ED 453 445   CE 081 869

TITLE   The Adult Learner. Symposium 35. [AHRD Conference, 2001].
PUB DATE   2001-00-00
NOTE   25p.; In: Academy of Human Resource Development (AHRD)
                 Conference Proceedings (Tulsa, Oklahoma, February 28-March
                 4, 2001). Volumes 1 and 2; see CE 081 829.
PUB TYPE   Collected Works - General (020) -- Speeches/Meeting Papers
                 (150)
EDRS PRICE   MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS   Adult Education; *Adult Learning; Adult Students;
                 Attribution Theory; Career Development; Career Education;
                 Cognitive Processes; Cognitive Style; *Covert Response;
                 Developed Nations; *Educational Philosophy; *Educational
                 Psychology; Foreign Countries; Foundations of Education;
                 Human Resources; Independent Study; Individual Development;
                 *Informal Education; *Labor Force Development;
                 Nontraditional Education; Organizational Development;
                 Student Behavior
IDENTIFIERS   Australia (Western Australia); *Follett (Mary Parker)

ABSTRACT
          This symposium on the adult learner consists of three
presentations. "Bridging the Gap Between Adult Education and Educational
Psychology: Some Important Findings" (Bryan W. Smith) is a report upon a
micro-analysis of a case of adults entering tertiary study for the first time
and their mental life concerning their own self performance, constructed
across four instances. It identifies characteristics of the four
participants' covert behavior during their learning in a course on human
resource development (HRD). "Mary Parker Follett: Philosopher of HRD" (Leslie
DeLaPena Wheelock, Jamie L. Callahan) concludes that Follett is a philosopher
of HRD, not only because her ideas support concepts similar to other HRD
philosophers but also because she introduces adult learning as paramount for
the development of the individual and organization. "The HRD Network as a
Means for Adult Learning" (Susan A. Huhta, John A. Niemi) is a study of the
HRD Network at Northern Illinois University, an example of nontraditional,
informal learning, that determined that HRD professionals successfully
conceived and directed their own professional development. All three papers
include substantial bibliographies. (YLB)

2001 AHRD Conference

The Adult Learner

Symposium 35

Tulsa, Oklahoma

February 28 - March 4, 2001

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Bridging the Gap between Adult Education and Education Psychology: Some Important Findings.

Bryan W. Smith
Edith Cowan University, Western Australia

This is a report upon a micro-analysis of a case of adults entering tertiary study for the first time, and their mental life concerning their own self-performance, constructed across four instances. The principle purpose of the study was to identify some characteristics of the four participants' covert behaviour during their learning in a course on Human Resource Development (HRD).

Keywords: Adult Learner, Educational Psychology, Covert Behavior

Research in adult learning appears to be on the threshold of change. While there has been recent concentration upon improving the effectiveness of the adult learner as being a self-directed learner or a transformative learner, and on the role of the facilitator in these learning processes, understanding of the mental life of adult learners appears to be a new focus of research. What the adult learner might think and feel during an adult learning experience is fundamental to understanding adult educational psychology.

Problem Statement

Adult educational psychology is an emerging field only receiving relatively recent attention from researchers and theorists. According to Smith and Pourchot (1998), traditional educational psychology has had little effect upon adult learning and there is no "formal association" between adult education and educational psychology (p.5). Adult educational psychology is about: "The study of learning activities and developmental processes and instructional practices and settings that promote learning and development as they occur across the adult years" (p.6). Athanasou (1999) is also concerned with the lack of association between adult education and educational psychology: "Adult education and educational psychology are often treated as quite unrelated and separate fields of study." (p 6)

There is a demonstrated need, therefore, to bridge the gap between adult education and educational psychology. The gap has occurred because the major theoretical and research interest in educational psychology has traditionally been centred upon children's learning. Teachers are expected to be aware of the psychology of children's learning. Yet adult educators, who often come from an industrial, commercial or public service background, do not have the same teacher preparation.

This paper is a report upon research by Smith (2000) that focused on the covert behaviour of adult learners in an effort to give better guidance to adult educators when structuring learning experiences for adults.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework is aimed at demonstrating linkages between a number of conceptualisations with the view of forging an association between the practice of adult education and the theory of educational psychology. The resultant entity is the umbrella conceptualisation of adult educational psychology.

Figure 1 indicates that the umbrella concept of adult educational psychology consists of three sub-concepts: adult development, adult learner motivation, and adult learning theory. Each of these in turn is mutually inclusive; for example, self-directedness appears in two conceptualisations. Below this line of sub-concepts, and influencing each, is the concept of adult learner covert behaviour. Adult learner covert behaviour in turn consists of the sub-concepts of adult thought processes, attribution theory and approaches to learning.

Research Proposition

The research proposition in Smith (2000) was therefore to examine each of the above conceptualisations in terms of

the literature, and to compare published findings with the findings from a micro-analysis of four participants undertaking first time learning in a tertiary HRD classroom.

Research Design

The research aimed to examine the nature of the covert behaviour of a group of adults in a formal learning situation relating to four major areas: the characteristics of adult learners entering a tertiary setting; the characteristics of participants' covert behaviour during a learning session; the conceptions of self-performance that adult learners appear to hold in a tertiary learning situation, and the conceptions of approaches to learning that adult learners appear to hold and then develop in a tertiary learning situation.

ADULT EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY

Adult Development ↔ Adult Learner Motivation ↔ Adult Learning Theory

Adult Learner Covert Behaviour

Adult Thought Processes ↔ Attribution Theory ↔ Approaches to Learning
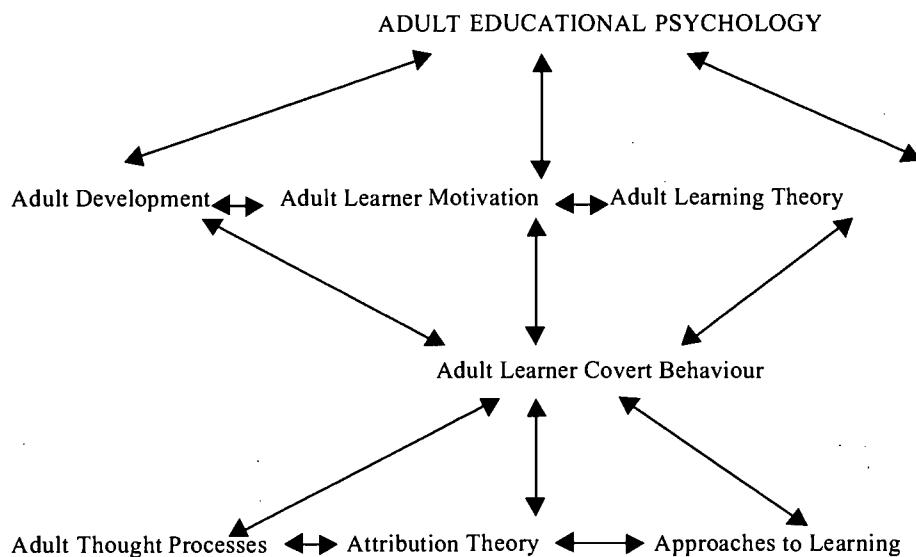
Figure 1. A theoretical framework incorporating key elements and their relationships.

The investigation of the covert behaviour of adults was based upon two substantive assumptions: That the adult learner entered and participated in achievement-related situations with thoughts and feelings about their self-performance; and, that the adult learner's conception of self-performance influenced their achievement-related behaviour.

The participants in the study were four mature-age students, two male and two female, who were enrolled in a tertiary course for the first time in their lives. All were employed HRD practitioners who enrolled in an undergraduate program in order to update their theory and practice in the field of HRD. None of the adults had experienced sequenced, long term formal, or classroom learning since leaving school so this formal learning experience was unique to them.

During the first semester of their course the four participants completed the Attribution Style Questionnaire (ASQ) (Petersen *et al.,* 1982). The Attributional Style Questionnaire (ASQ) is a self-report measure of patterns of explanatory style, that is, the tendency to select certain causal explanations for good and bad events. There are three dimensions relevant to a person's causal attributions and each dimension is associated with a particular aspect of adaptation to an uncontrollable event (Tennen and Herzberger, 1985). Participants also completed the Study Profile Questionnaire (SPQ) (Biggs, 1987). The SPQ is a 42 item, self-report questionnaire designed to focus on students' approaches to learning. It is designed to assess the extent to which a tertiary student at university endorses different approaches to learning and the more important motives and strategies comprising those approaches.

In order to answer the research questions the kinds of data collected were of two kinds: demographic and covert. Demographic data were collected in order to be able to richly describe the participants in terms of their life context. For example, their age, gender, backgrounds in terms of work experience and education were considered helpful in this regard. More significantly, data were collected about the participants' covert behaviour in order to describe their thoughts and emotions prior to, during, and after a learning episode. For example, expectations,

attributions, conceptions, perceptions, motives, ideas, beliefs, emotions and lines of reasoning were sought in order to build a picture of covert behaviour during learning.

