer-reviewed

journal articles. Review the instructions for Assignment #3, the course essential

elements, and course readings to identify selections of books and journals to create

entries.

a. Refer to the "Student Guide to Developmental Readings" in the General

Helps folder for updated information on sample comments, the grading rubric,

and key definitions related to developmental readings.

**Source One:**Henschke, J., & Charungkaittikul, S. (2024). *Lifelong Learning: An andragogical*

*approach to education for the aging population*.

**Comment 1:***(from PHI 800-12 Transformative Learning and Adult Education)*

**Quote/Paraphrase:** An unprecedented longevity revolution continues transforming the world as we know it before our eyes. Older people must have viewed this context. Although the COVID-19 pandemic has magnified existing vulnerabilities and inequalities in our society's systems, the world is already different. The dual impact of these unprecedented changes, along with the emerging technologies of the fourth industrial revolution, means that this is now a time to reimagine our society in fundamental terms as we rethink familiar concepts such as lifelong learning, learning cities and communities' recovering' from the crisis of the COVID-19 pandemic (UNESCO, 2021).

**Essential Element:** This comment is associated with the transformative learning theory.

**Additive/Variant Analysis:**This comment is a variant of the understanding of how older people can adjust their worldviews and ways of thinking based on new experiences and challenges. Older adults have more years behind them than they do ahead. So, their advantage, regardless of the era or generation, is that they can adapt and endure because they possess a different kind of wisdom that helps them to confront change and evolve. Lifelong learning as a future education in today’s circumstances is an essential challenge for inventing the future of our societies. Learning life is more than adult education or training. Learning for life is a mindset and a habit for people to acquire as human being’s responsibility (Henschke, 2024, p. 1).

**Contextualization:** Some older adults know that the year they were born has a tremendous impact on how the world is seen and interpreted. Due to multiple layers of pedagogical teaching methods from kindergarten through high school and the cognitive challenges I had throughout, discouraged me from pursuing college post-graduation like some of my peers. With learning challenges, pedagogy seemed inflexible, uncaring, and academically frustrating. There were no IT advantages such as the digital native generations have. Society was less accepting and gracious five or six decades ago as it relates to the academic success and progress of Black children in public school systems. Those who had cognitive or emotional issues or learning disabilities had to share academics in special classes with the incorrigible.

From a cultural perspective, as a child reared in a predominately Black community only to be bused to white schools in the suburbs, contrasting learning styles were apparent. Coming out of high school, I was ill-prepared for college. However, as time passed, life happened, and the opportunity to pursue a bachelor's degree became available at thirty-two. Upon matriculating, though pedagogy was the teaching method of the day, it did not seem as arduous as it did in primary and secondary education levels. The reason is that even while living life up to my early thirties, I brought to the undergrad experience a certain kind of wisdom (such as life experience, maturity, and a deeper understanding of my learning style) that made it possible for me to thrive and succeed. The institution's professors made pedagogy make sense to those of us who were adult learners. That is when I learned how to change and evolve in academic settings. Consequently, Knowles (1980) addresses various needs for learning that are important during different ages of adult life and in different dimensions of life (Henschke, 2024, p. 2).

**Source Two:** Loeng, S. (2018). *Various ways of understanding the concept of andragogy. Cogent Education, 5*(1)<https://doi.org/10.1080/2331186X.2018.1496643>

**Comment 2:***(from PHI 800-12 Transformative Learning and Adult Education)*

**Quote/Paraphrase:** “This article deals with the concept of andragogy and the understanding of the same from a historical and professional perspective. It also includes a clarification of the difference between European and North American andragogy. Andragogy concerns adult education and learning in some way or another, but, beyond this, the concept is ambiguous. Many perceive it as being synonymous with Knowles’s andragogy from the 1970s, but this perspective is divorced from a sense of history. European andragogy arose long before Knowles’s andragogy did and is also more ambiguous. This article accounts for various understandings of andragogy, from the first known user of the concept to date” (2018, pg. 1).

