

CHAPTER 2C: DELVING INTO TRANSFORMING LEADERSHIP APPROACHES

In Chapter 2A, I articulated how a limited view of leading through ruling employees creates barriers to expend multiple opportunities for learning, thereby giving space for change in my approaches to leadership practices. With this in mind, in Chapter 2B, using a communicating approach to leadership, I came to realize that a participatory and collaborative approach to leadership both at classroom and institutional levels can create a conducive learning environment to foster powerful learning. And to this end, focusing on teachers' professional development appears to be the core of meaningful change. However, I came to realize that reforms seemed to focus on more physical resource development rather than human (teacher/educators/researchers) resources, and this lacking in reform agenda created space for a morphing view of change through transformative leadership.

Given this background, here in Chapter 2C, with an intent to develop (by hoping and imagining) a re/conceptualized image of curriculum, teaching and assessment, my purpose is to explore the questions- *How can a transformative leadership enable me to move towards an empowering and inclusive view of teacher education and research practice in Pakistan?* To this end, I use the epistemic approaches of letter writing, critical reflections and soulful inquiry from within my historicity i.e., going back to the past, building on present and hoping for future with reference to informative (with a status quo) and reformative (change in existing conditions) phases leading towards a transformative teacher education and research practices (envisioning a morphing view of education) to work on.

View of Education: Leadership and Culture as Lenses

To me, it makes better sense that teacher educators as leaders of their learners/teachers need to establish a culture of balancing the power between educator and student teacher/learner while sharing the responsibility. This observation, reminds me the work of Jack Mezirow (2012) ‘learning to think like an adult: Core concepts of Transformative Theory’. With this line of thought, our assumptions, perceptions, beliefs and practices appear to be fundamental lenses while working to improve our professional lives.

Arriving at this point of inquiry, I come to realize how a particular interest of education (narrow, broad and/or liberating) can influence leaders at different levels to demonstrate their roles while accomplishing objectives (within a particular interest) by creating a desired environment within their institutional cultures. For example, a narrowly viewed notion of teacher education inspired by a bureaucratic environment (hierarchy that is built on valuing in a vertical order) tends to keep learners/teachers with limited freedom at institutional and classroom level (Habermas, 1972; Rehg, 2009). Perhaps, a broader view of education³¹ inspired leaders to reform the curriculum of teacher education that, to some extent, enabled me (and other teacher educators/leaders) to experience partial freedom by challenging a dictating leadership and looking other than single methods of knowing using an epistemic plurality (see Chapter 2B). Given this background, I am reflecting on my past and present practices so as to envision a morphing view of leadership inspired by an emancipatory interest of education.

³¹A broader view might be somehow challenging narrowly conceived view of quantitative and qualitative methodologies of research and embracing *constraint pluralism*- a limited view of pluralism that may not empower to the extent one expect to bring change in education with a practical interest. However, a broader view is much open with some practical interests of education (Habermas, 1972).

Reform as Limited Freedom and Superficial Change

In 2009, I was selected as a subject expert (as a leader) to represent my university, and participate with limited involvement³² in curriculum development workshops, which in no other way helped me to contribute to the extent that I should have contributed. For instance, during my limited participation in workshops to develop content based on some given objectives³³, it hardly gave me a chance to share ideas with each other as subject experts/leaders and/or teacher educators from different universities.

I argue that such kind of limitations in terms of the power politics with autocratic styles of leadership³⁴ in educational institutions like universities without realizing the importance of relevant person for relevant job could not bring a meaningful change. Perhaps, such a narrowly conceived view of reforms in teacher education created many challenges for practitioners like me at different levels of educative practices. In practice, the reformative activities could not help me to be more creative and innovative towards somehow wider view of education. Perhaps, such limited visions of reformative agenda gave rise to a liberating view with more responsibility for empowerment of self/others that is much needed in the context of teacher education and research practice in Pakistan.

³² A partial freedom to exercise my role in different activities of teaching/learning and curriculum development. I say limited i.e. due to sending irrelevant subject educator as my replacement for curriculum development workshop– institutional politics and nepotism rather professionalism.

