A Model Relating an Adult in a Job, Interests and Needs, and Continuing Education

by VICTORIA BEHL HAMMER

A.A. Liveright\textsuperscript{2} studied adult education activities in governmental and nongovernmental agencies and induced four major goals for the field of adult education:

1. Occupational, vocational or professional competence.
2. Personal and family living competence.

Kidd\textsuperscript{3} roughly classified adult learner needs and wants into those things that relate to: (1) health; (2) family, friendship; (3) sociocivic-relations; (4) consumer aspects of life; (5) occupational; (6) recreation, and; (7) religion and philosophy.

Cyril Houle\textsuperscript{4} stated the practicing professional:

1. Needs to keep up with new knowledge related to his profession.
2. Needs to establish mastery of the new conceptions of his own profession.
3. Needs to continue his study of the basic disciplines which support his profession.
4. Needs to grow as a person as well as a professional.

Jerome Rosow\textsuperscript{5} pointed out that the "working poor" have no economic satisfaction from work. For example, he stated in his book published in 1974, that one-fourth of the labor force in the South earns less than $2.00/hour and there are 4.5 million people who are unemployed or unable to find a job. Continuing education could help these individuals to increase the economic satisfaction from their work or help them to be employable.

Levin and Slavet\textsuperscript{6} stated that occupational training—continuing education—is necessary [for the "working poor,"] for the young before they enter the labor force, for the handicapped, and for the older adults who have difficulty in finding and retaining adequate employment. Federal legislation in recent years has reflected the support of education which helps to fill the manpower shortages in specific vocational areas. Continuing education becomes an op-

A dult education views the adult as a life long learner, and adults are coming to view adult education—continuing education—throughout their life time as a necessity.\textsuperscript{1} A job or an occupation is a major activity of life for most adults from the age of 18 to 65. As our society copes with the increasingly rapid changes and advances in technology, adults whose occupations are affected by those changes are finding their basic education preparation needs to be extended. Continuing education is one way to keep up and/or to further their occupational development. An adult's job then becomes a major consideration for continuing education.

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portunity for the hard core jobless to increase their employability.

It was found in a national study supported by the Carnegie Corporation which sampled 3910 households of United States adults from 18-60 in the summer of 1972, that 76.8 percent of the 2,004 respondents answered "yes" to the question, "Is there anything in particular you would like to know more about or would like to learn how to do better?" Forty-three percent of those who responded "yes" stated their first choice would include a vocational subject or topic.

A model is presented in this paper which relates the adult in a job to that adult's interests and needs as viewed by himself and as viewed by others. The meeting or nonmeeting of these interests and needs is then related to the continuing education process and what effect that has on the individual's job. A review of the literature supports the concepts related in the model (Fig. 1).

THE ADULT AND A JOB

A job is an important aspect of an adult's life and of an adult's growth and development. Levinson studied the psychosocial development of men in early adulthood and the mid life transition. His description of psychosocial development relates in part to the occupational development of the individual. For example, the adult in his early twenties to the age of 27-29 is establishing an occupation or occupational direction consistent with his interests and values. From age 28-32, the adult experiences a transitional period during which he questions his commitment to his occupation. In the thirties, the adult is described as beginning to settle down and invests more of himself in his work, family, and valued interests. From age 35-39, he attaches himself to a mentor who assists him to boom in his job and from which he eventually becomes independent.

When the adult selects a job, it is likely he will do so because of economic need, interests, or self-actualization.

In our industrialized society we depend on a job to obtain financial support for our basic existence. The only meaning a job may have for some individuals is that it is a means to fulfill their economic needs. If their economic needs are fulfilled, they survive in our society without depending on public assistance programs.

Jobs to others may be assumed for reasons other than or in addition to economic need. Berdie in a study of 1,500 University of Minnesota students found that interest was the best prediction of a field of study chosen and completed. The author assumes that one's chosen and completed field of study will provide one's occupational direction. Super in his study relating interests to success in an occupation, found "when other factors were held constant, when the congeniality of the activity effects industriousness, and when appropriate criteria were used, interest is moderately related to vocational success." The author assumes that at least some people select a job because of interest.

Others may assume a job because of self-actualization needs. Self-actualization is the fifth basic human need as identified by Maslow. Maslow placed basic human needs into a hierarchical structure of fulfillment as follows:

1. Body needs (physical).
2. Safety against pain or danger of life.
3. Love, affection, acceptance, belonging.
5. Self-actualization.

