

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCING ADULT LEARNING: LINKING THEORY AND PRACTICE



Box 1.1 Chapter Overview and Learning Objectives

Learning is a fundamental process that is continual and lifelong. An African proverb captures this sentiment about adult learning:

Anyone who fails to learn. . .is regarded as *oku eniyan* (the living dead).
(Avoseh, 2001, p. 483)

Learning—acquiring knowledge, skills, and attitudes—is as natural as breathing and vital to life. As an adult, you constantly learn throughout your day and life, whether or not you are conscious of it. You learn about breaking news from your smartphone. You decide to try a new recipe you scanned in the newspaper. You discover a new route across town due to an unexpected detour. You encounter a moment to question an assumption when a friend tells you how they shifted their thinking about a shared value. Your concern for a struggling child prompts you to identify ways to help them navigate the situation that sends you to other parents, their teacher, or your therapist. You decide to make a major life change that creates significant upheaval. These moments are learning opportunities in adulthood, largely unplanned and informal, and sometimes surprising.

This chapter introduces the second edition of *Adult Learning: Linking Theory and Practice* and provides an overview of the book with advice on how to read it. This book is written for you: an adult learner, an adult educator, a person interested in learning, or all three. The chapter and book contain key terms and ideas about adult education and learning. The chapter begins with an introduction to the book and its features, introduces key terms and definitions, and provides an overview of its framework. The boxes throughout the book include *Chapter Overview and Learning Objectives*, *Adult Learning and Teaching Cases*, *SOTL: The Scholarship of Teaching and Learning*, *Reflective Practice*, and *Tips and Tools for Teaching and Learning*, *Adult Learning by the Numbers*, and *Recommendations for Further Learning*.

As a result of reading this chapter and completing the exercise boxes, you, the reader, should be able to:

1. Understand the aims of *Adult Learning: Linking Theory and Practice* and how to read this book.
2. Define key adult learning concepts and terms.
3. Understand the book's framework.

Adult Learning in Turbulent Times

Globalization, the knowledge age, technology, and demographic changes characterize today's learning context. This chapter describes the world where adults learn. Most people have heard the adage attributed to Greek philosopher Heraclitus of Ephesus (535–475 BCE) that “Change is the only constant.” The axiom has never been truer, with change at an exponentially higher rate than ever throughout history. Learning has been adults' proven response to change, and as action learning advocate Reg Revans (2017) said, “There can be no learning without action, and no action without learning” (p. 53).

When you, the reader, think about learning, what flashes into your mind? It is likely a formal classroom with rows, pupils, materials, and a teacher. Yet, the majority of learning in adulthood is informal—not organized or taught by a teacher—and often incidental in that it is a byproduct of another experience, such as shifting to remote work and realizing life is more or less stressful or listening to the news and trying to understand geopolitical conflict. Learning happens as you navigate and negotiate daily life in your communications with others, face personal and interpersonal challenges, care for family members, engage in work or a career, participate in your community, and adjust to unexpected changes and catastrophes like the COVID-19 pandemic. Jarvis (1987)

observed that adult learning rarely occurs in isolation but in the context of life and the world. The editors of the 2023 *Handbook of Adult and Continuing Education* began the book by observing the field of adult education as “a forward-looking domain of practice and scholarship” (Mizzi et al., 2023, p. 1), describing the time as tumultuous:

Adult and continuing education should not simply respond to rapidly changing social, economic, technological, and political environments across the globe, but should lead the way in preparing adults to become informed, globally connected, critical citizens who are knowledgeable, skilled, and open and adaptive to change and uncertainty. (p. 7)

We (the authors) wrote the second edition of *Adult Learning: Linking Theory and Practice* deeply committed to providing you, as an adult or educator, with theoretically sound applied ways to enhance your learning and that of others. As adults muddle through a global pandemic, learn new technology, grapple with a health change, or travel to a new place, their learning is embedded within the social context, affected by the people, places, and current events they encounter.