Five sources were used to retrieve the data significant to the study: questionnaire responses, verbal reports in interview format, written reports, researcher field notes and videotapes. The ASQ and SPQ were administered in order to gain insight into the participants' explanatory style and their strategies for learning. Verbal reports were gained through a series of semi-structured interviews that were both conventional and stimulated. The conventional interviews were conducted using a variety of standard questions, while the stimulated interviews were conducted using videotapes as prompts for the participants. Each participant was asked to keep a self-report journal in which they were to record any thoughts and feelings pertaining to their learning as they occurred. As well, the researcher kept field notes of observations of the participants during each learning session. Finally, videotapes were made of learning sessions as aids to the stimulated recall methodology.

Interviews of the sample were of two types: semi-structured face-to-face interviews in the students' work places and stimulated recall interviews at the university. The interviews were formal interviews in a preset, field setting using a semi-structured question format by an interviewer who was somewhat directive (Fontana and Frey in Denzin and Lincoln, 1994).

Each participant was interviewed in their workplace prior to any research treatment in order to establish each student's background, motivation and expectations for learning at tertiary level. The interviews were semi-structured so that the students felt at ease with the researcher but the researcher did ensure that details collected from each student provided data on their thoughts, emotions and experiences. Apart from these conventional interviewing techniques, interviews were also conducted using stimulated recall. Stimulated recall interviews with the sample group yielded data on their interactive thoughts, that is, those thoughts that actually occurred during the classroom session. These interviews were conducted at the university immediately after, or as close as possible to, the cessation of a three-hour morning classroom session, and participant thoughts and feelings were stimulated through the use of videotapes of each session. Each participant was interviewed after three consecutive morning sessions. Transcripts of all interviews were then prepared for later analysis.

The researcher also prepared a session running sheet during the video recording. This running sheet described the sequence of events throughout the session. Facilitator strategies, student responses, transitions, significant and intriguing questions and comments, intra- and inter-group interactions were recorded against the clock and the videotape counter.

Each participant was asked to keep a journal in which they were encouraged to record random thoughts and feelings about their learning. These recordings were made both during the sessions and during reflective times outside the classroom.

A number of major reliability and validity issues had to be addressed in the gathering of data for this investigation. The case study approach was selected because it appeared to be the best approach for a micro-analysis of the thoughts and feelings of a group of adult learners. Stimulated recall methodology utilising videotape was deemed to be the most effective data collection method largely because of its viability in this research situation and the large numbers of studies that have used it in the past. The quantitative instruments, the ASQ and SPQ, have proved valid and reliable in a myriad of other situations and their unique use in this research was deemed to be appropriate in order to triangulate data from the stimulated recall methodology.

Results and Findings

Results and findings are indicated under each of the conceptualisations indicated in Figure 1.

Adult Development

All four participants had experience in work situations other than HRD and appeared to be motivated by the need to enhance their new careers in HRD. No evidence was found to indicate other motivation, such as family transitions, so the literature (for example, Aslanian & Brickell, 1980) that indicated that career moves were important reasons for adults undertaking learning is confirmed by the four participants in this study.

In terms of the life span models of, for example, Maslow (1968) and Levinson (1978, 1996), some inferences can be made from the data collected. Each of the participants, albeit differentially, demonstrated a maturity of mind and motivation driven by the need to actualise their potential in their workplaces. All were battling, to a more or lesser degree, with a kind of internal conflict that was fed by some self-imposed doubt and some external pressures. Acceptance of these conflicts as an inevitable part of being an adult was an indication that all were functioning as adult learners. As Knowles, Holton and Swanson (1998) have indicated, adult learning is

inextricably intertwined with adult development and motivation and readiness to learn is a function of development. These assertions were borne out by these participants.

Adult Learner Motivation

These participants confirmed Burns' (1998) assertion that adult learners are motivated by their needs in certain situations. All four, as already indicated, were motivated to attend to the new experiences of tertiary learning because they sensed the need to develop themselves at work. However, Burns' assertion that motivation is defined as a willingness to exert high levels of effort towards achievable goals was not entirely supported by the reported comments of two of the participants. The amount of effort expended by all participants did vary significantly and appeared to be the result of diverse conceptions of learning and the varying view of how long each participant was willing to maintain that effort.

In this study, Wlodowski's (1999) concept of inclusion seems to be contained in the identified research variable of "public participation". Public participation is concerned with each participant's thoughts and feelings about being part of the learning group. In this study, group work allowed each individual to access their experience, to reflect, to discuss and to allow their experiences to give meaning to the content of the session. However, there were instances where the participants chose not to be included in the group. The reasons for these withdrawals range through initial shyness, off task thoughts, frustration with "grandstanders", a desire for social isolation and frustration with perceived off task group behaviour. Therefore, while Wlodowski paints a warm picture of inclusive activity, these participants have demonstrated that an individual's a sense of inclusion will ebb and flow according to that individual's thoughts and feelings at critical times in the learning process.

Another of Wlodowski's (1999) four motivational conditions is the relationship between a learner's attitude and their behaviour. Learners apply past solutions to present problems and this allows them to cope and to be consistent in their behaviour. In this study, the participants were all more or less reticent about their new learning experience. Because they were reticent their application of learned past reactions to similar situations enabled them to cope successfully.

Attitudes are also shaped by needs because they make certain goals more or less desirable (Wlodowski, 1999). In this instance, all of the participants had the need to reaffirm that their current work practices were supported by the theoretical constructs learned in the classroom. Therefore, any classroom theory that did not assist them to immediately confirm or resolve practical work situations caused them consternation. There seemed to be a direct link between their attitude and their perception of how their needs were being met. For these participants, personal relevance appeared paramount. They perceived relevance when the classroom learning was contextualised in their personal and workplace meanings, and when the relevance reflected their construction of reality.

Strongly related to the desire for personal relevance is Wlodowski's third condition of motivation, the desire for meaningfulness. For these participants, the transcripts are full of allusions to learning activities that did create meaning and involvement, but when they did not the participants gave full voice to their criticism.

Adult Learning Theory

Merriam and Caffarella's (1999) framework for examining learning in adulthood – namely, the individual learner, the learning context and the learning process – proved to be a most useful framework for this study. Demographic and background data were gathered to reveal idiosyncratic information on each participant. The particular learning context was described in order to understand better the participants within the framework of the tertiary classroom. More importantly for this study, reported thoughts and feelings of the participants during the learning process were gathered, coded and analysed.

Some inferences can be made from the data that support the efficacy of Knowles, Holton and Swanson's (1998) six core andragogical principles. Two of these, *readiness to learn* and *motivation to learn,* have already been covered. The remaining four are discussed below.

Need to Know. According to Knowles, Holton and Swanson (1998), adults *need to know* how the learning will be conducted, what learning will occur and why it is important. In this study, the participants reported on a number of occasions their liking for the opportunity to learn in those small groups where there was a rich interaction of ideas. As well, at the beginning of each learning session the facilitator used advanced organisers to indicate the day's agenda in order to satisfy the participants' need to know what content was to be learned and how it would be learned. What is interesting from the data is the lack of need for the participants to seek answers from the facilitator as to why the learning was important. The answer instead came from their own perception of what was important and the yardstick of this was whether the content was relevant and meaningful.

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Self-directedness. Knowles and others have written at length about the adult learner's desire for *self-directedness*. All of the participants at various stages implied their learning was self-directed with regard to planning what they were to learn, how they went about this and what was required to have that learning evaluated by the facilitator. In the areas of planning and execution of learning, there was no evidence that the participants wanted or expected to be taught all the time. However, there were numerous instances when participants required structure from the facilitator and some guidance on how to proceed. If the process of self-directedness seeks absoluteness then it did not occur for these participants. On the other hand, the reported comments of the participants did confirm that they believed directedness to be a personal attribute.

Prior Experiences. The participants appeared to demonstrate Mezirow's (1997) tenet that adults need to understand their *prior experiences* and to make sense of what is happening to them. Such a requirement is difficult to do alone. That is why the participants reported why the group work concept was so powerful for them and why it was so idiosyncratic. The group work enabled them to share experiences, receive feedback, to listen to the experiences of others and to help them understand concepts.

Orientation to Learning. The andragogy in practice model (Knowles, Holton & Swanson, 1998) indicates that adults learn best when new information is presented in a real-life context, especially when they are able to utilise their current, as opposed to their previous, experiences. This was well demonstrated by the four participants. They reported on many occasions their liking for the learning strategies initiated by the facilitators that related to real life. Each session was started with some kind of concrete experience such as the examination of a relevant case study. Small groups were utilised to allow the learners to observe and reflect upon that experience. This meant sharing of experiences with knowledgeable peers in an environment of inclusion (Wlodowski, 1999). Finally, lessons learned were translated into practice in the workplace through project work.