Self-actualization refers to man's need to fulfill his capabilities and realize his potentialities. For some, a job may be the mechanism through which an individual can meet this need.

For whatever specific reason, or combination of reasons an individual selects a job, most of us in the United States do have jobs—it is a part of our adult development and our adult societal role.

It may be noted here that Larson stated adults who have had 12 years or less of school return to school motivated by economic factors—the need for a better job or to upgrade skills to gain an increased wage. Adults who have had 12 years or more of school return to school motivated by the drive for self-actualization—to fulfill one's personal capacities. If they turn to education for these two needs, they probably select a job for these same needs. Those of us in continuing education need to pay attention to these factors.

The Job as It Generates Interests and Needs

The job as shown in Figure 2 generates interests and needs. On the left, the individual identifies his interests and needs; on the right, others identify the adult's needs based on organizational and societal interests and needs. Interests are factors which attract or repel an
individual from various objects, persons, or activities within an environment. They indicate a liking or a preference and refer to desires. Interests act as an impetus to seek out new experiences which favor change or growth and are an accurate reflection of such things as change in abilities and shifts in vocational or cultural expectations. The best way to determine an individual’s interests is to ask him. This can be done by interviews, questionnaires, or group discussions.

Interests and need interrelate. Sometimes an interest is a direct expression of a need. Sometimes it is a substitute.

A need is a lack, want, demand, or tension, felt by an individual or social group, that seeks relief. As previously discussed, Abraham Maslow outlined five needs which are basic to all human people—the fifth being self-actualization. A job which may be selected to fulfill a self-actualization need may generate further self-actualization pursuits. A job may also generate a specific job educational need. An educational need as described by Malcom Knowles and Kaufman is a measurable outcome discrepancy between “what is” and “what should be”—between an individual’s present level of competency and his required level of competency for the job. The need implies a gap. An individual may identify his own educational need when he encounters a new situation in which the old way of behaving in the situation is not adequate and requires a new way of thinking and acting. This is upsetting and uncomfortable to the individual. It puts him into a state of disequilibrium at which time he recognizes his need to learn new knowledge and skills or resolve attitudinal conflicts. The more concretely an individual can identify the gap between what is required of him in his job in terms of credentials and competences, and what credentials and competences or self-actualization he actually possesses, the more exactly he can define his own job educational needs and the more intensely he will be motivated to learn.

The best way to determine what an individual sees as his needs is, again, to ask him. If he has not identified his own needs, asking him the question may stimulate the process.

The job may also generate an educational need that is not identified by the individual, but by others. These others may be the society or the community at large, specialists in the job field, or the organization for whom the individual works. This information may be obtained by watching the trends in the mass media, asking the community leaders and taxpayers, reviewing recent research, professional journals and technological advances, observing the employees at work, studying work productivity and management data, and asking the administrative and supervisory personnel who are responsible for the organization’s and the individual’s work performance. Specific techniques that can be used to gather data about needs which are unidentified by the learner are surveys, interviews, questionnaires, test, group problem analysis, role playing of situations, job analysis, performance reviews, records and reports.

**MOTIVATION**

Motivation is a concept used to explain why people do what they do; it implies an active relationship between an individual and his surroundings. Motivation stems from an individual’s self-identified interests and needs. These interests and needs are powerful motivators for an individual to seek continuing education.

Knox states that an adult’s participation in a continuing education program is associated with his perception of:

1. The importance to him of the aspects of his life to which the program relates.
2. The extent to which he wants to increase his competencies in relation to that particular aspect of his life.
3. The extent to which education is seen as an effective way to increase his competencies.
4. The fit between his life style and the anticipated patterns of program participation.
5. The balance between the anticipated benefits and the anticipated cost of participation.
6. The external sources of encouragement.

Many have asserted that the amount and rate of learning for an individual is determined by the learner’s motivation. The amount of motivation is related to the extent to which the individual sees the continuing education process relating to his interests and needs. Adults learn what they need and want to learn—they do not learn because someone else thinks they should learn, unless it corresponds with their own interests and needs.

