Lemma Degefa

Omega Graduate School

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October 26, 2023

**Assignment #1 – Course Essential Elements**

1. Select One (1) Core Essential Element from the Syllabus Outline:

a. Weekend Residency: Create a 350-word original discussion paper (with cited sources) during the week of the residency. Be prepared to discuss and engage with other students during the live sessions. Post this document in DIAL.

b. Professor will check for quality of content and word-count requirements. Grade

assigned will be Credit or No Credit (CR/NC).

**Transformative Learning Theory**

According to Hoggan and Kasl (2023) transformative learning is a self-directed adult learning practice that results in significant and irreversible changes in the way a person experiences, conceptualizes, and interacts with the world. The learning approach involves transformation at a deep level of the individual, which occurs at the epistemological level or reflective judgment as opposed to prescriptive training model that seeks to improve performance (Mello, Cunha, Silva, & Dandolini, 2023). Davis (2021) highlights that the transformative learning approach aligns with the mission and philosophy of Omega Graduate School, which promotes self-directed learning and critical reflection in personal growth and social impact.

Scholars argue that the transformative learning approach adds significant value to adult learners. For instance, Terblanche (2022) states that it helps to verifiably link learning processes with learning outcomes. Mello, Cunha, Silva, & Dandolini (2023) add that it’s relevant approach in developing leaders in that it ensures a significant change in leaders' sense of identity and in their relationship with followers. Bleiler (2023) notes the learning approach is highly compatible with Christian education. According to this source, the approach emphasizes the need for personal experience as an essential component of learning, critical reflection, and personal action as evidence of changed perspectives and practices. Therefore, it may be said that transformative learning approach can serve as key method to develop leaders for Christian ministries.

Nevertheless, views of scholars vary concerning the promises of transformative learning. Despite the assertion that the autonomous transformative learning is emancipatory in its nature (Finnegan, 2019), there are arguments that social structures and belief systems can still influence learning in a way that learners make transformation of their experiences (Schnitzler, 2020). Therefore, it’s important that transformative learning maintains balance between the individual self-directed learning with the socio-cultural and sociological dimensions of learning.

Scholars caution that mere adoption of the approach may not fully deliver the promises of scholars. In other words, the mere allegiance to a given philosophy of education may not necessarily yield the potential of transformative learning theory in educational practice (Sheshadri, Coley, Devanathan, & Rao, 2023). Holdo adds that embracing the theory requires the transformative educators to first experience transformation of their own. That is to say, the educators need to understand and practice a learner-centered method in which they play the role of a coach rather than a dispenser of knowledge. In short, the insufficiently of the transformative learning model has been highlighted in that it pays less attention to the significance of context in learning and development (Holdo, 2023). Therefore, there is a need to further examine and enrich the model of transformative learning.

Transformative learning approach is compatible with the teachings of the scriptures in that Christians are to be transformed into the likeness of Christ as they learn and mature in their faith. Yet, the transformative learning happens not just through a person’s learning effort, but by the transforming power of God. However, the transformative learning approach seems to place huge emphasis on the self-directed personal learning, and gives less attention to the fact that humans need God’s transforming work. As I continue to research the core leadership competencies in the digital era, I’m challenged to explore both the natural role of personal commitment to learning as well as the supernatural transforming power of God.

**Works Cited**

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