



Making Meaning of Local Nonformal Education

Practitioner's Perspective
Edward W. Taylor

“any organized, intentional and explicit effort to promote learning to enhance the quality of life through non-school settings”

(Heimlich, 1993, p. 2)

“...both in terms of recognizing the many educational programs in developing countries as well as focusing on the community-based programs of adult learning in all environments that fit the parameters of less structure, more flexibility, and concern for social inequalities.”

(Merriam & Caffarella, 1999, p. 29)

Practitioner's Perspective

Developed Country



Framework & Methods

- Brennan, B. (1997). Reconceptualizing non-formal education. *International Journal of Lifelong Education*, 16(3), 185-200.
- Case study of two nonformal educational sites
 - i. Environmental education at state and local parks
 - ii. Home improvement retail centre
- Constant Comparative Method
- Limitations
 - Focus on practitioners not learners
 - Local sites are part of larger institutional formal systems



- What are some of the challenges educators are faced with while working in *public*, nonformal education environments?
- What considerations would the educator need to take to account when delivering the content and curriculum of the learning activity?
- Where might the educator develop their body of knowledge from?

Context & NFE

Public Locations

Lack of Focus

Voluntary Participation

New Participants

Temporal Constrains



Making Meaning

Minimal Expectation

Learner-Centered Approach

Emphasis on Hands-On

Educator of Purveyor of Knowledge

Nature and Source of Knowledge

Necessity for Fun





“A community of practice is a unique combination of three fundamental elements: a domain of knowledge, which defines a set of issues, a community of people who care about this domain and the shared practice that they are developing to be effective in their domain”

(Wenger, 1998, p. 15)

“An explanation for these varying epistemological perspectives is that they are more a product of personal experiences with knowledge than of the teaching setting or curriculum.”

(Taylor, 2006, p. 304)



“...adapt strategies and processes that have been shown to be successful in the NFE system”

(Brennan, 1997, p.198)

References

- Brennan, B. (1997). Reconceptualizing non-formal education. *International Journal of Lifelong Education*, 16(3), 185-200.
- Heimlich, J. E. (1993). *Nonformal environmental education: Toward a working definition*. Columbus, OH: Educational Resources Information Center. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 360 154)
- Merriam, S., & Caffarella, R. S. (1999). *Learning in adulthood*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
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- Taylor, E. W. (2006). Making meaning of local nonformal education: Practitioner's perspective. *Adult Education Quarterly: A Journal of Research and Theory*, 56(4), 291-307.

