Policies and Practices of Adult Education and Lifelong Learning in India

Dr Md Rais Khan

Asst Prof., BGCW (DHTE), Puducherry

Abstract

Lifelong Learning policy in India is still in a transitional, transformative, and nascent stage. It is quite slow in its conceptual evolution and policy or program implementation due to lack of clarity in its disciplinary status and nomenclature, as it tries to move away from previous and cousin concepts and programs under the traditional discipline called 'Adult, Continuing and Extension Education' (popularly known as Adult Education, henceforth, in short AE). 'It (LLL) has not yet emerged as a clear guiding framework for education policy, planning and management.' 'The existing ground situation in India also indicates a mélange of the approaches' towards LLL.

Keyword: Lifelong, Learning, Transitional, Adult

Adult education evolved and transformed itself into a lifelong learning perspective at the international level (particularly Europe). Somewhat parallel to this transition of AE into LLL in Europe, adult education in India too is still in the processes of institutional expansion within a lifelong learning perspective. In fact, both the traditional AE and more contemporary LLL coexist in most part of the world contesting conceptual supremacy with each other. Although wider in usage and conceptualization, in practice, adult education in India had always been narrowly limited to programs of adult basic literacy, functional literacy, and continuing& extension education.

Let us recall that LLL is not only being used as a new disciplinary nomenclature for adult education either in India or abroad; it is also being advocated as the central organizational principle for entire education system, particularly the higher education system all over the world.

In India, now, we can identify coexistence of two broad and different strands of policies and practices within or related to adult education and LLL.

(a)   The traditional or conventional adult education as an umbrella term, which includes adult basic literacy, continuing education, extension education, vocational education, and vocational skills training, is guided by two main theoretical perspectives namely,

(i)   adult education seen as a fundamental individual and social right, and as an empowerment tool for social and economic transformation; and (ii) the more limited utilitarian perspective of adult education, which sees it as serving basic functional skills requirement of the society, for example, training in and understanding of basic literacy skills (the 3Rs), i.e., reading, writing and arithmetic.

(b)   The more contemporary concept and policy of Lifelong Learning (LLL) in India is still being contested, developed, defined, and broadened to include previous adult education policies and practices. However, LLL in India is practically and conceptually limited to the utilitarian notion of competitive and skill-oriented learning needs of the growing knowledge and market economy, both locally and globally. Thus, LLL in India refers to all kinds of skills training and education, both life-long and life-wide, including previous adult basic literacy, functional literacy, digital literacy, ICT and other technology and service sector based vocational and professional skills, imparted by public, private and NGO sectors through both formal and non-formal institutions including online, distance education courses.

Former Adult Education in India

Adult education in India has been in practice since colonial times under what is known as non-formal education sector, and which complemented the deficiencies of the formal education sector. It catered to adult 'illiterates' consisting of workers, peasants and farmers who could not avail any formal schooling. AE in many ways contributed enormously to both freedom struggle movement before 1947 as well as to the development needs of post-1947 India. 'Achieving universal adult literacy' and creation of a literate public or citizenry has always been 'a fundamental goal of adult and continuing education' in India.

Practice of adult education in post-independent India has carried different meanings and interpretations 'ranging from citizen training to its redefinition as an alternative to formal education with a three-pronged objective,' namely:

i.   'To focus on the target segment of young adults in the 15–35-year age group belonging to the underprivileged social segment

ii.   To link formal education and non-formal education for optimal utilization of available resources

iii.   To focus on inculcating functional skills as an imperative for development'

Thus, for example, the National Literacy Mission (NLM) launched in 1988 expanded the scope of earlier adult literacy programs to include development literacy. It added elements like social awareness, acquisition of relevant social skills, women's empowerment, health and hygiene, population control, values of national integration and environment conservation upon the pre-existing focus on basic literacy skills, e.g., 3Rs.