Volatility or “VUCA”

The acronym “VUCA” represents conditions that are V-volatile, U-uncertain, C-complex, and A-ambiguous (van der Steege, 2017; Yoder-Wise, 2021). The United States Army War College devised VUCA to describe and study perplexing, shifting, confusing, and multifaceted conditions (US Army Heritage and Education Center, 2018; Whiteman, 1998). VUCA circumstances prevail: The world grapples with the aftermath of the global COVID-19 pandemic and how it is reshaping work and career conditions; brutal wars rage and people are displaced, wounded, and killed, with little evident movement toward resolution; global poverty and hunger plague many nations; police violence against Black and Brown humans continues in the United States and elsewhere, although the wave of demands for equity and justice following the murder of George Floyd and others are being doused by conservative voices and initiatives to weaken or destroy diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) efforts in the workplace and educational settings; voters are electing populist leaders who are creating global conflict and unrest; and severe weather conditions have become the norm, causing destruction and human suffering as a result of climate change. These VUCA challenges capture what Rittel and Webber (1973) called “**wicked problems**”—obtuse, incomprehensible situations that are difficult for people to understand, predict, control, or address and require different mindsets and approaches than easily solved problems.

Living and Learning Amid Volatility

Learning in a VUCA world puts new demands on adults who must create meaning and make decisions with incomplete, changing information. Hawley et al. (2023) underscored, “The pandemic and the continued devaluation of Black lives are the backdrop for two of the major challenges resulting during this unprecedented time: economic and social disruption” (p. 453). They noted further that adult and continuing education is critical in helping people and nations confront these challenges. For example, Canzittu (2022) explained that in today’s context, employers expect workers to flex amid complexity by facilitating learning and leveraging knowledge to respond effectively to problems and derive appropriate solutions. Further, organizations grapple with capacity building to create, maintain, and share knowledge to address wicked problems. Table 1.1 describes VUCA concepts in adult learning terms using the COVID-19 pandemic as an example of a VUCA situation.

VUCA circumstances present continual opportunities for learning and change while simultaneously creating conditions that create resistance to both. The COVID-19 pandemic was unusual because change was compulsory and immediate once lockdowns began. Although few changes are as extreme, the situation proved that humanity could change radically and quickly (Korten, 2020).

Most people dislike or resist change, so living in a VUCA world can create anxiety and frustration. Finding resilience and staying focused can be difficult. Adopting a learning orientation—asking “What is new or different now?” or “What can I learn from this situation?”—is a healthier coping mechanism than feelings of helplessness or exasperation. It also helps to talk about change and uncertainty with others to make collective meaning and perhaps take collective action. Box 1.2 applies VUCA.

The research and scholarship in adult learning are extensive, and this book provides a solid introduction and firm grounding in the theories and research that inform evidence-based practice. One of the book’s features highlights SoTL—the scholarship of teaching and learning. Box 1.3 defines this concept.

Defining Adult Education and Learning Concepts and Terms

Adult education and the process of adult learning have several important concepts and terms to understand in order to be conversant in the field. Table 1.2 provides a summary of commonly used terms and a definition. Review the table to discover how many terms are familiar to you as a learner or educator.

The book will use these terms to introduce theory and research and tie them to best practices for facilitating effective adult learning.

TABLE 1.1 ADULT LEARNING IN VUCA TERMS

VUCA Term	Definition	Adult Learning Examples	Learning Strategies for Coping with Change	Reflective Questions
V Volatility	Unstable change, even in situations that are understandable and identifiable.	The COVID-19 pandemic injected volatility into life and work overnight globally. Even though people knew how to live and work, the disruption caused immediate shifts in how people lived, worked, and learned, demanding new ways of being and knowing. The lines blurred between home and work life, creating life balance challenges; formal learning suddenly became remote and technology-driven for all ages; jobs were reconfigured for remote work; anxieties prevailed about safety; social distancing became the norm, and new ways of connecting were discovered; and many people began reassessing their values and life goals, especially related to work.	Find balance, be agile, and be open to new learning: When the world is unpredictable, find a space, practice, or community that feels safe and centering. Ask questions about new challenges and learning. Accept change as a constant and develop flexibility to maneuver and change with the fluctuating demands. Create a vision for your next steps in life and help others do the same.	• What do I understand about this situation? • What do I not understand about this situation? • What scares me about this situation? • What am I learning about myself? Others? • How can I support others in this moment? • How do I want to show up in this moment?
U Uncertainty	The present is unclear, and the future is uncertain. A lack of knowledge about the implications or consequences of a situation prevails, even when its causes and effects are anticipated and recognizable.	The COVID-19 pandemic created a health risk situation that required immediate changes in daily life and work. It was unclear how long the pandemic would last and how it would affect lives in the future.	Learn: Seek to understand and build knowledge about the situation. Work on environmental scanning to assess the current reality and anticipate future needs, opportunities, and challenges. Reflect on what you do well and how you can improve. Use the situation to enhance your learning and knowledge. Keep perspective and attempt to control what is in your sphere of influence. Take care of yourself and your loved ones.	• What is known about the situation? • What is unknown? • What do I know that can be useful right now? • What can I control? • How can I support others in navigating the uncertainty?

