

Learning centred around Self, a Catalyser in Post-Merger Organizational Change & Integration

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Abstract

This article is about Action Research effort over 3 years, in a business organization which had gone through a recent merger between an Indian & European manufacturing organizations. The attempt is about organizational Integration between merged entities, with contrasting cultures, orientations work practices and world views. Article covers the entire cycle of Diagnosis, Intervention, Execution and Measuring influence of learning Interventions. Based on organizational diagnosis of two entities, a comprehensive learning Interventions were designed and executed. Article highlights in detail one learning intervention focussed on integration of contrasting world views and transition challenges.

Attempt is also made to measure the influence of learning Interventions on the learners, based on Transformative Learning theory of Mezirow (1978). Empirical data from Learning Activity Survey developed by King (2009) indicated, learning interventions significantly influenced Learners Transformative Learning experiences. Particular learning intervention focussed on contrasting orientations and opposing world views showed highest incidence of influence, maximum of 70-90% of learners experienced incidence of Transformative Learning.

Introduction

Author in the role of OD consultant over the last 20 yrs, in his practice observed, leaderships & organisations go through struggle of integrating & aligning demands of the business and people's readiness for change. More so during, merges & acquisition transitions experiences of organizations and people. In this process many leaders in order to catch up with missing opportunities, rely on quick fix methods, pressure tactics, incentivising, restructuring, golden handshakes and all this with their own style of passive coercion and sometimes even outright coercion. Soon organisations realise that these things run out of steam, and the process of change becomes very bitter & painful, both for the leaders and people, leaving behind new set of issues arising out of such tactics (unintended consequences), with this, they use more of the same approach out of desperation, for only things to get worse.

What is crucial is the appreciation of recently growing knowledge about role of 'Self' in enabling person to initiate one's own volitional energies constructively. At the heart is, *how to enable people in the organisation not only voluntarily embrace change but even master change proactively and willingly*? This article is an attempt to demonstrate process of creating catalytic conditions for volitional change through an educational cum learning intervention, as part of Action Research

1.1 Organizational Context

This paper is part of change consulting work done in a business organization, Agri-based Solutions provider, multinational for over 2 years, 2018-2020. The organization was going through transition

arising out of a merger between Indian and European organizations. These two organizations are culturally unique in their own ways and added to that , their approach & reach to customer is quite contrasting, one is bulk & mass product and other is specialized and individual customer centric. Both serve different segments & ways of reaching end user. Due to their nature of products & reach to customer, all their systems , process and policies related to people practices and even people’s world views are contrasting in many ways ..

1.2 Organization Sense making (Diagnosis) : Total 37 detailed interviews from two sides of the organization were conducted . representing the sections of field, office managers & leaders. Here are some salient aspects of the diagnosis. These are select observations as perceived by people, from the position of, Acquirer and Acquired entities . These snap shot of observations where obtained barely a year after Acquisition & Merger and also other managerial efforts of Integration simultaneously were under way.

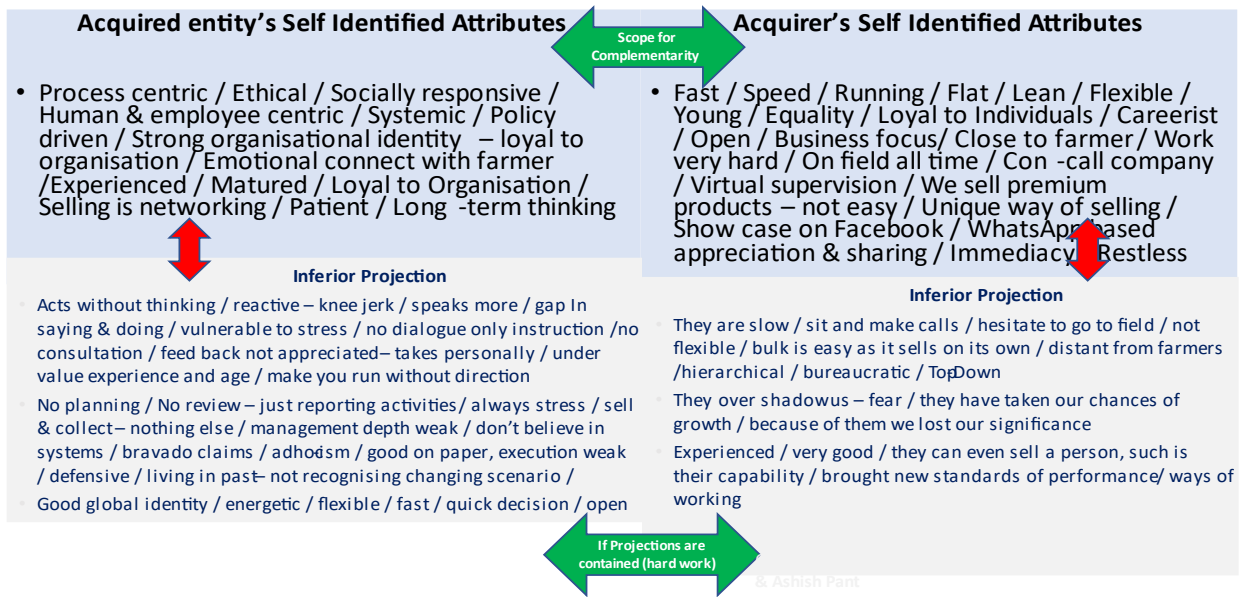
1.3. Table 1 : Salient Diagnostic indicators : Some relevant diagnostic observations, a sub set of larger data of diagnosis.