Emergence of Lifelong Learning India

The idea of LLL in India is not completely new. The first formal and well-articulated idea of LLL in India can be found in the Gandhian scheme of Nai Talim or Buniyadi Shiksha (translated as 'Basic Education'). Gandhi's Nai Talim envisioned a holistic and integral education based on productive handicraft for the education of 3Hs instead of skill acquisition in 3Rs, i.e. (a) Hands (work-based, problem-solving practical and universal education rather than text-based abstract education for urban white-collar jobs), (b) Head (mental cognitive processes) and (c) Heart or character-building education.

M.K. Gandhi's Nai Tali which is based on pedagogy arising from dialectical interplay between craft skills and cognitive processes, enabling simultaneous character formation, is the best example of a workplace- based lifelong learning. In the Gandhian scheme of craft-based education there is complete emphasis on local knowledge, local tradition, local language, local resources, where learners and experts, both as co-learners are engaged in scientific dialogical encounter not only among themselves but also with their productive works and tools. Gandhian education takes place in an interactive setting based on values of democratic learning and equal sharing, where work as a tool constantly provides dialectical interplay for cognition and learning (pedagogies) including theory and perspective building, critical understanding, exploration, and problem solving along with organic synchronization of the mind, heart, body, and spirits, thereby making it a powerful tool of personal and social transformation.

More contemporarily, LLL as a foundational principle guiding the reorganization of entire formal education system has been getting slow but increasing rhetorical attention in the educational policy discourses in India. This is evident from various policy documents and statutory commission reports.

Some of the prominent government policy documents in India with some elements of LLL policy intents are: (a) Kothari Education Commission Report (1964-66); (b) National Knowledge Commission (NKC, 2005-2008); (c) Planning Commission of India's (PCI) 11th Five Year Plan (2007-12); (d) University Grants Commission's (UGC) 11th Plan Guideline on LLL and Extension Education; (e)PCI's 12th Plan (2012-17) Guideline on LLL and Extension Education; (f) National Policy on Skills Development (NPSD 2009) and National Policy on Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (NPSDE 2015); and (g) MHRD's Draft National Policy on Education (Draft NPE 2016).

Kothari Education Commission Report (1964-66):

We can see the first intent (and idea) of LLL in the Kothari Education Commission Report (1964-66). Following M.K. Gandhi, it emphasized the importance of practical and productive work in the curriculum in order to restore dignity of labor and to develop vocational and agricultural education. One of the statements from the Kothari Education Commission Report pronounces this: Education does not end with schooling, but is a lifelong process. The adult needs an understanding of the rapidly changing world and the growing complexities of society. Even those who had the most sophisticated education must continue to learn; the alternative is obsolescence... Thus viewed the function of adult education in a democracy is to provide every adult citizen an opportunity for education of the type which he wishes and which he should have for his personal enrichment, professional advancement, and effective

participation in social and political life. (Kothari Education Commission Report, 1966, quoted in S. Y. Shah, 2017)

National Knowledge Commission (NKC 2005-08):

To understand and meet the challenges of globalizing India, the National Knowledge Commission of India (NKC) was set up, which worked from 2005-2008. The NKC recommended revamping of the entire educational system to cater to pro-market reforms taking place in the country. In order to 'leapfrog in the race for social and

economic development', one of the NKC (2006, p.1) document advises introduction of ICT and services sector related knowledge-oriented paradigm in education. It suggests development of appropriate institutional mechanisms in three significant ways:

I.   Strengthening quality and delivery within the education system, for better domestic research and innovation

II.   Leveraging of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) to enhance governance and connectivity

III.   Establishment of networks of exchange and knowledge collaborations between various knowledge systems in the global arena One of the objectives of the NKC was 'to build excellence in the lifelong and formal educational systems 'in order 'to meet the challenges of the 21st century and to increase India's competitive advantage in the fields of knowledge'. The NKC recommended the following:

1.   Expansion of LLL to 'promote a people-centred and inclusive knowledge society in India'

2.   A framework for 'achieving quality education for all through a wide-spread lifelong learning system in the country'

3.   'Open courseware and open learning resources for sharing intellectual capitals of elite institutions in India to supplement LLL systems in India'. (Das & Mukherjee-Das, 2008)

