

Research Topic: How has the theory of Andragogy influenced adult learning in higher education?

Merriam, S. B. (2001), Andragogy and self-directed learning: Pillars of adult learning theory. *New Directions for Adult and Continuing Education*, 2001: 3–14.
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The purpose of this article is to understand adult learning from two foundational theories to the present through past theories, principles and models from scholars in the field of adult education and from the authors' point of view to evaluate the importance of each theory. This article summarizes how adult learning has been defined in terms of andragogy and self-directed learning with use of an extensive list of resources with most being from literature written by Malcolm S. Knowles and provides an international view of adult learning theories. The theory of andragogy is used to distinguish the pedagogy of education for children and adults. While self-directed learning is a model that has been used to show how learning is done differently in children and adults in terms of concept and the learning process. There was no bias in the article, as it presented many scholarly views from different education practitioners throughout the world on adult learning, that was written by Sharan B. Merriam, PhD. Dr. Sharan B. Merriam is professor of adult education at the University of Georgia. Dr. Merriam is the author, coauthor, or editor of numerous books, including *Philosophical Foundations of adult Education*, *Adult Learning and Development*; *Multicultural Stories and Qualitative Research: A Guide to Design and Implementation*. Dr. Merriam has also written and coauthored numerous articles in scholarly journals over the span of her career. This article is in a peer reviewed journal and has an extensive reference list from other peer reviewed sources. There was some discussion regarding whether andragogy could be viewed as a science, discipline or a technology. Several scholars, one in particular being Henschke, viewed andragogy as a scientific discipline in that all studies related to teaching and learning are with the goal of bringing adults to their full potential. In contrast, scholar Pastuovic, views andragogy to be a technological application of societal and psychological knowledge that is not a science system. I chose this article as I am interested in self-directed learning and its conception as I tend to have to explain my reasoning for going to school online to peers and also I wanted to learn about how andragogy was developed and defined. I agree that adult learning is important and that pedagogy does differ for children and adults in terms of how, what, when and where we learn. This article is a great resource for students or educators who want to learn about andragogy and I can use article as a source in my research regarding adult learning and distance education.