

# A Paradigm Shift in Law Enforcement Training in The Bahamas: From Teacher-Centered to Learner-Centered

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## ABSTRACT

This study focused on determining whether the learning preference of law enforcement officers in the Bahamas was either pedagogical (teacher-centered) or andragogical (student-centered). Law enforcement personnel in a Bahamian police department were administered the Student Orientation Questionnaire (SOQ) developed by Christian (1982). One hundred and sixty-eight individuals completed the SOQ. Chi square statistics were calculated on the variables of educational level and gender. The preferred learning orientation was primarily andragogical; those with higher education levels tended to have a higher andragogical orientation. There were no differences by gender. As a result of the findings, a three-step approach is proposed to transition the training environment from one that is teacher-centered to one that is learner-centered.

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## INTRODUCTION

The training department within any organization, whether private or public, serves as an essential component to organizational growth and development. According to Swanson (1992), when properly used, training increases both effectiveness and efficiency of employees. Law enforcement, like many other organizations, views the training of their employees as a focal point. On this premise, most law enforcement agencies in the United States have developed a training academy specifically to train police recruits. In contrast, the training academy within the Caribbean and by extension the

Bahamas provides training for police recruits and extends to include professional development for serving officers. To this end, the training academy in law enforcement serves as the educational platform for personal, professional, and academic development of police officers (Hunter-Johnson & Closson, 2011). According to Conti and Nolan (2005), during the course of training at the training academy, recruits are exposed to an intense degree of socialization to the law enforcement culture. This process is a major change for those individuals who were socialized in mainstream culture to adjust to the police world, which often results

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in a shift in personality, perspective and identity (Bahn, 1984; Bennett, 1984; Burgin, 1975; Fielding, 1992; Glenn et al., 2003; Hopper, 1977; Maghan, 1988; McCreedy, 1983; McNamara, 1967; McNulty, 1994; Radelet, 1986; Tenerowicz, 1992; Van Maanen, 1973).

Walker (1999) asserts that 50 years ago, most law enforcement training was conducted in an informal manner, consistent with “watchman”-style policing, where officers were informally recruited and learned policing on the job (Alpert & Dunham, 1997; Chappell, 2008; Kelling & Moore, 1988). Training in law enforcement has evolved and become more formal, and in most instances, is reflective of the theory of behaviorism. The behaviorism theory incorporates instructional methods consistent with a pedagogical training environment, or teacher-centered learning. Birzer (2003) asserts that behaviorist instructional methodologies are commonplace in many police-training environments. Also, some scholars argue that law enforcement training is a field dominated by a militaristic and behaviorist orientation (Birzer, 1999; Ramirez, 1996). Scholars such as Ortmeier (1997) argue that the behaviorism theory may be effective when teaching technical and procedural skills, but is less effective on those non-technical competencies. However, other scholars in the field of law enforcement believe that the training environment should reflect an adult or student-centered learning environment and apply the principles of andragogy (Birzer, 2003; Birzer & Tannehill, 2001; Chappell, 2008).

In an effort to improve the effectiveness of law enforcement training programs, while promoting enhanced learning outcomes and retention (recruit training and professional development courses), this study was conducted to determine the preferred educational orientation of officers. This

study is guided by three research questions: (a) Would more participants have pedagogical orientation or an andragogical orientation in law enforcement training? (b) Would participants with a higher level of academic achievement prefer an andragogical orientation? and (c) Would there be a distinction in the learners’ preference based on gender? As well, when reviewing the literature on law enforcement training, it was evident that there was a gap in research in the Caribbean. It is also the intention of this study to propose a three-step approach to ensure that the training environment is consistent with the educational orientation of learners, while considering the organizational culture, the training instructors, and the learners. The theoretical framework that guides this study is based on the concepts of andragogy and pedagogy.