Adult Thought Processes

There were a variety of belief systems underlying learning amongst the group. This study, as did Kasworm's (1999), indicated there was more to the premise that adult learners just engage in learning through problem orientation or pragmatic applications. There is a more complex interrelationship mediated by the situation of the learner and their knowledge based upon their life role as an adult, past schooling and work experiences, knowledge structures and the classroom learning process. Certainly each of the participants brought to the learning situation an idiosyncratic biography of knowledge, experiences, conceptions and expectations.

Attribution Theory

Attribution theory (for example, Weiner, 1980) examines to what main causes people attribute their successes and failures. The researcher required the participants in this study to complete the Attributional Style Questionnaire (ASQ) in order to help discover causal explanations for the participants' behaviour. Such causes were grouped along a continuum of pessimism to optimism. In the main, the participants' ASQ scores indicated a moderate to high degree of optimism. That is, their explanatory style for explaining good events was internal, permanent and able to enhance every experience, while for bad events they attributed causes externally, temporarily and specifically. As a result, while the participants came to tertiary study with some trepidation as to their chances of success, they were optimistic about their outcomes.

Approaches to Learning

As this study was primarily about adult learning in a tertiary situation data were sought concerning the thoughts and feelings the participants held about their learning. Quantitative data were generated by the administration of the Study Process Questionnaire (SPQ) that sought information on the students' approach to learning, and an examination of qualitative responses was sought to confirm or deny the SPQ finding. The four participants interestingly covered the range of approaches to learning in the SPQ from Deep Predominant, through Achievement Predominant to Surface Predominant.

While approach to learning can be ascertained by the administration of the SPQ it was the qualitative data that enriched the understanding of these students in a learning situation. The making of meaning by seeking the relevance of the classroom content to the adult life and work world appears to be the fundamental driving force of

these students. Indeed, it is the initial unsatisfactory fit between the classroom content and the individual experience that activates the engagement of the individual. After a satisfactory cognitive and emotional interaction with the content a shift to a fresh meaning is achieved.

Additionally, the idiosyncratic life events and transitions in an adult's life also activate learning. In this research, because the program of study was vocationally and experientially based, it was no surprise that the students were prompted by a desire to meet current and future developmental needs through interaction with the program and its promise of a credential. Yet the interaction is more than pragmatically motivated but is the result of a complex intersection of the adult's situation and the way they construct meaning.

What is interesting in this study is not only the confirmation of the literature but also the degree of intensity that each of the participants reported about aspects of their learning. These adults reported strong beliefs and reasons underlying their learning and it is useful to ponder possible causes of the intensity. Perhaps the vocational orientation established expectations that classroom content would be relevant to their workplace so they approached the learning with the expectancy that the course would deliver. When it did deliver they expressed intense satisfaction; when it did not they were not reticent to voice loud disapproval. Perhaps, too, both the implicitly and explicitly voiced expectancies of the participants that universities are too academic and not related to the real world, established a kind of cognitive and affective barrier to learning that would only be diminished when their negative expectations were reversed.

External Pressures

Pressures outside the classroom were common for all participants in the study. While the effects of external distractions varied, some effects were extreme. Lack of time and money are the most often cited reasons for non-participation in adult learning (Merriam & Caffarella, 1999). Once engaged in learning it appears that lack of time to devote to that learning is a prominent negative force. However, it was not just time that exerted external pressure, but the emotions involved with life outside the classroom that also exerted significant pressure.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The four participants in Smith's (2000) study have reported a wide variety of variables such as ideas, beliefs, emotions and lines of reasoning in their covert behaviour while undertaking learning in a tertiary situation. Findings generally support the adult learning literature. No other study has reported the strength and the intensity of adult thoughts and feelings about their self-performance as this one did. Therefore, where the findings in the literature may have been tentative and even speculatory, this study adds some confirmation to much of it.

Relevance and meaningfulness of classroom content to learners' lives and work is paramount. Learning needs to be connected with how learners see themselves, what they care about, how they perceive and come to know. With these participants, when this occurs achievement motivation appears to soar; when it does not frustration and cynicism result. Therefore, any learning experience designed for adults, be it organisational learning or campus-based learning, requires content relevance and meaning.

Adult's belief in themselves as previous achievers creates a general optimistic view of life that in turn creates an attitude that effort will enable success. If it is *effort, ability, task difficulty* and *luck* (Weiner, 1980) that are the main causes to which learners attribute their success and failures, then these participants favoured *effort* and *ability* as the major causes of both success and failure. Therefore, facilitators of adult learning need to foster adults' belief in their experiences and ability as being fundamental to their success as learners.

All participants sought inclusion in the learning process. This meant interacting with the facilitator and the other students in their group. Such inclusion ebbed and flowed depending upon individual perceptions of the dynamics of group interplay at various times. When perceptions were that the group was off-task, or that individuals were exercising their egos, then participation ebbed. However, when the group was contributing to and supporting individual learning then the sense of inclusion was most powerful. Group problem solving is a powerful tactic that adult learning facilitators can use when designing meaningful learning episodes.

External pressures appear to be the single most limiting factor upon the adult capacity to learn in a formal setting. Lack of time is often cited as the major limiting factor. In this study, it was found that it was not just a lack of time but the emotions generated by the causes of that lack of time. Partner sickness, own ill health and competing pressures illustrated how time away from learning might emanate, but it was the emotion generated by such events that really took their toll. It therefore behoves learning facilitators to take into account the possibility that external pressures will affect the adult learner.

Contributions to New Knowledge in HRD

If one accepts, as Peterson and Cooper (1999) have, that there is a false dichotomy between HRD and adult education and that these fields share a common objective —learning for a productive citizenry – then the findings reported here have some implications for HRD practitioners.

For the adult learner relevance and meaningfulness of any new learning is vital if significant learning is to occur. It therefore behoves program facilitators to ground content in the workplace and to ensure that evaluation of learning is workplace-based.

Facilitators need to be aware that adults will have a variety of approaches to learning, so content, delivery and evaluation need to reflect this variety. For instance, there needs to be a wide list of resources for the deep-oriented learner to engage their desire for understanding, and for the surface-oriented learner there needs to be structure to ensure they are comfortable within known guidelines.

Adults also bring a variety of belief systems of engagement in learning. Facilitators need to recognise the importance of the social and cultural context of learning and the place authentic experience plays in learning. The learner's workplace is a logical context for this to occur.

The adult need for inclusion has an important implication for adult facilitators. Because the need for inclusion is an important motivator learning experiences need to be constructed to encourage this. However, this paper has indicated that individual commitment to group work is not always optimal and the facilitator needs to be able to change the state of the experience when less than optimal engagement is detected.

Adults approach any new learning experience with some amount of fear or trepidation. However, the study upon which this paper is based, indicated that such apprehension gives way to confidence as the individual achieves competence and improved self-concept. Therefore, orientation to learning and a gradual increasing of standards over the course of facilitation will aid this process.

Adults face a myriad of external pressures that often come associated with some emotional baggage. The alert facilitator will take into account such emotions and enable the learner to work through these even if that means allowing a wider range of flexibility.

Perhaps the largest contribution to HRD knowledge is that each adult learner has a unique mental life that operates totally outside the observation of the facilitator. In normal classroom circumstances this mental life will most likely never be revealed. At times, facilitators may simply have to acknowledge that there are a range of feelings and thoughts, and to have these, regardless of what they are, is acceptable to both the facilitator and to other students. What is unacceptable is that a facilitator will arrange a learning experience without an understanding of, and due regard for, the mental lives of adult learners. When this understanding occurs the desired relationship between educational psychology and adult education will be closer to fruition.

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Mary Parker Follett: Philosopher of Human Resource Development

Leslie DeLaPena Wheelock
Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University

Jamie L. Callahan
Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University

Currently a number of philosophers provide constructs for HRD. One writer that is worthy of study is Mary Parker Follett. Despite a dormancy of many decades, her thoughts are emerging as contemporary and innovative. This paper concludes that Follett is a Philosopher of HRD, not only because her ideas support concepts similar to other HRD philosophers but also because she introduces adult learning as paramount for the development of the individual and organization.

Keywords: Mary Parker Follett, Management History, HRD Foundations

Introduction

As Human Resource Development (HRD) continues to grow as a field of study and practice, it is vital that we follow a "philosophical framework for research and practice in HRD" (Swanson, Lynham, Ruona, & Torraco, 2000, p. 1125). Such a framework includes ontology (how we see the world), epistemology (how we know what we know), and axiology (how we should act). Since Human Resource Development emerged as a distinct field of study and practice in the 1960's, a variety of definitions of the field have been offered (Weinberger, 1998). Although these definitions all vary, they generally have in common the concepts of the development of people (human development), learning, and organizations. This understanding of HRD as a field is found in Nadler's original approach to HRD (1970), is echoed by a protégé of Nadler's, Neal Chalofsky (Personal Communication, 1997), and is most recently expressed in Ruona's (2000) analysis of the core beliefs about HRD. Thus, these three areas of people, learning, and organization can be considered the pillars of Human Resource Development.

