

## **A DISCOURSE ON EDUCATIONAL PRAXIS MODEL OF DEVELOPMENT EDUCATION**

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### **Abstract**

The paper argues that there is a need to have an (alternative) model for development education, a holistic conception of education that is not confined in instruction, classroom, and educational system. Such model encompasses the impact of development education on community, democracy, and citizenship in the framework of educational praxis. The paper extrapolates some major points of an educational praxis model of development education. These are educational praxis as the process of critical pedagogy (transformative education) towards community development (cultural transformation); educational praxis as anchored on experiential learning and progressive education; educational praxis as an educational philosophy; educational praxis as the internal measure of quality standards in higher education; and educational praxis as political liberalism. Once educational praxis is affirmed as political liberalism, such model exemplifies its radical progressive role given liberal democratic framework. Hence, educational praxis as a political conception rests on basic rights and liberties, promotes cooperative political virtues, advocates social cooperation and shared responsibility, values reflective equilibrium, facilitates public reason, enriches public political culture, challenges particularistic cultural traditions, and upholds objective political dialogue.

Keywords: educational praxis, development education, philosophy of education, political liberalism

### **Introduction**

Education is a human right. It is even considered as a primary social good. The entire society assumes moral obligation and social responsibility in providing education to all its constituents, based on the premise that it is through education that the fundamental values necessary for the maintenance of a human society are found. As a normative agency in the promotion of the common good, education is taken as a requirement in human life. Hence, society must formulate substantial principles and procedural mechanisms to

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ensure that there is equal access to education and at the same time educational excellence in all levels of educating the citizens formatively and normatively. Obviously, education takes priority in the distribution of benefits and burdens in the society. It is given and open to all regardless of social backgrounds (gender, status, religion, race, talent, and capacity). Since in principle education is not a privilege, institutions must make equity the first principle in educational provision and quality the nature of education.

Since education concerns itself with the transfer of knowledge from one generation to another, formation of human individual in terms of attitudes, skills, and competencies, progress and advancement of human technology, and development of new knowledge in the fields of sciences, arts, and the humanities, the concepts and principles, the process itself, and the relative outcomes of education must speak of and anchored on a certain development education framework. In the entire history of development education, some concepts and principles are merely pure idealism, others are for knowledge's sake, and some are for pure speculative adventures. Most of them can be conceived as intellectual elitism. Instead of improving the quality of life and enriching human civilization, seemingly there is a widening gap between classes of people, that is, the rich become richer and the poor become poorer. Hence, the nature of development education is put into question. Seemingly, development education has confined itself to the status quo. Education does not ensure qualitative human life, higher sense of well being, and deeper meaning of human existence.

Education, development education for that matter, is called to become idealist in principles and dynamisms but at the same time must be realist in considering socio-economic, socio-cultural, and socio-political contexts. Nonetheless, it must not demean being pragmatist for our situation calls for praxis. This redounds to the idea of holistic education. The idea of integrative wholeness in education speaks of considering the various aspects and approaches in education into a unified dynamic educational system. It is challenged to become constructivist in terms of framing and constituting aims, content, practice, and outcomes in development education. The

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ultimate guiding principle is that it should be an education that empowers and transforms.

The areas of transformative education are integrated knowledge, civic participation, and broader paradigm. This means educating students about social relations between communities, including issues such as social inequalities and power relations, and to empowering students to mobilize their communities to practice just alternatives to the status quo. Formation of knowledge and promotion of justice are interrelated. All efforts in instruction, research, and extension are infused with a conviction regarding the dignity of every human person and the responsibility to care for those who are suffering most in the world, delivering education to the least brethren. Transformative education is the praxis of social awareness and commitment along with the basics in education. It includes the development of a commitment for critical thinking, decision making and problem solving, and a commitment for social action.

Development Education becomes a medium for public reason in a democratic society and is seen to initiate, inspire, and transform communities towards collective human flourishing and at the same time foster social cooperation among the citizens towards social transformation. Such education, taken as a catalyst for change, harnesses transformative education for cultural transformation in the midst of various comprehensive doctrines, given reasonable pluralism in a democratic regime. The active dynamism of transformative education together with cultural transformation leads to spin off development education for qualitative educational effectiveness, given an institutional context for social transformation. This is the nature of educational praxis.

Educational Praxis is a philosophical, practical, and strategic process to effect action, cooperative thinking, and social transformation in society through transformative education for cultural transformation. It is philosophical, not in a sense of speculative or normative philosophy, but because of critical questioning which enables to give meaning to life and action. It is practical because it tries to propose alternative ways of restructuring our concept, method, and conception of development education. It is strategic because it provides a conceptual framework to effect social

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change. Educational Praxis as a model of development education is a philosophy that bridges critical pedagogy and community development through principles of experiential learning and progressive education, realizing transformative education and cultural transformation. Educational Praxis then affirms political liberalism.

**Educational Praxis is the process of critical pedagogy (transformative education) towards community development (cultural transformation)**

The structures, processes, and systems in education are designed not simply for the sake of education itself. Education is not perceived as an end in itself; it is taken as a hypothetical imperative. It becomes a means of society towards a social end. It should always be seen and interpreted based on its fundamental value. Education is conceived, harnessed, and institutionalized primarily for community development, making education itself a medium, a training ground, a locus for total human and community development. Education can never be separated from its social context. It has to respond to the varying socio-political, socio-economic, and socio-cultural contexts.

Education then must ensure parallelism, consistency, and harmony between the content and quality of education and the context of socio-political, socio-economic, and socio-cultural forces and reality in the society. Education must reflect society, challenge it, and initiate change in it. There should be no gap between theory and practice. Theories are generated out of facts and reality. Practices are but concrete realizations of theories. The roles of theories and practices are dynamic. They interrelate with each other. One is seen as incomplete without the other. They are not contradictory, rather complementary. Education must be concrete, research-based, and exploratory. It must fulfill not only the formative and the normative roles and functions but most importantly realize its transformative position. Education must challenge the status quo and critique social conditions. To do all these, education must instill and emphasize autonomy and nationalism to all stakeholders (students, faculty, personnel, and administrators). All must be concerned with development studies.