Acquirer entity's transition challenge	Acquired entity's transition challenge
<p><i>Psychological transitions in movement from being a smaller entity to larger and having a bigger shoe size to meet expectations :</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sudden change in yardstick of measurement/expectations. • feeling threatened and intimidated by the more organised larger setup. • feeling of being stretched beyond comfort and competence. • movement from simplicity to complexity with demands on processes and persons. • identity threat - fear of being subsumed by the culture of the larger incoming team. • Currently comparison is happening , that is causing unrest and negative emotions; People of acquirer org feel attention is being given to people of acquired entity. • And also somewhere there is a threat that the demands of organisation are increasing and whether we will be able to raise up to the competency requirements. "I have been playing a different game and now things have changed." <p><i>What other group think of us</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tagging /labelled as unplanned & unstructured people , always on run, no thinking. • Trapped in activity in only transactional tasks. • Though, small highly centralised and ad hoc, no system way of working. 	<p><i>Psychological transitions in moving from a part of larger integrated setup to part of smaller entity :</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • adjustment to the requirement of owner - owner not own parent - therefore, sense of concern / threat / uncertainty / ambiguity sense of wait and watch: desire for clarity in terms of expectations • uncertainty on how to interact with virtual power (Distant) ; how is he going to make best use of me/ us ? • dealing with paradox: when I am owned by somebody, how can I go and dictate/question? • "what happens to my dreams and aspirations - how do I dovetail them?" • Earlier used to corporate governing, and direction , now Top is not visible located some where in Europe. Its 'cloud leadership'. • On the other hand, people of acquired entity have mixed feelings. Some are being asked to report to juniors; most are used to consulting seniors and systemic working and planned way, which they are missing now. Now we don to see big picture and long term focus. • <i>What other group think of us</i> Labelled as slow , selling bulk is easy • Not nimble feet .Large entity, history of system & culture evolving bureaucratic'

1.4 Inter group perceptions – Psycho-dynamic perspective: Given below is the figure1 (intergroup perceptions) which captures the current location of the two opposing groups perception about each other and about themselves .Figure 1, consists of accepted & acknowledged ways (dark grey shade, upper quadrant indicated by upper Green arrow, of both Acquirer & Acquired) and their other opposite side , beneath, in light grey shade quadrant , which are least preferred ways or avoided dimensions (the inferior dimensions). In fact the data indicates these kind of projections (see comments, in light grey shade, inferior, quadrants) have already surfaced between groups. The paradox, opposing ways of working, is business necessity, as there are two segments of products and customers and both are equally necessary for reaching out to customers.

Figure 1 Intergroup Perceptions

Intergroup Perceptions : using adjectives

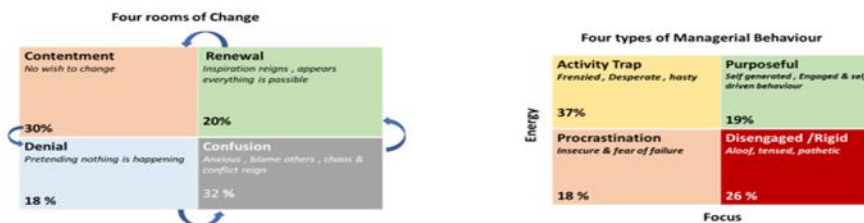


1.5 Leadership sense making (diagnosis)

Leadership group of 21 people met over a 3 day workshop, to understand the diagnostic observations of the external consultant and also validate data. To obtain leadership sense-making of the organization and organization's readiness for the change, two organizational frames /models were used (Energy /Focus matrix – S Ghoshal, Heike Bruch ,2004, p 12-15 ; Four rooms of change – Janssen, 2005) for quick dipstick, data of collective view of the leadership in addition to the diagnostic inquiry done.