We argue that long forgotten works of Mary Parker Follett capture the concepts of people, organizations, and learning, making Follett a philosopher of HRD even before the field was articulated. Each of these foundational disciplines has theorists who provide insights into the philosophical framework that under girds HRD. Brought together, these philosophers provide a framework for understanding how professionals in the field of HRD see the world, know the world, and practice in the world. Although there are a vast number of authors who are considered seminal for organization, learning, and human development theory, we have chosen five authors who address these pillars. These authors were selected, in part, because each is widely acclaimed as a seminal theorist in his respective field. This is certainly not meant to be an exhaustive list of those seminal thinkers who have influenced the discipline of HRD. Instead, they serve as benchmarks to highlight how Mary Parker Follett captured ideas associated with seminal works in each of the three pillars of HRD. For the purpose of this exploration, Chester Barnard and Max Weber provide seminal insights into organizations; George Herbert Mead and Erik Erikson provide seminal insights into the development of people; and Eduard Lindeman provides seminal insights into adult learning.

The purpose of this paper is to demonstrate that Mary Parker Follett is a Philosopher of HRD who offers thoughts on how our field views the world, sees the world, and practices in the world. This will be demonstrated by making comparisons of her insights to those made by seminal theorists in the three pillars of HRD. As a philosopher of HRD, Follett provides another framework for research and practice in HRD. As such, we believe it is important to add her works to our repertoire of guiding philosophical frameworks for the field of HRD.

Background

In the management literature, a long forgotten voice is emerging - that of Mary Parker Follett - who is being hailed as the "Prophet of Management." She has been dormant for a number of decades and only recently is she receiving

much attention. Her management thoughts center on integration and participation (Wolf, 1988); she espouses thoughts on conflict, leaders and teams, coordination, authority, and control (Selber & Austin, 1997), as well as communication (Dixon, 1996). Thus, Follett's work covers the topics associated with the foundations of HRD.

We examined three of Follett's five publications as well as twelve of her presentations for insights about people, organizations, and adult learning and compared those insights to those made by select seminal philosophers associated with each of the foundational disciplines. This paper presents our findings that support the claim that Mary Parker Follett is a philosopher of HRD because she offers insights associated with people, organizations, and learning.

The Framework of Mary Parker Follet's Works

Follett's most known works are her business lectures that are primarily captured in Fox and Urwick's (1982) Dynamic Administration and Graham's (1996) Mary Parker Follett: Prophet of Management. Dispersed throughout Follett's works are her thoughts on the individual, organization, and adult learning. The following subsections present these thoughts compared to several core theorists from the foundational areas of HRD.

Individual

In this section we will explore the characteristics of the individual in Follett's work in comparison to the characteristics of the individual described by two well-known theorists of human development. Follett's individual can be seen in terms of his relationship to society, of his internal conflicts, and in his creative experiences. In these characteristics, she is similar to both Mead's and Erikson's individual.

Like Follett, Mead (1967/1934) writes that individuals develop objectively through social relations and interactions where the "generalized social attitudes ... make an organized self possible" (p. 260). Follett's individual exists not unto himself but in union with society. The individual develops as a result of interactions with society with experience adding up exponentially. Eisenberg (1996) categorizes Follett as a pluralist whose ideas shape the development of individuals in democratic organizations. Central to this development is the concept that the individual matures and develops in relationship to the group. This concept is similar to Mead's (1967/1934) self who "finds its expression in the self-assertion, or in the devotion of itself to the cause of the community. The self appears as a new type of individual in the social whole" (p. 192). Mead's (1967/1934) individual adjusts to the environment resulting in a different person. This change thus impacts the community.

Follett's views on integration of the self and multiple facets of community are important in the development of the individual. For her, the individual exists on multiple planes and must unite those planes (Follett, 1924). This occurs "by the subtle process of interpenetration of a collective sovereignty (that) is evolved from a distributed sovereignty" (Follett, 1998/1918, p. 271). In other words, the individual must find a way to recognize and celebrate the different roles and identities he takes on in multiple settings and then discover how those multiple roles and identities are really integrated into a single identity. Erikson (1974) has similar thoughts about "a Protean man of many appearances" who is nevertheless "centered in a true identity" (p. 51).

In addition to development in terms of the individual and the community, Follett proposes individual development in terms of internal conflict. Follett (1996g) writes that every individual has many "warring tendencies inside himself where the effectiveness of an individual ... depends largely on these various tendencies ... being made into one harmonious whole" (p. 219). The "process is one of self-adjustment" (Follett, 1996g, p. 219). These warring tendencies resolve through self-adjustment as a result of constructive conflict. Follett (1996a) writes "we can often measure our progress by watching the nature of our conflicts ... we become spiritually more and more developed as our conflicts rise to higher levels" (p. 72). For example, when individuals are in negotiation with others, personal development and empathy develop through Follett's process of circular response (Kolb, Jensen, Shannon, 1996). Armstrong (1998) highlights her own developmental experience where the interactive exchange between researcher and participant, or circular response process, led to significant transformations during her study of Follett's principles in the workplace.

Erikson (1974) also believes in the progression through internal conflicts in order to develop. Erikson's (1974) stages of development present warring tendencies that an individual has at various times through life. From Erikson's (1974) perspective, the individual must develop a "positive identity (that) must ever fortify itself by drawing

the line against undesirables, ... those negative potentials which each man must confine and repress, deny and expel, brand and torture, within himself" (p. 71).

Finally, Follett also sees development as a creative experience with the individual and whole accomplished through "relating (which) involves an increment that can be measured only by compound interest. In compound interest part of the activity of the growing is the adding of the growing" (Follett, 1924, p. 64). "Thus 'behavior' emerges, always from the activity plus" (Follett, 1924, p. 66).

In summary, Follett views the individual resulting from societal interactions as well as development through circular behavior and creative experience. Follett also views individual development through reevaluation and integration of internal conflicts. She sees development as a synthesis of self, society, and creative action. Her perspectives of the development of the individual draw from well-established theorists associated with the field of human development.

Organization

In this section, we will explore Follett's concepts of organizational life as they relate to concepts proposed by two seminal theorists in organizational theory, Weber and Barnard. The major themes in Follett's organization deal with leadership, participatory management, and communication. Perhaps most interesting is that while Follett's theories of leadership can be compared in many ways to Weber's and Barnard's theories of leadership, their theories about the nature of participation and communication are more easily contrasted. In our opinion, this is likely because Follett was ahead of her time with regard to thinking about the nature of organizing; although we selected two classic theorists of organizing for this exploration, future studies might include more contemporary theorists of organization who are more likely to value participatory concepts.

Follett's leader is similar to Barnard's (1968/1938) leader who "is the indispensable fulminator of (cooperation)" (p. 259). Follett believes that the most pressing need of business is "not merely men who can unite without friction, but who can turn their union to account. The successful business man to-day is the man of trained cooperative intelligence" (Follett, 1998/1918, p. 113). She writes that the leaders have three major tasks dealing with workers, consumers, and investors with the leader "integrating the interests of these three classes" (Follett, 1982a, p. 64). Graham (1998) states that this integration has more productivity with a fairer workplace.

Follett (1982d) promotes the idea of a partnership between the leader and the follower resulting in "a reciprocal leadership" (p. 303) in which the "leader guides the group and is at the same time himself guided by the group" (Follett, 1998/1918, p. 229). Additionally, Follett's leader has the key understanding to do the job (Follett, 1982b). This knowledgeable leader is similar to both Weber and Barnard. Weber's leader is also one who has "acquired expert knowledge and who serve(s) for remuneration" (Gerth & Mills, 1946, p. 245). Likewise Barnard's (1968/1938) leader has "the aspect of individual superiority - in physique, in skill, in technology, in perception, in knowledge, in memory, in imagination" (p. 260).

Follett's leader is one whose authority is decentralized throughout the organization (Follett, 1987, 1998/1918). "Authority follows the function ... belongs to the job and stays with job" (Follett, 1996d, p. 153). This is similar to Barnard (1968/1938) who recognizes that "knowledge and understanding regardless of position command respect" (p. 173); however, he does emphasize "authority to communications from superior positions ... authority of position" (p. 173). Because authority is decentralized, the giving of orders in Follett's organization is operationalized as a standard of practice or rule (Follett, 1996d).

Her leader is inspirational and visionary, leading change (Follett, 1998/1918) and exhibiting conduct that merits trust (Vidaver-Cohen, 1998). Her leader does not use persuasion that may sometimes manifest in "the form of power-over" (Follett, 1996c, p. 104). Follett's leader is similar to Barnard's (1968/1938) visionary leader who binds "the wills of men to the accomplishment of purposes beyond their immediate ends, beyond their times" (p. 283). However, Barnard's leader relies heavily on persuasion to change subjective attitudes by: "a) the creation of coercive conditions; b) the rationalization of opportunity; c) the inculcation of motives" (Barnard, 1968/1938, p. 149).

