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Christian Education for Enhancing Adult Meaning-Making Oriented for Transformation in the Contemporary Context of Indonesia

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(abstract)

The indoctrination model governed by a dictation method, which mostly dominates adult Christian education in the church of Indonesia, limits the space of adults' meaning-making activity. Therefore adults are not creative enough to respond towards various situations brought by the contemporary context of the Indonesia they encounter every day. The adult meaning-making model oriented for transformation emerges as a response against indoctrination model and its dictation method. This model promotes critical thinking, mutual dialogue, and transformation as main characteristics of adult meaning-making activity.

Key words: adult, meaning-making, indoctrination, dictation, critical thinking, mutual dialogue, transformation

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References


I. INTRODUCTION

There are four major crises that define the contemporary context of Indonesia. These are: the culture-religious crisis, branded by inter-religious and inter-cultural conflicts; the economic crisis, mostly appearing in the continuous increase in poverty while corruption gnaws at all aspects of the nation; the discrimination against minorities, manifesting as a result of discrimination against the second gender, minorities in religion and ethnicity, and those who are living with HIV/AIDS; and the last, the ecological crisis, confronting Indonesia with the issues of tectonic activity, deforestation and illegal logging, over exploitation of marine resources, and high-pollution. These are the various catastrophes which the Indonesian churches and Indonesians - including adult church members - encounter in today's setting. A few of them might be involved as an oppressor within these circumstances, while the rest of majorities are oppressed. The question now is how to help adults construct meaning out of these circumstances through the education that the church offers.

There are at least three main features that describe the adult Christian education run by the church in Indonesia. Primarily, model of adult Christian education is indoctrination. The learning and teaching process of adults in the church is still controlled by remnants of the colonial pedagogy. The indoctrination model is rooted deeply in the long history of Indonesia. The Indonesians' experiences for hundreds of years under the occupation of colonizers, such as Portuguese, Spanish, Dutch, British and Japan apparently left deep scars. Identity as a people who have been colonized is embedded deeply in the Indonesians' hearts, minds, and attitudes. According to Tilaar (2011), the pedagogy of colonialism is an oppressed pedagogy; it aims to provide an education which is needed by the native people so that they can be a source to be exploited, and its model emphasizes much on subordination, which instilling an attitude of inferiority and implicit recognition of the authority of colonizers. The oppressed pedagogy has been influencing the education system, both formally and informally. Teaching and learning process are mainly characterized by the transmission of knowledge from the teacher to the learners. Indoctrination weakens and limits the development of critical thinking and the creativity of the adults since they have to follow those who instructed them. In the setting of the Indonesian churches, those who are considered as authority figures are the ministers, such as the pastors and the church school teachers. What they have said is held by the adults as truth. Thus, there are certain teachings and beliefs that have been passed from generation to generation without being criticized.

Secondly, adult Christian education is inadequate. The first issue that emerges here is that education for adults is mostly understood in term of preaching, and most of the preaching emphasizes the cognitive aspects of memorizing the Bible and church doctrine as high priority. Consequently, the adults might follow literally what they have been told, or if they do not agree, they simply ignore it. Furthermore, as a part of the church educational ministry, programs such as like catechetical classes, Bible study classes, seminars, and trainings are also arranged by the church for the adults. Nevertheless, the teaching and learning of these arranging programs are dominated by one-way communication, solely emphasizing on knowledge transfer, and do not properly answer the needs of the adults. The second issue emerging here is a common understanding that adult Christian education is not a necessary thing that needs to be done by the church. The church considers the adults as individuals who are mature enough (in age) and already know everything (in knowledge), so they do not need to be educated to any significant further extent.

The last characteristic of adult Christian education is the gap between the Bible and the adults' day to day life. The teaching and learning materials, including sermons, are more focused on the content of the Bible (and the Christian doctrine) and less attention
is paid to the everyday life of the adults where intolerance, violence, injustice, severe massive poverty, and natural calamities are occurring from time to time. Concerning this, Nuhamara (2008) argues that, the reason why the church program (including sermon) for the adults is mostly oriented on religious matters and ignores the secular things is because the Indonesian church is influenced by platonic tradition. Consequently, the adults often find difficulties in bridging the gap between what the Bible has said and their struggles in everyday life. They are struggling to interpret the Bible in their present time, in the here and now.

