

American Association for Adult and Continuing Education

International Pre Conference 2008

Denver, Colorado November 9-11

Presenters

Abdull Kareem, Omar & Wai Bing, Kuan

Learning to be Good Leaders: Significant stages experienced by school managers in Malaysia

Abstract

The purpose of this study was to understand the nature of learning for school managers in government schools as they lead and make decisions at different steps of the socialization stages. A phenomenological approach was selected. Data were gathered and generated on the nature of learning as experienced by school managers while performing leadership and decision making roles. Elite Sampling was used to select successful school managers, and data collection methods consisted of in-depth interviews with participants. Interviews were taped, transcribed (verbatim), and analyzed. In addition, non-participant observations and the examination of official documents made accessible to the researcher were also considered. Furthermore, teachers, parents and trainers were informally interviewed for triangulation and validation purposes. The trustworthiness of the study was further ensured through member checks, peer examination, and maintenance of an audit trail. Thematic findings which emerged included four socialization learning stages, namely: (a) Entry into Headship; (b) Identity Formation; (c) Making a Difference; and (d) Reformulation of Personal Values. This study provided a helpful guide for understanding school managers' learning within the socialization process towards achieving better leadership and decision making competencies. Implications for relevant training and support for leadership preparation are noted, and specific recommendations for further research are also suggested.

Chang, Bo

Culture as a Tool Facilitating Knowledge Construction in the Context of a Learning Community in Shanghai China

Abstract

Knowledge construction is regarded as an effective learning model in practice. When more and more learning communities are organized to promote knowledge construction, it is necessary to know how to use different tools to support knowledge construction in the learning community context. In the literature, few researchers discuss how to construct knowledge with such tools in the contexts of learning communities. The purpose of this project is to explore how culture as a tool supports knowledge construction in the context of the Zhabei learning community in Shanghai, China. Social constructionism and the cultural diamond device are employed to frame the study. Data from five learning cells indicate that culture is a bridge that connects multiple knowledge creators together; culture is a prop which transfers knowledge to a variety of receivers; culture is a lubricant nurturing an open and light learning environment; and culture is used as a toolkit to compose the new knowledge product.

Hassi, Marja-Liisa; Hannula, Aino & Saló i Nevado, Laia

Encountering Adults' Difficulties in Mathematics: The case of Finnish adult education

Abstract

We will first offer a short general picture of Finnish adult education system and organizations. After that we will take notice of various educational contexts in which adults' difficulties in basic skills are encountered. Finnish adults' possibilities and current projects for improving basic skills in mathematics in Finland will be described. Examples are presented from adults' personal learning experiences as well as from the perspectives of the involved teachers and student counselors by using interview data. Finally, future perspectives on adults' poor basic skills will be discussed.

Henschke, John

A Global Perspective on Andragogy: An update

Abstract

Andragogy has received mixed reviews in the past. Some have analyzed it from a positive perspective. Some have analyzed it from a negative perspective, and some have ignored it altogether. Most of the discussions have limited their observations to how Malcolm S. Knowles addressed andragogy. There has been an inadequate investigation of the foundation and background of andragogy from a world perspective. This research presents 240 major works published in English from national and international sources on andragogy that may help provide a clear and understandable international foundation for the linkage between the research, theory, and practice of andragogy. Six themes have emerged that provide a foundation for the linkage: The evolution of the term; historical antecedents shaping the concept; comparison of American and European understandings; popularizing and sustaining the American and world-wide concept; practical applications; and theory, research, and definition. This is the yearly update [2008] of this research.

Henschke, John; Koita, Dantouma; & Diakite, Daouda

(Opening Night Address)

Discovering Current Adult Education Needs in the Republic of Mali, Western Africa

Ho, Florence H.C.

Entrepreneurs' Learning Experience in Small- and Medium-sized Enterprises in Hong Kong

Abstract

This paper introduces a dynamic perspective of entrepreneurial learning, using entrepreneurship and learning theories as a framework of inquiry to explore the learning experiences of the entrepreneurs from small and medium-sized enterprises in Hong Kong. This paper concludes by demonstrating that there is interconnectedness between entrepreneurial activities and entrepreneurial learning. Entrepreneurial learning is characterized as contextual, continuous, and cumulative. Sources of learning include learning by doing, learning from experience, and learning from others.

Holmes, Tammy L.