Figure 2 : Dipstick sense making : Energy-Focus matrix & Four rooms of change

Leadership Group dipstick Sense Making of current state



The above Energy -Focus matrix data, about current managerial behaviour patterns. Represents sense of collective Leadership group perception .Activity trap 37% ; Procrastination 18%; Disengaged 26% & Purposeful 19% . Similarly, data from Four rooms of change ; Contentment 30%; Denial 18% ; Confusion 32% & Renewal 20%, . Both data about managerial behaviour patterns and reaction to transition indicate a challenge . Both are reflections of habitual reaction patterns. This data helps leadership group to assess current state of psychological conditions and extent of readiness to change. Current state of organization is reflected in these three inputs, 1) Snap shot of Salient diagnostic

observations (table 1); 2) Inter-group perception four quadrants (Figure 1); 3) Dipstick sense of ‘Four types of managerial behaviours’ & ‘Four rooms of change (Figure 2)

From the above diagnostic insights we arrive at the following tentative hypothesis

- a. Organizational Change & transition cause psychological disruptions at individual and Group levels .These disruption in psychological space can work either ways , as opportunity for change & innovation or rigidity or even deterioration.
- b. When contrasting cultures , styles & orientation of working come together , it is general perceived as opposing and contesting points of view, this way of perceiving(asymmetry) would trigger power dynamics.
- c. When some ways of working become a style or reified practices , their exact opposite ways are perceived as inferior and seen with defiance, where as they are actually not in awareness. Such out-of-awareness dimensions can manifest as unconscious projections, and have their own autonomy.
- d. Readiness to change /transition is dependent on perceived threat , fear or anxiety and also habitual behavioural patterns. Becoming aware of such auto regulated patterns is the 1st step in over coming the grip of those feelings on one’s behaviour & conduct.
- e. Emotional readiness to change is a significant indicator, to know what lies ahead and also the way the transition process is handled & communicated . The data show not a very encouraging picture. Good news is, same anxiety could be a resource for catalysing change or transformation.

From these working hypothesis we draw change goals to aid in conceiving the interventions.

1.6 Identifying Change Goals /in the format of ‘From- To’ , Shifts

Table 2: Snap shot of Shifts , ‘From – To’ : Intra-subjective and Inter- subjective habits of mind

FROM	TO
1. Fear & apprehensions arising out of uncertainty & transition	1. Know one’s own self and become student of oneself . Learning about oneself, helps in anchoring, and handling transition from inside –out.
2. Judgements & evaluation about other individuals & groups.	2. Learn, non-judgement disposition , people are always in movement and changing. Also different people think and act differently. There is no single reality, there are multiple realities . With in a person there are many voices, both positive and negative , opposing each other- acknowledging this helps in being non-judgemental.
3. Self doubts about ones abilities and competence.	3. Accept self the way one is . Trusting one’s own being . Learn to see the constructive side of things, even in so called failures or negatives things. Inculcate lens to see meaning in suffering.
4. Comparing with others and feeling inferior.	4. Learn to appreciate Part & Whole in any situation – appreciate the wholeness in life and work, and long term perspective, where everything is connected.
5. Perceiving others as contestants and the whole setting as competitive.	5. Focus on competing with standards NOT individuals. Recognize & discover ultimately all things are connected & inter-dependent nothing is stand alone . Same is with work place & organizations, hence collaborative way of working is more meaningful and effective, where there are inter-dependencies.

FROM	TO
6. Limited , narrow fragmented perspectives of the current situation, missing enterprise perspective.	6. Learn to see big picture and meaning making, rather than piecemeal , fragmented view. Learn strategic thinking & system thinking.
7. Insecurity , fear of losing jobs.	7. Focus on building one's own competency and constantly better. Best way to remove insecurity is raise competence.
8. Superior sense & feeling about one's role & work, than others	8. Every one's work equally important . When one learn to truly value one's own work and contribution , one will start recognizing others work also.
9. Projecting negative meanings and judgements on other groups & individuals	9. Practicing Self acceptance. Truly knowing one's own dark and bright side and accepting same shall enhance appreciation & viewing difference as gifts.
10. Living in past , ruminating on negative events or circumstances.	10. Learn to be here & now . Paying attention to one own changing thoughts , feelings and opposing voices , shall help to know the actual nature of being and not go by expectations or proving to others .

