TRANSFORMATIONAL IPADAGOGY FOR TRANSFORMATIONAL HOSPITALITY MANAGEMENT CURRICULUM: A CASE STUDY OF SHMS LEYSIN

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Abstract

The Swiss Hotel Management School (SHMS) dedicates itself towards leadership excellence in Hospitality Management education based on a unique philosophy of the Swiss Hospitality Touch (Swiss Hotel Management School 2016). The school endeavors to develop unique student experiences that propagate critical personality attributes, and leadership qualities resonating with current professional debates in Hospitality Management (Nohl 2014, Burns 2016). Research was conducted to examine the transformation taking place at SHMS in response to current industry specific challenges. A curriculum model grounded in transformational theories emerges (Nohl 2014, Marsden 2010 and Merizow1997). This paper articulates the action research associated with the curriculum design process, presents and analyses the curriculum model.

Keywords: Transformative learning, teaching, curriculum, education, Hospitality Management

Introduction

Current professional debates emphasize innovative classroom teaching and learning experiences. However, in specific terms the focus of discourse is shifting towards experiential and situated learning with particular reference to employability and entrepreneurship (Giroux 2010, Jeyaraj and Harland 2014, Burns 2016). The dynamic impact of technological and socio-cultural development on the industry and specifically the demographic profile of the consumers are major causative factors in this respect (Rogers 2015). This has prompted SHMS to re-examine its Hospitality Management curriculum consistent with its Swiss Hospitality Touch Philosophy. This paper articulates the ongoing transformative learning and teaching action research taking place at SHMS. Designed to explore transformative teaching and learning experiences the study seeks to accomplish the following objectives:

• To develop a blue print for transforming teaching and learning experiences at SHMS.
• To explore the use of appropriate iPad technologies in bringing about the desired pedagogical transformative teaching and learning outcomes.
• To reflect upon these developments and related challenges

The Background

The SHMS as a private university aspires to lead as an international benchmark in transformative learning within Hospitality Management Higher Education. Based on customized learning programs which are delivered within the context of an authentic learning environment, the SHMS hotelier apprentices move from the periphery of the learning community to the center of a unique hospitality industry education becoming Swiss made master hoteliers (SHMS 2016). This is accomplished through experiential and situational learning which place the apprentices in life-altering hotel management environment. The school curriculum therefore seeks to induce far-reaching changes with significant impact on the future of the hospitality industry. It is against this background that the school which, is located within the Swiss Palace hotels, transforms apprentices into masters of a unique philosophy called the Swiss Hospitality Touch. However, this SHMS brand and related practices have yet to be articulated from an empirical position. This paper creates the opportunity to address this gap.

Transformation and Transformative Learning

Although consensus reflects transformation as a drastic and sometimes radical form of change the concept has been interpreted from a wide range of perspectives. According to Cranton (2011) transformation transcends beyond change towards the creation of a shift in perspective which is often reflected in altered thinking habits. Supporting

this view, Jeyaraj and Harland 2014 argue this paradigm shift results in open and penetrable minds. In a much deeper analysis Merizow (1997) associates transformation with a change born out of natural and spontaneous experiences in life impacting profoundly on the individual's intellectual dynamic spiritual realm of development. Merizow equates transformation with shocking near death experiences or events that threaten the rudiments of survival within the individual. This perception suggests experiences are so traumatic they can be equated with bereavement, divorce, general unprecedented disasters and other personal crises. Despite the trauma and related discomfort, disorientation and grief, such experiences challenge assumptions about life impacting immensely on worldviews and learning behaviors (Moore 2005). In a radical way Freire (1972) mobilizes such worldviews and behavior change to emancipate the human mind suggesting that the desired product of learning is an empowered and liberated mind.

The Rationale behind Transformative Learning
The rationale behind transformative learning is located in the complexity of the environment ain which people operate. Brooks (2004) reasons that because of the pressure and specific dynamic changes emanating from the workplace people have to self-manage. The challenges emerging in this respect include leadership dynamics, workplace politics and related threats on job security. Compounding the situation is the threatening and yet exhilarating technological developments and their capacity to deskill the workforce. This threat is real as redundancy in the hospitality industry looms. Robots for instance are increasingly replacing human beings. Smart technologies are continuously replacing manual functions in order to increase operational efficiency and effectiveness (Rogers 2015, Dixon et al 2014 and Slack, Chambers and Johnson 2013). Cultural, diversity issues including racism, sexism, ageism, ethnicity, disability are taking center stage as global migration intensifies. The workplace itself and the workforce have to go through dynamic, life threatening and indeed life-altering changes. According to Brooks (2004) and Clark (1993) complex changes demand a reconceptualization of personal identities and challenge the substance of value belief systems while at the same time inducing appropriate action in order to survive. Similarly, SHMS seeks to develop a dynamic change management culture to match the complex realities in the contemporary Hospitality industry.

Transformational Theory
The application of transformational theories to explain transformation is inevitable. Transformational theory (Merizow 1981, Merizow 1997 and Nohl 2014) is based on the premise that adults are consistently challenged to create new meanings of their worldviews as dynamic circumstances force them to change in order to survive and remain relevant. Consensus prevails on the life altering nature of transformation. Brooks (2004) identifies 4 major transformational theories. The first one is Merizow's rational theory (1981) which according to Marsden (2010) resonates well with leadership issues. The second is Boyd's Jungian theory (1991) which highlights personality and interpersonal relationships. The third one is Freire's emancipatory theory with a specific emphasis on the liberation of oppressed minds, emancipation of individuals and organizations. O Sullivan Moreel and O Conor (2002) in the fourth theory address transformation from an action learning perspective. Other theorists like Taylor (2007), Bohm (1996), have extensively reflected on transformational theory. This growing body of literature inspires the paper with a specific focus on Nohl's (2014) work emanating from Merizow (1997).