II. NECESSITY OF MEANING-MAKING PARADIGM IN THE CONTEXT OF INDONESIA

Based on the description above, this study investigates how meaning-making appears to be a new paradigm for adult Christian education. It also takes into account the possibility that the way adults obtain and make meaning will be different to their past experiences and to the approach they were educated by. Our dealing with the necessity of meaning-making paradigm brings us to encounter the following significant questions: What is the primary purpose and content of adult Christian education? How can Christian education liberate adults from their position as an object to be a subject of education? How can Christian education empower adults to be an agent of transformation? How can Christian education help adults to bridge the gap and to build correlations between the Bible and their everyday life? In the following I would like to elaborate my argumentations of the necessity of meaning-making paradigm for adult Christian education.

Firstly, the contemporary context of Indonesia requires a new educational paradigm that promotes freedom for adults to think critically on the context in which they are living, on the life experiences they encounter every day, and on how they can connect these two with the Word of God. Adult meaning-making paradigm can break through the culture of silence which manifests in the indoctrination model and dictation method. Instead of simply receiving knowledge from the authority figures, critical thinking challenges adults to carefully examine the context and to find out a meaningful suggestion in a more comprehensive way.

Secondly, meaning-making paradigm challenges as well as criticizes the effectiveness of the one-way communication approach in the teaching and learning process of adults. It opens the way for active interaction, enabling adults to enhance their relationships and become more actively involved in a mutual dialogue. It creates room for interpersonal relationship to take root and grow richly in the learning and teaching process.

Thirdly, the contemporary context of Indonesia requires a change towards a better environment. Thus, education that is conducted by the church should have a clear target. It is not simply to teach the Bible and continuously hand over previous church’s traditions to the next generation without being able to criticize and correlate all this to a contemporary context that might require something different from the past. Following the four pillars of learning proposed by the International Commission for the Twenty-first Century, I will then contend that adult Christian education is not only about learning to know, but also about learning to do, learning to live together, and learning to be. Here, transformation, as a purpose of meaning-making model takes its place. Thus, adult Christian education should be oriented for transformation, as otherwise it can only remain within the status quo.

Based on the context above, in the following I am going to outline significant characteristics of the adult meaning-making activity based on the correlative understanding between Robert Kegan’s theory of meaning-making, which is grounded in constructive developmental psychology, and Daniel Schipani’s concept of education oriented for transformation, which is rooted in liberation theology.
Robert Kegan belongs to school of constructive-developmental psychology, which is oriented towards the movement of meaning-making development (Kegan, 1982). Meaning-making is the human beings’ activity of naming, interpreting, and dealing with the circumstances, either good or bad, that they encounter in day to day life, and later becomes their life stories. In his two well-known books, The Evolving Self and In Over Our Head, Kegan examines how the individuals’ ways of knowing grows and changes over the passages of their lives. He understands this process as an evolution of meaning; an effort by individuals to construct meaning by interpreting their life-experiences.

Kegan (2000) grounded his theory on the notion of a “transformation” to qualitatively distinct stages of meaning-making. He distinguishes the transformation from information. For Kegan, transformation cannot be limited only to learning new information or skills; it moves beyond information. Transformation is not only about what; but about how. It is about changing the very basics of our meaning-making system; making it more complex and flexible to handle various demands and uncertain things. Back to the adult education system in Indonesia now days, it is more intensely focused on informational learning styles rather than transformational learning. The church’s educators are busy with activities to fill their adults with as much information as they can through their preaching and lecturing. Furthermore, Kegan argues that knowing about where the person is in her or his phases of meaning-making will give us a clear understanding about whom we are interacting with (Kegan, 1982; Kegan, 1994; Magolda, 1999; Carlsen, 1988). This is a key point to developing right understandings about others, who are our spouses, children, students, clients, members of religious community, etc. By using the metaphor of “bridge,” Kegan claims that, we as teachers or facilitators need to give respect to the

learners’ way of meaning-making, step in their shoes, and wisely listen to their stories which describe their rich experiences.