Although similarities can be seen between the leaders described by Follett, Weber, and Barnard, a distinct contrast can be observed with respect to the nature of organizing. One reason for this is Follett's philosophy of community is the driving factor behind her conception of the participatory organization. Follett (1919) writes, "the study of community as process does away with hierarchy" (p. 582). She advocates coactive power of management and unions (Briar-Lawson, 1998), arguing that society must merge labor and capital to form "an integration of interests and motives, of standards and ideals of justice" (Follett, 1998/1918, p. 117). Follett applies these thoughts to the organization referring to her organization as a "functional whole or integrative unity" (Follett, 1982a, p. 42).

Because of this philosophy, Cooper (1980) credits Follett with understanding the relationship of theory, institution, and person as well as facts, politics, and psychology. In other words, Follett understands that there are many similar and contradictory influences on an organization. In order for an organization to become more functional, organizations must constantly address and unite these influences thus becoming an integrative unity.

Follett's (1996b) organization is well coordinated with a "horizontal rather than a vertical authority" (p. 186). This democratic organization is different from Weber's (Gerth and Mills, 1946) and Barnard's (1968/1938) organizations. In Weber's bureaucracy, there is "a firmly ordered system of super- and subordination in which there is a supervision of the lower offices by the higher ones" (Gerth & Mill, 1946, p. 197. In a similar fashion, Barnard's (1968/1938) organization also has a hierarchy with its "system of communication ... known as the 'lines of authority' (p. 175). This "line of communication should not be interrupted during the time when the organization is to function" (Barnard, 1968/1938, p. 179). This line of authority maintains vertical hierarchy at all times.

Teamwork is a manifestation of Follett's participatory management that has a collective responsibility supported by the "development of group responsibility" (Follett, 1996b, p. 195). Follett's influence can be seen as a radical democratic thought where interdependency is accomplished through group interactions (Ventriss, 1998). Individuals are not only "responsible for their own work, but as sharing in a responsibility for the whole enterprise" (Follett, 1996b, p. 196). In this organization, "the necessity of team-work between departments is recognized by everyone" (Follett, 1982a, p. 61). This teamwork may actually promote coordinated control in the organization. For example, Barker (1993) summarizes the development of concertive control that constrains members even more than the previous system despite a participatory influence and decentralized system. In this type of control strategy, the workers establish their own control based on consensus about appropriate behavior. Teams operating with concertive control actually demonstrate more control over members than authoritarian, technological, or hierarchical control.

The participatory management of Follett's organization also exhibits power that is a power-with instead of a power-over. Integration reduces power-over. Power-over is also reduced "through recognizing all should submit to ... the law of situation, and ... through making our business more and more of a functional unity" (Follett, 1924, p. 109). The law of situation provides orders that are generated from a specific situation instead of a hierarchical position. "In a functional unity each (man) has his function ... the authority and the responsibility which go with that function" (Follett, 1996c, p. 109). With theoretical foundation in Follett's power-with, Brunner's (2000) study of women superintendents supports this power-with. These women are comfortable describing, "power as a collaborative, inclusive, consensus-building model" (p. 88) ... shared with others or collective" (p. 89). This approach to power and collaboration can also be seen in Follett's conceptions of coordination and control.

Coordination in Follett's (1996g) organization is maintained by control but this control is "fact-control rather than man-control" (p. 213). Control exists through "reciprocal relating of all the factors in a situation" (Follett, 1996g, p. 214) and "co-ordination by direct contact of the responsible people concerned" (Follett, 1996g, p. 218). In contrast, the coordination in Barnard's (1968/1938) organization is through communication and man-control with "the selection in part, but especially the promotion, demotion, and dismissal of men, depend upon the exercise of supervision or what is often called 'control' (p. 173).

A participatory organization also needs communication to be integrated. Although both Weber and Barnard share Follett's perception that communication is the lifeblood of an organization, Follett's notions of communication are somewhat more democratic than either Weber's or Barnard's. Pietri (1974) recognizes Follett as one of the pioneers of organizational communication. Communication is important to maintain integration as well as interpenetration. In Barnard's organization, communication is the method that makes dynamic the "possibility of accomplishing a common purpose and the existence of persons ... contributing to such a common purpose" (Barnard, 1968/1938, p. 89). Weber supports "communication ... as (the) pacemakers of bureaucratization" (Gerth & Mills, 1946, p. 213). This communication supports the bureaucratic centralization at the same time "keeping their knowledge and intentions secret" (Gerth & Mills, 1946, p. 233).

In addition to the structural importance of communication, Follett goes one step further addressing the relational nature of communication. Follett recognizes that the language used may be a serious barrier to integration. "Probably more industrial trouble has been caused by the manner in which orders have been given than in any other way" (Follett, 1996f, p. 125). Follett (1924) states, "in the most delicate situations we quite consciously choose that which will not arouse antagonism" (p. 83). Oswick and Keenoy (1997) propose that discourse and action are not distinct domains and that management is a discursive activity that drives management processes and maintains managerial roles.

Communication is also important for conflict resolution. Follett's view of circular response is seen in situations where managers "get the workers' point of view and for workers to get the managers' point of view" (Follett, 1982c, p. 135). Because of Follett's views on conflict and integrative unity, she is known as a leader in integrative negotiations (Davis, 1991; Gawthrop, 1997; Johnson & Johnson, 1996; Kolb et al, 1996; Mintzberg et al. 1996). In successful conflict resolution, the interests and positions of parties are known (Deutsch, 1993). When interests are communicated, it is possible to find an integrated solution. For example, public conflict resolution between regulators and public citizens can be accomplished best through transformative practice with an engaged community, responsive government, and a capacity for problem-solving and conflict resolution (Dukes, 1993).

In summary there are some similarities between Follett and other philosophers in the field of organization and management. However, Follett introduces new thoughts regarding participatory organizations, communication, and leadership. These ideas are informed by her concepts of the reciprocal developmental relationship between the individual and the community of which he is a part.

Adult Learning

Mary Parker Follett views adult learning in terms of life; her concepts about learning offer an axiological frame for both individual development and organization. She has a pragmatic view providing suggestions on how to conduct education and for whom education is essential. Follett believes that the purpose of education for people is to "create life for themselves ... in making choices. The "aim of all proper training is ... the power to make a new choice at every moment" (Follett, 1998/1918, p. 54). Godfrey (1999) references Follett in his suggestion that service-learning pedagogies are important to developing informed citizens. With this concept in mind, Follett (1998/1918) believes training is a continuous, life-long process. These thoughts are similar to Lindeman (1989/1926) who also believes that "education is life" (p.129).

Follett (1998/1918) also supports self-direction at all levels believing that "we must train up our young people in the ways of self-direction" (p. 371). Additionally, she supports self-direction in the work place summarizing a successful businessman who wants his employees to "see that their life of steady learning is just beginning and their whole career depends on their getting this attitude" (Follett, 1998/1918, p. 370).

Follett's School Centres that may be equivalent to organization training departments today need to "help (people) acquire the attitude of learning, to make them see that education is for life" (Follett, 1998/1918, p. 370). These concepts are similar to Weber's organization that rationalizes the necessity of education and training to produce "a system of special examinations and the trained expertness" (Gerth & Mills, 1946, p. 240).

For Follett the teacher is a leader giving opportunities (1924). Additionally, the teacher as leader facilitates the growth of staff by empowering them to make decisions (Follett, 1996e). In the process of adjustment, the teacher instructs the "student first to become experience-conscious, secondly, to see the meaning of his experiences, and thirdly, to organize his experience" (Follett, 1982d, p. 311).

Follett (1982d) suggests methods of group activity for teaching. Through group process interdependence is achieved (Follett, 1982d). In order to teach interdependence to support group process, "every cooperative method conceivable ... must be used on our schools for this end" (Follett, 1998/1918, p. 363). These methods consist of "subjects which require a working together... group recitations, group investigations, and a gradual plan of self-government" (Follett, 1998/1918, p. 363). Like Lindeman, Follett focuses on the teaching method. Lindeman (1989/1926) suggests that adult educators "devote their major concern to method and not to content" (p. 114). He also writes, "the best teaching method is one which emerges from situation-experience" (Lindeman, 1989/1926, p. 115).

For Follett, training supports integration and coordination. "There should be classes in discussion which should aim to teach the 'art' of cooperative thinking" (Follett, 1924, p. 85). Leaders need "to be trained in the giving of orders - taught how to anticipate reactions, how to arouse the right reactions" (Follett, 1996f, p. 135). Additionally, "training in the technique of the job is a way of giving orders without the worker thinking they are following commands" (Follett, 1996f, p. 131). Follett also believes that there should also be on the job training especially in leadership. Leaders should be trained and allowed to practice (Follett, 1996e).