Put in a nut shell, above shifts essentially involve Conative , Cognitive & Affective components of Perspective Transformation (PT). (Mezirow J , 1991).

2.0 Learning interventions for organizational change

2.1 A brief on Learning Modules :

- a. Learning events are anchored around Individual Self , Interpersonal and group practices and were covering themes like , 1) '**Anchoring through Self**' (focus on Reflexivity & Reflection in enhancing subjective & Objective understanding of self) , 2) '**Triggering Urge for excellence**' (Understanding one's own Motive profile and ways of inculcating characteristics of Achiever) 3) '**Building Collaborative Culture**'(Recognizing independence & Interdependence-competitive & Collaborative dispositions and their implications) ,4) '**Social Technology of Co-creation for Future readiness**' (Learning large scale social technologies/methods of arriving common grounds for common futures) and 5) '**Differences as Gifts**' (Learning to work on self change involves working with Opposites, accepting the neglected , marginalised part of one's , appreciating diversity with in & with out). **NOTE** : Here we shall focus only of 5th mo

Learning Interventions | Module Details

Module No.	Module Name & Days	Module Learning Objectives
5	M5 – Differences as Gifts; Not Conflicts (4 days)	When two contrasting cultures, contrasting ways of organizing sales, manufacturing, two set of people with contrasting orientations have come together to work, it is a behavioral challenge, not to compare, judge, project, assign tags and categorize/pigeon hole people (Bulk walas / Lotus team vs. Young legs / Originals , natives vs outsiders etc). Therefore, it is a potential ‘war field’; hence, it is very important to learn to accept differences and start seeing these differences as gifts to be complimented. Depth & Process Psychology informs us such projections are deeply unconscious and need a different way of handling. A closely connected issue is how we see and handle opposites in our life i.e., “How do we embrace some aspects of our Self and disown or deny (marginalize) some other aspects. Learning to see & discern opposites is critical in accepting difference and valuing co -dependence/interdependence. Develop more willingness to accommodate differences and institute diversity as new normal and org ideal.

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b.

dule . ‘Differences as Gifts’

c. Table 3 : Learning Module ‘Differences as Gifts’

2.2 ‘Difference as Gifts’ : Learning Module – working with Opposites with in self

On going through 16 days of learning , spread over 14 months, of intense embodied learning experiences, learners found themselves in state of ‘Getting stuck’- ‘Trapping phenomenon’ , a type of psychological event in which the individual feels, thinks or perceives himself /herself as stuck, caught in a bind etc (Cabell & Valsiner, 2014), not making much progress in personal change goals, over last 12 months. And when ever learners engage in deep reflection, expression of weak voices become pronounced, followed by a resolve to act on change goal. We share Learning activities of the in the table 4.

Table 4 : ‘Differences as Gifts’: Learning activities

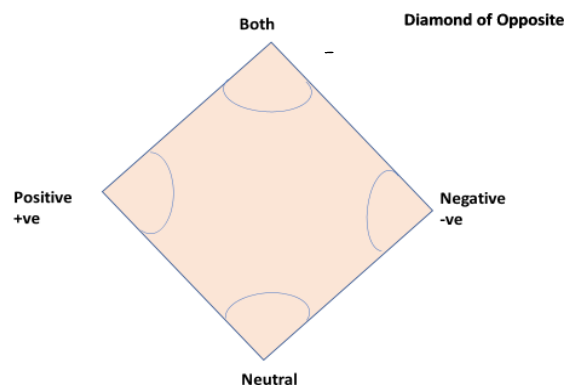
Learning Activities	Process & Out comes
1. GUIDED INTERVIEW Conducting Interview in triads	Revisiting 4 modules, invoking reflective awareness with a set of guided questions designed to relook at the learning history / journey. This process had rekindled and helped reach deeper layers of experiences, and confirmed relived learning moments can be source of rejuvenation
2. Listening to own AUDIO RECORDING	While guided interview was held in triads , respondent could audio record his /her own voices. Listening to one’s own voice provides different experience of watching from 2 person lens that is when person become aware of many missing dimensions , this is an act of self-confrontation. This also makes one to step out and see oneself , a self critical reflection process, and this builds reflexive competence
3. GROUP INTERVIEW - Processing experiences in mixed group	Mixed Triad groups, report their own experience of being an interviewer & Interviewee.(guided questions provided).This provided another opportunity to listen experiences others and how they negotiated real life challenge. Learners have reported this activity gave more insights and certain missing learning perspectives one could learn from others. With deep discussion many ‘door ways’ opened for some .
4. Live demo of WEAK& DOMINANT VOICE	Facilitator demonstrated, behind being stuck , ambiguity , dilemma there are inner voices in a ‘tough -of -war’. Volunteer described, Dominant voice and few Weaker voices behind dilemma due which he is unable to move ahead. He also realised so far his choices & preferences have been based on dominant voice. Wareness, these dominant voices have the societal sanctions & injunctions, where as weak voices are close to heart dreams, aspirations . there is a story behind each weak voice , story of injustice & neglect over a period. What surface is, in learning space during reflections these weak voices become active, that is when dilemmas become more pronounced