According to Kegan (1982), meaning-making includes two significant activities: the drawing and redrawing between self and other. We can see here that the self could not stand alone; it is a meaning-making system in relation with the world and the other. Kegan (1982) understood every evolutionary balance as an evolutionary truce and each of it is a temporary solution for the lifelong strain between the longings for inclusion and distinctness. Kegan divided the development of individuals into five orders of consciousness, ranging from the early childhood until late adulthood. In the following, I will briefly describe the third and the fourth order of consciousness which explained the adult.

The third order of consciousness. In this stage, individuals have the ability to master their needs, interests, wishes, and desires, and they are more oriented towards becoming mutual, emphatic and reciprocal in a relationship. They are capable of solving the hypothetical problems that they encounter with logical thinking, being able to self-reflect on their actions and the actions of people surrounding them, and dedicate their lives for people or things greater than their own. That is why this stage is called the “Socialized Mind.” Furthermore, in this stage individuals internalize societal norm into their personal life, and start to affiliate with some organizations. They engage themselves to the different social groups and become involved in activities such as peer groups which give many influences on their lives. They have formed their identity, belief and moral system from some form of reference figure. Through relationships with others, individuals at this stage try their best to fit into other people’s expectations and opinions, and struggle to become what others want them to be. The main purpose of them is to please and satisfy others. According to Kegan (1982), the type of conflict that is often faced by the individuals is not the contradiction between “what I want and what someone else wants; but it is about what I want to do as a part of this shared reality.
and what I want to do as part of that shared reality” (p. 96).

The fourth order of consciousness. Individuals at this stage are able to organize everything. They are capable of evaluating different perspectives of themselves and others in an objective way. Unlike the third order of thinking, individuals in the fourth order are able to separate themselves from all the authoritative, references, and others’ opinions, and start to set up a new independent self. That is why, the moving of self from “I am my relationship” to “I have relationship” marks this stage (Kegan, 1982). According to Kegan (1982), the dominant characters of this order are “sense of self, self-dependence, and self-ownership” (p. 100). A self-dependence which occurs through evolving leads individuals in this stage to form their self-identity. When adults reach this stage, they are able to independently define who they are. They will consider others’ opinion, but it will no longer determine who they are. They have been able to create a self which exists even outside of their relationship to others. They are no longer dependent on what others said about them, but rather it is the time for them to develop their own system and decide to choose an ideology to govern who they are in the world.

Kegan (1994) used the metaphor of “leaving the family faith” to describe the transformation from the third to the fourth order (p. 266). What he means by proposing the concept of “family faith or religion” is not something that is related to denominational affiliation to which the family belongs to, but rather, it is about the fundamental system that was passed down by parents to their children through their presence at home — meaning it could be beliefs, rules, values, ideals, prejudices, etc. (Kegan, 1994). By saying this, Kegan does not mean that we have to extremely leave our family religion, but it is more about how we develop a new relationship to our family religion. It is also about how I myself find a new way of practicing what my family still believe in and it is about how I myself no longer depend on and influenced by other family members.

The brief explanation above brings us here to highlight some significant issues relating to the Indonesian context. Firstly, Kegan’s theory shows how adults as well as children and adolescents actively construct their own experiences to become meaningful. This theory assists us in mapping the mental demands encountered by adults, and provides an appropriate way/context to help them respond to these demands. Therefore, adults should be presented with information that fits their meaning-making stage. I assert that this theory certainly criticizes and frustrates the general understanding among Indonesians that adults no longer need education because cognitively they already mature enough. Secondly, Kegan’s theory of meaning-making is not primarily based on intelligence and it is less (or non-) hierarchical in its stages. It shows the moving from simplicity to a more complex system of the mind. From this point, I would like to insist that this theory helps us appreciate adults in a more specified way based on the order they are in at the present time. The theory helps us to accept adults for whoever they are, and to recognize their preference. Such hierarchical stages of development segregate individuals eventually by placing someone in a higher or lower level than others. Lastly, Kegan’s theory of meaning-making puts in balance the self (individual) and others (society). By giving emphasis on a social dimension as well as cognitive and affective aspects. Kegan shows us that the society (an environment surrounding) plays a significant role and responsibility for an individual’s development of mind. It designates a specific way of making sense of our environment, including relationship and responsibilities.