Seven Indian Institutes of Technologies (IITs) and the Indian Institute of Science (IISc, Bangalore) have already taken up an open, innovative courseware initiative called, 'National Programme on Technology Enhanced Learning' (NPTEL) 'to enhance the quality of engineering education in the country by developing more than 200 curricula-based video and web courses' (ibid.). Many institutions in India are already taking advantage of the NPTEL for dissemination of quality courseware in the areas of engineering and technology. 'This open educational resource supplements the lifelong learning process of individuals who want to catch up and brush up their knowledge.'

Planning Commission of India (PCI) 11th Five Year Plan (2007-12):

The 11thFive-Year Plan focused on a comprehensive strategy to strengthen all segments within the national education system making LLL's presence central therein. Yet, it is quite vague there. Hence, until today (e.g., August 2017), adult education and LLL remain completely confined to traditional narrow boundaries of basic literacy, functional literacy, extension education and community outreach programs with additional emphasis on skills

development to meet the needs of emerging market and new technologies during the last one decade. Both AE & LLL remain intact within existing (old) disciplinary structure with little or few operational changes in their delivery.

However, rhetorical emphasis on linking of elementary and secondary education with the labor market in this document can be considered a significant step towards expansion of the idea of LLL.

For better demographic dividend, the 11th Five Year Plan also emphasized improvement in education and training in ICTs for the emerging international market in the knowledge and services sectors, including emerging domestic educational market based on 'public- private' partnership model in educational development. It placed emphasis on the services sector, science, technology, professional education, vocational education, and training with strong focus on employability and/or self-employment (entrepreneurship). (d)University Grants Commission's (UGC) 11th Plan Guideline on LLL and

Extension Education:

This document could be considered as the first ever, national level, complete policy document dedicated to LLL in India with a comprehensive guideline. It expanded the scope of adult and continuing education under a new program called as 'Lifelong Education and Awareness Program' (LEAP), which also advised university departments of 'Adult & Continuing Education' to be renamed as 'Departments of Lifelong Learning'. However, the UGC made very little budgetary provisions for this new initiative. Yet the UGC Guideline talks about the significance of LLL in the context of market and knowledge economy, fast-paced technological changes, and global competition in detail. However, the document is high in rhetoric and poor in provisions. It gives lip service to new requirements needed for institutionalizing LLL within Indian higher education system.

PCI's 12thFive Year Plan (2012-17) Guideline on LLL & Extension Education: The 12thFive Year Plan too reiterated the need for a paradigm shift from basic literacy to lifelong learning, contextualizing this need in terms of fast changing technologies, service sector and knowledge-based competitive economy. The document emphasized a LLL perspective within all learning activities that may be undertaken by an individual throughout his/her life along life-wide sectors professionally– whether in formal, non-formal and informal settings for the up-gradation and improvement of one's knowledge, skills, and competence in spheres like personal, civic, social, and economic including employment.

The most important aspect of the paradigm shift in lifelong learning and literacy as pronounced in the 12th Five Year Plan document is the new emphasis on recognition of prior learning' and accreditation and their alignment with the formal education system. The Sakshar Bharat Mission (SBM) of the GOI launched in September 2009, too was accordingly advised to reorient itself to the new LLL paradigm. It advised SBM to expand its focus on basic adult literacy to include other learning needs such as functional literacy, vocational education, physical band emotional development, arts, culture, sports, and recreation. Yet in practice, SBM too has continued to function in the traditional way within AE perspective until now. Ministry of Labor and Employment (GOI): National Policy on Skills Development (NPSD 2009) and National Policy for Skill Development & Entrepreneurship (NPSDE 2015)

Both these policy initiatives are specifically dedicated to skilled manpower need of the country's growing global market. They aim to improve upon the quality and scope of skills training and education in India while emphasizing market and employer's needs. They also emphasize inclusion of under-privileged groups for social justice. Rhetoric's and vision apart, in actual practice, both the policy initiatives primarily seek to expand apprenticeships in order to train 500 million people by 2020.

