Preservice Teachers’ Perceptions of the Environment: Infusing Environmental Education into an Elementary Teacher Preparation Program

“Teaching children about the natural world should be treated as one of the most important events in their lives.” - Thomas Berry

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Abstract

This article provides an example of how the faculty from one large urban university modified components of their teacher preparation program to systematically infuse more environmental education into the curriculum. These changes were made based on data gathered from the authors’ studies of preservice teachers’ mental models of the environment. These studies indicate they hold misconceptions about the environment and their role as humans in its sustainability. This article presents a summary of the research data collected. It also discusses the changes made to the teacher preparation program to infuse more environmental education into the curriculum. These changes involved the development of a partnership with the local natural area agencies called Strengthening Awareness and Valuing the Environment (SAVE).
Introduction

The goal of environmental education, as established by the Belgrade Charter and adopted by the United Nations in 1976 is to “develop a world population that is aware of, and concerned about the environment and its associated problems, and which has the knowledge, skills, attitudes, motivations, and commitment to work individually and collectively toward solutions of current problems and the prevention of new ones” (North American Association of Environmental Education, 2004, p.1). To achieve this goal, the generally accepted purpose of environmental education (EE) is to provide individuals with the awareness, knowledge and skills to take appropriate action for the protection and improvement of the environment. To this end individuals need to understand their personal beliefs about the environment since these underlying beliefs will either support or undermine the work of protecting the environment (Wals, 1992; Robertson, 1993).

According to Shepardson, Wee, Priddy, and Harbor (2007), “students’ conceptualizations of the environment or their mental models shape the ways in which they understand an environmental issue and guides their environmental behaviors” (p. 328). Research has shown that this is also true for teachers (Moseley, Desjean-Perrotta, & Utley, 2010). This article provides an example of how one large, urban university faculty modified specific components of their teacher preparation program to systematically infuse more environmental education into the curriculum. These changes were made based on data gathered from the authors’ multiple studies of preservice teachers’ mental models of the environment. These studies indicated misconceptions about the environment and their role as humans in the environment.

Theoretical Framework

Mental models have been defined as images in the mind that represent real-life situations for humans to use to make sense of their daily life experiences (Coll & Treagust, 2003; Johnson-Laird & Byrne, 2003; Desjean-Perrotta, Moseley, & Crim, 2010). Mental models reflect an individual’s belief system, “acquired through observation, instruction, and cultural influences” (Libarkin, Beifuss, & Kurdziel, 2003, p. 123). Preskill and Torres (1999) identify mental models as the “values, beliefs, assumptions, and knowledge that have been
developed over time, are thought of as ‘truths,’ and are what guide people in their everyday lives” (p. 66). Furthermore, knowledge and experiences are interpreted by humans through their belief systems and the resulting beliefs are stronger influences on behavior than actual knowledge (Anderson & Holt-Reynolds, 1995; Nespor, 1987; Pajares, 1992).

Research in teacher education indicates that preservice teachers enter teaching with strong mental models about teaching and learning based on prior experiences (Calderhead & Robson, 1991; Pajares, 1992; Thomas & Pederson, 2003). These mental models tend to be individually, socially, and culturally derived and have the potential of directly impacting their teaching practices (Rickinson, 2001). Additionally, preservice teachers bring to their future classrooms preconceived mental models or conceptualizations of the environment shaped by their prior experiences, or lack thereof, with the environment (Moseley, Desjean-Perrotta, & Crim, 2010).

A meta analysis by Rickinson (2001) suggests that two major influences on children’s mental models of the environment are the media and the classroom. Given the strong influence of teachers on children’s perceptions of the environment and their role in its preservation, it is important that teachers have clear and accurate understandings of the environment. However, studies show that teachers tend to have many of the same misconceptions or stereotypical beliefs as young children about the environment (Palmer & Suggate, 1996). Their perceptions of what constitutes the environment may be limited to their immediate surroundings; they may think that the environment only consists of living things or they may believe that they (as humans) are not a part of the environment (Desjean-Perrotta, Moseley, & Cantu, 2007). They may have some knowledge about ecosystems and components of the environment through the media as do children, but lack direct experience with local natural settings. A study done by Young and Simmons (1992) found that most teachers used ‘built’ environments, such as classrooms, zoos, or aquariums, rather than local natural areas to teach about the environment. Many of the teachers surveyed considered it important to provide children experiences in nature relevant to the school curriculum. However, they were concerned about their own lack of skills and knowledge and limited direct experiences in nature to teach about the environment. This information suggests it is important that
teacher preparation programs focus on exploring teachers’ beliefs about the environment and provide opportunities for the development of the skills and knowledge needed to be effective environmental educators.

Previous studies have concluded that “the university teacher should assume virtual environmental ignorance on the part of the general university student…” (UNESCO-UNEP, 1991, p. 2). This same assumption should also be made for preservice teachers who may have perceptions and understandings about the environment that are not accurate. Because the classroom teacher is one of the primary environmental educators of young children (Rickinson, 2001), it is imperative that preservice teachers understand the factors that shape their own perceptions of the environment and what potential effect these understandings may have on the children they will be teaching. Teacher preparation programs need to assist preservice teachers in identifying their mental models of the environment and facilitate their re-conceptualizations about the environment before they enter the classroom.

The Baseline Study

As a baseline study, the mental models about the environment of 118 elementary preservice teachers’ were assessed by the authors using The Draw-an-Environment Test (DAET), a draw and explain protocol that consists of a single page with two prompts (see Appendix A). The first half of the survey has the prompt ‘My drawing of the environment is …’ with room on the page for a drawing. The second half of the survey contains the prompt to complete the sentence ‘My definition of the environment is…’ No time limit was given to complete the survey, but most of the surveys were completed in an average of 15-20 minutes. The surveys were administered during a one-week period to students attending a teaching methods course. The rubric for assessing the DAET (see Appendix B) called the DAET-R, was developed using the definition of the environment as stated in the NAAEE Guidelines for the Preparation and Professional Development of Environmental Educators (2004). The Guidelines are a set of recommended basic knowledge and skills competencies that educators need in order to effectively teach environmental education.
They apply to:

- Preservice teacher education programs and environmental education courses offered to students:
- Professional development of educators who work in both formal and nonformal educational settings; and,
- Full-time environmental educators as well as those for whom environmental education is one of several teaching responsibilities.

The NAAEE Guidelines (2004) state that preservice teachers should be able to “describe the broad view that environmental education takes of ‘environment’, incorporating concepts such as systems, interdependence, and interactions among humans, other living organisms, the physical environment – and the built or designed environment” (p. 9). All instruction in environmental education should be centered on the three essential topics of systems, interdependence and sense of place.

The four essential factors in this definition – humans, living organisms, physical environment, and built or designed environment – were used as the basis for the development of the DAET-R as rubric categories for scoring the drawings (Moseley, Desjean-Perrotta, & Utley, 2010). The DAET-R is divided into four sections that focus on the degree of evidence in the drawings that indicate interactions of the four factors with each other: factor not present, factor present, factor interacting with other factors, and two or more factors interacting within a systems approach.

Results of this study revealed that the preservice teachers’ mental models of the environment were not consistent with the definition stated in the NAAEE Guidelines. Almost 60% of the preservice teachers surveyed did not include humans in their drawings. Thirty-one percent (31%) drew humans with no obvious interaction with other factors in the environment. Only 9% drew humans interacting with another factor and of that percentage, only 5% indicated any systems approach of humans interacting with the other factors. The factor drawn the most with no interaction with other factors was living (66.4%), followed closely with built or human designed (62.2%). Generally, when the preservice teachers drew one or more factors, they just drew and labeled the factors. Very few of the drawings evidenced an understanding of a systems approach to the environment with
interactions among factors. Analysis of the sentence completion portion of the DAET survey was consistent with results from the drawings where living (59%) was the factor most often included in the definitions and built or human designed included in 53% of the writings (Desjean-Perrotta, Moseley, & Cantu, 2007).

The results of this initial study mirror the findings of studies by Loughland, Reid, and Petocz (2002), Shepardson et al. (2007) and Rickinson (2001) in which the majority of young children viewed the environment as an object, with little or no human interference. Similar to the children in these studies, few of the preservice teachers surveyed drew images depicting their actions integrating with the environment. As teacher educators we became concerned about these findings because those who view the environment as an object, something separate from ourselves, may not feel responsible for its care. In order for EE to be more meaningful, individuals’ personal experiences must be explored and challenged. Environmental education should start at home, relating one’s actions to one’s experiences. As Shepardson et al. (2007) stated, “Students must first learn about the environment before learning about the environmental issue because this places the issue on the context of the environment…curricular emphasis must be on the local environment expanding to other environments” (p. 344). We think the same holds true for teacher preparation programs. They should use local natural resources and personal experiences as the context for preservice teachers to learn about environmental issues. As a result of our research, we implemented an EE professional development experience required of all elementary preservice teachers across the teacher preparation program.

**Initial Changes in the Teacher Education Program**

To begin the integration of EE into our elementary preservice teacher preparation program, we chose Project WILD (2004), an exemplary international professional development EE curriculum and workshop that uses the context of wildlife to teach ecological principles and concepts. Project WILD assists learners of all ages in developing awareness, knowledge, and skills in relationship to the environment and a commitment to its protection. Participation in a Project WILD workshop became one of the required assignments for a course in teaching methods that is part of the elementary teacher preparation program. Students spend a full day off campus engaging in
professional development at one of the city’s natural areas. The day’s agenda is centered on the conceptual framework of environmental literacy development which includes: awareness of and concern about the environment and appropriate skills and knowledge needed to take action in protecting the environment.

Following the workshop, a short post-workshop questionnaire was given to 100 elementary education preservice teachers. Results of the questionnaire indicated participants increased their knowledge and awareness of the local natural areas and developed a better understanding of the connections of EE to the elementary school curriculum. Responses to the survey evidenced that 52% of the preservice teachers had never been to any of the city’s six natural areas, 84% had never been to the specific natural area where the WILD workshop was held, and 7% were not even aware of the existence of any of the various natural areas in their local community. Participants overwhelmingly indicated on the survey that they wanted to return and bring their families and/or future classrooms to the natural areas.

In addition to the short questionnaire given at the end of the workshop, the DAET was administered as a pre/post survey, and the DAET-R was used to analyze the impact of participation in the Project WILD workshop on preservice teachers’ mental models of the environment. Participation in the EE workshop slightly influenced the preservice teachers’ inclusion of humans in their drawings: 71% initially did not include humans in their drawings which decreased to 65% after participation in the workshop. Additionally, 62% did not include built factors in their initial drawings which decreased to 54% after their participation in the workshop. Overall the scores indicated little significant impact of the EE workshop on the preservice teachers’ mental models of the environment. Upon reflection of the results, we concluded that our data actually supported an existing body of research regarding the impact of professional development. Teachers, as learners, need to slowly incorporate new information into their practices; rapid change rarely occurs. Instead, significant change occurs as a result of long term professional development programs that offer opportunities for the practice of new teaching ideas, integration of new materials, and time for reflection and discussion (Van Driel, Bejaard, & Verloop, 2001). Professional development over a longer time span provides for more opportunities for learning, which
leads to deeper understandings and greater possibilities for the implementation of the new information within the classroom (Garet, Porter, Desmione, Birman, & Yoon, 2001).

Establishment of SAVE Partnership and Curriculum Framework

Recognizing the need for more changes to the teacher preparation program that incorporated EE, and based on the research on effective professional development, we began to infuse EE curricula across the elementary teacher preparation program using Project WILD as the cornerstone for this integration. Rather than one EE experience, we implemented a sequence of EE experiences for the preservice teachers as part of their coursework across the curriculum. We added three additional EE training programs to the curriculum including Global Learning and Observations to Benefit the Environment (2011), Project Learning Tree (2008), and Growing Up Wild (2009). In order to accomplish the goal of utilizing the local natural resources, we also established a community partnership called Strengthening Awareness and Valuing the Environment (SAVE). Initially this partnership included the university’s College of Education, the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department and the San Antonio Parks and Recreation Department. This partnership has expanded over the last few years to also include Mitchell Lake National Audubon Center, Texas Wildlife Association, Texas Forest Association, Alamo Area Master Naturalists, and Cibolo Nature Center.

The goals of SAVE are: 1) to increase the preservice teachers knowledge of and interaction with the local natural resources; 2) to provide them with systematic, hands-on experiences in EE. As teacher educators, our goal is to expand preservice teachers’ understanding that “experiences outside the classroom are an important instructional strategy for engaging young children in direct discovery of the world around them” (NAAEE, 2004, p. 3). Through support and assistance from members of the SAVE partnership, we initiated a sequence of professional development experiences in EE curricula for the elementary preservice teachers. These EE experiences and curricula provide the preservice teachers with inquiry-based activity guides, materials, and resources to use in their future classrooms. The EE experiences and curricula, in the order that they are offered throughout the teacher education program, are listed in Appendix C. During the student teaching semester, preservice teachers are expected to utilize...
some of the EE curricula and experiences they were exposed to throughout their program.

University faculty and nonformal partners of SAVE are trained as facilitators in all of the EE curricula listed above. New facilitators and partners are solicited each year. We now have graduates of the program requesting training as facilitators so they can assist us with the university EE experiences and can offer the workshops at their school campuses. The workshops and field experiences are team taught by SAVE partners and each curriculum is offered each semester.

**Conclusion**

The *NAAEE Guidelines* (2004) promote the implementation of environmental literacy learning and teaching that are integrated into educational programs. The SAVE partnership has served as an effective way to solidify this commitment to environmental education in our teacher preparation program. This partnership has also assisted faculty in meeting the necessary components as outlined by Powers (2004) that must be present in an effective environmental education program: 1) teaching and learning outdoors, 2) sharing environmental education resources, 3) modeling effective environmental education strategies, and 4) involvement of the local community.

