

ADULT EDUCATORS AND THEIR EXPERIENCES PROMOTING ACTIVE CITIZENSHIP

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INTRODUCTION

The echoes of current global challenges such as social injustices, intolerance of diversity inter alia are of concern to many. Some scholars believe that promoting active citizenship in societies is a step toward achieving social cohesion and addressing other global issues... Consequently, for societies to encourage active citizenship and bring awareness to the individuals' rights and responsibilities as citizens, transformational change in attitudes and behaviors must take place. Governments can influence change by reforming the curriculum to include citizenship education, but we all need to work collectively to avert global and local challenges. This shift in attitude and behavior is believed to be achievable through education. Hence, educators play a vital role in developing social capital amid creating active citizens.

PURPOSE OF STUDY

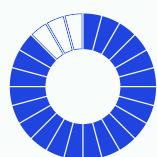
The objectives of this study was to:

- Explore the experiences of adult educators promoting active citizenship in their classrooms at Excellence Adult Learning Centre.
- To encourage participants to reflect on their roles as active citizens and add conceptual depth in a non-European context.
- To enhance knowledge and professional development of graduate students in becoming 21st century active citizens
- To impact policy makers to incorporate active citizenship into schools' curricula.

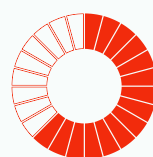
METHODOLOGY

Data Collection:

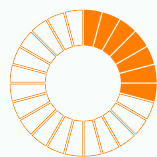
- Semi-structured Interviews done face to face with three adult educators at the Kingston Center and two at the Portland Center.
- Non-Participant Observation done of a class size of eight adult learners with one adult instructor at the Kingston Center.
- Group Discussion executed via zoom for 30-40 minutes with participants at the Portland Center.



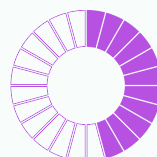
Citizenship
Marshall, 1950
Turner, 1997



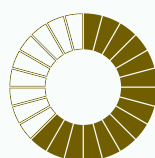
Active Citizenship
Hoskins et al, 2007



Adult Education & Active Citizenship
Toivianen et al, 2019



Andragogy
Knowles, 1980



Adult Educators' Role in Promoting Active Citizenship
Heggart et al, 2018
Toivianen et al, 2019

RESEARCH QUESTIONS:

[Overarching]

1. What are the experiences of adult educators in promoting active citizenship in their classroom?
[Subsidiary]
2. How do adult educators conceptualize active citizenship?
3. What is the role of adult educators in promoting active citizenship through teaching?

MAIN FINDINGS CATEGORIZED BY RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Theme: Adult educators are faced with myriad challenges.
Assertion: Adults have already developed their concept of self through their experiences. Thus, special training is needed to facilitate their lifelong process rather than depending solely on traditional teaching methodologies

Theme: Adult educators' conceptualization of active citizenship.

Assertion: Adult educators must be aware of their role in promoting active citizenship to develop social capital and be cognizant of global conceptualizations of active citizenship

Theme: Impact of facilitating adult learning on adult educators
Assertion: Adult educators themselves are involved in the lifelong learning journey amid facilitating the learning process of their learners

CONCLUSION

The controversial and plethoric interpretations of active citizenship that emerged from the literature suggest that there is a need for in-depth empirical research to explore the varied relationships between adult education, active citizenship, and social inclusion. The study revealed that adult learners themselves are involved in the lifelong learning course amid facilitating the learning process of their learners. Adult educators are aware of the concept of active citizenship and their role in promoting same in their classrooms. Despite their efforts, educators are faced with myriad challenges including a lack of resources and specialized training required to impart knowledge unto their adult learners effectively.

IMPLICATIONS

- Enhancing active methodologies which reflect the complexities of society leading adult learners to be aware of their rights and responsibilities towards others
- Active citizenship may be a beneficial topic for further research in light of the Eurocentric based literature and scholars not being able to agree on a single definition
- The restructure of school's curricula at all levels to include citizenship education and its extension active citizenship.
- Incorporating more community-based activities such as volunteering with marginalized individuals into the curriculum could imbue learners with ideas of self-awareness and responsibility to community.