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Such critical pedagogy must bear a perspective that is collective, based on consensus and community development. It fulfills social transformation. Pedagogy is constructed given community context. Such pedagogy responds to the development needs of the community as a people. Ultimately, such critical pedagogy is evaluated based on how it has contributed to community development.

Educational Praxis is a framework of Critical Pedagogy to Community Development. Such praxis is defined by the synthesis of the two concepts.

### **Educational Praxis is anchored on experiential learning and progressive education**

Experiential learning is the process of finding and creating meaning out of experience, i.e., direct experience. It focuses on the learning process of and for the individual. It requires personal values such as self-initiative and self-evaluation. It is about creating an experience where learning can be facilitated. Its dimensions are analysis, initiative, and immersion. Generally, experiential learning is learning through experience. Specifically, it centers on the elements of experiencing, reflecting, and applying.

Progressive Education rests on the premise that humans are social beings who learn best in real life activities with other people. Education is shared in this sense. The entire educative process of experiencing, sharing, processing, generalizing, and applying primarily occurs in a social context, given dynamic human interaction. Progressive education emphasizes problem solving and critical thinking, group work and development of social skills, collaborative and cooperative learning, education for social responsibility and democracy, integration of community service in the instruction, and experiential learning.

Experiential learning in the context of progressive education is educational praxis. Educational praxis rests fundamentally on the dynamic relationship of cooperative thinking, action, reflection, and action. One is asked to think critically and cooperatively until a certain consensus-based action is reached for a shared experience subject to reflection for further action. Educational praxis is liberal in this sense.

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It tries to situate education where learners are active, dynamic, critical, social, reflective, and committed. Ultimately, such education is for the progressive development of democracy given responsible citizenship.

### **Educational Praxis is an educational philosophy**

Educational Praxis is a philosophical, practical, and strategic process to effect action, cooperative thinking, and social transformation in society through transformative education for cultural transformation. It is philosophical, not in a sense of speculative or normative philosophy, but because of critical questioning which enables to give meaning to life and action. It is practical because it proposes alternative ways of restructuring our concept, method, and conception of development education. It is strategic because it provides a conceptual framework to effect social change. Such educational praxis is taken given its criteriology, which is educational philosophy of action, cooperative thinking, and social transformation.

A philosophy of education must be a philosophy of action. Since education concerns itself with the transfer of knowledge from one generation to another, formation of human individual in terms of attitudes, skills, and competencies, progress and advancement of human technology, and development of new knowledge in the fields of sciences, arts, and the humanities, the concepts and principles, the process itself, and the relative outcomes of education must speak of and anchored on a certain philosophy of action. In the entire history of philosophy and in the comprehensive literature on education, there are concepts and principles that are merely pure idealism, others are for knowledge's sake, and some are for pure speculative adventures. Most of them can be conceived as intellectual elitism. Instead of improving the quality of life and enrich human civilization, seemingly there is a widening gap between classes of people. Seemingly, education has confined itself to ivory towers, maintaining the status quo, and the technology created out of those knowledge is not made popular to the various communities. Education does not ensure qualitative human life, higher sense of well being, and deeper meaning of human existence. Ethics, which is the foundation of

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education, is compromised by the educator, the educated, and the system of education itself. There is a need for a paradigm shift, emphasizing human (affirmative) action over human knowledge.

Educational philosophy of action then is all about people; they are aware of their context; they reflect on their aspirations; and they do action for social change. People optimize transformative education for cultural transformation. They harness cooperative thinking for social transformation. Educational philosophy of action is all about people empowerment.

Transformative education must be based on a certain mode of thinking. Such kind of thinking develops both the theoretical and practical reason, builds up critical judgment, hones higher order thinking skills, and at the same time forms a community of inquirers based on philosophical inquiry.

There is a great need then to improve the thinking of people to become more responsive to the challenges the duties of membership and citizenship entail. They should engage themselves in inquiry and philosophical discussions and consider significant topics that have implications on socio-cultural, socio-economic, socio-political spheres. When they are able to create a culture of communal dialogue where political opinions and civil concerns are debated, they become more aware and reflective on the relevance of the spheres to their common life, and thus their significance and roles to the basic structure of society. Through this, they do not only ascertain what truth really is, but that social goals and social aims that direct and regulate state of affairs are understood and assimilated. Hence, they become not only sensitive but also sensible, to social conditions that immediately ask for attention and in a certain sense require social and political changes. These things are done during the process of social construction natural in a community of inquiry.

People then are able to develop among themselves the ability to consider and agree on good and better decisions, good and better criteria, and good and better actions in the context of social construction. These extrapolations enhance or enrich, and strengthen people's social and political roles as members of their political community. They then can assess properly and measure fairly social conditions which can lead to development proposals and reforms.

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Education should not only form minds. It has to strengthen human reason. Reason must be able to validate itself. What would be its grounds for certainty or knowledge? Can reason look at itself as a whole? Can it realize its own limitations and delusions? Education has to pose the possibility of reason as a universal phenomenon, hence, the communicability of experience. It should consider the commensurability of human situations. It should also tackle how various discourses and disciplines, as well as particular arguments, do legitimize themselves. How do the various disciplines and courses prove that they are worthy of serious attention or that they should be viewed as reliable and authoritative? To what standards, protocols, values do and must discipline appeal? How do we judge whether our own thinking is reliable? What moves us to act or believe? When do we say that we are convinced and why? How do we classify reasons? Do we have criteria for what is reasonable? These questions need critical answers, and those answers must be based on a certain firm and consistent logic and a strong viable human reason.