Perceptions about the environment are not innate but rather learned (Rickinson, 2001). Teacher education faculty can facilitate preservice teachers’ conscious examination of their existing mental models through pre-assessment and reflection. One of the first steps in creating shifts and changes in existing mental models is to raise doubts about personal beliefs and mental images (Duffy, 2003). If it is true that mental models are never complete, but continually expand as new information is assimilated, then it should be possible to modify an individual’s perception of the environment in a positive way through systematic and well-planned delivery of information and experiences. Thus, teacher preparation programs can provide a variety of specific and effective EE experiences across the context of a program where preservice teachers can incorporate new learning and expand their understandings of the environment as they experience new ideas and concepts.
Our research in EE continues to inform our practice as teacher educators in infusing environmental education into an elementary teacher preparation program. Our future research includes determining the cumulative impact of participation in a purposefully and systematically designed EE program on elementary preservice teachers’ mental models of the environmental and their teaching practices. We hope that as a result of this training in EE, these future teachers will be able to serve as transformative leaders in environmental education and will be able to assist young children as they construct their own mental images of the environment and their role in “working collectively towards solutions of current problems and the prevention of new ones” (NAAEE, 2004, p. 1).

“The role of classroom teachers as guardians is critical if we are to raise a generation of individuals who are aware of environmental issues and share a sense of responsibility for the future.” - Jane Goodall and Jean E. McCarty

References


Moseley, Desjean-Perrotta, & Crim


APPENDIX A

Draw-an-Environment Test

Date: _________
ID#______

In the space below draw a picture of what you think the environment is. Below that, please provide your definition of the environment (in words).

My drawing of the environment is:

My definition of the environment is:

# Draw-an Environment Test - Rubric (DAET-R)

Date: __________
ID#: __________________

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor</th>
<th>Present</th>
<th>Interactions with other Factors</th>
<th>System Interactions Made Explicit</th>
<th>Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Human</td>
<td>Drawing does not contain pictures of humans</td>
<td>Human(s) drawn without any apparent interaction with other factors.</td>
<td>Humans drawn with obvious deliberate emphasis placed on interaction with one or more factors and the influence of that interaction on the environment through the use of special indicators such as conceptual labels and/or arrows.</td>
<td>0 Points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human</td>
<td>Human(s) drawn without any apparent interaction with other factors.</td>
<td>Human(s) drawn interacting with other humans and/or another factor (e.g. human fishing or walking on a bridge), but without special emphasis placed on the influence of the interaction on the environment.</td>
<td></td>
<td>1 Point</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Living</td>
<td>Drawing does not contain pictures of living organisms.</td>
<td>Living organisms drawn without any apparent interaction with other factors.</td>
<td>Living organisms drawn with obvious deliberate emphasis placed on interaction with one or more factors and the influence of that interaction on the environment through the use of special indicators such as conceptual labels and/or arrows.</td>
<td>2 Points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Living</td>
<td>Living organisms (e.g. plants and animals) drawn without any apparent interaction with other factors.</td>
<td>Living organisms drawn interacting with other living organisms and/or another factor (e.g. animals grazing), but without special emphasis placed on the influence of the interaction on the environment.</td>
<td></td>
<td>3 Points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abiotic</td>
<td>Drawing does not contain pictures of abiotic factors.</td>
<td>Abiotic items drawn without any apparent interaction with other factors.</td>
<td>Abiotic items drawn with obvious deliberate emphasis placed on interaction with one or more factors and the influence of that interaction on the environment through the use of special indicators such as conceptual labels and/or arrows.</td>
<td>0 Points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abiotic</td>
<td>Abiotic items (e.g. mountains, rivers, Sun, or clouds) drawn without any apparent interaction with other factors.</td>
<td>Abiotic items drawn interacting with other abiotic items and/or another factor (e.g. wind blowing a palm tree), but without special emphasis placed on the influence of the interaction on the environment.</td>
<td></td>
<td>1 Point</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human</td>
<td>Drawing does not contain pictures of human built factors.</td>
<td>Human built or designed items (e.g. buildings, automobiles, and bridges) drawn without any apparent interaction with other factors.</td>
<td>Obvious deliberate emphasis placed on one Human Built item interacting with one or more factors and the influence of that interaction on the environment through the use of special indicators such as conceptual labels and/or arrows.</td>
<td>2 Points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human</td>
<td>Human built items drawn interacting with other human built items and/or another factor (e.g. smo kestack emitting smoke into the air), but without special emphasis placed on the influence of the interaction on the environment.</td>
<td>Human Built items drawn interacting with other human built items and/or another factor (e.g. smo kestack emitting smoke into the air), but without special emphasis placed on the influence of the interaction on the environment.</td>
<td></td>
<td>3 Points</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Directions: Assign points for each Factor—Human, Living, Abiotic, Built—based on whether the factor is merely present in the drawing (1 Point), interacting with other Factors in the drawing (2 Points), or interacting with special additional emphasis placed on the influence of the interaction on the environment (3 Points). Factors that are not drawn do not receive points. (0 Points). Factors must be drawn to be scored. Implied relationships do not receive a score. For example, if a subject draws a house but there are no drawn humans, it cannot be assumed the subject infers humans in the drawing. Diagrams without drawings of factors receive a score of ‘0’.

Conceptual Label
A label that depicts interactions between one or more factors and an influence of that interaction on the environment is considered a conceptual label. For example, smog indicates interactions between abiotic, human and built factors. A cloud labeled as water cycle instead of just cloud indicates interaction between abiotic and living factors. Trash and garbage indicates interaction between human and abiotic factors and the influence of that by-product on the environment.

Identification Label
Identification labels are different from conceptual labels in that they merely identify the object (tree, dog, house, etc.).
# APPENDIX C

## Environmental Education Curricula

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Course Connection</th>
<th>Setting</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Global Learning and Observations to Benefit the Environment (GLOBE, 2011)</strong></td>
<td>Developed by NASA. Targets math, science and technology in study of earth systems science</td>
<td>Earth Systems Science lecture and lab (sophomore/junior year)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Project Learning Tree (PLT, 2008)</strong></td>
<td>K-12 curriculum developed by the American Forest Foundation. Use of forest ecology as conceptual framework</td>
<td>Science and Humanities (junior year)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Elementary GLOBE (2011)</strong></td>
<td>Integration of GLOBE protocols with elementary (EC-4) activities and literature</td>
<td>Approaches to Teaching Science and Approaches to Teaching Social Studies (senior year)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Growing Up WILD (GUW, 2009)</strong></td>
<td>EC-3 curriculum developed by Council for Environmental Education (CEE). Use of wildlife as conceptual framework</td>
<td>Approaches to Teaching Science (senior year)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Technology for Sustaining Global Education
Changing the World through Technology in the Classroom

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Abstract

The literature is replete with student boredom in the schools of America. Student attitudes about the relevancy of what and how it is being taught are at critical levels. Student attitudes about teaching and learning will require 21st century methods and a paradigm shift away from 20th century tools and attitudes. Students are bored with school because the fun they experience with their high-tech games and interactive technology in their personal life dwarfs their experiences in the classroom; school is not fun anymore. Traditional teaching methods cannot compete with the technology and resources available today. Teachers, administrators, parents, school officials charged with funding schools, and even the state and federal education agencies must come to the realization that the answer in changing schools and making school fun, relevant, and exciting again rests with the implementation and integration of technology in the curriculum in schools throughout the United States. Changing student attitudes about education will require teachers to make attitude changes as well. Education cannot be sustained for the future without technology that is also futuristic in design and implementation. Technology of the present is quickly becoming technology of the past. Teachers must embrace the current technology available to students, allow them to use the technology creatively to aid and enrich their learning and promote the use of new technologies. Technology makes teaching easier, learning more fun, and provides students with a sense of personal control over what and how they learn. Technology has also enabled educators around the world to collaborate about student learning. Expanding the use of technology in education on a global scale has the ability to allow students to immerse themselves in a topic or a culture, to learn with students from around the world and to provide teachers with the same opportunities. The teachers and administrators in the schools and classrooms of America must be forward thinking in the
ways technology can be integrated that will create schools that meet the needs of our students in a world that is being driven by technology.

**Introduction**

Reports, studies and articles abound proposing that one of the major problems with American schools, according to students, is that they are boring and out of touch with what needs to be taught and how the curriculum should be delivered. Student attitudes about education and how it should be delivered have been greatly influenced by the age of technology. They have, in many instances, outdistanced their teacher counterparts in accepting and using technology to enhance and broaden their learning experiences. Too often, students are bored in the classroom, not so much with learning as with the seemingly mundane methodologies and archaic forms of technology used to support the teaching and learning acts in the classroom. As a result, students have become disconnected with the teaching and learning process.

Students must feel connected to what they are being taught or are expected to learn. They must develop a love of learning and this connection is best fostered through the feeling that they are in control of what they learn or at least, in part, experience learning in ways they perceive as within their control and is relevant. This includes using technology which they are accustomed to using and given additional opportunities to discover new and more appropriate ways to use the technology for schooling purposes. Collins and Halverson (2009) stated that “a love of learning can be fostered by encouraging kids to explore deeply topics in which they are particularly interested, as home-schooling parents do” (p. 132). They continue by stating that “kids who play real-time strategy games, such as Civilization, begin to check out books on ancient cultures and earn better grades in school” (p. 132).

Teachers and students are connected in the teaching and learning cycle and their attitudes about the value of school is also intertwined in the educational experience. Students’ interest in school is currently, more than at any other time in history, based on their perceptions of relevancy and applicability of school to the real-world. Additionally, student attitudes about learning and the schooling process has been, and is still, connected to the attitudes of teachers (Collins & Halverson, 2009; Ertmer & Hruskocy, 1999). Too often, teachers have a real fear
of technology, largely because student knowledge of and utilization of technology makes teachers appear to be novices compared to the students. Teachers’ fears may also be based on their feelings that students will have too much control and they will lose the control in the classroom that they have been expected to maintain or have grown accustomed to through years of strict classroom management techniques in all classroom learning situations. Collins and Halverson (2009) noted that “instead of diverting student attention from schools, as feared by many teachers and school leaders – technology - can provide a path to make conventional school content more appealing and encourage students to give their classroom instruction another chance” (p. 132).

**Student Perceptions of Boredom and Relevancy**

Recent reports, research and literature on the health of education suggest that students are bored in almost every aspect of their educational experience. Collins and Halverson (2009) reported that:

- 50% of high school students are bored every day in their classes; another found that 82% of California 9th- and 10th-graders reported their school experiences as boring and irrelevant. Changing these deeply ingrained attitudes about learning will mean changing both the process of teaching and learning and the reward system for successful completion of schooling. (p. 131)

Traditionally, students have always experienced a degree of boredom with school. That level of boredom for many of our students has increased appreciably over the past several years (Collins & Halverson, 2009). This is due, in large part, to students being exposed to the plethora of technology they utilize in their daily lives. The technology makes learning and living interesting and relevant. What once worked for educators in terms of technology for making learning fun and exciting, is antiquated and boring to students who have access to 21st century technology (Collins & Halverson, 2009; Wolf, Lindeman, Wolf, & Dunnerstick, 2011).

According to Wolf et al. (2011), the first blackboard was used in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, in 1809. At that time, students were focused on what the teacher was doing in the front of the room. However, current classrooms focus on student learning and the learning process with the primary focus being on student engagement
and how to create more active engagement in the classroom (Collins & Halverson, 2009; Wolf et al., 2011). The challenge for teachers and administrators for future will be on creating a classroom environment enriched and flourishing with activities that inspire learning that is viewed as relevant and engaging by students. Technology has the potential to solve many of the issues surrounding classroom engagement and relevancy (Collins & Halverson, 2009; Wolf et al., 2011; Olaniran & Agnello, 2008). With learners as the focus of classrooms of the future, it is easy to understand how technology can support such a learning environment when the technology is used for learning and helping to keep student interest levels high as well as varying the way the lesson is delivered. Wolf et al. (2011) contended that through the integration of technology, students are enabled to become more active in the learning process.

When a student feels vested in actual learning, retention of the material tends to rise significantly. Film projectors, slide projectors and other antiquated technology common in classrooms 30-40 years ago, simply bore current teachers who started their teaching careers using current more sophisticated and powerful technology. As bored as the teachers may be, their students are far more turned off to this level of antiquated technology (Collins & Halverson, 2009; Wolf et al., 2011; Olaniran & Agnello, 2008). Olaniran and Agnello (2008) agreed that students have become bored and do not find school and learning to be much fun. They cite the case of the British Open University that was established with the idea of helping students follow their pleasure in learning without the constraints of physical walls. Jarvis (2000) reported that students can read books, watch television, listen to the radio, and talk with people considered experts on a given subject as they wish. The Open University allows learners to learn with the aid of computer programs and other computer-mediated devices to take control of their learning. According to Wolf et al., 2011; Ball, 2003; and Gouws, 2007, whiteboard and other similar technology has the ability to transform a bland classroom into a place where students want to learn.

The problem of boredom becomes exacerbated when schools lag seriously behind in making the same technology available for students to use in the classroom that they are accustomed to using in their personal lives and daily activities away from the school setting. Classrooms of the future must be adaptable to the types of learning
students experience throughout their daily lives outside the school building (Courville, 2011). When teachers and instructional leaders are able to adapt the use of technology in the classroom and make the learning experience relevant and applicable to students, then student attitudes will also change about school (Wolf et al., 2011; Courville, 2011; Roden, 2011; & Tapscott, 1998). Currently, the technology is available to provide relevant and applicable learning experiences in our schools. However, the technology of yesterday will not satisfy the hunger of our 21st century learners. The students who are currently in our classrooms are already using advanced technology to communicate with each other and to perform research on an infinite array of topics. They are also able to determine their futures through online courses and interactive programs, to expand their knowledge and skills across a wide range of topics, and to work cooperatively with numerous other students locally, nationally and internationally on various tasks. Additionally, they are able to experience global cultures through the internet and other online social network sites for communicating and sharing ideas and personal experiences. Courville (2011) stated that “we should continue to focus on technology that allows students to interact with other students and environments located outside of their current environment, locality, and culture” (p. 17). With this kind of technology and interesting learning venues available to students in their personal lives, the challenge for schools is a daunting one at best.

**Changing Attitudes: The Influence of Teacher Attitudes**

Changing the way students view education and their attitudes concerning the value of the teaching-learning process will be successful only if we are able to reformulate their attitudes about school. Fortunately, technologies are currently available to educators that provide the necessary avenues to engender the levels of interest and relevancy students require. Collins and Halverson (2009) stated that “learning technologies provide some direction about how to improve student motivation to learn and to invigorate learning content” (p. 131).