(Continued)

TABLE 1.1 (Continued)

VUCA Term	Definition	Adult Learning Examples	Learning Strategies for Coping with Change	Reflective Questions
C Complexity	Multiple factors within a system come into play that create confusion and chaos.	How COVID-19 vaccines were developed and administered was a global, confusing, and chaotic task. On a more individual level, how families decided to organize their lives was a new learning territory. Similarly, work teams and organizations had to deal with the upheaval and awkwardness of remote work.	Communicate: Clearly and often. Whether engaging with family and friends or peers, supervisees, customers, or the boss, transparent exchanges help create alignment on the next steps. Communicating and ensuring people understand expectations also enhances collaboration and results.	• How might I cultivate a growth or learning mindset? • What scares me about not knowing? How can I lean into the confusion? • What are different ways of looking at this situation? Who else should I be talking with? • How am I affected by this situation? How can I influence this situation?
A Ambiguity	Little or no clarity exists about the situation.	When the COVID-19 pandemic began, there was little clearness about personal safety measures like masking or social distancing. There was a blurring of personal and professional work for remote workers. Once some organizations began returning to in-person work, many CEOs made and continue making missteps in their policies and communication.	Experiment and foster resilience and flexibility: When the situation is unclear, you may have to try different things. Sometimes, that means making an individual decision. Another may mean negotiating the appropriate situation and learning new coping skills. Talking about coping with others can also be helpful and therapeutic.	• What is known? • How can I remain calm in the face of the unknown? • Who seems to manage ambiguity well? What can I learn from them? • What happens if I make the wrong decision?

Source: Adapted from Bierema, 2024, pp. 22–23.



Box 1.2 Reflective Practice

Applying VUCA to Life's Challenges

VUCA gives you, as an adult learner or educator, the language to make meaning of abstruse and fluctuating situations and find ways to be resilient during uncertainty. Referring to Table 1.1, picture a taxing situation you have encountered or are currently trying to solve. Review the definitions, examples, and coping strategies and consider how you might handle it from a VUCA perspective. Jot your reflections in this box:

VUCA Term	Definition	Coping Strategies
V Volatility	Unstable change, even in situations that are understandable and identifiable.	Find balance and be agile by:
U Uncertainty	The present is unclear, and the future is uncertain.	Learn by:
C Complexity	Multiple factors within a system come into play that create confusion and chaos.	Communicate by:
A Ambiguity	Little or no clarity exists about the situation.	Experiment and foster resilience and flexibility by:

Source: Adapted from Bierema, 2024, p. 24.



Box 1.3 SoTL: The Scholarship of Teaching and Learning

What Is the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning?

The scholarship of teaching and learning (SoTL) began with Boyer's (1990) work, *Scholarship Reconsidered: Priorities of the Professorate*, in which he advocated reframing traditional scholarship to reflect the range of faculty work. Boyer proposed expanding scholarship beyond conventional or basic research to include integrative scholarship that compiles and interprets original research and insights from existing research, the scholarship of application or bridging of theory and practice, and the scholarship of teaching to profile effective, evidence-based teaching methods.

Fanghanel et al. (2015) explained:

SoTL covers concepts as diverse as reflection and inquiry on learning and teaching practices, strategies to enhance teaching and learning, curriculum development, the promotion of research-informed teaching, undergraduate research, and student engagement in disciplinary or SoTL research. SoTL is also fundamentally linked to, and informs, visions of, and practices for, strategic professional development, career planning, promotion and recognition (Chalmers, 2011; Fanghanel, 2013; Hutchings et al., 2011; Mårtensson et al., 2011). (pp. 8–9)

Adult education scholar Roger Boshier (2009) criticized SoTL, arguing that the concept has become a synonym for non-teaching-related activities, the definition has conceptual confusion, SoTL is difficult to operationalize, SoTL discourse is anti-intellectual, and it over-relies on peer review to determine effectiveness.

This book will profile research that provides evidence for effective adult learning practice, where the information is available, and share contrary views and evidence.

A Framework for Adult Learning

This edition of the book applies a framework to organize the major sections of the book. Merriam et al. (2020) offered a scaffold for adult learning that distinguishes it from child learning according to the characteristics of the learner, process, and context that inspired the current framework. The first edition of *Adult Learning: Linking Theory and Practice* expanded the scaffolding to consider the additional variables of the educator and the design and facilitation of the learning itself. The framework has evolved and become the organizing framework for this book: the educational context, the educator, the learner, the process, and the method. This section briefly introduces the framework.

