

Descriptive Study on Cambodian Tourism Industry towards Boosting its Economy Using Andragogy as Mediating Variable

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Abstract: It is important to know the role of Andragogy to boost a market and this research's results depicts 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. Management in this sector is very crucial to the success of the business sector and is dependent on the performance of its leaders. One of the emerging practices to ensure performance improvement in the professional practice is adult learning or andragogy. The paper explored the influence and impact of the practice of andragogy through executive coaching to the leaders of the tourism industry in Cambodia as described by the respondents.

Keywords: Cambodia Tourism, Travel Industry, Andragogy.

INTRODUCTION

Cambodia has today a lot to offer the modern global traveller. The bustling busy city capitol of Phnom Penh with its magnificent Royal Palace, the lively social life in the city centre and along the Sisowath Quay next to the Tonle Sap river. The smaller pleasant and welcoming town of Siem Reap situated close to the impressive stone temples and smiling stone faces of Angkor. And finally the somewhat unknown beautiful serene beaches of Sihanoukville along the country's coastal strip. These are the main attractions that are marketed and offered the international visitor during her stay in Cambodia.

As a tourist to Cambodia you are inextricably a part of this complex equation, and your actions here can never be neutral. In Cambodia even the most well-meaning intentions can have disastrous consequences, so be sure to inform yourself before you go to ensure your holiday has a positive impact, and makes life even just a tiny bit better for those who have made your holiday so memorable.

Cambodia's tourism industry has boomed within the last five years. In the recent years, online shopping has become increasingly popular. This is because of the rapid growth of the kingdom's internet users which is attributed to the rapid development of technology. The rapid growth of the Internet users was very useful for daily life, work, and business, including the tourism industry. Thanks to technological development, the tourism industry has also rapidly developed in Cambodia. This is in line with the country's strategy towards digital economy by 2023.

Due to the present issues of the tourism industry in the kingdom today, the leadership of the businesses need additional learning in order to survive the unstable situation of the sector. Tourism experts as their coaches would help in keeping the business afloat and get their leverage in the Cambodian market.

BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Analysis of 77 documents on Cambodia's sustainable tourism revealed themes and challenges relating to: (1) an emphasis on nature-based tourism (ecotourism); (2) calls for greater community engagement for sustainable outcomes; (3) stakeholder perceptions and values as drivers of tourism success; (4) cultural heritage as a key tourism attraction; and (5) foreign investment shaping Cambodia's tourism future.

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This study will investigate how the tourism executives in Cambodia are able to increase their leadership performance through andragogy using executive coaching. The executives' own experiences will be analyzed and identified how andragogy impacts the improvement of these learners regarding their performances at work.

PROBLEM STATEMENT

Tourism executives need to continue their learning because of very fast technology upgrade. They need help to find solutions to some of their most challenging problems. It doesn't matter if the executives are just starting out and need someone to guide them in the right direction or are an established business looking to leverage some of the brightest tourism minds in the industry. Andragogy through tourism coaching provides sound, proven advice to reaching their objectives.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The results of the study will give new knowledge in both the tourism industry and in andragogy profession which will be very important for anyone in the adult education and coaching profession. It can be a basis for program development, strategy planning, human resource development, skills development, and others that would improve the profession.

This way, the study can be made a basis for the researchers to develop procedures and more effective strategies for coaches to assist tourism managers for leadership development in an improved way.

The main objective of the research is the following:

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

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical foundation of this study is adult learning theory, which is also called andragogy. Malcolm Knowles (1983), developed the theory about learning among adults. The executive coaching process key phases are the same with the andragogy model of Knowles (1983) as well as the adult learning process. This is partnered with executive coaching which is a considerably an upcoming process of learning and development that would ensure improvement of performance for executives.