Both the individual and society are in a process of creating each other towards social transformation. To facilitate social transformation, the individual must be subject to transformative education to become an agency of social transformation, which comes from the collective transformation of the individuals within that society. New forms of publics are based on open communication and serious dialogue. Social transformation develops out of communities of inquiry. These communities of inquiry create a critical consciousness, empowering people to question and critique social realities and challenge the situation effecting contextual social change in the process. People then see their role in transformation. They shall critique existing social reality, mobilize social transformation, review all carried out action, and re-plan future action given a political conception of justice as fairness in a liberal democratic regime.

Education plays a crucial role, as a powerful instrument, in the entire process of social transformation. There is already a growing resistance against the conventional view that education is chiefly a means for only improving the individual's own economic situation. All stakeholders in education must understand their position as agents of

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social change, serving the best interests of the community. Transformative education develops faculties and releases capacities to cultivate values, competencies, and knowledge that would enable people to contribute their share in building a just society.

### **Educational Praxis is the internal measure of quality standards in higher education**

Educational Praxis is an articulation of a quality assurance framework that can be used by higher education institutions given the values of relevance, academic atmosphere, institutional management, sustainability, and efficiency. The core concepts for institutional quality assurance both for intramural and extramural standards are cultural transformation, resource management, effective organization, strengthened partnerships, and transformative education. These core thresholds of educational praxis spin off transformation of societies through higher education institution taken as the critical mass for community development.

When resource management, effective organization, and strengthened partnerships are integrated with each other, transformative education intercalating with cultural transformation would result to quality transformation of higher education institution. Such quality transformation would lead the way to the development of communities and transformation of societies. As educational quality procedure, it shows both processes and outcomes for institutional quality assurance system for higher education institution. The institutional processes are transparent quality assurance management system, relevant institutional processes, academic formation mechanisms, normative institutional practices, and sustainable organizational capacities. These processes, when put in place, will in turn produce institutional outcomes such as full educational access, organized systems and procedures, research-based decisions, macrocosmic impacts, and strengthened institutional principles. This is a good set of criteria that would align quality assurance of both intramural and extramural quality standards. They are taken as the basis and/or origin of academic quality criteria, standards, and indicators. These substantive principles

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must be the focus of qualitative assessment and evaluation of self studies and extramural methodologies.

Cultural transformation can be perceived in two perspectives: first, in the context of the higher education institution itself beyond the 'outside' world, known as the institutional context; and second, given the context of communities 'outside' the higher education institution itself, known as societal context. Cultural transformation happens by virtue of the active interaction between these two contexts, even though communities 'outside' higher education institution is not really an 'outside world', for the higher education institution, which is at the same time cannot be alienated or taken as separate from society, forms part of the communities in a wider perspective, situating itself both socially and geographically. Hence, cultural transformation is a creative dynamism, a fusion of horizons, we may say, of the two creative dynamic forces, the intramural and extramural realities.

Cultural transformation can be taken as alongside transformative education and as a (concrete) form of transformative education itself. This means that academic programs are programmed always in relation to the development of communities, re-engineering education delivering and extending education to the marginalized sectors of society. Integration of instruction, research, and extension is a driving force and a transformative opportunity for the higher education institution to immerse with the communities, bringing education beyond margins. Hence, as a quality criterion, cultural transformation is a systems perspective domain of quality assurance, aligning operations and service to ensure consistency of practices, measures, and actions of higher education institution.

Cultural transformation requires visionary leadership, client-focused and community-based academic excellence, parallel institutional and people learning, valuing partner communities, partner institutions, and human resources, organizational agility, fact-based and innovation-driven management, and social responsibility and community ethics. Cultural Transformation creates better-lasting, long-term outcomes.

Higher Education Institutions are tasked to implement quality and equity in education. But this is not a complete mirroring of reality

in educational context for though every educational institution is challenged to provide access to everyone, it needs to face and resolve fiscal issues. Financing an educational institution takes center stage in the entire discourse of educational provision. It is a common fact that financial resources drive the entire operation of educational service. Fiscal management is the crucial issue for these educational institutions. It is common sense knowledge that all programs, projects, and activities of all higher education institutions depend entirely on their fiscal resources. This means that the higher budget allotment would mean higher realizations of the goals and objectives and therefore success rates are elevated. This presupposes that the lower fiscal budget leads to (very) limited accomplishments. Higher education institution must devise ways to bring order to chaos, generate timely revenue, control costs, create plans, maximize resources, manage projects, prioritize programs, and achieve objectives through stakeholder analysis, better understanding of potential, better understanding of constraints and opportunities, systematic assessment of outcomes and feedback, and assessment of the effects of intervention.

Organizational effectiveness is the concept how effective an organization is in achieving the outcomes such organization intends to produce. This must showcase clearly stated and appropriate mission, effective governance, efficient and effective administration, relevant, current, well-documented, and appropriately assessed programmes, established, documented, functional, and well-managed quality assurance system, responsiveness to change, and a system for formative and summative evaluation and reform. This covers rational goals, open system, internal process, human relations, competing values, fault-driven mechanism, and high performing system.

Academic quality recognizes partnerships and linkages as a major component of higher education institutions. Such partnerships and collaboration broaden the horizons and capacities of higher education institutions not only in transforming education but also in developing the partner communities. These are strengthened by ethics, accountability, and commitment.

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There is a seeming difficulty in defining the proper, if not the best, approach in the Philippine educational system because of the seeming differences in terms of objectives and goals of the various schools as seen perhaps on the various nature, setups, systems, and processes these schools adopt and sustain. The idea of integrative wholeness in education speaks of considering the various aspects and approaches in education into a unified dynamic educational system. It is challenged to become constructivist in terms of framing and constituting aims, content, practice, and outcomes in school education. The ultimate guiding principle is that it should be an education that empowers and transforms. Transformative education is the praxis of social awareness and commitment along with the basics in education. It includes the development of a commitment for critical thinking, decision making and problem solving, and a commitment for social action. Transformative education is educational praxis. All areas in higher education institution are key components of transformative education i.e. library, laboratories, student support services, and quality of teaching and research.

