

# TOWARDS A HOLISTIC EDUCATION VIA TRANSFORMATIVE PEDAGOGY

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**Abstract:** Teaching Modes are three: Transmissive, Transactional and Transformative. We examine a translation from Transmissive to Transformative Pedagogy, a reflection on respective works of Andrew Johnson (Human Being, Professor of Literacy) and of Shri Uday Mehta, Dr. S.R. Pandya. Transformative pedagogy empowers both teachers and learners. It encourages learners to be reflective and critical thinkers who are able to contribute meaningfully as members of local and global communities. It also redefines role of teachers. Teachers become facilitators with the disposition, knowledge, skills and commitment to support students to develop their full potential as peace-builders (Transformative Pedagogy for Peace Building, a guide for Teachers, UNESCO-IICBA, 2007).

**Keywords:** Teaching Modes, Transformative Pedagogy, peace-builders.

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## I. INTRODUCTION

Good learning starts with an operational definition of teaching and teaching has three common views of constitution. Teaching as Transmission, Teaching as Transaction and teaching as Transformation (Miller, 1996). Transformational education involves goals beyond transmission of content and skills. Its expansive goal is to generate reflective, self-critical and self-motivated students who are proficient of criticizing and directing independent work open-mindedly and have powerfully developed higher order thinking skills in interpretation, analysis and communication. Transmission mode of teaching views the activity as the act of transmitting knowledge from one point (Teacher, Guide, or Instructor) to another (Pupils, Students, or learners). Transmissive pedagogy is a teacher centered approach in which the teacher is the dispenser of knowledge, the arbitrator of truth (such as in religious fields of education), and the final evaluator of learning (Andrew Johnson, 2015). A teacher's job from the perspective of transmissive education is to supply students with a designated body of knowledge in a predetermined manner. Academic achievement is seen here as a student's ability to demonstrate, replicate or transmit this designated body of knowledge back to the teacher or to some other agency or entity measuring it. Teaching becomes transformational when the teacher conscientiously creates necessary and sufficient conditions that have requisite potentials to change the learner (Nnamuchi, 2018). In this respect many different (Cognitive, emotional, Social, Intuitive, creative and even Spiritual) levels are required to transform the learner. Transformational pedagogy invites both students and teachers to full discovery of their potentials as members of society, and as human beings.

The ultimate goal of transformational pedagogy is to help develop more nurturing human beings who are better able to perceive the interconnectedness of all – human, plant and animal life (Narve, 2009) and holistic education is an educational philosophy consistent with the transformative view ( Miller, 1996). Academic achievement from the transformative pedagogy perspective is perceived as discovering and developing each persons unique talents and capabilities until it reaches the fullest possible extent. This is when one could be said to be an academic achiever, a teacher or student becomes aware of the multiple dimensions of self thereby expanding his/her consciousness. In transformational pedagogy, personalized goals as well as authentic assessment are used to describe learning. In this regard the school and teachers should be provoked to assess students as well as teachers movement towards personalized goals by examining the extent to which students engage in meaningful learning experiences.

Learning is the ability to gather enough content information to ask good questions (i.e transmission). The ability to synthesize the research; the design of responses that addresses the questions that have been identified (Transaction); the application of those responses to real world situations to test their viability (transformation) and the ability to defend choices to a broader public (Ronald Chalrusan - Battle, ). Let us ponder what some motivated writers have to say on this all-important aspect of education:

1. “Transformative mode is the only way change can take place by reminding people what the purpose of teaching/learning is, truly (Kuin Schafer) – Teacher at Breck School”
2. “Yup. This is what I learned in teachers’ College. However the transmission approach is most efficient when trying to cover a body of factual information, and can be good if the other realms are addressed in the learners’ life one way or another (Ted Tracewicz) – Professor at Sheridan College.”
3. “... Now do you think there is much hope of satisfying the demand for public accountability of teaching effectiveness in a teaching situation where transactional and transformational learning predominate? I think the test design is possible, but the act of legislating it near-impossible (Steve Shea, Product Manager at PPI)”

Transformational pedagogy necessitates a backdrop that encourages and rewards intellectual openness. It incorporates transparency and authentic partnership between student and teacher. Humbleness becomes an indispensable quality of transformative teacher who unobtrusively is a co-intentional teacher alongside the student through collaborative endeavours and discoveries. Transformative pedagogy is essential for today’s learning environment, particularly when dealing with reminiscent subjects such as values, ethics, sustainability and social responsibility, in that they facilitate transformative learning, which involves experiencing a deep, structural shift in the basic premises of thoughts, feelings and actions. It invites students to engage in their learning in intentional, responsible and meaningful ways rather than passive receptacles of information. The process of transformative pedagogy opens the door for the development of problem-solving skills and expands the views of students and teachers alike, leading to greater self-awareness, deeper compassion for others and a commitment to produce change in self and the world. Within this composition of learning, exists a reciprocal nature of open-mindedness, personal freedom and investment by means of risk-taking and vulnerability through negotiated learning (Dewey, 1997; Habermas, 1985; Mezirow, 2000). Senteni (2005) offers that transformative pedagogy reconfigures the student and teacher relationship to one that grounds and secures the experience of student and teacher in the knowledge and meaning of learning. Pedagogy in this form is an invitation, so to speak (Henriksen, 2006; Nelson & Neufeldt, 1998), which allows students to consider alternative perspectives in a collaborative, interactive process of analytical thinking, where they actively participate in their learning, struggle with social issues, envision alternative possibilities and engage in social action. (Fear, et al., 2003; Nagda, Gurin & Lopez, 2003; Meyers, 2008). All teachers and educationists are therefore called to employ transformative mode as an innovative pedagogical approach that empowers learners to critically examine their contexts, beliefs, values, knowledge and attitudes with the goal of developing spaces for self-reflection, appreciation of diversity and critical thinking. This would be realized when learning goes beyond the mind and connects hearts and actions, transforming knowledge, attitudes and skills. (*Transformative Pedagogy for peace building, a guide for Teachers, UNESCO-IICBA, 2017*)

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