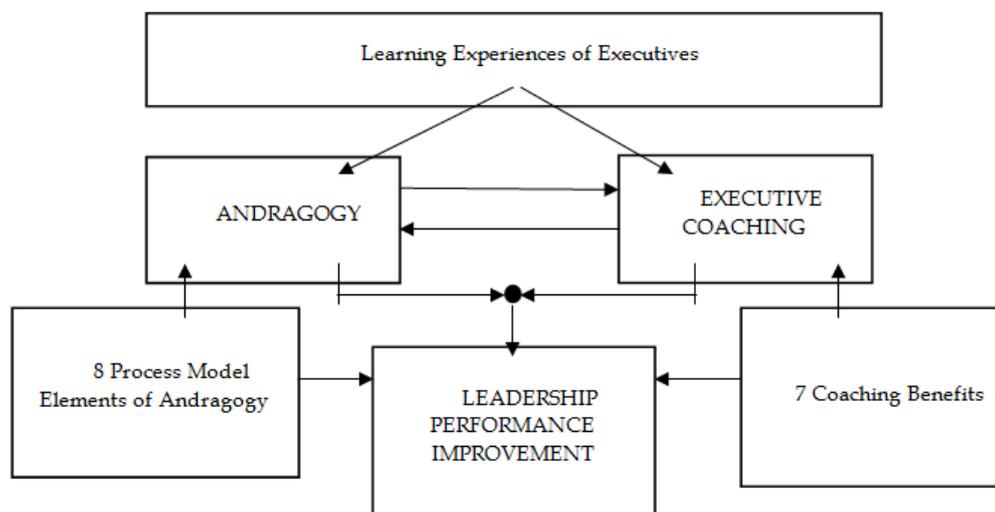


Figure 1: Theoretical Framework

Everyone must continue to learn and go through self-development. This is especially true when one needs to constantly update himself with information because it is essential to his chosen career. Executives are an example of people who have to learn continuously and get updates in new trends in the global arena. Tourism are doubly needing continuous development because of the new technologies and updates in the web technologies today.

METHODOLOGY

The design of qualitative research is revealing the range of the behavior of a target audience and the its reference of the driving perceptions to specific topics. It guides and supports the construction of hypotheses through the use of small groups of respondents for in-depth studies. The results of qualitative research are more descriptive and a lot less predictive.

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

According to Creswell (2003), gathering data for a qualitative study, the interview is the primary tool for that. As such, the primary instrument for data gathering for this study is a face-to-face interview with each tourism business executive. There were two sets of questions, a structured interview guide and a ranking and rating checklist. The structured interview guide consisted of four main questions, and each main question consists of between five to ten probe questions. All the questions for the 1st set of questions are open-ended.

The second set of is a checklist that consists of ranking and rating of statements. These statements are ranked according to what the participants experienced and preference. Factors and constraints are also rated by the participants given rating scales appropriate to the factor. The researcher identified the research question which is the anchor to which this research is hooked on to. The researcher has read and explored various materials about andragogy and executive coaching. These resources were gathered and compiled and relevant articles and passages were extracted to be the support literature for model development and creation of framework that the researcher used for the research. From these resources, the researcher designed and developed the interview guide in order to get relevant data to support the research on the influence of andragogy through executive coaching to leadership performance improvement in tourism management. The sample is identified and respondents were purposively selected.

The respondents were interviewed using the instrument that was designed and developed by the researcher. The data is collected, organized, explored and cleaned in preparation for processing, analysis, and interpretation. Data has been transcribed and summary narrative has been created for each of the respondents. These summary narratives were sent back to the respondents for the member check validity method. After the validity procedure, the data were analyzed and interpreted based on the theoretical framework developed.

The data was cross checked and optimized. After this, the findings were written. Finally, the conclusions and recommendations were given.

The following flowchart will show the flow of procedures of the study:

