



## Motivating Young Adult Learners in Higher Education Institutions: Experiences from Ghana

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**Abstract:** Globally, adult learners are becoming a major cohort of students pursuing degree programs in higher education institutions (IHEIs). This phenomenon could have a positive impact on productivity in the workplace if sustained in developing economies. Following the 3-year free public senior high school (SHS) introduced in Ghana in 2017, many young adult learners between the ages of 18-35 are learning in HEIs via the distance education (DE) mode. This exploratory case study used adult learners learning at a satellite campus of a Ghanaian University to ascertain motivating experiences of learning in HEIs. Mixed methods research (MMR) that tilts towards a qualitative study was employed. A random sample procedure was adopted for sampling 46 adult learners from the target population of 300, and 36 participants ultimately took part in the study. A critical and dialogical approach to MMR was employed, and semi-structured interviews were administered to adult learners. The results, which include poor time management and a lack of funds among young adult learners, underscore the need for effective development of time management skills among this group. Continuous shaping of the blended learning (BL) environment and financial cushioning by extended family relations to young adult learners should be encouraged and promoted. Student support and advisory services and the Ubuntu strategy should be instituted and reinvigorated to inform policy decision-making on adult learning in HEIs in Ghana.

**Keywords:** motivation, young adult learners, learning in higher education institutions, distance education, ubuntu strategy, satellite campus of a Ghanaian university

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Globally, the proportion of higher education adult learners taking advantage of distance education (DE) courses has increased each of the last three years (Bellare et al., 2023; Seaman et al., 2018). The DE enrollments increased for the fourteenth straight year, growing faster than they have for the past several years in the United States (Seaman et al., 2018). The DE students grew by 5.6% from fall 2015 to fall 2016 to reach 6,359,121 (Seaman et al., 2018). Students taking at least one DE course comprised 31.6% of all higher education enrollments in the United States (Seaman et al., 2018). The public universities in the United States admit the highest portion (67.8%) of DE adult learners (Seaman et al., 2018). Adult learning has become one most important component of lifelong learning (Vacaretu et al., 2011).

In Africa, the University of South Africa (UNISA), with over 355,240 students (Everipedia, 2018), is the largest distance education (DE) institution. In Sub-Saharan Africa, perceived as low- and middle-income countries (LMICs)—Nigeria has achieved significant progress in DE through the National Open University of Nigeria (NOUN), which has over 300,000 students (Everipedia, 2018). Adult learners work, earn, and study via the DE mode.

In Ghana, adult learners pursuing degree programs through DE mode represented 30.2% of the overall students admitted during the 2017/2018 academic year at a Ghanaian University (UG Basic Statistics Unit Report, 2018). Anamuah-Mensah (2015) indicates that the University of Education, Winneba (UEW) attracted over 45,000 students to its DE program. The University of Cape Coast (UCC) garnered a 42,000-student population, and Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (KNUST) had a DE student population of 10,000. The University of Ghana (UG) currently has over 12,000 DE students (UG Basic Statistics Unit Report, 2024) pursuing degree programs. Young adult learners can persist in pursuing undergraduate programs when they garner *motivating experiences* in HEIs (Biney & Inusah, 2024). Hence, the concept of motivation appears to receive varied definitions.

Ginsberg and Wlodkowski (2023) aver that motivation can be seen as an individual's behavior, goals, beliefs, emotions and thoughts; arguing that depending on one's discipline and cultural context, the concept of motivation to learn varies among scholars. Yet it is the instructor's responsibility to help adult learners become motivated to learn (Vacaretu et al., 2011). The quality of teaching in education is crucial because it is the instructor who makes a curriculum effective (Johnson, 1987). In education, motivation is the primary driver for adult learners' future success (Parker, 2023). Adults are more motivated when they find the learning experience enjoyable, engaging, and different from traditional educational methods (Teachers Institute, 2023). As instructors incorporate creative elements into the learning process, they help keep adult learners engaged and motivated (Teachers Institute, 2023). Thus, some of the creative approaches can include interactive activities, multimedia presentations, storytelling, role-playing, and gamified learning experiences (Teachers Institute, 2023).

Indeed, what *all* adult learners need in adult learning settings is exposure to well-designed, inviting and responsive courses, along with assuredly good teachers (Coulter & Mandell, 2018). The questions that arise are: What motivating experiences do adult learners at a satellite campus of a Ghanaian university receive? Do adult learners face challenges in the lifelong learning drive? What strategies do they deploy to address those challenges? These questions should be answered if we are to inspire young adult learners to aspire and become self-directed lifelong learners. This is because motivation is the natural human process that fuels the energy and

direction of human behavior (Ginsberg & Wlodkowski, 2023). Being motivated means being purposeful; achieving goals through attention, concentration, imagination, and other means to accomplish one's intentions (Ginsberg & Wlodkowski, 2023). Yet motivation as a concept explains why people think and behave; hence, cognitive psychology and research explain that motivation has intrinsic and extrinsic aspects (Bandura, 1986). However, the differences between intrinsic and extrinsic motivations are not always simple on the surface, but a telling distinction is the *urgency* of motivation (King, 2017). Hence, much learning in the digital age is related to the internal motivation of the individual to reach a goal (King, 2017). I argue that when such *urgency* is activated within young adult learners in Ghana, they can learn. After all, motivation is situation-specific (Ginsberg & Wlodkowski, 2023). This study, therefore, aims to explore the motivating experiences of adult learners in HEIs learning via the DE mode in Ghana.

In Ghana, there are many young adult learners between the ages of 18-30 learning in HEIs following the 3-year free public senior high school (SHS) introduced in 2017 (Biney, 2022). The researcher selected a satellite campus of a Ghanaian university on the account that it is the biggest of the 11 satellite campuses, and hosts over 11,000 DE students (Biney, 2021). The satellite campus of a Ghanaian university has two computer laboratories with a seating capacity of 75 students. The satellite campus has seminar presentation rooms, smart classrooms, and two video-conferencing rooms, making this satellite campus digitally ready for young adult learners to foster a lifelong learning mindset.

In a digital age coupled with high social media usage by young adults in life endeavors, including learning, such social media platforms have both positive and negative sides (Biney & Salifu, 2024). If not managed well, social media platforms could become a danger to young adult learners in HEIs. Griffin and Zinskie (2021) opine that social media is a multifaceted tool that has been used by educators and students in ways that are beneficial and detrimental, and requires that adult learners are *motivated* to remain focused on their academic work. As Ryan and Deci (2017) averred in self-determination theory (SDT), when learners build *motivation* into their learning, they develop competence, relatedness, and *autonomy*. Faculty in HEIs are to orient young adult learners on the usefulness of social media and employ some social media platforms in delivering DE teaching and learning to adult learners to garner better experiences in HEIs.