#### **Traditional Training in Law Enforcement**

Policing is a very labor-intensive field, and the nature of police work in organizations has become increasingly complex and challenging (Henson, Reyns, Klahm, & Frank, 2000). In an effort to ensure that police officers are properly equipped with the knowledge, skills, and abilities needed to function on the job, it is critical that they receive appropriate training. According to McCreedy (1983), police training programs are based on three concepts: (a) closely following the military training model, (b) a punishment-centered experience in which trainees must prove themselves, and (c) a screening process (eliminating those who are not up to par). Although these three concepts are common in many law enforcement training programmes, there is still a need to promote uniformity amongst law enforcement training.

There are vast inconsistencies between law enforcement training programs, not only in the United States (Palmiotto, Birzer, & Unnithan, 2000), but also in the Caribbean. Inconsistencies include: (a) subjects taught

during recruit training and professional development, (b) time spent in the training environment, (c) training procedures (whether officers live at the training academy or only attend the training academy for classroom instructions), and (d) the number of hours required to certify a police officer (Palmiotto et al., 2000). Law enforcement training academies in the United States specifically focus on preparing police recruits for their duties and responsibilities. However, within the Caribbean, and by extension the Bahamas, law enforcement training encompasses training of police recruits and professional development for serving officers. Although there are many disparities as they relate to law enforcement training, one major consistency that occurs both in the United States and the Bahamas is that law enforcement training has traditionally been conducted in a very structured military manner, regardless of the subjects being taught (Birzer & Tannehill, 2001). And, law enforcement training often is dominated by a teacher-centered learning environment, consistent with the pedagogical approach. Such an approach emphasizes incorporating the lecture method with little input from the trainee, while promoting prompting, cueing, behavioral modeling, simulation, skill drills and positive reinforcement (Birzer & Tannehill, 2001).

### **Behaviorism Applied to Law Enforcement Training**

According to Elias and Merriam (2005), “no other system of psychology has had as much impact on general and adult education, or had its principles be the cause of as much debate, as behaviorism” (p. 83). The behaviorism theory founded in the 1920s by Watson focuses on overt, observable behavior of an organism. Basically, behaviorism in behavioral terms focuses on a change in behavior. Within law enforcement, the traditional training environment is reflective of techniques used in behaviorism (Birzer & Tannehill, 2001). These behaviorist

techniques include drill and repetition. Class schedules, subjects taught, instructional techniques, dress code, and expected behaviors are all controlled by the training instructors and are viewed as a method of conditioning the learners.

The theory of behaviorism has been a foundational platform of law enforcement training. However, many scholars and researchers have challenged its benefit to law enforcement training. Birzer and Tannehill (2001) found that the behaviorist approach can be very advantageous because it allows the training instructor to design clear-cut objectives, promotes behavioral practices and not just theory, works best for helping learners to acquire behavioral skills, is highly specific, and is observable (i.e., points scored at a shooting or defensive driving range).

Furthermore, Elias and Merriam (2005) found that behaviorism is good as it relates to accountability. Much emphasis is placed on arranging contingencies of learning and then measuring change in behavior. Elias and Merriam (2005) also support the use of behaviorism theory as a method for technical or practical training in law enforcement such as firearm usage, driving, and so forth. Additionally, “some postmodern adult educators, interestingly enough, have come to the defense of the behaviorist mode at least in its focus on empowering teachers and learners through competency based education” (Elias & Merriam, 2005, p. 109).

Opponents argue that behavioral objectives are more appropriate for some subjects and types of learning than others. For example, in law enforcement training, firearms training is a technical course. However, they do not ensure what is learned in one situation is transferred to a new situation. Collins (1991) argued that behaviorism has been dismissed as cold, inhumane, devoid of feeling, and ignorant of the subjective, creative and intuitive dimension of human behavior (Elias

& Merriam, 2005).

Elias and Merriam (2005) further explain that whether or not one supports the concept of behavioral objectives, consistent with behaviorism theory, they are still used by teachers, curriculum designers, administrators, and adult educators in a variety of settings and act as a guide for the learning environment. Although the behaviorism theory is often the historical and preferred method in law enforcement, there are some scholars who promote the inclusion of the andragogical approach in law enforcement training (Birzer, 2003; Birzer & Tannehill, 2001; Chappell, 2008; Hunter-Johnson & Closson, 2011).

