CO-CREATION: COMPLEMENTING COMPETENCY-BASED LEADERSHIP TRAINING IN THE WSQ FRAMEWORKS WITH EMERGENT DESIGN

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ABSTRACT

According to the Singapore Workforce Development Agency, the Workforce Skills Qualifications (WSQ) is a national credentialing system. The WSQ trains, develops, assesses and recognizes individuals for key competencies that companies look for in potential employees. A key feature of WSQ programmes is that it is competency-based—assessment and certification are based on the learner’s ability to demonstrate the identified capabilities in the frameworks. The WSQ is the Singapore government’s initiative to ensure that Singapore’s workforce remains current and competitive.

This paper posits that co-creation through emergent design is the next step in competency-based leadership training in the WSQ frameworks—it complements the existing system. The aim of the paper is to acquaint readers with how this innovation—integrating co-creation through emergent design with competency-based leadership training—is being introduced and applied in the WSQ space in Singapore. In this integrated andragogical model, leadership training will move to become leadership learning. Facilitators will leverage on the stated competency elements to create a learning space that creates opportunities for learners to develop meaning by dialoging, discussing, and debating with other learners. In doing so, the learners’ personal knowledge, life experiences, and direct experience in the learning space becomes part of a curriculum that will be ongoing, developing and evolving each time the programme is run. The power in the classroom moves away from the trainer and is shared by both the learner and the facilitator. This distributed power in the learning space is arguably more befitting and appropriate for leadership programmes. The end result is a more personalized competency-based programme that makes room to address learners’ identified interests and real and current needs in the ‘real’ world.

The paper also suggests how co-creation through emergent design in the WSQ leadership frameworks may be facilitated from a policy-level perspective. Refinements in certain core elements in the WSQ model may be necessary to help organisations adopt aspects of this andragogical model. These include the governance of leadership training organisations including the accreditation and audit process of Approved Training Organisations (ATOs) in the leadership space. The requirements in courseware accreditation may also need to account for the ambiguity and fluidity inherent in co-creation and emergent design. The application of this andragogical model is contingent on ATOs and its facilitators being involved in
active research. Therefore, the onus will be on the ATOs to ensure that facilitators are competent and qualified and for on-going skill development. In addition, both WDA and ATOs will need to work closely to bring about a mindset change in learners as well as sponsoring companies.

INTRODUCTION

The constructivist theories of co-creation and emergent design are rarely applied to competency-based leadership training. The concept of co-creation has gained dominance in the business and marketing literature relating to innovation. Co-creation is also gaining traction in the world of psychotherapy mainly in how the relationship between client and therapist impacts the process and outcome of therapy. Emergent curriculum, and by extension emergent design, is now widely used in early childhood education and to a growing extent online instructional design. However, a review of the literature on leadership studies, organisational development, and adult education suggests that co-creation and emergent design have not yet made foray into these fields.

This paper posits that co-creation through emergent design is the next step in competency-based leadership training in the Singapore Workforce Skills Qualifications (WSQ) frameworks—it complements the existing system. The aim of the paper is to acquaint readers with how this innovation--integrating co-creation through emergent design with competency-based leadership training--is being introduced and applied in the WSQ space in Singapore. It is written from a practitioner’s standpoint. The paper is organised as follows. It begins with a literature review of emergent design and co-creation in the fields that they are currently used. The paper then examines the current landscape of learning, and highlights the key features of the WSQ system that impact applying co-creation through emergent design to competency-based leadership training. In the next section, the paper explores how emergent design and co-creation can be applied to competency-based leadership training in three aspects, namely, the role of the facilitator, the role of the learner, and the function of the curriculum. Finally, the paper suggests briefly how co-creation through emergent design in competency-based leadership training in the WSQ frameworks may be administered from a policy-level perspective.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Constructivism, Co-Creation, And Emergent Design

The essence of constructivism is that learners actively construct knowledge; they 'construct' their own meaning. Knowledge (and by extension, learning) comes from creating meaning that occurs as a result of life experiences. Learners interpret new information using knowledge that they have already acquired. Learners activate prior knowledge, and try to relate new information to knowledge they already possess. There are varying conceptions of constructivism, depending on whether the emphasis is on individual cognitive processes or the social co-construction of knowledge (Loyens & Gijbels, 2008). These differences will not be explored within the scope of this paper. The numerous perspectives on constructivism can be grouped around a fundamental assumption about learning: the active role that the learner plays in the creation of knowledge (Birenbaum, 2003).
Perhaps part of the reason why co-creation through emergent design complements competency-based leadership training is that all three concepts—co-creation, emergent design, and competency-based learning—have their roots in constructivism. Given that competency-based learning is now widely associated with technical and vocational education, it is easy to overlook the historical foundations of competency-based education. Competency-based learning is linked with Behaviourism, Cognitive Theory, and Constructivism (Bridges, 1996).