Ahl (2006) opines that many theories concerning motivation and adult education maintain that individuals are innately motivated to learn. Hence, motivation to learn constitutes the tendency to find learning activities meaningful and worthwhile to benefit from them (Ginsberg & Wlodkowski, 2023). To make sense of available information, adult learners should relate the new knowledge to prior knowledge and develop additional knowledge and skills (King, 2017). What is motivation all about? Motivation is perceived as a foundation to survival (Ginsberg & Wlodkowski, 2020) and at the center of *participation* in any learning endeavor at various levels and in different contexts and capacities (Deci & Ryan, 2012). The engines of motivation are *interest* and *desires* (Deci & Ryan, 2012), and when these are working at full power in an individual, remarkable feats of learning can be achieved.

Motivation in education, according to Pintrich and Schunk (2002), is the process whereby goal-directed activity is instigated and sustained. This definition fits more into *how* adult learners are to be motivated to learn in HEIs in Ghana. This point is that many young adult learners in Ghana are social-media-savvy learners (Biney & Asamoah, 2023; Parkay, 2013) and learn more by sharing. Faculty and HEIs administrators must institute an *ubuntu strategy* (humanness and togetherness) with adult learners to motivate and sustain their drive to garner better learning experiences in HEIs. Bernauer et al. (2024) assert that despite the changing times and

opportunities, faculty should not forget that many students are adult learners with specific needs. This demands that young adult learners in Ghana, as elsewhere, are guided, motivated, engaged and cushioned in their learning endeavors to garner enjoyable and better learning experiences in HEIs.

In Ghana, every young adult wants to learn in HEIs and may have varied reasons to learn via the DE mode (Biney & Asamoah, 2023). The views held by adult learners to learn in HEIs are what the researcher attempted to interrogate and offer steps to learning in HEIs via the DE mode. Studies by Biney (2021, 2022), Hart (2012), Stoter et al. (2014) and Adam (2012) indicate that adult learners are poor time managers learning through DE mode. This problem persists today and informed the study. Motivating young adults to learn is important, considering that the cause of human behavior evades any simple explanation (Ryan & Deci, 2012). This explains variations in the application of the concept of motivation in adult learning settings. However, the degree of adult learners' motivation to learn in HEIs can be explained using Ryan and Deci's (2012) learner self-determination theory. This meta-theory of human motivation suggests that people can become self-determined when their needs for *competence*, *connection* and *autonomy* are fulfilled (Cherry, 2015; Vinney, 2019).

The *purpose* of this study is to ascertain the motivating experiences of young adult learners learning in HEIs through the DE mode in Ghana. Personal observation revealed that adult learners are becoming a major cohort of students pursuing varied degree programs in HEIs. Many young adult learners between the ages of 18-30, due to the 3-year free public senior high school (FSHS) introduced in Ghana since 2017, are learning in HEIs via the DE mode (Biney & Salifu, 2024). Hitherto, many adult learners who have learned in HEIs via DE mode have been between the ages of 25 and 60 years and older (Biney, 2022). This trend is fast changing following the introduction of the free SHS system by the Government of Ghana.

To examine *experiences of young adults learning in HEIs via the DE mode and challenges faced learning and coping strategies mounted to surmount challenges*, this paper will (1) provide a review of related literature, (2) describe the theoretical framework undergirding the study, (3) present methods underpinning the study, (4) present and discuss the results of the study, (5) present implications for adult education policy and practice, (6) state the limitations of the study, and (7) draw conclusions for the study. The researcher explores motivating experiences of young adult learners learning in HEIs via DE mode in Ghana by addressing the following specific objectives:

- (1) determine motivating experiences of young adult learners learning in HEIs.
- (2) determine challenges young adults face learning in HEIs via the DE mode
- (3) identify coping strategies needed to learn in HEIs via the DE mode.

### **Literature Review**

Literature examined four areas, comprising (1) motivating experiences of young adult learners in HEIs, (2) challenges to learning in HEIs, (3) coping strategies adopted by young adult learners, and (4) the psychology of adult learning. In Ghana, not much research has been done on young adult learners' motivation to learn in HEIs. The closest work I have read was on motivations and barriers for adult learners' achievement, authored in the U.S. by Bellare et al. (2023). The paper dealt with young adult learners in HEIs. I identified a gap in the literature when it comes to motivating young adult learners learning in HEIs through the DE mode. This study attempts to bridge that gap.

## Motivating Experiences of Young Adult Learners in HEIs

Motivating young adults to learn in HEIs is more crucial today than ever because, regardless of the age groups or contexts, tapping the power of *motivation* for formal learning is one of the major keys for conquering many challenges of the digital age (King, 2017). This is the case because Ginsberg and Wlodkowski (2023) provide a foundation for understanding and leveraging motivation in adult learning. In a Ghanaian university, the DE program runs at the 11 satellite campuses located in the former 10 regions of Ghana. There are innovations to motivate young adult learners to learn (Biney & Salifu, 2024).

A Ghanaian university started DE in 2007 in eight satellite campuses in Ghana. They comprise Accra, Ho/Tsito, Koforidua, Kumasi, Sunyani, Takoradi, Tema and Tamale. Later, Cape Coast, Bolgatanga and Wa Learning Centers were added to the satellite campuses. This satellite campus of a Ghanaian university is the biggest of the 11 satellite campuses of a Ghanaian university, with over 85% of the DE students' population (Biney, 2022). Many young adult learners benefit from student support services provided by center coordinators to keep them on track with the courses they are required to take for degree programs at the Centers. Yet there is increasing failure and resit of courses by adult learners in three successive years – 793 in 2015, 906 in 2016 and 810 in 2017 (Biney, 2020). Hence, student support services provided to young adult learners should aid them in completing programs on time (Biney & Salifu, 2024). Additionally, information provided to young adult learners should empower them to become knowledgeable about the courses they pursue in a semester. Young adult learners should also know the lecturers who facilitate courses for each semester.

Similarly, course materials developed for young adult learners are uploaded on the Sakai Learning Management System (LMS) employed by a Ghanaian university as a blended learning (BL) delivery strategy. Young adult learners access learning materials on time to learn before the tutorial starts. Lecturers are assigned roles as course advisors to young adult learners on courses and programs read by young adult learners to enable them to focus on academic work. The academic support, together with emotional and organizational support provided to adult learners, drives them to become motivated to foster a self-directed and lifelong learning mindset (Simpson, 2015). King (2017) posits that the motivation for most adults to be lifelong learners may appear simple, but essential, and such a mindset must be cultivated in young adult learners in a digital age in Ghana. However, to successfully function in the digital age, adults' *intrinsic* motivation must include a paradigm of continuous learning and mind-stretching (King, 2017). This paradigm is what King (2017) indicates not only extends across the lifespan but also needs to be independent and self-directed. As young adult learners foster a self-directed learning mindset, they end up making learning a lifelong venture.

