

Refereed Articles

Social Policy and Adult Education Program Planning: Perspectives on the Tyler and Boyle Models

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Abstract

Program planning is a component of practically every facet of adult education. Neither the educator planner nor the program are immune to the same social policy issues that influence the field of adult education. The purpose of this presentation is to examine both the Tyler and the Boyle models of program planning from a social policy perspective as well as to discuss the relationship of reproduction and resistance theory to the two models.

Introduction

According to Long (1987), program planning is central to the art and science of adult education. This view is supported by the vast amount of writing in the field covering various aspects of program planning. Within the scope of adult education, few terms are as widely used or more elusive than “program planning.” The history of adult education in North America reveals different forms of specific adult education programs: Mechanics Institutes, Chautauqua, workers’ movements, Lyceums, Americanization, and freedom schools. Program providers include universities, volunteer agencies, labor unions, business and industry, community-based agencies, and government agencies. Likewise, there are multiple definitions of what constitutes program planning and of the philosophical underpinnings that lead to practice judgments. This paper will discuss two program planning models that represent different models of social policy and adult education practice. For purposes of this discussion, the term “program planning” is defined as the process associated with designing, developing, and implementing orderly, purposeful learning experiences to meet new needs and expanding interests that grow out of an adult’s changing role in his or her social setting.

Background

Market Model

Peters and Waterman (1982) note that since World War II, the United States has transformed from a goods- and services-based economy to an information-based economy—a technocracy. In addition, philosophical streams of American education have changed in accordance with these economic transformations. The industrial era with its stress on production and supply and demand supported the social policy model commensurate with the market model. As suggested by Quigley (1993), the social policies of the market model undergird the behavioral and vocational philosophies of adult education. These two concepts, behaviorism and vocational training, are linked sociologically with structural functionalism (Griffin, 1987). Structural functionalism, or consensus viewpoint, as described by Flexner (1915) and discussed by Schon (1983), posits that the existing dominant culture is good and, further, that those in power focus on the public good. Most important to the concept is the positivistic belief that knowledge and understanding are measurable commodities.

Tyler Model

In 1949 Tyler submitted a conceptual framework for program planning in education. He refined his framework in 1974 by using the learning theory concepts of Gagne (1965). As a neo-behaviorist, Gagne stressed that learning was environmentally dependent and could be scientifically measured, altered, and controlled. Learning, Gagne believed, was taking place only if there was individual observable change; learning was not viewed as the process of maturation or growth. For Gagne, planning learning activities required three behaviorally centered points: (a) make the instructional sequence parallel the hierarchy of knowledge, (b) design specific instructional objectives, and (c) evaluate. The Tyler rationale consisted of four key characteristics phrased as questions: (a) What educational purposes should the provider seek to attain? (b) What educational experiences can be provided that are likely to attain these purposes? (c) How can these educational experiences be effectively organized? (d) How can we determine whether these purposes are being attained? (Tyler, 1974)

Important dimensions of the Tyler model link directly to the structural functionalist viewpoint which, in turn, informs the psychological and sociological underpinnings of the behavioral and vocational stream of adult education. Tyler emphasizes designing and implementing the program to achieve specific outcomes. Outcomes are derived from either

the provider's goals, the existing social context (e. g., the economy), or the provider's perception of the learners' needs. The focus is on what will benefit the dominant culture (i.e., the culture of the provider) or society and what will support its infrastructure of values, attitudes, and beliefs. Tyler's four key characteristics encourage planners to consider individuals available to accomplish the task, to target specific demographic or social groups, and to measure not only the outcomes but also the productive capacity of programs.

Liberal-Progressive Welfare Model

According to the *Russell Report* (1973), the worth of adult education "is not solely to be measured by direct increases in earning power or productive capacity . . . but by the quality of life it inspires in the individual and generates for the community at large" (Department of Education and Science, p. xi). The production of human capital—i.e., the productive strength that workers contribute to the gross national product—is not the value and purpose of adult education. From a sociological perspective, issues of effective structures, governance, and planning systems are integral to the liberal-progressive-welfare model (Quigley, 1993).