Leadership requires competencies and skills such as the ability to innovate and create and solve ill-defined problems. Constructivism helps to develop these skills through such learning methods as group-based and cooperative work, problem-based activities, and discovery learning (Snyder, 2009). In a classroom setting, “group work is a dynamic, iterative process. Goals and tasks transform: understanding and perceptions of the leadership issues evolve; and learners undergo changes within and outside of the group, causing interactions and outcomes to emerge in ways that are sometimes out of the control of the group. From a constructivist perspective, this group process is essential to the formation of knowledge and learning” (Brown & Renshaw, 2000, p.55). In this case, formation of knowledge and learning about corporate leadership.

**Emergent curriculum, emergent design**

Emergent curriculum is not a new concept in learning; it is now widely practiced in early childhood education. (The irony of proposing possible advancements in leadership learning based on pedagogy used in pre-schools is not lost on this writer.) The goal of emergent curriculum is to respond to every child’s interests. Its practice is open-ended and self-directed. Jones (2012) writes:

> Curriculum emerges from the play of children and the play of teachers. It is co-constructed by the children and the adults and the environment itself. To develop curriculum in depth, adults must notice children’s questions and invent ways to extend them, document what happens, and invent more questions. The process is naturally individualized. In contrast, standardized curriculum comes from unknown experts outside the classroom. It relies on generalization rather than on an individual teacher’s creativity and attentiveness to individual learners. Indeed, standard curriculum may squelch teacher thinking. What it permits is linear planning and assessment that is responsive to bureaucratic needs in a large nation with large educational systems. In this approach, responsive teaching is sacrificed to efficiency, and only outcomes are measured (p.67).

There are various sources of emergent curriculum in a pre-school setting. These include the interests of the children and teachers, developmental tasks, things in the physical environment, people in the social environment, curriculum resource materials, and serendipity (or unexpected events). Emergent curriculum can also emerge from living together—conflict resolution, caregiving and routines, and from values held by the school, family, community and culture (Jones, 2012).

The newer, and more ‘grown up’ theory of emergent design is a term first coined by Cavallo (2000) to describe a theoretical framework for the implementation of
systemic change in education and learning environments. Cavallo writes that “the approach to the design of the educational intervention [in this case, the learning programme] resembles that of architecture, not only in the diversity of the sources of knowledge it uses but in other aspects as well—the practice of letting the design emerge from an interaction with the client” (p.768). In the case of WSQ leadership training, this would be the interaction between the primary stakeholders who are the learners and the facilitator, as well as the secondary stakeholders who are the employers, the government, and industry players. “The outcome is determined by the interplay between the understanding and goals of the client [in this case, the learners], the expertise, experience, and aesthetics of the architect [the facilitator] and the environmental and situational constraints of the design space [the physical and the larger learning space]” (Cavallo, 2000, p. 768).

Cavallo’s choice of words is noteworthy: the purposeful stance implied by the word “design” mates with the openness implied by the word “emergent” (Mason & Rennie, 2008). Mason & Rennie (2008) write of Cavallo’s work that the emphasis on emergence as the guiding principle does not imply that it is an anything-goes environment reacting to the whims of the participant facilitators and learners. Emergent design brings a very disciplined set of principles, methodologies, tools, activities, models and exemplars for learning environments. However, to deliver a pre-set curriculum with pre-chosen problems, explanations, and sequence of events would be antithetical to the underlying learning philosophy (constructivism). Put simply, the design of the learning programme is ongoing throughout its delivery. There is a lesson plan but it is held subordinate to the real learning that emerges. The learning programme and its learning outcomes emerge, contingent on the interests and needs of the learners and the interaction and social negotiation between the learners themselves and between the learners and the facilitator.

