

U-3G: THE CONTEMPORARY WAY OF ANDRAGOGY

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Abstract

Old age is a stage of life characterized by advanced age. While there is no universally agreed-upon definition of when someone is considered "old," it is often associated with the later years of life when individuals experience physical, cognitive, and sometimes social changes. The age at which someone is considered old can vary across cultures and societies. (W. H.O.,2021) Elders who receive education may feel happier and have a stronger sense of purpose in life. Someone can focus their attention on acquiring a skill by participating in a variety of activities and programs on a regular basis, which reduces their likelihood of experiencing anxiety or sadness. assists elders in keeping current with the times. Bringing together three generations of students, working adults, and retired seniors is the novel university idea known as U-3G. It aims to close the generational divide and provide all involved parties the capacity to take the lead and change society. In the present article the investigators try to reveal various scopes of U-3G in modern societies.

Key word: U3-G, Andragogy

Introduction

Every individual should be able to lead a long and healthy life. However, the surroundings in which we reside may either promote or detract from our health. Our behavior, our exposure to health dangers (such as air pollution or violence), our access to services (such as health and social care), and the possibilities that come with aging are all greatly influenced by our environments. Elders' social and physical environments have a big impact on their behavior and health. Health disparities can arise from personal factors that distort our relationship to our surroundings, such as race, sex, or family of birth. Elders are sometimes characterized as being frail, reliant, and a drain on society. Public health authorities and society at large need to confront these and many other stigmatizing ideas that might cause prejudice. These affect the formulation of policy and the opportunities for older adults to age healthily. Technology breakthroughs and globalization. (Emoha, 2022). Education is more helpful to solve or management of the aging problems in society.

There are several connections between education and ageing that affect older people's life and each other. Here are a few things to think about in relation to education and aging.

Lifelong Learning: Education is not confined to the earlier years of life. Lifelong learning is a concept that encourages individuals to continue learning and acquiring new skills throughout their lives. Older adults can benefit from participating in educational programs, taking courses, and engaging in activities that stimulate the mind.

Cognitive Health: Continuing education in old age can have positive effects on cognitive health. Studies suggest that engaging in intellectually stimulating activities, such as learning new skills or pursuing education, may help to maintain cognitive function and reduce the risk of cognitive decline and conditions like dementia.

Adaptation to Technological Changes: As technology advances, older individuals may need to adapt to new technologies. Educational programs and initiatives aimed at teaching digital literacy can empower older adults to use technology for communication, accessing information, and participating in various aspects of modern life.

Socialization and Community Engagement: Educational opportunities in old age provide avenues for socialization and community engagement. Joining classes or workshops allows older individuals to interact with peers, share experiences, and build a sense of community, which is crucial for mental well-being.

Occupational Engagement: Some older adults may choose to continue working or explore new career paths in their later years. Educational opportunities, including vocational training or skill development programs, can facilitate such transitions and contribute to a sense of purpose and fulfillment.

Addressing Educational Disparities: It is essential to recognize and address educational disparities that may exist among older adults. Factors such as access to education, socioeconomic status, and cultural background can influence opportunities for learning in old age.

Educational Policies and Programs: Governments and organizations can implement policies and programs that support educational opportunities for older adults. This may include affordable and accessible classes, workshops, and online courses tailored to the needs and interests of an aging population.

Health Education: Education in old age extends beyond academic subjects. Providing health education programs can empower older individuals to make informed decisions about their well-being, manage chronic conditions, and adopt healthy lifestyles.

Andragogy

Andragogy is a term used to describe the theory and practice of adult education. The concept was introduced by the German educator Alexander Kapp in the 19th century, but it gained widespread attention and development through the work of American educator Malcolm Knowles in the 20th century. Andragogy is based on the premise that adults have unique characteristics, experiences, and needs that differ from those of children and adolescents. Knowles, in particular, identified several key principles of andragogy

Self-concept: Adults have a self-concept of being responsible for their own lives, decisions, and actions. They prefer to be seen and treated as self-directed individuals.