**Essential Element:** This comment is associated with the andragogical teaching method (andragogy).

**Additive/Variant Analysis:** This comment is a variant to the understanding of various ways of understanding andragogical concepts from a historical perspective. Understanding pedagogical concepts requires understanding their seminal and ethnological roots. The article demonstrates the ambiguity of the concept of andragogy, supposing that the common understanding of the concept is somehow generally attached to Knowles’s andragogy (Henschke, 2015), and a great deal of the literature in the field from the 1970s onward centers on this approach. The debate in the wake of this approach has entailed support for or opposition to Knowles’s andragogy (Henschke & Cooper, 2006). This concept is narrow and divorced from a sense of history.

However, it’s crucial to acknowledge the significant influence of Knowles in popularizing andragogy. His book, The Modern Practice of Adult Education: Andragogy versus Pedagogy, made the concept known in the United States (Knowles, 1970). The previously mentioned Dusan Savicevic informed Knowles about the concept of andragogy in 1966 (Sopher & Henschke, 2011). After participating in one of Knowles’s summer courses at the University of Boston, he told him he was preaching and practicing andragogy (Knowles, 1984, p. 6). Knowles had never heard the word before, so Savicevic told him that, in Europe, the concept parallels pedagogy to denote the growing knowledge about adult learning (2018, p. 4).

**Contextualization:** From a contemporary perspective, Knowles’s andragogy is widely accepted. His andragogy rapidly gained renown in the English-speaking world and seems to form the basis for the common understanding of the concept of andragogy (Loeng, 2018, p. 1). My first exposure to andragogy came in 2007 at Martin University, Indianapolis, Indiana, under the facilitation of Dr. O’Neal Shyne, Jr. It was there that we were introduced to a new teaching method. Dr. Shyne clarified the difference between the pedagogical and andragogical perspectives. He explained that all we have academically accumulated up to that point had been pedagogical, where foundational learners are taught *what* to think. However, from an andragogical perspective, learners are taught *how* to think.

**Source Three:**Wang, V., & Gordon, K. (2023). Pairing Leadership and Andragogical

Framework for Maximized Knowledge and Skill Acquisition.*International Journal of Technology-Enhanced Education, 2*(1), 1-14. <https://doi.org/10.4018/IJTEE.330981>

**Comment 3:** *(from PHI 800-12 Transformative Learning and Adult Education)*

**Quote/Paraphrase:** “Is andragogy the elixir for organizational instability? To ensure training and development program success, leadership must understand that adult learners acquire information differently than children (Wang & Gordon, 2023, p. 1). Contemporary education scholar Malcolm Knowles (1913 – 1997) advocated for the study of andragogy as he believed adult learners were essentially overlooked and therefore taught in the same fashion, in a similar environment, and with the same tools as the children. Andragogy, Knowles affirmed, is the art and science of helping adults learn (Knowles et al., 2015). In this regard, art refers to a style, while science refers to a method. Unlike pedagogy, which is the art and science of teaching children, andragogy is specifically tailored to the unique needs and characteristics of adult learners” (Wang & Gordon, 2023, p. 3).

**Essential Element:** This comment is associated with Multiple Intelligences Theory.

**Additive/Variant Analysis:** This comment is variant as the article examines differences in knowledge acquisition between children and adults. It delves into andragogy's constructions, including theories associated with self-directed learning and enhanced self-concepts and their profound impact on organizational survival. As institutions and organizations progress towards the future, their survival in the post-pandemic world means navigating through the great resignation and ensuing labor market shortage to find the most efficient manners to conduct business. Many organizational leaders are looking to their existing workforces for solutions. In addition to looking to younger workers, organizations also see the value of what older adult learners have to offer. Organizations with a strategic approach towards training and development appreciate the return on investment such programs may provide if the training effectively expands employee skill sets. The leadership of this mindset is guardedly optimistic (Wang & Gordon, 2023, p. 1).

