TRANSFORMING TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT: EXPERIMENTAL APPROACH

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Abstract

This study discusses the concept of transforming training as a unique management system. It also traces its root to the evolution of psychology and education in the 1990s. The study also conceptualizes transforming training in some diverse ways. It argues that for a healthy and smooth running of a system of administration, there is need for transforming training. Therefore, it sees transformation as a necessary tool of national development and stability. The study adopts transformative learning theory which says that the process of perspective transformation has three dimensions: psychological (changes in understanding of the self), convictional (revision of belief systems), and behavioral (changes in lifestyle). The methodology adopted for these researchwork is via context analysis. It is therefore concluded that organizations are been plugged by the efforts of individuals in transforming training in order to bridge this gap in the chain of events. The concept of experimental approach as an aspect of educational psychology formally surfaced in the study.

Keywords: Training, transformation, experimental, approach, development.

Introduction

In the past decades, new generation of scholars, many of whom have carved out an independent practice which have challenged the dominant ideology thereby offering alternative experience namely; visual, demonstrative, illustrative, helpful, and spatial. However, since 2000, their exploratory practices are described as experimental approach (Guaghui Ding, 2014). Abhijit V. Banerjee and Esther Duflo (2009) maintain that the past few years have seen a veritable explosion of randomised experiments in development. By 2008, a large conference in development was attended by researchers from all walks of life. Inger Maren Rivrud et'al (2016) affirm that experimental approach shows investigation, quality, elevation and movement distance. They also argue that the concept is a unique management system.However, (David Mackey and Sian Livsey, 2006) the cry from many organisations that have cut their training provision for core workplace skills is that if they train employees they will only leave to join competitors is arguably justifiable.Companies argue that they will not waste money on training when they can recruit from a competitor by offering more benefits. Thus, the result, a few years on, is that there is an acute shortage for all organisations and for some trades the pool of some skilled workers is becoming smaller and smaller. Large gaps in organisations are been plugged by the efforts of individuals in transforming training in order to bridge this gap in the chain of events. The concept of

experimental approach as an aspect of educational psychology formally surfaced in the classical study of Thorndike and Woodworth on transfer (Cronbach, 1957). The experimenter's interest in the effect of environmental change, referred to as "treatments", demanded designs using standardised procedures to hold all conditions constant except the independent experimental variable. It has a long tradition in psychology and education. When psychology emerged as an infant science during the 1990s, it modeled its approach methods on the established approaches of the physical sciences, which for centuries relied on experimental approaches was strengthened bybehavioral approaches to psychology and education predominated during the first half of the century. Thus, usage of experimentation in education psychology over the past 40 years has been influenced by developments in theory and research practices within its parents' disciplines (Steven M. Ross and Gary R. Morrison).

Literature review

Transforming Training is a Registered TrainingOrganization (RTO) under the Australian Skills Quality Authority. It also employs dedicated and skilled trainers with total commitment to provide training for adults and school students. The aim is to equip learners with the skills, knowledge and attributes that are needed for life and for the workplace through the provision of nationally recognized qualifications.Business Dictionary sees the concept of transforming training in an organizational context. It views it as a process of profound and radical change that orients an organization in a new direction and takes it to an entirely different level of effectiveness. Unlike the turnaround which implies incremental progress on the same plane. It also involves a basic change of character or little or no resemblance with the past configuration or structure.According to S Chandra (1997), management of the organization firmly believes that human assets unlike other asset cannot be depreciated and must necessarily be appreciated over entire tenure. Therefore training is regarded as investment and not a cost. Even long-term intangible gains such as attitude change, are to be considered as valuable returns. Training is considered as vehicle for effective communication and coordination. Training is catalytic in any man management matrix for cohesiveness, compatibility, and cooperation in every organizational endeavour.Management proclaims Training & Development direction as permanent part & parcel of operational process and not some experiment in isolation.Management is fully committed to lend its total support to training tasks and is dedicated through intense involvement in every phase of this activity.