## Challenges Young Adults Face Learning in HEIs

Though higher education can provide economic and career enhancement opportunities, adult learners experience several challenges as they learn in HEIs (Bellare et al., 2023). The challenges of learning via DE mode include poor time management, lack of funds, jobs, inability to procure learning devices, including laptops and mobile phones and data to learn and lack of parental and extended family support (Biney & Inusah, 2024). While unemployment is a challenge among all groups, its impact is acute among young people between the ages of 15 and 35, who make up about a third (33.5%) of Ghana's population (Baah-Boateng, 2018). Some

young adult learners in HEIs who learn via the DE mode are unemployed and have difficulties accessing funds to procure laptops and mobile phones to strengthen self-directed learning in this age of digitization (Biney, 2022).

Adult learning is increasingly perceived as widening differences in opportunities instead of bridging them and thus referred to as the *'Matthew effect'* (Kocór & Worek, 2017). Similarly, Economist (2017) argued that “the lifelong learning that exists today mainly benefits high achievers, and [is] more likely to exacerbate inequality than diminish it” (p. 9). Adult learners face many challenges, not just attending tutorials during massive motor traffic at the center of Accra, to a satellite campus of a Ghanaian university. Accra, the national capital of Ghana, is where the satellite campus is located. Adult learners should adjust their roles and balance tutorials, working on assignments, coupled with working time and running household chores, which could stand in the way of achieving higher degrees (Bellare et al., 2023).

Time management is identified as a critical element in the research into learner characteristics and turns out to be a common barrier to success for DE students (Adams, 2012; Hart, 2012; Stoter et al., 2014). What it means is that young adult learners fail to utilize their time wisely and engage in studies early in the semester. After all, adult learners who manage their time wisely in learning are more likely to be successful in learning via the DE mode (Stoter et al., 2014).

Although Ghana practices an extended family system, such that each is his brother or sister's keeper. However, mass extensive unemployment is making it difficult for young adult learners in HEIs learning via the DE mode to access financial support from family relations to cushion themselves. Owusu-Agyeman (2019) asserts that students' economic background shapes enrollment patterns in HEIs. The direct and indirect costs of programs, including the cost of tuition and uneven access to digital tools, tend to prevent some adult learners from progressing in HEIs programs (Bellare et al., 2023). This reveals that young adult learners in HEIs learning via the DE mode should devise some realistic coping strategies to be successful in their lifelong learning drive.

### **Coping Strategies adopted by Young Adult Learners**

Young adult learners consider higher education as a bridge to better job opportunities, higher pay, promotions, and an increase in knowledge (Bowers & Bergman, 2016). To be successful in learning in HEIs via the DE mode, however, requires fostering *group learning* skills, an integral part of a life-wide and lifelong learning drive (Belanger, 2016). Belanger (2016) argues that integration of a lifelong learning agenda into all aspects of experience and life is non-negotiable if transformation is to be achieved. Imel (1997) adds that adult learning is usually carried out in groups. This goes to indicate that *group learning* is one of the most powerful methods in encouraging adult learning in HEIs.

Orchestrating time to learn, a significant learner characteristic is accomplished through self-management, the use of technology, on-the-go learning and participation in concurrent activities (Hart, 2012). Young adult learners should foster positive mindsets to be successful learning in HEIs. This is because time management is an important characteristic for persisting in the DE program (Biney, 2022).

Similarly, lecturers should shape a BL environment in terms of instructional interactions, structures, systems, tasks and texts in ways to encourage young adult learners to persist in learning (National Council Research, 2012). Young adult learners must cultivate self-efficacy,

self-control, goal orientations and interest in programs they read in HEIs by building strong *intrinsic motivation* such that external rewards in forms such as financial support and access to jobs will not diminish their inner drive to achieve their goals (Biney & Inusah, 2024). This is because, when learning occurs for intrinsic reasons, it is highly effective (Falk & Dierking, 2002). More so, intrinsically motivated adult learners with intrinsic enjoyment of learning tend to make the most of their abilities and are associated with higher creativity (Falk & Dierking, 2002).

Simpson (2015) calls for the strengthening of students' support services as one of the key steps of addressing retention of students in HEIs and learning. Simpson (2015) adds that students' support services comprise three areas- *cognition*, *emotional* and *organizational* qualities and skills. Young adult learners must interact more among themselves, with lecturers, and engage in critical thinking skills, dialogue, and interact in varied online learning environments (Biney, 2022). Mastering the use of technology is a necessity; especially the use of Sakai LMS is a sure path to success in DE mode of learning (Biney, 2022). Doing so emotionally, adult learners can learn and become empowered in their learning endeavors. This requires that adult learners organize and position themselves properly in their lifelong learning drive.

Flexibility in learning is to be guaranteed via the BL approach employed by a Ghanaian university at the 11 satellite campuses, including one satellite campus under study. Adult learners are to be encouraged to foster a self-directed learning mindset and flexibly supported to learn. This can serve as a *magnet* to attract and inspire them to learn in HEIs and acquire the requisite experiences. Young adult learners can make themselves more useful at workplaces; after all, the whole of life is a process of learning to become more human to attain personhood (Salem, 2019). Hence, young adult learners should be supported to learn in HEIs in Ghana.

### **The Psychology of Adult Learning**

According to Goff (2023), to effectively motivate (young) adult learners to learn, we must understand the psychology behind their learning process. Adults are self-directed individuals and prefer taking control of their own learning (Fasokun et al., 2005; Goff, 2023; Herod, 2012; Knowles et al., 2020; Mackeracher, 2004). This demonstrates that when young adult learners are provided with a *sense of autonomy* and *choice*, they can learn to be empowered and take ownership of their educational journey and create an environment conducive to their learning (Goff, 2023).

Additionally, adults are motivated by relevancy and immediate applicability (Goff, 2023; Knowles et al., 2020). Adults want to see the direct application of what they are learning in their lives. Thus, when adult learners take their learning seriously, it will positively impact their current and future careers and the social roles they play in their societies. The point is that adults seek knowledge that can be easily transferred to their lives and work settings (Goff, 2023). It thus becomes incumbent on lecturers of young adults learning in HEIs via DE mode to provide them with the needed *engagement* and *facilitation* to make their learning experiences germane and meaningful.