**Co-creation**

Summers and Tudor (2014) write about co-creativity in psychotherapy in Transactional Analysis, a form of social psychology. Co-creativity derives principally from two theoretical strands: field theory and social constructivism. Field theory emphasizes inter-relationship. Events occur “as a function of the overall properties of the field taken as an interactive dynamic whole” (Parlett, 1991, p.70). This means that

> When two people converse or engage with one another in some way, something comes into existence which is a product of neither of them exclusively… There is a shared field, a common communicative home, which is mutually constructed. (Parlett, 1991, p.75)

In defining co-creation in innovation, Roser, Samson, Humphreys, and Cruz-Valdivieso (2009) posit that co-creation is a form of collaborative creativity, that is initiated by firms to enable innovation with, as opposed to for their customers. “All co-creation approaches share two main features: one, the expansion of product or organisational boundaries [in this case, the curriculum] and two, the involvement of the consumer [the learner]” (Roser et al., 2009, p. 9).

Applying these ideas to leadership learning, co-creation is the collaborative
innovation with the learner. It is an active, creative and social process that entails
collections and interactions between people. Learners come not to learn from the
learning guide but from the facilitator and classmates and the interplay between
them. It entails collaboration and not just involvement or participation. It involves co-
creativity in the ideas of fantasy, and play and creativity, and not simply co-
construction or co-production.

**Co-creation through emergent design**

The consensus is that co-creation is a facilitated process. In business, the
facilitation is led by the firm. In psychotherapy, co-creation is facilitated by the
therapist. In the case of leadership training in the WSQ framework, co-creation can
be facilitated through emergent design. The facilitation of co-creation through
emergent design is led by the facilitator, facilitated with the learner, and guided and
audited by the competency-based curriculum. In this integrated andragogical model,
leadership training will move on to become leadership learning.

**METHODS**

The Aim is to Complement, Not Change the Existing System

It is crucial to understand the current landscape of the learning industry. Advocating
creation through emergent design in leadership training is very different from
advocating co-creation through emergent design as a complement to competency-
based leadership training in the WSQ frameworks. Every andragogical model has its
limitations; competency-based learning, and more specifically competency-based
leadership training, is no different. However, there are many advantages of
competency-based learning in a country like Singapore; the WSQ system has served
us well. For example, a competency-based system makes learning accessible.
Learners understand what is expected of them in each programme—acquire and
then demonstrate competence in the subject matter. It is comparatively easier to
train facilitators to work in the competency-based learning space since the scope of
learning is clearly defined. A competency-based system also makes governance and
administration more straightforward. The government, employers and other
stakeholders can be fairly sure of the learning outcomes after an employee has
attended a programme. There is more accountability in the funding of a competency-
based system: providing X amount of training grant gets you an employee with Z
skillset. This is important when there is so much government funding involved, and
when it is a national credentialing system affecting employment, promotion and
career advancement.

So why change the existing system? This paper does not suggest changing the
WSQ system; the context of this paper is limited to leadership learning. This paper
posits that co-creation through emergent design can complement competency-based
leadership training in both industry-specific WSQ frameworks as well as the
leadership-specific WSQ Leadership and People Management (LPM) framework.
The central thesis is that complementing competency-based leadership training with
creation through emergent design advances leadership learning. This model is
better suited for how leaders learn. Learning is more personalized and therefore
more relevant. Learners have more responsibility and say in directing the learning
outcomes. The learners’ personal knowledge, life experiences, and direct experiences in the learning space becomes part of the curriculum that will be ongoing, developing and evolving each time the programme is run. The end result is a more personalized competency-based programme that makes room to address learners’ identified interests and real and current needs in the ‘real’ world.

The WSQ System: The Landscape of Learning

According to the Singapore Workforce Development Agency (WDA), the WSQ is a national credentialing system. The WSQ trains, develops, assesses and recognizes individuals for the key competencies that companies look for in potential employees. The WSQ system is managed by frameworks. As of 2015, there are 33 WSQ frameworks; majority of these frameworks are industry-specific, designed to build industry-specific capabilities (www.wda.org.sg). The WSQ frameworks range from aerospace to service excellence, precision engineering to early childhood care and education.