### **Andragogical Approach**

Andragogy, a term synonymous with adult learning, is derived from the Greek word *aner* with the stem *andr* meaning man (not boy), and *agogus* meaning leading (Knowles, 1990). Although originally coined by Kapp in 1833, the term, in the United States, is synonymous with Knowles, who is often referred to as the father of adult education. The term andragogy is defined as “the art and science of helping adults learn” and is often utilized to distinguish the difference between education of adults and children (Davenport, 1987). Reischmann (2004) further defines andragogy as “the science of understanding (theory) and supporting (practice) lifelong and life wide adult education of adults” (p. 1).

The andragogical approach is grounded on four assumptions developed by Knowles (1980). These four assumptions are reflective of the andragogical orientation and are based on an individual’s maturity. It is Knowles’ position that as individuals mature:

- 1) their self-concept moves from one of being a dependent personality towards being a self-directed human being;
- 2) they accumulate a growing reservoir of experience that becomes an increasingly rich resource for learning;

- 3) their readiness to learn becomes oriented towards the developmental task of their social role and
- 4) their time perspective changes from one of postponed application of knowledge to immediacy of application and accordingly their orientation towards learning shifts from one of subject-centeredness to one of performance-centeredness (1980, pp. 44-45).

Andragogy is influenced by humanistic education. The major commonality between andragogy and humanistic education is that humanistic education, like andragogy, focuses upon those adult learners who are optimistic to change and continued learning. An additional commonality is those adults whose goal is self-actualization and who can live together as fully functioning individuals. The focal point is more upon the individual learner than the general content being delivered. Some practitioners tend to use the term learner-centered approach rather than andragogy; however, the term andragogy is the preferred term.

As a training instructor or facilitator, it is imperative to be aware of the andragogical approach and the assumptions that guide it. This knowledge can, in most instances, aid in the process of adult learning specifically to those learners who prefer the andragogical approach.

### **Pedagogical Approach**

The term pedagogy is derived from the Greek word *paid* meaning child and *agogus* meaning leading. Subsequently, pedagogy is defined as “the art and science of teaching children” (Knowles, 1980, p. 80). Pedagogy embodies teacher-focused education (Conner, 2005), where the role of the teacher is to teach, as opposed to facilitating learning. Focus is on what content the teacher or training instructor perceive should be taught, the teacher is perceived as the expert, content is usually delivered in a lecture style, rote memorization

is promoted and the method for assessment is often through quizzes. Hudson (2005) asserts that within the pedagogical model emphasis is on the teacher determining the instructional goals, methods, materials and assessments. Although the pedagogical approach places much emphasis on the teacher and child-like practices, Birzer and Tannehill (2001) contend that many police academies employ methods similar to those used to teach children (pedagogy).

Within the pedagogical approach, there is also a distinction in the role of the learner which is “to be a passive recipient of the teacher’s instruction” (Knowles, 1980, p. 48). In other words, the learner is dependent upon the teacher with regard to what is learned, when, how, and if learning occurred, the degree and kind of learning. As a result of this unique characteristic, the pedagogical approach is customary in law enforcement training. The adherence to the hierarchical rank structure, both in and outside of the learning environment reinforces this approach. According to Birzer and Tannehill (2001), “police academies that use pedagogical approaches foster an environment in which the focus becomes the chain of command, rules, regulation, and policy and procedures” (p. 239). Further, the teacher or training instructor is viewed as the authority in the learning environment, not solely because of the hierarchal rank structure, but is reflective of the pedagogical approach which emphasizes the teacher being the subject matter expert.

When comparing the andragogical and pedagogical approaches, they appear to be on extreme ends of the continuum. Both approaches have been utilized in law enforcement training, albeit not equally. However, it is imperative for the training instructor or facilitator to be aware of the learning preference of their students and hence, the learning environment to be

reflective of that preference to enhance learning outcomes. On that premise, this study was conducted to determine the learning orientation of law enforcement officers within the Bahamas.

