

A Turbulent Journey of Radicalized Pedagogy

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Abstract:- Radicalized pedagogy emerged, struggled, and grew through the discussion, and investigation of the discourse analysis, pedagogy of the *Oppressed*, critical pedagogy, and translanguaging pedagogy. Capitalism, culture, and race in society obstructed and compelled the radicalized pedagogy to walk a turbulent journey. The previous studies emphasized the advantages, disadvantages, and historical development of radicalized pedagogy compared to various emerging pedagogies. However, this study uncovers the three dimensions i.e. the contested terrain, commitments, and philosophical positions of radicalized pedagogy, and its struggle with Neo-Marxist educational theories, post-modernism, post-colonialism, and feminism to survive in the pedagogical field. The previously published pedagogical articles are the sources of data to analyze and discuss the article. The paper discusses and analyses the radicalized pedagogy which has passed a turbulent journey struggling with various movements, turns, and changes in the teaching and learning field. The argumentations and claims under the discussion section signify the value, and struggle of radicalized pedagogy. It has emphasized teachers as social agents for change and learners as critical citizens who opine against political, social, and economic injustices. The study concludes with doubts that either radicalized pedagogy exists with strong connectivity or its value diminishes due to the attacks by various pedagogical movements.

Keywords:- Radicalized Pedagogy, Turbulent Journey, Contested Terrain, Neo-Marxist Educational Theories, Post Modernism, Post Colonialism and Feminism.

I. INTRODUCTION

Children need a loving community that could develop their bodies, mind, and spirits to make them physically, socially and spiritually complete human beings. For this, authoritative parenting (Hossain & Eisberg, 2020) at home and radical (critical) pedagogy (Douglas, 2019) at school can be the demand of the present world. Giroux and McLaren (1991) defined radical pedagogy as a critical pedagogy that examines schools in the historical context and as a part of political and social relations. It rejects the idea that knowledge is politically neutral, and claims the similarities between acts of teaching and the issues of democracy and social justice. Similarly, radical pedagogy is the dynamic and continuous interplay between political work and education that aims to nurture deep understanding of students political and social situations, and prepare them for radical social change (Mayo, 2019). Various political and social changes in the society, emergence of new knowledge and skills in education, and combat against

capitalism, sexism and racism, radicalized the pedagogy, and introduced it as critical pedagogy with different hurdles.

Critical theories propounded by the philosophers of the Frankfurt school conceptualized and the *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* by Freire (2005) created a new dimension in radical pedagogy, redefining the relationship between student, teacher, and society. In the course of the journey, radicalized pedagogy has faced various counterattacks such as the Neo-Marxist educational theories, postmodernism, and challenges of post-colonialism and feminism. As a result, it has traveled a turbulent journey from its origination. After 1995, radicalized pedagogy emerged in various scenes such as discourse analysis by Fairclough (1995), language and identity by Norton (1997), pedagogy for the opposition by Giroux (2001), critical constructivism primer by Kincheloe (2005), translanguaging by García et al. (2017). Capitalism, culture, and race in society obstructed radicalized pedagogy to run smoothly.

II. DISCUSSION

This section deals with the origin and dimensions of radicalized pedagogy with various philosophical theories such as Neo-Marxist educational theories, postmodernism, post-colonialism, feminism, etc. that have hurdled the smoothness journey of radicalized pedagogy.

A. Origin

The Greek philosophers, renaissance scholars, and the intellectuals and educators of the 19th and 20th centuries contributed to the area of radical thinking. Before establishing radical pedagogy as a theory, some important philosophers introduced the concept of pedagogy. Locke (1632-1704) introduced the idea of a child's brain as an experience and knowledge gaining tabula rasa through his/her cognitive efforts. Rousseau (1712-1778) introduced the concept of a natural man who acquires knowledge following his/her educational need. Additionally, Dewey (1859-1952) highlighted the actualization of the child's self-development with his practical activity (Fedotova & Nikolaeva, 2015).

Hegel's political philosophy, Marx's and Engels' Communist manifest from 1848 to 1867, Nietzsche's philosophical anthology (1873), Kant's critical philosophy (1881), etc. contributed to the emergence of critical theory which is the source of radicalized pedagogy (Abraham, 2014). The establishment of the Frankfurt school in 1923 became an epicenter to emerge and develop the critical theory. The school defined pedagogy as a way for social emancipation based on Marxist philosophy, and it's central economic and political notions (Landmann, 2011). Frankfurt school's critical theorists blamed that the schools provided a

distorted view of history, encouraged dependency, undermine social consciousness, and fostered a hierarchical understanding of authority, that was against social transformation (Eisner, 2002). Further, Brazilian philosopher Paulo Freire rooted radicalized pedagogy as a new challenge to traditional ways of teaching and learning.

