

Dear Colleagues Salam,

Pedagogy or Andragogy? Which Methodology is Appropriate for Adult Learners?

The fight and flight between pedagogy and andragogy is not new. History dictates that these two methodologies of teaching and learning been used since 7th and 12th century. Since then, both methodologies are used as a parallel to each other based on the teaching and learning conditions. Andragogy stresses about the age of the learner (adult) when teaching is concerned. In reality, it is not the end; it is far beyond the age. For instance, a teacher has to consider the learner's biological, physiological, social, legal, psychological, moral and even spiritual when preparing for the class. In teacher's mind, the issue of gender and age is secondary. In fact, pedagogy engages all those conditions mentioned above when they teach. In the United States for example, before 1950s, the age for formal education was from six to 21 years, the teachers used both theories, and it worked pretty well for adults and children. The issue of age and pedagogical assumptions appeared only in early 1920s when some instructors "assumed" that pedagogy might not be suitable for adults.

Pedagogy derived from Greek words *Paid* means child and *Agogus* means leader. Therefore, pedagogy means leader of the child. **Andragogy** first introduced by a German teacher Alexander Kapp, majority of German teachers disapproved its assumption about teaching and learning so it disappeared almost for a decade and pedagogy was still in use. Only in 1927, andragogy reappeared in the United States but it was not, even recognized as a teaching concept. However, in the 1960s, the term andragogy was introduced to Knowles, who revived it as a so-called concept. **According to Knowles (1973), the so-called founder of andragogy**, tried to redefined pedagogy as the art and science of educating the children while andragogy as the art and science of teaching the adults.

As we discussed earlier, we have to look at the fundamental attributes attached to the learners such as biological, physiological, social, legal, emotional, moral and even spiritual when preparing our contents for the class. **Houle (1972)** perceives knowledge as a holistic and as a single fundamental *human* process. He argues that even though there are substantial differences between adults and children, the process of acquiring knowledge is the same among men, women, boys and girls. Therefore, he rejected andragogy as an organized teaching and learning process in adult education. He named andragogy merely as a technique of learning. **London (1973), Elias (1979)**, raised doubt in the theoretical ability of andragogy and the failure to show concrete evidences, how it is different from pedagogy in terms of teaching and learning.

They defined education as oneness and a unified entity. **Cross (1981)** another scholar strongly challenged andragogical concept, saying it is only an optimistic assumption without reality. **Cross (1981)**, further argues that andragogical theory is confused between teaching and learning. It is also confused about the similarities that exist between children and adults when they learn. Additionally, andragogy methodology is confused between theory and practice. In fact, pedagogy has not specifically declared itself as a children education. Pedagogy never focused in learners' age or gender. Even andragogy, in its assumptions indicated that it is for adult male not female and there is no reference about age. **Mohring (1989)**

See what Knowles (1980) said as a defender of Andragogy: "I am at the point now of seeing that andragogy is simply another model of assumptions about learners to be used alongside

the pedagogical model of assumptions, thereby providing two alternative models for testing out the assumption as to their 'fit' with particular situations. Furthermore, the models are probably most useful when seen not as dichotomous but rather as two ends of a spectrum, with a realistic assumption in a given situation falling in between the two ends". (p. 43.) At one point, he even agreed that andragogy may be used with children education and pedagogy with adults. In short, there are sufficient documented evidence advocates that pedagogy and andragogy are similar in nature and can be used to educate adults as well as children. Therefore, educators will continue to use both methodologies according to their needs and conditions of their environment, Rachal (1994).

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