Engagement increases student interest and thereby increases student learning, achievement, and overall acceptance and appreciation of school. Nelson, Palonsky, and McCarthy (2010) proposed that students today need to develop technological knowledge, skills, and
attitudes in order to become successful members of society. They also contend that students are more engaged in learning when technology is involved, thereby making technology the instrument or means for tailoring learning to meet the specific needs of learners. Roden (2011) stated that:

There are a variety of uses for technology in education, and numerous studies have been conducted on its usefulness. Researchers have discovered that teacher attitudes have a major role in the effectiveness of technology in schools. Using technology in schools can positively influence the school and community environments. Students are more engaged, and their achievement increases when technology is used appropriately. In order to be successful in today’s society, students need a solid base of technological skills and exposure. (p. 2)

According to Ertmer and Hruskocy (1999), studies have established the relationship of teacher beliefs and attitudes concerning the use of technology in the classroom and how their attitudes influence the use of technology – computers - in the classroom by both teachers and students. Courville (2011) stated that “when technology is directly applied to an educational setting, such as school, both the students and teachers can be viewed as learners” (p. 3).

Courville (2011) also stated that:

Technology is fulfilling an ever increasing role in both the traditional education field, and in other fields which are utilizing technology for educational purposes. Within the educational field, we can see technology as a means of removing barriers for students and teachers alike. Technology can remove financial and geographical barriers……allows students and teachers to experience educational opportunities that they might otherwise never have been able to encounter. (p. 15)

According to Wolf et al. (2011), there are many reasons that can be given to use various technologies in the classroom. However, many teachers feel threatened because they are unfamiliar with the technology to be used in the classroom (Courville, 2011). When the teacher’s minimal or even lack of technology skills is coupled with the often advanced level of many students in the classroom, there is the
potential for teachers to feel that their position in the classroom as the primary instructor of knowledge and skills is being threatened by these same students (Collins & Halverson, 2009; Roden, 2011). A change must occur in the attitudes of teachers concerning the value of technology to the teaching-learning process. Similarly, an accompanying change is required by educators in accepting that many students have a decided jump-start on the utilization and level of comfort with technology over many teachers (Nelson, Palonsky & McCarthy, 2010). Most of the teachers who fall into this category of novice, in comparison to the level of technology utilization of the students, are the more veteran teachers who are correctly classified as the ‘technology immigrants’ or those individuals who adopted technology and attempted to make it fit into their lives as best they could. This is compared to the vast numbers of students who are classified as ‘technology natives’ or those who were essentially born using the technology (Wolf et al., 2011; Collins & Halverson, 2009).

**Empowering Students to Control Their Learning**

Education cannot be sustained in a global educational future without providing the technology required to assist students in mapping their learning and gaining a degree of personal control over their pathways. Collins and Halverson (2009) stated that:

> In order to produce a generation of people who seek out learning, learners need to be given more control over their own learning. Learner control can be fostered by giving kids the tools to support their own learning, such as access to the web, machines for toddlers that teach reading, tutoring help when needed, and computer-based games that foster deep knowledge and entrepreneurial skills. (p. 132)

Students want to have more control of their learning in the classroom. The difficult aspect of this issue, again, is changing the attitudes and behaviors of teachers. Traditionally, schools and classrooms have been very controlling in terms of what is being taught and when it should be taught. Allowing students more control over their learning experiences will require a serious shift in the way schools and classroom teachers view their roles and the roles of their students. Collins and Halverson (2009) stated that:

> Pushing students to take more control of their learning, runs counter to the institutional control of learning exercised by
Our world has become far too complex and the knowledge-base has become too expansive for a person to ever be expected to memorize all the information they will need to be successful. There must be a shift away from the traditional memorization of facts to a system where schools teach sustainable skills such as data or information retrieval. Courville (2011) stated that:

Given how expansive the world’s knowledge has become, we as educators should not lead our students into inefficient endeavors aimed at creating human databases, but we should teach students the skills to utilize the existing knowledge in their learning tasks”. (p. 8)

However, memorization is still at the heart of the assessment industry both in schools and on a national level. Courville (2011) stated that:

Educators should develop assessments where student utilization of technology is not considered an unfair advantage or academic dishonesty….students should be free to access information during exams and assessments. This would require those responsible for developing exams to focus more on synthesis and application of readily available knowledge than simply memorization and recitation of specific facts. (p. 14)

This is a fundamental shift away from textbook and test development companies holding the ‘trump cards’ when it comes to what is important to be taught and the appropriate methodologies to best use in teaching the skills and concepts. When testing companies decide that computers are not appropriate to be used during testing situations because it provides students with unfair advantages, then there must also be fundamental changes in the way we view testing and assessment as well as teaching and learning on a daily basis in the classroom.
Sustaining a Global Educational Focus: Challenges for the Future

Technology can be used to communicate with and learn with students from around the world. Courville (2011) stated that “technology can be used for classes to communicate with other school sites” (p. 5). According to Collins and Halverson (2009), “technology-driven venues for learning are springing up everywhere, and technological innovations are having unanticipated influences outside of the public school system” (p. 122). This influence is being felt in countries and cultures around the globe. This phenomenon has already taken root in places outside the United States. Collins and Halverson (2009) noted that:

> With inexpensive computers, young people in Thailand and Brazil can have access to the same resources for learning that people in the developed world now have. Many will choose to take advantage of these resources to escape from poverty. In some ways, they will be a new kind of immigrant - instead of moving to a new country, they will use information networks to transform their thinking. They will be able to find like-minded souls to share ideas in cyberspace. (p. 131)

However, Olaniran & Agnello (2008), warn against believing that because the sharing of information globally through technology may create a sense of globalization, we should not assume that technology and a new sense of global collaboration will erase the historical constraints that might ease the transition to a globalized world or to an education system that prepares global citizens and workers optimally (p. 71). In order to prepare 21st century workers, most nations, overall, have witnessed and, in many cases, demanded the increased role of education, as they prepare their workers for information literacy (Jarvis, 2000; Stewart & Kagan, 2005; Agnello &d Jung, 2005). Olaniran and Agnello (2008) proposed that:

> The learning society of the future is fostered through the use of technologies and computers to provide equal opportunities for all individuals to receive as much education as they are believed to be capable. In a futuristic sense, the learning society approach is aimed at the central goal of allowing individuals to develop their capabilities. With cutting-edge knowledge, societies look to the future, can plan for the on-going demands and changes in technologies, can be reflexive –
that is concerned about the specific needs, and are able to become part of the global market. (p. 71)

Education for the future global perspective must be one that is planned around common beliefs of what is best for the world as a whole. World governments must take the lead in establishing educational opportunities with a global learning society perspective. Olaniran & Agnello (2008) noted that:

With the planned approach, a learning society recognizes the role of governments and their institutions in offering education either through policy or legislation. This overarching goal of the planned learning society prepares workers for increased national or state global market competitiveness, competencies, widening participation, and lifelong learning. Furthermore, the promotion of the learning approach is based on the need to participate in the democratic processes of the society. (p. 71)

Wolf et al. (2011) noted that:

Technology will be more important than ever for the next generation of students. Their ability to gain functional……..technology skills could determine their level of success in the real-world. As educators, we are preparing our students for an unknown new age. If students are exposed to challenging, exciting new tasks that embrace technology, we can encourage them to meet expectations. We [as teachers] must learn new cutting-edge delivery methods and procedures to give our students maximum opportunities. (p. 560)

Courville (2011) stated that “internet-based technology allows teachers to form their own learning communities that are not confined to the local school site” (p. 4). This is also true for students as many of them are going global in their interests concerning other cultures. Because a growing number of American students have established connections with other students from numerous global societies, the network of global interactions and the level of interest in those cultures and societies are expanding exponentially every single day. The classroom for these students and the students they establish relationships with on a daily basis is changing the world of education. The challenge for teachers is to take advantage of the teaching and learning opportunities afforded them by such unique situations created by the technology students cut their teeth on. The face of the traditional school must change to meet the dynamics of the changing world of the learners of our schools and the learners in our global network of informal schools;
According to Olaniran & Agnello (2008), the challenges facing educational systems include the need to challenge students, to change the teaching methods to include effectively using technology to make learning fun and appropriate, and to adequately prepare students for the real-world in whatever career path they might choose. Another challenge is to help students keep pace with the needs of the various parts of the global society whether it deals with politics, economics, cultural awareness, etc. (Jarvis, 2000, p. 348). Olaniran & Agnello (2008) claim that “The move toward globalization ……requires wealthiest countries to insist on knowledge-based or digitally literate workers of which the economically developed countries control a large portion” (p. 69). Cultural and educational borrowing and lending will become commonplace as the classrooms of tomorrow take shape and a global network of learners bring the world closer together. The world will become more alike even with its regional and national differences. According to Olaniran and Agnello (2008):

Educational borrowing and lending have occurred throughout history when ideas spread from one region to another and as a cultural group saw the value of adopting the new ways usually to improve life or if the new ideas and educational demands were imposed on them. (p. 69)

Olaniran and Agnello (2008) also stated that:

There is much more cultural borrowing today through government delegations, international participation in conferences, and international collaboration on educational and policy research. As nations ‘converge’ becoming more alike in structure, curriculum, and goals, international consultants take their expertise across the globe. (p. 71)

**Conclusion**

The schools of the future are the schools of this generation. The problems associated with boredom, relevance, and attitudes by teachers and students that seem to haunt schools, are issues that can be resolved by educators and schools today. The challenges facing educational systems include the need to challenge students, to change teaching
methods to include effectively using technology to make learning fun and appropriate, and to adequately prepare students for the real-world in whatever career path they might choose (Olaniran & Agnello, 2008). The ability to change schools and make learning fun and relevant rest with the appropriate and creative applications of the plethora of technologies available to teachers. The technology required for the enhancement and expansion of the horizons of educational and learning experiences is not an event somewhere in the future; it is available to us now.

Wolf et al. (2011) concluded that:

As information technology continues to progress, teaching ….with multimedia is becoming a new way of instruction. Integrating technology enables students to become more active in the learning process. When students feel more vested in actual learning, retention of the material tends to rise significantly. Tools such as interactive whiteboards, personal computers, and document cameras can help keep students’ interest high and vary the way the lesson is delivered. Technology will be more important than ever for the next generation of students. Their ability to gain functional ………technology skills could determine their level of success in the real-world. If students are exposed to challenging, exciting new tasks that embrace technology, educators can encourage them to meet expectations. Educators must do their best to learn new cutting-edge delivery methods and procedures to give students maximum opportunities. (pp. 558-560)

Ball (2003) contended that interactive technologies are bringing about changes in traditional teacher-pupil discourse. Communication and discussion among fellow students also occurs naturally as many students begin to feel more comfortable with one another using technology to change the learning environment and thereby shifting some of the learning away from the teacher. This approach allows each student to feel more connected and in tune with the learning and also offers students a variety of media in which the teacher is afforded an opportunity to better differentiate how students are learning (p. 5-6).
Goodison (2002) suggested that technology that creates a student-centered classroom offers students the ability to explore and discover how to work with technology to make learning fun while also engaging with their peers (p. 217). The classroom of the future consists of engagement of peers, not just in the classrooms of America, but also in classrooms throughout the world. Wolf et al., (2011) contended that one of the major challenges for educators in America is to prepare our students in such a way as to enable them to compete and succeed in today’s competitive global marketplace. Education for a future global perspective must be one that is planned around common beliefs of what is best for the world as a whole. Therefore, world governments must take the lead in establishing educational opportunities with a global learning society perspective (Olaniran & Agnello, 2008). Likewise, they also believe that another challenge for American educators is to help students keep pace with the needs of the various parts of the global society whether it deals with politics, economics, cultural awareness or whatever the societal issue (Olaniran & Agnello, 2008, p. 71).

Courville (2011) stated that, “Internet-based technology allows teachers to form their own learning communities that are not confined to the local school site” (p. 4). Courville (2011) also contended that this is true for students as many of them are going global in their interests concerning other cultures. Because a growing number of American students have established connections with other students from numerous global societies, the network of global interactions and the level of interest in those cultures and societies are expanding exponentially every single day. The classroom for these students and the students they establish relationships with on a daily basis is changing the world of education. The challenge for teachers is to take advantage of the teaching and learning opportunities afforded them by such unique situations created by the technology students cut their teeth on. The face of the traditional school must change to meet the dynamics of the changing world of the learners of our schools and the learners in our global network of informal schools; schools without barriers or walls (Wolf,
Lindeman, Wolf, & Dunnerstick, 2011; Olaniran & Agnello, 2008). Goodison (2002) added support to this premise by suggesting that students benefit from distance learning technology which removes the barriers present with the traditional school.

A global society and the accompanying global economy and mindset require that the schools of tomorrow use technology to create classrooms without walls that are linked through various technologies and forms of social media. Learning in a global society cannot be conducted in a classroom designed for a pre-technology era. Likewise, attitudes by educators concerning learning through the use of various forms of technology must be aligned to meet the needs of learners who use technology for numerous other learning venues outside the classroom. Tapscott (1998) stated that “For the first time in history, children are more comfortable, knowledgeable, and literate than their parents about an innovation central to society – technology - which makes them a force for social transformation” (p. 1-2). Our thinking about learning, schools and technology must change if schools are to survive as we currently know them. If we continue to do what we have always done, then we will become relics of the past and schools, as we know them, will disappear into history books. Our society and the world as a whole operate on a futuristic paradigm where technology influences the plethora of changes and the operational aspects of a world-wide economy. In the past, schools have served society extremely well. That all changed when the age of technology came screaming around the corners of our small world and the world ballooned into a global reality for everything from business, military, finances, economics and every other aspect of our lives. Even our attitudes about education and where it fits in the new technologically advanced society that has been created due to the sophisticated technological developments are subject to a paradigm shift. The primary objective for schools – teachers, administrators, parents and all stakeholders must be focused on helping our student, not just cope with this new
world, but to provide them the skills, attitudes and ability to be successful and competitive in this new global society. Collins and Halverson (2009) stated that, “If schools cannot change fast enough to keep pace with advances in learning technologies, learning will leave schooling behind” (p.131).