According to Wayne F Cascio (1995), Training consists of planned programme designed to improve performance at the individual, group, and /or organizational levels. Improved performance, in turn, implies that there have been measurable changes in knowledge, skills attitude, and/or social behavior. Training is considered as a tool for HRD. Training has immense potential in transfer and utilization of latest technical know-how, leadership development, organization of people, formation of self-help-groups, mobilization of people as well as resources, empowerment of resource-poor rural mass, entrepreneurship development, etc., which are considered essential components of HRD. According to C B Memoria (2000), Training is a process of learning a sequence of programmed behavior. It is

application of knowledge and it attempts to improve the performance of employee on the current job and prepares them for the intended job. Training is a short term process utilizing a systematic and organized procedure by which non managerial personnel acquire technical knowledge and skills for a definite purpose. Training refers to instructions in technical and mechanical operations, like operation of some machine/equipment. Training is for a specific job related purpose.Herbert H. Bell and Charles M. Reigeluth (2014) describe training as a big enterprise. These authors also see it as an activity tailored to meet individuals needs whenever they are and wherever they are ready to learn. According to them, today information technology creates the opportunity for individuals to acquire knowledge and skills from multiple sources. These sources include peers, mentors and traditionally structured environments as well as evolving sources, such as social media, mobile devices and other electronic means that allow on demand access to information and experts who address specific questions and problems. However, it is important to recall that, training (for instance, job training or skill training) provides the basic knowledge and skills for any individual; it advances competencies and develops experts. The concept of training is not without limitations. One of the impediments is that training requires resources, money, time and manpower in order to translate into effectiveness and reality. David Mackey and Sian Livsey (2006) affirm that the concept of transforming training is the structured programme of training normally provided off the job in an establishment, Centre or training room designed or designated specifically for training. The training may be delivered in-house by the organization's own trainers by external providers. Alternatively, the training may be delivered in a location to the organization. For instance, a tutorial is most likely to occur in distance/open learning when there is a guided programme of study and learners need to gain feedback on the assignments.Bill Strickland (1999), a social entrepreneur sees transformation as an art of modeling people or apprentices to learn craft skills. He also points out that the key to transforming peoples is treating them with respect. Besides, he further illustrates that, there is nothing wrong with poor people except that they have no money and they cannot do something about it. In other words, there is nothing wrong with these people. According to him, "I want to be a symbol of transformation and stability, to build an institution not just run a programme, because most things associated with community are temporary. They come and go, I wanted to build something that had a long history". This work is very important in the context of this study because it is all encompasses as it admits that transformation as an approach goes with training. In the same vein, it explains the quest to change from the old self.Donald H. Rumsfeld (2002) views transformation as an unending process. He also sees the concept as an event that is not static. In other words, it is ongoing process. For instance, there is no point one can say one is transformed. The writer uses September eleventh tragic drama in the U.S. to cry home his point. According to him, "our challenge in the twenty first century is to defend our cities, friends, allies, space among others. Our goal is not simply to fight and win wars; it is to prevent them. In order to do so, we must as a matter of urgency 'transform', we must find ways to influence the decision-making to potential adversaries to deter them not only from using existing weapons but also transform to detect the looming dangers and threats. This study is of immense benefit to our study because it sees transformation as a catalyst to development.According to Texas Higher Education