Every higher education institution should conduct self studies by a transparent quality assurance management system,, a mechanism wherein the higher education institution, setting its own criteria, standards, and indicators are based on the institution's articulated mission and vision. It is a given principle that all organizational endeavors and all institutional programs, projects, and activities must be done in cognizance and in coherence to explicit goals and objectives of the institution itself. Hence, such higher education institution is in the sole and best position to devise its own quality evaluation system. The institution itself shall define all aspects of quality evaluation system. This is a form of self-definition. All efforts are to be validated given the parameters set by the institution itself. The framework then is not to compete with all other higher education institutions but to manifest the institutional values and actualize them in the everyday routines and creative organizational presentations.

The problems identified are reconstructed to serve best the clients, the students. New programs are designed to correct, remedy, and recreate the areas for improvement. The institution considers its



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own socio-historical context, the purpose of its existence, the thrusts of the school, the highly valued traditions and core values, and at the same time new directions as the institution tries to revolve, evolve, and excel, as response to the new challenges of the social, political, economic environments. Institutional integrity and academic reputation as codes of honor, a culture of evidence and excellence in the light of ethics, and sustainable and viable operations are the long-term outcomes as a result of a quality assurance management system. Hence, we may say that a transparent quality assurance management system facilitates academic quality, and therefore educational praxis.

Given that every higher education institution has a unique character from all other higher education institutions, there are processes and mechanisms that are based on institutional policies and principles which are the source of the institutional identity. As such, these can be taken as the strengths and special features of the institution. Hence, they could be a source for institutional dynamism.

These relevant institutional processes must be highlighted, and when given emphasis, may set the conditions and pace for the growth and development of the higher education institution, which can be seen on how the institution integrates instruction, research, and extension, or on how the various interdependent divisions within the academic community are interrelated and interfaced such as the academics, culture, and administration, or on how the institution engages with the communities, or on how efficiency and effectiveness of the programs, projects, and activities are measured. To say relevant institutional processes would mean the dynamic interaction of academics, culture, and administration with each other for the realization and concretization of the institutional goals and objectives.

Indicators of academic quality are embedded on the various projects and activities as found in the major institutional processes. Consistency and adequacy are the major conceptual tools. The higher education institution in the principle of transparency and accountability shall subject its institutional processes to assessment and evaluation.

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Higher education institution should guarantee that students learn not only the basic attitudes, skills, and knowledge but more importantly the academic formation in its purest and complete form. We have said that the institution ensures academic formation mechanisms to provide holistic, constructivist, and transformative education. This encompasses the support services given to students. Since the focal point of higher education institution is the academic atmosphere and therefore academic excellence, service and operations serve as the major support mechanism to the development of clients and other stakeholders. A clear-cut well-defined functional academic formation should be formulated and implemented showing to the communities the major role of academic programs in these communities. To measure academic excellence is to measure service excellence and operations excellence. Relying solely to academic excellence does not make that education truly holistic and constructivist.

Academic formation mechanisms may be in the form of adopting a competency-based curriculum articulated in the course syllabi, implemented inside the classroom, and evaluated carefully, or it can be seen in how instruction, research, and extension are integrated in every course syllabi, both the general education curriculum and professional courses, or in the various academic interventions, remediations, and enhancements catering the various classifications and categorizations of students based on their capacities and competencies, or even the inclusion of co-curricular and extra-curricular requirements and student-initiated activities in the classroom interaction, or in how the vision and mission are demonstrated in all academic programs.

Quality assurance must always be anchored on academic formation mechanisms. The higher education institutions have the responsibility to showcase these formation mechanisms and how these are indeed relevant to the holistic, constructivist, and transformative education.

The biggest challenge for a higher education institution is to become mature in its services and operations. All practices as organizational habits, if they contribute to the optimization of the services and operations given both human and non-human resources,

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need to be translated to institutional normativity. This means that identified, recognized, and appreciated institutional practices must be a norm to the institution as the divisions, departments, and units do their operations and service. Higher education institutions then need to demonstrate what these norms are and how normative these practices are. Identity, character, and advocacy statements are shown through these normative institutional processes. These are the traditions showing mature instruction, visible community-based researches, and strong context-based community service.

In order for the higher education institution to maximize resources and optimize viable outcomes, organizational capacities must be defined first. Having a reasonably high standard of instruction, a highly visible research tradition, and a highly visible community extension program would totally depend on organizational capacities and their sustainability, especially the human resources component. A clear long-term comprehensive aggressive human resources management and development of the higher education institution must be a top priority since all processes would depend on the people defining the institution itself. These capacities are the talents, abilities, skills, and intelligences needed to pursue all institutional plans, targets, and directions.

These five quality assurance processes are the concrete forms of educational praxis which would realize educational quality for educational effectiveness given the institutional context. Once these processes are in place, outcome measures for quality assurance are viable and tenable, and these are full educational access, organized systems and procedures, research-based decisions, macrocosmic impacts, and strengthened institutional principles.

The primary goal of higher education institution is to form students with the highest possible level of transformative education preparing them to their chosen profession and field of specialization. When quality of education is assured in the higher education institution as proven through transparent quality assurance management system and with qualified, competent, and engaged faculty corps and staff by way of effective and diversified learning and teaching experiences, then access to complete educational advantage is provided.

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Corollary to full educational access is the necessity of instituting organized systems and procedures anchored on the relevant institutional processes and the results based on a transparent quality assurance management system. This shows how all areas of higher education institution are integrated and synthesized for procedural mechanisms accuracy, key results precision, and substantive systems organization. With this quality assurance outcome, service and academic excellence are parallel with operations excellence.

With academic formation mechanisms in accordance with relevant institutional processes, higher education institution needs to base crucial decisions on research. This includes all programs, projects, and activities, all levels and components of planning, and all assessments and evaluations, must be done according to the standards and rigors of research. When decisions are research-based decisions, improvements in institutional processes are expected and improvements in academic formation mechanisms can also be expected. Research-based decisions means objectivity and quality.

