



Education is a public and social good for everyone

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5th December 2011

Presentation Outline

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I. Introduction

- Educating the young only is not enough for current socio-economic challenges
- Citizens have to deal with a changing world
- Education lexicon has come to embrace terminology like: 'life- long education'; 'RPL'; 'reflective learning' –
- Most successful era of adult education in SA at the height of political violence in the eighties and early nineties
- Non-governmental organisations have been more successful than government in implementing Adult Education

2. The development of Adult education in the North

- “ We study history in order to see more clearly the situation in which we are called upon to act” (Collingwood, 1946).
- Factors that promoted adult education include:
 - Translations that ensured the export of cultural information- benefits for the exporting and receiving countries;
 - Professionalization of adult education through the development of adult educators;
 - Intellectual capacity in the discourse;
 - Linking adult education to other disciplines like Sociology; theology; etc.
 - Identifying institutions to make adult education available, e.g. churches, libraries.

Adult education in the North.....

- The disruptive power of the First World war that turned the world upside down – requiring individuals to learn a range of skills during and after the war.
- Extension of citizenship to the working class, people of colour, immigrants and women.
- Linked to major political movements: human rights; feminism; desegregation
- Changing working and family lives
- Increasing life expectancy
- Period of job feasts and periods of job famine
- Adult education as an integral part of modernising and dealing with competitiveness of nations
- As a globalising tendency – concepts like: knowledge economy; life-long education; learning societies

3. Adult Education in Africa

- Colonialism left Africa with massive backlogs in literacy
- Country after country after independence was led to a development of adult literacy as a notion of adult education in Africa
- Adult education mainly a state-sponsored activity, and funded mainly through donor funding
- The global economic recession of the 1980s hit hard on African adult education as donors pulled out and the World Bank introduced structural adjustments
- At the same time, African governments were experiencing alienation from the citizenry – country after country experienced a coup and unending internal conflicts – unfavourable conditions for adult education

Adult education in Africa.....

- Tanzania – one of the most successful adult education stories:
 - 2 different streams: Academic upgrading programme (AUP) and Skills Upgrading programme (SUP)
 - Adult education tied to Nyerere's notion of building an egalitarian society
 - One of 12 countries that participated in UNESCO's experimental literacy linked to Agriculture and economic production
 - Designed to curtail rural migration to urban centres
 - Primary school teachers coerced to be adult educators
 - Failure attributed mainly to poor infrastructure, including scarcity of libraries, bookstores and printed media.

4. The South African Adult Education story

- New government inherited roughly a 60% literacy citizenry and a number of adult education initiatives
- Night schools were initially established as teacher upgrade centres and soon became matric completion sites
- In the 80s, large companies were forced to provide adult education in order to comply with foreign investors
- Non-governmental organisations took advantage of donor funding associated with a sympathetic international community before and after apartheid – Bureau of Literacy and literature; the South African Race Relations; Operation Upgrade; Project Literacy; Learn and Teach, etc.
- “The terms of the debate were understandably shaped by the apartheid experience’ (Steward, 2001).

South African story

- When new government took over, COSATU dominated the debate on adult education, especially the mining sector
- ABET became the dominant discourse and everything else disappeared, including the work done by SACHED on the Alternative Secondary Education Curriculum for Adults
- New government sidelined and discredited the night schools
- The labour movement was also instrumental in pushing for a National Qualifications Framework, which has no sense of an institutional base in its concept of provisioning

South African story.....

- Government decided to take schools, universities and recently FET colleges out of the NQF, and Adult Education remained floundering with training programmes of less value in the NQF.
- Most efforts continued to be directed to basic literacy interventions
- The primary school – Std. 5 certificate- disappeared with the new reforms to be replaced by a ‘school-like’ qualification that is onerous and difficult to achieve.
- Donor funding for AE has long gone and now even universities have closed the adult education programmes that provided the intellectual capacity through research and trained adult education workers
- The general poor achievements in adult education demonstrate clearly the continued uncertainty that South Africa has always had about the kind of adult education the country needs and why.
- Adult education has not responded robustly and in a dynamic way to the problems South Africa faces

5. The case of USA and UK

The United States of America:

- The Merrill Act of 1862 which gave federal states the impetus for the land grant higher education institutions – enabling higher education to be extended to the bright children of the working class
- The influence of various wars America fought abroad
- The GI Bill of 1944 following World war II was the first access oriented bill – a ‘twofer’ strategy to reintroduce large numbers into the workforce
- The Russian launch of Sputnik
- The Great Society programme introduced by President Lyndon in the 1960s
- The higher Education Act of 1965 with the introduction of the Community College system

The case of USA

- **A two- pronged approach:**

- a. *A high school completion programme:*

- helping many adults who missed out, dropped out of education, and those who had recently made the USA a new home to be credentialed as educated Americans and participate fully in that society.