The transformation model by Merizow (1981) is based on the following phases: disorientation and dilemma; self-examination; critical assessment of assumptions; recognition of the shared discontent; exploration of new options, roles and relationships; planning of course action, acquisition of new skills and knowledge; building of new competencies and reintegration into new life. These phases suggest transformation is not a simple instant event but process but a complex process. Nohl (2014) acknowledges the significance of the phases of this process but simplifies and synthesizes them into five as follows: non-determining start; experimental and undirected enquiry; social testing and mirroring; shifting of relevance and social consolidation and reinterpretation. Justifying this review Nohl (2014) and Marsden (2010) agree that although Merizow (1981) offers critical reflection and rational discourse he is too context specific. While further critique, clarification and exemplification of transformational theory exist, consensus prevails regarding the theory's articulation of radical change elements and processes (Canton 2006, Taylor 2007, Choy 2009, Levin and Merrit 2006, Canton and Associates 2012). These scholars agree transformation begins with a dilemma capable of inducing disorientation and a range of uncomfortable feelings. Dilemmas described as near death experiences (Merizow1981) trigger a plethora of emotional, intellectual, spiritual developments challenging core value assumptions, beliefs and actions. The implied and emerging critical reflective discourse induces the development of a new set of values, skills, attitudes and knowledge. Clearly this process results in the development of the new worldviews needed to survive the dilemma. Consequently, the new reserves of energy and

self-confidence generated facilitate integration towards a new radical order. In the process, perspectives, roles and relationships are redefined as they assume new relevance. This paper pursues a holistic understanding of transformational theory in order to develop a curriculum model, consistent with the ideals of Hospitality Management education as reflected by SHMS.

Application of Transformational Theory into Teaching and Learning
The application of transformational theory into teaching and learning is of interest in this paper. Giroux (2010) in a critique of higher education laments the global institutional identity crisis. He is convinced institutions are deviating from their core business with limited accountability for their products. Consequently, educational products have little relevance within the society. In pursuit of this argument Harland, Tidswell, Everret, Hale and Pickering (2010) believe the current market driven business models are ill-advised and hardly impact personal, professional and academic development. In the light of such reflection, Kincheloe (2008) recommends a critical pedagogy underpinned by principles and worldviews that make the world a better place. Wink (2000) defines critical pedagogy as transformative learning strategies that encourage higher levels of student accountability. Accountability in education measures self-development while creating the desirable societal impact at the same time. Freire (1972) whose work on the pedagogy of the oppressed contributes significantly towards empowerment and emancipation challenges education to assume political, economic, religious and sociological relevance. Supporting this argument Duenkel and Pratt (2013) advocate for collaboration between education, communities and the society to transform livelihoods. The notion of critical pedagogy is also embraced in various other forms such as sustainable education (Sterling 2001), place based education (Sobel 2004), experiential education (Dewy 1938, Kolb 1984) and holistic education (Miller 1997). Reflected in this pedagogical discourse is the role of collaboration and the development of communities of practice. An analysis of this discourse suggests deeply engrained traditional power dynamics which should be exposed and challenged giving way to radical teacher – learner relationships.

Arguing from a technical perspective in his study on Emirati women and leadership (Marsden 2010) advocates for open and engaging learning environments. His emphasis is on leadership development that is inspired by reflective practice. Consistent with these ideals, Taylor (1997) explores the context and practice of reflective engagement with significance on Hospitality Management and leadership. He views the provision of work experiences, open-ended assignments, and effective learner participation through a wider range of activities. The argument advanced is that such activities encourage divergent and deeper learning. Appropriate use of role models in this respect is encouraged to generate critical reflective leadership skills. These ideals are quite consistent with the SHMS Swiss Hospitality Touch Philosophy. This unique and customized philosophy emphasizes the refinement of delicate leadership values through the exemplary behaviour of university staff. In pursuit of similar leadership ideals Subramanian and Soh (2010) engages in a passionate dialogue on how the gap between science and technology can be bridged to generate sustainable industry solutions. Based on these perspectives, it can be argued the articulation of the gap between theory and practice is the cornerstone of innovation. Articulating the linkage between theory and practice, Subramanian and Soh (2010) yields an understanding of critical pedagogy culminating into four categories of learning namely, conceptualization, experimentation, experience and reflective learning. The significance of this study lies in its culture of nurturing inventors who are competent to bridge the gap between theory and practice. These transformational narratives resonate with current discourse on employability and entrepreneurship (Giroux 2010, Jeyaraj and Harland 2014 and Burns 2016). It is against this background that SHMS pursues an action oriented research designed to bridge the gap between Hospitality Education and the practice of Hospitality Management.