³³ Objectives of teacher education curriculum were developed by some foreign experts with few elites in the country without involving teacher educators. Because objectives are the key drivers to control content, pedagogy and assessment and in so doing reforms agenda seems to accomplish a particular interest of education that does not seem more helpful to teacher educators/teachers who are the real agents of change. If a policy that is based on political agendas of developing tangible resources in terms of physical resources rather more empowering teachers and educators may not benefit teacher education and research in the long run. So such kind of policies can be shortsighted and limited in its scope.

³⁴ A leader who is more managerial with controlling view rather facilitating view of educational leadership approach.

To this end, transformative approach to leadership with an inclusive-holistic view can better facilitate learners/researchers in knowledge generation. Perhaps, such an approach can help us to challenge the limited views embedded within self-assumptions and taken for granted ways of ‘knowledge/ing’ under reformative agenda of teacher



education, and can help us to bring paradigm shift in thinking, believing and actions with liberation from self/others inspired by an emancipatory interest of teacher education (Bohman & Rehg, 2014; Habermas, 1972).

To me, the concept of liberation from self/others means challenging self with taken for granted views/notions/beliefs, developing new perspectives at personal and socio-cultural levels. It also means embracing multiple-integrated possibilities of knowing continuously, and reflecting critically on actions/practices with reference to embodied personal values as explanatory principles (Whitehead, 2015).

Perhaps, such a reflexivity can lead us towards multiple loop and/or super loop learning that seems a continuous struggle to improve praxis, which can lead towards contextualized, and personalized theory creation (Argyris & Schon, 1974, 1978). Here, I begin to look at my leadership practices with reference to my own embodied values of ‘intention of doing good for others, humility for humanity, care of self and others with ecological consciousness, love and peace’ with reference to my praxis to create my own living-theory (Whitehead, 1989, 2015).

My experiences as a school principal and teacher educator with the notion of reformation caution me that reformation seems to be embedded within fragmented ways

of modifications in existing situations to improve (Bush, 2008). However, transformation demands integration with a holistic and inclusive view of knowing, believing and doing things innovatively. Such view of knowing and doing appear to be more powerful way of envisioning and hoping that can enable me to expand the horizons of knowing through critical-creative ways rather than depending on the limited notions of improving.

Arriving at this point of inquiry, I begin to ask- *why a transformative leadership is required, and in what ways it is conscious about self/beyond by fostering transformative learning? How a transformative leader can create conditions to experience a liberating view of education? How critical self-reflection as a tool to transformative learning can enable individuals/teacher educators (Halai, 2011) to experience spirituality? What are the ways to develop spirituality so as to spread love and peace with care for all as core of transformative intent?* With these questions in mind, I am discussing critical self/beyond reflective practices (which we had started – see Chapter 2A & 2B) to build the basis for transformative leadership. As such, as I did it earlier, here as well, I articulate it through a letter written to Zayne.

Critical Self-reflection as a Way to Transformative Leadership

December 2015

Dear Zayne,

I am hopeful that with your recently emerged imaginative and creative views on teacher educators/research supervisors' transformative learning activities, you must have begun to live your professional life in its fullest.

<p style="text-align: center;"><i>KHUDI – The Self</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Khudi Ko Kar Buland Itna Ki Har Taqdeer Se Pehla</i> <i>Khuda Banda Se Khud Poocha Beta Tari Raza Kia Ha</i> <i>(Iqbal)</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Develop your inner self so high and purified so that the God will ask you for your wish to be fulfilled.</p>
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Zayne, it is good that we (I, you, and other colleagues) have made considerable progress since we have been attached with the idea of critical reflection that allowed us to evaluate our own 'meaning structures' or 'false interpretations' in a process of encountering with new ideas (Mezirow, 1990, p. 4). For example, gathering every weekends for transformative seminar and presenting experiences with transformative learning has put tremendous impact not only in our way of being, but also has developed awareness among other departments of the university to attend our seminars for their own learning.