**Contextualization:** In a previous graduate school context at Martin University, Indianapolis, the professor presented andragogy as an overview, unlike the current post-graduate setting, where the curriculum goes into the forensics of andragogy. The articles for this set of developmental readings present the challenge of becoming more acquainted with and paying attention to the adaptation of my learning style while progressing toward the completion of the program. Learning, understanding, and seeing how my learning style(s) and way(s) of thinking have evolved and changed over the years is intriguing. This OGS journey has underscored the importance of adapting learning styles, a realization that I hope will continue to motivate me to explore and even incorporate aspects of different andragogical concepts as a component of professional growth and development.

**Source Four:** Reiff, M., PhD., & Ballin, A., PhD. (2016). Adult Graduate Student Voices: Good and Bad Learning Experiences.*Adult Learning, 27*(2), 76-83. https://doi.org/10.1177/1045159516629927.

**Comment 4:** *(from PHI 800-12 Transformative Learning and Adult Education)*

**Quote/Paraphrase:** “Cohorts of adult graduate students participated in a common learning task in which they listed their factors of good and bad learning experiences. The lead author collected these factors from students over the course of 3 years. The purpose of our inquiry was to examine and document what adult graduate students listed as factors contributing to good and bad experiences in adult learning classrooms. The finding revealed emergent high-frequency themes that were identified and named relating to student experience (Student Self), perceptions of and experience with instructors (Instructors), and respondent's content learning (Course Content)” (Reiff & Ballin, 2016, p. 76).

**Essential Element:** This comment is associated with the transformative learning theory.

**Additive/Variant Analysis:** This comment is additive because it gives further insight into the creation of effective learning environments, the method of curriculum delivery for adults in higher education, and how these translate into good and bad experiences for adult learners. Graduate students know what motivates them and creates an engaging and productive learning environment. This inquiry examined a set of factors from graduate students, listing what made for their own good and bad experiences in adult learning classroom environments. Over the years, a substantial number of lists have accumulated, reflecting extensive research and data collection. Educators became curious about how to examine these lists and use themes from them to provide insight into adult students' experiences and spark ongoing dialogue about how to design effective adult learning (Reiff & Ballin, 2016, p. 76).

**Contextualization:** Good experiences are affirming. Bad experiences are

for our learning and growth. Hindsight is the tool from which we can see, analyze, interpret, adapt, and learn from them. The article focuses on three research questions: What do adult graduate students say makes for good and bad learning? How much time do college instructors spend gathering and using information about adult students' prior experiences and course content interests? To what extent do graduate student instructors receive professional development in adult learning theory and practice? (Reiff & Ballin, 2016, p. 77). Thus far in this academic journey, there have not been any bad academic experiences per se; now, some external issues may have occurred that would have threatened academic progress, though minimal, even catalyzed patience and perseverance during those times.

Of the three research questions, the one more akin to my academic experience is the third one: To what extent do graduate student instructors receive professional development in adult learning theory and practice? Bad academic experiences or potential ones and how learners survive and thrive despite them are primarily due to instructors from an andragogical context. In the current academic environment at OGS, its instructors and staff are engaging and supportive, encourage dialogue, and offer constructive yet affirming feedback. Their knowledge base, a wealth of academic and personal experience, and empathy bring a fresh perspective in taking those not-so-pleasing academic moments and showing learners how to use them as a muse and motivation for academic and professional success.

**Source Five:** Sharpe, S. L., & Elwood, S. A. (2024). *E-Learning Design for Older Adults in the United States. Social Sciences, 13*(10), 522. https://doi.org/10.3390/socsci13100522.

**Comment Five:** *(from PHI 800-12 Transformative Learning and Adult Education)*

**Quote/Paraphrase:** “As global populations age, there is an urgent need to address the unique learning requirements of older adults in the context of e-learning. This study builds upon prior work to investigate the connections between older adults’ cognitive profiles, learning preferences, and attitudes toward technology in the United States” (Sharpe & Elwood, 2024, p. 1).

**Essential Element:** This comment is associated with educational taxonomies.

**Additive/Variant Analysis:** This comment is variant. Educational objectives,

taxonomies determine teaching methodologies and various types of learning. These taxonomies serve as tools for educators and, in this context, for older adult learners. A survey of 203 U.S. adults aged 55 and above collected data on participant demographics, learning preferences, and attitudes toward technology. The results reveal a tech-savvy sample that is most comfortable with everyday applications and favors practical, visual learning approaches. Key findings include high internet and smartphone adoption levels, varying confidence levels across mobile applications, and strong preferences for step-by-step instructions, examples, and graphics in e-learning modules.