The Research Methodology
In principle research methodologies seek to articulate the complexity of the issues reflected in the research problem. This integrated study pursues the practical application of transformational theories through action research. Action research by design pursues a radical process agenda with radical tangible outcomes. Action research therefore seeks to mobilize, empower those involved by inducing changes in perceptions and related behaviours (Freire 1972, Jeyaraj and Harland 2014). In this study systematic and multidimensional phases of curriculum delivery transformation characterize the radical agenda to mobilize, emancipate, empower and change teaching and learning behaviours. Details of the phases, related tools, the participants and desired research outcomes are illustrated in table 1. An inclusive number of 100 teaching, operations and information and technology staff including 650 students were involved at various stages of the project. The project was based initially on a top down and later integrated approach sought to introduce the transformative ideas, develop an understanding of these ideas and market and implement them. In particular the study sought to redefine value systems and develop an action plan that could

facilitate the implementation of the ideas. This is a commonly used project management approach in the industry. Experts in change management however, insist on consulting and involving all the players right from the beginning (Alkjetbi and Gardnier 2014). They argue that this form of involvement promotes ownership of ideas during the early stages of a project impacting positively on project implementation. Research in developing countries concurs indicating a positive correlation between project failure and prescriptive approaches (Samkange 2014). However, other critics in the field of research consultancy suggest an integration of both consultative and prescriptive approaches (Dixon et al 2014 and Slack, Chambers and Johnson 2013). The impact of the project management approach applied in this study is beyond the scope of this paper. Formal and informal interviews, focus group discussions, meetings workshops, seminars, panel discussions and participant observations were applied indicating methodological triangulation and process integration. Triangulation in action research is advisable to create the necessary checks and balances required to enhance validity, reliability and objectivity (Creswell 2014 and Silverman 2014). Samkange (2014) asserts methodological triangulation is consistent with complex Hospitality Management research issues.

The study initially assumed a deductive approach based on transformational theory (Nohl 2014, Marsden 2010 and Merizow1981), to understand the nature of the transformation desired. However, it subsequently pursed an inductive approach in order to customize the transformation and the mode of implementation. A customized model of curriculum design and implementation emerged as part of the research outcomes. This model is presented and analyzed as part of the research findings.

The Phases of Development
Phases of development followed a project management approach, which is consistent with Hospitality Management business development practices (Slack, Chambers and Johnson 2013). The phases are reflected in (table 1)

Table 1: Summary of Research Methodology and Related Phases

Phase	Purpose	Tools (formal and informal)	Participants
1	Identification and clarification of the transformational issues at stake and desired project outcomes, standards and deliverables	• Targeted Meetings • Workshops • Seminars • Panel discussions • Focus Group Discussions • Informal and formal interviews • Participant observations	• Chief Executive • Top Management including the dean, programme managers, and leaders and coordinators • Key industry specific resource people • Educational consultants • Teaching Staff • Operations • IT staff • students
2	Analysis of the issues at stake including the causal linkages emerging and related issues		
3	Development of alternative solutions to effect the desired transformation Development of implementation plan Development of curriculum transformation model		

Findings: The Seeds of Transformation Phases 1, 2 and 3
While this project is on-going, findings reflected in this paper address the first three phases in which the seeds of transformation were sown.
The first phase was driven and inspired by the leadership to propagate the seeds of transformation within the context of experiential and situational learning as already embedded in the vision and mission statement of the school. A critical analysis of this vision which emphasizes suggests an evolving and dynamic set of values, goals and standards which emphasize Swiss Hospitality traditions and current global trends (SHMS 2016). The SHMS vision resonates with transformation and critical pedagogy (Giroux 2010 and Marsden 2010). Given that the curriculum delivery activities are located in unique palace hotels and within the reality of the hospitality industry the project therefore did not have to look far for the inspiration. A set of five key attributes emerge from the action research as lynchpins of the transformation process (see table 2). The first phase of the project was ideological and sought to create an understanding and appreciation of these attributes. Transformational ideas and processes were analyzed and contextualized in the second and third phases culminating into a curriculum transformational model (figure 3). The significance of context in examining the findings emerging from these research warrants attention. The Swiss

Hospitality Touch Philosophy provided the ideological and contextual basis upon which the curriculum transformational issues were articulated.

The Swiss Hospitality Touch Philosophy
The Swiss Hospitality Touch philosophy is a tradition dedicated to the development of the Swiss culture and its fine hospitality related values, attitudes and behaviours. In addition this philosophy portrays specific leadership qualities. The philosophy propagates five hospitality management leadership principles reflected in figure 1 below.

Figure 1: Principles of the Swiss Hospitality Touch Philosophy
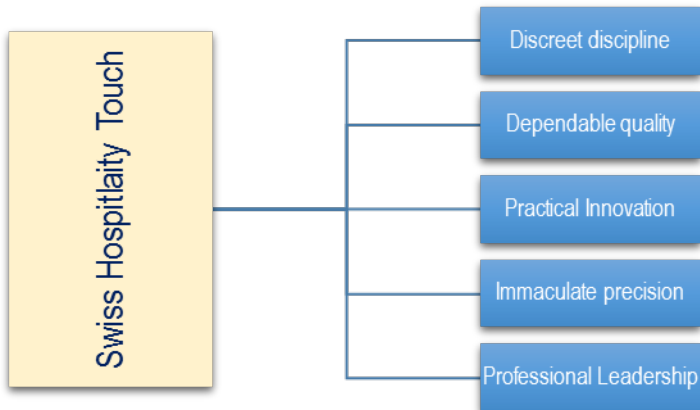
Discrete discipline aims to cultivate a balanced work ethos while molding a specific ethical character with a sense of social responsibility. This denotes a code of conduct and dress compatible with the highest possible leadership qualities. Discrete discipline as a principle emphasizes the development of discerning diplomacy, which supports the anticipation of other peoples' needs. This implies developing the ability to create and nurture appropriate relationships while developing the capacity to resolve problems in appropriate and innovative ways. Practical innovation is a quality associated with the development of an eye for current issues while seizing opportunities in the dynamic environment for career development and personal growth. This quality liberates the minds of the SHMS apprentices placing them at the heart of creativity and imagination in order not only to keep pace with current developments but to engineer such developments. According to Freire (1972), Cranton (2011) and Subramanian and Soh (2010) this is the desired outcome of transformative education. Dependable quality as a value underscores the need to create a culture of execution while propagating the qualities of accountability, responsibility and quality management. Immaculate precision reflects a process and people management set of values based on accuracy and meticulous attention to detail. Immaculate precision also insists on the tenacious pursuit of excellence and therefore entails overcoming adversity towards continuous personal improvement. Professional leadership as a principle focuses on developing the specific personality traits required take up roles as dynamic man and women of vision with the ability to impact positively on the current and future hospitality industry. This view is supported by Marsden (2010). According to this philosophy, Hospitality Management education should therefore expose students to a set of experiences that shape personalities, build characters and develop competencies required to influence and propel the hospitality industry towards greater heights of success. Giroux (2010) believes this is the core business of higher education which reflects a solid and relevant identity.