## **METHODS**

The study conducted was exploratory in nature and utilized descriptive statistics. All three of the research questions were explored by descriptive research methods utilizing the Student Orientation Questionnaire (SOQ). The SOQ was distributed throughout all ranks of a law enforcement agency including constables, corporals, sergeants, inspectors, chief inspectors, assistant superintendents, superintendents, and assistant commissioners. The participants were allowed to complete the survey anonymously and represented 20 stations and departments throughout the law enforcement agency. The age range of the participants was 18-60 years of age. The SOQ was successful in disclosing the participants’ educational orientation (andragogical, pedagogical or neutral). This information was used to determine if there was a relationship between the educational orientation and academic achievement level and gender. The research participants in the study were from a police department in The Bahamas. All data collected were analyzed utilizing SPSS procedures to obtain chi square goodness of fit statistics as well as descriptive statistics.

## **Instrument**

The Student Orientation Questionnaire was developed by Christian (1982) to measure the discernible differences between the students’ perceived educational orientation as andragogical or pedagogical. The purpose of this instrument is to measure students’ preferences, attitudes and beliefs about education. The SOQ incorporates six dimensional designs that measured the following areas: a) purpose of the education, b) nature of the learner, c) characteristics of

the learning experience, d) management of learning experience, e) evaluation, and f) relationships among educator-learner and between learners and educators. The SOQ is a self-report paper-and-pencil questionnaire consisting of 50 items. Of the 50 items, each dimension is represented in random order. In addition, the questionnaire represents 25 pedagogical statements and 25 andragogical statements which are also in random order on the questionnaire. The SOQ consists of a five-point Likert scale ranging from five representing *almost always* to one representing *almost never* for andragogical items. Pedagogical statements range from five representing *almost never* to one representing *almost always* (reverse scoring).

Scoring of the instrument ranges from possible scores of 50 (lowest) to 250 (highest). A score below 150 would indicate that the learner has a pedagogical orientation, and a score above 150 indicates that the learner has an andragogical orientation. It is possible for a learner to receive a score of 150 which would indicate a neutral learning orientation. Delahaye and Smith (1995) examined the internal consistency of the SOQ revealing Cronbach's alpha values of 0.83 for andragogy and 0.82 for pedagogy. Pearson correlation coefficients were  $r = 0.74$  for andragogy and  $r = 0.69$  for pedagogy.

### **Setting of Study and Sample**

The setting was a Bahamian police department whose population consisted of approximately 2,500 police officers ranging from the rank of constable to commissioner of police. The sampling technique used was a convenience sampling which initially consisted of 182 participants. However, 13 participants were eliminated from the study due to incomplete data. The inclusion criteria for the participants were that they had to be employed as full-time police officers within this respective police department, between the ages of 18-65 years, and between the rank of

constable and commissioner. Anyone who did not meet the inclusion criteria was excluded from the study. All participants were informed of their rights in conformity with the Institutional Review Board. The police training academy within the Bahamas is the premier provider of law enforcement training and education. It is an amalgamation of four distinct training schools namely: recruit training, detective training, in-service training, and specialist training. Training within the training academy ranges from one week to six months. There is a variety of courses taught: ranging from the one-week First Responders' Course to the six-month recruit training programme.

This law enforcement agency was selected in The Bahamas because although there were numerous studies that utilized the SOQ, there was none that focused on the Caribbean and by extension law enforcement. Law enforcement training, whether in the Caribbean or in the United States, is predominately reflective of behaviorism and the pedagogical approach which is distinctly different from other training environments found in the governmental sector or private sector. On this premise, it would be interesting to determine if the results from this study varies from studies previously conducted.

### **RESULTS**

The 168 participants in this research study included 47 females, 117 males, and 4 participants who did not indicate gender. The results of the statistical analysis of the three research questions are presented below.

*1 – Would participants have a pedagogical orientation or an andragogical orientation in a law enforcement training environment?*

This research question was selected after reviewing the literature on law enforcement training. Within the literature, it was identified that law enforcement training is reflective of the behaviorism theory which is

similar to the pedagogical approach (teacher-centered). Further, it was also assumed that the influence of prior learning experience within the organization, organizational culture and the learning climate, all of which are reflective of behaviorism and pedagogical model, would influence the educational orientation of the participants to be pedagogical.