III. DIMENSIONS OF RADICALIZED PEDAGOGY

The three dimensions of radicalized pedagogy are as follows:

A. *The Contested Terrain*

McLaren (2005) claimed that critical pedagogy must reflect the historical specificity, speak context-specific antagonisms, local issues, and basic human needs, challenge normative associations of intelligence, rethink issues of modes of production, be antisexist, antiracist, and anti-homophobic, struggle for a socialist democracy, and involve a politics of economy, affirmation, difference, and recognition. However, learning from pedagogies connected with North American, European, and feminist pedagogies, the imbalance between localization and globalization of the learning contents, more emphasis on whiteness, maleness, and heterosexuality, lack of critical thinking culture, the inadequacy of critically written textbooks and reference materials, and solidified unequal power relationship between teacher and students are the contested terrains of radicalized pedagogy.

B. *Commitments*

Critical pedagogy has two kinds of commitments i.e. a political commitment to bring political and social consciousness to the classroom, and the power of literacy in shaping and behaving lives as Freire (2005) stated to exist is to name the world, to change it. It should challenge our orthodoxy, rethink fundamental principles, and act in the support of students, ourselves, and our beautiful hopes (Ayers et al., 2004). However, there are great challenges to managing such an environment in the classrooms and learners' lives as it needs very sophisticated and critically oriented teachers. Kincheloe (2005) highlighted the politically contested spaces in schooling and educational practices in critical pedagogy. To shorten the gaps, Sharma and Phyak (2017) suggested that teachers should be engaged in conflict-filled situations to empower them to build alternative and multiple ideologies, without imposing the experts' views on the senior authorities. However, in the context of Nepal, the state policy and teachers' capacity seem very weak to implement the complete critical pedagogy in the classroom as Rana (2018) explored some challenges such as teachers' monolingual development, weak strategies to implement various languages in the classroom, less realization of the identity and norms of rights by the citizens.

C. *Philosophical Positions*

Ontology, epistemology, and ethics are the three areas of philosophical inquiry to help inform someone's way of being in the classroom (Shudak, 2014). Freire (2000) claimed that critical pedagogy is a choice between ontologies of *being* versus *becoming* that is infused with transformation, betterment, and hope for change. However, the negative attitude of teachers towards poor students, high absence of teachers in school, teachers not teaching full period in the classroom, opposition party's harassment, humiliation and torture of the teachers, discouragement to have any political talks among teachers, and lack of critical thinking culture in education are the barriers to make the pedagogy more critical in Nepal (Mathema, 2007).

In relationship with objects of knowledge, dialogue, an existential necessity in Freire's words, is epistemological. It lets students practice experiences, learn more about the world, others, self, and the object itself, and question every doubt. But in the name of discipline, a majority of teachers overrule and make the class a pin-drop silence. As a result, students lack the opportunity to dialogue in the classroom. Likewise, Musgrove and Taylor (2011) explored that the teachers' motive seems to fulfill the instrumental (intellectual) needs of students rather than expressive needs. Therefore, dialogue, a source of learning and knowing, remains absent in the classroom.

D. *The Emergence of Radicalized Pedagogy*

Pedagogy of the Oppressed by Paulo Freire, introduced the critical or radicalized pedagogy around the 1970s, in which he infused the Marxist stimulated beliefs and religious and cultural influences. Teachers, educators, and leaders needed to understand and employ the culture of the oppressed to develop a new form of knowledge and skills which ultimately contribute to social transformation. Teachers started teaching from the learners' experiences as the foundation for receiving and creating knowledge, the opposite of the so-called banking model of education. Freire, further, claimed that the oppressed would reach a stage of conscientization, recognizing the powers that limited their human capability, and the way that frees them (Woodin, 2007). In Freire's dialogical method, the personal experiences of teachers and students work out for the cognitive and socio-political development of learners. Here, teachers become social agents of change and learners become critical citizens who opine against political, social, and economic injustices in school and community (Safari & Pourhashemi, 2012).

E. *The Counterpart: Neo-Marxist Educational Theories*

Neo-Marxist education theories emerged as the counterpart of radicalized pedagogy. Bowles and Gintis (2008) claimed that education in capitalist societies reproduces basic economic inequalities. Similarly, Apple (1987) opined that school plays a role to reproduce and legitimize the hegemony of a capitalist society. Children come to school to make a better future. Teachers in capitalist society encourage children to be prepared for economic growth. Carnoy and Levin (1985) argued that schools should prepare children for later work roles. It declares that

the relationship in the workplace confirms how the school develops the social roles of children.