The greatest assumption underlying the Swiss Hospitality Touch philosophy is that students are groomed to take up positions among the global movers and shakers in the hospitality industry. This conscious effort to create inspiring worldviews capable of transforming workplaces, communities and societies according to Harland, Tidswell, Everret, Hale and Pickering (2010) and Kincheloe (2008) is missing in current higher educational models. Emerging from the Swiss traditional principles is the belief that teaching and learning transcends beyond the sheer pursuit of knowledge towards greater impact on livelihoods Duenkel and Pratt (2013). Hospitality Management education therefore pursues sophisticated levels of skills mastery, competencies and behavior traits reflecting an all-round impact of personal development with an emphasis on character building. This notion of Hospitality Management education resonates well with the alternative worldviews reflected in transformative education (Giroux 2014, Nohl 2014, Marsden 2010 and Freire 1972). It is not surprising the Swiss Hospitality Touch is a deliberate culture that permeates the core of the university curriculum. Underlying this philosophy is the belief that Hospitality Management education is not complete until it begins to consciously articulate the values and personality traits that

constitute leadership. Emerging from this approach to curriculum design, development and delivery is the assumption that leadership is not necessary inborn and hence it can be developed. However, great debate has ensued over this notion of leadership with some arguing that leadership is a personality trait that is inherent. This implies one is either born a leader or not. However, the Swiss Hospitality Touch philosophy refutes this argument and refuses to take chances in what it considers the core business of Hospitality Management education.

Based on this Swiss Hospitality Touch Philosophy SHMS seeks to transform and enhance teaching and learning experiences beyond traditional educational boundaries. It therefore challenges the traditional norms and practices in Hospitality Management education consistent with the reality of the contemporary hospitality industry. In this regard the outcome of education is a broader range of unique experiences required to enhance leadership qualities, employability and entrepreneurship (Jeyaraj and Harland 2014 and Burns 2016). This justifies a radical approach towards the review of the curriculum and related activities. Thus the curriculum transformation implied in the Swiss Hospitality Philosophy reflects what Giroux (2010) argues as the need to maintain relevancy in a dynamic industry. The only problem is that different parts of the world present different cultural and political realities. Which of these realities does SHMS seek to articulate? Perhaps it can be argued the teaching and learning attributes emerging from the action research indicate the desire to acknowledge and embrace this global diversity challenge.

Curriculum Transformation Attributes
Inspired by the Swiss Hospitality Touch Philosophy five major curriculum attributes emerged from the action research. Details of the attributes are reflected in table 3. The findings indicate an understanding of curriculum design based on the key stakeholders including the teachers, the learners and the industry. Furthermore, the conceptualization of the curriculum reflected in the findings also emphasize the significance of appropriate values goals and standards, context and content, methodology, assessment and related delivery systems. Suggested in the findings is an articulation of curriculum consistent with Nohl's (2014) and Merizow's (1998) transformative perspectives.

Table 2: Summary of Transformation

Curriculum Attribute/Outcomes	Desired Values, outcomes, characteristics/standards	The Transformation
Master of Socially-Constructed Learning The SHMS instructor	Seasoned guide and expert master Compassionate critic Innovative role model Facilitator and resource person	Transforming critical pedagogy into reflective empowering pedagogy Staff to lead by example e.g. dress code, behavior code Emphasis on innovation driven by iPad and apple technologies Industry experience and collaboration through international recruitment forum, conferences and workshops. Continuous renewal of skills and knowledge through training and development. Partnership with UK university to deliver accreditation degrees for lecturing staff
Co-Constructing Apprentices in a Learning Community The SHMS student	Co-constructor of learning Mastering personal development Apprentices assuming various roles with equal opportunity Diplomat and ambassador reflecting refined SHMS values	Learning for social action for change in the industry Co-constructors of knowledge and not just consumers or passive recipients of knowledge Greater7levels of participation and involvement Greater levels of independence Technological empowerment and propelled by iPad and apple technology
Social Learning Programmes The Curriculum content	Critical reflection Challenging traditional assumptions Constructive, active, applied learning Life-altering experiences	Reviewed learning programmes Teaching and learning materials redesigned to include the use of iPad and related applications Focus on research-based learning. Emphasis on iBook's, e-journals etc. and the school no longer handed out textbooks as per previous practice
Authentic Learning The learning Environment	Situated learning Collaborative partnerships and communities of learning Open and transparent safe and free	Emancipatory: free and democratic learning environment Intensified industry exposure through internships, work placements and learning projects iPad Technology enabled teaching and learning context school transformed as information and communication technological systems were redesigned to facilitate the use of iPad More than 600 global partnerships for learning placements, internships and jobs
Transformative Instructional Activities The teaching learning experience	Collaborative learning Problem-based learning Self-profiling Development of Leadership, Near-Death-Experiences (NDEs): Boardroom Executive Meetings, Time-pressured deadlines, Simulations, etc.	IPadagogy: Teaching and learning based on iPad technologies and related apps Flipped classroom experiences iCloud learning: Emphasis on informal and non-formal learning Greater collaboration with industry in teaching and learning Prominence of project work particularly integrated business projects