### **Self-Determination Theory**

The self-determination theory (SDT) developed by Deci and Ryan (2012) frames this study. SDT provides a framework for understanding the factors that promote motivation and

healthy psychological and behavioral functioning (Ryan & Deci, 2017). SDT has been supported by more than four decades of research (Legault, 2017) and focuses attention on how social-contextual factors support or hinder people's development through the satisfaction of their basic psychological needs for *competence*, *relatedness*, and *autonomy*. Legault (2017) adds that SDT is a broad theory of human personality and motivation concerned with how the individual interacts with and depends on the social environment. SDT defines intrinsic and several types of extrinsic motivation and outlines how these motivations influence situational responses in different domains, and social and cognitive development and personality (Legault, 2017).

Thorndike et al. (1928), in the law of adult learning, concluded that three laws govern learning, comprising *readiness*, *effect* and *exercise*. They elaborated on the law of *readiness*, that people only learn when they are ready to learn. Readiness includes seeing a need to learn, feeling a desire to learn, being interested in the subject, and having sufficient skills to comprehend and utilize the new information (Thorndike et al., 1928). The law of *effect* states that the more success we feel in learning, the more excited we get about learning. Thus, nothing succeeds like success, and as people gain pleasure in learning, it results in the successful performance of a formerly difficult task (Thorndike et al., 1928). The law of *exercise* also states that 'practice makes perfect', meaning that a hands-on drill is necessary. The more people are involved in a learning endeavor, and the harder they work for it, the more it engages them and the more they learn (Thorndike et al., 1928).

The Ubuntu paradigm or philosophy is the way of life of Africans (Letseka, 2000). Humanness and togetherness are the ways Africans live and learn. Africans' belief that individual success depends on the entire family. The small support, love or kindness shown to the individual propels him/her to the highest point in his/her life. On this basis, HEIs' management, administrators, faculty members and extended family members and relations are to provide financial, psychological and spiritual support as forms of motivation to young adult learners in HEIs to remain focused on their studies to garner better experiences in HEIs.

Hence, Agyekum et al. (2024) assert that the SDT is concerned with the social conditions that facilitate or hinder human thriving, adding that the SDT shapes higher education (HE) in people's lives by incorporating a learning-centered approach in young adult learners. Thus, SDT entails how biological, social, and cultural conditions either enhance or undermine the inherent human capacities for psychological growth, engagement, and well-being (Ryan & Deci, 2017). Indeed, adult learners who learn via DE mode are usually workers and need support. Paniagua and Simpson (2018) indicated that student support services, crucial in adult learning, comprise everything that could help adult learners sustain their learning motivation and support them in their learning process. Hence, both intrinsic and extrinsic motivations are important in adult learners' learning experiences and sustain their drive to learn. Intrinsic and extrinsic motivations can aid adult learners in charting a lifelong learning drive in their BL environment. Adu-Marfo et al. (2024) and Simpson (2015) opine that attention should be paid to student support services, be it social, psychological or organizational, to aid young adult learners to address their learning needs.

## Methods

I employed mixed methods research (MMR) developed by Tashakkori and Cresswell (2007) and extensively elaborated by Taylor and Raykov (2020) in this study. MMR is defined as research "in which the investigator collects and analyses data, integrates the findings and draws inferences using both qualitative and quantitative approaches and methods in a single

study” (Tashakkori & Cresswell, 2007, p. 4). This study is an embedded mixed-method type because it employs a research design that combines both qualitative and quantitative methods within a single study (Plano-Clark & Ivankova, 2017). The study combines the strengths of both qualitative and quantitative approaches. As I integrated both qualitative and quantitative methods, I embedded mixed methods of research, which offer a more comprehensive understanding of research problems. This is a case study focused on young adult learners' motivating experiences at a satellite campus of a Ghanaian university. Descriptive and interpretivist mixed design methods, which tilted toward a qualitative case study, were employed. Taylor and Raykov (2020) opined that the critical and dialogical approach to MMR methodology is consistent with the trend in adult education research, because knowledge is both real and constructed. The MMR helped me to explore and answer research questions that cannot be answered by quantitative and qualitative methods alone (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018). The MMR results in more fruitful dialogue and is useful in triangulating different kinds of data (Taylor & Raykov, 2020). The study sought participants' *voices* and *experiences* and provided rich data on participants' experiences learning in HEIs in Ghana. The researcher, being mindful of ethical challenges and difficulties, adopted an anonymized approach in naming the sites and institutions used for this study.

### **Sample and Participant Recruitment**

I adopted a random procedure in selecting the sample for the study, because there were many potential participants (300) for all to be included in the sample. The adoption of simple random sampling resulted in 80 accessible young adult learners. Names were compiled and serially labelled on pieces of paper. I randomly selected 46 adult learners from the accessible population of 80 adult learners pursuing degree programs in HEIs via DE mode at a satellite campus of a Ghanaian university. This sample size of 46 respondents was representative in terms of the center under study. The researcher sampled participants from some of the Bachelor of Arts programs, including Psychology, Information Studies, Adult Education, Sociology, Economics and Bachelor of Administration, Accounting, Bachelor of Arts in Education, Information Technology and Nursing.

### **Data Collection and Analysis**

I designed and administered semi-structured interview guides one-to-one with participants, and 36 participants, constituting 78% participants, participated in the study. As observed by Sagna and Vaccaro (2022), the semi-structured nature affords adequate structure so that all participants are asked about the same set of topics core to the inquiry. I informed participants in writing about the objectives of the study, the time and what was expected from them. I resorted to using a telephone interview since the participants were busy writing exams in February 2024.

The participants were assured of strict confidentiality and their right to opt out without any repercussions. I made participants aware that the interview sections of the instrument involved probing questions and would be tape-recorded, and research data would be kept for a period of six months after the study and then destroyed. I conducted the telephone interview in the evenings when the participants were done with their exams for 5 days. The interview usually takes 50-60 minutes for a participant. Though the telephone interview conducted offered the researcher a quicker and more convenient way to access so much information in a little time, I

was unable to read the body language of the participants. However, it paved the way for me to co-create and co-construct the narrative with the participants and collaborated with them to generate new ideas and build understanding, knowledge and meaning together.

Questions on the age of participants, job responsibilities, program of study and level of study of participants were asked to enable the researcher to estimate the level of responsibilities participants had at the workplace, home and the effect on learning. In addition to the socio-demographic data of the participants, the questions I posed to the participants were structured to address three specific objectives underpinning the study: (a) motivating experiences of adult learners in HEIs, (b) challenges young adult learners face in HEIs, and (c) coping strategies to learn in HEIs.