There are several features of the WSQ system that have a bearing on learning and how companies view adult education. These features consciously or sub-consciously impact how andragogical models are applied by policymakers and practitioners. In the case of this paper, these features affect how co-creation through emergent design is applied to the existing system. A key feature of the WSQ system is that it is competency-based—assessment and certification are based on the learner’s ability to demonstrate the identified capabilities in the framework. Competency categories are translated into competency elements; competency elements are further divided into performance criteria that learners will have to demonstrate that they either mastered before the programme or acquired during the programme. (In later Competency Standards, Competency Categories and translated into Performance Standards.) Competency-based learning is used both in the acquisition of practical skills like how to use a fire extinguisher (in the WSQ Security framework) and in the application of theory such as the Five Disciplines in Peter Senge’s Learning Organisation to the workplace.

Secondly, WSQ programmes are meant to help employees ‘upgrade’ themselves. They lead to professional credentials such as Advanced Certificates, Professional Diplomas and Specialist Diplomas. Therefore, learning is not just an end in itself but also a means to an end—a certificate used to find a job or aid a promotion.

Thirdly, the WSQ system involves multiple stakeholders. An Industry Skills and Training Council (ISTC) is established for each framework. Each council is represented by key industry partners such as employers, industry associations, training organisations and unions. The council decides on an industry competency map identifying the types of skills needed in the industry. It also decides on the competency standards and curriculum. The competency standards list the skills, knowledge and attitude to perform a job task and describe the acceptable levels of performance. Guided by these competency standards, training companies approved by the WDA to be in that particular framework develop curriculum and assessment plans. The council also decides on the qualifications to reflect the acquired skills (www.wda.org.sg).
Fourthly, the WSQ system is meant to be practical, accessible and affordable. WSQ programmes are heavily subsidized and funded by the Singapore government. Small and medium enterprises (SMEs) sponsoring learners who are Singaporeans and Singapore Permanent Residents for WSQ programmes receive funding of as much as 90 percent of the course fees. (The Singapore government defines a Small and Medium Enterprise as a company whose annual sales turnover does not exceed S$100 million or have an employment size of not more than 200. (www.spring.gov.sg)) In addition, the sponsoring companies are eligible to claim Absentee Payroll from the government in view of their employee’s time out of office (www.wda.org.sg). Often, the net learning investment of the company after the government funding is minimal. The generous government funding has helped many companies afford training programmes for their staff.

However, government funding has also led to some unintended consequences. Many companies are disinclined to send employees for training unless there is government funding for the programmes. There is also a smaller market for non-funded programmes outside the WSQ system. Even big players in the training industry find it challenging to compete without government funding. Therefore exposure to learning that is not competency-based is also limited. Another unintended consequence is that companies may mount WSQ programmes to fulfill their annual ‘quotas’ of training programmes with little consideration of the needs of the organisation and staff, and the learning outcomes of the courses. When training is so affordable and when there are so many choices available, attending a training programme can be merely a company activity.

**Leadership Training in the WSQ system**

Leadership training in the WSQ system is both a part of industry-specific frameworks as well as a framework on its own. The Service Excellence Competency Framework (SV CF) is one of the most established of the 33 frameworks. Some of the programmes in the SV CF are ‘Provide Go-the-extra-mile Service’ and ‘Respond To Service Challenges.’ As with some other industry-specific frameworks, leadership is one of the competency categories addressed in the operational, managerial and transformational levels. In the SV CF, leadership training is facilitated in modules such as ‘Champion A Service Excellence Ethos’ and ‘Lead With Service Vision’ (www.wda.org.sg).

Aside from featuring as competency categories in industry-specific frameworks, leadership is a WSQ framework on its own. Unlike majority of the other WSQ frameworks, the Leadership and People Management (LPM) framework is not industry-specific; it is designed to be applicable to leaders across industries and sectors. The LPM framework comprises six competency categories—lead with vision, drive change, build relationships, develop people, achieve results, and personal effectiveness. For many SMEs in Singapore, it is a plug-and-play leadership development roadmap. Leaders from SMEs can systematically acquire leadership and management competencies in a very structured manner through the six core modules in the LPM framework. Non-SMEs in Singapore can leverage on the very cost-effective modules in the LPM framework as modules in their more elaborate and customised learning and development roadmaps (www.wda.org.sg).
Applying Co-creation Through Emergent Design In Leadership Training In the WSQ Frameworks

The role of the facilitator

What is in a name? Mostly, the/she is called a ‘trainer’—the person who stands in front of the class and for want of a better word, ‘teaches’. Sometimes, he/she is called a ‘consultant’, and other times, a ‘facilitator’. He/she is called a ‘trainer’ partly due to the fact he/she has traditionally always been called a ‘trainer’, and partly because it is just shorter and more convenient. However it is not just a name; the assignment of the job title determines the andragogical model that is used in the class. It describes how learning takes place. When co-creation through emergent design is applied in competency-based leadership learning, the individual is a facilitator. His/her role is to facilitate. He/she facilitates the learning space, the learning process, the discourse, and the relationships between learners and between learners and his/herself.