Master Instructors of Socially Constructed Learning

A major attribute reflected in the transformation desired addresses the nature of the teacher. The teacher is referred to as the master of socially constructed learning. Clearly the teacher is an expert hotelier in their own right with adequate subject mastery to provide a role model for the students. Consequently, teachers are expected to lead by example and hence a set of rules including a dress and behavior code is put in place. Suggested in this finding is that the teacher should not only demonstrate a balanced theoretical and practical knowledge and skills in Hospitality Management but possess qualities, character and passion required to guide the students towards innovative learning experiences. In keeping with this notion a teacher is expected to operate beyond traditional methods of teaching towards transformative critical pedagogy into reflective empowering pedagogy (Duenkel and Pratt 2013). In reality they are expected to adopt innovative technology driven teaching approaches. The school therefore has provided iPads and related apple technology for this purpose. In order to facilitate delivery, appropriate continuous training and development of staff is provided through partnership with the industry and other universities. Burns (2016) endorses this development.

The perception emerging from this attribute is that teaching and learning is a social and interactive process suggesting knowledge is a social construct. Teaching and learning in this respect implies promoting effective human interaction. This notion of teaching and learning resonates with social learning theories (Bandura 1986). Social learning theory is compatible with the nature of Hospitality Management which emphasizes guest service encounters. Hospitality Management as a discipline is epistemologically grounded in social sciences even though a great debate exists regarding this (Lashely and Morrison 2002). This seems to justify the position taken by SHMS. However the emphasis on socially constructed teaching and learning ignores other forms of teaching and learning based on cognitive, behavioural and scientific theories (Piaget, 1968, Perry 1999, Vigotsky1962). While social interaction is a significant part of the experiential learning process it is flawed to assume a one sided approach given the integrated nature of the discipline and indeed the content reflected in the Swiss Hospitality Philosophy.

The other main feature of this attribute is the desire to create a teacher who is an expert in their field with highly sophisticated skills and knowledge to help them manage the transformation. Although training and development is available continuously as reflected in table 3 it is a fallacy to assume all teachers have the capacity to learn all these complex skills within a short space of time as demanded by the transformation. This explains why Merizow (1991) alludes to the creation of near death experiences. Teachers are put under pressure to ditch their tried and tested classroom knowledge, skills and habits to develop new survival kit including a new classroom repertoire. This is too drastic a change of worldviews, there is no guarantee every individual can survive such experiences (Brooks 2004) and yet this radical change is what drives transformation.

The attribute reflects teachers as instructors and encourages them to be role models leading by example hence the need for dress and behavior codes. However codes of behaviour are governed by cultural and social values outside the school. To what extent can the school integrate social and cultural behaviours towards a common goal? At the same breath the school alludes to emancipation and empowerment which denote freedom. This is commendable given what transformational theorists believe (Freire 1972, Nohl 2014). However contradictions emerge raising a pertinent question.   How can someone bound by strict rules and regulations such as strict code of behavior and dress be free enough to free others?

Co-Constructing Apprentices in a Learning Community

SHMS values reflect the desire to interact effectively within the Hospitality Management community for greater relevance. This is important because research tends to be critical of education that is far removed from the reality justifying the need for transformation (Marsden 2010, Burns 2016). The Co-constructing Apprentice in a Learning Community attribute implies knowledge values, skills and attitudes are developed through sharing and interacting within the hotel environment.   This emphasizes the collaborative and emancipatory nature of transformative education where nobody holds a monopoly on knowledge (Freire 1972). Students in this case play an active role in developing learning experiences and constructing knowledge. This view is consistent with Wink (2000) and Cranton (2011) who believe students should be held responsible and accountable for their learning. The challenge unfolding in this respect is developing this culture of responsibility and accountability among the students. The extent to which students and indeed the teachers are ready for this paradigm shift is not clear.

The attribute also recognizes teaching and learning as an activity located within the reality of the hospitality industry suggesting a link between theory and practice. Bridging the gap between theory and practice is the basis of transformation (Canton 2006, Taylor 2007, Choy 2009, Levin and Merrit 2006, Canton and Associates 2012). The relationship between the community and the school is therefore critical. However, the extent to which the university can sustain the development of such relationships is yet to be established. Do students possess the ability and will to develop and sustain such relationships?

Social Learning Content
The nature of learning as a process is dependent upon the nature of experiences offered. Teaching and learning experiences provide the context and content of education. Social learning content therefore implies the need to acquire knowledge skills, values and attitudes that enable learners to interact effectively as social beings. The SHMS curriculum should therefore not only provide knowledge on how hotels are managed but also develop the social values, attitudes and behaviors that are necessary to provide appropriate guest experiences. The Swiss Hospitality Touch is articulate on the nature of values and attitudes, behaviours desired in tandem with the ideals of transformative education (Marsden 2010). The school located in hotels provides the necessary context to facilitate the content reflected. According to Lave and Wenger (1990) this is referred to as situated learning. In this context, technology enables learners to pursue content beyond the confines of the classroom and the textbook and in an integrated fashion as dictated by their field of study.