Readiness to learn: Adults are typically motivated to learn when they perceive that it will help them solve real-life problems or achieve personal and professional goals. They are more receptive to learning when they see the immediate relevance of the information.

Orientation to learning: Adults are goal-oriented in their learning. They prefer learning that is focused on the application of knowledge and skills rather than theoretical or abstract concepts.

Motivation: Adults are motivated by intrinsic factors, such as a desire for self-improvement, recognition, or increased job satisfaction. Andragogy emphasizes creating a learning environment that fosters internal motivation.

Need for respect: Adults want to be treated with respect and as equals in the learning process. The teacher or facilitator in an andragogical setting is viewed more as a guide or facilitator rather than an authoritarian figure.

Andragogy is often contrasted with pedagogy, which is the traditional approach to education focused on the teaching of children. While pedagogy is teacher-centered and relies on the teacher's authority, andragogy is learner-centered, emphasizing the active involvement and autonomy of the adult learner. In practice, andragogy has influenced the design of adult education programs, encouraging a more participatory and interactive approach. It has also led to the development of adult learning theories and instructional strategies that align with the principles of andragogy. Overall, the goal is to create effective and meaningful learning experiences for adult learners based on their unique characteristics and needs.

U-3G (University of Third Generation)

The University of the Third Generation (U3G) is a global movement that caters to the educational and social needs of individuals in their third 'age' of life, who are primarily retired from the workforce. For the U3G, there is no widely used model. Its initial idea, which originated in France as an extracurricular university activity, was greatly altered in the UK when it was realized that most individuals who are retired had something valuable to offer and that sharing—rather than formal educational connections—is the key. This pedagogic model has been adopted by many English-speaking nations, whereas continental European nations have primarily adopted the French approach. In the US, organizations that resemble U3G groups are referred to as lifelong learning institutes for historical reasons.

Talks on the history and wildlife of the area, tai chi, creative writing, stress relief, gardening, computers, appreciation of poetry, museum visits, Yeats Winter School attendance, walking festivals, and many more opportunities and activities for active aging and learning have been arranged by U3G groups in Ireland. Along with these activities, U3G groups have worked on several projects and initiatives in partnership with universities and other Further Education and Training institutions, engaging students of all ages.

U-3G in India

University of Third Age activities are also active in India. Some examples of this are the Indian Society for U3A in Rajasthan, the University of the Third Age in Bengaluru, and the U3A: Pioneering New Horizons in Lifelong Learning run by Mahatma Gandhi University in Kerala.

Indian Society for U3A in Rajasthan : The Institute of Social Development, Udaipur, and the G.B. Pant Social Science Institute, Allahabad University, organized a national conference on population ageing & development in India on March 29, 2008, which served as the launchpad for the Indian Society of U3A (ISU3A), a networking association of volunteer organization dedicated to the cause and care of the elderly. The major goal is to integrate elderly folks from India and other nations with one another.

University of the Third Age in Bengaluru: It is an organization started in Bangalore to provide mental entertainment for the elderly, to gain maximum knowledge and to pass on their life experiences to the new generation.

Pioneering New Horizons in Lifelong Learning. Mahatma Gandhi University, Kerala: Mahatma Gandhi University in Kerala is experimenting with the innovative concept of Third Generation University through which about 65 seniors can lead a comfortable life.

Conclusion

Education plays a crucial role in the lives of older adults, contributing to their well-being, cognitive health, and overall quality of life. Here are several ways in which education is important for individuals in old age are life long learning, cognitive health, social engagement, personal growth, adaption to change etc.

In summary, education is a lifelong process that continues to be important in old age. It not only contributes to cognitive health and personal growth but also enhances social connections and helps individuals adapt to changes, fostering a positive and fulfilling later life. The innovative concept of the University of the Third Generation is a unique concept for developed and underdeveloped countries alike. If this is implemented, it will help many elderly people in the country, whose knowledge will be a source of inspiration for the new generations.

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