In summary Follett's beliefs about the purpose of education are similar to those espoused by Lindeman. Follett also introduces thoughts on the role of the teacher and appropriate methods for teaching that are echoed in the theories of Lindeman from the discipline of adult learning and Weber from the discipline of organization science. Her concepts associated with learning offer a lens to the axiology inherent in her philosophy of HRD.

Contributions to Human Resource Development

Follett's writings provide concepts that offer the HRD practitioner a frame of reference regarding the role of adult learning in developing the individual, group, and organization. Many of Follett's views are in alignment with theories presented by seminal authors more closely associated with distinct subdisciplines of HRD; however, she brings a new dimension to these theories by integrating the concepts of people, organizations, and learning.

The HRD practitioner operating from Follett's perspective utilizes adult learning to facilitate the development of the individual and the organization through group work so that an integrated unity is accomplished. The HRD practitioner working with an organization also keeps at the forefront the importance of developing leaders who institute horizontal authority, functional leadership, teamwork, power-with, and law of situation. For example, the relatively recent leadership development practice of 360-degree feedback has roots in Follett's views about development in terms of the individual and the community (Klagge, 1995).

From an ontological perspective, Follett provides concepts about the individual, organization, and adult learning. Follett sees the individual, as do Mead and Erikson. Follett's individual is a result of his interactions with society that allows him to formulate an individuality. This individual is also an integration of a multitude of reactions. The group is the link between the individual and the organization at large. The organization is a representation of a unified whole. For Follett adult learning is an integral part of growth with experience the living classroom. From this perspective, the HRD practitioner sees the organization with integrative management recognizing the importance of the individual as well as the group. Within this integrated organization, learning is a core element. This concept is currently reflected in HRD writings centered on organizational learning.

From an epistemological perspective, Follett's writings address the individual, group, organization as well as adult learning. Follett's parallel processes of individual development recognize influences internal and external to the individual with interpenetration that allows the integration of an individual. The interpenetration of individual ideas also results in collective thinking that is the true process of decision-making. Follett believes that the organization is an integrated unity with operating principles of participation, empowerment, functional reciprocal leadership, teamwork, reciprocal communication, and horizontal authority. From this perspective, the HRD practitioner understands the organization recognizing how it should optimally function. Follett's writings provide the foundation for this perspective with support of adult learning in achieving optimal leadership, individual development, and organizational development. Follett's writings also capture the interdisciplinary nature of HRD uniting thoughts around adult learning, management, sociology, and psychology.

Follett's ideas also provide an axiology, how we should act in research and practice, for HRD. For HRD, this axiology is grounded in Follett's thoughts on adult learning. Follett thinks of adult learning as the instrument by which the individual, group, and organization develops. Adult learning allows self-direction and optimal decision making to occur. She even provides pragmatic suggestions on how to teach using the group process to develop a collective mind and integrating whole. From this perspective, the HRD practitioner utilizes adult learning to facilitate the development of the individual and the organization. With thoughts on integrated unity and adult learning, the HRD practitioner encourages development of individuals to achieve participation, empowerment, functional reciprocal leadership, teamwork, reciprocal communication, and horizontal authority.

Conclusions

Mary Parker Follett is indeed a Philosopher of HRD. When compared to HRD sub-discipline theorists such as Weber, Barnard, Mead, Erikson, and Lindeman, she is an innovative and integrative Philosopher of HRD who captures the essence of adult learning in the individual and organization. Follett's writings address the core beliefs of HRD through her thoughts on people, organization, and adult learning. Consequently, her writings provide a framework for how a HRD practitioner sees the world, thinks about the world, and practices in the world.

Although her works pre-date the generally recognized emergence of the field of HRD, Follett nevertheless adds to the body of knowledge of our field. She offers a perspective of organizational life that incorporates all the foundations of HRD - people, learning, and organizations. Much like HRD practitioners today, she uses adult learning as an integrative mechanism to achieve optimal functioning in and by organizations. Such an approach can be seen in her beliefs about leadership development, individual development creating contributing members of society, and career development through continuous learning. Follett's works provide a seminal, foundational view of the essence of HRD. For that reason alone, students of HRD can find value in her works. More importantly, she

provides a framework for positioning HRD as a strategic partner to management that facilitates the learning necessary for the survival of the organization.

This paper provided a brief exploration of how Mary Parker Follett's works might be associated with the three foundational pillars of HRD, thus making her a philosopher of note in our field. Clearly, she was ahead of her time in articulating the linkages among people, learning, and organization that were being expressed in the late nineteenth and early to mid-twentieth centuries. Further explorations into Mary Parker Follett's works might trace how her thinking is associated with more contemporary expressions of people, learning, and organizations made by individuals such as Bronfenbrenner (people), Mezirow or Knowles (learning), and Weick or Schein (organizations).

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The Human Resource Development Network as a Means for Adult Learning

Susan A. Huhta
John A. Niemi
Northern Illinois University

The Human Resource Development Network (HRDN) at Northern Illinois University (NIU), in DeKalb, Illinois, is an example of non-traditional, informal learning. This form of adult learning occurs outside the formal, traditionally conceived boundaries of institutions. Participants created this network to fill in the gaps in their own learning.

Keywords: Informal Learning, Adult Learning, Career Development

The Human Resource Development Network (HRDN) at Northern Illinois University (NIU), in DeKalb, Illinois, is an example of non-traditional, informal learning. This form of adult learning occurs outside the formal, traditionally conceived boundaries of institutions. Participants created this network to fill in the gaps in their own learning.

This study of HRDN at NIU has determined that HRD professionals have successfully conceived and directed their own professional development. Research data came from interviews based on an open-ended questionnaire of thirty-three participants, participant observation, and documentary analysis.

From this inductive study, the CHI model of learning emerged, showing interrelationships among the categories of career awareness, human interaction, and individual development.

Problem Statement

The problem central to this study is the extent to which established networks serve as focal points for individual, lifelong, and professional learning. As learning specialists, HRD professionals are charged with the responsibility for the training and development of individuals and organizations. The demands of this profession require these individuals to be consummate lifelong learners, to insure that the organizations that employ them maintain a position on the cutting edge to keep up with changes in today's fast-moving economy. A central focus of this research was the particular means that HRD professionals utilized to maintain and advance their own personal and professional development.

One way in which HRD professionals remain at the forefront of new knowledge is through networking. HRD professionals connected with Northern Illinois University formed such a learning network to meet their own learning needs, rather than relying solely on providers of continuing professional education and/or institutions of higher education. This study addressed elements of adult learning in such networks and conceived a holistic picture of an HRD network as an environment for adult learning.

Theoretical Framework

Nadler originated the term human resource development in 1969 to describe, "organized learning experiences in a definite time period to increase the possibility of improving job performance or growth" (Nadler, 1983, p. 13). As learning specialists, HRD professionals are charged with the development of individuals and organizations. Gilly and Eggland (1989) defined "development" as "the advancement of knowledge, skills, and competencies, and the improved behavior of people within the organization for both their personal and professional use" (p. 5).

HRD professionals exist in a world that is constantly changing. Changes in society, technology, and information are all occurring at a more rapid pace than ever before (Gooler, 1990). Organizational structures and strategies, evolving employee attitudes and needs, new technologies, and an information explosion are some of the shifting forces that create a continuous demand for workplace learning. Lifelong learning, especially for HRD professionals, has become a necessity of contemporary life.

While much of lifelong learning for personal, community, and workplace needs is accomplished through the formal educational system, a large degree of learning occurs informally and outside of the traditional means.

Darkenwald and Merriam (1982) recognized a continuum of adult education, ranging from highly formal to highly informal. They stated that, "We might consider as highly informal any purposeful, systematic, and sustained learning that is not sponsored, planned, or directed by an organization" (p. 152). They included, in the informal category, not only self-directed instruction, but private instruction via individual or group lessons, and informal groups and clubs where adults focus on specific subject matter areas for mutual education; and networking, where individuals with common interests gather for learning and mutual support (Darkenwald & Merriam, 1982). For this study, informal learning was defined as learning that is non-credit, person-to-person transactions, or self-directed.

As contemporary change and complexity continue to expand, informal learning is becoming increasingly important to the workplace (Marsick, 1987). As learning specialists, HRD professionals are responsible for organizational and individual learning, as well as for their own continuing professional learning and development. Marsick wrote that:

> Learning calls for a flexible capacity for continual reflection on one's actions, and at times for critical reflection, that is for digging beneath the surface to examine taken-for-granted assumptions, norms, and values. Much of this learning takes place informally - - through daily professional interactions and self-directed learning. (p.9)

Whereas many avenues of learning are available to adults for informal, lifelong learning as private individuals or in groups, or professional education provided by outside sources, the learning network promises to be an integral part of the learning system in America. In addition to learning to meet the needs of today, HRD professionals must examine their personal and professional development in order to fulfill the demands of the future. Professional development is the "process of keeping current in the state of the art, keeping competent in the state of practice, and keeping open to new theories, techniques, and values" (Chalofsy & Lincoln, 1983, p. 21). Professional development can be accomplished formally through seminars, classes, and workshops offered by continuing education providers. It can also be achieved informally through learning networks with very little cost.

