

Institute for Christian Teaching  
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**HOLISTIC EDUCATION IN  
TEACHER-STUDENT RELATIONSHIPS**

by

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## HOLISTIC EDUCATION IN TEACHER-STUDENT RELATIONSHIPS

### I. INTRODUCTION

The industrial age is coming to an end and a systemic ecological worldview is now emerging. Crucial to much of science today, this view is a fundamental premise upon which the cutting edge of research in every major discipline is based. This new worldview is global, holistic, and integrative. Its primary mode of thinking is whole-brain thought, incorporating both inductive and deductive strategies, while integrating both rational and intuitive modes of knowing.

The discovery in physics has affected politics, economics, society, culture, and education etc. and facilitated change of paradigm. The change of scientific paradigm promotes the paradigm of education. It results in the holistic paradigm as growing paradigm.

As education is undergoing rapid and dramatic changes, there has been a certain call for a return to the nature of education.

Our conceptualization of learning, teacher-student, methodology, usefulness, and worth of education to individuals will change as such.

The school factor of greatest influence is the quality of the teacher. The teacher is not a mere purveyor of information, but a role model, a caring person, an inspirer of vision, and many other things that are central to christian education.

The purpose of this paper define what holistic education to give its background, and its implications of teacher-student relationship in SDA education.

### II. The meaning of holistic education

The word 'holistic' is derived from 'holos' in Greek and the meaning of it is 'whole', 'health', 'heal', 'holy'. The synonyms of 'holistic' are ecological, contextual, systemic, and environmental.

The holistic paradigm emerged as a vibrant and coherent intellectual movement in the 1980s. Then, a new theoretical perspective began emerging in science, medicine, philosophy, and social theory that enables us to describe an alternative worldview that is shared by these dissident educators. This perspective is known as 'holism'.

Holistic thinking rejects the Cartesian/Newtonian reductionism that permeates modern attitudes toward nature, humanity, technology, and social and economic life. In place of the scientific objectivism that splits observer from the observed, mind from body, and the spiritual from the material, holistic thinking views every phenomenon in relation to its meaningful context. Reductionism is atomistic and fragmenting - it dissects and analyzes phenomena into their presumed component parts, holism asserts that the whole is always greater (more complex, more integrated, more meaningful) than the sum of its parts. Wholeness is inherent in all phenomena. Everything that exists is connected, related, to everything else, and is therefore meaningful.

In other words, the holistic education is rooted in holism or the concept of an interconnected reality. A particular emphasis is the connection between one's life and external world.

The word 'holistic' has been used as 'holistic health', 'holistic medicine' since in the 1970s. Those who are arguing that holistic medicine that the wholeness of life to body and to mind can not be separated, later this holistic concept to education, and the word 'holistic' education has been used.

### III. The characteristics of holistic education

The emphasis of holistic education is the connection between one's life and the external world. That is, holistic education is an effort to honor these intricate and subtle connections in human experience that the reductionistic worldview has sundered - connections between persons, between the individuals and the community, between humanity and nature, between the material and the spiritual.

#### A. The characteristics of holistic education.

R. Miller describes the characteristics of holistic education.

1. Holistic education nurtures the development of the whole person. It is connected with intellectual as

well as emotional, social, physical, creative/intuitive, aesthetic, and spiritual potentials.

2. Holistic education revolves around relationship between learners, between young people and adults. The teacher-student relationship tends to be egalitarian, open, dynamic in holistic settings, rather than bound by bureaucratic roles or authoritarian rules. A sense of community is essential.

3. Holistic education is concerned with life experience, not with narrowly defined 'basic skilled.' Education is growth, discovery, and a widening of horizons. It is an engagement with the world, a quest for understanding and meaning. This quest goes far beyond the limited horizons of conventional curricula, textbooks, and standardized exams.

4. Holistic education enables learners to critically approach the cultural, moral, and political contexts of their lives. It recognizes that cultures are created by people and can be changed by people if they fail to serve important human needs. In contrast, conventional education aims only to replicate the established culture in the next generation. Holistic education, then, is a radical endeavor.