The Adult Learning Context—The Where. *Context* is *where* learning occurs, and it affects every learning exchange. **Context** is the social system that permeates the thinking and actions of all human beings within a particular situation, such as a classroom, school, organization, community, or nation. Context may incorporate physical conditions, political conditions, economic conditions, power dynamics, and other influences that impact those occupying that space. For example, the context of the

TABLE 1.2 COMMON ADULT LEARNING AND EDUCATION TERMS

Term	Definition
Adult Education	Adults engage in learning or educational activities to develop new knowledge, skills, or attitudes, encompassing everything from basic literacy to advanced graduate work to activities not associated with academic institutions or formal instruction. Adult education is considered distinctive from the education of children.
Adult Educator	A person who teaches, supports, and facilitates adult education and learning on various topics.
Adult Learner	Any person holding roles with adult-like responsibilities (e.g., worker, parent, responsible citizen) who is engaged in acquiring new knowledge, whether formal, informal, or nonformal (see definitions in this table).
Adult Learning	When adults engage in systemic, sustained activities to gain new knowledge to meet a desired goal, such as learning, connecting with others, or advancing at work, adult learning can be formal, informal, or nonformal.
Andragogy	Contrasted with pedagogy, andragogy is typically learner-centered education where learners define their learning goals and have input and control over the learning process, even when engaged in formal education.
Chautauqua	A late-19th and early 20th century adult education and social movement in the United States that provided community-based entertainment and cultural learning. Some are still active today, such as The Chautauqua Institution in New York State, the original Chautauqua, or the Athens Chautauqua Society in Athens, Georgia.
Critical Pedagogy	Education that questions power relationships and who in society creates knowledge. This approach teaches learners to think critically and question their knowledge and the material others try to teach them. The intent of critical pedagogy is learning and action that promotes social change, equity, and justice.
Critical Thinking	Pondering about the information one consumes through observation, experience, reflection, reasoning, or communication by conducting analysis, interpretation, and evaluation about the quality of the information and using good judgment and discernment in the information one believes and accepts as knowledge.
Digital Literacy	Adults' ability to responsibly use and consume digital information with confidence, critique, and safety.

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TABLE 1.2 (Continued)

Term	Definition
Formal Learning	Structured, organized education usually depends on a teacher presenting planned lessons. This type of learning often leads to some kind of credentialing, such as degrees or certificates.
Informal Learning	Learning occurring in the course of daily activities and experiences that is unplanned, unstructured, and not organized, but instead happens as an adult encounters other people, challenges, or opportunities. Informal learning can also be incidental or learning as a byproduct of doing something else. For example, incidental learning might be learning what annoys the boss during a meeting—a consequence of the activity that was neither intended nor planned.
Nonformal Learning	Learning that occurs through planned learning activities where some support of the learner is available, but the learning is not part of the formal education and training system, such as vocational education, continuing education, or apprenticeship training.
Lifelong Learning	Learning in all its forms (formal, informal, nonformal) occurs across a person's lifespan and may encompass formal education, job training, life experiences, and cultural, civic, and social activities.
Literacy	The ability to read, write, speak, and listen that allows a person to effectively communicate with others and make sense of their world.
Lyceum	A loose collection of adult education programs popular in the mid-19th century in the United States, before and after the Civil War. They were traveling programs that included lectures, drama, classes, and debates by well-known entertainers and scholars. The lyceum movement influenced the development of adult education in the United States. Similar programs are common across the globe such as the Scottish Mechanics' Institutes, the Workers Educational Association (WEA) in the United Kingdom, Danish folk high schools (Folkehøjskoler), German people's high schools (Volkshochschulen), the Latin American Pedagogical Movement (Movimiento Pedagógico Latinoamericano), the Tawijhi movement in the Middle East, and community learning centers in Asia.
Pedagogy	Contrasted with andragogy, pedagogy is typically teacher-centered education with the goal of filling learners' empty minds with knowledge. Freire (2011) referred to this type of teaching as "banking education," where the teacher would "deposit" knowledge into the learner's head.
Training	The process of increasing an adult's knowledge and skills for a particular task, job, or desired level of performance, productivity, or capacity.