Research Questions

Specific concerns that emanated from this problem were twofold. First, why do HRD professionals participate in this learning network? And second, how do they utilize new knowledge acquired through the network?

Method of Research

Because a learning network may be thought of as a community, the anthropological research model was applied. According to this model, two components are needed to reach an understanding of such a unit of study. The first component addresses the question, "Why is this study being done?" That is, what conceptual thoughts guided collection and analysis of the facts? The conceptual frame here was qualitative and naturalistic. The second component addressed the logic and plan of the research design, including technological aspects such as data collection, field procedures, and coding.

> Qualitative research is an approach, rather than a particular set of techniques and its appropriateness derives from the nature of the social phenomenon to be explored (Morgan & Smirich, 1980). Filstead (1970) concisely described the usefulness of this approach for this type of study in this way:

> Qualitative methodology allows the researcher to get close to the data thereby developing the analytical, conceptual, and categorical components of explanation from the data itself - rather than from the preconceived, rigidly structured, and highly quantified techniques that pigeonhole the empirical social world into the operational definitions that the researcher has constructed. (p. 6)

Brookfield (1983) stated that qualitative research methods are particularly appropriate to informal learning situations, such as the learning network. Research methods utilized in this study were therefore qualitative, because they provided a holistic view of the educational setting and the learners in a learning network.

There were two major foci of this research project. The first focus was to explore the nature and extent of adult learning that occurred as a result of participation in an HRD network (HRDN). The second was to illuminate and understand the contextual setting, personality composition, and conceptual base of such a network. This research was designed to examine such questions as:

- To what extent did adult learning take place in this HRDN?
- What was the nature of this adult learning?
- In what ways did learning in this type of environment empower participants to take control of their own continuing education?

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- Did the relationships of the group result in learning experiences that were satisfactory for most members?
- What would be the potential advantage of establishing expanded linkages for a peer-learning network (advisory boards among business, government and the voluntary sector, and higher education human resource development (HRD) programs)?

The qualitative method, grounded theory, was appropriate because human resource development networks are not usually large enough or stable enough to utilize strictly quantitative methods of analysis. Grounded theory (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) is a method of social research that is concerned with the emergence of theory from data that has been systematically gathered and analyzed. It is characterized by inductive fieldwork and emphasizes the discovery of theory that is grounded in analysis of the data. Also, grounded theory is also particularly appropriate when investigating new areas of inquiry, problems for which little theory has been developed, such as learning networks for professional development.

Findings of this research provide a "naturalistic understanding" (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) of a particular phenomena of adult learning, including the environment of the network, the way that this network developed and survived in the context of voluntarism and continuing education, and, the perceptions of individual learners as to specific benefits of being a network participant.

Thompson (1985) suggested the following guidelines when a holistic view of a phenomenon is the target: "to understand, not to judge; to begin the study of phenomena, not to arrive at conclusions; and, to involve the subjects in study, not to study them in the abstraction of numbers and percentages" (p. 67).

This modality of research stressed the importance of understanding roles, motivations, values, and underlying assumptions, all of which add to the holistic understanding of adult learning in networks.

Grounded theory was also selected as the research method for this study, because it facilitates the presentation of detailed and rich information concerning the dynamics of adult learning within a voluntary organization. This research was an intensive investigation of the perceptions of experienced learners within the HRD network at Northern Illinois University, DeKalb, Illinois and resulted in an in-depth study of the background, current status, and interactions of given network members (Isaac & Michael, 1983).

Self-Realized Limitations

The researchers' involvement with the network provided motivation for initiating this study. This study does not pretend to be objective due to the researcher's personal involvement. Every attempt was made to obtain and interpret the data in an impartial fashion.

Researcher bias was controlled through the three-way process of data collection, coding, and memo writing (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). In qualitative research there is a general overriding issue of objectivity. Spradley and McCurdy (1972) illuminated this problem in the following manner:

There must be a recognition that complete objectivity is impossible, that personal prejudices and ethnocentrism influence data collection, and that selective observation and interpretation always occur during research. (p.18)

Bogdan and Biklen (1982) recommended that researchers be aware of this bias and reflect on their own interpretations and personal prejudices with detailed field notes. Continuously monitoring the subjects' views against the researchers' reactions guard against researcher subjectivity.

Results and Findings

The three categories that emerged from the data-gathering process from interviews with participants in the HRDN were: (1) career awareness, (2) human interaction, and (3) individual development as illustrated in Figure 1.

Career awareness

Career awareness was related to professional concerns of improvement on the job, changing within a career field or between career fields. The emerging properties were job relatedness, career development, and career modulation.

Job relatedness concerned discoveries made by participants that related to improvements on a current job, exposure to new job sources, internships that were not available in the adult education program, and areas of learning in HRD that could benefit organizations. The first characteristic of the job relatedness property was how the HRDN addressed issues that were immediately applicable to the work environment. Members found support from

Figure 1: CHI Model of Learning

Career Awareness

HRDN

Human Interaction   **Individual Development**
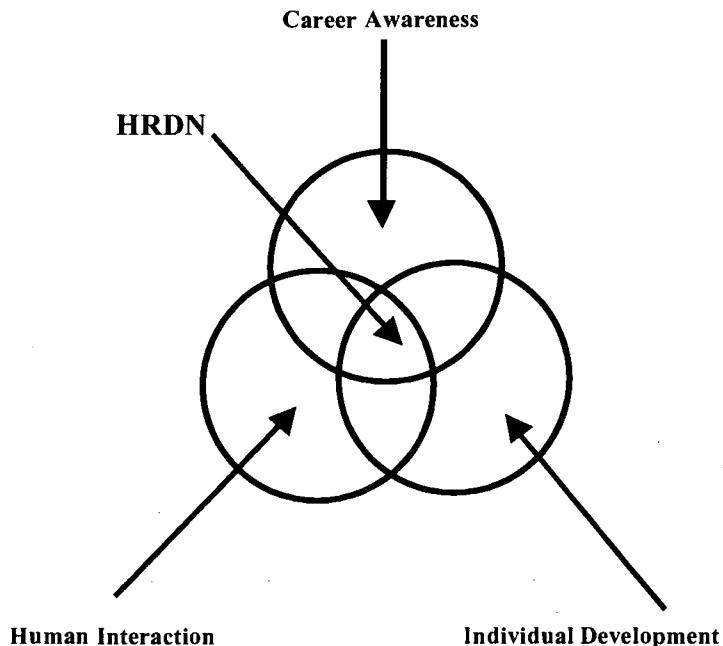
other network participants for their current positions. They received encouragement and reinforcement at HRDN meetings and said that network meetings were thought of as a reunion, where members gathered to share ideas and support each other. A second characteristic of the job relatedness property was usefulness of the network as a resource for jobs and internships. Participants said that they believed the network yielded many opportunities for acquiring jobs that were not usually advertised openly. Exposure to new organizations, through conferences and site visits, were abundant. Members of the network were provided with many opportunities to obtain or provide quality internships. Organizations benefited from network associations by gaining highly educated and skilled individuals. The final characteristic of job relatedness was the HRDN's proficiency at recognizing current movements, such as the learning organization and strategic HRD, and incorporating them into specific programming for network meetings.

Career development included two prominent characteristics of continuing professional education and enrichment for HRD jobs and class work. The first characteristic was achieved in the network through exposing participants to different kinds of learning experiences that are normally only available to those who would actually be the recipients of the professional training sponsored by a business or institution, or offered commercially for financial gain by the provider. These HRD practitioners said that network site visits gave them a unique type of non-credit professional continuing education and created an elevated level of intellectual involvement. Learners achieved a form of continuing professional growth by acquiring an increased exposure to various facets, contexts, and applications of HRD, and by becoming more aware of issues of career development for HRD professionals.

The second characteristic of the career development property was the HRDN as a source of enrichment for HRD jobs and class work. Members were able to get feedback and reflect on projects for classes, or writing articles for professional journals. Network experiences helped to build upon expectations of previous understandings of HRD, what people in HRD really do, and the specific skills required to execute essential HRD roles.

Career modulation was the third and final property of the career awareness category. For this research, career modulation is defined as movement within an HRD career, or movements to an HRD position from a different career field. Participants gained an exposure to various aspects, facets, and contexts of HRD, as well as career possibilities. They were sometimes surprised by the many different applications of HRD and how they could be utilized. Participants learned that the variety of skills they possessed could be readily transposed to an HRD

position.

The first category, career awareness, revealed properties that included issues of job relatedness, career development, and career modulation (changing careers). This first category yielded valuable properties for development as HRD professionals in current and future careers. Career awareness, for these participants, encompassed a lifelong process related to the examination of self, self-development, implementation, and planning of career goals. The emphasis was on promoting growth and development in the career sphere of the individual life of the HRD professional. While many participants indicated that furthering of individual careers was the initial reason for their network attendance, the data strongly suggested that it was not the only motivation for participation.