Descriptive statistics and qualitative characteristics were adopted at several stages throughout the study. This exploratory case study gathered data and, consistent with descriptive-interpretivist researchers, the results were presented qualitatively in terms of themes and quantitatively in terms of simple statistics. I adopted descriptive statistics to aid in building a case for using the qualitative data, which sought participants' experiences, meanings, and comprehension of motivating experiences of learning in HEIs via DE mode. The data collected from closed-ended questions were analyzed using percentages, and the open-ended questions were summarized, organized, interpreted, and presented in quotes verbatim.

The descriptive-narrative and interpretivist approaches were adopted to analyze the responses. The descriptive-narrative approach was used because the study sought to offer detailed accounts about the study area from the participants' own voices, and the interpretivist approach was used because the study sought to provide rich descriptive data (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The study yielded anecdotal evidence to triangulate the results descriptively described. This aided in extending the enquiry and discovering contradictions. Interpretivist analysis was performed on the data following the steps recommended by Creswell and Poth (2018).

### **Credibility and Dependability of Results**

I engaged the participants to ensure the credibility of the study. I also ensured that contextual information was provided in the study to ensure transferability. Armstrong et al. (1997) assess inter-rater reliability in qualitative research, though complex is an important method for ensuring rigor. I ensured that the data collection tool, thus the semi-structured interview schedule employed in the study, was vetted by an expert. Being aware that an inter-rater agreement is required in content analysis, I ensured that two (2) research assistants were involved in collecting data and analysis. The number of people involved enhanced the consistency and reliability of the results. This is because, in the final analysis of the data, I realized that different judges assigned the same rating to each object. I built codes and themes into the data collected. In terms of dependability and confirmability of this study, I explained the research method and objectives for the research to the participants.

### **Ethical Consideration**

Before embarking on this study, I sought clearance from the Ghanaian university's ethical research committee. The participants were informed in writing concerning the study's objectives, the time and their expectations during the interview. The participants were assured of the strict

confidentiality of the information and their right to opt out of the interview without any repercussions since their participation was purely voluntary.

**Socio-Demographic Data of Participants**

Nearly all (86%) of the 36 participants were young adults aged between 18 and 35 years. Only 14% of the participants had ages ranging between 36 and 55 years. More than half (61%) of the participants combined work with learning, with 39% of the participants not working. Programs of study mentioned by participants were Bachelor of Arts programs including Psychology, Information Studies, Adult Education, Sociology, Economics and Bachelor of Administration, Accounting, Bachelor of Arts in Education, Information Technology and Nursing. Participants interviewed were in levels 200, 300 and 400, respectively, an indication that these participants, by virtue of years spent learning in HEIs via DE mode, have acquired some rich motivating experiences.

Table 1  
*Socio-demographic data of respondents.*

	N	Percentage
<b>Age range</b>		
18-35	31	86.11
36-55	05	13.88
<b>Sex</b>		
Male	10	27.78
Female	26	72.22

*Note: Researcher’s field work, 2024.*

**Findings and Discussions**

**Motivating Experiences of Adult Learners in HEIs**

Regarding motivating experiences of young adult learners learning in HEIs via the DE mode, the researcher sought to understand whether programs pursued by the participants were responsive to their needs, whether they had dedicated lecturers, received student support services, and had learning materials and digital learning tools to learn with. I also asked the participants to explain to me some of the digital tools they employ to learn.

On the responsive nature of the programs read, all (100%) of the participants indicated that the programs respond to their needs. A participant expressed it in this apt way:

Yes, the programs we are reading are responsive to our needs, yet I realized along the way that most of the opportunities derived from the programs have few jobs in Ghana. As we are living in a global village today, people can still dispense services to international organizations. I am fortunate that the accounting program that I am reading has a big job outlet in Ghana. (Participant # 5)

On the availability of dedicated lecturers to take young adult learners through the programs smoothly, all (100%) of the participants were in the affirmative, yes. The participants, however, expressed some concerns. Three of the participants indicated that:

Generally, we have dedicated lecturers who exhibit love and invest time explaining difficult areas of our courses to us. However, I have a problem with the inadequate number of sociology lecturers to facilitate our courses and promote our understanding and interest in the program. (Participant # 9)

I can state that we have good lecturers for the psychology program and its respective courses. The same cannot be said about accounting, to the extent that I must depend on external support and pay money for extra classes and tuition to grasp the courses. (Participant # 11)

In my case, there is a particular lecturer who has moved his courses taught at weekends to weekdays, making it difficult for me to participate as a worker and a learner at the same time. This arrangement is affecting me as a student and a worker. (Participant # 20)

The results demonstrate that despite the quality of tuition, lecturers' love for students and lecturers' readiness to go the extra mile to support young adult learners in their studies, some of the students genuinely had problems, especially in a situation where they do not have dedicated lecturers for some of the courses that they read at HEIs via the DE mode of learning. Meanwhile, the multifaceted nature of the lecturer's impact on student well-being encompasses dimensions such as support, benevolence, competence, availability, interaction, and attitudes toward professional duties (Eloff et al., 2023). Hence, every effort should be made by HEIs in Ghana to recruit dedicated lecturers for courses where there are no lecturers to facilitate, especially at the DE mode of learning in HEIs, to increase young adult learners' interest and garner better learning experiences in HEIs.

On the provision of student support services, nearly two-thirds (72%) of the participants responded yes, with another 28% of the participants indicating no to the question. This is a way a participant expressed it:

Yes, I continue to receive support from my lecturers, usually via email. However, most of such information is channelled through our course representatives, who often end up diluting the instructions provided and creating misinformation in the system. I prefer the use of Sakai LMS for student support services provision. (Participant # 6)

Some of the participants were of the view that they do receive student support services alright, and that is good, but less useful and effective in their learning endeavors. Meanwhile, Jung and Hong (2014) and Simpson (2015) argued that student support services are important factors for motivating adult learners to participate in and progress through higher education. Similarly, Buhs (2005) averred that the role of a supportive school environment in promoting academic success cannot be underestimated, adding that the school environment has a broad influence on students' learning and growth. Efforts should be made to ensure that the remaining

28% of young adult learners are provided with the needed student support services to enable them to garner better learning experiences in HEIs in Ghana.