Holistic education is not a new orthodox. It is a richly varied approach that honors the inherent creativity and uniqueness of individuals - and communities. It is my belief that the holistic worldview in the paradigm inclusive and flexible and dynamic enough to meet the tremendous ecological and human challenges confronting us in the twenty-first century.

GATE(Global Alliance for Transforming Education) conference declares 'EDUCATION 2000/HOLISTIC PERSPECTIVE'. The content of the declaration is very important to SDA education.

### *1. Educating for human development*

The possibility of growth that a human is born with should be developed.

### *2. Honoring students as individuals*

It must be recognized that the students are the most precious beings not exchangeable with anything. Recognition of the gifted, the learning disabled, and problem makers must be changed.

### *3. The central role of experience*

The education is the products of experiences. The learner has to get learn that the world is wonderful and wonderous.

### *4. Holistic education*

The wholeness of curriculum should be focused. Educational institutes and policies should converted holistic education.

#### *5. New role of educators*

The new recognition of new role of educators is needed. A education model for educators is needed to facilitate inner growth and creative recognition of educators.

#### *6. Freedom of choice*

life is a succession of choices. In the process of learning, the learner must be given many opportunities of choice of selection.

#### *7. Educating for a participatory democracy*

All citizens should participate in politics and education management for model of true democracy education in the authentic meaning.

#### *8. Educating for ethnic and cultural diversity and global citizenship*

The education in this global age should include the education of existence that embraces all types of culture. The starting point of the global citizenship is in ecological way of thinking.

#### *9. Educating for earth literacy*

The learner needs to feel the awe of life. The education of earth atmosphere is needed. The learner should recognize that all the people in this world are interconnected and are responsibilities for all types of life on earth..

#### *10. Spirituality and education*

As a spiritual being. One's individuality is expressed through the gifted ability, intuition, and intellect. The spirituality of holistic education is different in christianity. It is important in terms of the pursuit of authenticities of education and the education extension

## IV. The Principles of Holistic Teaching and Learning

Holistic education is to link together various education orientations. Three orientations - transmission, transaction, transformation - are described here together with how they might be viewed in a holistic manner.

### A. Balance

Holistic education can be conceived using different frameworks and metaphors. Here are three aspects of holistic education: balance, inclusion, and connection.

From BALANCE perspective, the intellectual development of the child is kept in appropriate relationship to the child's emotional, physical, aesthetic, and spiritual development.

Below is a list of some factors in the curriculum that need to be kept in balance.

Individual	Group
Content	Process
Knowledge	Imagination
Rational	Intuitive
Quantitative	Qualitative
Assessment/Evaluation	Instruction/Learning
Technology	Program
Techniques/Strategies	Vision

### B. Inclusiveness

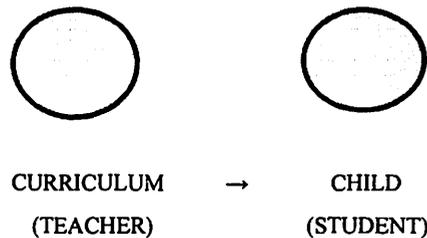
New paradigm shift tend to be balance, inclusion, connection. There are three positions of curriculum structure. Transmission position and transaction position based atomism and pragmatism. Transformation position based holism. Holism is a new paradigm for 21st c□□□. The philosophical foundations for holistic curriculum is concerned with all aspectives of curricular activities such as holistic learning, teaching, and evaluation. Holistic learning tend to be transformational in nature because it encourage diversity and creativity in the student response. To develop a growth scheme, the teacher should develop potential abilities and innate self.

### *1. Transmission position: Atomism*

Transmission learning is characterized by the student receiving and accumulating knowledge and skills. Learning in this form can occur by reading a text or listening to a teacher's explanation. Knowledge is seen as fixed rather than as process, and is usually broken down into smaller units (for example, atomistically) so that students can master the material. Transmission learning is common when we begin to learn a particular skill. For example, in order to drive we have to learn the basic laws and rules of driving and thus we study the driving handbook so we can pass the written test.