Boyle (1981) proffers a program planning model representing a broad-stroked attempt to integrate various aspects of the liberal, progressive, and humanistic adult education philosophies. He defines an educative program as "the product resulting from all the programming activities in which the professional educator and learner are involved" (p. 5). The actual program develops following "a deliberate series of actions and decisions through which representatives of the people affected by the potential program are involved . . . to plan an educational program that will contribute to improve the health of the people and their community" (p. 5). Programs are divided into three types: (a) developmental, (b) institutional, and (c) informational. The three types are distinguished according to: primary goal, source of objectives, uses of knowledge, involvement of the learner, role of the programmer, and standards of effectiveness. Boyle enumerates 15 key planning concepts that integrate what Goodwin (1982) lists as significant characteristics of liberal-progressive social policy. The concepts are characterized by consent, freedom of choice, and a high tolerance of nonconformity. Some might argue that because Boyle's developmental program type provides opportunities to define and solve individual, group, or community problems, it is more characteristic of a social redistribution model. However, review of Boyle's framework for developmental programs clearly demonstrates that the various phases are

hierarchical, stress structure and stability and, to some degree, are generated by the relative needs of both constituents and stakeholders. The accountability component emphasizes meritocracy rather than equality. The selective meritocracy of this model can lead program planners to be discriminatively inattentive to real problems and issues.

Reproduction and Resistance Theories

Karabel and Halsey (1977) suggest that if education is a product of the dominant culture and perpetuates the conceptual hegemony, then "there would seem to be no way out of a ceaseless process of self-reproduction" (p. 41). A clear definition of terms is important to this discussion of reproduction and resistance. Reproduction in education is a "means of motivating individuals to behave in ways appropriate to maintain the society in a state of equilibrium" (Karabel & Halsey, 1977, p. 3). Resistance theory suggests that "learners are totally indifferent to the dominant ideology of the education program including the rewards and demands and express it through oppositional behavior" (Giroux, 1983, p. 283).

Theory of Reproduction

Reproduction of the present conceptual hegemony includes social, cultural, and intellectual aspects of education. Several states provide examples of a programming activity that reinforces the dominant culture by identifying and classifying high-status learners and low-status learners. For example, each year various state education districts choose intellectually exceptional graduating high school seniors to attend "Governor's School." The program proposes to offer educational activities emphasizing a full range of "politically correct" ideology (LaBarbera, 1992). This is an important example; such programming not only fosters the idea that only those who are intellectually gifted should benefit from special programs, but it also suggests that a particular body of knowledge exists that is considered "politically correct."

Using Giroux's (1983) analysis of the three aspects of reproduction in an educational setting, this type of program can be described as (a) providing a specific class and social group with knowledge and skills to occupy a predetermined place in society; (b) functioning for the purpose of distributing and legitimizing forms of knowledge, values, and language that reinforce the liberal-progressive cultural interests; and (c) producing and legitimizing certain economic imperatives. The educational program adheres closely to the consensus model, although the social policy

framework is described as liberal-progressive. Thus, it appears that the consensus model is appropriate if the provider is a member of the status quo. Proponents of meritocratic programs argue that rewards ensure success for those most qualified. However, Rubenson (1989) notes that rewards "are a function of the degree to which . . . quality, performance, and possessions measure up to the standards set by society" (p. 54). Any program that focuses on a commitment to the broad values of society and to the performance of a specific type of role within that society emulates structural functionalism.

Giroux (1983) argues that by appearing to be impartial in programming practices, programs are able to promote inequality. Moreover, educational providers, who are engaged in designing and implementing programs, possess a political, cultural, and ideological hegemony that informs all aspects of their practice. In considering the models of Tyler and Boyle, both appear to promote the organizational or programmer's philosophy through the way knowledge is classified, transmitted, and evaluated and, thereby, reproduce existing viewpoints.

Silver (1980) defines social policy as "the attempt to use education to solve social problems, [to] influence social structure, to improve one or more aspects of the social condition, [and] to anticipate crisis" (p. 17). Because adult education organizations never are and never will be free of social intervention either as an extrinsic or an intrinsic process, they will continue to respond to social and individual (i.e., provider) demands rather than to inequalities in society (Rubenson, 1989). If adult educators continue to ignore issues foundational to reproduction theory, program planning not only will become a social tool but also will discourage critical reflection and challenges to existing relations of power.

Resistance Theory

If, as Giroux (1983) suggests, hegemony is a process of continuous creation and if it includes the constant restructure of consciousness as well as a battle for the control of consciousness, then consensus-based programming attempts to restructure the learners' consciousness by offering three types of learning outcomes: social mobility (economic), enfranchisement, and socialization. However, the consensus philosophy, when embedded in the market model or liberal-progressive-welfare model, fails to account for the human agency. Learners will culturally, socially, and intellectually accommodate, mediate, and sometimes resist the status quo based on daily life experiences. For example, if the logic that pervades the learner's life is counter-hegemonic, then the patterns of values, norms, and

skills that characterize the dynamics of the program in the market model will be actively resisted. Programs that offer social mobility and economic welfare, but which mirror prevailing social divisions of labor within the workforce, may meet with learner resistance. For example, workplace training often reflects the reproduction of the social division of labor. Workers find themselves in either a coercive or remunerative environment (Ingham, 1968) where classification of knowledge is organized around the difference between theoretical and practical subjects. High-status and high-knowledge are equated with “education” or “development” training and upper management, while low-status and low-knowledge labels are linked to on-the-job training programs. Furthermore, economic constraints serve to prevent learners from active resistance to these programs.