On provision and access to learning materials and ICT teaching and learning tools to learn with, nearly all (97%) of the participants responded affirmatively, with only one (3%) participant stating otherwise. This response is expected because the satellite campuses of a university in Ghana have state-of-the-art ICT laboratories with the Sakai LMS providing a BL platform for instruction delivery for adult learners to learn and communicate with their lecturers. The participants indicated that they received learning materials through the Sakai LMS platform. These are the two apt ways in which two participants expressed them:

I receive my learning materials via the Sakai LMS platform. Aside from the learning materials which I receive via Sakai LMS, I do not receive any other complementary learning materials through this learning platform. (Participant # 8)

Yes, I do receive my learning materials in the form of slides from the Sakai LMS platform, but network operations and interruptions through technical challenges, low-speed internet affect my studies and usage of this learning platform. These challenges worked against my proficiency in digital skills. (Participant # 13)

Probed further to explain the ICT facilities they learn with, the participants provided varied responses. These are some of the ways the participants shared them:

I use my personal laptop and phone to access learning materials and learn. I download the learning materials from the Sakai LMS to my laptop and phone, and I learn wherever I find myself. It eases my learning endeavors since I can now learn anywhere. (Participant #2)

In addition to using my personal phone and laptop to access information and learning materials to learn, I also utilize AI tools such as ChatGPT and Snap AI to simplify complex learning materials to aid my learning. (Participant # 7)

For me, aside from using my phone and laptop to access learning materials to learn, I also utilize WhatsApp, YouTube, Microsoft Teams, Online search engines and Zoom applications for group discussions. (Participant # 5).

I learn more by utilizing the satellite campus of a Ghanaian university's ICT laboratory. However, I sometimes utilize Safari and Google platforms for research on my studies. I have a smartphone that makes it possible for me to learn wherever setting that I find myself. (Participant # 10)

The results as provided demonstrate that young adult learners continue to witness some motivating experiences in HEIs via the DE mode of learning. Artificial intelligence (AI) and digital teaching and learning devices are now integral parts of learning endeavors that must be made increasingly available to adult learners to learn. Griffin and Zinskie (2021) assert that social media is a multifaceted tool that educators and students use in ways that are beneficial and detrimental. This requires that adult learners are *motivated* to focus on their academic work.

Ryan and Deci (2017) opined that in SDT, when learners build *motivation* into learning, they build *competence*, *relatedness* and *autonomy* in their lifelong learning drive. High-speed internet facilities should, therefore, be made available to adult learners to learn. The results further show that nearly all young adult learners have digital and ICT learning tools to employ in their studies. Parkay (2013) asserts that today's young adult learners eat and drink media and refers to them as *social-media-savvy learners* who engage in a '*media diet*' as learners. They are skilled with ICT and digital learning tools and learn by sharing (Parkay, 2013). So HEIs should employ more of such emerging digital learning tools, social media platforms, and devices to aid their learning. Similarly, HEIs should ensure that lecturers are responsive to young adult learners' needs. This is one sure path for young adult learners to build up *motivation* to foster competence, establish useful relationships, and become autonomous in their learning endeavors and garner better learning experiences in HEIs via DE mode.

### Challenges Young Adult Learners face Learning in HEIs

On challenges young adult learners face learning in HEIs via the DE mode, questions of the combination of work and learning, ICT learning tools to learn, and financial support from families to cushion young adult learners as they learn were posed to the participants. More than half (61%) of the participants were workers, combining work with learning and about (39%) of the participants were not working. This result notwithstanding, participants working indicated that they are not getting it easy combining work with learning due to pressures from the workplace. In learning, and for that matter, adult learning in HEIs, the process requires readiness to learn, as Thorndike et al. (1928) made us understand. Thorndike et al. (1928), in their book, "*Adult Learning*," outlined three primary laws of learning: the Law of Effect, the Law of Exercise, and the Law of Readiness. To Thorndike et al. (1928), these laws propose that learning is most effective when accompanied by *satisfaction*, when *connections are frequently used*, and when the *learner is prepared to learn*. My focus is on the law of readiness, and about this law, adult learners who learn in HEIs via the DE mode should be mentally, socially and psychologically ready for the DE program before they get on board. An adult learner who fails to prepare and plan, and make time for his or her studies, will have problems learning in HEIs via the DE mode. The point is that the more prepared or ready an individual is to learn, the more likely they are to learn and retain knowledge (Thorndike et al. 1928). This law of readiness is related to the concept of *motivation* (Biney & Salifu, 2024), and thus, if the individual is motivated to learn and has a strong desire to achieve the goals set, they are more likely to learn and become more successful in their learning endeavors. As adult educators, our responsibility is to create an atmosphere that is enabling and conducive to learning and provides appropriate incentives for young adult learners to learn. Additionally, we are to engage young adult learners more to ascertain their challenges in learning and help them address them.

On whether participants have laptops and phones to learn with, all (100%) participants were in the affirmative yes. The participants, however, indicated that they rely essentially on smartphones to assess learning materials to learn. On whether participants received financial support from parents and family relations to cushion their learning in HEIs via the DE mode, more than half (67%) of the participants indicated yes to receiving support. However, 33% of the participants indicated no to receiving financial support from family members to learn in HEIs.

The results indicate that more than half (61%) of the participants were workers and learners at the same time; hence, young adult learners might have had challenges managing their

time to complete their programs. This observation resonates with Adams (2012) and Smith et al. (2021), Hart (2012), and Stoter et al. (2014) assertion that time management amongst adult learners in HEIs via the DE mode is crucial and must be taught to adult learners who lack those skills in managing their time.

Similarly, learning today has to do with the use of ICT and digital learning tools. It is not surprising that all (100%) participants indicated that they learn with their laptops and phones. This is good news and should be sustained. More so, Ghana is noted for practicing the extended family system, and *ubuntu*, or togetherness, is our way of life. In such a condition, each is his/her brother's or sister's keeper. Though more than half (67%) of the participants said that they received financial support from their parents and family relations to pursue HEIs via the DE mode, more support is to be provided to young adult learners learning in HEIs via the DE mode. The result resonates with the findings from a grounded theory study undertaken by Sagna and Vaccaro (2022), which indicated that family is a source of *motivation*, inspiration, and pride, and a source of tangible support. This should be the case to cushion young adult learners to learn in HEIs and become useful to themselves, communities, and the Ghanaian economy. The point is that the *Ubuntu strategy* (togetherness and humanness) is a way of life for Africans, and for that matter, Ghanaians. The researcher is of the view that this *Ubuntu strategy* or philosophy should be invoked to help young adult learners have good learning experiences in HEIs in Ghana. Africans' belief in collectiveness, togetherness and the extended family system, such that one's success is success for all.