With this background, let me share my views on how to engage with professional development of teachers and researchers (self/other's). To me, being critically self-reflective towards our own and that of others' TLPs seems to be a powerful tool that enable us to grow professionally. Perhaps, it is a kind of self-determinative approach to change self/beyond without any investment towards the agenda of transformation, in contrary to huge investments on physical resources in the name of reformation.

Zayne, do you remember that I had started these practices with you and some other colleagues in School of Education at TU some five years back in 2010 with the idea to improve our practices of teaching/learning and research supervision at graduate level programs? Practicing it for other few years, now we can evaluate the difference that seems very visible to me, which perhaps you and others colleagues also must have felt.

To me, Zayne, the concept of a teacher educator's professional development with sharing stories of professional lifeworlds and engaging with such critical reflections seems one of the powerful ways of transformation (Taylor, 2015). Perhaps, the practices of professional development to a great extent enabled us in helping and empowering

self/others, and continuously challenging our taken for granted views of being and becoming at different levels (Pithouse-Morgan & Samaras, 2015).

Reflection and Spirituality as Means to Meaningful Leadership

Zayne, I was reflecting on our approaches to reflection and its core that leads me partially to agree with Jessica Arends and others' views who claim that critical reflective practitioner 'aims to bring about change, be it personal or social' (2014, p. 3; Jacoby, 2009). To me, becoming a reflective practitioner seems beyond the notion of simply helping self/others to improve. It is rather embracing spirituality that aims to remind me questions of the kind, *'Who am I? (Palmer, 2007) Where I came from? What is the purpose of my life and that of others? What is the relationship between me and others/beyond - the earth (the physical world) and that of metaphysical world (everlasting world occupied with an ocean of souls)? How to create an environment here in this world that is more desirable for all of us to leave with peace, love, care and humility for humanity and the planet where we are? And where I have to go next after this world?*

To me, interestingly, reflection seems the first step towards understanding the intent to spirituality which appears to be a state of deep consciousness that lets me to think about my values and practices. In my view, for a teacher educator, being spiritual means being consciously aware of self and learners and create a world that is desirable for all to learn and live with love, care and peace. Zayne, would you not ask me 'are we progressing towards developing space that can lead us to understand spirituality?' My answer to the questions is, probably, yes, we are. This is what we are doing towards such

kind of consciousness to develop through such kind of engagements through sharing our lived experiences with our critical reflections.

Zayne, through this letter, my purpose of writing to you is to seek your views about transformative learning that would help us to further progress in our understanding of thinking, beliefs and practices, which we are practicing for last few years. Do you think that our way of change can lead towards 'life affirming' and 'life enhancing' (Whitehead, 1989, 2014, 2015) teacher education in Pakistan that would develop peace with respect and love for all as equal citizens of the county? If so, Zayne, let us think together on how we can play our transformative leadership role effectively at different levels to enhance our efforts to introduce this notion of teacher education and research practices. If you agree with me, I guess, you, me and other colleagues need to develop a clear understating of cognitive and non-cognitive aspects of reflection and its contributions in fostering transformative learning. Perhaps, this will help us to address the question like, what does it mean to be transformation of self/beyond (Jordi, 2011; Mezirow, 1990; Taylor & Cranton, 2012; Young, 1990).

Zayne, let me share my understanding of personal or self-transformation at cognitive and non-cognitive levels. To me it seems nurturing the complex undetached-fluid-self for not only developing common good in material life but also illuminating the soul for a life in everlasting world. In this context, in an attempt to understand self-transformation, I came to realize that spirituality, as it has the transformative intent, plays a significant role in fostering transformative learning. It is highly dependent on to what extent my actions are embedded with my values of 'intention of doing good for others,

humility for humanity, care of self and others with ecological consciousness, love and peace' while in the process of change for being and becoming (Arends, 2014).

Zayne, I was studying few mystic and Sufi poets like Nasir-e- Khisraw, Allamah Iqbal, Jalalluddin Rumi and Ghulamuddin Ghulam Hunzai to name but a few, and their notion regarding how spirituality can change subtle human into causal being (an illuminating being) who can become source of peace, humility, care and love for all and beyond the boundaries of individual identities. My experience of spirituality from these sources without excluding other sources seems a search for love of Lord and service to humanity for developing peace.