Learning Activities	Process & Out comes
5. Socio drama : ROLE PLAY – Voice doubling	Role of weak voice was assumed by third person (doubling) on behalf of volunteer protagonist on his willing. Then when the dialogue enactment happened between dominant & weak voices , that is when protagonist had no answer to reply to weak voice 'questions, felt speechless, 'heavy heart beat and perspiration increased' – this is an experience as narrated by the protagonist during the role play demonstration. Same experience repeated in learners triads and similar stunning experiences were shared .
6. DIAMOND OF OPPOSITES EXERCISE (DoO).	Details of the D o O Socio- drama is illustrated , separately below.
7. REFLECTION Writing down reflections after each activity	Apart from reflections written post every activity. In DoO also the learners wrote down their experiences & reflections. Usual experience many reported , it was not easy to face the weak voice and more so it was very difficult to verbalize the both voices inner manifestation , though dilemma is felt , its not easy. Rather desired direction & position became clear and also people expressed, they now realise different things one has to do . In short the practical socio dramatic experience had brought into awareness very many layers of voices and their actual import , it has increased learner's reflective awareness .
PROJECTION EXERCISES Experiential activities that bring our data about Projections	Simple survey was provided to express their own view about certain situations and how they would see about the other's & opinions, views on similar situations . This had brought about projections they held , about others and how they are supported. This was followed by a video showing how projection work in day to day interactions. Then activity to practice 'Precept language' of John Weir, through sample situational descriptions. These exercises bought out shocking realization , there is piece of one's own projection in every choice or observation or even simple narration.

2.3 Working with Opposites : ‘Diamond of Opposites’ (DoO) exercise :

DoO is a socio dramatic exercise based on Process method, which brings to surface how opposites, left & right quadrant, are not actually inversely related but are often positively correlated (Sabelli HC1994). It is phase -plane method where the two opposing emotions, thoughts or energies are plotted on a phase plane in a diamond shape, which is drawn on the floor.(Fig 3)

Figure 3 : Diamond of Opposites



Bottom quadrant signifies both forces are low in intensity. Top quadrant indicates both opposites are of high intensity. This high energy of contradictory process at the top quadrant is an indication of great potential for creativity or destruction . The diamond of opposites allows one to differentiate ambivalence and contradiction from neutrality and indifference.

For example we can use DoO in the form of socio dramatic exercise by asking the protagonists to take position on the floor at the neutral corner, then ask to think of the opposing voices /dilemma. Then he/she shall be advised to move on the left axis which indicates positive sign, representing dominant voice and stand on the axis which is assumed on a scale of 1-10 , depending on the degree of intensity. After doing that she or he comes back to neutral corner and then moves to right axis which is marked negative , indicating weak voice or position. He/she shall be asked some question to think why he or she chose that spot . He would be asked to think what makes him or her to stand in that spot .

Now as a next step after clarifying to himself /herself the reasons for both the left and right axis positions, he/she shall be asked to experience the combined intensity (attraction & repulsion) together which is his or her actual current condition (getting stuck) . Accordingly he/she shall be advised to choose the spot with in the area (space between opposing poles) of Diamond, signifying the combined effect of both voices intensities.

Based on that he/she shall be invited to address some questions like , why did he/she chose that spot . How does it explain ? If this is the current positions with regard to the combined effect of both voices, what does she /he visualize to be the future position, and accordingly advice to physically move to desired spot with in the area of diamond , then he /she is invited to respond or can talk little more of the possible future position and what it means to him or her in terms of voices. What are the circumstances that seem to facilitate or hinder the movement into future ? What seem to be the efforts that he /she need to invest in order to progress to the desired spot etc.