### **Young Adult Learners' Coping Strategies to Learn in HEIs**

Regarding coping strategies young adult learners devised to learn in HEIs via the DE mode, four questions posed to participants centered on how adult learners undertake self-directed learning, whether they learn in groups, whether BL aids, and plans to enhance learning experiences in HEIs. On how to undertake self-directed learning, varied responses were made by the participants. Four apt expressions were made by the participants:

I depend on the slides provided to us by lecturers and YouTube source materials to learn. I learn on my own, though the learning materials are scanty, they give me the lead to search for other relevant learning materials to learn. I do the learning better by dedicating 25% of my time to cover learning needs and spending 75% on work-related activities. (Participants # 4)

I have scheduled day and night timetables for myself, even though it is difficult as a worker and adult learner to follow through. I endeavor to use the day to work and the night to learn. I call on colleagues to help me in areas where I have difficulties, and interact with friends who are knowledgeable to deepen my knowledge. (Participants # 17)

I have developed a personal timetable based on my learning needs and follow-through. I use the early hours to learn, and I ignore the weekend face-to-face lectures to study on my own. I have made it mandatory to learn after work and make my own notes to promote my understanding of the course. (Participant # 9)

I plan my own learning schedules as a security officer and a student. I learn based on my shift hours. I utilize the school library for learning on weekdays based on my schedule. I utilize lecture recordings and YouTube to aid my learning process. (Participants # 15)

On learning in groups, nearly all (81%) of the participants said that they do learn via groups, with less than a quarter (19%) indicating that they do not learn in groups. This is an apt way a participant expressed it:

I learn via a group which I formed with friends during my first year in HEIs. I have not regretted learning via group because two heads are better than one. In fact, the group that I am a member of usually switches to a high gear in meetings during revision times toward exams. (Participant # 30)

On the issue of whether a BL approach aids participants in their studies in HEIs, nearly all (97%) of the participants responded in the affirmative. It is only one participant (3%) said BL has not helped him. These are two ways participants expressed them:

Yes, BL has been effective and good for me, because it has aided me in acquiring relevant digital skills, which are aiding me much in the workplace. My difficulty has to do with the low-speed internet facility and technical hitches that are often experienced with the internet facility. (Participant # 4)

I like the BL approach to teaching and learning because I benefit from in-person and virtual teaching and learning as a worker. I prefer the online component of the BL approach more. The point is that I can do learning activities anywhere, and this approach has helped me to foster lifelong learning skills. (Participants # 34)

On plans to step up learning experiences in HEIs, the participants provided varied responses, all geared toward steps they intend to take to sustain and add to the rich experiences they continue to garner as they learn in HEIs via the DE mode. Some of the rich plans the participants shared are expressed in the best ways:

I thought I could do more independent learning by dedicating more time to utilizing online learning services; hence, I focused attention on managing my time well so that I could undertake studies. Though I still engage in independent studies, I have realized that I need to engage more in group learning and seek peer support when I have difficulty comprehending aspects of courses taught to me. (Participant # 6)

I plan to study hard, yet I have realized that I can only make time and learn if I take time management seriously. I realized that I must participate more in face-to-face teaching and learning as part of the BL approach to course delivery. (Participant# 1)

I plan to utilize more group learning activities due to my tight family schedules, which hinder my progress in learning. As I progress to level 300, I plan to engage

more in group learning. I can do better when I plan my timetable and follow through with it. (Participant # 8)

I have found a way of reducing my workload by foregoing overtime work at my workplace and focusing my attention on my studies. I can now ask my lecturers' thought-provoking questions to improve my performance. I now make time to learn, improve upon my grades and graduate with better grades. (Participant # 17)

Considering the responses provided by the participants, one key area that all participants appeared to emphasize is *group learning*. This is not surprising, because adult learners utilize group learning methods more. Imel (1997) and Vella (2018) emphasized the utilization of groups in adult learning. This is because it frees quiet and shy-looking learners' voices to be heard and noticed. This approach to learning aids can produce graduates with self-confidence and can hold their own, especially at the workplace (Herod, 2012). Adult learners prefer *flexibility* in learning, and when a congenial and enabling learning environment is created, learning becomes ubiquitous and meaningful learning is experienced.

### **Implications for adult education policy and practice**

Supporting young adult learners to sustain the drive to learn in HEIs via the DE mode and garner motivating experiences is something that should be encouraged, especially in the LMICs, including Ghana. This is because it is the LMICs that need the requisite human capital critically to engender development in all sectors of their economies. This means that young adult learners in HEIs are offered the appropriate exposure to well-designed, inviting, and responsive courses along with good teachers (Coulter & Mandell, 2018). As Legault (2017) observed, SDT focuses attention on how social-contextual factors support or hinder people's development. In this sense, when the teaching and learning environment in HEIs is congenial, adult learners will learn to unfold the hidden potential they are made of. This study which sought to explore the motivating experiences of adult learners in HEIs learning via the DE mode in Ghana, essentially addressed three objectives, (i) motivating experiences of young adult learners in HEIs, (ii) challenges young adults face learning in HEIs via the DE mode, and (iii) coping strategies needed to learn in HEIs via the DE mode.

Considering the demographic data of the participants, age-wise, the participants were largely (88%) young adult learners dominating campuses of HEIs in Ghana learning via the DE mode. This is because of the free public SHS policy, making it possible for students to complete SHS in three years instead of seven years in the yesteryears. This has its own advantages and challenges, and HEIs in LMICs must continuously motivate young adults to learn for their development and that of their economies.

Policy-wise, as today's young adult learners are social-media-savvy learners (Parkay, 2013), the deployment of ICT and digital teaching and learning tools is one sure means of facilitating learning (Biney, 2022). The point is that digitalization is having a significant impact on the rapid development of DE, which provides opportunities for improvement of adult life situations (Biney, 2021). These digital or BL tools must be provided in larger quantities in the ICT laboratories in HEIs. This, to a large extent, will attract young adult learners to use such digital devices and tools to learn and excel in DE programs, especially in the AI and digital learning era.

Similarly, female (72%) participants in the study were more than male (28%) adult learners in the study. This should be expected because female adult learners prefer learning in HEIs via the DE mode using technological and digital devices (Kramarae, 2001; Kwapong, 2021). Many of the participants were workers, and women in the African context are homemakers, coupled with reproductive and productive roles (Kwapong, 2021). Female adult learners are always busy and largely take advantage of learning in HEIs via the DE mode. In such a situation, the ‘Affirmative Action’ bill, which has been passed into law in Ghana, should be operationalized to position women in their lifelong learning endeavors in Ghana.

The results from the study also indicated that the programs participants pursued are responsive to their needs (100%). This is expected because in the global economy today, many of the jobs are *outsourced*, and can be sourced not only in the home country, but also virtually. People with information communication technology, AI or digital skills in data mining, Python and others work from home and make money. Adult education policy should focus on getting young adult learners durable and market-driven AI and digital learning skills and experiences to become more useful in the workplace.