Around the 1980s, Neo-Marxist theories challenged the radicalized pedagogy. However, the savior, Paulo Freire, and others further specified the roles of radical pedagogy with hope and possibility and saved from its rejection. Then, radicalized pedagogy turned against structural (agency) and economic (culture) determinism. After that, radical pedagogues attempted to relate it not only to pedagogy and politics but also to classroom pedagogy and agency. Here, radicalized pedagogy faced some hurdles in the course of its smoothness in popularity and adaption.

F. The Counter: Postmodernism

Postmodernism is a late 20th-century movement with an attitude of irony, skepticism, and rejection of ideologies and grand narratives connected with modernism. To save the face from Neo-Marxist educational theories, radicalized pedagogical theorists tried to develop the language of possibility, a new alternative education. The new waves of Marxism such as postmodernism, post-structuralism, and post-colonialism directly influenced and newly shaped the radicalized pedagogy. After defining critical pedagogy by McLaren (1995) as a form of cultural politics, culture came to the center. Cho (2013) advocated the use of culture to influence the resistance approach.

Postmodernism denies the Enlightenment wave of modernism blaming it as a skeptic of the revolutionary wave of Marxism. Here, the critiques (Gert, 1998; Sidorkin, 1997) claimed the termination of the quest for critical pedagogy. It's because the poststructuralists observe the subject formation as an intermediate, loose, and complex phenomenon. They emphasized the involvement of ideology and consciousness to form subjects that include desires and feelings. They tried to infuse the concepts by providing sensitivity to other powers to shape subjects. However, after a slight modification, the radicalized pedagogy emerged with a new feature, psychoanalysis.

G. The Challengers: Postcolonialism and Feminism

Loomba (2015) introduced post-colonialism as a study of relations between colonial knowledge and colonial power. Postcolonialism takes critical studies as an understanding of race in depth. Like feminists, post-colonialists also disagreed with radicalized pedagogy that it could not preserve the "race" as it needed. Similarly, Giroux and McLaren (1991) emphasized race stating that the teachers should get the knowledge of students' race, class, and gender-specific issues to address the students' requirements in this post-modern era. The post-colonialists displayed the inadequacy in radicalized pedagogy; however, they could not present alternatives to counter it.

The Feminists challenged the radicalized pedagogy blaming it on a male-oriented theoretical construct (Luke, 1992), which is based on liberalism. They tried to present "feminist poststructuralist theories" as an alternative solution to critical pedagogy. They attempted to create a different world supporting Michael Foucault, however, they could not redefine social justice, democracy, and equality in

their theories. Further, the feminists blamed that critical pedagogy could not address the issue of race. Hooks (1994) highlighted the inadequacy of radicalized pedagogy that preserves the "race" as a secondary role, however, it is a perfect pedagogy as a class-based political foundation.

IV. CONCLUSION

The above description presents historical origins, emergence, and dimensions of radicalized (critical) pedagogy, and argues with the counter-attack by Neo-Marxist educational theories, postmodernism, post-colonialism, and feminism. Radicalized pedagogy is based on critical theories produced by the Frankfurt school. Brazilian philosopher Paulo Freire (Pedagogy of the Oppressed) rooted the radicalized pedagogy as a new challenge to traditional teaching and learning. Freire infused the Marxist beliefs in pedagogy against the banking model of education. Radicalized pedagogy took teachers as social agents of change and learners as critical citizens who opine against political, social, and economic injustices.

Radicalized pedagogy has its three major dimensions i.e. the contested terrain, commitments, and philosophical positions. Critical pedagogy is the choice between the ontologies of *being* versus *becoming*. It commits to bringing political and social consciousness to the classroom, and the power of literacy in shaping the learners' lives. Dialogue is epistemological in relationship with objects of knowledge. But, in traditionally cultured classrooms, students lack the opportunity to dialogue in the classroom. Dialogue knots the moral values and ethics tightly.

Radicalized pedagogy has countered various hurdles in the course of its expansion. For example, the Neo-Marxist educational theories claimed that education in capitalist societies reproduces economic inequalities, which is against the radicalized pedagogy; postmodernists advocated the centrality of culture in pedagogy, however, radicalized pedagogy centralizes the politics, social norms, and values, and democracy in education; post colonialists challenged radicalized pedagogy blaming its inadequacy to preserve the "race"; feminists blamed it as a male-dominated theoretical construct and presented "feminist post-structuralized theories" as an alternative solution. Such a turbulent journey questions the boundaries and gravity of radicalized pedagogy critically.

The influence of postmodernism and the search for alternatives have instructed radicalized pedagogy to be refined with macro-level management. This pedagogy has not only promoted micro-centered pedagogy and politics but also in search of fundamental changes in its system. At present, radicalized pedagogy has been caught in a vicious circle by various post-modern ideas. It is even running in a turbulent way. Does it come in shape if capitalism is abolished? Is it right if culture and race are emphasized more in teaching and learning along with other pedagogical features? Even now, these questions strike critical educators to search its alternatives.

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