Student Involvement, Experiences, and Perceptions in Study Abroad Programs

Abstract

Presented is a narrative inquiry approach to studying African American college students' study abroad experiences. Explored are study abroad programs that teach important intercultural skills, with transformation occurring within students when they realize that they can see the world from a different cultural viewpoint. Types of study abroad programming are defined with a subsequent discussion of African-American students' 3.5 percent participation rate in study abroad involvement. Study abroad programs are explored in three areas: Involvement, benefits, and transformation. Through the use of interviews, study abroad experiences were collected from African American college study abroad participants. Ten essential themes emerged as central to African American students' participation in study abroad programs: (a) preparation, (b) finance, (c) recruitment, (d) language acquisition, (d) global perspectives, (e) identity, (f) race, (g) host families, (h) class, and (i) influence (faculty, student, and media). Conclusions, limitations, and implications for further research are also discussed.

Kamen, Gale

Fundamental Hinduism's Role in the Conversion of Many Dalits of India to Other Faiths: How Dalits are addressing the issue of religious acclimatization

Abstract

The Dalits of India, formerly known as Untouchables, consist of approximately 160 to 180 million people. There are four castes (social orders) in the Indian society. The Dalits are considered the 'fifth caste,' as they are viewed by the other castes as being too nominal to be a part of the Indian social caste system. This stigma is a reality that persists throughout the nation of India. Dalits, even today, often live under demeaning and indeed subhuman conditions. Hinduism is the only known religion that accepts negative views of race, intolerable human rights violations amongst its own believers, and inequality on an imposing scale. Many of the Dalits in India have voluntarily chosen to convert to several egalitarian faiths that provide them with religious and social fulfillment; Buddhism being the

foremost. Religious conversion has presented the Dalits with the freedom to worship without restraint, even though they cannot rid themselves of the stigma of untouchability that always prevails. This paper will discuss the segment of Dalits that have chosen to convert to other religious convictions. Moreover, it will also take into account those who have not chosen to convert, and will discuss what compels these individuals to remain part of a social system that disparages their very being.

Morris, Linda & Cranford, Steve

Visioning Knowledge Societies from a Global Perspective: Challenges for education and adult educators

Abstract

The 2005 UNESCO World Report Towards Knowledge Societies noted that, with a few exceptions, there has been little description or clarification of what a “knowledge society” might be and urged clarification and coalescence around ethics such as justice and freedom. This paper provides perspectives about the aims and characteristics of knowledge societies that may be created within and among nations. It incorporates national and international knowledge society visions and includes three that VA Tech Adult Learning and Human Resource Development graduate students created during a knowledge society course. The paper highlights common elements in the visions and considers underlying enablers. It focuses on actions adult educators and others could take to actualize such visions and identifies questions for further exploration.

Mwaura, John N.

Black African International Adult Students’ Experiences in Higher Education: A qualitative study.

Abstract

The purpose of this study was to explore the lived experiences of adjusting to U.S. culture among non-traditional-age, adult Black African international students while attending predominantly White higher education institutions. The study explored how the role of race as well as cultural background informs their experiences as Black African adult international students, thus distinguishing them from other international students. A qualitative research method drawing largely on heuristic phenomenology was employed. Critical Race Theory, sociocultural theories, and acculturation model by Jandt (2004) inform this study. Five themes emerged from this research. First, the perceived motivations that influenced Black African adult international students to study in the U.S. are highlighted to give background to the study. The second theme addresses the challenges encountered by participants as a result of facing a new educational system. The third set of findings focus on participants’ growing awareness of race, while the fourth set deals with the realities of being in a new culture. The last set of findings center on post-arrival experiences in the United States’ educational journey. The study provides key implications for adult education and recommendations for faculty and higher education administration on American university campuses.

Nishioka, Shoko

Adult E-learning: Development of Two-Way and Blended Learning Courses in Kyoto

Abstract

Kyoto Prefecture's Lifelong Learning Development Network Council (LLDNC), comprised of 116 groups including 37 universities and 39 cities and education boards, has developed more than one hundred adult e-learning courses. The first generation of courses, launched in 2005, are taught by video and animation and are one-way open-access courses. A second generation of courses launched since 2007 employs not only video and animation, but also two-way communication and blended learning. In addition to interactive on-line materials, these courses offer one-to-one tutor-learner correspondence for problem solving, and face-to-face options including field-trips and study tours. These courses are open to all and enable flexible learning, anytime and anywhere. Uptake so far as generated class sizes ranging from 50 to 150 with 56% of learners in the over 60 age-group. Through these courses, adults resident not only in Kyoto but anywhere in the world can study Japanese culture and a range of other topics. The co-operative reinforcement of this and other such Councils is important for the further creation and improvement of adult learning opportunities.