The results revealed that 56% ( $n = 94$ ) preferred andragogical, 39% ( $n = 66$ ) pedagogical, and 4.2% ( $n = 8$ ) were neutral. The results implied that most law enforcement officers preferred an andragogical approach to learning. therefore, instructional design and training should be reflective of this instructional technique.

*2 – Would participants with a higher level of academic achievement prefer an andragogical orientation?*

This research question was selected on the premise that participants with a higher academic level and exposure to a university of college setting would be more self-directed learners. As a result of this exposure, this would influence their preference to be more andragogical.

The data revealed that comparing the proportions of academic levels, participants with an Associate's degree or above ( $n = 61$ , 36.3%) preferred andragogical compared to those participants with only a high school diploma ( $n = 107$ , 63.7%). To this end, there is statistical evidence indicating that learners with higher academic levels tend to be more andragogical oriented at a .05 significance level,  $\chi^2(1, N = 168) = 6.1015, p = .0135$ .

*3 – Would there be a distinction in learners' preference based on gender?*

Within this specific Bahamian law enforcement agency, it is culturally accepted and expected in most instances that females would have more clerical or administrative duties and responsibilities. This would assume that the female officers would be self-

directed, work independently, be motivated, and equipped with critical thinking skills. It is on this premise that this research question was included in this study. Analysis of the data revealed that comparing the proportions of learning orientation across gender, there was no significant statistical evidence that the learning orientation of females was significantly different or greater than that of males,  $\chi^2(1, N = 168) = .0073, p = .9319$ .

## **DISCUSSION**

The results from this study revealed that the preferred learning orientation of law enforcement officers in this particular law enforcement agency is andragogical and is consistent with previous studies across a variety of professions including Australian youth programs (Choy & Delahaye, 2002), military and civilian training at the Tinker Air Force Base (Christian, 1982), mid-western schools of theology (Grubbs, 1981), and American nursing programs (Richardson, 1994).

Knowles (1980) advocated that the andragogical approach is preferred for teaching adults. However, in law enforcement, traditional training practices are consistent with behaviorism theory and the pedagogical approach (teacher-centered). Despite this influence, the results are consistent with Knowles' assumption concerning adult learners' preference of andragogy (learner-centered). To this end, the training curriculum, instructional techniques, assessment methods, and the training environment should reflect this approach.

This approach is beneficial not only to law enforcement training programs, but can be utilized as a method to examine the training practices and learners' preferences across many professions. Subsequently, this study illuminates both the theoretical and practical implications of transitioning the adult training environment from pedagogical (teacher-

centered) to andragogical (learner-centered).

### Implications for Practice

Contrary to the pedagogical approach employed by this law enforcement agency, the findings from the study revealed that the preferred educational orientation is the andragogical approach (student-centered). On this premise, it is essential that the instructional techniques, and by extension, the learning environment, incorporate practices reflective of the andragogical approach to promote positive learning outcomes. Birzer (2003) asserts that “although there are many that support the andragogical model, it is said

that the difficulty associated with andragogy is transforming the theory and design into action in an environment (institution) that does not utilize the andragogy model” (p. 38). To ensure that this approach is systematic and effective, a three-step implementation approach is proposed that focuses on transitioning the learning environment from teacher-centered to learner-centered (See Figure 1). This three-step approach focuses on organizational culture, training instructors, and learners to ensure a successful transition from teacher-centered (pedagogy) to learner-centered (andragogy).