The response of the volunteer was , now he recognised , he knew where he was himself holding back and now there is more clarity. The greatest realisation “ I am only holding my self back , no one is ! ”.

This experience of learners match with of Miguel Goncalves [et. al](#) process research from counselling context, “*In the process of change internal Voices , which are domination of community of voices and the suppressed weak voice are at conflict. An Innovative moment (IM) happens when the suppressed voice express itself . In this way every time assertive position is voiced in the self , IM occurs. There are three levels of IM s. Level one to three, indicating the gradual transition from initial weak moments to more conscious grip of innovative moments of change*”. (Miguel Goncalvess et.al

2.4 Working with Opposites and their benefits :

The above Eight learning events /activities from 1 to 8 for a group of 65 learners in 3 cohorts, could generate learning experiences which facilitated intra-subjective and inter-subjective semiotic dynamics (inner dialogic activity between multiple voices) (Gillespie , Aveling & Cornish , 2015; J Valsiner et.al 2011) . Facing one’s own opposing voices and their arguments become critical in creating conditions for innovative thoughts as Meta & Moderating third positions/voices (Hermans , 2012) .

- a. The way of learning together potentiated catalytic field in which contrasting ways of thinking & functioning have started to become complimenting & co-dependent on each other . (lave & Wenger,1992 , reference, Stepich 1992)
- b. “Differences as Gifts” module had created conditions for Intra & Inter subjective explorations with the help of preliminary knowledge of dialogic self . In fact through these simulations and experiences around Dialogic Self conceptions, learners learnt to comprehend once own inner subtle experiences and their role in volitional self change.
- c. Through this method, practical managers, shall be able to appreciate the subtle aspects of voices that help to recognize and realise the work of subtle layers of subjective experience and instrumentality of Self .This kind of learning leads to Dialogic dynamics necessary for change

d. There is clinical support to the coexistence of opposites, from Green berg & Pascal - leone, 1999 “ Clinical observation and our descriptive research suggest, when opposing schemes are co-activated they synthesize compatible elements from the co-activated schemes to form new higher level schemes, just as in development when schemes for standing and falling in a toddler, are dynamically synthesized into a higher level scheme for walking (Greenberg & Pascual-Leone,1995; Pascual-Leone, 1991)".

3.0 Measuring Influence of Learning Interventions

How can we validate , what ever learning intervention we facilitated had actually resulted into some impacts or influence ? How do we measure the same? Secondly how can we be sure , which learning activities have actually catalysed those impacts or influences. To validate and measure the influence of learning intervention on learners we adopted the construct of theory of Transformative Learning of Mezirow. (Mezirow 2012)

“ According to Mezirow (1991) transformative learning (TL) refers to “the process of becoming **critically aware** of how and why our assumptions have come to constrain the way we perceive, understand, and feel about the world” and is concerned with “changing these structures ...to make possible a more inclusive, discriminating, and integrative perspective” (p. 167). In other words, Transformative Learning challenges and changes not only what we know but also how we learn and integrate knowledge into our lives and worldviews.”

In order to explore & understand how learning interventions could have resulted into certain outcomes in the form of Self awareness and change in the Frames of reference (Meaning Perspective) , triggered or catalysed by learning Interventions, we adopted **Learning activity survey instrument (LAS)** , developed by K P King (2009).LAS was developed exclusive to capture Transformative Learning .The foundation for the Learning Activities Survey (King, 2009) was the work of Mezirow (1978; 1991), Cranton (1994), and Brookfield (1986; 1987; 1995), with additional input provided by Williams (1985) and Baxter Magolda (1992).

3.1 Precursor stages as Indicators of Transformative Learning (TL)

Table 5 : King’s Learning Activity Survey items & Mezirow’s Ten stages TL

<i>LAS Questionnaire, Q 1 items (stages of Perspective Transformation (PT))p</i>	<i>Mezirow’s precursor steps of perspective transformation : how learning event Influence</i>	Rank – Percent
1.1 I had an experience that caused me to <i>question</i> my ideas the way I normally act .	Disorienting Dilemma	I 66.7%
1.2 I had an experience that caused me to <i>question</i> my ideas about social roles. (example social role include what a father or mother should do or how an adult /child should act)	Disorienting Dilemma	II 65.0%
1.3 As I <i>question</i> my ideas , I <i>realised</i> I no longer agreed with my previous beliefs or role expectations	Critical Reflections on assumptions	VII 35.0%
1.4 Or Instead, as I <i>questioned</i> my ideas, I <i>realised</i> I still agree with my beliefs or role expectations	Critical Reflections on assumptions	VIII 25.0%
1.5 I realised that other people also <i>questioned</i> their beliefs	Recognized discontent shared - Process shared and that others have negotiated a similar change	VI 46.7%
1.6 I <i>thought about acting</i> in a different way from usual beliefs and roles	Exploration of options for new roles, relationships and actions	III 63.3%

