Discourses of transformation for social justice in higher education


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DISCOURSES OF TRANSFORMATION FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE IN HIGHER EDUCATION

Dr Dina Zoe Belluigi, Queens University Belfast
@DZBelluigi
29 June 2018
‘EDUCATION FOR TRANSFORMATION’ INTERNATIONAL SUMMER SCHOOL
HIGHER EDUCATION?

Schools idealised as agents of social reform

Universities idealised as agents of ... private gain/ public good/ common goods
IDEAL VS REALITY

What is experienced, and patterns of outcomes indicate that

Educational opportunities and outcomes are not distributed equally

Educational institutions serve to perpetuate and reproduce inequalities
FAIRNESS

Justice as harmony - based on principles of merit or desert (talent; potential)
1. People should be treated according to their merit.

Justice as equity - based on principles of need
2. People should be treated according to what they need.

Justice as equality - based on principles of equal treatment
3. Everyone should be treated equally and the same way.

Remedying society’s injustices
Figure 1. A clear disconnect between those notions of transformation which were most prevalently espoused and those most experienced in practice.

From the research project ‘Considering the reception of equity-agenda development programmes by its recipients in a rapidly transforming higher education context’ Dr Dina Belluigi (Queen’s University Belfast) with Dr Gladman Thondhlana (Rhodes University, South Africa)

Video overview
A process of making amendments. It is about bringing about radical changes in ourselves and advocating change to structural defects and dehumanising systems for the betterment of higher education whereby it is possible to build a culture of mutual respect, trust, co-operation, tolerance and humaneness.
To provide opportunities for an excellent teaching and learning experience that is contextually responsive to the challenges of globalisation and of a society in transition.
Transformation as a change that takes place between individuals and where historical power relations are fundamentally altered and equalised.
Transformation as a process of becoming useful in and to society at large. It is a multifaceted and integrated process by which the university continuously renews itself in an ongoing effort to complement national development and societal goals.
An inevitable (involuntary) process of change. It is an ongoing process and not an event or an end in itself. It is a journey that requires courage, tolerance, fairness, and equity and the willingness and courage to ask the difficult questions.
Change that takes place in individuals. It refers to the change process that takes place in people. It involves the promotion of moral, ethical and social values as well as the enhancement of moral regeneration.
A process of meeting set objectives. Transformation is fundamental and purposeful advancement towards specified goals - individual, collective, cultural and institutional.
COMPLIANCE

Transformation as a response to constitutional and legal requirements.

N = 21
REVIEW

Evaluating existing conditions

- Not experienced
- Both espoused and experienced
- Experienced
- Espoused
- N = 21
Cutting across the notions of transformation prevalent in South African HEIs is an Enlightenment narrative aimed at

the development of an inclusive narrative of progress and equality in mind: one that can facilitate the fundamental reconstitution and re-expression of the role of the university in wider society; as well as contributing to the reconfiguration of an economy based on the goals of social justice, democracy and human solidarity

UNDERPINNING TENSIONS

(Durkheim)
Slow subtle changes to keep the foundation intact
Society as a body

(Critical - Marx; CRT; BFT)
Rupture, challenge cos the system is broken

Functionalism

Conflict Theory

TRANSFORMATION
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