

# Role of Andragogy to Boost Cambodian Tourism Industry for Executive Performance

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**Abstract:** This paper investigated how effective is andragogy through coaching in improving the skills and knowledge of leaders that would ensure excellence in their field. Cambodia's tourism industry has boomed in the past few years. It has become a very tight competition among business rivals in the industry. The literature review in the study showed the success of executive coaching as a development program for leaders. The results also show the effective use of executive coaching to ensure leadership success for leaders in the tourism industry in Cambodia as an initiative to increase the executive performance of the tourism industry.

**Keywords:** Andragogy, Cambodian Tourism.

## INTRODUCTION

Cambodia has recognised this interest from the outside world and the tourism industry has therefore rapidly flourished. As tourism is becoming a more recognised source of income it is necessary to take into consideration that Cambodia is a developing country with noticeable social differences concerning the local community. The country and its people can therefore be vulnerable towards a development of the country as a tourist destination.

Cambodia has undoubtedly come a very, very long way since the dark days of the Khmer Rouge and the battles and torture that raged through the country for decades. The smiling faces that welcome tourists display the optimism and contentment of a people grateful for what they have. But the scars remain – both physical (unexploded landmines continue to injure or kill over 200 people each year), intellectual (the genocide centred on the most highly educated Cambodians, leaving a gaping “knowledge gap”) and financial, as the poverty cycle spins on. As well as leaving many Cambodians without access to education or healthcare, poverty can also lead desperate families to seek insalubrious “solutions” – including the sex trade, human trafficking and child abuse.

Andragogy is adult learning. Tourism business executives would do their continuous learning through andragogy. Andragogy through executive coaching is a new strategy for a successful tourism business. Executive coaching practice is a profession that has been existing for long but was only formally recognized recently. It has increasingly improved and became very popular. International Coach Federation, a worldwide organization of executive coaches has members of about 7000 from 33 different countries (Johnson, 2004). But even if it is popular, the profession of andragogy through executive coaching is comparatively still in its toddler stages, where many aspects of the profession have not been tapped or studied. For the tourism industry, there is still no research made on the effect or impact of andragogy to the improvement of performance of leaders in this area.

## BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Governments in many developing countries endorse sustainable tourism, despite associated practical limitations and challenges as a development strategy. Using the case of Cambodia, this paper illustrates how sustainable tourism issues in a developing country may be better understood through a systematic review of scattered relevant peer-reviewed and grey literature. Unequal emphasis is given to key government policies for tourism development and there is limited practical guidance on how to realise a vision of sustainable tourism. There is a lack of consideration of how the socio-economic and cultural context affects sustainable tourism. The evidence suggests that sustainable tourism in Cambodia is

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questionable until fundamental economic, social capacity and policy issues are addressed, along with greater emphasis given to the tourism system's demand side.

### **PROBLEM STATEMENT**

Global changes in technology, economy and especially in environment has made the tourism business more complicated. Due to this, leaders have to improve their insights and get more training to guide their organizations towards the success level that they desire.

It would require the leaders to increase their skills and knowledge and be trained to be better leaders in the specific areas that they are managing. Andragogy through tourism coaching provides sound, proven advice to reaching their objectives.

To make sure that leaders will have these skills and knowledge, coaches are hired in order for them to cope with their demanding roles. Coaches will help and guide them to face challenges that require them a broad range of technical, emotional, and physical skills as well as social awareness that is characteristic of the role of a tourism business leader.

### **SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY**

The exploration of the influence of andragogy through executive coaching on leadership development in the tourism industry from the leader's own standpoint will give crucial support to the human resource improvement in an organization.

It will also improve the profession of coaching through the provision of results of studies and in strategy development.

In this case, the points of view of the participants are instrumental in the process of making decisions and in strategy planning and development in an organization.

This study is an exploration of the influence of andragogy using coaching to performance improvement of Cambodia's tourism industry. It shows the impact to the corporate leaders of andragogy through their own perspective.

### **Research Objectives**

The main objective of the research is the following:

- To identify how andragogy will help to improve performance of tourism executives through coaching.