Learners need the psychological safety and the psychological permission to co-create and to learn. Since the free, ‘safe’ and unhindered space is not normally available in social environments, co-creation is driven by facilitation. The facilitator creates and holds the metaphorical space that creates opportunities for learners to develop meaning by dialoging, discussing, and debating with other learners. The facilitator can begin to do so by examining his/her mental models about the learners in the class and about his/her role in the classroom. What are his/her philosophical assumptions about people? What does he/she really believe about the role of the facilitator and the role of the learner? How much value does he/she bring into the class compared to the value that the learner brings into the class?

In a traditional didactic setting, the power balance is tipped in the favour of the trainer. He/she is believed to know more and is in the driver’s seat. When the trainer is also the assessor, the power balance tips even further. The facilitator can only facilitate psychological safety and permission for co-creation and learning in as much as he/she is aware of his/her underlying beliefs around the classroom. Psychologically, there is a huge difference between “you have permission to fail in the class because the trainer is here to help you out” and “you have permission to fail in the class because knowledge creation is a work in progress, and collectively, the class can construct knowledge together.” In this proposed integrated andragogical model, it is the latter that the facilitator should work towards. The power in the classroom moves away from the trainer and is shared by both the learner and the facilitator. The facilitator facilitates the interaction between the learners and himself/herself by managing the power distance between them. It is not just the frequency of interaction, but the quality of the relationship that facilitators form with and facilitate among their learners, which will determine how knowledge is created, shared and transferred (Roser et al., 2009). This distributed power in the learning space is arguably more befitting and appropriate for leadership programmes.

Since the WSQ system involves multiple stakeholders, the facilitator’s role in the learning space is also to broker the psychological and professional contract between the stakeholders. He/she has to broker the social negotiation to define and articulate and de-conflict the interests of each stakeholder. Co-creation facilitates the
relationship between learner and other stakeholder, while creating a shared meaning and a common sense of purpose (Roser et al., 2009). What are the learning outcomes that must take place in order for government funding for the programme? What are the real interests and current needs of the group? The facilitator’s role is to respectfully expose the unspoken at the non-conscious level of the primary stakeholders so that he/she can facilitate the professional and psychological contract in the classroom. Outside the classroom and at a policy level, this role may have to be facilitated by the WDA.

The facilitator also facilitates the learning process. In a more traditional competency-based classroom setting, knowledge is transmitted from trainer to the learner. The pace and order of learning is dictated by the lesson plan which is approved by the secondary stakeholders and which oddly, the primary stakeholders have little control over. For co-creation through emergent design, the art of teaching is being reframed as “co-constructing knowledge with [learners], acting as a conceptual change agent, mentoring apprentices through the zone of proximal development and support a community of learners” (Windschitl, 2002, p.135). The facilitators create opportunities for peer scaffolding, facilitator-directed and possibly curriculum-directed scaffolding. This is the process of allowing interaction that stimulates knowledge building, thereby bridging differences of knowledge levels within a classroom.

Leadership is certainly not ‘trained’ in these classrooms and the facilitator is not the expert in leading and managing people. The facilitator may be trained in a related field such as organisational leadership or management or business administration, but he/she is really an expert in the process of facilitation. This, not in the implement the lesson plan sort of way, but in the way that adults learn and in the way groups behave and in the way that knowledge construction is facilitated. Effective facilitators have access to expertise—their own or borrowed—but they draw on it sparingly. Instead they look for the knowledge that the leaders as learners are already using and reflect it back to them, making leaders as learners own stories, rather than established authority, the starting point for learning (Riley & Roach, 2006). In doing so, the learners’ personal knowledge, life experiences, and direct experience in the learning space becomes part of a curriculum that will be ongoing, developing and evolving each time the programme is run.