References


Effective Teaching Practices: Global Tools Used by Leaders in Early Childhood Education

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Abstract

Three early childhood educators reflect on their distinct perspectives when providing professional development to early childhood education teachers in childcare centers, public schools and developing countries. This paper is a collaborative effort in which three professionals aggregate their experiences of working with teachers in various settings, South Texas Head Starts, public school early childhood centers and early childhood teachers in Zambia. These professionals, using the common characteristics defining, effective teaching, reflect on their teaching methods and strategies to consider how their approaches makes them effective teachers and leads to the professional development of their students. The purpose is to draw from these three perspectives and their teaching strategies, with the intention to impact teachers working with young children in South Texas and rural areas of Zambia.

Introduction

Preschool teachers attend a variety of educational institutions for their professional development. Community colleges, four-year universities schools of education and non-profit teacher trainings are among them. Three early childhood educators, colleagues in the field, came together to discuss the professional development they provided as instructors to the present and future teachers of young children. Their discussion revealed that while the demographics of their students and the teaching
environments were dissimilar, their goal was a common one. The three early childhood educators reflected on their distinct perspectives when providing professional development to early childhood education teachers in childcare centers, public schools and developing countries. As instructors, they are expected to be effective in their teachings and as role models for their students. Their hope is that their strategies would be effective in teaching knowledge, skills and personal experience with teaching.

Reflecting on the differences, these three instructors and authors of this paper created a collaborative effort in which they collected their experiences of working with teachers in various settings: a university school of education, a community college early childhood education department and as trainers of early childhood teachers in Zambia. These professionals, using the common characteristics defining effective teaching principles, reflect on their teaching methods to consider how their strategies make them effective teachers and leads to the professional development of their students. Ramsden (1992) points out the assumption that student learning is possible when every teaching action is evaluated for the outcome of desired learning. This assumption “leads to an argument for reflective teaching and enquiring approach as a necessary condition for improved teaching” (Ramsden, 1992, p. 5). With this assumption in mind, the authors of this paper agreed to consider Ramsden’s six key principles of effective teaching in higher education. They consider these principles as they reflect on their own strategies as executed in their educational teaching environments.

- Interest and explanation
- Concern and respect for students
- Appropriate assessment and feedback
- Clear goals and intellectual challenge
- Independence, control and engagement
- Learning from students

**Literature Review**

**Interest and explanation**
With more attention being placed on the role of the teacher as it pertains to the success of young children, one key characteristic comes to mind, and that is how does a teacher become effective? The early
childhood profession has changed and evolved from an occupation into a professional field and career (Goble, 2010). In this article, personal characteristics and the value of setting goals and a path to professional development links training and effect teaching. Ramsden (1992) describes how a teaching approach that used constructive engagement with learning activities leads to changes in understanding of the learner.

An example of this in a community college setting might be to review a specific concept as it pertains to the development of young children. This observation can occur in a student’s classroom as they work with young children or to visit a center. Students are able to assess and provide feedback to each other regarding their observations. This interactive approach rather than a one-way communication teaching method helps students to make sense of their subject matter and enables them to see the relevance.

An element of teaching is expressing interest in students while providing content explanations. Teachers realize that there is a strong connection between positive interaction with students and learning. Lumpkin (2007) states in her article, “Caring Teachers,” that a teacher’s belief in a student’s ability shapes the learning process. She concludes that students sense their teacher’s belief in them and they respond by “optimizing their commitment to learning” (p. 160).

**Concern and Respect for Students**

An effective teaching strategy includes the goal of learning from students to the benefit of student learning. This includes an ongoing challenge for instructors to differentiate instruction for individual students. An effective instructor will adapt their instructions to meet the needs of their students. The instructor sets clear goals and plans good monitoring strategies (Stronge, 2002). The key to this process is to understand individual intellectual capacity of each student in order to develop new approaches and strategies in education. Shields (1999) states, “Furthermore, without better understanding, it is likely that problems will continue to be located within a student’s learning.” (p.127). It is significant to learn from students in class feedback and cues to better teach the necessary content.
Assessment
Ramsden (2003) believes the quality of teaching is learning from our student’s experiences. The learning is transferred from teacher to student and student to teacher. During this transfer, the learning begins with Rowntree’s (1997) theory that it is most critical to learn who your students are and not just how they learn. In other words, establish a relationship with your students to further learn their strengths and limitations as learners.

Moon and Nelson (as cited in Heafner, 2004) state “assessment is a critical component of classroom instruction” (p. 14). During classroom instruction, students are acquiring new knowledge; there should be opportunities for students to reflect upon this new knowledge. It has been a common practice for the final grade to be the main objective instead of the “value of personal growth” which can include self-reflection (Heafner, 2004, p. 14), this value of personal growth is an example of an assessment.

Instruction and preparation that is cumulative is most beneficial for assessment strategies. However, it is more than just introducing the assessment strategies, the students need to practice the assessment experience. Dewey (1938) states that teachers will identify assessment as a component of their own individual experience. It is more how teachers view their attitudes and beliefs about assessment that will result in their implementation (Campbell & Evans, 2000).

Clear Goals and Intelligence
Effective teaching, states Ramsden (2003), results from ongoing high academic expectations resulting in outstanding student performance. In Octacioglu’s (2008) study, self confidence should be presented in all various educational programs with the end result of sustained academic success. The teacher’s level of self-confidence is a contributing factor to student’s academic success.

A teacher’s self confidence can be demonstrated during the instruction of problem solving methods that actively engages students. The purpose is to lead students to think in a scientific mindset while utilizing problem solving skills. This idea is supported by Bingham’s (1998) research that problem solving skills can be implemented by communicating contextual information; ideas and feelings of a global issue or conflict. “People not only gain understanding through
reflection, they evaluate and alter their own thinking. People not only gain understanding through reflection, they evaluate and alter their own thinking” (Bandura, 1986, p. 21).

Ozda (1977) further elaborates that implementing problem based solving methods such as problem based learning reinforces imagination and scientific thinking skills. During this reinforcement of presenting the results in problem based learning, self confidence begins to develop and “is seen as a necessity for successful teaching” (Otacioglu, 2008, p. 97).

Intellectual challenge is also indicative of successful teaching, it occurs as students are learning and engaging in problem based experiences that identify student’s practices and beliefs (Moore, 2008). In the student’s learning, “the ideas, understandings and attitudes that students acquire will be inspirational in their teaching” (Gunning & Mensa, 2011, p. 183). The instructor should present a teaching approach that cultivates ideas and understandings that will inspire the spark of student’s learning. Lederman (2004) states that students, “actively construct their understandings of the world and these constructions are significantly influenced by prior knowledge, beliefs, attitudes and experiences” (p. 40). Students would benefit in their self-confidence from discussing their prior knowledge and experiences from current world events. The instructor should construct the learning environment in knowledge that is conceptual and experiential to scaffold the student’s learning (Krajcik, 1999). The instructor’s teaching attitudes are to involve “self esteem, interest, past experience and self efficacy” (Kobally & Glynn, 2007, p. 174) which will mirror student self confidence because the students will observe that effectiveness of the teacher’s attitude. Bandura (1997) suggests that teacher self efficacy can stem from self confidence. Instructors that demonstrate self efficacy are reflecting to students that they can be successful in the course and as a teacher through their own self efficacy. Acquiring the confidence at the beginning of the course can induce the foundation for student’s sustained academic success. In summation, the instructor’s self confidence can be presented in meaningful learning experiences that will result in student’s academic success and self efficacy.
Independence, control and active engagement
Setting the classroom environment for independence and active engagement are methods used by instructors. Some of the goals designed to meet the needs of the independent student are: personal autonomy, the ability to manage one’s learning and independent learning in a non-formal environment (George, 2004). The goal is to develop students as researchers so that they continue to construct their own knowledge of various topics. As students develop more responsibilities for their own learning, the teaching role evolves into that of a facilitator and guide. Some examples of methods used by instructors are: group projects, case-base learning and projects (George, 2004).

Learning from Students
An ongoing challenge for instructors is how to differentiate instruction for individual students; the key to this process is to understand the individual intellectual capacity of each student. An effective instructor will adapt her instruction to meet the needs of her students. The instructor sets clear goals and plans good monitoring strategies (Stronge, 2002). The use of pre-assessment to support the teaching strategies and provide feedback to support and encourage students is key. The information/concept is present to challenge and help students be successful.

Educational Environments of These Instructors

Preschool Teacher Training in a Developing Country, Zambia
Since January of 2005, Lisa has worked with Women’s Global Connection, WGC, as an instructor and coordinator of the Children under Seven project in Zambia. WGC is a non-profit organization committed to building bridges of connection to promote the learning and leadership of women locally and around the world. The WGC Preschool Teacher Training Institute is a project that evolved after an investigative trip in June 2003 where the WGC team learned of the desperate needs of young children in Zambia.

Teaching Students in Community College
Ana is an instructor at a community college, in the department of Early Childhood Studies. The college is a Hispanic-Serving Institution and the largest of five colleges within the district. Ana works to develop a relationship with the students. The first few classes are spent getting to
know each other and building a class community of learners. An example of concern and respect for students and student learning, Ana is intentional in modeling note taking, setting up a calendar to remind them of when assignments are due and teaching methods to implement a variety of learning styles. Building interest and connection for the course is instrumental. Setting clear goals from the first day of class, having the students share what they expect from Ana as an instructor also builds clear goals for the semester.

**Teaching Pre-Service Teachers in 4 Year University**
Lynda is an instructor at a four year public university in the department of Interdisciplinary Learning and Teaching for students who are seeking an EC-6 (Early Childhood through 6th grade) Generalist degree or an EC-6 Bilingual Generalist Certification. Her teaching promotes academic and pedagogical knowledge and research, engagement in reflective practice, a value for diversity, caring about the students and their profession, and advocacy for educational change. The curriculum is an interactive approach that involves technology, integration, lesson planning and field placements that require teaching lessons and engagement with the elementary students.

**Educational Environments and Effective Teaching Strategies**
The central aim of these three instructors, as the authors of this paper, is to review their teaching strategies and to create a connectedness that demonstrates how the professional development training has common characteristics when teaching, in spite of the different educational environments. The purpose is to draw from this triad of perspectives and their teaching strategies, with the intention to impact teachers working with young children in South Texas and rural areas of Zambia.

**Preschool Teacher Training in a Developing Country**
**Interest and explanation.** In the Zambia setting there was great interest to learn more about child growth and development, as well as methods and strategies to teach young children. The formal education curriculums at the local teacher’s college addressed teaching children from elementary years (seven years old) to secondary school (17 years). Even preschool teachers that had an education past secondary school did not have experience with early childhood education. This
meant that the teaching strategies used in the preschool classroom were didactic and passive.

**Student Learning.** Because the students’ culture and experiences were a new and different reality for the instructors, there was a significant amount of time spent speaking individually to students before class and during breaks. One of these cultural differences was language. While formal school settings teach in English, English is a second language for everyone. Zambia has seven local tribal languages, depending on the region, that are used in homes and communities on a daily basis.

**Assessment.** The instructors used the information during their daily debriefings to make modifications or changes to the session for the following day. By the third day of the week long training students expected and waited for the feedback form to give their assessment of the session. This showed the instructors that the students found their feedback to be immediately useful.

**Clear goals and Intelligence.** In the first hour of each session, students were asked to pose their questions related to the topics of the week. These questions were then used to set clear goals and referred to often by the instructors. As students were presented with new methods and strategies they were instructed to adapt the new information into activities they would present in their classroom for their age group of children. Together, new activities and resources were discovered, such as using local clay found along the banks of the river to form shapes for tactile learning. Students immediately decided to make alphabet letters for creating words and simple sentences.

**Independence and Active Engagement.** Students were gradually encouraged to take initiative with the information they gained by engaging them in guided practice. With each week of the institute, students were given more control to share information and develop activities. The final training sessions of the WGC Preschool Teacher Training Institute were sessions in which the students took initiative to use all four weeks of the institute modules and create parent information and activities for families to use at home related to the activities in their classroom. This allowed students to exert control to transfer their cumulative knowledge in their own reality.
Learning from students. The daily feedback evaluations were useful in the task of learning from the students immediately. Instructors debriefed after each session to review their learning and use it in the following sessions. This was a major component of the instructors’ experience. The different reality of presenting early childhood education method and strategies in a developing country was a new experience to all the WGC team.

Community College Department of Early Childhood Studies

Interest and Explanation. Students are able to link class lectures and concepts learned as they observed teachers in various early childhood settings. Coming together as a class to reflect on observations allows for a dialogue about the best teaching practices in the field. A key tool used by Ana is “coaching and mentoring” during the observation process and discussion.

Student Learning. Student learning is twofold, observation and demonstration. As students observe teachers in various early childhood settings, they are able to use class notes and various checklists to observe.

Assessment. Student assessment is based on their own reflection and the process of change to their own teacher’s actions or classroom environment. Using before and after pictures of their classrooms provide them with documentation used to share with other peers.

Clear Goals and Intelligence. Conceptual learning provides the avenue for clear goals and intelligence. Students acquired “aha-moments” as they reflect on their class and new concepts learned from class lectures and class activities.

Independence and Active Engagement. Learning in these two areas is essential for student’s reflection practice. Student develops skills and understandings of their own need to be active in their reflection practice and to transfer skills learned to their own teaching strategies.

Learning from Students. As an educator, learning from students, is essential to the development of the class environment.
Students provoke and challenge us to reach key teaching strategies that provide both the learner and instructor with rich experiences.

**Four Year University, School of Education**

**Interest and Explanation.** Students will permeate a learning connection if the explanation is contextual and of interest. Lynda’s students create a math pack that consists of two math activities that are reinforced with the guidance from a parent, caregiver or older sibling in the home. The math pack assignment is bridging the family and school connection, the math activities serve as an enrichment of the math content objectives.

**Student Learning.** Teachers are natural risk takers, as they are always trying novel teaching methods and strategies that are innovative. When teachers are trying new learning methods and strategies, they are challenging themselves as professionals and modeling the art of risk taking to their students. Risk taking may not be outlined in a textbook, but is a real life experience that comes with practice.

**Assessment.** The assessment strategy is identified in three types of reflection: internal, parallel and external. Students individually prepare a lesson plan which is an example of an internal reflection. The next assignment is for the students to parallel with other students in the same assigned grade levels in their field placement and compare their input while assessing each other’s lesson plan. This is an example of parallel reflection. The external reflection is when Lynda provides color coded feedback in the student’s lesson plan. The specific color coded feedback helps the students to grow professionally through self-knowledge and in learning the preparation of a lesson plan.