From the main objective of the study, the researcher is guided by the following specific objectives:

- To explore the experiences of the leader participants on andragogy through executive learning.
- To identify the following from the participant's experience with andragogy through executive learning
  - Benefits
  - Impact
  - Outcomes

The bases for the research are the andragogical process model which has 11 elements (Elwood et al, 2008), which are, a) preparing learners, b) climate, c) planning, d) needs diagnosis, e) learning objectives setting, f) learning plans designing, g) learning activities, and h) evaluation.

Experiences with the leaders who are participating in the research will be cross-matched with the process model and the seven benefits of executive learning (Bonici, 2018), which are: "Heightened self-awareness, improved self-regulation, higher levels of empathy, boost in recognition at work, increased levels of motivation, better social skills, and improved leadership abilities".

Maddalena (2016) said, when considered as a theory or assumptions on learning, Knowles' work can be effectively applied to coaching.

This is so because coaches guide their clients to discover advanced methods that boost self-development. In a coaching relationship, it seems that andragogy is seen as the only term that describes the distinctive experience of adult learning, and the body of knowledge that captures its meaning.

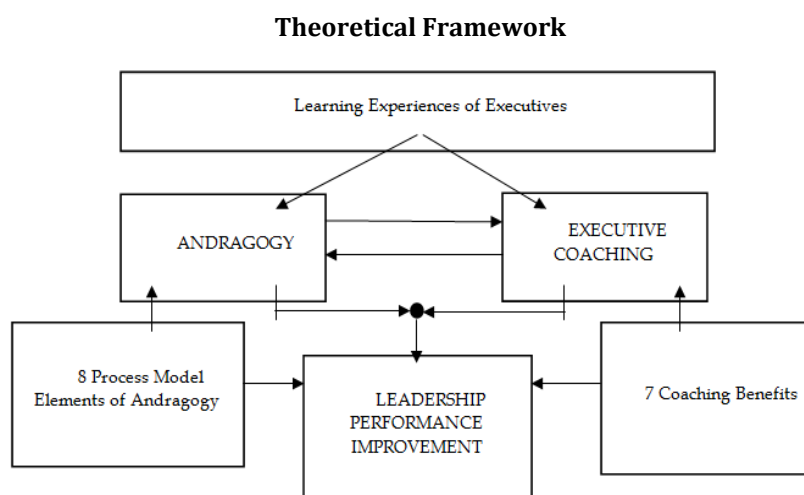


Figure 1: Theoretical Framework

### METHODOLOGY

The methodology used in the research is qualitative research. This method allows things to be studied in their natural settings, the meanings that people give to the researcher is interpreted in its raw form. Social and behavioral sciences started the method of qualitative research. But now it is used in the field of marketing, business, engineering, and scientific research. Methods comprise of individual in-depth interviews, team or group discussions (typically maximum of 10); exercises in diary and journal; and observations in-context. Since there are more venues for qualitative research these days, internet, video-conferencing, telephone sessions are other ways to get information.

All participants are leaders (managers, directors, supervisors) of tourism businesses in the country. There are four males and two females. The gender selection is beyond the researcher's control since the sampling is purposive, these are the only participants that qualified for the sampling. The following table shows the characteristics of the participants. For convenience of transcription and analysis, the participants are labeled Participant A to F.

### Instrumentation

Characteristics	Respondent					
	1	2	3	4	5	6
Gender	M	M	M	F	M	F
Management level	Top	Mid	Op	Mid	Mid	Top
Years in service	3	5	3	4	2	3
Years as leader/executive	3	4	2	4	2	2
Length of coaching (in weeks)	8	6	5	10	4	12
Completed coaching	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes

Legend:

M - male

F- female

Mid - middle

Op - operations

For Stake (1995), there are two principal utilizations of multiple case study analysis, these are, to obtain the descriptions, and extract the interpretations of others.

### Data Collection

The studied collected data through a two-part interview guide, the structured interview guide consisting of four sections and an interview guide checklist consisting of three parts. The collection of data is a face-to-face interview where thorough information gathering on the specific topics were done. The interview checklist also was about the factors and variables needed to support and answer the research questions. There are three parts to this checklist of which the respondents would rank and rate the factors specified.