Given the value of academic formation mechanisms and relevance of normative institutional practices, the higher education institution can view itself through macrocosmic impacts. These impacts build up tradition of integrity and untarnished reputation, measure commitment to excellence, and level of sustainability and viability of operations. Such impacts guide and at the same time direct the plans, targets, and thrusts of the higher education institution. It is necessary and beneficial on the part of the higher education institution to conduct macrocosmic impacts to have an idea of institutional relevance and organizational effectiveness to the communities.

Full educational access, organized systems and procedures, research-based decisions, and macrocosmic impacts lead to educational praxis of strengthened institutional principles of the higher education institution. Guided by the mission and vision, in the context of self studies, institutional principles are affirmed, reviewed, and harnessed. This in turn will bring the higher education institution to strong sense of tradition and integrity and at the same time an untarnished reputation. This in effect will demonstrate institutional excellence.

**Educational Praxis is political liberalism**

Educational Praxis is a political conception. It rests on the fundamental premise that the nature of the human person and that of society is both political. The human person is said to be political because it is rational and at the same time reasonable and that the human person has the capacities for a sense of justice and at the same time sense of the good. The democratic society is said to be political because it is built based on social unity through political stability. Rational and reasonable citizens come together to transform society into a liberal public democratic regime. Such political conceptions explain the political relation and connection of pedagogy and community. Educational Praxis is the key for the connection and relation of education and society.

Educational Praxis is a political constructivism. It is intended to establish and enhance democratic culture in a liberal democratic constitutional regime. It is fundamentally constructed for the transformation of communities. It is based on political principles of democracy, citizenship, and participation. It sees democracy as the most viable social and political system but tries to challenge that system to improve such system. The challenge is based on educational praxis itself. Such transformation can be realized through educational praxis that rests on basic rights and liberties, promotes cooperative political virtues, advocates social cooperation and shared responsibility, values reflective equilibrium, facilitates public reason, enriches public political culture, challenges particularistic cultural traditions, and upholds objective political dialogue.

*Educational Praxis rests on basic rights and liberties*

Basic rights and liberties are called as basic because they are the foundation of values citizens must have to exercise their moral powers and as they deliberate and relate among themselves to arrive at common and public principles of justice. They are considered as the groundwork of human personality because citizens are able to assert themselves in the society through these principles. They are required for social cooperation. Social cooperation starts from a clear perception of how to conceive human persons as rational agents of

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political conception and as reasonable citizens trying to adjust themselves with others' rights and liberties. Since these basic rights and liberties are so important in the development of human persons and society in the context of the public political conception of justice, they must be given a special priority. They must be given special priority because in a society defined by reasonable pluralism, comprehensive doctrines disagree with one another in their pursuit of their respective conceptions of the good. The divisive conflicts could be resolved if all subscribe to the significance of a set of basic rights and liberties and that all see these rights and liberties as the starting points in the deliberation of pursuing for the good especially in matters of society's concerns. Since we cannot give priority to all conceptions of the good emanating from the reasonable views, a set of basic rights and liberties could act as standard in the decision process. There is a need to set a principle to resolve significant issues concerning rights and liberties and conceptions of the good.

Educational Praxis sets the principle that there must be a priority of rights and liberties over the good. This priority must be recognized because this is the only acceptable way of dealing with both the fact of reasonable pluralism and the need for stability for the right reasons. The right sets constraint in the acceptable conceptions of the good life.

There must be a specification of these basic rights, liberties, and opportunities and putting priority to them especially with the claims of the general good and perfectionist values. There must be measures assuring all citizens adequate all-purpose means to make effective use of their basic liberties and opportunities. Possible measures could be securing these rights and liberties to the constitutional essentials and matters of basic justice. These basic rights and liberties must be continuously asserted and reiterated constantly in order for reasonable and rational citizens to become fully aware of their rights and liberties and the society as a whole always respects and considers these rights and liberties in the policy formulations and in the adoption of state laws.

Once the recognition and appreciation of these rights and liberties are wide then we can say that social structures are structured in such a way that citizens are able to exercise their moral

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powers and thus able to participate actively in the state affairs. Citizens must be conscious of these rights and liberties and hold them so dearly to attain a well-ordered society based on a fair social cooperation.

*Educational Praxis promotes cooperative political virtues*

In order to acquire social cooperation from reasonable citizens, there must be an encouragement of cooperative political virtues. These cooperative political virtues are unconditional cooperativeness, virtue of reasonableness, sense of fairness, spirit of compromise, readiness to meet others halfway, political trust, and toleration. They are the political values that all reasonable citizens can reasonably be expected to endorse. These political values enable all reasonable people to pursue freely and realize their visions of the good life.

These political virtues must always be encouraged especially when parties concerned in the deliberation are conflicting with one another with regard to the issues needed to be resolved. The main reason why we enter in the first place into social cooperation is in order to allow ourselves to be part of the social schemes and structures for mutual advantage and human flourishing. We engage in deliberations, public reason, debates, dialogues and other ways of social discussions with the sole purpose of having agreements, and look and wait for the social arrangements and resolutions that would enhance more social relationships especially in the basic social structures. This entails unconditional cooperativeness. Because of our desire of resolving significant issues in our social life and our willingness to end major conflicts, conceiving unconditional cooperativeness as a political value is a requisite. Regardless of the levels of conflict and how the pace of deliberations become apparent, given the difficulties attached in resolving seeming irreconcilable conflicts, all participants must not give up unconditional cooperativeness because this political value suggests openness of the parties concerned in putting finality to raised issues and points of contention.

Virtue of reasonableness is another one. Educational Praxis can be secured and maintained as long as citizens remain as reasonable. Reasonable citizens can be counted on to maintain their commitment

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to the political values. Only when citizens become reasonable is there reasonable pluralism in society and Educational Praxis be sought and sustained.

