# Chapter 11
# Education for Liberation:
## A Transformative Polymorphic Model for ICT Integration in Education

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## ABSTRACT

*This particular proposal presents a Transformative Polymorphic Model for training, researching and teaching, a learning community of educators, which involves the integration of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) into the educational practice. It refers to ideas of justice, applied to an entire online society, based on not only giving digital individuals and groups' fair action, but also sharing the benefits of free online society. It promotes transformative learning by way of emancipator education that fosters the human rights and equity that manifest in the everyday digital lives of people, from every level of online society. It consists in a learning environment that facilitates development of higher order cognitive abilities and it promotes a critical community of learners, where both reflection and discourse facilitate the construction of personally meaningful and socially valid knowledge and guides decision and action.*

## INTRODUCTION

*The revival of democracy calls for the revival of the concept of citizenship; the revival of the concept of citizenship requires the revival of solidarity and responsibility, in other words the development of anthropo-ethics-(Edgar Morin, UNESCO 1999)*

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*Distance education* has the potential to adopt cutting-edge technologies in order to bring together learners, e-facilitators/tutors and e-content. Yet there is much deliberation about how we can infuse this form of distance learning with a socio-political and ethical dimension, so that it may address the social needs of online participants, embracing diverse races, genders, ethnicities,

religions, languages, sizes, cultural and social backgrounds, whereas liberation is only a theoretical viewpoint. The *Online Distance Education* dynamic itself, seems to diminish when it creates a chasm between an arcane, highly specialized techno-science and citizens that leads to a new social antithesis between a "new class" and the citizens. In this way, citizens are expelled from the political arena, which increasingly becomes the property of "specialists" and where the supremacy of the "new class" actually prevents the democratization of knowledge. The status of the citizen deteriorates and democratic life wanes.

Consequently, the potential of incorporating *Information and Communication Technologies* (*ICTs)* in the educational process, through *Online Distance Education*, should not be restricted to bringing together learners, tutors and e-content, but must contribute to a new ethic, whereby with the aid of people and communities, they are reformed and perhaps new human values will emerge as a collective conscience and solidarity for all mankind. It is deemed necessary that ICTs be integrated into the educational process, where technology will not replace the social aspect of learning and thus entrench the technocratic and purely instrumental perception of new technologies in the educational process and practice, but by virtue of its dynamic, it will be conducive to the socio-political dynamic and ethical dimension of *Education for a Sustainable Future*. The challenge is to turn e-information into human knowledge. This is not a technological problem but a social challenge that requires an educational solution.

The present paper aims to present a *Transformative Polymorphic Model* for training, research and teaching, the major objective being the integration of ICTs in the educational practice with an "*emancipatory cognitive interest"* and the promotion of a qualitative education for liberation. Initially, broad definitions and discussions, found in reviewing the bibliography, are formulated with respect to integrating ICT in the educational process, in *Distance Education* and in *Online Learning Communities*. In continuation, epistemological, theoretical and pedagogical issues are presented, concerning the design and development of the model, and an analysis of its various forms and elements follows. Subsequently, the authors pose questions and make recommendations in relation to the integration of ICT in the educational practice, within the framework of an *Online Education for Liberation* and recommendations are given for further research on this issue.

## BACKGROUND

### Integration of ICTs in Education

#### Conceptual Definitions

According to the European Commission Report in 2000 to the Council and the European Parliament (EC Report 1996), *"....the modes of communication, information exchange and work are constantly changing, the way in which individuals create, gather, store and transmit information is changing"*. The scientific advances that occur in every field and which find applications in our daily lives create a new environment, on an international scale, a new society, the Information Society (InfoSoc). *Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs)* are part of this society, and they have brought about radical changes in all sectors of modern society and human activity (Raptis & Rapti, 2006:16).

### Training and Pedagogical Function of Educators in ICTs

The integration of *ICT*s in the educational process is considered to have been proven, at an international level, for important scientific, methodological, teaching and learning reasons (Fragaki, Raptis, Makrakis, 2007a, 2007b, Fragaki & Makrakis, 2006, Komis, 2004, Dimetracopoulou, 2002, Bosniadou, 2001a, Bransford et al., 1999,