### Analysis of Data

Data analysis, or data analytics, is the process for inspection, cleansing, transformation, and modeling of data to be able to discover valuable information, make conclusions, suggest recommendations, and support decision-making. It is not the goal of the study in itself but a support to the goal which is making decisions and conclusions. The researcher relates the data to the models identified to get relationships between them and make suggestions and recommendations regarding these relationships.

### DATA INTERPRETATION

This is a study of multiple cases from which cross case analysis was used for data processing. It aims to seek processes and identify outcomes among many cases in order to acquire more complex depictions and more potent descriptions. According to Miles & Huberman (1994), the method of cross case analysis intensifies perception and explanation.

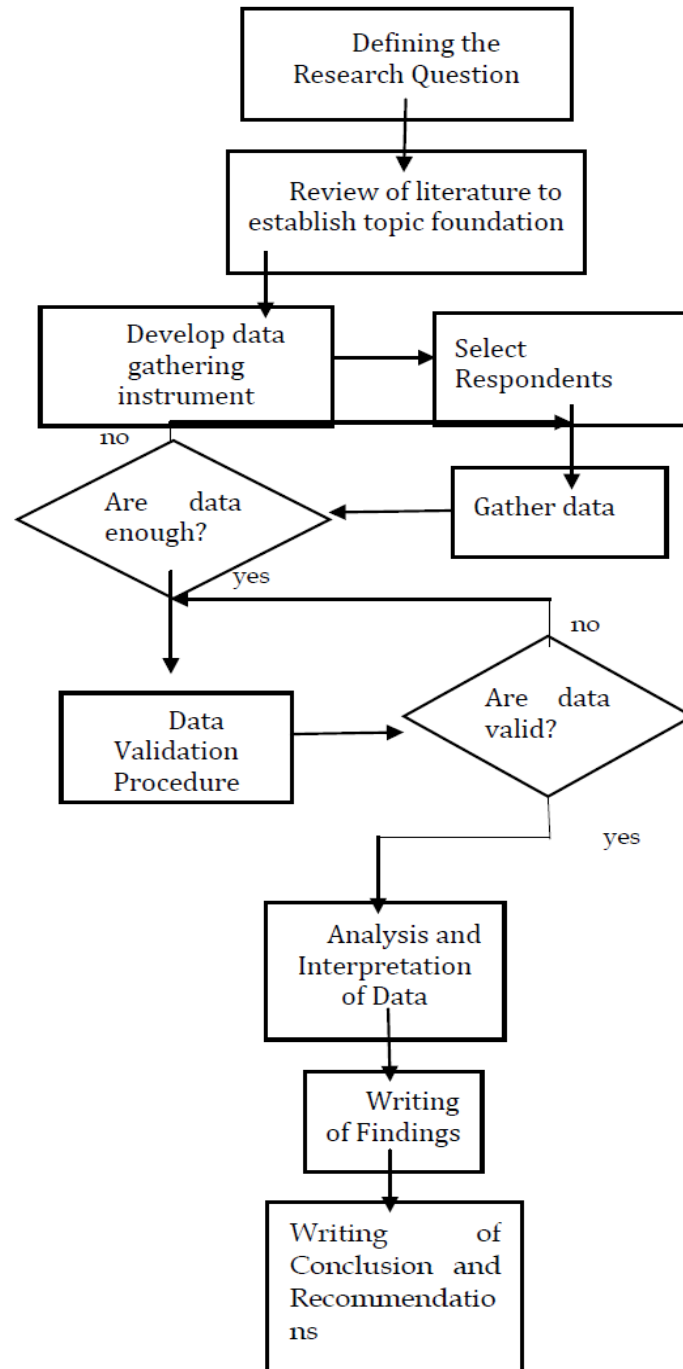


Figure 1: The flow of the procedures of the research

## RESULTS

Data for analysis were gathered through face to face interview with the six leaders of tourism businesses in Cambodia. The responses were written down and as a back-up, the interview was recorded with the consent of the interviewee. In analyzing the data, the researcher coded the data, patterns were found, themes were labeled and category systems were developed.