Resistance is defined as an indifference to the dominant ideology. This indifference expresses itself in a variety of forms; one form is oppositional behavior. According to Giroux (1983), examples of oppositional behavior would include a violation of the rules, a rejection of the ideological structure, or a rejection of social practices. Examples of resistance should not be equated with powerlessness but should be understood as expressions of power, which are both reactive and proactive to circumstances associated with “moral and political indignation” (p. 285). Learners presume to have emancipated themselves through their having developed a voice—albeit a discordant one—when assessed by those in power. This type of resistance closely patterns the social redistribution model which focuses on how to correct the perpetuation of deep-seated social, economic, and cultural inequalities of our society. Ironically, resisters who successfully refuse to conform strengthen existing dominant belief structures. Low literate workers who resist literacy classes geared to job performance and what the workplace considers “investment in human capital” (Karabel & Halsey, 1977, p. 12) reinforce the assumption that stratification (low-status and high-status jobs) is necessary to promote the existing hegemony. Survival of the economic enterprise may depend on making the most effective use of intellectual resources. Those demonstrating oppositional behavior, whether subtle or overt, presumably fail to possess the necessary intellectual potential. This deficit perspective philosophically underpins the needs assessment component of both the Tyler and the Boyle models. In both models, the provider designs the program based on learners’ perceived needs and deficiencies.

Successful resisters, those who “fail,” ultimately become victims of the existing program structure and lose any opportunity to exercise an

emancipatory voice. Removal of resisters eliminates obvious inequality; power no longer needs to be redistributed, and decision making returns to issues of governance or economics of delivery. In effect, by leaving programs, resisters lose power and any chance for reconstruction of the existing structure.

Conclusion

According to Forester (1989), "Planning is the guidance of future action. In a world of intensively conflicting interests and great inequalities of status and resources, planning in the face of power is a daily necessity and a constant ethical challenge" (p. 7). Two important questions that program planners can address are: Whose interests are being served? How can learners become enfranchised to attain social justice and emancipation? The consensus model represented by Tyler reproduces the dominant culture and hegemony of the provider. Boyle's model demonstrates characteristics of the liberal-progressive model, while it relies on accountability and required outcomes. As Willis (1983) discussed, "required" outcomes, whether driven by market "accountability" or liberal-progressive-welfare "meritocracy," perpetuate the same spurious "personal underdevelopment" (p. 110). Clearly, in order to avoid reproduction and to encourage the power associated with resistance theory, program planning must become a dialogical relationship between the provider (institution and educator) and the learners. Planning should become a collaborative process in which both the planner and participants appreciate the existing political and ethical conflicts associated with the organizational and social context. This includes an appreciation for organizational self-interests, economic motives, and distributions of power.

Beyer and Apple (1988) suggested that programming must always have an interest in emancipation that is guided by the values of "equity, sharing, personal dignity, security, freedom, and caring" (p. 7). Giroux (1983) expanded the mandate for programmers to include the requirement that a planner "openly takes sides in the interest of struggling for a better world" (p. 19). Despite these various insights into how existing organizational and social relations of power shape planners' everyday judgments, and the accompanying plea that educators plan in ways that foster dialogue, democracy, individual freedom, and social justice, little theory has been offered on how this might be accomplished in the everyday world.

Griffin (1983) described the object of theory as "the elucidation of

practice; it is not the solution of philosophical, social, or moral issues. Any theory of education must, in the last resort, be a theory of practice” (p.201). Therefore, as theories of social policy influence theories of education, practice is directly influenced. For example, adult education planners cannot claim the independence of the consensus paradigm in practice if they ascribe to the structural functionalist philosophy. Programs are still fashioned through practical human judgment informed by values, attitudes, and beliefs.

Education planning is like a game; a game consists of a set of rules governing a situation in which individuals or groups attempt to maximize their own goals. Planning needs a common set of principles which both sides agree on. If adult educators and learners are playing chess, they can resolve any arguments by consulting the rule book. However, if the planner plays chess while the learner plays Monopoly, how can they resolve their disputes? There are no common rules, no final court of appeal. Each side tries to dominate the other through reproduction or resistance. The players rely on individual theory. In frustration, theory becomes practice, and principles of what is true, right and just may be lost. For adult education program planning, the solution may be in extracting the positive aspects of the market, the liberal-progressive, and the social reconstruction models to achieve a balance and to establish rules that permit everyone to win.

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