Coordinating Board (2014), the concept of transforming is seen as the holistic process or approach which adds significantly to the unprepared trainees, students, old or adult, young or teenager, apprentices and all other learners. In the context of this study, the institute agrees that there were hitherto two sets of developments which one calls for transformation. For instance, the change call is occasioned by the existing status quo.Danielle Lake, Michael E. Ricco and Judy Whipps (2016) assert that transformation is an innovative, accelerated and hybrid model. They further agree that the concept incorporates a wide range of high-impact practices focused on developing the skills of leaders and employers. They also argue that it integrates practices from motivational and experimental learning, community-based issue among others. This article is relevant for educators and administrators hoping to catalyzing a means of innovative co-participatory engagement projects that will engage with the needs of surrounding community in a format supportive of nontraditional learners.Partners' Training for Transformation is a learning process for community leaders and others interested in social transformation, based on the workshops developed by Anne Hope and Sally Tummel in Africa. Training for Transformation is about learning about transforming ourselves, our communities and our society into sources of justice and equality. The programme is an immersion in participative and experiential learning. The programme aims to explore the development of community by creating a temporary learning community in the group itself. This affords participants a real-time experience of community building, informed by pieces of theory and opportunities to apply the workshop learning to real life.According to HR Advisor, employee training and learning have been moving away from the traditional classroom approach for a while now, yet LinkedIn's *2017 Workplace Learning Report* reveals that instructor-led classes in an in-person classroom setting remains the number one way employees are trained. Seventy-eight percent of learning and development professionals surveyed say they use classroom training. However, mobile training often is more practical than classroom training, too. Employees can tap in when they need information and are best positioned to absorb it. The rising interest in mobile training is closely tied to the growing demand for self-service training (also known as on-demand or participant-led training). "What makes the concept of 'self-serve' relevant today is that now, more than ever, people want to drive their own employee experience," writes Jennifer Miller on her The People Equation blog. "From Bring Your Own Device to Work plans, to choosing à la carte employee benefits, today's employees demand to participate more fully in their work experience.

UNESCO in the paper titled"building peace in the minds of men and women" maintain that transforming learning and training environments concerns not only managing physical facilities more sustainably, but also changing the ethos and governance structure of the whole institution. The priority calls for promoting whole-institution approaches to ESD in schools and all other learning and training settings. It is the dedicated learning and training concept geared toward the broader community. Institutional leaders are prompted to take a holistic view of this concept, focused not only on transferring content about sustainable development, but also on participating in sustainable development practices, including taking actions to reduce the institution's ecological footprint. Collaboration between the learning and training

institution and the host community is important. This international body agrees that main stakeholders in this Priority Action Area are the leaders and the managers of all types of learning and training institutions such as school principals, directors of Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) centers, presidents of universities and community colleges as well as those of private companies. Community leaders, parents, learners and trainees are important partners for these main stakeholders.

Theoretical framework

This study will adopt transformative learning theory which says that the process of perspective transformation has three dimensions: psychological (changes in understanding of the self), convictional (revision of belief systems), and behavioral (changes in lifestyle). This theory was promulgated by Mezirow (1978). The transformative learning is the expansion of consciousness through the transformation of basic worldview and specific capacities of the self; transformative learning is facilitated through consciously directed processes such as appreciatively accessing and receiving the symbolic contents of the unconscious and critically analyzing underlying premises. Jack Mezirow (1978) believes that it usually results from a disorienting dilemma which is triggered by a life crisis or major life transition. Thus, it may also result from an accumulation of transformations in meaning schemes over a period of time. Less dramatic predicaments, such as those created by a teacher, also promote transformation. An important part of transformative learning is for individuals to change their frames of reference by critically reflecting on their assumptions and beliefs and consciously making and implementing plans that bring about new ways of defining their worlds. This process is fundamentally rational and analytical Jack Mezirow (1978) developed transformative learning theory starting in 1978. Since then, the theory has evolved "into a comprehensive and complex description of how learners construe, validate, and reformulate the meaning of their experience." For learners to change their meaning schemes (specific beliefs, attitudes, and emotional reactions), "they must engage in critical reflection on their experiences, which in turn leads to a perspective transformation."The meaning schemes that make up meaning structures may change as an individual adds to or integrates ideas within an existing scheme and, in fact, this transformation of meaning schemes occurs routinely through learning.Achieving meaning and balance in life is a learning task that underpins Mezirow's theory of transformative learning that is based on findings from evaluation studies at Teachers College (Baumgartner, 2012) during the 1970s. His work builds on that of Tough, Knowles, Blumer, Kelly and Bruner but mostly on Dewey, Freire and in particular Jürgen Habermas. The theory develops from an interest in 'developing a research based body of

theory indigenous to adult education and of practical utility to practitioners' (Mezirow, 1970, p. 1). Mezirow proposes social justice and change as an aim of adult education. Though this is not always explicit in his work those who worked with him confirm this (Fleming, Marsick, Kasl and Rose, 2016, p. 1). This chapter tracks the links between Mezirow's work and critical theory with the intent of linking transformation theory with critical theory.A defining condition of being human is that we have to understand the meaning of our experience. For some, any uncritically assimilated explanation by an authority figure will

suffice. But in contemporary societies we must learn to make our own interpretations rather than act on the purposes, beliefs, judgments, and feelings of others. Facilitating such understandings is the cardinal goal of adult education. Transformative learning develops autonomous thinking.