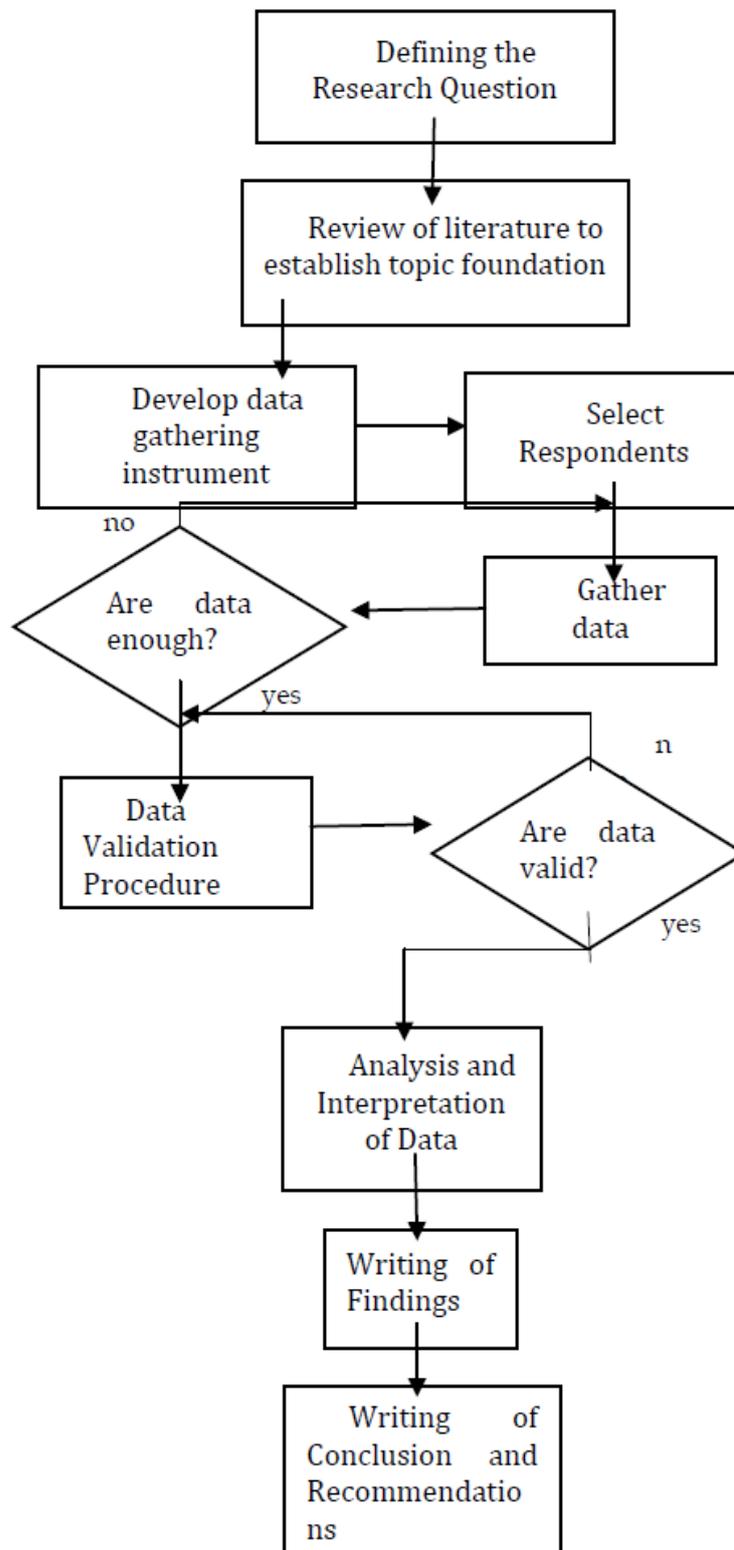


Figure 1: The flow of the procedures of the research
Data Collection

The interview responses were compiled, categorized and processed. A summary statement is extracted from these responses and written for each of the respondent. These statements were returned back to the responded as part of the member checking method as validity procedure. After confirmation and valid check, the summary statements were processed for analysis.

Analysis of Data

The study used multiple case study where each of the interviewees are cases. The study used interpretational data analysis procedure for these case studies. The definition of Gall, Gall, and Borg (2002) of interpretational analysis is it is a process of closely examining case study data so that the constructs, themes, and patterns can be found which will be used to express and rationalize the situation under scrutiny. Interpretational analysis was used and able to construct meaning from the data collected. Data is initially gathered, described, categorized, and explored in preparation for analysis. The researcher wanted to make sure that the data is of good quality. So, the next step is to improve data quality. Researcher corrects spelling mistakes, manage and handle missing data and unnecessary information are weeded out. This step is done to avoid wrong results and misinterpretation because of junk data. There is a danger of giving erroneous conclusions if data is not validated and cleaned.

DATA INTERPRETATION

This research utilized cross case analysis and compared two models, the andragogy process model and the executive coaching benefits model that were formulated from the analysis of the multi-cases of the six respondents as well as the additional data analysis from those taken from the face-to-face interview.

RESULTS

Each of the participants were considered a single case. So each participant will be analyzed as a single case. From the transcribed responses, a summary statement for each case is developed. Each section of the interview for every participant has a summary statement. These summary statements will be cross analyzed and compiled to generate a second data source which will be compared with the base theory and extract the answer from these. Special requests were also given to make sure that all identifying characteristics be kept hidden. Only after these reassurances were given that the participants freely and all honestly gave their responses.