Perhaps, this is the inspiring power of spirituality that I got from my mother's lap- with her love, care, and her prayers till this time for my good life (a human who cares and loves others). I also got the influence of spirituality from the community services with which I have been involved as a Boy Scouts leader, a computer instructor/teacher, and then a community school principal. Perhaps, engaging with these services to my community enabled me to understand self/beyond from a spiritual perspective.

Probably, such a nurturing and powerful training attribute of spirituality demand embodied values to embrace as guiding principles of being. Let me share with you how



these embodied values develop and what are the ways to attain this spiritual longing in life. Here, I do remember the moments, when I sit alone in my meditative state, listening and reciting Ginans (praise of Allah, Prophet (PBUH), Hazrat Ali(AS) and his Aal- his right hereditary decedents- the spiritual leaders), shedding tears in love of my Lord, who bestowed a bundle of gifts like a good

life, a soft loving and caring heart, an imaginative mind thinking about helping other, thinking about multiple ways to improve practices, and a courage to face odds of life, to name a few. It lifts me in inexpressible ways of pleasure from within. I begin to feel lighter from the wounds and worries of life. To me, it appears to be a kind of spontaneous liberation that is what I call a spiritual healing of the moment.

Perhaps, this kind of healing develops core values of humility for humanity and planetary love and care for all to create a place that is desirable for not only humanity but for other living beings. Zayne, having such kind of values how it is possible to lead my student teachers without a transformative intent. Perhaps, be very professional with such kind of transformative view would also help me to live a healthy and balanced life with my family, with society and beyond at personal and social milieu (Arends, 2014).

Zayne, I guess, this letter is becoming long, and let me pause here for a while with a hope that spirituality as a core of transformative learning will find us thoughtful leading towards a soulful inquiry of self/beyond (Riaz, 2012). I would desperately want to know your views and your experiences of transformative journey in its relation to spirituality. I hope sharing our views would help us to co-lead and co-evolve over the time. With best wishes! Until then...

Truly Yours

Sadruddin Qutoshi

Here, in my letter to Zayne, I was reflecting on my personal experiences of transformative learning with critical self-reflection and its impact on my spirituality that I can feel with my own embodied values while being and becoming. To me, as I come to understand it, spirituality is not something very religious construct, rather it is a way of

being with my embodied values which guide me towards common good, and that is what, perhaps, the agenda of a liberating view of teacher education to work on.

A Journey of Leadership: Constructing Visions From Within

Today is Tuesday June 2003. I am highly excited thinking about my journey that seems progressing towards its destination. A destination that has its beginning, and every time it keeps me at a point that further reminds me that there is another point ahead....It



keeps me growing and growing, and there seems no end in itself. If I call it a journey, and a process of lifelong learning, a 'life affirming and life enhancing' journey, it may not be wrong, and yet it seems in a continual back and forth moment (Whitehead, 1989, 2014, 2015, Whitehead & Huxtable, 2016). However, sometimes it takes me to a point for a short pause with a message to keep silent for a while that enables me to think deeper and then higher what Johnny Saldana calls 'highdeep' (2015). Perhaps, this is the time when consciousness comes into action and lets me to become more aware of self/others.

*A silence stirs my
heart to feel self/others.
It makes the way to
trace in past and present.
and pushes to look
forward for more to explore.
an endless destination with intention, hope, love,
with humility for humanity and ecological consciousness.
In love of the beautiful planet on
which all this seems possible where we all are living.*

Let me keep my readers to the point from where I take my journey i.e., me as a traveler. I remember when I began my professional journey of leadership it was back in 1997. I worked as a teacher/instructor, teacher educator, an administrator, and a vice/principal. These roles within a multicultural environment have been driving forces

for me, challenging my capacity to keep learning continuously through experiences over a long time (Bedi, 2015). Though, I confess that 'my early days - 'a man in principal's office' kept me in a cage of title- the principal as symbolic authority (see Chapter 2A), and yet it enabled me to understand what it means an instructional and/or a pedagogical and an administrative leader' (Crawford, 2012; Memon et al., 2006; Sergiovanni, 2000).'