1.7 I felt <i>uncomfortable</i> with traditional social expectations	Self examination with feeling of guilt or shame - Critical assessment of epic , socio-cultural or Psychic assumptions -	IX 18.3%
1.8 I tried out new roles /ways of doing so that I would become more comfortable or confident in them	Tried new roles- Provisional trying of new roles	IV 56.7%
1.9 I tried to <i>figure out a way</i> to adopt these new ways of acting	Planned course of action - Planning of a course of action	V 51.7%
1.10 I gathered information I needed to adopt these new ways of acting	Acquired Knowledge & skill to implement plan	X 10.0%
1.11 I began to <i>think about the reactions</i> and feedback from my new behaviour	Built competence & Confidence-	X 10.0%
1.12 I took action and adopted these new way of acting	Re-entered to Life -A reintegration in one's life on the basis of new perspective	X 10.0%
1.13 I don't identify with any of the statements		0.0%

3.2 Data of the Precursor stages of Transformative Learning

First part of the LAS (learning activity survey) contains, question 1, that has a checklist of items corresponding to the 10 phases (Precursor steps) of TL to help determine, how many phases were experienced , as shown in table 5. These ten precursor stages are shown in correspondence with the actual questions pertaining to Q1 of the LAS . Actual data of Q1 of LAS with rank order of the stages of Transformative Learning are highlighted, in table 5 .

All of the 10 stage were theorized to be important for TL. Most of the of the respondents have checked most of the stages indicating that they experienced Transformative learning. Frequency distribution in percentage of incidences with rank order of Transformative Learning are presented in the above table 5. There is a pattern, items except ‘acquisition of knowledge’ , ‘building competence’ and ‘Re-entry’ at 10% are lowest followed by ‘Critical reflections of assumptions’ at 35% & 25 % and ‘Self examination of feeling guilt and shame’ at 18.3 % remaining are all in range of 46.7 % to 67.7 % . This data show there is significant influence on learners by the learning interventions. As it is also stated by Mezirow there is no need for all stages to be involved for Transformative Learning to happen.(Mezirow,2012)

The literature review shows there has been inconsistency in the incidences of Transformative Learning,even in educational context, however some (Glisczinski, 2005; Kumi-Yegboah, 2012; King, 1997; Wansick,2007) researchers have taken an average incidence of 36- 37 % is comparable. **In current study average incidences of Transformative Learning is at 38.2%** , which is higher than the other studies. Major reason being, facilitated context. Usually most of the reported studies are done in educational setting, which are non- facilitated. .

3.3 How did ‘Differences as Gifts’ influence the Learners ?

As part of Learning activity survey (LAS) there is question no. 2 which asks, ‘*Since you have gone through Learning modules , do you believe you have experienced a time when you realised that your values, beliefs , opinions or experiences had changed*’ . For which 100% i.e 65 learners confirmed they experienced change in their values, beliefs & opinions. As follow up questions , there is Q 5a, which ask, ‘*Was it part of the learning module that influenced you, if so, what was it ?*’ . We share the data of 5th module percentage of responses .

Table 6 : Module ‘Differences as Gifts’ and Learning activities

Differences as Gifts : Learning Activities	NO		YES	
	Count	Row N %	Count	Rank - %
1. GUIDED INTERVIEW	14	23.3%	46	V 76.7%
2. Listening to AUDIO RECORDING	14	23.3%	46	V 76.7%
3. GROUP INTERVIEW- Exp processing in mixed group	6	10.0%	54	II 90.0%
4. Demo WEAK & STRONG VOICE	7	11.7%	53	III 88.3%
5. ROLE PLAY weakdominant voices	11	18.3%	49	IV 81.7%
6 . DIAMOND OF OPPOSITES EXERCISE demo & role pla	2	3.3%	58	I 96.7%
7 . REFLECTION	14	23.3%	46	V 76.7%
8 . PROJECTION EXERCISE	6	10.0%	54	II 90.0%

The data reflects learning activities which contributed to the incidence of learners Transformative learning . We have ranked the activities based on the highest to lowest .