Aside from the several implications above, some question on this theory still remain. This study recognizes that Kegan’s theory of meaning-making was rooted in a setting that is totally different from the Indonesian context. It was born out of the modern context of America with specific demands that need to be addressed there. Kegan addressed both the American adult’s private and public life, and the issues that come along such as parenting, partnering,
working, healing, dealing with gender difference, and learning. These are the issues that Indonesian adults encounter as well in their daily life even though their way of approaching might be different from the Americans since their cultures and life values are vary. In general, Kegan’s theory deals with the common problems of Indonesian people, but it does not deal with the specific problems which Indonesian adults encountered. At this point, I would like to argue that from the perspective of Asia, particularly Indonesia, this theory lacks in issues like pluralism, cross-culture, ecology, etc., as a context where people are embedded in. Furthermore, in the next section, we will turn our attention to Daniel Schipani and his concept of education for transformation.

IV. DANIEL SCHIPANI AND EDUCATION FOR TRANSFORMATION

Daniel Schipani, a well-known Mennonite theologian and religious educator, based his theory on Paulo Freire’s understanding of critical pedagogy and his conscientization method. He gave particular attention to the content of liberation within Christianity. To him, the church and its educational ministry should orient itself to the gospel of the kingdom of God. Education itself is aiming to transform people of God and to help them to achieve freedom as a human being. In the following, this study will discuss Schipani’s understanding of education for transformation limited on the pedagogical issues of purpose, context, process, and figure of the teacher and learners.

Purpose - From the liberation theology and education perspectives, Schipani (1997) articulates the goal of Christian education as “sponsoring human emergence in the light of the reign of God.” (p. 26). This statement of purpose corresponds to what Kegan meant with meaning-making, particularly it associates to the third and the fourth of Kegan’s orders of consciousness. Schipani understood sponsoring as the responsibility of the church. As a primary setting for transformative learning, the church should be a place where everyone can feel and find security to grow in fullness as a human being. By using the term sponsoring, he invites the church to imitate Jesus’ way of educating people which are “compassionate initiative, hospitable inclusiveness, gentle empowerment, and a generous invitation to partnership and community” (Schipani, 1988, p. 99; Schipani, 1997, p. 26). By following what Jesus already did, the calling of the church is to welcome everyone without any exceptions to be members of the community (Schipani, 1995). For Schipani, by treating everyone in an equal way, the church recognizes the existence of the oppressed, and places them as equal partners as well as resource persons in the church educational ministry.

Furthermore, from the context of oppression, Schipani defines human emergence, first and foremost, as a process through which someone regains his/her freedom (humanity) as a human being. Schipani associates human emergence to the life of Jesus which brings liberation for all people, and through His ministry, He liberated people from all bondages. He views the resurrection of Jesus as a picture of human emergence through which human being achieves complete and definitive freedom (Kegan, 1988). Human emergence, for Schipani, requires two holistic processes, formation and transformation, which both take place alternately and continuously in someone’s life. These two interwoven concept call the church to maintain the balance between formation and transformation rather than over emphasize only on one aspect.

Lastly, since the goal of this educational ministry is oriented to the ethical, political, and eschatological vision of God’s kingdom, human emergence should happen in the light of the reign of God. Schipani (1988) states, “The reign of God symbolizes divine liberation and re-creating action, will, and promise as depicted in the Bible and, mainly, in light of the ministry of Jesus” (p. 83). The gospel of the reign of God should not be defined in a very exclusive
way. It also cannot be limited in any social system or even the church. Rather, it opens a way for the growing of individuals as well as community, and directs individuals to fully participate in social transformation. The gospel of God should drive individuals and communities to move beyond the boundary.

Context - For the purpose of transformation, Christian education in the church has implications for every segment of the life of the congregation. It includes worship, community and missions work. Christian education plays a major part in facilitating worship through which we acknowledge and celebrate the reign of God. It equips to forming a community where people from different backgrounds are treated in an equal way and unite as a family of God. It also empowers the community for mission - a way the community proclaims the reign of God with its presence, deeds, and words (Schipani, 1988, 1997, 1997a). Furthermore, since the church plays a significant role in social transformation, then, when it designs its congregational Christian education, the church should be consistent with its responsibility for the world. The church needs to confront growing poverty, inequality, injustice, violence and discrimination against minority, marginalization, and alienation. In the midst of these contexts, the church is called to sponsor a social transformation in order to increase freedom, justice, and peace (Schipani, 1995).