**Clear Goals and Intelligence.** Clear goals and intelligence are presented through problem based learning. This is a group of students collaborating on a world problem to find a solution. Once the solution is identified, the results are presented in a teaching scenario. The problem solving skills are a learning transfer of the clear goals for the course and the intelligence is the implementation of the problem solving skills.
Independence and Active Engagement. Independence and active engagement are the results of being an active agent in teaching. Students are introduced to professional organizations and they are taught how to apply the professional organization’s information in their learning. NCTM (National Teacher of Mathematics) is a national math research organization that is discussed throughout the semester and thoroughly introduced in the course syllabus. The students learn to be active agents in their engagement of learning and become independent learners through the application of current research trends.

Learning from Students. As an educator, how you learn from your students can breed success in student achievement. At the end of every lecture, students reflect in one paragraph what they learned for the day and pair/share their reflections. Three students are asked to respond, to illustrate in a graphic organizer of their responses and this culminates with the lecture objectives. Though the reflection is a simple, informal activity, it is a quick check for understanding.

Analysis

In the following matrix, each instructor/author identified a teaching strategy they implemented which demonstrated each of Ramsden’s (2003) effective teaching principles.
## Table 1.1. Analysis Implemented Strategies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Educational Environment</th>
<th>Interest and Explanation</th>
<th>Concern and respect for students</th>
<th>Assessment</th>
<th>Clear Goals and Intelligence</th>
<th>Independence, Control and Active Engagement</th>
<th>Learning from Students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Preschool Teacher Training in Developing Country</td>
<td>Execution of requested topics and strategies</td>
<td>Cultural competence through discourse</td>
<td>Daily evaluation of session used by instructors to modify curriculum</td>
<td>Contextual learning/risk taking to demonstrate challenge</td>
<td>Adaptation of cumulative learning for home activities</td>
<td>Immediate use of student feedback</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community College Department of Early Childhood</td>
<td>Classroom observation &amp; reflection</td>
<td>Student able to observe Demonstration teacher/model by demo teacher</td>
<td>Conceptual understanding through application</td>
<td>Observation link to contextual learning</td>
<td>Model Approach for practical application</td>
<td>Classroom assessment and reflection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Four Year University School of Education</td>
<td>School Home connection</td>
<td>Risk taking</td>
<td>Reflection -Individual -Parallel -External</td>
<td>Problem Based Learning</td>
<td>Active agents in current educational research</td>
<td>Checking for Understanding through Reflection</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Reflection of Strategies

After reviewing their strategies within Ramsden’s (2003) effective teaching principles, the instructors/authors considered their strengths and limitations in comparison to the three teaching environments.

Common Strengths
Observation of students for practical applications was used within the community college and university environments, as well as, using reflection as a tool for assessment and evaluation.

Contextual learning for understanding was used by instructors in the community college and the Non-governmental organization (NGO) preschool Teacher Training Institute.

School-Home Connection activities were a common method used by the NGO Teacher Training Institute and the university school of education.

Common Limitations
Within the NGO Preschool Teacher Training Institute, several limitations existed, understanding a different reality, language barriers, distance, and time. The focus during the four week-long trainings was to transfer knowledge of child growth and development with age appropriate activities for conceptual understanding. Teaching concepts and application had precedence to reflection and observation of students.

Within the community college early childhood studies, the instructor’s limitation is the time constraints in which to check for understanding of student learning and application simultaneously. This is due to the varied standards of each student’s classroom settings.

Within the university school of education setting, a limitation is the inability to consistently observe students for practical application in their classroom settings. This is due to the course criteria.
Individual Dissimilarities

Each instructor/author then considered the dissimilarities in the comparison. Each identified a strength, and a limitation that enables them to implement effective teaching principles in their environment.

Preschool Teacher Training in a Developing Country

**Strength.** Presenting workshops in Zambia came with many challenges, but the strength which presented itself in every week of the Preschool Teacher Training Institute was the learning from the students. Only when the team learned from the students; for example, about their cultural attitudes towards children, or about the natural resources available in the area, could a curriculum that is appropriate and useful to them be provided.

**Limitations.** During the workshops, the WGC team became very aware of the dependence on materials in the early childhood classroom, even simple materials such as paper and crayons. When these materials are not available to teach concepts, the instructors must be creative to demonstrate teaching strategies with other resources.

Community College Department of Early Childhood

**Strength.** The strength in observation and reflection in learning and teaching is the linking of pedagogy and practice. When students are able to apply what they have learned and reflect on these practices, the learning becomes concrete and “real” to them.

**Limitation.** A limitation of this process is reflection and observation. Teachers in this process must be able to understand the reflection process and evaluate their own classroom.

Four Year University, School of Education

**Strength.** Pedagogy is a strength that Lynda identifies from over 20 years of teaching experience in the public school and teaching pre-service teachers. The teaching experience supports a solid foundation of appropriate teaching methods and strategies. Instructing pre-service teachers how to be quality educators can stem from a solid foundation of a pedagogical approach of teaching.

**Limitation.** The idea of observing all the pre-service teachers teach or engage with the elementary students is a limitation. The
limitation can be due to the quantity of field days during the semester. The instructors are out in the field during the students’ assigned field day and make contact with the students and the cooperating teachers, but cannot officially observe each teacher teach a full lesson due to time constraints.

Conclusion

In three different lens, three Early Childhood teachers explain and substantiate their best teaching practices. Though each teacher has her own philosophical convictions, and through individualized contextual environment, she has executed the most appropriate teaching strategies to best fit the students’ needs and students’ learning experiences. These teaching strategies have organically defined the Early Childhood teacher’s strengths, but have also served as a muse for each other and to continue to serve as muse to further their professional development as future Early Childhood leader.

References


Environmental Education: Addressing Perception of the Diverse Learner and Recommendations for Sustainable Programs

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Abstract

Organizations and communities who develop environmental education programs encounter obstacles to successful implementation, because of conflicting priorities of the target populations. Human response to decision making can be influenced by different factors. Some factors take greater precedence, affecting the desired outcome of environmental education (EE) initiatives. In recent years, there has been a surge of “environmental” psychology from a heightened awareness of environmental crisis. Information from research concerning an ecological identity or ecological self may be helpful to appreciating people’s intrinsic and extrinsic motivations in prioritizing decisions, especially concerning environmental health. A comparative case analysis of past EE programs highlighted the importance of effective awareness of global cultural diversity and equity in delivering EE. Factors to consider for EE are perspectives based on culture, traditions, human health and economy. The cases and studies provide insight as to the success or lack of success when implementing EE programs.

Introduction

Wes Jackson (1971) in Man and the Environment stated that unless we radically change our national life style within the next two years, we might as well begin preparing ourselves for the eco-catastrophes which are certain to be upon us before the end of the decade. Jackson (1971) challenged us to change our way of life which included the reorientation of the human psyche. Jackson (1971) proposed that humans tend to be crisis-oriented, acting only when the conditions appear dire. Even now, in the 21st Century, the strain on the natural world has been highly publicized in the media, as the demand for raw goods, technology, fossil fuels and numerous natural resources has increased to sustain human consumption.
The result of disconnection between humans and nature is evident in continued damage to the environment in an effort to consume resources for human use (Jackson, 1971; Shapiro, 1995; Kellert & Wilson, 1993; Saylan & Blumstein, 2011). Such activity includes, routine poor farming practices to meet the rising demand for food, significant demand for exploration of petroleum and natural gas for energy sources, such as coal fire power plants, and natural gas exploration to power communities and businesses. Shapiro reported back in 1995, a global concern of the environmental effect of poor farming practices in Zaire. Exploding population growth had intensified the demand for land use for agricultural purposes and the consequences have been reduction of soil fertility and degradation of the environment (cited in Shapiro, 1995). A call for change in farming practices had been a result of unsustainable need for land to grow food to support a growing population (cited in Shapiro, 1995). In the United States, waste from livestock facilities is a major contributor to nutrient pollution in water sources (Burkholder, Libra, Weyer, Heathcote, Kolpin, Thorne & Wichman, 2007). An increase in agricultural facilities with livestock has led to heightened concerns about water contamination (Burkholder, et. al 2007). The demand for these concentrated facilities which results from a growing human population, leads to higher exposure of nearby surface and groundwater sources to parasites, viruses and bacteria (cited in Burholder, et al. 2007). The harmful results can be contaminated water being ingested by the most sensitive in the population such as the youngest, the oldest and women who are pregnant (Burholder, et al. 2007). The increased human population growth has resulted in stressful demands on land, water and air quality which can impact human health (Brunekreef, 2010; Burholder, et al. 2007; Shapiro, 1995).

The ecological identity or ecological self (Naess, 1973) is compromised as a result of reduced direct experiences with nature. As more and more people move to the cities, there is less direct contact with nature and the feeling of concern over the issues that are compromising the health of the environment are less significant to humans. Human connectedness with the environment has been compromised in recent times with the evolution of cities (Kellert & Wilson, 1993). The historical movement to a more urbanized
environment seeking employment and a more profitable income minimizes opportunity to directly experience the outdoors. Nature no longer is directly part of the lives of communities that depend on nation-wide chain stores to purchase food and necessities, and living and working in artificial temperature controlled homes, office buildings and schools. Humans are losing the interconnectedness with the Earth; therefore, the significance of a sustainable environment has minimized over time.

Gertner (2009) describes troubling information that environmental pollution and sustainability are not significant priorities for people. He asked the question; “Why isn’t the brain green?” Human response to decision making can be influenced by several different factors. Interest in career or employment, family, financial investments, best living experiences, healthy lifestyles, and interest in global issues vary for people. Some or most of these circumstances take more precedence, depending on relevancy and urgency (Gertner, 2009). According to Jon Gertner (2009) cognitive psychologists acknowledge research that addresses the human decision making process and the systems that contribute to the process. Elke Weber, a scientist from Columbia University explains that there are at least two systems of processing risk and making decisions. One system is considered more analytical and it involves careful consideration of costs and benefits of the outcome to the decision maker and others. The second system is familiar to behavioral scientists, which is more primitive and urgent. The general public may know this as the “fight or flight” response or “acute stress response” which was defined by Walter Cannon in the 1920’s (Psychologist World, 2011). Based on the research conducted by Weber and her colleagues, the second system is a response to danger and based on personal experiences, for example, a person may have had a fearful experience in an outdoor setting (park, zoo, etc.) and the response may negatively impact future decisions by the person.

In the mental health field, there has been a surge of interest in “environmental” psychology, and several terms have manifested from a heightened awareness of the crisis to the environment. The terms include; ecopsychology, conservation psychology, solastalgia and soliphila. Glenn Albrecht, a professor at Murdoch University in Perth, Australia defines solastalgia as “the pain experienced when there is recognition that the place where one resides and that one loves is under
Ecopsychology has been promoted by Thomas Doherty, a clinical psychologist in Portland, Oregon as an idea “that grief, despair and anxiety are the consequences of dismissing equally deep-rooted ecological instincts” (Smith, 2010). Conservation psychology is “understanding and changing how people act toward their environment” (Smith, 2010).

Environmental education program developers encounter obstacles to successful implementation because of conflicting priorities of the target populations. The global community is responding emotionally to environmental concerns, but there appears to be a slower action response (Smith, 2010). Advocacy of environmental education has a history with global partnerships and challenges towards establishing common goals to protect and regulate use of natural resources for human consumption. Measuring success of environmental education programs is dependent on the diversity of perception by developers and participants of the programs (Hungerford & Volk, 1990; Madfes, 2004; Pooley & O’Connor, 2000; Saylan & Blumstein, 2011). However, environmental education programs have failed over the years to deliver a response from the global community (Saylan & Blumstein, 2011). The programs have not been able to successfully alter attitudes or perceptions of environmental health (Hungerford & Volk, 1990; Pooley & O’Connor, 2000; Saylan & Blumstein, 2011). A comparative case analysis is an opportunity to identify causal links of commonalities between varying programs (Yin, 2009; Creswell; 2003). Several studies in this paper may provide some insight to conditions that may influence the success of EE programs in globally diverse communities. The communities in the studies include African villages and cities, school youth programs in Canada and multicultural adults participating in North American health screening study conducted in New Jersey. The globally diverse populations were defined as groups of people classified, for example, by ethnicity, cultural association, socio-economical range, and geographical distribution such as rural and metropolitan communities. The research in this comparative case analysis was selected to address the perceptions of globally diverse learners to EE programs and recommend standards in long-term plans to successfully prioritize environmental health as a personal choice in the target communities.
Background of Environmental Education

Awareness of environmental sustainability through education became a global concern when the United Nations participated in developing guidelines for environment education (EE). Two significant documents were written to set specific guidelines for EE: the Belgrade Charter (UNESCO-UNEP, 1976) and the Tbilisi Declaration (UNESCO, 1978). The Belgrade Charter was adopted by the United Nations and stated:

The goal of environmental education is to develop a world population that is aware of, and concerned about, the environment and its associated problems, and which has the knowledge, skills, attitudes, motivations, and commitment to work individually and collectively toward solutions of current problems and the prevention of new ones.

Several years later, the Tbilisi Declaration established three major objectives that have been the foundation of EE since 1978. The three objectives include:

- To foster clear awareness of, and concern about, economic, social, political and ecological interdependence in urban and rural areas;
- To provide every person with opportunities to acquire the knowledge, values, attitudes, commitment and skills needed to protect and improve the environment;
- To create new patterns of behavior of individuals, groups, and society as a whole towards the environment.

The National Association of Environmental Education (NAEE), among other prominent international partnerships, has worked vigorously in an effort to bring EE to the global community, in order to promote awareness, appreciation, and a sense of protection for the environment. Environmental Education (EE) is learner-centered, providing students with opportunities to construct their own understandings through hands-on, minds-on investigation (NAEE, 2000). Those who deliver EE, challenge others to view the environment in the context of human influence. According to the National Association for Environmental Educators (NAEE), EE incorporates an examination of economics, culture, political structure, social equity, and natural processes and systems (NAEE, 2000).
Challenges to Environmental Education

Challenges for EE include factors such as culture, traditions, and perspective (Madfes, 2004; Saylan & Blumstein, 2011). For many years, it has been a struggle to bring the information and resources to globally diverse groups, due to inadequate tools and skills for working with culturally diverse audiences and colleagues (Madfes, 2004). Environmental educators work in a variety of settings to bring EE to communities all over the world (NAEE, 2000), and regardless of the setting or capacity, the preparation and training is important for the effective delivery of the information to diverse audiences. In the 1990's and continuing today, NAEE (2000) developed a series of guidelines as a resource for pre-service teachers, formal teachers, and non-formal educators.