Both NPSD and NPSDE further emphasize expansion of open and distance education (e.g., MOOCs – Massive Online Open Courses), especially in the post-secondary sector, which is already plagued with poor quality and recognition. Both the policy initiatives also prescribe elaborate principles for quality assurance procedures and accreditation, but they have not been able to address all the quality related issues. Also, since both NPSD and NPSDE come under the M/o Labor & Employment, they are not fully and meticulously integrated with the existing education system under the HRD ministry, and its proposed new education policy, which may be launched sooner or later.

(g)   MHRD's Draft (Proposed) National Policy on Education (2016):

The MHRD Draft National Policy on Education (Draft NPE, 2016) titled, 'Some Inputs for Draft National Education Policy 2016', is a 43-page document. In this document, we are not very sure about the specificities of the actual national policy on education, which might take the final shape sooner or later. We are also not sure of the real contents of the LLL policy and its would-be status in the new NPE. We are also not sure of the actual status of LLL in relation to education in general, particularly higher education. None of the official documents are very clear about the status of the relationship between LLL under MHRD and the skills development initiatives under Ministry of Labor &Employment.

The Draft NPE 2016'envisions a credible education system capable of ensuring inclusive quality education and lifelong learning opportunities for all and producing students/graduates equipped with the knowledge, skills attitudes and values that are required to lead a productive life, participate in the country's development process, respond to the requirements of the fast-changing, ever-globalizing, knowledge-based societies, and developing responsible citizens who respect the Indian tradition of acceptance of diversity of India's heritage, culture and history and promote social cohesion and religious amity.'

The Draft NPE firmly remains located within a market economy perspective in 'education as an investment' coupled with parallel rhetoric of social inclusion, promotion of mother-tongue-based education, language, and culture. At p.16 of the Draft NPE, 'the direction of the future education agenda is anchored in a lifelong and sector-wide perspective'. It also advises school level curriculum to incorporate LLL courses with focus on vocational education, skills development and entrepreneurship, and use of ICTs for gainful employment. However, higher education, particularly the universities have not been integrated with other policy initiatives to address universal and full-scale adoption of LLL. The document advises universities in a little way only to reorient their courses within a lifelong learning perspective. In addition, it advocates introduction of alternative lifelong learning systems based on distance and online modes (e.g., MOOCs / SWAYAM). MOOCs (SWAYAM) are online distance learning programs under the direct administration of the MHRD, and not under its statutory body like

the UGC, which until now has been the main regulatory body for higher education system in India.

In addition, university departments of adult education and lifelong learning have been advised to focus on creating a "literate society" and a "learning society". Here too, the main emphasis of the Draft NPE is on imparting basic adult literacy, digital, financial, and legal literacy with additional focus on creation of online and alternative learning opportunities.

Aligning itself with the National Policy on Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (2015), the Draft NPE 2016 recognizes the need to incorporate skill development programs in 25% of schools and higher education institutions. This alone perhaps constitutes the apparent coordination and integration of skills development with the existing formal education system in India under the HRD ministry.

Most of the Commission Reports, beginning from the Kothari Education Commission (1964-66) to the current Draft NPE 2016, have recommended 6% of country's GDP as investment in education. Yet until now the educational budget in India has hovered around 3% of the national GDP. In this sense, meager budgetary provisions in education have not only marred all the laudable educational policies and plans in general but have debilitated the very institutional dynamics needed for making an efficient education system based on a LLL perspective.

Apart from the above government documents at the policy level, there are two civil society initiatives influential in lifelong learning arena. They are: (a) the Mumbai Statement on Lifelong Learning, Active Citizenship, and the Reform of Higher Education (1998), and (b) the Hyderabad Statement on Adult and Lifelong Learning (2002). Both the Statements are policy suggestions resulting from two international conferences for a comprehensive LLL policy in India held under the auspices of the UNESCO. 'The concept of lifelong learning in India, as seen from the text of Hyderabad statement seems to be oriented towards UNESCO's humanistic orientation though some elements have an economistic orientation as inspired by OECD, or EU documents' (Aggarwal, 2012).