We observe ‘*Diamond of Opposites activity demo*’ as well as ‘*Role play*’ had 96.7 % of learners reported, had influenced , followed by ‘*Projection exercises*’ 90% and ‘*Group interview experience processing in mixed groups*’ 90% and almost equal is the ‘*Demo of Weak & strong (dominant) voices*’ 88.3% and also close to this ‘*Role play of Weak-Dominant voices*’ at 81.7 % . based on the data now we can say with confidence that learning module of ‘Differences as Gifts’ had significantly influenced and catalysed Transformative Learning. Remaining three activities are equal at 76.7 % , which is substantially significant impact or influence on learners, they are ‘*Guided Interview*’ , ‘*Listening one’s own audio recording*’ & ‘*Reflection*’. *There are no activity less that 70% influence incidence, which in the literature of Transformative Learning is remarkably very high and with average influence % of 84.6.* Here are some conceptual rationale, as to why high levels of influence are observed . The rational of potency of learning activities in evoking transformative learning , is as follows :

a. Working on the dilemmas & getting stuck, due to tension between opposing dialogic voices, this is an Intra subjective awareness raising process, which also has an element of Self Confrontation. It brings out intra-subjective awareness, the dynamics of inner dialogic activity and its implications. In words of Dialogic self theory , it generates ‘semiotic catalytic activity.

b. The processing ‘Group interview experience’ has retrospective and reflective elements along with knowledge of how others processed their experiences in real life. This is inter-subjective as well as Intra-subjective phenomenon. Task of collective sharing of insights, provide emotional scaffolding and learning anxieties are facilitated in a constructive way.

c. Third set of activity around ‘Projection’ phenomenon. Through the experiential activity, every one gets data about one’s own ‘projection’ patterns, which is not in awareness. This is unsettling (disruption is psychological space)experience because, one’s own image , and past culturally prescribed habits come under question. This makes learner alert to immediate circumstances in which they are situated, where such projections, are already happening between two groups and individuals. It is live validation of the phenomenon of projection and it implications and which can be grave.

3.4 What can we deduce from various source of data measures ?

From the theory of Mezirow when a learner experience Transformative learning , it implies three fundamental processes co-exist . Here we make some deductions .

- a. That learner confronts his or her own assumptions and existing perspectives , which are of three kinds viz., *Epistemic , Socio Linguistic and Psychological* . With out changing these perspectives, a learner cannot proceed to experience Perspective Transformation (Mezirow 1991). This is evident in LAS data table 5 , of Question1, items nos, 1.1 to 1,4 & 1.7.
- b. Secondly, If we closely observe data, it is evident learners, must have certainly experienced Reflections which are of 3 types ,viz., *Content , Process and Premise* (Mezirow,1991). As the learning themes & process focus on Intra-subjective & Inter -Subjective, we assert that learners were able to engage in Premise and Process Reflection, more than Content reflection, with out which Perspective Transformation is not possible. It is evident from above data from Question1 items nos, 1.1 to 1.7 .
- c. Third deduction is about Types of Learning, data imply, learners must have gone through, *Communicative and Emancipatory* learning more than *Instrumental*. Support for us , is learning methods /pedagogy revolved around Intra subjective and Inter-subjective prosses with, opportunity for Contemplative and Self Critical Reflection practice as its fulcrum. Way we had contextualised /situated learning it shall have opportunity for Communicative as well as Emancipatory components. Question 1, items nos. from 1.5 to 1.9 support this assertion. From the above rational and data substantiation we assert that Learners did experience fundamental processes /components associated experiences of Transformative Learning.

3.5 Summary

The action research attempted to harness the inherent resources in the situation which is full of challenges, confusing transitions and power struggles started with the merger of two entities. Study claims same set circumstances which were threat to the organizational integration could be converted into forces in harnessing constructive volitional energies.

These transitions and uncertainties themselves bring with them the forces of transformation , viz., Disorienting dilemma (Mezirow 1987) and disruptions in the psychological spaces (Valsiner et., al 2011; Zittoun , 2004). Recognizing this, learning Interventions aimed at harnessing volitional power with in individuals & groups , could demonstrates (with empirical proof,) it is possible to nurture and harness the volitional energies towards transformative learning leading to emancipatory learning and organization Intergation.

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