- A Community College system:*

- one of the greatest American inventions – shifting American higher education from eclecticism to meritocracy to opportunism and to egalitarianism.
 - USA one of the leading countries in higher education participation
 - Fore runner institution of Community Colleges = technical college.
 - Now offering: *transfer; technical; continuing; general; alternate high schools; career and public interest programmes.*
 - Mantra- ‘nobody should be more than 1 hour travel time from a Community College’.
 - Community Colleges mainly an institution for both programmes but Adult education Centres still exist

The case of the United Kingdom

United Kingdom

- A history of technical colleges that supported the apprenticeship system
- Adult education centres patronised largely by immigrants wanting to learn English
- Many young school leavers ended up in technical colleges hoping to gain a meaningful qualification whilst the apprenticeship was in decline
- An expanded college sector with various forms of work-based traineeships and some concerted efforts to coordinate and see post-school as an extension of schooling, followed

The case of the United Kingdom

- By the end of the 1980s, the UK was one of the countries with the lowest participation in higher education ($\pm 30\%$) – low for a developed country.
- The expansion of the post-school education (known as the post14) led to the replacement of terms like *trades*, *commercial*, *craft and technical education* to be replaced by **further** education
- A need to massify higher education led to strategies for enrolling 'non-traditional' students in higher education
- The expansion of both post 14 and higher education gave rise to a further education college system that overlaps with higher education – the former offering foundation degrees, access courses and an expanded curriculum for all kinds of individuals who have left school.

6. The global adult education in the 21st century

- Many countries, including developing countries, have attained the EFA goals
- Basic literacy continues to be an important part of adult education but the scale is informed by the literacy levels in country
- Many young people participate in school education but many still drop out before completion of high school education
- There has been a growing realisation that completion of upper secondary education by citizens is a necessary requirement for preparing citizens for the socio-economic challenges of the world
- Full-time education or training up to age 18 is becoming the norm, especially in OECD countries. This pattern has a knock-on effect for the labour markets.

Global adult education

- Industrialisation and now the knowledge economy is putting a prime on post-secondary education for most economies and expansion of this has become essential
- Most technical and vocational capabilities are acquired at the post-secondary education level
- Prospects for vocational routes are not as secure as they were 30 to 40 years ago – it is a different world, a different economy and labour market (Wolf, 2011)
- Youth unemployment has been rising even during the boom years that preceded the 2009 recession and the labour market has become egg-shaped
- Many jobs which were once open to 18 or even 16 year olds are now 'graduate entry' without having changed substantially

Global adult education

- Good levels of English and Mathematics continue to be the most generally useful and valuable vocational skill on offer – a precondition for accessing selective, demanding and desirable courses – vocational and academic.
- Governments are still keen to fund post-school education programmes as opposed to adult education, as the former offers possibilities for increasing access beyond basic education
- The college system has become the main institution for providing education to those out-of-school
- In OECD countries, universities are spending resources in the study of the intermediate institution – the college and its curriculum – than pure adult education without an institutional base

7. Whither shall South Africa go?

a. Priorities for South Africa

- Increase education levels of the citizenry in order to develop a 'Greater Society' which South Africa wishes to be amongst the nations. The country's competitiveness will continue to be hampered by its low levels of educational achievements and skills development.
- The 'Equality' project will also continue to be a pipe-dream if focus is not given to the development of opportunities for all its citizens. Adult education can be an equalising factor in this society.

b. A different focus in adult education

- Adult education that recognises the importance of basic literacy, but puts emphasis on the education of those who have already left the schooling system.
- These individuals are made up of (i) those who have to complete basic education and acquire a National Senior certificate, and (ii) those who have acquired a national Senior certificate but lack progression routes

South Africa.....

c: *What informs the debate for a different adult education?:*

- Increased participation rates in schooling up to Grade 10
- Highest unemployment amongst those without a Senior certificate or a senior certificate not for accessing HE
- General upward trend for staying longer in education
- A Labour Market that sifts at the upper-end and requires more education and technological capabilities
- A need for a different adult education discourse that puts emphasis on young adults than older people

d: *Target*

- All citizens but with a bias to young people, as they are the labour force of tomorrow
- Communities and workplaces

South Africa.....

e: *Programmes*

- A *variety*: matric completion; transfer to higher education; vocational education; work-based or occupational programmes; general interest (e.g. politics, labour issues; faith-based programmes; etc.); hobbies, etc.
- A more practical, easier and effective way for the development and doing away with programmes to be found than the current system
- Courses to be accessible for all kinds of people : working, family persons; disable; poor; rural, etc.
- Programmes to relate to the formal education system of schools, colleges and universities – open progression possibilities than being dead ends

South Africa.....

f: *Institutions*

- Further Education and Training Colleges to be the core of provision for the new kind of adult education
- PALCS, where they exist, to serve as satellite centres for FET Colleges
- Expansion of the college system, which is solely needed, will only happen through a newly conceptualised adult education system to serve a different clientele and in a different way, than it is now.
- A Further Education and Training College system that overlaps with universities has to be developed, to give hope to those who start their post-secondary journey at the College
- Universities to provide the continued intellectual capacity and stimulus for this new kind of adult education as well as teacher development possibilities

South Africa.....

g: Governance

- As much as the FET Colleges are moving to be a National competence, bringing in adult and continuing education will present challenges to this arrangement
- Whilst it is desirable that Colleges remain in the Higher education sector, this does not mean that the provinces and local government should be absolved of all responsibilities
- Provinces should continue coordinating the administrative work of colleges and oversee appointments and funding. Local government should start taking interest in their colleges to influence shape, size and demand.

South Africa.....

h: *Funding*

- If all tiers of governance are to be involved in the college system when it offers adult education, so should they be involved in funding different aspects of the institution and programmes. The following is an example of possibilities:
 - National government can be responsible for providing student financial support to low-income families, incentives for students to study in fields of particular national interest, and provide incentives to create complementary student grant programmes;
 - Provinces can compliment the National budget with student financial assistance and in particular funding to institutions for infrastructure development in order to increase provincial capacity for provision
 - Local governments can assist with infrastructure maintenance like electricity, water and waste.
- The net effect of a new and collaborative funding arrangement should be to the benefits of the students so that education costs little if anything at all.