Development and Promotion of Lifelong Learning Policy in India

Since there is no concrete and comprehensive national policy on Lifelong Learning in India until now, some of the 'enabling measures', which may be considered as policy frameworks in the making of a LLL policy in India are:

a) Existence of a legislative framework for LLL, outlining the 'rights and responsibilities of the government, civil society organizations and individuals';

b) Existence of a national LLL support and service system for both urban and rural

areas, supported by 'ICTs, including satellite, broadcast networks and the internet';

c) Existence of a comprehensive 'learning outcomes assessment and accreditation, and credit transfer systems;'

d) Research-based plan for an accumulative learning credit system for individual learners aspiring for continuous up-gradation through a continuing education system- based LLL;

e)   Existence of a national qualifications system in which knowledge, skills and competencies are equally weighted, and diploma and professional qualifications are mutually transferable';

f)   Existence of an assured budgetary provision and cost-sharing system, outlining the 'responsibilities of the government, employers, and individuals', with provisions social justice to deprived sections; and

g)   Expansion of research to investigate increased spending on workplace learning with the help of industries, organizations, and civil departments (Ahmed, 2014).

Analysis and Comments on AE & LLL as a Policy Discourse in India

a)   It would be better to say that there is an existence of an expanding educational discourse on LLL in India, instead of a well-defined, well-integrated and comprehensive LLL policy in India. Both AE & LLL coexist in their conventional shape, contesting and vying for supremacy with each other.

b)   In globalizing India, the discourse of LLL as a policy has been gaining increasing importance more than the traditional adult education, continuing education and extension education.

c)   LLL as a philosophical perspective and vocational practice is not new in India. It existed during ancient and medieval times and in modern times, it is best visible in Gandhi's Nai Talim or Buniyadi Shiksha (Basic Education), which exemplifies good example of LLL principles and practices.

d)   The paradigm shift from AE to LLL within the formal education system in contemporary India has not happened in isolation but it has had exogenous influence of global changes in the economy, technology, and knowledge intensive services sector. Major policy advocacy groups from supra-national agencies such as the UNESCO (e.g., Faure Report 1972, Delor's Report 1996) and the European Union have largely influenced this paradigm shift from AE to LLL.

e)   The main obstacle behind qualitative growth and deeper institutionalization of both AE and LLL in India has been meager financial and infrastructural support provided to them by various governments and policy plans. As a result, AE and LLL have been confined to providing narrowly conceptualized basic educational services to those outside the formal education system (Shah, 2009: 21)

f)   Existing regulatory frameworks in India are not designed meticulously and comprehensively to address all the complexities in skill building project of India whether they relate to existing education system or autonomous vocational

institutions or to any other stakeholder's initiative. For example, both Draft NPE (2016) and NPSDE (2015) coexist independently without complementing each other in a close and integrated manner. This complexity is further complicated and enhanced by phenomenon such as (i) fast-paced globalization, (ii) massification of education, and (iii) withdrawal of state welfarism leading to inability of the Indian state to provide social and economic security.

LLL in India – The Way Ahead

(1)   An efficient support system by government and other stakeholders is needed to ensure sustainable financial, infrastructural, and legal framework for better research and innovation and state-of-the-art institutionalization of LLL in Indian education system.

(2)   There is a fresh need to review existing regulatory frameworks in education by governments, regulatory bodies, institutional and professional bodies, and other influential stakeholders. We need to identify areas of strengths and weaknesses in existing regulations, policies, and budgetary provisions for education, particularly in the context of LLL.

(3)   Investment in education, and particularly in LLL must be guided by effective welfarism as against unproductive and inefficient welfarism in order to cater to social justice and to the needs of personal fulfilment, professional growth, and development of social and private entrepreneurship.