The participants are given back their summaries to read and verify to ensure the accuracy and completeness of the analysis. During this practice, two of the participants requested to modify some of their statements and replaced with clearer statements to avoid misunderstanding.

The research made it a priority to maintain anonymity and confidentiality of the participants not only because of the request of the participants to do so but also because of the deep respect for the privacy of the respondents. All the participants were conscious of these and were reassured that their individual responses would be treated in complete and strict confidentiality.

### CASES OF ANDRAGOGY THROUGH EXECUTIVE COACHING

The case of Participant A:

Participant A has been with the agency for over 12 years. He has been an executive of the agency for 9 years and has been pretty comfortable in the position. In the nine years that he has been the leader of the unit he belongs to, he has seen that his performance stagnated. There was no apparent improvement. He has put it aside and thought that he has peaked his performance and that this is a normal occurrence. He has been lucky because in the past seven years of his leadership, there has been no major disasters that his unit has faced but on his 8<sup>th</sup> year, a very sudden and unexpected occurrence tested his leadership. He was able to perform adequately and has not let his team down but to his standards and his superiors, the performance was terrible in terms of social relationships and communications. After the emergency occurrence which was a natural disaster, with no amount of prediction would have warned the team, his members blamed him for some failure of operations. A few of his members resigned in dismay. He has blamed himself for the situation. Initial requirement audit before the start of his program showed that he needed to upgrade himself with new technologies, both in communications and in the gadgets to use for work. He has realized that he gets insecure because his young subordinates have the knowledge on new technologies and he has none. Another thing he has admitted to himself is he has an explosive temper. He has anger issues and cannot control his temper sometimes. Although he never gets physically aggressive, he can hurt people with his angry outbursts and his vicious words.

Participant A has a superiority complex brought about by his long term leadership in the unit. He has mentored a lot of members in his team, they have come and gone, and he considered himself the one they look up to.

But this is also one of the things that keep his team members away from him. They are uncomfortable when he is around, feel uneasy, and treat him with fear and stay away from him. This relationship is a disadvantage in their work because they need to be close-knit during operations to be more efficient and safe. Participant A wanted to go back to school but a colleague mentioned to him that he can hire a coach. A coach was hired by his human resource director for him. The coach was a younger man and at first his pride would not let him accept the coach. When he gave in and started with the program, he began to like it. And the rest is history.

The first thing they tackled as a coach and client team, was Participant D's gender issues. The coach made her understand that it is normal to have that dilemma because being brought up in a patriarchal family and environment, she would naturally feel that leaders should be the male. However, she likened her leadership status as that of a mother.

The issues were cleared and she was able to see how being a woman leader can work as much as being a male leader. She was able to see the advantages of being a woman in the position, and use these advantages for the good of the team. She found out that the obvious gender differences are just a surface dilemma, but working relationships, rapport, and cooperation are the same whatever their genders are.

## CONCLUSION

From the responses of the six respondents during the interview, transcripts were processed to which interpretational analysis was done. The definition of Gall, Gall, and Borg (2002) on interpretational analysis is a case study data examination process that is closely done to find patterns and meanings that would justify the topic and answer the research question.

Elements	Andragogy Theory
Preparing Learners	Self-direction is the key basis for this element. Self-directed learning process is what adult learners dedicate and commit to with high degree. Trainees become dependent learners because this type of learning is underutilized for educational purposes. Also preparatory sessions are essential to develop self-directed learning proficiency.
Climate	A climate is the social and physical environment that are favorable for learning which would allow for comfort and a free exchange of ideas. The environment that is conducive to learning process is important. Social is interpersonal relation and the physical is the layout, and acoustics.
Planning	Andragogy is based on the primary theme of transforming learning processes from being teacher-directed to self-directed. As such, the instructor plays the role of a facilitator who collaborates with learners to develop and reinforce a learner-centered learning experience.
Diagnosis of needs	Involving adult learners in the diagnosis of needs (mutual assessment along with the facilitator) through the exposure to models portraying the desired levels of performance, thereby facilitating comparisons between current performance and the desired level of performance can motivate and encourage learning.
Setting learning objectives	Based on the diagnosis of needs, the learner along with the facilitator develop learning objectives through which learners can achieve the newly established and desired level of performance. Such objectives developed using mutual negotiations based on self-diagnosed needs ensures commitment and active participation in the learning process.
Designing learning plans	After needs assessment and the setting of learning objectives, material resources and active learning methods are carefully devised to facility the mutual inquiry process. Several sequential and pro-active learning methods that rely on the experience of learners are an essential component of the adult learning process.
Learning activities	Learning activities must facilitate active participation of all learners in the mutual inquiry process. A skilled facilitator with adequate knowledge on adult learning process is essential to the andragogy-based learning experience. Several hands-on and experimental activities can be effectively used to improve learner interest.
Evaluation	To reinforce a continuous improvement culture, evaluations are essential to verify if learning objective were met and the degree to which desired outcomes were achieved. Any weakness found can be incorporated in the next iterative learning process.