Another political value that needs to be respected and cherished is the sense of fairness. Citizens seen as reasonable are perceived to be fair. To be fair would mean participating in a social discussion observing sincerity and trust as they engage in such public deliberations. All will not do actions that would elicit suspicion on the level of commitment rendered by them. They will not do actions that would affect the process of the deliberation and resolutions. They will not do actions that will not contribute to the decision of issues.

Spirit of compromise is a political virtue that guarantees sense of fairness. This is because both parties try to consider and identify the strengths and weaknesses of all their claims and assess them as objective as possible until they arrive at agreements favoring all parties involved. This would entail certain forms of sacrifice because parties need to give up some of their ideas, preferably those that can be conceded, to resolve issues. This spirit of compromise suggests the value of meeting halfway. This value opens possible negotiations under fair conditions and finds the middle ground. This demands political trust and tolerance.

All these political values are geared towards the development of social cooperation. It is only through these political virtues that the value of Educational Praxis can be highly appreciated.

*Educational Praxis advocates social cooperation and shared responsibility*

The idea of cooperation is significant because it serves as the common rational and reasonable virtue of parties engaged in doing shared policies, mutual agreements, and viable collective scheme of principles and standards. But such value should be incorporated into society's public political culture and therefore part of progressive development of a democratic society in a constitutional framework. In other words, a sustainable population should see the value of cooperation as a principle of facilitating liberal social democracy. A democratic framework within a culture of cooperation under and supported by public political culture avoids wars and major social



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conflicts. Ideas of peace and social justice are operational only in the context of cooperation.

Educational Praxis revolves around the idea of social cooperation and in effect the idea of a well-ordered society. Such idea of cooperation is based on a certain fundamental political conception of the human person. It is how we view persons that reflect how we perceive society and thus the complex interactions of individuals relating and interacting in a society under a specific political framework influenced by social, political, and economic institutions. Seeing human persons as having the capacity for a sense of justice and the capacity to decide upon, to revise, and rationally to pursue a conception of the good, they, as moral persons, are able to formulate rules that are understandable to them, and are also said to have both the capacity and the desire to cooperate on fair terms with others for reciprocal advantage. Human persons are reasonable and rational, and free and equal.

The idea of well-ordered society given such political conception of the human person is stipulated because of the principle and culture of cooperation existing among persons seen as citizens. The political notion of the person should be known to them for them to understand the social role and moral obligation attached to their social and political identities. The constitutional democratic society should at the same time perceive citizens with their moral powers and with their social and political identities. Seeing them now as political in the sense that they try to have cooperation in the midst of conflicting and incommensurable comprehensive doctrines, they exert efforts to arrive at common points of understanding and in that sense a certain level of meeting of minds.

As free and equal and reasonable and rational, they should value and find the meaning of cooperation in their state of affairs. Social conflicts should immediately be mediated and resolved not through (drastic) violence or (justified) wars but through compromise and negotiation under the principle of cooperation. Cooperation is the key word for conflict resolutions in a way that is objective and rational.

The key to the achievement of Educational Praxis actually depends on the level of cooperation extended by the free and equal

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citizens and reasonable groups and associations. Such cooperation must be genuine and includes promise and conviction. Cooperation just for the sake of cooperating and not realizing the categorical influence it makes in shaping the fate of modern democratic society will not lead to Educational Praxis. Expressions of cooperation must be true and faithful. People must realize that we enter into cooperation to have a well-ordered society. The strength of cooperation can be measured on the kind and on how serious the level of conflicts between and among comprehensive doctrines. Free public reason is the idea that would strengthen cooperation in a fairly maximal level. Cooperative thinking would be a very big help.

One starting point of cooperation is the idea of tolerance. Toleration can be seen as narrow expression of cooperation since it can vary and change and the level of stability can be affected in different degrees. But human history proves that declarations of tolerance avoid major conflicts within a plural society and between and among nations. This means that toleration can be an example that men enter into cooperation to solve and avoid major conflicts. In that sense, toleration can be the starting point of cooperation in a well-ordered society. Social unity begins with tolerance. But it must not stop there rather to be extended into deeper and broader social schemes and political grounds. We should go beyond tolerance.

#### *Educational Praxis values reflective equilibrium*

Educational Praxis considers the different moral and non-moral claims on certain justifiable issues, arrives at common points of understanding, resolving conflicting views, and formulating the best principles of justice which are justified by rules and principles of logical, moral, and political levels of coherence. Reflective Equilibrium is a coherence account of justification. In reflective equilibrium, the main points and areas of certainty for Educational Praxis are identified. It is the basis of Educational Praxis.

Reflective Equilibrium is the end-point of a deliberative process in which we reflect on and revise our beliefs about moral or non-moral claims. It consists in working back and forth among our considered judgments or intuitions. It comprises particular instances or cases and principles or rules that we believe govern these intuitions or

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judgments. It contains theoretical considerations that we believe bear on accepting these considered judgments, principles, or rules. But it also includes the possibility and capacity of revising any of these elements if necessary to achieve adequate coherence among them.

Reflective Equilibrium is both construction and justification. It is a method of deliberation to construct such principles; it is a construction which at the same time justifies those principles of Educational Praxis, which is a process of working back and forth among the key shared ideas in the public political culture in a democratic framework.

We need to enhance Reflective Equilibrium, given the various conflicting and even incommensurable philosophical, religious, and moral doctrines have major part to play in building, broadening, and strengthening Reflective Equilibrium. By considering these various conceptions, best reasons are articulated, best arguments formulated, and best ideas conceived. If we are serious in looking for, finding, and having best principles of Educational Praxis, we must consider all points of view in the political to construct a conception of Educational Praxis that is subject to universalizability and applicability. It is only when great minds and great ideas interact that great thoughts are imagined and expressed.