Teacher and learners - Education for transformation places the teacher and the learners as equal partners whose life journeys and experiences are considered as valuable resources in the learning process. The relationship among them is mainly characterized by a partnership which is free from domination of one over another. Partnership requires both sides, particularly the teacher, to move beyond the borderline that takes place in many different ways, such as the teacher’s power and authority to control everything, feeling of fear of teachers that occurs inside students’ hearts and minds, and unwillingness of the teacher to change their style of teaching, which is mostly dominated by monologue rather than dialogue.

Partnership should be viewed as a great chance through which teachers and learners come to realize that they are practitioners of liberation and freedom. For those who are already accustomed to the authoritarian system, this shifting paradigm might be hard initially.

Process - Schipani has adopted the three essential movements of liberation theology, particularly the Brazilian Catholic Action methodology, to become his method of education for transformation. They are: “seeing (or observing), judging, and acting” (Schipani, 1988, pp. 162-169; Schipani, 1997, pp. 33-34). By engage in it, the church exists and is alive. But, if the church ignores it, the church is already dying and slowly is going to die. In turn, this study will discuss each of the movement. Seeing/observing can be defined as a concrete participation in context. By being together and listening to the voices of people who are oppressed and marginalized, we map the real context. The oppressed and marginalized are considered as main sources; they are subjects rather than objects of transformation. Through direct engagement and mutual conversation, we allow people to tell their stories and experiences, their perceptions on situations they face, and the ways they deal with their circumstances. The second movement is judging. This movement leads to mutual conversations between realities that people face and the Christian faith. People search for guidance from the Scripture and try to interpret it in their current situation. Thusly the issue of hermeneutics of liberation emerges in this movement. It helps people read the Bible with their own eyes. Mutual conversations that take place in this hermeneutic context employ three significant components: people, the context of people, and the biblical text. The main themes that commonly emerge in this conversation are “the figure of God as a good parent of life and helper of the oppressed, liberation from bondages, prophecy of a new world that is free from suffering and includes the kingdom of the poor, and the church as a welcoming place for everyone” (Schipani, 1988, p. 165). In this movement, everyone has access to the Bible, to read it, and let it
speak to their own particular context. The Bible is no longer dominated by biblical scholars, academicians, and ministers; rather it belongs to all people, whomever they are. The last movement is acting. This movement leads to discerning and deciding an appropriate pastoral action which is in line with people’s hopes for liberation and God wills for peace and justice.

Based on the exploration above, this study argues that liberation theology with its education for transformation is still relevant to the multiple contexts of Indonesia today, particularly for the development of adult Christian education in the church, which emphasizes teaching for meaning-making. The multi-context of Indonesia needs people who are concerned with what is going on in the society as well as in the church. Critical thinking and reflection stimulates adults’ awareness, and helps them become more sensitive to the surrounding circumstances.

V. CORRELATIVE UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN ROBERT KEGAN’S THEORY OF MEANING-MAKING AND DANIEL SCHIPANI’S CONCEPT OF EDUCATION ORIENTED FOR TRANSFORMATION

This section would like to bring Kegan’s theory of meaning-making into a dialogue with Schipani’s understanding of education oriented for transformation under the issue of adult meaning-making activity. Kegan defines meaning-making as human beings’ activity of naming and interpreting life experiences. The activity of naming and interpreting takes place during the lifespan and they begin with the very simple ways of knowing and moving toward a very complex one. Schipani describes meaning-making as moving activity towards critical consciousness. Once individuals get into the level of critical consciousness, they are able to understand themselves and their surrounding objectively; it enables individuals to free themselves from any shackles.