Applications such as YouTube, stratpad, iBook, Flipboard, iJournals and e-journals, magazines and newspapers for instance provide a whole range of possibilities as learners can find all sorts of learning resources and content. Students can pursue this content at own pace in interesting ways. The iPad and related apple technologies have the capacity to encourage students to interact globally and harness resources that would otherwise be inaccessible. The ability to conduct research at a click through these technologies enables learners to take advantage of the knowledge explosion, which is fast becoming industry specific. This is the empowerment reflected in transformative education (Freire 1972 and Nohl 2014). The fact that teachers, learners including peers can all be accessible on the same platform facilitates the social engagement process responsible for reflective practice and co-creation of knowledge. According to Marsden (2010) and Burns (2016) this mirrors the complex realities of the world of work where managers work with teams to address common goals targets and problems. However, grappling with the selection of content given the proliferation of applications and related knowledge becomes a major challenge. Although this development is supposed to empower students (Nohl 2014) how do teachers structure the proliferated content or should they abandon structure and control altogether? Critical scholars in education applaud the significance of structure in teaching and learning (Piaget 1972, Bandura 1986). Reconciling these contradicting worldviews is indeed a dilemma which is expected though as a step towards real transformation (Merizow 1997). The design, development and delivery of the curriculum through a wide range of applications is commendable and transformative. Indeed a plethora of such applications exist today. The question emerging here is why Apple given the proliferation of technologies? In the current circumstances where partnerships and integration form the basis of curriculum design and delivery systems this development can be rationalized strategically (Rogers 2015). The size and popularity of Apple as one of the leading companies in educational technology justifies this partnership as strategically significant.   Although it is obvious not all hotels and related service organizations use Apple technologies, arguably, technological skills are transferrable.   Once students have been exposed to particular technologies they are able to quickly adapt to other types. Furthermore, SHMS students are expected to construct their own learning experiences, they should therefore be empowered enough to do the same when confronted with any novel technological situation. This is the ultimate goal of transformative education (Freire 1972 and Marsden 2010)

Authentic Learning Environments
Transformational theory suggests a strong link between learning and the environment (Marsden 2010). Indeed social, psychological, cognitive and behavioral theorists (Bandura 1986, Piaget1972 and Vigotzky 1978) agree that the context of learning is fundamental in shaping the nature of knowledge and how it is developed. Developing effective managers therefore demands an exposure that facilitates an understanding of the Hospitality Management industry and its demands. SHMS therefore believes in exposing students to real hotels as an authentic learning environment. Business schools are continuously criticized for the development of cadres who are only theoretical (Nohria 2009). Most universities do this by confining teaching and learning activities within sterile classroom environments. Real transformation captures the complex dynamism reflected in the real world of work within the

industry (Marsden 2010). SHMS wants to acknowledge that functional Hospitality Management classrooms are found within functional hotels in guest rooms, front offices, back of the house, restaurants, conference and banqueting rooms, hotel spas, gardens etc. Learning in situ, referred to as situational learning authenticates teaching and learning (Lave and Wenger 1990). SHMS believes providing learning within their palace hotels adds value to the student experiences. Students learn about hotels within real hotels based on appropriate technologies. This provides an opportunity to immediately apply and test knowledge, skills values and attitudes effectively linking theory with practice. Nohl (2014) asserts this is the cornerstone of transformative learning.

Transformative Instructional Activities
Transformation demands a change not only in perspectives but in the way things are done. This is what leads to desirable outcomes (Merizow 1981). There is no transformation if curriculum design processes are not translated into action. The manner in which experiences are developed and delivered are critical aspects of the whole process of transformation. This is one of the most challenging attributes of the SHMS transformational models. Walking the talk is easier said than done. This attribute recognizes the impact of execution and hence the need to be guided by an action plan that reflects the desire to change. Building of knowledge is important but even more critical is the development of the necessary values skills and attitudes that can help the learner to construct their own reality (Levin and Merrit 2006, Canton and Associates 2012). This implies a paradigm shift in the way teachers perceive their role. The philosophy of Swiss Hospitality touch provides some guidance in this respect. Perhaps this is the part where technology has a critical role to play.
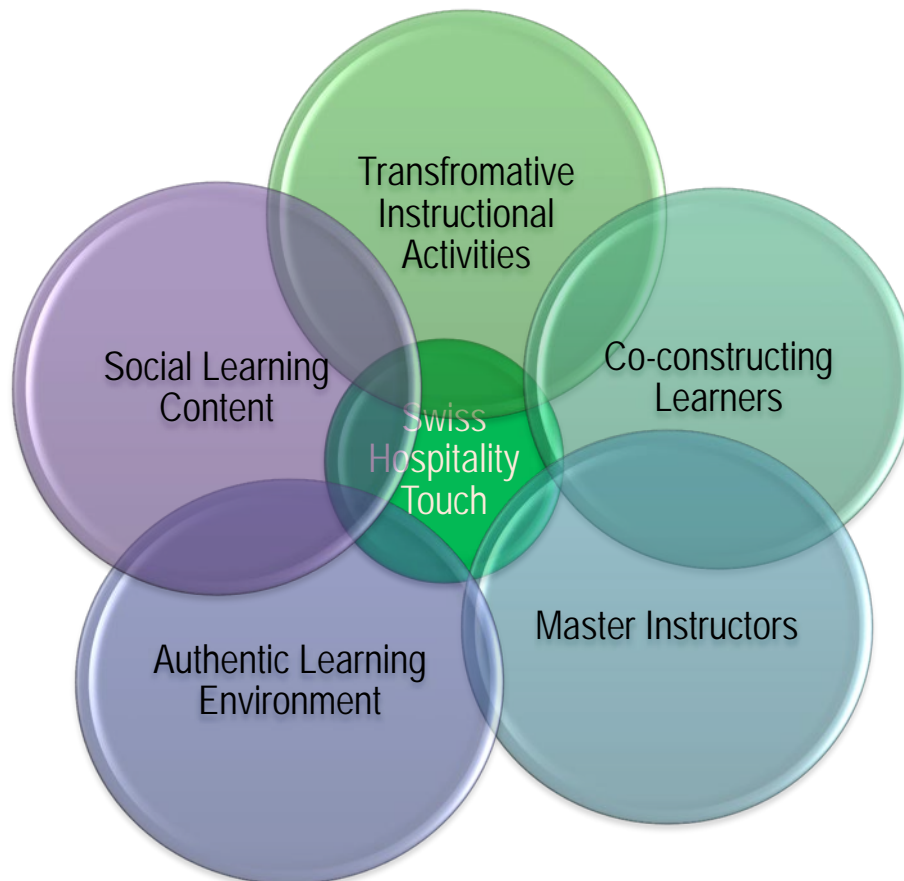
According the Swiss Hospitality Touch Philosophy teaching and learning processes are transformed into dynamic unpredictable processes full of new experiences and excitement. The fact that teachers and students can engage in a wide range of interesting activities such as debates, quizzes, research, projects with a lot of ease through appropriate applications such as zotero and project management templates needs to be recognized. Problem solving tools such as the interactive theoretical models including ishakawa diagrams, balance score cards can be used to create interesting and varied learning activities. The teachers no longer have to feel they should know everything and control everything. The power dynamics in the classroom change encouraging the exchange of ideas and thus sharing the responsibility of generating and testing knowledge. However, the question remains, how many teachers really want to lose control and share their power with students? Perhaps this is the near death experience alluded to in Nohl (2014) and Merizow (1997). The list of activities indicated reflects the abundant possibilities in this case. Some of the applications reflected in this discussion are categorized in figure 2.