The participant further indicated that student support services (72%) were provided to them. It can be stated that in such a context, young adult learners can flexibly explore and learn to foster a self-directed learning mindset (Belanger, 2016; Goff, 2023; King, 2017). Hence, the institutional and national policies on DE and adult education in Ghana and those of LMICs should have at their center *student support services*. There should also be a high degree of flexibility as far as DE is concerned, to aid young adult learners in becoming self-directed learners. Such young adult-friendly and flexible policies must be directed at making young adult learners become lifelong learners, especially in the era of AI and digitalization, which is blowing across the African continent. Thus, the utilization of digital devices in learning should be the name of the game in the current dispensation of adult learning in African economies in general, and Ghana, in particular.

On challenges confronting young adult learners learning in HEIs via DE mode, it can be argued that when young adult learners are elaborately supported with student services, they can learn to foster a lifelong learning drive. The provision of student support services, whether social, emotional, organizational or academic, is crucial in adult learning (Paniagua & Simpson, 2018). Young adult learners’ needs should be the concern of lecturers and university administrators. It is through the provision of such student support services that we can get the best from young adult learners to achieve their academic goals in HEIs.

Another major challenge confronting young adult learners has to do with poor time management. The young adult learners have difficulties managing their time for work and learning. The young adult learners cannot comprehend the fine balance between time for learning and leisure (Adams, 2012; Hart, 2012; Stoter et al., 2014). The young adult learners tend to waste valuable time on their phones to the neglect or detriment of their academic endeavors (Biney & Inusah, 2024). This makes it imperative that time management is taught to those young adult learners who lack that skill and knowledge, so that they can organize themselves properly and gain from the academic endeavors they engage in.

Group learning (72%), as the participants asserted, is one of the best methods in adult learning and should be sustained and encouraged amongst young adult learners. Although young adult learners learn via groups, it must be encouraged to the point where every adult learner becomes involved in group learning to become more empowered. This is important because building a *community of learners* means increased participation in group work (Karaca & Akyuz,

2024). Thus, if young adult learners work together with study mates, it becomes important for academic success. In fact, because no one's head is a repository of all knowledge, young adult learners must continue to share new and innovative ideas, knowledge, and information amongst themselves to succeed in their lifelong learning drive that they have engaged themselves in.

### **Limitations**

Although the research adopted the MMR approach in conducting the study, this study largely tilted towards a qualitative research approach, thus limiting the generalization of findings garnered. More so, the study was a case study exploration that examined motivating learning experiences of young adult learners in just a single satellite campus of a Ghanaian university, thus making the generalization of results difficult. Yet this study provides some insight into how young adult learners can be motivated and sustained to learn in HEIs via the DE mode in Ghana. The researcher proposed that a quantitative study be conducted to validate the findings of the study.

### **Conclusions**

The paper explored the motivating experiences of young adult learners in HEIs through the DE mode in Ghana. The study sought to address three objectives: (a) motivating experiences of young adult learners in HEIs, (b) challenges young adults face when learning in HEIs via the DE mode, and (c) strategies needed to learn in HEIs. As part of the results, the participants indicated that they are reading responsive programs that meet their needs. The participants added that they have dedicated lecturers and benefit from student support services to sustain a lifelong and self-directed learning drive, yet some young adult learners continuously write resit papers. This is where student support services become crucial to aid young adult learners in transforming their learning experiences into HEIs.

On challenges that confronted young adult learners in their lifelong learning drive in HEIs via the DE mode, poor time management came up strongly. Young adult learners who lack this critical skill are to be provided with this skill to effectively combine work with learning. The issue of extended family support needs to be reinvigorated such that many young adult learners learning in HEIs via the DE mode are cushioned financially to sustain a lifelong learning drive. There should also be a continuous shaping of a BL environment such that young adult learners will be encouraged to continuously learn in HEIs via DE mode.

In this sense, I suggest that every effort is made to cushion young adult learners engaged in HEIs via the DE mode of learning to experience well-designed and responsive courses (Coulter & Mandell, 2018). This, I argue, can be realized when student advisory and support services, as emphasized by Simpson (2015), are regularly provided to young adult learners to stay focused on their academic endeavors.

The BL system employed for aiding young adult learners to learn should be continuously shaped to benefit the participants' learning in HEIs. Learning has indeed become ubiquitous in today's digital and AI era of teaching and learning. Young adult learners also used varied digital devices in learning, yet young adult learners can benefit tremendously from meaningful learning experiences in HEIs when they have acquired good computer knowledge, manners, skills, and access to computers with high-speed internet facilities devoid of many technical challenges.

As a matter of urgency, HEIs in Ghana with satellite campuses should recruit faculty members for courses read by young adult learners for whom they do not have lecturers to

facilitate them. The recruitment of committed faculty for such courses could entice young adult learners to develop a greater interest in the courses and learn to avoid recurring resit challenges that they usually face as young adult learners in HEIs.

The issue of time management is crucial for success or otherwise in adult learning. It is a skill that should be taught to young adult learners so that they will work, earn, and learn to manage their time to garner better experiences in HEIs. As Ginsberg and Wlodkowski (2023) indicated that motivation is situation specific, then HEIs administrators and faculty members in HEIs in Ghana should demonstrate love to young adult learners in their lifelong learning endeavors. Faculty members should model the way to enable young adult learners to emulate and achieve the goals they set for themselves in HEIs. Faculty members should dialogue with young adult learners to invest their investible resources in learning in HEIs via the DE mode.

In conclusion, I state that Ghana believes in togetherness, and the *ubuntu strategy* is our philosophy. Hence, young adult learners are to be supported financially, psychologically, and spiritually by extended family relations to enable them to enjoy better learning experiences in HEIs. The African philosophy of education truth is that “*I am because we are and since we are, therefore, I am*” (Letseka, 2000, p. 183) should be a policy in HEIs in Africa, and Ghana, for that matter. As Africans, we believe that we can achieve our goals when we support one another in our endeavors. More so, since motivation is context specific, I conclude by suggesting that the faculty members and administrators in HEIs must, as a matter of policy, adopt the *ubuntu strategy* or philosophy to provide young adult learners with all the psychological, organizational, emotional and social support they need to learn and succeed in their lifelong learning drive in HEIs. In so doing, I daresay that many young adult learners in Ghana, and for that matter, Africa, will become determined and learn to create the needed paradigm to foster a lifelong and self-directed learning mindset. Indeed, such high-quality human resources produced by our HEIs will contribute to the growth of AI and digitalization processes and to the rapid development and progress taking place in Ghana and Africa, for that matter.

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