Pleskot-Makulska, Krystyna

Traditions and Current Trends of Development in the Area of Adult Education in Poland

Abstract

The presentation highlights the main historical traditions and current trends in adult education in Poland. The analysis is primarily focused on such main issues as: factors influencing the development of adult education in Poland; its legislative framework and the structure of the current Polish adult education system; institutions and organizations involved in adult education; the extent of participation; aims and function of adult education in Poland; its main challenges and perspectives for the future. Adult education in Poland experienced a deep transformation over the few centuries of its existence. At present, it forms an integral part of the Polish educational system and plays a crucial role in the implementation of the idea of lifelong learning. The presentation shows both accomplishments and current challenges to adult education in Poland.

Simmala, Buasawan

Cross-Cultural Adjustment of Lao and Vietnamese International Graduate Students in the United States

Abstract

As a part of the Asian international student body, which represents the largest and fastest growing international student population in the U.S., Lao and Vietnamese graduate students' enrollment in the U.S. is beneficial to host universities and the country in various aspects. However, their social and cultural needs are seldom addressed. To succeed, these students are required to function in English as a foreign language, and adjust to teaching approach and patterns of communication based on U.S culture and the subculture of the particular State/university, they are in. They thereby tend to suffer from considerable stress. Guided by the research question: "What are the adjustment problems facing Lao and Vietnamese international graduate students in the United States?" this study explores the

cross-cultural adjustment experiences of these students. This new knowledge is also used as a conceptual framework for examining Mezirow's (1990, 1991) transformative learning theory. The interpretive approach to qualitative research is used to describe their experiences. The perspectives from a sample of thirteen Lao and Vietnamese students were gathered through interviews, and the data were tentatively analyzed using the "constant comparison" method.

Sun, Qi

Adult Education Research in China, 1978-2008: An analytic review and discussion on the influence of National Educational Policies

Abstract

Through an overview and analysis of the major national education and adult education policies, this paper endeavors to present the driving forces of the development of contemporary Chinese adult education, to identify and examine the highlights of current practices, and to discuss future developments. Questions for exploring and informing the study include: (a) What are some of the driving forces for the development of Chinese adult education? (b) What are some of highlights of Chinese adult education? (c) Where to next for Chinese adult education? The contemporary Chinese national education and adult education policies and regulations relevant to Chinese adult education are reviewed and examined to help answer these questions and portray a picture of contemporary practice of Chinese adult education.

Sun, Qi & Cho, Sun Rang

From Confucian Tradition to Postmodern World: Korean middle-aged women's traditional roles and modern expectations in a globalized society

Abstract

From a Confucian tradition to the postmodern world, informed by critical theory, feminist perspectives, and existing literature, this paper identifies and explores perceptions of Korean married middle-aged women's traditional roles and roles in the globalized society. It concludes with the application of adult education to the empowerment of Korean women and gender equity

Wadende, Pamela

Negotiating Space: International adult learners in USA universities

Abstract

This is a qualitative study in which seven international students enrolled in graduate programs of a Southwestern state university are interviewed. Information is collected about their arrival into the USA and the challenges they face in their attempts to settle into their studies. The students discuss the reasons why they decided to come to the USA for graduate studies. They talk about their orientation to the USA, how they secured initial accommodation, culture shock, and what motivates them daily to excel despite being away from their families. The students also

discuss how distance has affected their relationships with their families and how they try to counter this effect of distance through keeping in touch with their families by means of technology. Lastly, they advise prospective international students on various issues they would need to reflect on during their adjustment period. The recommendations given in this study can be used by both prospective international students and receiving universities on how to ease and make shorter the transition period at the student's relocation.

Wang, Wei-ni, Ong-Fen, Hsieh and Hwei-Jen, Chan

A Content Analysis of Mission Statements of Taiwanese Community Colleges

Abstract

Mission statements present an easily and publicly available communication message regarding the stated purpose of organizations. This study examined 70 mission statements of the Taiwanese community colleges. Through the rationale of content analysis methodology, the researchers found 21 mission characteristics emerged from the data. The researchers also analyzed the extent to which the characteristics of missions changed over the years, and found 2001-2004 was the key period of time when community colleges started to show greater attention to particular issues and populations. The study further investigated the extent to which mission statements were similar and the extent to which they were different, given the references to urbanicity and modes of management.

Yelich Biniecki, Susan

Adult Education and Globalization: An analysis of worldviews

Abstract

This literature review synthesizes authors' worldviews of adult education situated within this current phase of globalization. Drawing internationally on peer-reviewed literature, worldviews were found to be positioned within two stances: a) workforce development and the new economy and b) inequity and the neoliberal agenda. Within these worldviews, rhetoric connotes different sets of symbolic meanings. An analysis of the literature suggests the need for the incorporation of adult education and globalization within the framework of concrete qualitative, quantitative and mixed method research studies. An understanding of these worldviews has implications for adult education policy and practice on micro and macro levels.