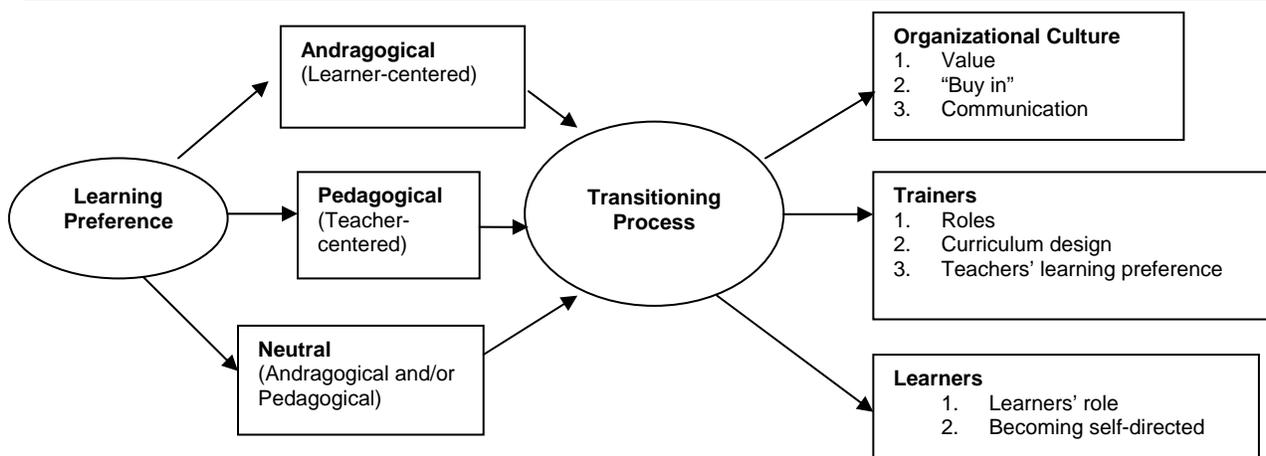


Figure 1. Model for transitioning the learning environment from teacher-centered to learner-centered: A three-step approach

### Organizational Culture

Law enforcement, unlike many other professional organizations, traditionally encourages militaristic and behavioral practices resulting in a behaviorist and pedagogical approach (teacher-centered learning) to training. The organizational culture is one which often expects and encourages such behaviorist and pedagogical practices as being unique to policing. However, within the last few years, there has since been an evolution in the approaches of policing to Community Oriented Policing (COP) and Problem Oriented Policing (POP).

The adaptation of these approaches encourages the training environment to abandon some behaviorist approaches and adopt approaches and training consistent with COP and POP (andragogical or learner-centered practices). Such adaptation extends to include a shift in the content of many training academies to incorporate the new paradigm (Chappell & Lanza-Kaduce, 2004; Glenn et al., 2003; Haarr, 2001) coupled with instructional techniques and designs. However, to ensure that change in the training curriculum is well received by training instructors, the learners, and the organization

by extension, it is integral that the organizational culture is one that embraces the change and values such a change. The question now lies as to which approach is more effective with promoting change in the training environment, curriculum and instructional techniques in law enforcement and should the change in training be reflective of a top-down approach or a bottom-up approach and why?

It is recommended that a top-down approach be applied for the transition in the training environment from pedagogical to andragogical practice. As law enforcement agencies fully enforce the hierarchical rank structure, the administration of the organization must commit to the change for a smooth transition. In other words, it is important that the administration of the organization has a thorough understanding of the importance of the change in approach: why and how the training curriculum, instructional techniques, and content will be adjusted and how the change will positively impact COP and POP policing approaches.

Once the administration supports the new approach, it is equally important that they effectively communicate the relevance of the change from pedagogy to andragogy and its implications to the training environment. This communication can be in the form of organizational training policies, procedures and other internal communications. As the hierarchical rank structure has a great influence in the organizational culture in law enforcement, the top down approach is recommended to ensure success and encourage officers to adhere to the new change.

### **Training Instructors**

The training instructors play a crucial role in implementing organizational goals, policies and procedures at the training academy. The training instructors are equally important in the transition of the training environment,

curriculum and instructional techniques, from one that mirrors pedagogical principles to andragogical principles. To ensure that the principles of andragogy are adhered to in the training environment, it is incumbent that the training instructors conceptualize their roles as facilitators and not solely as a transmitter of knowledge (Birzer & Tannehill, 2001). The andragogical approach clearly outlines distinct roles of the training instructor as a facilitator of learning and not a teacher. Hence, their role would now be to facilitate the learning process and not to dictate content. An additional role of the training instructor would be to aid the learners in the process of becoming self-directed learners and developing their full potential. This process can mimic training workshops on self-directed learning, motivational seminars, and distribution of relevant literature.