Effective delivery of EE information has the potential to broaden the perspective of the learner by expanding an understanding and appreciation of the significance of the relationship humans have with the Earth. Environmental educators can benefit from cognitive research on how humans approach important events and make decisions based on relevancy and immediate need. Program developers can take steps to improve effective communication of self efficacy for communities and community leaders towards environmental sustainability. Several studies are provided as examples of national and international EE program implementation. The studies are an opportunity to address the approach of EE programs in the diverse communities. The issues influencing the effectiveness of EE in the studies included working with youth and schools, inter-agency collaborations, background research and planning, leadership skills, power dynamics, cultural dissonance, environmental justice and "One size fits all", which is in reference to developing one program and assuming it will work for every community.

Environmental Education Implementation

Case studies and research from WestEd and additional national and international research were used to address effective awareness of cultural diversity and equity in delivering EE programs to a broad range of communities to include the United States, Canada, and Ethiopia. Environmental Education and Training Partnership (EETAP)
partnered with WestEd (nonprofit research development and service agency) to address effective delivery and sustainability of EE to diverse populations.¹

**African Case Study: Western Educator Working in Burundi, Africa**

One of the cases from WestEd and EETAP addressed four issues: youth and schools, cultural dissonance, background and planning, and “one size fits all” approach. A Western educator, Jane Shartzer, spent a significant time traveling internationally while working in education and international schools; one of her assignments was a school in Burundi, Africa (Madfes, 2004). She questioned her ability to work with the **biophobia** of her students, since she was aware of the trepidation and fear of nature that the students exhibited. Her approach included teachable moments during encounters with live animals and development of curriculum that included adopting a chimpanzee. Her goal was to pair the students with young chimpanzees at the renowned chimpanzee orphanage to bridge the social gap between the students and the chimps. The children responded well to the lessons, activities and plays performed at the school as well as a presentation by Jane Goodall, the renowned behaviorist. Once the students were introduced to the chimps at the chimp orphanage, however, they would not interact with the animals. Ms. Shartzer suggested she failed to effectively reverse the learning that stemmed from socialization (Madfes, 2004).

The discussants of this case addressed the dynamic of the Western idea of education and the conflicts it has with the local populations of Africa. For generations, the people of rural villages have competed with both animals and plants for survival. Often this prejudice against nature is retained by villagers who leave their rural environments and move to larger, more modern metropolitan areas. Nature is feared; since even a mosquito bite can result in diseases that can kill entire villages. Highly vegetative areas are habitats for animals such as lions, snakes, and crocodiles that prey on humans living in nearby villages. The sell of bush meat, and trophies from endangered species provide income for people that are so poor they cannot feed their own children. Following Shartzer's commentary about her experience in Burundi, the discussants in the reflection conceded in the reflection three events that
need to occur for there to be success in bridging the relationship between humans and nature. The first event was to create a perception of the environment as less threatening, such as a clean water source, and medical resources to reduce the threat of disease that is spread by insects. In order for humans to consider protecting the environment, they must recognize a benefit such as flourishing eco-tourism, where human and nature can both gain. Humans will benefit monetarily, and nature can be protected with the sustaining of ecotourism. The final recommendation is to promote learning locally and early to decrease fear while encouraging interest in and understanding of the environment (Madfes, 2004).

**Canadian Research Study: EE School Program**

Another study conducted in Quebec, Canada by Legault & Pelletier (2000) addressed implementation and impact of a school-wide EE program on both the youth and the parents, in which research, planning and awareness of cultural dissonance in regards to socio-economics of the community were essential to program strength. Legault & Pelletier (2000) worked with four schools located in western Quebec, Canada on the Brundtland Green School Project, which brought EE to Grade 6 classrooms with a total of 184 students and 131 parents. The program was voluntary and lasted eight months of the school year for both a control group and an experimental group. The experimental schools had to agree to implement several guidelines: (1) an ecological club headed by the children, (2) start a measureable and visible "reduce, reuse, or recycle" program, (3) teach ecological issues in all subjects, and (4) implement an ecological action program (e.g., composting).

Legault & Pelletier (2000) used the self-determination theory proposed by Deci & Ryan (1985), to measure ecological motivation. The study included the three levels of motivation: intrinsic motivation, which is the high level of self-determination; amotivation, which is the lowest level and includes loss of personal control and helplessness, and extrinsic motivation, which is motivation that comes from outside factors, such as money or recognition. Legault & Pelletier (2000) provided limited evidence of success with the experiment as a result of their statistical analysis. They did notice both a diminishment in extrinsic motivation and an increase in intrinsic motivation; they attributed these results to repetition of ecological information. The researchers suggested that a larger number of students should be
included in the study, and they acknowledged there was not very much difference between the control group and experimental groups. Since it was a voluntary program, most parents came into the study with some sense of ecological concern.

**New Jersey Health Study of Diverse Adults**

Another study conducted in New Jersey, working with culturally diverse adults, evaluated the connection between race and ethnicity to the concerns of environmental pollution. This is a study of cultural dissonance, background research and planning. Michael Greenberg (2005) looked at non-Hispanic blacks, non-Hispanic whites, English-speaking Hispanic-Americans, Spanish-speaking Hispanic-Americans, and Asian-Americans. His study expanded the model of core support for environmental protection from whites, female, young, educated, and politically liberal people to include non-Hispanic whites, non-Hispanic blacks, and English-speaking Hispanic populations (Greensberg, 2005). More than 40% of whites and blacks classified New Jersey's environmental problems as "very serious" compared to 25% for Hispanic and 19% for Asian Americans (Greensberg, 2005). Whites and blacks were more vigorous in addressing the concerns and issues of the environment and health issues related to pollution. English-speaking Hispanics showed more concern for environmental pollution than Spanish-speaking Hispanics. The concerns between whites, blacks, and Hispanics were distinctly different depending on where they lived. Whites were more concerned about traffic congestion due to commuting to and from suburban dwellings. Blacks and Hispanics were more concerned about issues such as rats, obesity and urban re-development found in dense urban centers. Greensberg (2005) observed that English-speaking Hispanics tended to acquire information from newspapers, television, radio, and lastly, family and friends, which suggested acculturation. On the other hand, Spanish-speaking Hispanics relied on television first; therefore, radio, family, friends, and newspapers were less popular sources.

Reporting on the study, Greensberg (2005) did advise that future studies include ecologic questions, such as concerns about fishing, hunting, other forms of recreation, and building and maintenance of parks. He also noted that it is important to tie economics to environmental health. It is just as significant to present a message that
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does not cause people to choose between environmental health and economic progress (Greensberg, 2005). He did not have an explanation for why Asian-Americans were less concerned about environmental pollution, but he also suggested that an understanding of the environmental health issues that are significant to cultures, such as, Mexican, Cuban, Puerto Rican, Dominican, Pakistani, Korean, Chinese, and other Hispanic-American and Asian American populations needs to be addressed. This study showed evidence of community members that were more informed about the issues; they had a tendency to be more involved in taking action to protect the environment when it was linked to their health.

**Ethiopian Research Study: EE Programs for Rural and Urban Communities**

In another study, Bekalo & Bangay (2002) were researchers who explored the idea of EE in Ethiopia to address rapid environmental degradation and its link to poverty. This study involved inter-agency collaboration, environmental justice, power dynamics, “one size fits all” approach, and cultural dissonance. In research collected by Bekalo & Bangay (2002), poverty was both the cause and the effect of environmental damage, because of limited access to appropriate farming techniques and resources (Jazairy et al., 1992; Sachs, 1994). The people of Ethiopia are described by the researchers as victims of political and economic instability. Ethiopia’s economy depends primarily on agriculture with a majority of the population living off the land as subsistence farmers. The most important generators of income are coffee, hides, cattle, and oil seeds (cited in Bangay & Bekalo, 2002). The instabilities of the country combined with population growth are credited by Bangay & Bekalo (2002) for a negative impact on the health of the regional environment. As a result of the farming practices of the rural farmers, the projection is that the forests of Ethiopia will be completely decimated within twenty years (Gronvall, 1995). Soil erosion is a factor due to poor farming practices, as well as increased use of dung and plant residue as fuel. These alternatives are being used as a result of limited wood for fuel. The use of alternative fuels reduces the nutrient cycling in the soil, thereby, leaching the soil and rendering it barren (Lemma, 1995). Quality education is considered critical to approaching the concerns of socio-ecological and economic problems. Bekalo & Bangay (2002) recognized that in order
to improve efforts to slow the destruction of the natural habitats and agriculture well-being of Ethiopia, EE programs would need to be implemented. Education can lead to sustainable social, economic, and physical environmental development (WCED, 1987; MOE/SIDA, 1995; UNCED, 1992; Psacharopoulos, 1994; Mehrotra & Dellamonica, 1998). In 1985, an EE program for Ethiopia was created and managed by both the Ministry of Education (MOE) and the Ministry of Agriculture (MOA), with the funding provided by the Swedish International Development Authority (SIDA). Of the teachers in Ethiopia, the EE effort trained only 20% of the primary teachers and 10% of the secondary teachers by 1995 (cited in Bekalo & Bangay, 2002). The inter-agency partnership did not prove to be successful due to disagreement of the validity of the curriculum and the pedagogical approach to the program. The MOE took over the program, and with the redirection of the program, a shift in partners included non-governmental organizations (NGO) which provided the supplemental EE programs and activities needed to enhance the educational expectations for the participants (Bekalo & Bangay, 2002).

Bekalo & Bangay (2002) acknowledged the efforts of MOA, but insisted that student enrollment and retention of these participants needs to be addressed appropriately with a problem-solving focus. The authors suggested there be a better appreciation of the "peasant" as not ignorant, but instead sensitive in the approach to curriculum that is relevant to rural and poor students, and conventional schools are not suited to the needs of rural students. Retention of rural students was low due to the traditional approach to education, such as the "chalk and talk approach." The approach represents a generally accepted method to measure success of an education program in most nations by collecting and analyzing quantitative data from student examinations (Bekalo & Bangay, 2002). The researchers explored the option of EE being delivered through non-formal education (NFE); the idea was considered ineffective due to often rigid and binding academic standards that do not frequently meet the local needs of rural communities [in Ethiopia] (Sterling, 1996). Formal education in Ethiopia is geared towards preparing students to work in the urban formal sector and to be proficient in the competitive markets. An NFE program can meet the needs of the rural students with a more flexible schedule and a more localized approach. According to Negash (cited in Bekalo & Bangay, 2002), a localized approach recognizing the
wide-spread knowledge found in rural and urban communities can then lead to more effective integration of EE programs. In the research by Bekalo & Bangay (2002), they included successful partnerships, such as a joint program between UNICEF and the Government of Uganda called COPE (Complementary Opportunities for Primary Education) which provides a Life Skills program for children that are not in school. This program was able to address EE objectives and at the same time, meet the needs of the learners. NFE programs have the potential to promote successful partnerships with global communities to empower marginalized people. Once the programs meet the needs of the people, then the people can be better agents of change for a healthier environment which includes healthier human communities.

**Recommendations**

The cases provide insight as to the success or lack of success when organizations and communities implement EE programs. The information is significant to the ongoing struggles when implementing EE programs world-wide. There is a noticeable reoccurring theme: in order for EE programs to endure and be successful, they must be long-term, localized, and empowering to the people. Continued exposure to EE is significant to the establishment and sustainability of these programs in communities (Evans, Jacobs & Frager, 1982). Factors that influence the success of the programs include research, planning, familiarity with the population (attitudes, behavior and needs), effective interagency collaboration with clear goals, strong communication, and commitment for a long term involvement to having a lasting influence on environmental attitudes of the community. One size does not fit all, and establishing a variety of local and long term programs provide the framework for a global reconnectedness of humans to the Earth. Environmental educators must commit to a long term project that extends from the young ages of the learner on up to adulthood, influencing how they themselves will raise their children. Natural space has been significantly compromised in communities, especially in urban areas, and when developing EE programs, planning is essential to either reclaim or enhance available space for natural experiences for the learners. A need to acknowledge and appreciate diversity and partnerships exists to formulate a unified approach to EE, making the process collaborative and equitable, and
this in turn brings awareness and appreciation of the primitive bond between humans and a more sustainable natural Earth.

Hungerford & Volk (1990) reported that a commitment by highly qualified and environmentally concerned educators can carry over to the development of the same commitment of their students. In other words, respected community member leading by example have the potential to motivate the community to be proactive towards decisions that include a healthy environment.

The important point is to remain focused on the diverse learner, who is part of a whole community. If the individual is healthy and committed to being healthy, then the community is healthy. The identity of the community must include all natural resources in order for there to be a healthy balance. Global societies are diverse from each other with different needs, but what they do have in common are healthy lifestyles with access to clean water supply, sustainable food sources and a safe place to live (Desi & Ryan, 1985; Evans, et. al 1982; Greenberg, 2005; Smith, 2010).

Reclamation projects are occurring in some cities, such as New York City and Chicago to take vacant lots and develop plans that include park creation. The Restoring Property Initiative is a collaboration of groups in six major cities that are making efforts to transition from their antiquated industrial roots to become more modern (Vey, 2007). The initiative is an opportunity to revitalize abandoned space and use it for higher quality of living space and reclamation of natural space to provide a beneficial experience that connects humans with nature. The city and urban plans are part of a trend by city planners to reclaim abandoned space to broaden a vision of a healthy and prosperous community. According to Vey (2009), there is an opportunity to revamp the federal laws to gain access to abandoned property, in order to invest in “human capital, improve infrastructure and nurture the growth of quality places.”