This mixed-method study is a foundation for future research to increase the adoption and effectiveness of e-learning among older adults in the U.S. and globally, ultimately contributing to the overall quality of life and support for active-aging initiatives (Sharpe & Elwood, 2024, p. 1). The writers identified several areas where support or resources are needed as adults age and live longer. With longevity comes cognitive changes and challenges; technological familiarization and barriers; e-learning preferences and instructional design for enhanced engagement; emerging technologies and adoption challenges; addressing ageist assumptions and promoting inclusivity to enhance access; and synthesis and future directions (Sharpe & Elwood, 2024, pp. 2-4).

**Contextualization:** In 2022, the World Health Organization reported that with the rapidly growing aging population, adults 60 years and over are expected to more than double from 600 million in 2000 to over 2 billion by 2050. This demographic transformation will offer opportunities and challenges for lifelong learning. People are living longer, which yields longevity. As people live longer, their personal experiences, if they are disciplined in their care and possess a reasonable portion of health and strength, significantly shape their perspectives and the way they experience life. These experiences also contribute to the cross-generational wisdom they enjoy. This wisdom results from witnessing and being part of societal shifts and world changes, which significantly shape the future. The longer a person can live, the more there will be a need for different resources or systems to support the aging person in achieving their goals and objectives.

As a parent of adult children, one is already in their early forties, another will be forty years old in 2025, and five others are ranging from their early to late thirties; keep me in touch with the latest slang and catchphrases. I recall one of them telling me when I turned sixty years old that 40 is the new 20 and 50 is the new 30. They further denoted to me to cushion the fact that I turned sixty years old and said, “… And Dad, 60 is the new 40.” As if I needed sympathy or the “do not feel bad about getting old” encouragement. Quite frankly, it is just the opposite. My personal experiences, such as surviving cancer and the opportunity to live to see sixty years, have shaped my perspective on aging. They have served as the fuel for my tenacity and perseverance. Life has become more meaningful and purposeful as I pursue the goals and objectives where the unpleasant moments served as steppingstones on the road to success. Sharp & Elwood (2024, p. 2) note that he increased longevity in our population allows for more years of meaningful education, experiences, engagement, and continued contribution well into late adulthood. However, this societal transformation also brings forward new challenges that limit older adults’ access to high-quality continuing education experiences (Zhang et al. 2022).

**Source Six:** Boateng, J. K., Attiogbe, E. J. K., & Kunbour, V. M. (2022). *Influence of adult learners’ self-direction on group learning. Cogent Social Sciences, 8*(1)<https://doi.org/10.1080/23311886.2022.2064592>

**Comment Six:** *(from PHI 800-12 Transformative Learning and Adult Education)*

**Quote/Paraphrase:** “The study draws from the concept of self-directed learning and constructivist theories, examining the relationship between self-direction and group learning in an adult learning context. Through the qualitative approach, the researchers conducted a thematic analysis of the transcribed interviews to gain insight into what influenced adult learners’ self-direction and peer engagement. The research found that collaborative contexts lead to better student engagement. Also, support from a more capable colleague contributed significantly to successful learning. The main contribution of the study is that the self-direction of the adult learner is critical to moving from the zone of the current development to the zone of potential development” (Boateng et al., 2022, p. 1).

**Essential Element:** This comment is associated with the multiple intelligence theory.

**Additive/Variant Analysis:** This comment is additive to the understanding and involvement in self-directed learning communities. More adults are taking charge of their learning and development to meet the demands of their daily lives. This has become necessary due to the pressures from a fast-changing socio-economic world that sometimes impact their employment. Their interest in seeking specific knowledge and skills makes them self-directed learners with the primary responsibility for their learning, ranging from planning how to learn to evaluating learning experiences, including all other activities falling in between, which is necessary to ensure successful learning. As part of the strategy of adult learners to manage their multiple roles, including learning as higher education students, adult learners tend to draw significant support from their colleagues and faculty.