It is essential that the training curriculum and instructional techniques are consistent with andragogy. This includes: (a) promoting self-directed discussions within the learning environment while capitalizing on the learners' past experiences as the foundation of the discussion; (b) deviating from training practices that encourage behavioral practices such as rote memorization, repetition and drill to more advanced practices that involve problem solving, active debates, collaborative work, critical thinking skills (higher order thinking), and effective communication consistent with the duties and responsibilities of law enforcement officers; and (c) ensuring the learning environment is physically and psychologically reflective of an adult learning environment with minimal focus on the hierarchical rank structure, organizational policies and procedures, and the punishment system.

As outlined by Birzer and Tannehill (2001) and consistent with the assumptions of andragogy, whenever possible, the training curriculum should include the needs, interests

and desires of the learner. A training curriculum that is reflective of a learner-centered approach should incorporate subjects and skills that the learner would be interested in learning and able to apply immediately after the training program as their learning shift would be one from content to performance centeredness.

According to Pratt (1988), teachers normally teach in the manner they were taught. Therefore, those training instructors who were taught in a manner consistent with the pedagogical approach (teacher-centered) would normally mimic the pedagogical practices in their curriculum and instruction. Subsequently, those training instructors whose learning preference may be reflective of the pedagogical approach may be inclined to teach in the manner in which they learn. On this premise, to ensure consistency as it relates to andragogical practices and principles, it is crucial that all training instructors receive additional training as it relates to the andragogical approach (learner-centered) and facilitate learning reflective of andragogical principles and practices.

### **Learners**

The findings from this study revealed that the learners preferred the andragogical approach (learner-centered) as opposed to the pedagogical approach (teacher-centered). However, Pratt (1988) indicated that there are some instances when the adult learner preference switches from pedagogy to andragogy and vice versa, dependent upon the situation and the learner's level of self-directedness. Thus, learners must be equipped with a level of self-directedness or a level of independence from their teacher. Subsequently, the learners must be made aware of their roles in the learning environment as not merely a passive recipient of knowledge but actively engaged in the learning process. This can extend to include the inclusion of the learners' experience as it

relates to the topic, ideas of assessment techniques, relevant content to be taught throughout training using crime statistics, complaints against officers and concerns from the judicial system as a guide.

Further, for those learners who may not demonstrate an adequate level of self-directedness or level of independence from the training instructor, it is crucial that they learn how to become self-directed learners. It is important that these learners are educated as it relates to the importance of becoming self-directed and the implication for the learning process and learning outcome. This educational process can be in the form of workshops, seminars, distribution of literature; and at an individual level, with the training instructor.

### **CONCLUSIONS**

Law enforcement is a complex profession that requires officers to be critical thinkers, decision makers, problem solvers, effective communicators, self-directed, and equipped with collaborative skills. It is incumbent that the training curriculum is reflective of these desired skills and the method in which the content is facilitated is one that also enhances the desired skills of the officers and learning outcome.

Although most training programs in law enforcement are reflective of the pedagogical approach (teacher-centered), there are instances when the andragogical approach (learner-centered) is preferred. Law enforcement, like many essential services, is a profession that is built on practical application. As a result, it is pivotal that law enforcement training is not only reflective of practical application but is inclusive of experiential and active learning practices consistent with the principles of the learner-centered approach. Further, according to Akerlind (2007) and Kember (1997), emphasis upon conceptual understanding and student learning represents a more

sophisticated and effective model of teaching. To this end, it is incumbent that the organizational culture, training instructors and learners are all in support with this approach to ensure success.

Lastly, the effectiveness of a training program in law enforcement can have great implications not solely for the individual

learner, but the organization and by extension society. Therefore, it is essential that the training environment reflect best practices as it relates to the preferred learning orientation of officers, which will yield a positive learning outcome.

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