Human Interaction

The second category that emerged from the data, revealed the importance of involvement, participation, and interpersonal communication, and quality of work-life environment as important characteristics to participants.

Involvement and participation were important because they encompassed human interaction and created a sense of ownership by the primary stakeholders of the network. Participants found great motivation in the process of program planning, decision-making, and control of their own leaning. Participants also developed their own organizational culture through this participatory process and even worked as a group to create the HRDN logo, which visually and concretely represented the values of the network.

Interpersonal communication, and a like-mindedness among participants resulted in a sharing of resources for knowledge and research. By talking with each other, participants discovered that the HRDN offered a medium to exchange ideas and concepts. Most interchanges of information were face-to-face and were engagements of informal interactions. This human networking was an important motivation for learning in the network. The HRDN laid the foundation for open communication among participants. There were no hierarchies to clog communication, and everyone was free to interact with each other in a non-political way. Therefore, the human connection was a significant drawing point for network success. The network was sustained by a horizontal interrelationship of colleagues. Network participants supported each other in HRD work and learned from one another by sharing information and experience.

Quality of Work Life Environment

The quality of work life environment included trusting relationships, collegial learning, and network members as change agents. Through its very existence, the network enlightened participants on improving the quality of their personal work lives and environments. The importance of trusting relationships demonstrated the collegial interdependence with superiors and colleagues. Participants achieved social contacts in the network that later developed into professional relationships and interchanges. The network served as a catalyst for the cultivation of these associations. The network was unique because it provided professional experiences and relationships without the risk of negative or positive job ramifications that might ordinarily accompany a professional situation. The network consisted of people who were trusted by their colleagues for information. Therefore, new information and learning were more likely to be adopted, because the level of trust gave credibility to new concepts that were being tested. Collegial learning occurred because people networked in a social situation that provided valuable informal learning opportunities. Information was freely given, without consultative charges and within an atmosphere of trust. Personal trust and respect yielded empowerment for learning within the HRDN. Relationships were based on high intellectual standards and respect for learning and information.

The third and final characteristic of the quality of work life environment category was network members as change agents. Participants viewed themselves as catalysts for change. As HRD professionals, they assisted organizations and people with adaptation to environmental fluctuation. The HRDN encouraged individuals to develop their skill levels with the confidence to adopt new ideas. These early adopters within the network had a finely tuned sense of intuition and an ability to synthesize what is going on in the environment. This intuition enabled them to know where to go to get information, who had credibility, and in ways to share new knowledge. Concepts and ideas were congealed and solidified. Intuition allowed them to make small connections that appeared to be giant leaps in helping organizations and people change.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Professionals in the HRD field have a personal and professional responsibility to further their education beyond a formal degree program. Unfortunately, to rely only on pre-determined classes that are designed by an institution of higher education or professional presentations, without the opportunity for personal interaction, only touches the

surface of the actual knowledge that exists in the realm of practice. It also denies the experiences of other professionals and the fact that professionals can create innovations through experience. Networks, structured similarly to the one described here have the unique capacity to accommodate these additional avenues of educational experiences and legitimate the creation of new knowledge.

These data lead to a new model of continuing development for HRD professionals. Learning in the HRDN was a form of continuing professional education and that learning was extremely successful in three distinct areas. These areas generated the categories of career awareness, human interaction, and individual development. The interaction of these three areas suggested a process model of learning. This interrelated model of learning was a support system for its participants and is described as the CHI Learning Model. The CHI model of learning is a visual representation of the three categories of data that emerged from the data.

Chi originates from the eastern tradition of life energy. All things that exist require this energy and are interrelated in their giving off or absorbing the vitalizing energies around them. Energy flows both from the chi to the living object, and in reverse. Without this interconnectedness, the relationship of living things to this unseen energy would be broken, resulting in illness and a lack of continuing growth. In HRDN each category that emerged was critical to the life-blood of the network's existence. If any one category were lacking, the others would not have had the continued success that was evident from the research. In turn according to the data, this learning network regenerated itself by providing reflexivity. All three categories were complementary to each other and to the HRDN as a whole entity. The categories that emerged were also interdependent upon one another. If one category changed or became more dominant, the others appeared to respond to this action by becoming temporarily subdominant.

The "C" in the model represents the career-awareness category that unfolded throughout this research. Career development was at the core of the network's reason for being, and by developing individual careers, participants contributed back into the network, through providing job and intern resources, contributing their experiences on a related topic, suggesting future site visits, or sharing how a particular topic relates to them personally.

Central to the learning network is the category of human interaction. This category is represented by the "H" in the model. Participants stated that they wanted personal contact with other people who were interested in HRD. Participants repeatedly said that face-to-face contact was important and the primary motive for them to make the effort to drive to network meetings after work on a Friday night or Saturday. Communication among participants could have taken place more easily via the telephone or the Internet, but these media would not have replaced the interpersonal interactions experienced at meetings. Participants were able to receive and give feedback to others on a one-to-one basis. Information gained in this manner often changed the way a participant interpreted a topic and creativity emanated from this exchange of ideas.

The category that emerged on individual development is represented by the "I" in the model (Quality of Work Life Experience). Participants invested time and effort in network activities, because they were developing personal skills as individuals and HRD professionals. They said the quality of network learning was excellent and filled in the gaps of learning they found in their class studies. In turn, their network learning was internalized and processed and reflected back on class work and interactions within the HRDN. Unique to this CHI Learning Model, is the interrelatedness among the three categories. The CHI model is like an amoeba that constantly changes direction and shape. The three circles of the CHI model represent the three categories of learning for individual participants. The circles, however, are never the same and certainly not symmetrical. The process model is fluid and ever-changing. One circle may interact predominately with one circle and yet remain slightly with the third. While this relationship can change at any given moment, the HRDN is always the focal point that links the three circles. Even though the potency of a circle may change, the common link remains the fact that each circle is always in some kind of relationship to one another. Connection is at the core of the model and provides opportunities for all of the learning and interactions.

Participants in an HRD professional learning network can be compared to amoeba, because they too are constantly changing learning emphasis according to their needs at a particular moment. Even within one learning experience, new needs, and therefore emphasis, may arise due to new information that is consumed and processed. Digestion of new material not only changes what is already known, but may transform a participant's outlook on future unfamiliar information. Attitudes and perspectives become transfigured to the point of the blossoming of new species of thought processes. While each category represented a branch of learning in a participant's educational process, the three branches never carried equal emphasis. The model remained fluid and changing - when participants learning needs changed, that particular facet of the learning model received more emphasis.

Based on the data all three categories of the CHI model, career-awareness, human interaction, and individual development were redefined in light of each other. They appear now (in the model) to be a kaleidoscope

that changes at each turn of the cylinder, because the interactions of participants and their knowledge base constantly changed as they learned from each other. Apparently, learning created its own momentum for further learning and change.

This type of informal learning may occur frequently in many venues, but the theoretical aspects of it were not discovered until this study. The CHI model has profound implications for HRD professionals.

Implications for Practice

The HRDN was able to meet a variety of participants' needs, including professional and personal deficiencies. The categories and properties delineated in the CHI model represent the educational benefits that participants derived from this learning network. This model suggests five implications for HRD professionals.

First, learning networks can facilitate the educational development of HRD professionals, whether or not they have completed a formal degree program. The rapid growth of knowledge and communication systems in today's world imposes tremendous demands on HRD professionals to maintain and enhance their knowledge base for themselves and their employers. A learning network offers unique learning opportunities for HRD professionals to customize an evolving knowledge base according to the needs of the participants. Second, HRD professionals, who may be at any level of expertise or training, could create a learning network to fill in gaps in their professional education. Third, HRD professionals would gain the advantage of participation in the process of designing learning programs that could overcome individual deficiencies in a particular job situation. As HRD professionals move from one position to another, adaptation to the new environment can be challenging and time consuming. The learning network could ease the transition. Fourth, any HRD professional who embraces a self-directed learning style could benefit from a learning network because it seems to encourage self-directed learners in creating their own educational experiences. Finally, HRD professionals tend to be early adopters of innovation and the learning network could serve a useful purpose as a testing ground for new ideas. Furthermore, because the presenters of innovations are usually trusted peers who are regarded as credible sources of information, the adoption of these innovations becomes less intimidating. Another effect is the spontaneous appearance of innovations as old ideas are viewed from fresh perspectives. In conclusion, it is suggested that HRD professionals should consider these implications when devising a learning network.

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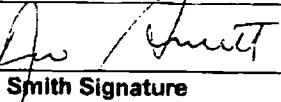
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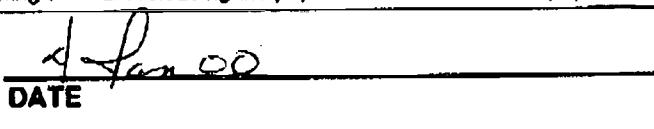
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