Furthermore, both Kegan and Schipani have placed adult as subject of the meaning-making process. Kegan defines adult as a meaning-maker. As a meaning-maker, the adult is described as a self-authorship person who has characteristics of an autonomous individual, an independent thinker, active observer, and criticizer of surrounding circumstances. On a particular level they are able to construct their meaning toward realities they encounter and are no longer dependent on outsiders’ perception. While in Schipani’s concept of education oriented for transformation, the adult is defined as a history maker. Originally, this concept is developed from the context of oppression and suffering in which human being is treated as no more than object of history. In his design of education for transformation, Schipani makes a significant shifting paradigm marked by the moving of adult from object to become subject of history. He views the process of education as sponsorship, and he defines sponsor as someone who has a lot of experiences in life and journey of faith and willing to share with other fellows what she/he has. The word “sharing” should be understood in terms of being with others, walking together, encouraging each other, and enable others to be involved in. This understanding leads us to move from the old definition of education as a merely process of indoctrinating, pouring out, and filling someone up with the doctrine/set of beliefs/knowledge, to the new definition of education as process of emancipation and empowerment. Sponsorship enables adults to criticize themselves and surrounding circumstances, and to actively work for personal as well as societal transformation.

In addition, this study considers issue of equality, which is the background of Schipani understanding, to be brought here as well when this study deals with the concept of adult as subject. From Schipani (and all other liberationists) point of view, everyone is equal in the sense of being a human being (have eyes, ears, lips, blood type, etc.), so they need to be treated in equal ways as others. But, when we put it in term of Kegan’s theory, then it needs to be
understood in a different way. From Kegan's perspective, every person cannot be treated in equal ways since they approach life from different levels of ways of knowing. One person differs from others. That is why by using the metaphor of bridging the bridge, Kegan calls us to give respect to everyone's way of meaning-making, so it will help us to have a better understanding of people's thinking, attitudes, behaviors, expectations, and support them through the way they are supposed to be treated. In sum, Schipani deals with commonality of human beings, while Kegan deals with specific issue of human being's way of meaning-making.

Furthermore, I argue that the correlative understanding between Kegan and Schipani can be viewed through three significant characteristics: critical thinking, mutual dialogue, and transformation. The first correlative understanding is critical thinking. Kegan defines critical thinking as an individual's ability to criticize their previous perceptions of life experiences and open their mind towards the new information. According to Kegan's order of consciousness, this ability emerges during the third and the fourth level. This is the capacity to stand on "my personal voice" without denying or ignoring voices of others; it is an ability to move from dependent into independent mind. Schipani, in a different way, views critical thinking as an achievement, to break through a culture of silence. Critical thinking enables people to see realities in a very comprehensive way, and to give responses to it under the guidance of the Word of God. Both Schipani and Freire have defined critical thinking as a cooperative process - one that calls for active participation among teachers and learners.

The second correlative understanding is mutual dialogue. From the perspective of the meaning-making theory, mutual dialogue can be defined as reciprocal conversation between persons and cultural context where he/she is embedded in. This is based on the assumption that meaning-making involves both individual and social dimensions. Here, we can see that mutual dialogue requires openness, commitment, and respect for each other. Since Kegan does not limit it to any specific context, the mutual dialogue can take place anywhere. For Schipani, mutual dialogue takes its place among members of community. Education for transformation through its mutual dialogue renews as well as affirms the position and role of the teacher and the learner. It is no longer a subject-object relationship. Instead, it calls for equality and partnership in the teaching-learning process which takes place in the mutual dialogue.

The third correlative understanding between Kegan and Schipani is founded on the issues of transformation. By following the constructive-developmental theorists, Kegan defines transformation as a shifting frame of reference. What is shifting, specifically, is the way people identify something and make meaning on it. They named it epistemology, or knowing. Kegan denotes this framework as orders of consciousness. Their evolution which occurs during an individual's lifespan is determined by the interaction between developing forces in individual (internal factor) and surrounding circumstances (external factor), mainly from social complexity. Transformation occurs as the process of moving from one order of consciousness to the next order of consciousness. This is a moving paradigm from simple to complex ways of knowing. While for Schipani, transformation is understood as moving forward to achieve better life and human dignity. Transformation involves two dimensions, individual and communal, and both are interrelated and inseparable. For Schipani, personal transformation will bring a good impact on society, and conversely. In terms of education, transformation is defined as a situation in which awareness is raised, so people are capable to free themselves from shackles that bind them. The ending point of transformation is that human beings acknowledge their identity.
VI. ADULT MEANING-MAKING MODEL ORIENTED FOR TRANSFORMATION: EDUCATIONAL VOCATIONS FOR ADULT CHRISTIAN EDUCATION OF THE CHURCH IN THE CONTEMPORARY CONTEXT OF INDONESIA

