



Perspective Transformation through Professional Development: Experiences of University Teachers in Pakistan

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Introduction

In spite of the complexity of teaching, learning to teach in universities is generally a matter of experience rather than training (Putnam & Borko, 2000).

But in today's era it is indispensable for the university teachers to get acquainted with “how to teach” component.

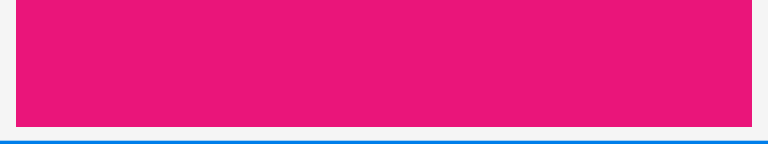
Definition of Transformative Learning

- Transformative Learning is “The process of using a prior interpretation to construe a new or revised interpretation of the meaning of one’s experience in order to guide future action” (Mezirow, 1996: 162).



Transformative Learning

- Idealized model of adult learning
- Learners who are actively engaged vs. learners as receptacles
- Critical reflection, discourse, and relationships
- New perspectives guide actions



Mezirow's Transformative Learning Theory

In childhood, learning is formative (derived from formal sources of authority and socialization)

In adulthood, learning is transformative, as adults are more capable of seeing distortions in their own beliefs, feelings, and attitudes



Key Points in Transformative Learning Theory

- Constructivist perspective of reality
- Learning defined as meaning-making
- Adults make meaning of experiences by examining, questioning, validating, and revising beliefs, values, attitudes, and feelings

Perspective Transformation

- Critical reflection on the content, processes, and premises of untested assumptions
- Revises our “worldview”

Perspective Transformation

- Can be dramatic and epochal -- a disorienting dilemma or trigger event
- Can be incremental -- accumulation of changes to meaning schemes

The Role of the Adult Educator Becomes ...

- To support and encourage transformative learning that creates more inclusive, discriminating, and integrative perspectives for the adult learner
 - Challenge untested assumptions
 - Encourage critical reflection and critical self-reflection
 - Create ideal conditions for discourse

Cognitive domain and transformative experiences



Teachers' training

- In accordance with the Higher Education Commission Pakistan's initiative to give in-service training to university teachers, Department of Education International Islamic University Islamabad had arranged a 03 days professional development workshop on "Demands of Teaching Profession".

Objective of the study

- The present study was undertaken to gather the experiences of University Teachers regarding their Perspective Transformation through Professional Development at International Islamic University Islamabad Pakistan.

Participants and data collection

- A group of 35 faculty members from different departments of the university benefitted from it. One month after the workshop the participants were interviewed about their experiences with the workshop and how it benefitted them?

Theoretical background of study

- The theoretical ground of the study was Mezirow's (2006) Perspective Transformation Theory, according to which the learners undergo a conscious recognition of difference between old viewpoint and the new one and value the new gained perspective by transforming the actions.

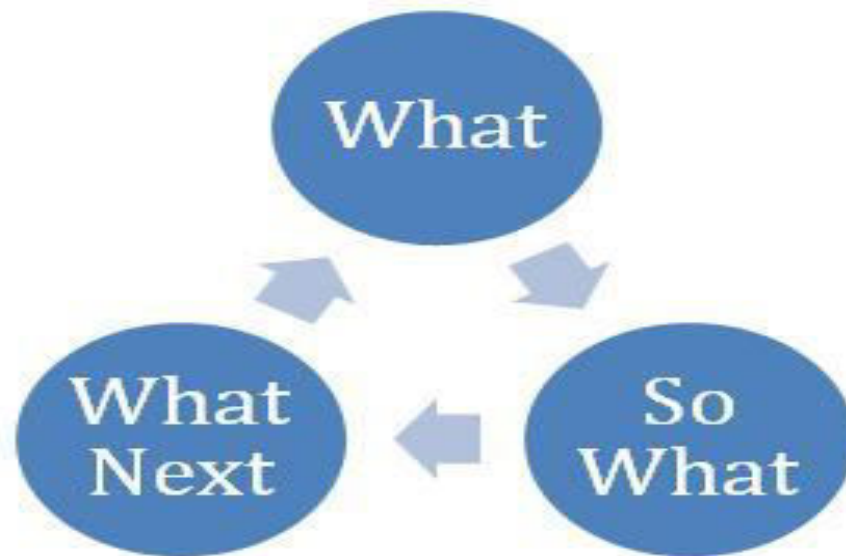
Interviews



Results of the Study

- The respondents were of the view that when they were being nominated for the workshop they did not have the idea what they need to know about the demands of teaching profession. But after attending the workshop and discussing their teaching worldview with the other participants during group activities of workshop their perspective has been transformed.

Participants views Analysis: thematic



Rolfe 2001



Teaching as Challenging Job

- Now teaching looks a more challenging job as they know what could be their contribution to the society.
- Transforming tacit knowledge into explicit is tougher than we were thinking it would be.



Teaching as Challenging Job

- The participants were of the view we had always heard that anyone can do teaching job, but now we have realized that changing knowledge into learning is really challenging.



Demands of 21st century Learning

- One of the important aspects the workshop covered was changing demands of teaching profession in 21st century.
- Students can gather knowledge anytime, anywhere and everywhere, but the teachers' job is to link the knowledge with practices.



Demands of 21st century Learning

- Generating further knowledge, critical thinking and creative faculties is also important.
- The participants were of the view that they know the demands of 21st century teaching and learning and have changed their practices regarding teaching.



Consciousness about Professional Ethics

- The teachers were aware about some of the ethical considerations linked with teaching profession, but after attending the sessions and discussion with the peers they are observing professional ethics more consciously.



Consciousness about Professional Ethics

- They are trying to follow professional ethics and trying to develop balanced personalities of students.

Practices according to Professional Standards of Teachers in Pakistan

- The sessions on National Professional Standards for Teachers in Pakistan enabled them to know the expectations from them and they have tried to transform their practices according to standards.

Practices according to Professional Standards of Teachers in Pakistan

One of the participants shared

- “I never knew there are some standards made in Pakistan for the teachers. I really learned from the session on professional standards and I evaluated my teaching in the light of these standards and am trying to change my practices”.

Recommendations

- The study recommends that more professional development workshops are required for university teachers.
- As the university teachers are not required to have professional teaching qualification so before sending them to classes they need proper orientation and training workshops about the teaching profession and required skills may be developed in the very beginning of career.

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Discussion

○ Questions