COVID-19 pandemic radically affected how people lived, worked, and learned worldwide. The physical or psychological context may also require inhabitants to modify their thinking and actions when occupying the space. For example, the physical context, such as a classroom setup and format, affects the learning exchange. A traditional in-person lecture format with all learners facing the front will create very different interpersonal dynamics than a room where learners can sit around a table and face each other or a room with only chairs but no tables. Of course, learners from more teacher-centered cultures may be uncomfortable with a room setup that turns their gaze away from the teacher and toward their peers. The psychological environment, such as one marked by interpersonal conflict, creates very different dynamics from one where there is collaboration and respect. Online learning contexts have other influences on learning as they change the nature of human interaction that might occur in a classroom.

The Adult Educator—The Who. Oftentimes, scholars and practitioners overlook the *educator* in discussions of teaching and learning in adult education. We, the authors, believe this is a mistake as helping adults learn begins with the well-being and mindset of the educator, where one is involved in the learning. Throughout this book, we address both the educator and learner since the roles are intertwined. We also think it is essential to acknowledge that all educators are learners first. Being an educator is an honor and responsibility and striving to improve as a teacher is a lifelong learning endeavor. Outstanding educators embody Schön's (1983) notion of the reflective practitioner stance in which one is engaged in an ongoing examination and adjustment of practice. This reflective practice gives the educator a keen sense of self and how their values translate into educational thought and action. Educators are continually creating and testing theories and practices as they strive to meet learner needs. Both non-Western and Western teaching approaches have much to offer learners. Educators can more effectively reach diverse learners across cultures by using multiple methods and embracing multiple perspectives and worldviews.

The Adult Learner—The Who. The *learner* tends to get most of our attention as educators, and for good reason. This book addresses many aspects of the learner, from who participates in adult education to what motivates learners to how learners can thrive in a constant state of ambiguity and social upheaval. Early theoretical work in adult education focused on describing the learner. These contributions dominated from the 1960s through the 1980s and include Houle's (1961) work on understanding learner goals, Knowles's (1970) popularization of the Andragogy concept, the advancement of self-directed learning as a key

feature of adult learning (Knowles, 1975), and the development of lesser-known theories such as McClusky's (1950) Theory of Margin. Adults participate for multiple reasons, although work-related learning remains a significant focus. Adults are also engaged in English as a second language (ESL), adult basic education (ABE), general education development (GED), credential programs, apprenticeship programs, continuing professional education, and personal development courses. Adults have high expectations for timely and relevant learning. Although adult learning has common characteristics, the diversity of learning needs and varied cultures of learners must be acknowledged and valued in the learning process. Adulthood is full of multiple demands, so most adults seek learning when it is relevant to a life issue or problem. The learning must also be about something adults care about and find useful. Adult motivation to learn is likely intrinsic; adults learn to meet unmet needs, resolve unwanted conditions, or reach desired goals. Box 1.4 summarizes work-based adult learning.

The Adult Learning Process—The How. Educators and learners are key stakeholders in the *learning process*. Just how does the learning happen? The **learning process** concerns what goes on in the learner's head, heart, body, and soul, leading to a change in behavior or perspective. The learning process is culturally bound, and change is often a significant catalyst for learning. Adulthood is characterized by constant change that may prompt an identity crisis, challenge relationships, and impact a person's sense of legacy—what they will leave for the next generation. Learning helps adults cope with change, whether it is expected or unanticipated. For example, people might anticipate leaving home for the first time, becoming a college student, committing to a relationship, joining a cause, starting a family, taking a new job, or assuming an important community role. All of these foreseen life events are learning opportunities. Adults are less prepared for life's unexpected changes, such as the breakup of a relationship, sudden death of a loved one, loss of a job, change in financial circumstances, or new insights gained from events, travel, or relationships. Some of these changes could evoke **transformative learning** that provokes shifting one's way of thinking and being in the world. Change often requires people to reframe their understanding of circumstances and ideas. Adults learn by making meaning of life situations, reorganizing their understandings of ideas, and, at times, changing their behaviors and beliefs due to learning. The chapters in this book explore various aspects of this learning process, including motivation, the role of experience, self-directed learning, transformative learning, brain and cognitive functioning, embodied and spiritual learning, and critical thinking.



Box 1.4 Adult Learning by the Numbers

Adult Learning in the Workforce

This box contains summaries of research on AL from the National Center for Educational Statistics (NCES—see <https://nces.ed.gov/>).

The NCES conducts periodic surveys on *Participation in Adult Education and Lifelong Learning*. Results from the 2001 survey concluded:

In 2001, the overall participation rate in formal AE during the 12 months before the interview was 46 percent. About 92 million adults participated in one or more types of formal educational activities during this period (p. vi).