This peer support is crucial in helping them deal with learning anxiety as they face challenges in their studies, including passing exams and completing their projects successfully. They build relationships where they get support from their peers, encouraging those struggling to persist in the course. These educationally meaningful peer relationships are essential to support the adult learner. Adult learners also tend to achieve more with the support of their colleagues than when they work independently. However, it must be noted that the level of self-directedness of the learner determines whether the individual will seek or avail themselves of such collaborative learning arrangements, especially if the task is of common interest (Boateng et al., 2022, p. 2).

**Contextualization:** Per PHI-800-12, Howard Gardner’s Theory of Multiple Intelligences Theory purports that intelligence is diverse because people are different. Older adult learners bring a special and unique toolbox into their academic experience. Most older adults are parents, grandparents, spouses, relatives, and friends to many people. Gardner suggests that there are eight types of intelligence, each with its own distinction: linguistic (language), logical (quantitative), kinesthetic (bodily), spatial (perception), musical (artistic), interpersonal, naturalist, and intrapersonal (introspective). As an older adult learner, I can attest to the effectiveness of self-directed learning groups. Being in an academic environment with one’s peers or colleagues is less stressful and intimidating than being in such settings with Millennials or Gen Z’ers. In an aggregation of seasons, adults in an academic setting demonstrate remarkable resourcefulness because each person is different and brings with them attributes and intangibles germane to their journey and experience. In such settings, relationships are built, respect is garnered, and the likelihood of academic success is greater and more achievable.

**Source Seven:** Brown, K. S. (2024). *Pathways to Thriving for Adult Learners*(Order No.

31485979). Available from Publicly Available Content Database. (3088048719).

**Comment Six:** *(from PHI 800-12 Transformative Learning and Adult Education)*

**Quote/Paraphrase: “**The purpose of this study was to explore

the pathways to thriving for adult learners, taking into consideration their entering characteristics and life circumstances. Thriving has been defined as student success that includes not only a student’s academic performance and engagement but also their psychological wellbeing and interpersonal relationships. However, most student success literature has focused on traditionally aged students, perpetuating a knowledge gap of what student characteristics and campus experiences are predictive of thriving among adult learners. Given the projected continuation in adult learner enrollment, this study addressed a gap in the student success literature by assessing the pathways to thriving for adult learners” (Brown, 2024, p. 8).

**Essential Element:** This comment is associated with the transformative learning theory.

**Additive/Variant Analysis:** This comment is variant. Research on adults in higher education has tended to be deficit-based and focused on the individual student. As a result, the literature has emphasized adult learners’ barriers to success, elements of adult learning (Rose, 2021), and motivation to pursue a degree (Belzer & Dashew, 22, 2023) that affect individual students. Knowing what experiences and characteristics contribute to adult learners thriving can assist institutional leaders in creating or revising policies and designing programs to enhance the success of these students. Enhancing the success of adult learners could lead to more students earning bachelor’s degrees, improving student social mobility, and increasing revenue for their respective institutions. The potential for higher graduation rates is an intriguing aspect of a strengths-based approach that should pique the interest of researchers. Thriving adult learners will likely not only persist and graduate at higher rates but also have higher emotional, psychological, and social well-being (Brown, 2024, p. 22).

**Contextualization:** One of the mentors who took me under their wing decades ago encouraged me during what he was unaware of, my academic struggle, when he echoed to me, “…each victory will help you some others to win,” This suggested to me that every victory is not a pom-pom, rah-rah victory but learning victories. In or with adult learners, there are diversities of temperaments, attitudes, experiences, wisdom, and the like that are brought into whatever situation an adult learner may find him or herself in. The transformative learning theory, a concept that emphasizes the importance of life experiences, former employment, and educational settings in shaping an individual's learning journey, has been instrumental in my personal growth. In retrospect, this theory has given me critical thinking, scholarly research tools, and, more importantly, the motivation to be open-minded and explore new ways of thinking and learning.

**Works Cited**

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