Other perspectives

In the latter two perspectives, including Mezirow's psychocritical view, the unit of analysis is the individual, with little consideration given to therole of context and social change in the transformative experience.On the other hand, a third alternative perspective, a social-emancipatory view, in a small way starts to address these concerns. Rooted primarily in the work of Freire (1984), this perspective is about developing an "onto-logical vocation" (p. 12), a theory of existence that views people as subjects, not objects, who are constantly reflecting and acting on the transformationof their world so it can become a more equitable place for all to live. Its goal is social transformation by de-mythicizing reality, where the oppressed develop a critical consciousness.In addition to the previously discussed views, four additional views of transformative learning (neurobiological, cultural-spiritual, race-centric,planetary) have lately emerged in the field. Most recent is the neurobiologicalperspective of transformative learning (Janik, 2005). This "brain-based" theory was discovered by clinicians using medical imaging techniques to study brain functions of patients who were recovering from psychological trauma. What these researchers determined was that a neurobiological transformation is seen as invoking "the parasympathetic branch of the autonomic nervous system, and the hypothalamic-pituitary pitocin secreting endocrine system to alter learning during periods of search and discovery" (Janik, 2007, p. 12). In simpler terms, the findings suggest that the brain structure actually changes during the learning process. These findings in turn bring into question traditional models of learning (behaviorism, cognitivism, constructivism) and instead offer a distinctive neurobiological, physically based pathway to transformative learning. From this perspective, learning is seen as "volitional, curiosity-based, discovery-driven, and mentor-assisted" and most effective at higher cognitive levels (Janik, 2005, p. 144). Furthermore, a neurobiological approach suggests that transformative learning (1) requires discomfort prior to discovery; (2) is rooted in students' experiences, needs, and interests; (3) is strengthened by emotive, sensory, and kinesthetic experiences; (4) appreciates differences in learning between males and females, and (5) demands that educators acquire an understanding of a unique discourse and knowledge base of neurobiological systems.A number of critical responses to Mezirow's theory of transformative learning have emerged over the years.One criticism of Mezirow's theory is its emphasis upon rationality. Some studies support Mezirow. Others conclude that Mezirow grants rational critical reflection too much importance. Edward W. Taylor(2011) has since suggested neurobiological research as a promising area that may offer some explanation about the role emotions play, closing the gap between rationality and emotion in the transformative learning process. Taylor implies that, with available modern technology such as magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) and positron emission tomography (PET), these once obscure factors can now be examined through determining which neurological brain systems