Figure 2: Categories of Technological Possibilities
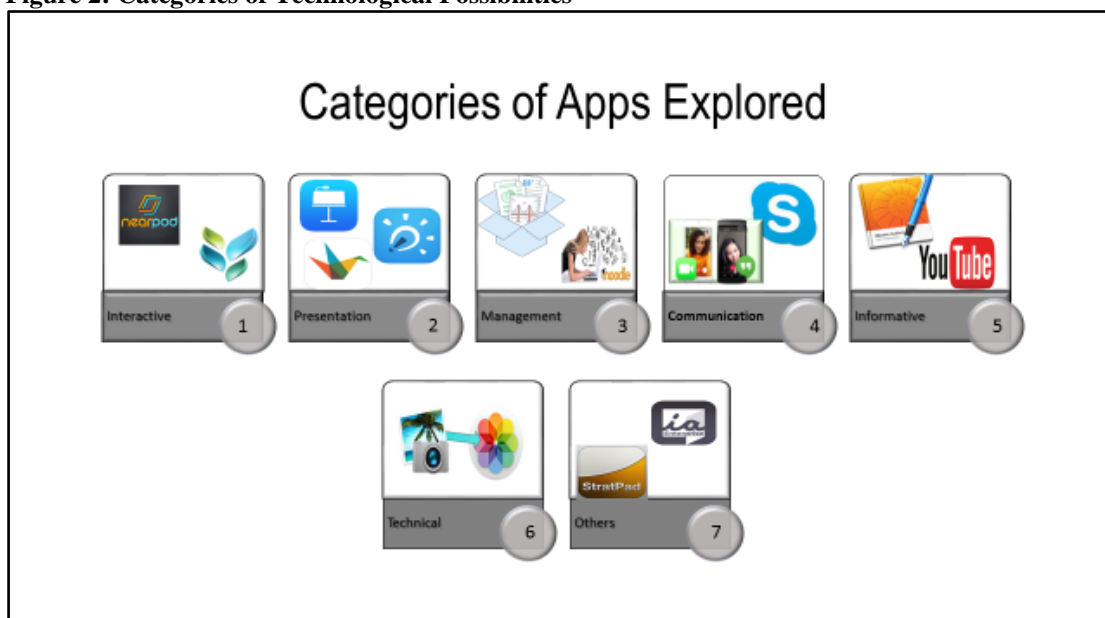
Using computer applications such socrative, nearpod, haikudeck presents opportunities for creative engagement in the classroom. Other packages including iMovie, iPhoto, explain everything are encouraging students to maximize participation in class. Tools such as Skype, iChat, iTunes, YouTube are instrumental in encouraging the independent learning required for learners to construct their own reality. The applications are numerous and the learner has an opportunity to explore them at their own pace encouraging students to be co-constructors of knowledge and not just consumers and passive recipients of knowledge as reflected in the banking concept of education criticized long back by Freire (1972). The ability to take ideas and related activities beyond the confines of the classroom while in a position to link with the teacher and colleagues no matter how far the distance has provided a platform through which learners engage in social action for change in the industry. Communication barriers which once existed between learners and the industry such as the distance, lack of confidence, resources etc. are disappearing. Students could find it exciting to explore novel ways of doing things which could transform the power politics in the classroom dismantling teacher's monopoly on knowledge. This is consistent with the ideals of emancipatory learning (Freire 1972 and Canton and Associates 2012) The excitement comes from engaging with technological gadgets already part and parcel of the learner's culture since the current SHMS student is more of a digital native than a migrant. This implies learning is no longer regarded as a chore but fun. Supporting this argument Wink (2000) and Cranton (2011) agree this is the critical rationale behind transformative education. However given the diversity of cultures and educational backgrounds at SHMS it remains a fallacy to assume all students can be classified as digital natives (Jones and Shao 2011)