References:

- Merriam, Sharan B. & Brockett, Ralph G. The Profession and Practice of Adult Education: An Introduction. Jossey-Bass, 2007, p. 7. ISBN 978-0-78790-290-2
- "Basic Information About Adult Education". ThoughtCo. "Adult Education". The Canadian Encyclopaedia. Retrieved 19 October 2014.
- Baumgartner, Sharan B. Merriam, Rosemary S. Cafarella, Lisa M.; Caffarella, Rosemary S.; Baumgartner, Lisa M. (2007). Learning in adulthood: a comprehensive guide (3rd ed.). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass. p. 7. ISBN 978-0-7879-7588-3.
- Star, Mt Kenya. "Maruge family: We've been abandoned". The Standard. Retrieved 2022-01-28.
- Fenwick, Tara J.; Nesbit, Tom; Spencer, Bruce (2006). Contexts of adult education: Canadian perspectives. Toronto: Thompson Educational Publ. p. 17. ISBN 9781550771602.
- Spencer, Bruce (2006). The purposes of adult education: a short introduction (2nd ed.). Toronto: Thompson Educational Pub. pp. 9–10. ISBN 9781550771619.
- "Adult learning in Canada: Characteristics of learners". Statistics Canada. Retrieved 19 October 2014.
- World Bank World Development Report 2019: The Changing Nature of Work.
- Bohonos, Jeremy Appreciating the Experiences and Expertise of Adult Students, Journal of College Orientation and Transition 20:2
- Spencer, Bruce (2006). The purposes of adult education: a short introduction (2nd ed.). Toronto: Thompson Educational Pub. p. 4. ISBN 9781550771619.
- Knowles, Malcolm (1984). The adult learner: a neglected species (3rd ed.). Houston: Gulf Pub. Co., Book Division. ISBN 978-0-87201-005-5.
- Brown, Angela H.; Cervero, Ronald M.; Johnson-Bailey, Juanita (August 2000). "Making the Invisible Visible: Race, Gender, and Teaching in Adult Education". Adult Education Quarterly. 50 (4): 273–288. doi:10.1177/074171360005000402. ISSN 0741-7136. S2CID 143846207.

- Bowman, Lorenzo (June 2005). "Race and Continuing Legal Education: From the Functionalist Approach to the Critical Approach". Adult Learning. 16 (3–4): 14–17. doi:10.1177/104515950501600303. ISSN 1045-1595. S2CID 143249568.

- Charron, Katherine Mellen (2012). Freedom's Teacher the Life of Septima Clark. ISBN 978-0-8078-7222-2.

- Bohonos, Jeremy W.; Sisco, Stephanie (June 2021). "Advocating for social justice, equity, and inclusion in the workplace: An agenda for anti-racist learning organizations". New Directions for Adult and Continuing Education. 2021 (170): 89–98. doi:10.1002/ace.20428. ISSN 1052-2891. S2CID 240576110.

- Bohonos, Jeremy W. (November 2019). "Including Critical Whiteness Studies in the Critical Human Resource Development Family: A Proposed Theoretical Framework". Adult Education Quarterly. 69 (4): 315–337. doi:10.1177/0741713619858131. ISSN 0741-7136. S2CID 197710425.

- Alfred, Mary V. (2021). "Race and the politics of exclusion: The socio-historical contexts of Black brutality and the emergence of the Black Lives Matter movement". New Directions for Adult and Continuing Education. 2021 (170): 9–19. doi:10.1002/ace.20421. ISSN 1536-0717. S2CID 240568628.

- Roumell, Elizabeth A.; James-Gallaway, Arcasia D. (2021). "Social movements, community education, and the fight for racial justice: Black women and social transformation". New Directions for Adult and Continuing Education. 2021 (170): 21–31. doi:10.1002/ace.20422. ISSN 1536-0717. S2CID 239160617.