The facilitator also has to facilitate the learning process in terms of time. Constructivist facilitators are often viewed as the “anything-goes” type. There is nothing further from the truth. In this integrated andragogical model, he/she facilitates the emergent design that takes place in the group learning process. The group discusses and dialogues their curiosities about the competency elements. Learners spend more time on and delve deeper into what they perceive to be the real and current needs that matter to them. However, there are still activities that need to be performed to meet the interests of secondary stakeholders and perhaps to justify government funding. The facilitator needs to check all the boxes in the assessment checklist, facilitate what emerges and is co-created in the group learning process, and keep time.

Therefore by role definition, they are certainly not ‘trainers’. In order to effectively facilitate co-creation through emergent design the WSQ system, they must be facilitators, learners, and researchers. In the class, they are also learners because
they participate in the group co-creation process. They construct knowledge with the rest of the learners. They are learners and researchers because they must keep current and keep on learning in order to be truly effective. They must co-create and test new models and frameworks.

**The role of the learner/s**

Central to constructivism and this integrated andragogical model is the active role that the learner plays in constructing and co-creating knowledge in his own mind. In these programmes, the learner is not a passive recipient of the one-way transfer of knowledge from trainer to learner. The learner’s role is to be the active learner. The learner is engaged in the process of reciprocal-intention-action-reflection cycles, making meaning in his/her head. “The learner first intends to resolve dissonance (the difference between what is perceived and what is understood). The learner acts on his or her intentions by consciously articulating the intention and then actively resolving the dissonance physically, mentally, or socially. The learner then reflects on his/her intentions and actions to regulate learning and construct meaning. This cycle is especially useful for solving problems ‘in complex and new domains’” (Jonassen, 2004, p.136). This internal process is essential if the learner is to play his/her part in the co-creation process as a part of the group.

As a member of the group, the learner's role is to collaborate and not merely participate. Cooperative learning is crucial in co-creation through emergent design. Social interactions with fellow learners and between learners and facilitators contribute to the construction of knowledge. Leadership is about people and groups. The social interactions that take place within a class provide excellent material for reflective practice. Here, leaders learn by observing what happens in the classroom and discussing all possibilities with other leaders/learners. These social interactions become a starting point for learning (Riley & Roach, 2006). Depending on the learners and facilitators, social interactions can increase communication of ideas about subject matter because their level of understanding of their industry could be more similar to each other’s as compared to the facilitator. Here, the facilitator’s role is to facilitate the social interaction and relationships between learners.

The learner also plays the role of social negotiator, which is another crucial element in acquiring knowledge (Riley & Roach 2006). Cooperative learning enables group discussions that are indicative for learners of their level of prior knowledge. These discussions provide the learner with both the direction and extent of study that needs to be undertaken to acquire competence in the competency elements (Loyens & Gijbels, 2008). With this insight, the learner’s role is to negotiate for his/her interests to be met amidst competing stakeholder interests. He/she collaborates in goal-setting and time management and in the direction of the discourse for co-creation. The learner is a co-designer in the emergent curriculum that happens. This social negotiation is itself an act and practice of leadership. There is a parallel process between social negotiation in the classroom and leadership in the learner’s organisation.

Finally, the learner plays the role of a peer in peer learning and peer-scaffolding. He/she is co-creator and co-constructor of the emergent curriculum and the ensuing knowledge and learning. He/she brings his/her life experiences, curiosities, personal
knowledge, and direct experiences into the learning space to be used in the co-creation process.

**Function of the curriculum**

One of the strengths of a WSQ competency-based leadership training programme is the detailed curriculum. In order for a programme to be accredited, the learning organisation needs to submit a range of documents pertaining to the curriculum. These include a competency matrix, a detailed lesson plan, an assessment plan, a learner guide, and powerpoint slides. These documents detail what is taught, when it is taught, and how it is taught and assessed.

In co-creation through emergent design, the design of the curriculum is ongoing throughout the delivery of the course. There is great fluidity in the pace of the class and the amount of time taken to explore topics and issues. The facilitator facilitates the learning process with the learners as co-creators and co-constructors. Learning situations resemble real-life or authentic situations. Learners explore complex and ill-structured problems; similar to the kinds of problems that they will face in the ‘real’ world. These complex scenarios have many interacting elements and can lead to multiple solutions. By exploring these issues, learners develop real understanding of the leadership theories, their application and limitations. They apply and represent their ideas in a manner similar to the way in which they would when back at work (Loyens & Gijbels, 2008).