Figure 3: The SHMS Transformative Curriculum Model

The SHMS Curriculum Model

The model emerging from the project is reflected in diagram 3. Important to note is the central role played by the Swiss Hospitality Touch as a philosophy guiding the curriculum model. The curriculum reflects the key players as master instructors and co-constructing learners. Teaching and learning content in socially constructed and delivered within an authentic learning environment where transformative teaching and learning activities take place. The model reflects the Swiss Hospitality Touch Philosophy values, goals and outcomes as the basis upon which the curriculum is assessed. One of the major advantages of this model is that it is customized and hence unique to SHMS. The discussion so far has highlighted the positive developments associated with the transformation. The fact that the key values, goals and standards can be reflected and presented in the way demanded by the challenges facing the school is highly commendable. However, there is need to determine the extent to which this model is able to deliver the outcomes desired as an important part of the project.   It is clear the project will go through the first two phases of transformation, which are disorientation and dilemma. During these phases the near death experiences associated with transformational processes according to (Nohl 2014 and Merizow 1997) need to be identified and addressed. This is one of the basic principles of operations change management (Slack, Chambers and Johnston 2013). The dilemmas that could make all those involved uncomfortable include the changing profile of the student, the dichotomy of the digital migrant teacher, coping with the pedagogical challenges in the classrooms such as the flipped experiences, the communication and technology issues emerging, conquering the fear associated with doing things differently and coping with the change experiences from a managerial perspectives.

While the school has increased its student enrolment to 750 the cultural background of the students continues to is diversify.   Over 80 nationalities are registered among the students (SHMS 2016). The students already have challenges coping with the culture shock presented by the adaptation to the Swiss culture. Consequently, educators have to grapple with managing this diversity both inside and outside the classroom. Trying to understand the technological needs of this diverse student population in a world where the students are considered digitally savvy while the educators are generally considered as technophobes (Jones and Shao 2011) has never been harder. Technologically, students are geniuses in their own right with a repertoire of skills and attitudes already acquired before they come to SHMS. The challenge emerging here is how to harness these technological behaviours and knowledge towards authentic learning and teaching experiences? This has the potential to challenge every teaching tradition at SHMS threatening the survival of educators. It is important to note this is a normal development given the theoretical narratives reflected in Kohl (2014) Levin and Merrit (2006), Canton and Associates (2012). Leaners come to class with their smart gadgets already, which according to the traditional educators distracts attention as students are always texting and surfing the web, twitting, skyping and chatting. Adding an iPad compounds the problem especially for those educators who want to maintain control of the student and the learning environment. How do educators ensure students are effectively engaged in useful learning activities and how can they manage such complex situations? This could be a source of stress for many teachers which is well documented in research (Jones 2011 and Shao). While the transformational model is reflective of the changes at stake, it does not establish the change management variables or indicate how changes will be implemented. Slack, Chambers and Johnston (2013) advise that change management variables need to be clearly articulated otherwise there is no guarantee operational models would work as planned. Operationally, the model is likely to challenge the way teachers will perceive and perform their new roles in unprecedented ways. Given this assertion it is difficult to understand how they are expected to lead learners through the transformation. Potentially, this could drive teachers towards near death and yet according to Merizow (1997) only to be transformed by their near death experiences. How many of them will survive remains to be seen.

The current model of transformation demands a paradigm shift towards flipped teaching and learning experiences: Flipped experiences demand interactive learning and away from the prescriptive and banking concept of learning (Freire 1972, Alkjetbi and Gardnier 2014)). This implies teachers need to learn how to gracefully lose control maintain the principles of the Swiss Hospitality Touch without exposing their own inadequacies in this case? This is likely to impact personal egos with consequences for self-image. The transformation emphasizes experiential learning which is quite consistency with the current era, the age of discovery by doing. Demonstrating the appropriate traits reflected in the transformational model requires conquering fear by confronting the fear. This is easier said than done. While the students could find this naturally easier their teachers are likely to struggle for survival (Jones and Shao 2011).

The stage is set for the transformation, the manner in which learning is packaged and delivered has to change. Digitally, the provision of iCloud activities coupled with nonconventional block delivery modes in some cases present complex challenges that will keep everybody on their toes. This is transforming the teaching and learning

roles placing a lot of responsibility on the learner. To what extent are the learners time management skills sophisticated enough to manage such huge responsibilities? This is what the industry demands of students but how much responsibility are teachers willing assume for the students' failure in this respect?

Conclusion

This paper set out to document the transformation taking place at SHMS and reflect on the issues emerging. Through action research the development of a transformative and customized curriculum model reflects the needs and interests of the school. Based on the Swiss Hospitality Touch Philosophy the model seeks to articulate the challenges associated with the Hospitality industry. It is assumed this curriculum transformation process will add value to the nature of the products emerging from SHMS. However, this assumption remains empirically untested. The paradigm shift towards teaching and learning, anticipated dilemmas and near the death experiences associated with the transformational processes will begin to unfold as the model is implemented (Nohl 2014, Merizow1997, Freire 1972, Marsden 2010). The model though explicit in terms of the teaching and learning outcomes and delivery processes does not indicate how these challenges will be managed. An analytical examination of the implementation process is recommended to assess the value and impact of this model.

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