Those adults who enter the continuing
education process based on their own identified interests and needs are motivated to learn. Educators within the continuing education process should take heed to consider the individual's interests and needs to keep the learner motivated. It should be noted that common needs as identified by a group may not be the same as those identified by the individual.²⁰

An adult who enters the continuing education process because of needs as identified by others may lack the motivation to learn. He comes to the continuing education process because of a requirement placed upon him by outside forces such as new regulations for licensure or consumer demands or because of requirements placed upon him by the organization for which he works. This individual must be persuaded to learn—his interests and needs must be identified to arouse his motivation.¹²

It is an art and a challenge in the field of adult education to help the adult to search for, to discover, and to become interested in his needs.²³ Some learners may need to be counseled to assist them to identify at what level they are presently performing and at what level they need to perform. Motivation may be aroused in other individuals by "whetting their appetite." Advertising practitioners have long realized that one of the most effective ways to motivate people is to allow them to sample at least a small amount of the incentive in advance of the instrumental activity." This could also be done with continuing education. Other ways to motivate people is by external forces such as encouragement by friends, work expectations that emphasize continuing education, and other external rewards which may be used to "get the student going." These should be de-emphasized as soon as possible to take full advantage of whatever intrinsic motivation that may have been awakened within the individual.

BLOCKS TO MOTIVATION

In Figure 1, motivation of the individual for continuing education may be blocked either before he enters the continuing education process or while he is in it. In the nation-wide 1972 Carnegie Commission supported study on adult education, it was found that the two major blocks to continuing education, hence blocks to the individual's motivation for continuing education, as identified by the "would be learner" respondents were lack of money (53%) and lack of time (46.2%).¹⁷ Other blocks identified by the "would be learners" were they didn't want to go to school full time, home responsibilities,
and job responsibilities. Knox identified blocks to continuing education as being lack of time, lack of money, lack of confidence, scheduling conflicts, and problems with transportation. Kidd further identified a second group of blocks to continuing education to be lack of time, lack of money, age, culture, and social group. The two recurrent blocks identified are lack of money and lack of time.

Wolk suggests that the block of a lack of money could be overcome by federal funding for continuing education. In 1960-1970, federal support for higher education became a national policy. In 1967, $4.6 billion was appropriated by the United States government for higher education. Wolk identified four alternative ways that the education was funded. They are as follows: (1) categorical aid which was designated to be spent in a certain area, (2) aid to students in the form of low interest loans and grants, (3) direct grants to institutions, and (4) tax relief. Federal support for continuing education is one possible solution; however, other solutions need to be explored. Perhaps the organization for which the individual works could pay for part or all of the costs. This is already being done by some organizations, e.g., hospitals which are providing inservice education for their employees. Another way to overcome the block of lack of money for continuing education is for the individual himself to routinely set aside a certain sum of money each month to be used specifically for this purpose.

Time for continuing education must be budgeted by the individual and the organization. There are only 24 hours in a day and a job is only one aspect of an individual’s life. The individual and the organization must take the responsibility to set continuing education as a priority and to take the time for continuing education to meet the individual’s and subsequently, the organization’s needs and interests.

Blocks to motivation may also occur within the continuing education process itself. This occurs when the continuing education process does not meet the entering motivated learner’s interests and needs, or when it does not determine the interests and needs of the unmotivated learner.

THE CONTINUING EDUCATION PROCESS

It is obvious that educators in the continuing education process must assess the interests and needs of the individual in program planning to keep the individual motivated or to motivate the unmotivated. Clearly, people’s needs ought to be among the basic criteria for designing and evaluating educational programs. Coffing and Hutchinson developed a set of rules and procedures for identifying, defining, and measuring needs. They felt that before the continuing education process begins, educational needs have to be identified, specifically defined as to what is lacking, and the current status measured in terms of the desired status. One question that they ask is “Who needs what as defined by whom?” The “defined by whom?” should include the individual learner, the educator (subject specialist) and the society or the organization for whom the individual works. Though mature people learn best when the individual and the educator have a mutual responsibility for diagnosing learning needs and formulating an educational program based on those needs, the adult educator would be in error to base an entire program only on the individual’s identified interests and needs.”
Continuing education programs should provide an opportunity for the learner to explore and study new areas to which he has not previously been exposed—these new areas of study may not be identifiable as a need by the learner, especially if he has no knowledge that they exist. Whatever needs are identified and whoever it is that does the defining and the measuring of present and desired status, the educator must "hook up" the individual's identified needs and interests with the continuing education process and the information that is presented.

As shown in Figure 1, if the continuing education process meets the learner identified interests and needs, and presents new information to the learner which meets those needs as identified by others and which is carefully related to the learner's interests and needs, then the learner will proceed through the education process motivated and satisfied. His interests and needs will be satisfied as well as those needs as identified by the organization for which he works. It is important that the adult receive feedback as to how he has changed as a result of completing the continuing education process. This helps him to be more satisfied and hopefully to have confidence in his increased knowledge and skills to continue growing in his job.