It is in the aspect of the curriculum that seems most challenging to integrate with co-creation through emergent design. However, the synthesis in this aspect is arguably also one of the greatest strengths of the integrated andragogical model proposed in this paper. Co-creation through emergent design gives competency-based learning the fluidity that is essential for real learning to take place. No one really learns in modules, one performance criterion at a time, one competency element after each other. Competency-based learning gives structure and form to co-creation through emergent design. This order is important for accountability to the multiple stakeholders.

To use Cavallo’s words, “in the same way that a jazz group can improvise within the structure of a piece while remaining coordinated and within the theoretical principles of the genre, so too can an emergent design remain consistent within a core set of principles” (Cavallo, 2000, p.770). In the case of this paper, it is the curriculum.

**Administration and governance of Approved Training Organisations (ATOs), learning programmes, and facilitators**

Applying co-creation through emergent design in competency-based leadership training in the WSQ frameworks will necessitate changes to how the Approved Training Organisations (ATOs), learning programmes, and facilitators are managed at a systemic level. At the ATO level, the accreditation criteria may need to be more stringent. Learning is good business; but learning well is an art and a science that ATOs needs to be committed to. In order to facilitate real learning, ATOs need to be involved in research and development. They need to be thought-leaders in the areas in which that they provide learning interventions.
This also means that the audit process and criteria may need to change. Audits stroke the behavior and culture that the government and industry want to see in ATOs and by extension, the facilitators. If the focus of audits is on the process and administration of learners, then that is where ATOs will focus their energies. Set too stringent the criteria in an audit and ATOS will deliver teaching set pieces to the learners. This is theory, this is the answer, this is the way to lead. Yet audit and governance are very important in programmes applying co-creation through emergent design. The question is really is how and what to audit. This is scope of another paper.

Similarly, the requirements in courseware accreditation may need to account for the ambiguity and fluidity inherent in co-creation and emergent design. Perhaps what might be useful is for the ATO and the curriculum developer to detail the learning methodology or andragogy that will be used in these programmes. In an emergent curriculum, there may be too many permutations and combinations in the terms of the details of what segment of the courseware to train and for how long and how to conduct each activity in the programme. Instead, WDA may wish to consider a learning report after each programme where the facilitator briefly describes and processes the learning and the learning process which transpired in each programme.

The management of facilitators will also have to change. Currently, many companies deploy adjunct trainers whom they have little responsibility to grow and groom. There is a fair amount of ‘free play’ in the classroom in this integrated andragogical model. It will be easy for rogue facilitators to get away with not delivering any of the stipulated learning outcomes on the pretext of learner-led dialogue and discussion. Feiman-Nemser (2001) writes of the importance of recognizing the interconnectedness of student learning and teacher learning. This applies to the facilitator here as well.

After decades of school reform, a consensus is building that the quality of our nation’s schools depends on the quality of our nation’s teachers. Policy makers and educators are coming to see that what students learn is directly related to what and how teachers teach; and what and how teachers teach depends on the knowledge, skills and commitments they bring to their teaching and the opportunities they have to continue learning in and from their practice. (Feiman-Nemser, 2001, p.1013)

Applying this integrated andragogical model requires advanced facilitation skills. Therefore, this paper calls for facilitators for these types of modules to be held to a higher standard. This may mean a change in the industry norms. Facilitators working in these WSQ frameworks may need to be managed like faculty in the Institutes of Higher Learning. Doing so might also place a high premium on scholarship and research and specialization. The onus will then be on the ATOs to ensure that facilitators are competent and qualified and are themselves, constantly learning.
CONCLUSION

The SkillsFuture movement was launched by the Singapore government in 2015 as a national effort to develop skills for the future and to help Singaporeans develop a future based on skills mastery. The leaders of tomorrow will face complex, ill-defined problems. The learning that they do in the classroom should have real-world relevance and prepare them for the thinking and collaboration that will be necessary to lead. This paper posits that complementing competency-based leadership training in the WSQ frameworks with co-creation through emergent design will better equip leaders with these skills.

This paper merely highlights the potential of this integrated andragogical model and why it is worth exploring the model further. There is much thinking and co-creation and collaborative learning to be done on this: how will the efficacy of these programmes be evaluated? What role does assessment have in these programmes? How will facilitators be credentialed or will that be necessary at all? Most importantly, there is also much work to be done to change mindsets about learning. Ultimately it is not leadership training that is needed but rather, leadership learning.

REFERENCES