- Robinson, Petra A.; Scott, Jennifer L. (2021). "Immigrants and the politics of belonging: Learning in the shadows". New Directions for Adult and Continuing Education. 2021 (170): 33–43. doi:10.1002/ace.20423. ISSN 1536-0717. S2CID 240522515.

- Margolis, Jan (1970). "THE MODERN PRACTICE OF ADULT EDUCATION (Book)". Training & Development Journal. 24 (11): 47.

- Selman, Gordon; Cooke, M; Selman, M.; Dampier, P. (1998). The foundations of adult education in Canada (2. ed.). Toronto: Thompson Educational Publ. ISBN 978-1550770834.

- Bohonos, Jeremy. "Understanding Career Context as a Key to Recruiting, Retaining and Best Serving Adult Students". Journal of Adult Learning. 2014: 28–30.

- Cox, Elaine (2015). "Coaching and Adult Learning: Theory and Practice". New Directions for Adult and Continuing Education. 2015 (148): 27–38. doi:10.1002/ace.20149.

- "Adult English Language Instruction". Archived from the original on 31 October 2012. Retrieved 11 December 2012.

- Faez, Farahnaz; Valeo, Antonella (September 2012). "TESOL Teacher Education: Novice Teachers' Perceptions of Their Preparedness and Efficacy in the classroom" (PDF). TESOL Quarterly. 3 (46). Retrieved 19 October 2014.

- Wallace, James M. (Spring 1988). "Adult Learning in America: Eduard Lindeman and His Agenda for Lifelong Education (book)". Educational Studies. 19 (1): 76.

- "The Lindeman Legacy". Adult Learning. 2 (8): 11–14. 1991. doi:10.1177/104515959100200806. S2CID 220680281.

- LBS Practitioner Training: Professional development support for Literacy and Basic Skills educators in Ontario. "Principles of Adult Learning". Archived from the original on 2014-11-12. Retrieved 19 October 2014.
- Cross, K.P (1992). Adults as learners: Increasing Participation and Facilitating Learning. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass. ISBN 9780783725079.
- Parker, Daniel A. (2019-08-21). "Book Review: Powerful Teaching: Unleash the Science of Learning, Agarwal, P. K., & Bain, P. M." Adult Learning. 31 (1): 45–46. doi:10.1177/1045159519871920. ISSN 1045-1595. S2CID 202464312.
- Renirie, Rebecca Hill (2017). "Retention of adult and traditional learners: library strategies for student success". Journal of Library & Information Services in Distance Learning. 11 (3–4): 314–329. doi:10.1080/1533290X.2017.1406876. ISSN 1533-290X. S2CID 65497184.
- Spencer, Bruce (2006). The purposes of adult education: a short introduction (2nd ed.). Toronto: Thompson Educational Pub. pp. 101–103. ISBN 9781550771619.
- Lieb, Stephen (Fall 1991). "Principles of adult learning: Adults as learners". Vision.
- Rabourn, K.E.; Brocka Lorenz, A.; Shoup, R. (2018). "Reimagining student engagement: How nontraditional adult learners engage in traditional postsecondary environments". The Journal of Continuing Higher Education. 66 (1): 22–33. doi:10.1080/07377363.2018.1415635. ISSN 0737-7363. S2CID 149044250.
- UNESCO (2018). Pathways of progression: linking technical and vocational education and training with post-secondary education. UNESCO. ISBN 978-92-3-100290-8.
- Tuijnman, Albert; Boudard, Emmanuel (2001). "Adult education participation in North America: international perspectives". Montreal, Canada: The U.S Department of Education and Statistics Canada and Human Resources Development Canada.
- Chisholm, Lynne (2004). Lifelong Learning: Citizens' Views in Close-Up: Findings from a Dedicated Eurobarometer Survey. Office for Official Publications of the European Communications.
- Ahl, Helene (2006). "Motivation in adult education: a problem solver or a euphemism for direction and control?". International Journal of Lifelong Education. 25 (4): 385–405.