If the continuing education process does not meet the individual's interests and needs as perceived by the individual, the individual will become frustrated and swing out of the continuing education process unsatisfied. This dissatisfaction may affect how the individual performs in his job.

Continuing Education Process and Job Satisfaction

Continuing education, if it meets the individual's interests and needs, could have an impact on the individual's job satisfaction. Several studies on job satisfaction as completed by Hulin,25 Weitz and Nucklos,26 Taylor and Weiss,26 and Wild,11 found significant differences in the measure of job satisfaction between employees who remained in the perspective organization and employees who left. If employees aren't satisfied, they terminate (Fig. 1).

Curry22 in his study of attitudes that affected job turnover in Navy civilian employees found that the significant factors relating to employee turnover were job information—employee knowledge about his own job, fairness of the merit promotion system, and employee services. Factors relating to supervisor turnover were union-management relations, job satisfaction/morale, satisfaction with subordinates, and policies toward subordinates. Though continuing education was not identified as being directly related to job turnover, it could be an indirect factor to decrease turnover if continuing education includes the topics that related to employee job satisfaction factors. For example, continuing education for the employees could provide the employee with more knowledge about his job and could be a basis or partial basis for a merit promotion system, i.e., continuing education could assist the employee to increase his job performance and hence be promoted. For the supervisors, continuing education could provide the supervisor with "know how" to improve union-management relations, increase the subordinates performance, or support those specifics that relate to the supervisor's self-actualization/morale needs. Henle53 stated that the individual with limited job satisfaction but with considerable education and technical knowledge may try many jobs over a relatively brief period of time in an effort to find one that meets his needs, and that lessened interest by workers in their job could easily lead to more frequent instances of job turnover. Continuing education if it supported the individual's job interests and needs could assist in decreasing job turnover.

Tuttle and Hazel44 developed a general model of job satisfaction (Fig. 2).

The purpose of the model is to provide a loose framework for systematically considering those variables presumed relevant to job satisfaction. The model considers the individual's interests, needs and expectations, and the organization's interests, needs and expectations. Continuing education could be relevant to the model (Fig. 2), in that continuing education may be a tool to help the organization meet the individual's self-actualization expectations and needs in the job situation, and continuing education could assist the individual to meet the situational requirements of the job within the organization—to fill the gap between how he performs in his job and how the organization expects him to perform in his job. According to Tuttle and Hazel's model, if both the individual's and the organization's requirements are met of each other, then satisfaction occurs.44

The model, Figure 1, relates continuing
education that centers around the individual's interests and needs to increased job satisfaction, increased job performance, and increased job growth and fulfillment. This in turn strengthens the individual in his job and supports the reasons why the individual selected the job. It may even generate new interests and needs. If the continuing education process does not center around the individual's interests and needs, the individual will swing out of the continuing education process frustrated and exhibit a decreased job satisfaction, decreased job performance, and possible job termination.

SUMMARY

A model relating the adult in a job to that adult's interests and needs and the continuing education process was presented. The adult selects a job because of self-actualization needs, interests, or economic needs, or a combination of the three. The job then generates individual identified continuing education interests and needs, and individual unidentified continuing education needs as identified by society, educators, or the organization for whom the individual works. When the individual has identified his own interests and needs, he is motivated for continuing education. The adult's motivation may be blocked by factors such as time or money which prevent him from entering the continuing education process or by the continuing education process itself which does not meet the individual's interests and needs. The individual who enters the continuing education process unmotivated must be motivated by a continuing education process that "hooks up" with the individual's needs and interests. If the continuing education process does not do so, the individual will swing out of the process into a state of frustration. If the continuing education process does focus on the individual's interests and needs while meeting the individual's unidentified needs as seen by him, the individual will proceed out of the continuing education process with his needs and interests met as well as those needs as identified by others. This will result in increased job satisfaction, increased job performance and increased job growth and fulfillment, which will feedback into the individual's job and the reasons why he selected the job. When blocks to this process are encountered, the individual experiences decreased job satisfaction, decreased job performance, and possible job termination.

Educators involved in the continuing education of adults must remember to consider the adult's interests and needs as they guide that adult through continuing education experiences, especially when it relates to a major aspect of the adult's life, such as his job. If the adult experiences satisfaction from the continuing education process that meets his interests and needs, hopefully he will return to the continuing education process when he identifies further job interests and needs in a quest for further self-actualization.

REFERENCES

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The author of this article is Victoria Hammer, RN, MN, Box 612, Starbuck, Minnesota 56381.