The following table is the cross analysis result for the eleven elements of Andragogy Process Model and their association with the six participants of the study.

Table 1: Cross Analysis of Participant Response to Elements of Process Model

Elements	PARTICIPANTS					
	A	B	C	D	E	F
Preparing Learners	X	x		x		
Climate		x	x	x	X	X
Planning	X	x	x	x	X	X
Diagnosis of needs	X	x	x		X	
Setting learning objectives		x		x		x
Designing learning plans	X					x
Learning activities	X	x	x	x	X	x
Evaluation	X	x	x	x		x

Participants were asked to rate the elements of andragogy process model of their training according to criteria given. Table shows criteria used to rate the elements and table shows the results of the rating by the participants:

Table 2: Rating criteria for the elements of andragogy process model

Score	Rating	Explanation
3	Excellence	All or nearly all of the expectations reflect the level of performance that is necessary for a coach to help the client make substantial leadership skill progress. None of the expectations reflect "bare minimum" performance. Most describe truly exemplary (top 10%) performance.
2	Competence	In general, expectations reflect the level of performance that is necessary for a coach to help some—but not necessarily all—clients make substantial leadership skill progress. Some of the expectations may be sufficiently rigorous, but several are not. A few may reflect compliance.
1	Compliance	Many of the expectations could be met even by coaches who do not help most of their clients make substantial leadership skill progress. Many are not sufficiently rigorous; they reflect bare minimums or compliance requirements. Many expectations do not affect client learning.
0	Non-existent	Coach did not include element in the process.

Table 3: Rating of the elements of andragogy process model by the participants

Elements	PARTICIPANTS' RATING						Average rating
	A	B	C	D	E	F	
Preparing Learners	2	2	0	3	1	3	2
Climate	1	0	0	1	2	0	0.4
Planning	3	3	2	2	1	3	2.6
Diagnosis of needs	3	2	3	3	2	2	2.6
Setting learning objectives	1	2	2	2	2	1	1.6
Designing learning plans	1	0	0	0	1	1	0.4
Learning activities	3	3	2	3	2	2	2.6
Evaluation	3	3	2	3	3	3	2.8

The following are the results for the cross case analysis for the seven benefits of executive coaching.

Knowledge transformed into practice create intensified consciousness and new opportunities to individuals and organizations. 21st century workforce does not have the past as luxury to learn a specific career role or activities all throughout their life. Today, the world global market compels learners to revolutionize their purpose in order to satisfy the needs of the transforming environment, cultures, and technologies.

The study's results were described as implications emerged from the cross-case analysis. The benefits model is a strong evidence of influence regarding the andragogic programs they have attended. The process model was a framework that is embedded in the programs. From these, improvement performances were reported by the executives on their social skills, improved self-awareness and self-regulation, improved leadership abilities, better recognition at work, improvements in motivation, and the overall positive influence of andragogy through executive coaching on them personally and professionally. The findings of the study were seen to have significance to professions of andragogy, in all aspects, such as trainer's training professions, graduate school professors, executive learning professionals, life-long learning professionals and most importantly to the coaching profession, be it executive, life, sports, etc. It is also significant to the leaders and organizations that are considering to provide leadership training to their executives, and also to the human resource development fields.

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