Based on the correlative understanding above, I am going to propose “Adult Meaning-Making Model Oriented for Transformation” as an alternative model for adult Christian education in the contemporary context of Indonesia. Firstly, the Adult Meaning-Making Model is an alternative model of the teaching and learning process for adults, and aims to enhance the adult meaning-making oriented for personal and social transformation. The aim can be achieved through these three significant objectives: (1) to develop adults’ capacity for critical thinking and consciousness so that they are able to understand themselves and surrounding society in a very comprehensive way; (2) to build a healthy mutual dialogue which oriented for interpersonal relationship and equal partnership; and (3) to support adults attain personal transformation, which later on helps them to produce a positive influence for the surrounding environment so that societal transformation can take place as well.

Secondly, this model insists that context plays a major role in adult’s meaning-making. It takes place within and outside the church and it occurs through different forms of relationship among meaning-makers, both formal and informal. Within the church, the context of the Adult Meaning-Making Model takes place in church community and relationships among members, church worship service, teaching, pastoral counseling, and mission. Outside the church, society includes many different institutions, for instance, family, working place, school (for continuing education), etc., become the context for this model.

Thirdly, since the main source of meaning-making is emphasized on (life) stories therefore this study organizes contents of this model into three major sections of stories: (1) everyday life stories of meaning-makers/community of meaning-makers; (2) life stories of people in the Bible; and (3) Indonesian heritage stories (from Christian/non-Christian faith). In practice, these three categories of stories must be considered together since they complement each other and interrelated.

Fourthly, this model calls the church to renew as well as to affirm the position and role of the teacher and the learners. There should be a shifting paradigm from top-down relationship to equal relationship and partnership in the teaching-learning process. From the Adult Meaning-Making Model’s point of view, the teacher plays certain tasks: fostering critical thinking, being a dialogical teacher, and leading for transformation. While the learners play two significant tasks: the first one is to be an active contributor. Through their activities of telling and listening, they get themselves into the process of meaning-making; and the second task is to constantly exercising their critical thinking. Exercising critical thinking takes place in activities of examining, questioning, and revising their perceptions.

Lastly, based on careful study of Kegan’s and Schipani’s theories in the previous parts, this study argue that the adults who engage in the meaning-making process eventually discover they are nurtured by five central steps looked for to determine the process of the Adult Meaning-Making Model. They are: (1) emancipating which denotes to how far the church let adults get involve freely and actively in the process that the church has designed; (2) engaging which refers to a quality of relationship that is built among adults and teacher and denotes to how adults embedding deeply in the context and issue of surrounding realities; (3) evaluating which carries an interpretive task that challenges adults to understand their experiences under the Light of the Word of God; (4)
encouraging which is understood as a spiritual (and emotional) touch in the journey of meaning-making and it takes place in acts of supporting, stimulating, inspiring, enabling, and empowering each other; and (5) acting which is a calling for adults to put their understanding into a concrete action. These five distinctive steps orient for bearing critical thinking, mutual dialogue and transformation.

VI. CONCLUSION

This study calls the Indonesian church to move from their old educational (theological) paradigm and seek for a new one that fits both the adults and their needs, and the contemporary context of Indonesia. This study strongly requests the church to minimize the indoctrinating approach to adult Christian education in order to maintain the balance between formation and transformation. A correlative understanding among these two traditions, constructive-developmental psychology and liberation theology and education, has assisted to formulate the appropriate Christian education model for adult Christian education in the church in the contemporary context of Indonesia. The correlative understanding between these two theorists bears three significant characteristics identifying the Adult Meaning-Making Model. The model proposes here is built on the concept of the adult as a subject, a meaning-maker, and an agent of transformation. This status places adults as masters of their own identity creation. The model also renews and affirms the position and the role of the teacher and the adult learners that there is no longer subject-object relationship, but instead, it calls for equality and dialectic partnership in the teaching-learning process. Lastly, the model places adults’ life stories and experiences as significant sources for learning together.

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