Discussion

Environmental educators are tasked with making the human brain green. They are continually working collaboratively to provide robust EE programs that not only address environmental health but
make a connection with the community benefiting from the program. From the first case study, Shartzer neglected to educate herself on the needs of her students, therefore, failing to understand the relationship they had with their own environment. Her connection to the natural world influenced her approach to teaching the children about the primates, and she did not consider that they did not share her perception of the significance to the environment. She could have researched and talked with the students in order for her to better understand their perception of the environment. Once she had a better appreciation of their connection and knowledge, she could then design lessons to be more effective with the children in the class.

In Canadian research study, Legault & Pelletier concluded that they needed to improve communication opportunities with teaching staff, more time to establish the program, and more participants. The researchers acknowledge that the participation in the program was voluntary and as a result those parents that were part of the study were more likely concerned about the environment. Legault & Pelletier acknowledged that the teaching staff already had an environmental unit built in the curriculum, yet, they did not consider the benefits of collaboration between their program and the lessons provided by the teachers.

In the New Jersey study, Greensberg advised that environmental issues were related to health issues within the community. He acknowledges that concerns such as war, terror, economics, and other domestic issues take precedence in the community. In order to prioritize environmental issues, such as pollution, the concerns must be tied to the current concerns of the community. The relationship of the immediate needs of the community and the health of the environment has to be obvious and interrelated for the community members to take action.

Bekalo & Bangay came to the conclusion that “one size does not fit all.” The types of programs in cities and rural communities should be tailored to the needs of the specific community. The EE provider must be sensitive to the needs and expectations of the learner. The inter-agency collaborations between state and local agencies are cautioned to consider the needs of the rural farmers that they are servicing with the programs. The traditional methods of education are not the best fit
for the rural farmers, and best practices are recommended to successfully implement sustainable EE programs.

**Conclusion**

The ambitions of the EE program cannot overshadow the essential needs of the community to have fulfilling, healthy lives, which in turn can lead to individuals making positive environmental decisions (Deci & Ryan, 1885; Gertner, 2009; Saylan & Blumstein, 2011). In the haste to globalize, countries have neglected to consider the outcome of unchecked progress (Saylan & Blumstein, 2011; Jackson, 1971). Wes Jackson suggests that our ecological crisis is a result of the evolution of a democratic culture. It is the merger of the aristocratic and intellectual science with the action-oriented technology of the lower class (1971).

Pooley and O’Connor (2000) addressed affect (attitudes), behavior and cognition in perceptions of environmental issues. In their research, they provided a majority of EE programs tending to focus on knowledge of ecological principles (cognitive) and less on values and attitudes (affect and behavior) of the target populations. The results from their research provided evidence that attitudes are influenced by values and beliefs, and attitude has an affect on the decision making process. Miller and Miller (1996) stated that “attitudes that are formed through direct experiences are also seen as better predictors of behavior.”

If an organization or group is attempting to develop an EE program or integrate EE in the curriculum, then the developers are advised to know the audience. The attitudes and behavior of the community are directly related to the experiences of the members of that community. Pooley and O’Connor (2000) found that cognition and attitude were significant in addressing environmental attitudes in EE programs. More attention given to affects and behavior may have a positive influence on environmental attitudes of the target population.
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Sohn


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Footnotes

1The cases provided by the partnership included a commentary and reflection of a panel of discussants (Madfes, 2004). The reflections were constructive feedback, providing a resource to other educators, aiding them in the process of working with diverse communities in planning and implementation of EE projects and programs. Other studies included work from Canada, the United States, and Africa. An EE program was implemented in a Canadian sixth grade classroom by Louise Legault and Luc G. Pelletier of the University of Ottawa to observe the impact to student and parent attitudes, motivation, and behavior toward the environment. A survey conducted by Michael R. Greensberg was administered to 1,513 residents of New Jersey focusing on perception levels of concern about environmental problems based on ethnicity. And a final study completed by S. Bekalo from the University of Leeds, UK and C. Bangay, a Cambridge Education Consultant, addressed the effectiveness of environmental education in low socio-economic Ethiopian communities.
An Ethical Approach to Building a Positive School Climate

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Abstract
School leaders need to learn an approach to ethical decision-making. This article reviews the literature on ethical decision making in schools and provides a four staged framework—the Ethical Decision-Making Model (EDM) — that promotes positive school climate. Additionally, we offer a case study for applying the EDM.

Introduction
Perceptions drive any movement or organization in social sciences. What is perceived becomes what is believed and held as truth. This is true in negative forms in what are known as stereotypes and biases, and in positive forms as optimistic reality and hope. Organizations, and schools, more specifically, live and die based on the perceptions of those who experience and interact within the school. These perceptions, which make up the school climate (Hoy & Miskel, 2001), are developed and transmitted in part from a broader element, school culture (Owens, 2001). The culture takes years in its development and is a result of tradition, past heroes and villains, symbolism, rituals, and the overall history of the school; whereas, the school climate may change somewhat from year to year based on the perceptions of the participants as they learn the culture and
interact with other participants. In fact, the climate perceptions are impacted by the physical buildings, the social interactions, and the leaders, as well as the long-standing culture of the school (Marion, 2002). These perceptions cannot be turned on and off like a faucet; they are constant. Yet school leaders have the ability to influence the climate through a multitude of approaches.

Several major educational works have been published which focus on the importance of ethical leadership. Rebore (2001) placed standards at the center of ethical leadership in schools. Leaders influence a school through their efforts to meet local, state, federal, and association standards. Holding the school and its participants to a standards-based level is an ethical approach to school leadership. It demands that these levels must be met for the school to proceed toward its goal of participant learning. Missing these marks then becomes unethical because the participants are not given the opportunity to learn at the level set by the standards.

The force of love was emphasized by Hoyle (2002) when discussing the concept of school ethics. He stated that:

> Caring for others is paramount for organizations to reach their potential. For centuries, writers have inspired us to lead with the heart, soul, integrity, kindness, vision, and equity, but only a few have focused on love as a leadership force and the implications for love in the leadership act. (p. 101)

Schools need love more than they need some other concepts that increase stress among the participants. High stakes testing, competition, and an over-emphasis on standards can result in the opposite of love. In addition, school leaders may place too much emphasis on themselves which will produce self-aggrandizement, fear from others, and a lost sense of community. Love is selfless, seeking the good of others without thought or concern for oneself. When love is set forth as the primary force
in a leader’s ethical approach, then the climate of a school has the opportunity to be positive.

Strike (2007) purported that ethical school leadership worked toward the creation of a sense of community among participants. The ethics of leadership involves the concept of living well together rather than mere morality, which is primarily concerned with individual conduct in the realm of right and wrong. Though there are general rights and wrongs” held within a community, morality tends to be more individualistic. An ethical school leader is interested in the school community as a whole, wanting to produce good education for its participants. The development of the school community must be a primary focus. Out of this community development, a positive school climate is produced.

Combining the concepts of the three authors, ethical leadership involves striving to meet standards through the development of school community out of the force of love. The school leader’s motivation will be love that seeks to produce a community that lives well together as they meet and exceed the educational standards that confront them. School leaders need to learn an approach to ethical decision-making that will incorporate all three goals of ethics. What we present in this article is a framework for ethical decision making that promotes positive school climate. Additionally, a case study for applying the staged frames for ethical decision making in schools is provided.

In the next section of this paper, we summarize the related literature dealing with ethical decision making for school leaders.

**Recent Literature**

The School Ethical Climate Index (SECI) was created to measure “a school’s sense of community by assessing student and teacher interactions and relationship through the application of five ethical principles: respect for autonomy, nonmaleficence, beneficence, justice, and fidelity” (Schulte et al., 2002, p. 117). The five principles are understood as: *respect for autonomy* is
allowing others to have their independence; *nonmaleficence* is doing no harm; *beneficience* is benefiting others; *justice* is treating others fairly; and *fidelity* is acting with integrity and honesty. As a result of using the SECI with teachers and administrators, it was determined that it was a valid and reliable instrument for measuring the ethical climate of middle and high schools. Teachers and administrators perceive that ethical climate is a very important factor in schools. The development of the SECI came out of a general concern for safe school environments in the midst of recent violence in American schools. School leaders can use the SECI to measure the ethical climate in their schools in order to meet the needs of their participants (2002).

The first thing a visitor notices when entering an elementary school is its atmosphere or general demeanor, also known as climate (Keiser & Schulte, 2007). The Elementary School Ethical Climate Index (ESECI) was developed to measure the ethical climate in elementary schools. It also measures the same five ethical principles as the SECI. It measures the interactions and relationships between students and teachers, “specifically *teacher to student* (i.e., how teachers interact with and relate to students), *student to teacher/learning environment* (i.e., how students interact with and relate to teachers), and *student to student* (i.e. how students interact with and relate to other students)” (p. 74). Elementary schools could use the ESECI to understand areas that need improvement for building a sense of community.

Schulte, Shanahan, Anderson, and Sides (2003) found that there was a positive relationship between students’ perception of school community and their overall attendance and academic achievement. Teachers perceived their relationships with students in a more positive light than did students. In addition, middle school students and teachers rated their school’s sense of community as significantly more positive than what high school
students and teachers perceived. The researchers used the SECI as a primary instrument in this study.

In a study examining ethical school climate in both urban and suburban schools (Keiser & Schulte, 2009), students and teachers had dissimilar perceptions. Urban students rated the school’s climate higher than teachers in every subscale. In contrast, suburban students’ perceptions of school climate were lower than their teachers in all subscales. In addition, urban teachers were significantly less positive about their school climate than were suburban teachers.

Rosenblatt and Peled (2002) discovered that a school climate characterized by rules and a professional code was more significantly related to parental involvement than a caring climate. This would tend to fit more with Rebore’s (2001) concept of standard-based ethics, rather than Hoyle’s (2002) force of love. They also found that high SES parents were less involved than low SES parents when they perceived that the school climate was ethical. Parental involvement was considered in two contexts: cooperation-wise (when parents choose to participate) and conflict-wise (when parents must become involved to face a tension).

Shapira-Lishchinsky and Rosenblatt (2010) examined the relationship between school ethical climate (both caring and formal) and voluntary teacher absence. They found that both caring and formal climates are negatively related to teacher absence – when the perception of an ethical school climate increased, teacher absences decreased. As a result, they proposed that “school principals may reduce voluntary teacher absence by creating an ethical climate focused on caring and clear and just rules and procedures” (p. 164).

In theorizing about the need for greater student engagement, McMahon (2003) proposed that adopting critical pedagogy and an antiracist multiculturalism would create classroom climates
that would foster significant engagement. Creating educational environments that are more responsive to everyone’s human and social rights is the ethical need of today’s schools. When these classroom and school climates are produced where students feel free to fully engage without loss of safety or esteem, the potential for meaningful engagement increases. This sounds strongly related to Strike’s (2007) concept of a community that lives well together.

Narvaez and Lapsley (2008) proposed an Integrative Ethical Education model to train teachers to develop positive character formation in students. In the model, the authors believed that there are five steps needed for moral character development: fostering a supportive climate, cultivating ethical skills, apprenticing approach to instruction, nurturing self-regulation skills, and building support structures in the school community. This model has elements that have similar tones as Hoyle’s (2002) force of love and Strike’s (2007) community that lives well together.

Through a qualitative case study approach, Parker, Grenville, and Flessa (2011) described success stories of students in challenging socioeconomic situations as a result of positive school and community climate. Several themes were drawn from the study: the importance of ethical leadership, the need for a commitment to high-quality collaboration, purposeful community building, and parent and community partnerships. Poverty does not need to decide the outcome of students, if leaders and schools will work to develop learning communities that produce a climate that is conducive to student engagement.

What makes some schools outperform other schools that are demographically similar in students and community? Wilcox and Angelis (2011) found that there are four practices that distinguished the higher performing schools.

These practices are a well-defined and enacted focus on rigor, capacities to innovate, open and transparent
communication within the school and with the broader community, and the willingness and capability to use a variety of evidence to make strategic decisions. (p. 138) The identified practices are similar in many ways to the primary authors’ central concepts on ethical school leadership, mentioned in the introduction. A focus on rigor agrees with Rebore’s (2001) emphasis on meeting and exceeding standards. The open and transparent communication is what love would do (Hoyle, 2002) and it would be necessary for a community that lives well together (Strike, 2007). A capacity to innovate is part of the culture of an ethical school – to meet the needs of all and to meet the challenges that would try to undo that aim. The final practice as found by Wilcox and Angelis (2011) was the openness and the ability to use a variety of evidence to make key decisions.

In the subsequent section, we present a four-staged framework, the Ethical Decision-Making Model (EDM). This ethical decision-making model aims to demonstrate how leaders use multiple realms of evidence to make strategic decisions for the students and the learning community. Attempting to provide clarity and render application of the case study more tangible, the reader is addressed in second person.

The Ethical Decision-Making Model (EDM)

For leaders, decision-making can be an endless task. So many decisions need to be made that leaders find that they have little time outside of that realm. Today’s school leaders, more than ever, need ethical decision-making. Corruption, violence, standards driven curricula, diversity, and a shrinking teacher pool demand that ethics be a primary focus of today’s school leader. The Ethical Decision-Making Model (EDM) was discovered as a simple tool or process that can be utilized by elementary to higher education leaders (Wiemers & Shutt, 2008). It was discovered rather than created because facets of this model have been used for centuries and it is not the authors’ model to own.
There are four basic stages to the EDM which, when followed, will allow the educational leader to make ethical decisions. The stages are *perspective consciousness, collegial dialogue, critical assessment,* and *reflective thought.* There is no set length to each stage, and the stages may not be equal in duration. However, the purposeful utilization of each stage is necessary for the entire model to be efficacious.

**Perspective Consciousness**

*Who am I? What experiences and relationships have made me into the person I am today? Why do I think the way that I do? What biases, stereotypes, and prejudices have been developed in me over the years that I need to control, and try to eliminate? What is my honest worldview?* These are all important questions for the school leader to ask as he/she seeks to make ethical decisions. Self-awareness is a key quality of any good leader, especially one who directs the future of children. A leader must honestly look inside his/her life, mind, heart, and soul to discover self’s perspective. People do not all see actions, words, and relations in the same way, so becoming conscious of one’s worldview is a starting point to making any ethical decision. Begley (2006) called this self-knowledge. One needs to have it to make any key decisions. Millions of decisions are made daily at the world, national, state, and local levels that are not based upon a conscious understanding of one’s own perspective. Those decisions affect others and the leader is not even aware that he/she is so influenced by self’s worldview. Hoyle (2002) would not classify this as being moved by a force of love.