Perhaps, this unique journey of self-exploration enabled to welcome a 'call to come out of office' (see Chapter 2B). It appears to me that this invitation helped me to communicate with a world where my real community (subject coordinators, teachers and learners) lives. There, I felt the love of being and becoming among the others, listening to them, solving their problems of teaching/learning, generating discussions, and encouraging individuals (silent voices). I experienced a healthy relationship through 'communitying'³⁵ that enabled me in opening the closed windows of hearts and minds, and seeing the world with new eyes.

To me, this process of communitying seems leading me towards knowing leadership as soulful inquiry. An inquiry that opens avenues to think in a way Palmer (2007) calls to teachers - 'The Courage to Teach' with critical questions of the kind-who am I, what I want, from where I come, where I want to go and with whom I want to co-evolve and co-lead? Engaging in this way, can enable me to understand the vision of the complex undetached-fluid-self to transform self/others.

³⁵ Communitying is a process of empowering everyone (i.e., the community of learners, teachers, and students as members of the community) to lead and take decisions based on knowledge, skills and right dispositions in contributing towards the formation of a community of co-evolving learners. The process is not only democratic but also a way of co-developing along the time.

With this in mind, I am thinking about my feelings of living (out of my office) among children at work, teachers with note/books, the coordinators with observation/reports and to support staffs, perhaps, who (sometime, somewhere in past) seemed to be very scary of me. And with certain shift in my way of thinking and doing things, they seemed feeling comfortable to sit and share their views with me. I think it is a big shift. Perhaps, it seems to be my realization of the *world* (my community) *and its importance. It was not the office as symbol of authority where I was, but behind the mask*³⁶.

Developing Community: Leading as Co-worker

It may be some days around April 2006. I broke the symbolic leadership view (attached to a man in the principals' office), and joined the world of my own journey with teacher/teacher educators/the coordinators. Perhaps, with a shift in my thinking and approaches to leading as principal of the south community school, I came to realize how notions of servant leadership (Greenleaf, 2002), and prophetic leadership (Khaki, 2005), have the attraction for co-workers to become volunteers for sharing their own lived experiences for improving practices in school.

I remember, when I opened the doors of my heart and mind for others in school through understanding their problem of teaching/learning, listening to their worries, sitting with them to find ways to solve, seeking their views on how can we address the issues and valuing their views, and yet giving my professional inputs, to name a few, such approaches made me more closer to their hearts and minds. In so doing, I with other teachers, coordinators and section heads started our journey of developing a team of co-

³⁶ Though having a good intention yet could not help self and others to feel them good and win their trust to share their professional worries with me as their leader.

learners and co-workers towards our agenda of educating children with student centered approaches to teaching, which was the community school' view of providing quality education (Qutoshi & Poudel, 2014; Weimer, 2002).

Perhaps, understanding the emotions of the members of the journey enabled me to understand the actual challenges of school. Because it is 'our emotions acted as windows into our deeper beliefs' through which one can see into the mind (Tanaka & Tse, 2015, p.6). With this in mind, it became possible for me to experience what they have *in their hearts and minds*, and how I can address the issues of school and schooling by taking all members as my co-workers.

*A world full of hard rocks
pain of being and becoming and
burning self for lightening others,
yet compassion, hope, love and care for others
to liberate self/others from the darkness of ignorance.
removing the distances reduces the differences
keeps the secret open for all, and
makes the unknown public for common good
that is the beginning
of the real story of this communitying*

As I was wanted the staff to become open towards their problems to share, my closeness of being with teachers in co-planning a few lessons, co-teaching for demonstration and co-assessing activities (assessment as 'of', 'for' and 'through' learning- see Chapters 5A, 4B & 4C), and the process of our joint experiencing of the educative journey enabled us to learn from each other's experiences. This experience helped us to sit together and share our stories with the couple of questions- what happened, how it happened, who were the key characters, why it happened, what was the outcome/learning, and what was next to plan further for the new stories to construct.