In learning to perform a skill, transmission learning tends to be initiative and repetitive. The young child learns to talk by imitating the speech of his or her parents. In learning a sports skill, such as hitting golf ball, we watch the instructor and then repeat the skill over and over.

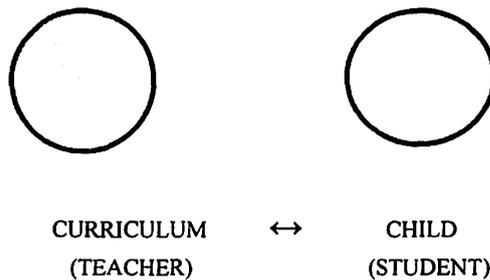
Historically, the transmission position has a long history and has two strands. One strand is the behavioral, the second strand has focused on students studying the standard subjects taught in a traditional style (for example, lecture and recitation). In either case the relationship between the curriculum (teacher) and child (student) can be characterized in the following diagram:



In the behavioral strand this relationship is known as stimulus-response, S-R, while in the traditional subject curriculum the teacher r text conveys information to the student. In both cases there is essentially a one-way flow, or transmission, of skills and knowledge. There is little or no opportunity to reflect on or analyze the information.

## 2. Transaction position: Pragmatism

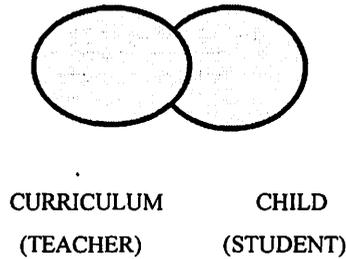
Transactional learning is more interactive although the interaction is mainly cognitive. The student in transaction learning is often solving a problem or pursuing some form of inquiry. Knowledge is not viewed as something that is fixed in small units but as something which can change and be manipulated. The scientific method is often used as a model for transaction learning. The transaction position can be characterized by an emphasis on dialogue between teacher and student.



However, this dialogue stresses cognitive interactions since analysis is stressed more than synthesis and thinking more than feeling. Teaching models which are based in the transaction position usually have some set of procedures for inquiry and problem solving. Sometimes these procedures are rooted in a particular discipline such as physics or history, or alternatively they are more generalized as found in various thinking skills models. The learner is generally seen as rational and capable of intelligent behavior or as problem solver.

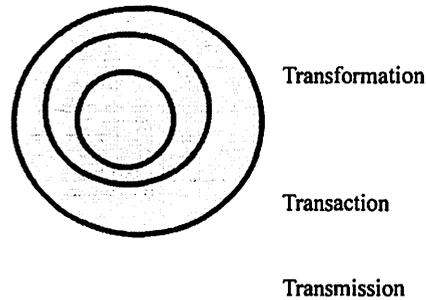
## 3. Transformation position: Holism

Transformational learning acknowledges the wholeness of the child. The curriculum and child are no longer seen as separate but connected. (Curriculum  $\cap$  Child)



The aim of transformation position is the development of the whole person. The student is not reduced to a set of learning competencies or thinking skills but is seen as a whole being. Certainly when we view the student as less than a whole person, we diminish the chance for authentic learning to occur. The teacher working from this position will use strategies such as creative problem-solving, cooperative learning, and whole language which encourage students to make various types of connections. The connections make learning personally and socially meaningful to the student.

In the transformation position we are also concerned about links with the other forms of learning. J. Miller This might be diagrammed as shown below. (Transformation □ Transaction □ Transmission)



Here the transmission position is viewed as the smallest domain while the transformation position is the most inclusive. Again, inclusiveness is another important factor in holistic learning. As long as the form of learning does not discriminate or diminish the individual in any way then it should be included. This diagram is certainly not the only way the positions can be related, but the one shown moves to a more holistic stance.

### C. Connections

Holistic education also involves exploring and making connections. It attempts to move away from fragmentation to connectedness.

The focus of holistic education is on relationship.