*Educational Praxis facilitates public reason*

There is a need to have political, social, or psychological forces to bring about Educational Praxis, which must be seen in its operationalization in actual practice in a constitutional democracy. Political groups with agenda of promoting their common and specific interests must engage themselves in public political fora projecting, presenting, and substantiating their claims and arguments that concern matters of basic justice and constitutional essentials and other policies affecting and influencing political culture to come up with best thinking, best reasons, best process, and best arguments. Relying on the capacity of human persons to posit the idea of objectivity in their political actions and behavior in the sense of the motivation and goal of such actions is common welfare. The idea of objectivity is expressed, recognized, and validated when the best

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ideas are articulated in public debates and open argumentations in a democratic society are seen as part of the community of inquiry.

The notion of objectivity is where the role of public reason can be seen. The citizens follow the public principles and communal laws because all subscribe and endorse to these laws and principles regardless of their social backgrounds and comprehensive doctrines they dearly hold. No one can be exempted from these laws and principles because these are the things that all citizens render to be objective principles of justice. Everyone knows and feels that everyone must follow, subscribe, and endorse them. Everyone also knows and feels that once he violates any or all of these principles, he must be accountable to the whole community who subscribes to these principles of justice. The comprehensive doctrines will not find the exercise of public objective principles of justice offensive because they know and feel that they are the results of public reason.

The identified and expressed forms of objectivity out of public reason would serve as the groundwork of policymaking and legislative agenda, when such kind of public reason is addressed and shown; critical examination and evaluation of ideas are made; and therefore there is affirmation and revision of comprehensive doctrines conforming to the idea of the political posed by Educational Praxis.

#### *Educational Praxis enriches public political culture*

Educational Praxis is possible and realizable depending on the level of development of certain political culture. Such political culture must be supported, adopted, and fostered by the public majority of citizens in a well-ordered democratic society. The principle is the higher the political efficacy, the higher the political culture; the higher the political awareness of citizens, the higher their involvement in governance. This suggests a deeper meaning of membership, and hence elaborate meaning of human welfare in terms of rights, needs, and goods, and a justified sense of security against alien forces. Such case posits a broad sense of human rights, liberalism, political will, and social justice. With such kind of political culture, citizens look for justifications of definite political actions, demand common claims, and engage in various free and public inquiries and discussions of

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ideas making society a (political) community of (political) inquiry given reasonable pluralism. Therefore, there is a high regard for civic competence, a strong presence of civic duty, high sense of political efficacy (both of internal and external efficacies). In this sense, there is a strong public political culture. But the lower the level of political culture of democratic society would mean the lower the possibility of Educational Praxis.

Political Culture refers to the distinctive and patterned way of (political) thinking, the inherited set of widely held political belief systems (shared ideas about what is true), values (shared ideas about what is good), attitudes, and symbols, about how political and economic life ought to be carried out in a society, and hence define the environment of the political action. It embraces the total political activities and programs in a society and understands the prevailing modes of (political) thought and behavior. It includes empirical beliefs of people (how things are), their normative beliefs (how things ought to be), and emotional commitments of the general public (both the positive and negative feelings).

Economic systems, historical roots, religious orientations, and legal-sociological factors influence such political culture. It is perceived in terms of the content of people's culture (the organization of production, the structure of the family, the structure of the institutions which express or govern social relationships, and the characteristic forms through which members of the society communicate), the extent or level of people's homogeneity (or heterogeneity), the existence of (multiple) subcultures, and the presence (or absence) of a set of common cultural cognitions, values, and emotions.

Political culture cannot be measured because it is highly subjective but can be understood and considered in terms of the manner of political representation, extent of citizens' participation, structure of the government organization, framework of decision-making process, content of political issues, community demographics, and character of geographical region. There is a need to say that political culture is the most difficult to analyze, explain, and project because the interaction of the citizens and their varying social backgrounds

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influence it. It affects the body politic both of the national and local governments.

Enriching the public political culture could guarantee Educational Praxis. To change and sustain (and in that sense to enrich) political culture is through political socialization that which shapes political attitudes. Political socialization can be expressed through explicit communication and moulding of and reflection on significant human experiences. The reasonable and rational, free and equal citizens, and the government structures as agents of constructing political culture through political socialization shape attitudes toward authority, increase sense of political competence, provide skills for political interaction, establish different perceptions, affirm values and roles, and direct aspirations. Educational Praxis can be secured and maintained if there is a high level of public political culture. The level of public political culture can be enriched through promotion of social cooperation, enhancement of reflective equilibria, and the use of public reason.

#### *Educational Praxis challenges particularistic cultural traditions*

Educational Praxis must consider the prevailing principles and concepts already operating in a community rooted in customs, norms, practices, and traditions, which are the bases of moral and non-moral rules and standards of such community. Liberal principles created not based on communal values would not be considered and supported by the members of such community. In order for liberal principles to gain allegiance and respect, they must be able first to prove themselves as general principles in conformity with the communal principles.

Cultural traditions are thoughts and practices that have endured over generations and have a solid hold on the psyche and behavior of people. Their practical identities are their personal identities. Communal precepts and law govern them. Adopting a certain set of principles different from theirs is only possible if such principles are seen as alternative principles; if they find such principles as having equal bearing or consisting of higher values that would preserve or enhance their culture and traditions. In either case, there is still a difficulty of converting or shifting from culture-based principles to

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liberal principles especially that culture-specific values and beliefs are hard to discharge and liberal principles involve much risk.

But cultural traditions are dynamic; they are subject to change and therefore can be remade. Members of such community have the capacity to revise values and beliefs perceived as not good, or upon due reflection need to be discarded. Upon seeing the merits and/or demerits of those beliefs and values, they are to look for, reformulate, or consider new beliefs and values to correct the limitations generated or imposed by communal principles. Such perception of society suggests that members of such community are not really and totally hostile to other principles, and in that sense, to the liberal principles. The mere fact that they are able to have communal values governing their lives, they can see the value of those liberal principles as something that is not really alien and different for they see the weight and depth of the value of those principles. They will recognize that the substance of these principles is not really different from their own principles. They will be encouraged to provide synthesis of the two sets of principles, and appealing to their rationalities and common values, they will be able to have, hopefully, a reformulated set of just principles. They are to rethink their particularistic cultural traditions, consider other cultural traditions, bearing other liberal principles universal in character, and construct alternative particularistic cultural traditions.