The rate shifted from 40% to 45% during the 1990s, which is the most recent data.

During 2005, the breakdowns of adults taking specific programs, classes, or courses included (see https://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d19/tables/dt19_507.40.asp):

- Informal learning activities for personal interest: 70.5%
- Career or job-related courses: 27%
- Personal interest courses: 21.4%
- Basic skills/General Educational Development (GED) classes: 1.7%
- Part-time post-secondary education: 5%
- Apprenticeship programs: 1.2%
- English as a second language (ESL) classes: 0.9%

Informal learning is common among adults and occurs outside traditional, formal settings like a classroom. Much of AL is self-directed, planned, and controlled by the learner. Work-related learning is the second highest area, where activities like workplace training occur.

Workplace training is a thriving industry, with *Training* magazine reporting in its annual Training Industry Report that US expenditures were \$10.1 billion in 2023, averaging \$954 per employee (Freifeld, 2023).

The Method of Facilitating Adult Learning—The What. Effective learning for adults is cognizant of the intersecting roles of the context, educator, learner, and process in designing and facilitating **learning**—creating and delivering learning experiences that help adults develop and demonstrate their understanding of knowledge, skills, or attitudes. The design and facilitation of learning is the bridge between theory and practice in adult education. It is the moment we, as educators, must take our theories and concepts of adult learning and put them into practice to create relevant, timely, and engaging learning experiences for diverse learners. No single formula exists for creating robust programs to optimize learners’ learning. Yet, as discussed throughout this book, there are several things that educators can do to ensure that each participant has an opportunity to learn from the experience.

The impact of culture continues to be essential for educators and learners as we strive to appreciate diverse ways of knowing. Although the traditional theories of adult learning are here to stay, such as andragogy, self-directed learning, and transformative learning, the field is focusing on more contemporary emerging understandings of learning, such as holistic learning, embodied learning, spirituality, non-Western ways of knowing, technology, and generative knowing. We, as authors, would like to think that these perspectives are a result of our increasingly globalized and technologically connected world. Smith (2010) suggested that holism is the most effective means of facilitating learning as it promotes a “natural state of the human being. . .[an] interconnectedness within the human being (mind, body, spirit), between humans, and between humans and the universe” (p. 150). Smith explained that the technical, rational Western approach to learning fails to honor the intellectual, emotional, physical, social, aesthetic, and spiritual aspects important in many non-Western cultures. She noted that Western approaches privilege the intellect over other ways of knowing and value autonomy and independence over collective ways of learning. On the other hand, holism is experiential, interdependent, community-oriented, and culturally responsive. It values using the learner’s culture within her learning context while inviting the learning community to engage in the learning.

It is our hope as authors that the second edition of *Adult Learning: Linking Theory and Practice*’s framework and features will provide a path through the vast and voluminous research, theory, and practice of adult education and adult learning and equip readers with the necessary understanding to accomplish their goals whether they be learners, educators, or both. Box 1.5 offers an opportunity to apply the learning framework to your learning and teaching as an educator or learner.



Box 1.5 Reflective Practice

Applying the Framework for Adult Learning

This chapter described the organizing framework for the book to include:

1. The adult learning context
2. The adult educator
3. The adult learner
4. The adult learning process
5. The method of facilitating adult learning

Considering yourself as the learner, how have you been affected by each domain of the five-part framework?

Chapter Summary

This chapter introduced the second edition of *Adult Learning: Linking Theory and Practice* by providing an overview of the book. The book contains integrated features as an interactive tool for connecting research and theory to practice. The chapter also defined key concepts and terms in adult education and learning. The chapter concluded with an overview of the book's framework. We, the authors, welcome you to this second edition and hope you find the information interesting and applicable to your life and work as a learner, educator, or both!

Key Points

- The chapter establishes the foundation for understanding adult learning using a five-part framework of the context, adult educator, adult learner, adult learning process, and method, emphasizing the importance of adaptability and lifelong education.
- Historical and theoretical foundations shaping adult learning were discussed, examining how they have evolved.

- Adult learners face challenges, including inequitable access to education, motivation, work-life balance, and technology adaptation.
- Adult learning and education challenge traditional pedagogy that relies on banking education.
- Economic conditions, social structures, and systemic inequalities impact adult learning opportunities and outcomes.
- Lifelong learning is essential for adults' continuous skill development, adaptability, and the integration of learning into daily life.

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