are at work during disorienting dilemmas and the journey of recovery that follows. This neurobiological research also stresses the importance of the role of implicit memory, from which emerge habits, attitudes and preferences that are related to unconscious thoughts and actions.While the learning process is certainly rational on some levels, it is also a profound experience that can be described as a spiritual or emotional transformation as well. The experience of undoing racist, sexist and other oppressive attitudes can be painful and emotional, as these attitudes have often been developed as ways to cope with and make sense of the world. This type of learning requires taking risks, and a willingness to be vulnerable and have one's attitudes and assumptions challenged.Other theorists have proposed a view of transformative learning as an intuitive and emotional process. John M. Dirkx, Robert D. Boyd, J. Gordon Myers, and Rosemary R. Ruether link Mezirow's rational, cognitive and analytical approach to a more intuitive, creative and holistic view of transformative learning. This view of transformative learning is based primarily on the work of Robert Boyd,who has developed a theory of transformative education based on analytical (or depth) psychology. According to Boyd, transformation is a "fundamental change in one's personality involving (together) the resolution of a personal dilemma and the expansion of consciousness resulting in greater personality integration." This calls upon extra-rational sources such as symbols, images, and archetypes to assist in creating a personal vision or meaning of what it means to be human.To bring the reader up to date, in the previous edition of this volume(Merriam, 2001), there were three alternative perspectives discussed incontrast to Mezirow's psychocritical perspective of transformative learning:psychoanalytic, psychodevelopmental, and social emancipatory. A psycho-analytic viewof transformative learning is seen as a process of individuation,a lifelong journey of coming to understand oneself through reflecting on thepsychic structures (ego, shadow, persona, collective unconscious, and soon) that make up an individual's identity. Individuation involves discoveryof new talents, a sense of empowerment and confidence, a deeper under-standing of one's inner self, and a greater sense of self-responsibility (Boydand Meyers, 1988; Cranton, 2000; Dirkx, 2000). A psychodevelopmentalview of transformative learning is a view across the lifespan, reflecting continuous, incremental, and progressive growth. Central to this view oftransformation is epistemological change (change in how we make meaning), not just change in behavioral repertoire or quantity of knowledge. In addition,there is appreciation for the role of relationships, personal contextual influences, and holistic ways of knowing in transformative learning, that havebeen often overlooked in Mezirow's rational emphasis on transformation(Daloz, 1986; Kegan, 1994). Key differences exist among the various views of transformative learning.Beginning with the goal of transformation, one of the most fundamental differences is that of personal or emancipatory transformation (self-actualizationto planetary consciousness). Related to this difference is the emphasis onindividual or social change. Those views that are more rooted in the individual (psychocritical, psychoanalytic, psychodevelopmental, neurobiological) give little attention to context and social change and their relationship totransformation. Where the individual and society are seen as one and thesame (emancipatory, race-centric, cultural-spiritual), transformative learningis as much about social change as individual transformation. Anotherdifference is the role of culture in transformative learning. The more psychologically

centered models (psychoanalytic, psychodevelopmental,psychocritical, neurobiological) tend to reflect a more universal view oflearning, with little appreciation for the role of social or cultural differences.On the other hand, those views that recognize difference (social emancipatory, culturally relevant narrative, race-centric, and planetary) place muchgreater emphasis on positionality (where one's "position" is relative to race,class, gender, sexual orientation) and its relationship to both the processand the practice of transformative learning.

Conclusion

Transformative learning theory continues to be a growing area of study of adult learning and has significant implications for the practice of teachingadults. The growth is so significant that it seems to have replaced andragogy as the dominant educational philosophy of adult education, offering teachingpractices grounded in empirical research and supported by sound theoreticalassumptions. Also, as previously discussed, there is the emerging presenceof alternative conceptions of transformative learning, challenging scholarsand educators to look beyond transformative learning as defined byMezirow. These alternative perspectives offer fresh insights and encouragegreater research in the area of transformative learning.Despite the growth in understanding transformative learning, there isstill much not known about the practice of transformative learning in theclassroom. One area in particular is the student's role in fostering transformative learning. What are the student's responsibilities in relationship to thetransformative educator? Second, there is a need to understand the peripheral consequences of fostering transformative learning in the classroom. For example, how does a student's transformation affect peers in the class room, the teacher, the educational institution, and other individuals who play a significant role in the life of the student? Furthermore, there is little known about the impact of fostering transformative learning on learner outcomes (grades, test scores). Definitive support is needed if educators are going to recognize fostering transformative learning as a worthwhile teaching approach with adult learners.Transformative learning is first and foremost about training from a particular worldview, a particular training philosophy. It is also not an easy way to train. Wearing the title, or moniker, of a transformative trainee "should not be taken lightly or without considerable personal reflection. Although the rewards may be great for both the trainer and the trainee, it demands a great deal of work, skill, and courage" (Taylor, 2006, p. 92). It means asking yourself, Am I willing to transform in the process of helping my staff to transform? This means taking the position that without developing a deeper awareness of our own frames of reference and how they shape practice, there is little likelihood that we can foster change in others.

The study concludes that the concept of transforming training remains a big enterprise and unending process. It submits that it is a process of profound and radical change that orients an organization in a new direction and takes it to an entirely different level of effectiveness. The study also admits that the concept of transforming is seen as the holistic process or approach which adds significantly to the unprepared trainees, students, old or adult, young or teenager, apprentices and all other learners.

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