CASES OF ANDRAGOGY THROUGH EXECUTIVE COACHING

The case of Participant A:

Participant B is just three years in the leadership position. It has never been his wish to be a leader and was content to be in the operations without leadership responsibilities. But because of seniority, he was assigned to the position and he cannot turn down the assignment. He always believed that he had no potential as a leader and always saw himself in the support role. These thoughts and beliefs have made him insecure and hesitant to do his duty. He would sometimes feel shy and embarrassed to ask his subordinates to do some work for him. Assigning jobs that are unpopular is a struggle because when the person being assigned would complain he would immediately take away the assignment. It would seem that he is forever trapped in between the demands of his superiors and the complaints of his subordinates and these are stressing him out. He wanted to resign from his position ever since but he was advised that it was a bad career move.

One day, one of his friends who was a businessman told him about his experience of attending going through a three-month business training with an executive coach. This is an on-site training where the coach will upgrade the executive with a business skill of choice in his own work-place. Participant B's friend has confided that the executive coach program has made a lot of difference in his job that he was up for promotion. Most of all, he was taught how to avoid stress in his workplace no matter how busy he was with work responsibilities. This discussion had given him ideas and he became interested in the leadership training. His friend recommended to him a coach who has the expertise in leadership training and at the same time a specialist in emotional intelligence quotient for adults. His friend thought that Participant B will give him benefit from the emotional intelligence quotient training because of his insecurity as a leader.

At the start of the program, the coach immediately pointed out to him all the positive traits that he has observed from him. This has given him a boost and confidence early towards the training. The coach also involved his team and were able to extract positive feedback from the members of the team. It seemed to Participant B that the coach knows more about him than he himself. From this, the working relationship between him and the coach flourished.

That was the hardest part of the training. The rest went smoothly, even the strenuous physical exercises she had with her team of mostly men were a breeze. She also found out that she can cope with

the rest of them and even more physically fit and able than some. For her, her team members are her babies, big babies.

CONCLUSION

There are multiple cases in this study which requires a descriptive case study method using cross case analysis. From this, comparisons and cross checking is done with the models that are used to support the study.

The processed data was analysed using cross case analysis based on two models, namely, the andragogy elements of process model and the seven benefits of executive coaching. Below are the bases of analysis for the study. There are two models used in this study, the andragogy theory process model and the Bonnici executive coaching benefits model.

Elements of Andragogy Process Model Rating

3 Elements	Average rating	Rating	Interpretation
Preparing Learners	2	Competence	Expectations reflect level of performance 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
Climate	0.4	Compliance	Many 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; reflect bare minimums or compliance requirements. Many expectations do not affect client learning.
Planning	2.6	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.
Diagnosis of needs	2.6	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.
Setting learning objectives	1.6	Competence	Many 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; reflect bare minimums or compliance requirements. Many expectations do not affect client learning.
Designing learning plans	0.4	Compliance	Many 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; reflect bare minimums or compliance requirements. Many expectations do not affect client learning.
Learning activities	2.6	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.
Evaluation	2.8	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.

The reason for the research is to discover and define the influence of andragogy through executive coaching on performance improvement of the leaders of tourism industry in Cambodia. This influence is seen through the point of view of the leaders themselves,

There are six leaders of tourism businesses who participated in the study and each of these participants were considered as a single case giving six cases to analyse. These cases were analysed through multi-case analysis through cross analysis. Each case has a summary statement from the responses during the interview. This summary statements were used to cross analysed with the andragogy theory process model and executive coaching benefits model are shown.

From the results, there was immense improvement in leadership skills for all the six executives of tourism businesses of Cambodia. These were improved relationships with team mates and other colleagues, increased levels of trust, higher confidence levels, better social skills, improved professional image, and increased decision making skills. The study showed a positive influence of andragogy using executive coaching to leaders of tourism businesses.

Data that have been collected in the study are insightful information for the profession of coaching with regards to the skills and qualities considered essential by leaders of the tourism business and all similar professions. Their requirements are coaches with strong on line business management skills and experience, trustworthy, worthy of respect and at the same time respectful, a listener and not judgmental, and more importantly, someone who keeps confidential matters and private information to themselves. There is a preference to external coaches.

This research provides organizations of high risk professions the chance to recognize andragogy as a leadership development approach and executive coaching as one of the strategies in this perspective. The highlight is on the synergy between andragogy and coaching and the positive effect of the partnership in training leaders. The influence of andragogy gives a big difference in the use of learning framework for executive coaching. These frameworks for coaching give a chance to clients to explore their experiences and reflections in order to attain their professional goals as leaders. Andragogy also provided the principles and practices in developing the executive coaching process essential to the tourism business.

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