In case the communal principles are directly opposite to the liberal principles, the idea of public reason can be a big help. The two (ideological) camps must agree with each other to enter into cooperation to resolve major issues in the question of Educational Praxis. Educational Praxis could be a big guide in facilitating stipulating forms of agreement. The main point in this discourse is that culture has a special place and whatever liberal principles are thought of, it should always bear the belief systems and value structures of community, which are in themselves strong statements. To fail to consider the cultural traditions is to theorize with no grip and with no support.

Educational Praxis must not demarcate itself from the role of community just to claim universality and validity. It is recognized that the notions of reasonable, critical pedagogy, and public reason are

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firm bases of Educational Praxis. But the viability and strength of influence of communitarian values cannot be underrated since all notions, theories, and principles are tested and validated by the community relative to people's culture and values. Liberal claims can be reached even through recognition of communitarian claims.

*Educational Praxis upholds objective political dialogue*

Dialogue is a conversation between two or more persons with differing views; the primary purpose of each participant is to learn from the other so that he can change and grow. The reason why we ought to listen to the different views and positions of others is the fact that no one has the monopoly of truth. In dialogue, we must maintain open-mindedness or reasonableness. We must view reality from the others' perspective and believe fully well that they also have their story to share. Dialogue is the avenue whereby we can live with others and live harmoniously well with them. It is not confined to communication or exchange of knowledge. It offers opportunities for persons to engage in meaningful political interaction and practical engagement. It provides venues for the common concerns at the grassroots level and in everyday life.

Part of being an independent view is to provide a neutral ground in order to make it conducive for better discourse and deliberations. Such situation would entail the involved parties to enter into dialogue characterized by political values such as looking for possible rational compromise, devising short-term or long-term conflict resolution(s), and arriving at certain mutual agreements by valuing the idea of fairness. In order to come up with possible outcomes, all parties must believe in the value of an objective political dialogue. In dialogue, two opposing parties try to resolve fundamental and major issues that motivate them to continue and fight for their cause. It is in political dialogue that they try to listen from each other's claims and sentiments, understanding the nature of conflicts, and identifying the possible all-purpose remedies to such claims and other contentions.

The objective of political dialogue is to identify and redress existing forms of injustice. Such idea significantly appeals for the concept of objectivity to share experiences and exchange claims, attitudes, and background beliefs, which bend or obscure various



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forms of injustice. The idea of objectivity should be responsive to the social and ideological pluralism of society. Such kind of objectivity requires parties to frame their demands for justice in terms of a conception of justice acceptable to all participants in the political dialogue. Such political dialogue as fair and genuine is objective in a sense that it is not a bundle of subjective perceptions but a result of objective (intersubjective, transpersonal) minds, regardless it is affected by self- or group interests.

Decisions in such dialogue are made for the good of all. There is a call for sacrifice. There are two things need to be given emphasis here: the process of deliberation itself and the substance of the deliberation. First, the process of deliberation must be clear and must be understood by all to avoid doubts, strange inclinations, and possible uncooperative behavior. Rules need to be set, agreed upon, and convince all parties to recognize, be subjected, and follow religiously the agreed rules that will guide and define the deliberation itself. Those rules must be deliberated, discussed, and finally evaluated by all concerned. Any stipulation and pronouncement of any rule must be agreed upon to avoid any form of bias and other possible problems that may occur during the deliberation of the main issues. In case there are some doubts or the formulation is defective or the wording is not appropriate or subject to further interpretations, they must be immediately raised to have progressive way of constructing rules. These rules must express the sense of justice all parties provide and have. Second, the substance of deliberation must be both generally and specifically formulated. The objectives and goals of the deliberation must be made well known to all parties concerned and understood in such a way that they know how to present, deliberate, critique, attack, and evaluate the content of the deliberation. Given the rules created and devised, the parties must stick and restrict themselves to the issues at hand. Any agreements should be stated evidently and unmistakably. If points of disagreement are not resolved, the deliberation must be appreciated by the parties and make another schedule to discuss further these disagreements. Such pause in the meeting may give the parties enough and exact time to clear their minds, become more reasonable, and realize the weight and significance of the arguments

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of the other parties. But the discussion must be progressive. They must avoid repetitively questioning the same points in the discussion table. They must deliberate issues one at a time and slowly progress until a certain level of consensus is reached. The parties must be ready and willing to sacrifice some of their claims, and in that sense, know how to engage in compromise, which is not merely a *modus vivendi*, but higher than *modus vivendi*. Given these two things at hand, the process and content of the deliberation, institutionalizing objective political dialogue is possible and realizable.

### **Conclusion**

Educational Praxis Model of Development Education is a holistic conception of education that is not confined in instruction, classroom, and educational system. Such model encompasses the impact of development education on community, democracy, and citizenship in the framework of educational praxis.

Educational praxis is the process of critical pedagogy towards community development. It is anchored on experiential learning and progressive education. Educational praxis is an educational philosophy of action, cooperative thinking, and social transformation. It is the synthesis of transformative education and cultural transformation. It is the internal measure of quality standards in higher education.

Educational praxis is political liberalism. As political liberalism, Educational Praxis Model of Development Education exemplifies its radical progressive role given liberal democratic framework. Hence, educational praxis as a political conception rests on basic rights and liberties, promotes cooperative political virtues, advocates social cooperation and shared responsibility, values reflective equilibrium, facilitates public reason, enriches public political culture, challenges particularistic cultural traditions, and upholds objective political dialogue.

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