I think, this is what Donald Schon calls reflection in action (1983, 1987; Punjwani, 2013). I call this learning as team experiencing that can only be possible through teamwork with care, trust, love and responsibility for each other's learning. In this adventure, we (I and subject teacher) did not discard the previous lessons that the teacher/s made rather re/viewed with different angle, and started discussions on, giving our critical reflections and imagining how we would make livelier lesson, and then re/planned it.

Probably, this process drew our attention towards the need of contextualizing school based curriculum, and yet we were not aware of the concept of contemporary images of curriculum as experience (Dewey, 1938; Schubert, 1986) and currere (Pinar, 2004, 2012, 2014) and montage (Luitel, 2009) (see Chapter 3C). Perhaps, through these notions of curriculum, which focus on more contextually empowering educative practices like critical-creative pedagogies (see Chapter 4C) and holistic-authentic assessment processes (see Chapter 5C), we tried to use the same but unknowingly. Now I realize that we had become aware of such practices long back, though without recognizing their names and functions.

I remember, in so doing, our gaze remained fully on the learners through an active and interactive way of their involvement in the whole process of teaching/learning, and assessment that made our goal more visible. Though the process was lengthy, yet it was interactive, creative and enjoyable that enabled us to go for a joint trip (co-teaching) to the ferry-meadow (classroom) with full of fun with actively involving learners in the process of learning. On the trip, we not only enjoyed our roles as co-facilitators (critical-creative teachers), but we came to know that the learners enjoyed a lot while engaging

actively in their learning, working on self-assessment, and peer review activities using the concept of assessment 'through' learning.

Co-leadership as Process of Evolving Together

Let me share here a unique experience of our co-leading the ship³⁷ that opened another vista of learning and looking for opportunities, which would help us to design and develop teacher training programs within the school as part of in-house professional development endeavour. My experiences of working with teachers and coordinators enabled me to bring the contextual learning experiences from few of our co-planning, co-teaching and learning of co-assessing (as I mentioned above) into our training modules planned for professional days (on every Saturdays). In doing so, we got wonderful ideas from our co-leaders (subject coordinators, teachers and learners/students) while being among them during teaching/learning experiences to experience.

Reflecting on my experience I came to realize that the learning was uniquely empowering for all of us. More so, it was even exciting while conducting these sessions through interactive strategies to enjoy team learning through the practice of Co-Leadership experiences at the community school. I can understand this term co-leadership emerged over the course of our experiencing with such interactive, innovative, inclusive and creative ventures under my personal leadership. This co-leadership could be and/or a form of social transformation for the whole team. The concept of single man show as one leader was not there rather it was everyone who demonstrated as a co-leader to sail the raft through the waves of the river.

³⁷ The metaphor of school/classroom as chip- The school in a broader sense and classroom at micro level serves like a ship.

Closure

To me, transformative leadership appears to be a process of creating conditions for self/others to experience co-leadership in education, to navigate the rafting team safely on the shore of the river. In other words, it was like to nurture the delicate plants of the garden with coordinated care and efforts to let them grow at their own pace of growth, with every possible effort for nutrition. Unless everyone does not put collaborative efforts as an effective member of the team with patience, transformation is not possible. Such collaborative efforts lead towards co-evolving and ‘communitying’ in which personal leadership turns into co-leadership that inspires each other for creativity to nurture.



Co-leadership seems visible everywhere from within team by providing all possible required support to each other by enabling and empowering the co-workers as *co-leader* unlike ‘one man show’ as a *single-leader*. Arriving at this point of inquiry, I begin to reflect that a *visionary transformative leader would be one who* envisions, empowers, collaborates and coordinates to bring the team to celebrate the journey together as *co-* leaders. Perhaps, ‘spirituality’ plays a key role to develop this liberating views of education required to develop co-formation (Sergiovanni, 2000; Riaz, 2012). With this hope, I portray co-leadership as a form of transformative dimension, which is likely to be inspirational for currere as awakened citizenry, critical-creative pedagogical co-leader, authentic inclusive assessor and transformative research practitioner in the coming four subsequent chapters.