Linear Thinking and Intuition  
 Relationship between Mind and Body  
 Relationships among Domains of Knowledge  
 Relationship between Self and Community  
 Relationship to the Earth  
 Relationship between self and Self

### V. The Holistic Education to the SDA Teacher-Student Relationships

Teachers-students in conventional education are wide apart. In many countries the relationship between teacher and student is still one-sided. The open education that has come into vogue during the three decades of the 20th century supports transaction position. In holistic education, the relationship between teacher and student is complementary and includes transmission position and transaction position.

Transmission position is widespread in the school and the church. Especially in Korea, we approach education of faith through transmission position. In the Transformation position a teacher and a student are co-work. They share the contents with each other. They undergone changes each other in class.

The school factor of greatest influence is the quality of the teacher. The teacher is not a mere purveyor of information, but a role model, a caring person, an inspirer of vision, and many other things that are central to christian education.HOLISTIC EDUCATION]

A Pastor and a teacher are of equal gifts in the Bible. Ellen G. White remarks that "in the highest sense the work of education and the work of redemption are one..... To aid the student in comprehending these principles, and in entering into that relation with Christ which will make them a controlling power in the life, should be the teacher's first effort and his constant aim. The teacher who accepts this aim is in truth a co-worker with Christ, a laborer together with God."<sup>(2)</sup>[BALANCE]

The key text for our topic is Genesis 1:26-28:

"The God said, 'Let us make man in our image, in our likeness, and let them rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the livestock, over all the earth, and over all the creatures that move along the ground.'"

"So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them."

"God blessed them and said to them, 'Be fruitful and increase in number, fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air and over every living creature that move along (on) the ground.'"

This passage provides a basic statement about the creation of the human race--of human beings. What you have here in this story of Genesis 1 is a description of three relationships. We are an upward relationship with God. We were created in the image of God. That means God is superior. We are directed toward God as his authority and it's what you say 'mentor-client' or 'mentor-disciple' relationship.

We find all three types of relationship in the Genesis story. First, there are mentoring relationships where A is the teacher, the guide. For example, father-son relationships. Second, discipling relationship--a client relationship. In this relationship you grow and develop with a mentor. Third, friendship.

As Parker Palmer says we must think of interactive 'learning community' as a fundamental context for 'knowing truth' in the deepest and fullest sense. Without interactive 'learning community' proper education what we want can't be accomplished.

In the development of learning ability, Hilda Taba, for example, see learning as:

Thought Systems = Blueprints

Concepts = Framing

Basic Ideas = Room Dividers

Facts = Furniture

Thought systems are cognitive blueprints that show how the various concepts, ideas, and facts fit together within a given discipline. Concepts provide the conceptual framework, i.e., mental model, that gives shape and meaning to the thought system.

Similarly, I have found the following analogy helpful in understanding teacher-student and teaching-learning. Caine and Caine see learning as:

making connections;  
see patterns and wholeness;  
seeing a 'BIG PICTURE'; and  
finding meaning

Mentor : Disciple = Teacher : Student = Pastor : Layman

In the Basis of BIG PICTURE

The curriculum needs to be presented 'whole to part' with emphasis on big concepts. This means that each subject or learning area relates to and contributes to an illumination of the 'big picture'. Major strands within the subject, and key concepts in each strand should fit consistently within this frame of reference.

Teachers will generally behave in an interactive manner with students, functioning as facilitators and mentors.

Students should be viewed as creatures in the image of God who are thinkers, decision-makers and actors, with diverse intelligences, gift, and emerging theories about the world.

## VI. CONCLUSION

Life, community, balance and harmony, interconnectedness, and interrelationships in the SDA church are the key words in the early part of the 21st century.

The school factor of greatest influence is the quality of the teacher. The teacher is not a mere purveyor of information, but a role model, a caring person, an inspirer of vision, and many other things that are central to christian education.HOLISTIC EDUCATION]

In this perspective, the curriculum will be presented 'whole to part' with emphasis on big concepts. Students will be viewed as creatures in the image of God who are thinkers, decision-maker and actors, with diverse intelligences, gifts, and emerging theories about the world.

These education would begin to meet the deepest needs for connectedness and wholeness - integration - in the lives of our students.

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