At the same time, the leader needs to have a conscious awareness of the perspectives of those in the school community. Understanding the way others view the world will help the leader to make caring decisions, ones that will help the community to live well together (Strike, 2007). This will guide him/her to choose terms carefully, to approach others in certain manners, to include or exclude others from various activities, and to ethically consider the learning needs of all in the school community.
(students, teachers, parents, etc.). When self-conscious understanding is coupled with school community awareness, ethical decisions are possible. This first stage is not easy. It demands cutting honesty about oneself, and the integrity and perseverance to learn about others. The highest qualities of a good educator are genuineness – knowing and being true to self and knowing those you serve – school community awareness.

**Collegial Dialogue**

When leaders truly have this perspective consciousness, they can turn to colleagues for support in the decision-making process. Their worldviews will not be distorted, so they can genuinely hear what their educator peers have to share. These peers can be found within the school community, at other schools, or at some distance, wherever a trusted relationship has been developed that openly seeks ethical practices. Most specifically, collegial dialogue needs to occur in the school community. In this case, school leaders should not only rely on those who agree with them, but they must open the dialogue with their challengers. Good leaders are not fearful of challenge. They realize it as a sharpening stone that will result in ethical decisions that will allow the community to live well together (Strike, 2007).

There is a simple concept of dialogue that will help immensely in any decision-making process that we have termed *dialogic resolution*. Hufford (2003) presented this conception of dialogue as he spoke at a conference in Nashville, Tennessee. He suggested that dialogic resolution involves two straightforward principles: speak to be understood – not to hide and listen to understand – not to respond. Be honest. People hold back some key ammunition when speaking with others and do not want others to fully perceive viewpoints for fear that they will abuse that knowledge. Words and sentences are used cautiously to craft a statement that expresses but does not reveal. Conversely, people may listen while stockpiling ammunition for the next volley with challengers rather than fully listening to their point of view and trying to understand it from the way they see the world.
In this negative mode of listening, truths may be missed. What could be gained by opening minds to words and the perspectives of others? Collegial dialogue seems easy with trusted friends and it can be valuable, but it becomes priceless when used this concept of dialogic resolution. New realms open for ethical decision-making when meaningful dialogue is communicated with all in the school community.

Critical Assessment
When leaders have perspective consciousness and are willing to openly dialogue with others in the school community, they can move to the stage where they use a critical approach to assessment of the situation that needs a decision. Critical can have two meanings: using logic and insight to examine an issue with scrutiny, and from a multicultural point of view, allowing all sides to be expressed, especially those of the suppressed and forgotten [as used by McMahon, (2003) with the term, critical pedagogy].

The use of logic and insight to scrutinize an issue can take on some simple forms. A leader could perform a thorough review of laws, codes, and standards to make sure that any decision fits within those legal realms. They could follow a basic process of listing pros and cons to the see benefits and losses that would be sustained with any decision. In addition, they could use an analysis where they subject the potential decision to an examination of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT). Of course, the leader’s experience and wisdom should never be overlooked. The past may provide the perfect insight to the present and future. Whatever approach is taken here, it needs to involve deep examination of the issue, the potential decisions, and the possible outcomes.

With logic and scrutiny utilized, consider the importance of the other aspect of critical – the value of keeping the conditions and needs of the oppressed before our eyes as leaders. Too often decisions are made because politically strong bosses or
stakeholders will benefit and roles will remain secure. Love is renounced and self-preservation prevails. However, true critical assessment always examines the needs of those who often benefit the least from education, those who are marginalized in the educational process. In order to make truly ethical decisions, leaders need to be courageous enough to seek the opinions of formally silenced stakeholders. A focus on love is required for a thorough critical assessment.

**Reflective Thought**

Reflective thought represents the final stage of the EDM. Reflective thought is final because it comes after the first three stages and involves both pre and post decision reflection. Reflection may be the most important tool of a school leader. Without it, he/she may be adrift in a sea of problems and successes, issues and decisions, politics and standards, students and teachers, careers and the future of the children, without knowing where to turn. Reflection is the rudder to the ship that sails through these vast seas.

Reflection will guide the ethical decision. Prior to reflection, one needs to understand his/her own perspective. One needs to perceive viewpoints of the school community. Voices of colleagues must be heard. The situation’s potential decisions and outcomes must be critically assessed. The final stage requires reflection to guide the ethical decision making process. The leader now has all the resources. To move to reflection, the next step may require isolation to review all elements of the EDM process. Some guiding questions might be: What did you learn? Where is the greatest need? What decision will serve students best? A more thorough presentation of guiding questions is provided after the case study.

Reflection will fortify the ethical decision. The leader needs to feel confident about the decision. This can best be accomplished by going through the stages of the EDM process. The outcome of the dilemma may not be as significant as the process of fully
employing the EDM stages. Reflection will allow one to look back over the process and remain secure in the resulting decision. Guiding questions included: Did you remain legal in the process? Were you looking out for self or did you seek the good of others? Were there voices you failed to hear? Were student needs your number one priority? Were you courageous? A more thorough compilation of guiding inquiry follows the case study.

In the section that follows, we provide a case study to help you apply the EDM to make ethical decisions. Follow the four stage process: perspective consciousness, collegial dialogue, critical assessment, and reflective thought to guide you through the process. Remember that the route may be linear or may be iterative. Analyses at one stage may result in divergent responses at an earlier level. Conversely, the stages may stand alone and be linear. Use the four-staged ethical decision making process to promote a positive school climate in a school setting.

A Case Study

You have been a principal at a middle school for five years. Your school has been active in the middle school movement and as a result, grade level teams with teachers of varying content areas have been functional and effective for over twenty years. All three grade level teams (6th, 7th & 8th grades) work independently and yet collaboratively with you, including being active in human resource decisions, such as the interviewing process. Most recently, the seventh grade team presented at the National Middle School conference on The Culture and Benefits of Teaming at The Middle School Level. Your school has won awards from both state and national organizations for successfully implementing middle level practices.

Grade level 7 team includes five members: a social studies teacher who acts as the team leader and has taught at the school for eighteen years; an English teacher who has taught
at the school for seven years; a third year science teacher; a twenty-five year veteran special education teacher; and a first year math teacher. Each member of the team was part of the interviewing and selection of the first year math teacher in the previous spring.

During the previous year, the state legislature passed a new law mandating that student achievement measures be a component of teacher evaluations. The language of the statute specifically requires that student achievement should constitute *up to 50%* of the states’ teachers evaluations, as measured by value added scores collected by the state and your own district. There is a considerable movement among policy makers within the state to include a teacher’s impact on student achievement in his/her evaluation at a higher percentage in future years, but at the moment, the exact amount of student achievement measures have remained a district-wide decision, following the state statute requiring *up to 50%* of the evaluation be comprised of student achievement data. In addition, the superintendent of your district has made it clear that starting with this current school year, student achievement measures must be included in your evaluation of your teachers. In your weekly leadership team meeting, you superintendent laid out a plan that will be presented to the Board of Education later in the year that will mandate a *minimum of 50%* of future teacher evaluations will be comprised of student achievement scores for the following school years. You expect the Board to pass the plan this year.

The first year math teacher started the school year well, becoming involved in his grade level team meetings and teaching his general math and also an advanced algebra course for students who qualified because of high math scores on state and district assessments. He continues to attend every meeting and to teach, according to your own observations, in an exemplary fashion. However as the year
progressed, he began to have personality conflicts with the seventh grade team members. His attitude is negative when they suggest interdisciplinary units of study, which have become a model for other grade level teams in the past, and he states that math does not fit-in well with the suggested interdisciplinary unit. He states that he prefers not to take part in this IUD. In addition, advisory—which is an established middle school practice for all of your grade level teams and for all members of the staff (you even have your own advisory group along with the vice principal, librarian, and band leader)—seems to hold no value for the seventh grade math teacher. Seventh grade team members have reported to you that they have heard from students that the math teacher does not regularly hold advisory meetings, but allows the students to have a study hall and talk.

As the year progresses, the seventh grade teacher leader approaches you about discussing the option of dismissing the math teacher based upon his lack of participation at the team level, a cultural expectation of the exemplary middle school. The team does not wish to proceed another year with a non-functioning team member. At the same time, you have just received district-wide assessment results. The data suggest that the students of the seventh grade math teacher have performed exceptionally well. In fact, his general math students are performing better on district wide tests than any previous year. His algebra students have systematically passed the district entrance exam for taking Algebra II, a feat no other Algebra teacher at the middle school level has been able to accomplish in the past.

You are faced with a dilemma. You need a teacher who functions well on a middle school team and collaborates with fellow team leaders for those practices they value, including cooperating with interdisciplinary units of study and conducting advisory for middle school students. Your teachers have requested that you consider the math teacher’s
dismissal for his lack of display of middle school values commonly held at the school. At the same time, the math teacher’s impact on student learning seems to be positive. At the state level and certainly, at the district level as well, student achievement measures are considered to be prima facia evidence of effective teaching. In the current year, the state mandates that student achievement measures may be reflected up to 50% of a teacher’s evaluation, but that the district would problematize exactly how those measures will be included in teacher evaluations. Your superintendent seems to favor student achievement as an indicator of teacher effectiveness. How will the seventh grade team react if you suggest that the math teacher’s impact on his students’ learning outweighs the value your school has placed on collaboration, specifically and on middle school practices in general? How will the superintendent react if you dismiss the high scoring math teacher at the very time when school policy is moving toward student achievement measures as valid measures of teacher effectiveness? Ethically, what must guide your decision making (Wiemers & Shutt, 2008)?

**Applying the EDM**

Below are some guiding questions to help you apply the EDM process. It is not our intent to answer the problems associated with this case study. The questions are provided to focus on the most important elements of the case as you follow the EDM process.

**Perspective Consciousness**

1) How do you really feel about the situation? 2) Have you accepted the new evaluation measures? 3) Do you value student scores, teacher collaboration, or both? 4) Are you genuinely aware of how the whole department (and faculty) feels – about the situation, the new evaluation system, the students’ scores? 5) Do you have a broader sense of the school community’s values on this issue (the parents, the community, leader colleagues)?
Collegial Dialogue
1) What opportunities do you have to increase dialogue on this matter in the department? In the school? 2) Have you sought out your trusted peers for their opinions? 3) Have you sought out your challengers for their opinions? 4) Does the dialogue need to include those in upper administration? How would this be approached? 5) Have you truly expressed yourself openly to others without hiding your feelings? 6) Have you truly listened to others without thinking about your response?

Critical Assessment
1) What laws or policies need to govern your choices/decisions? 2) Who has authority in this matter? 3) What are the pros and cons of your potential decisions, or what possible strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats arise out of them? 4) Have you thought about the needs of the forgotten and suppressed? Are all considered? 5) What ultimate criteria should be used to make your final decision?

Reflective Thought
1) Based on PC, CD, and CA question outcomes (above), is there a solution that will serve all parties? 2) If not, what is going to best provide for student needs? 3) And after you decision, what was your purpose and motivation for making the decision? Why did you decide what you did? 4) Did you affect the climate of your school positively with the decision?

Conclusion

The answers to the questions provided above will determine the pattern of your ethical decision-making. Attempt to judge your answers not by the outcomes, but by the literature grounded ethical decision making framework. Did you follow a standards-based approach, wanting to meet and exceed those preset goals (Rebore, 2001)? Did you act out of love, supporting the improvement of others, without thought of yourself (Hoyle,
2002)? Did you seek an avenue for the school community to live well together (Strike, 2007)?

We do not want to belittle ethical decision making in school leadership. Making ethical decisions is not an easy task. It takes great focus, much effort, and courage to take meaningful positions for the good of the students and others in need. The EDM model is an intentional, straightforward process that will allow you, as a leader, to develop an approach to making decisions that will guide you through a successful career. The result – positive school climates. How did this result occur?

When you are being genuine, you will be positive – satisfied with yourself. When you are seeking awareness of others’ perspectives and listening to their voices, the school community will be positive – they will feel valued and wanted. When you are critically examining all possible avenues for success, legal and authoritative realms will be positive about the school – stakeholders will view school decisions as being made with fidelity. Finally, when you reflect over issues and decisions made, you will feel confident in the integrity of the EDM process.

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Beck

Bolting on and Building In: Strategies for Integrating Sustainability into the Academic Curriculum

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Abstract

Over the past decade, universities throughout the country have made significant advances in implementing sustainability initiatives. However, although degree programs and course offerings in environmental fields continue to increase, few colleges require all students to gain exposure to sustainability in the general education curriculum and students are less likely to be environmentally literate when they graduate than their predecessors. This paper identifies factors underlying the lack of progress on curricular change and analyzes different strategies for integrating sustainability into the academic curriculum. Results indicate that for a significant portion of students to be exposed, sustainability will need to be integrated into disciplinary and general education courses.

Introduction

Over the past decade, colleges and universities have made significant advances in making campus operations more sustainable. Compelled by financial considerations to reduce energy costs and academic and ideological considerations to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, more than 75% of schools reported efficiency improvements such as energy and water conservation (McIntosh, Gaalswyck, Keniry, & Eagan, 2008). Case studies from the United States and Europe of schools detailing actions undertaken to reduce energy use or greenhouse gas emissions are becoming increasingly well represented in the literature (See National Wildlife Federation [NWF], 2011; American Association for Sustainability in Higher Education [AASHE], 2010; Cusick, 2008; Holmberg, Svanstrom, Peet, Mulder, Ferrer-Balas, & Segalas, 2008; Hopkinson, Hughes, & Layer, 2008; Barlett & Chase, 2004). Significant gains have been made in energy conservation and renewable energy, building design, water conservation, purchasing, transportation and chemicals and waste management (Elder, 2008;
McIntosh et al., 2008; Barlett & Chase, 2004). These activities are even more developed in Europe where over the last twenty years, most European universities have adopted strategic plans for improving sustainability (Geli di Ciurna & Filho, 2006).

However, despite enthusiasts proclaiming that such actions imply that “Campuses make sustainability a core curriculum” (Buttenweiser, 2008, p. 34), evidence suggests the academic sector has lagged far behind campus operations when it comes to addressing environmental performance and sustainability (Hazelton, 2010; Rusinko, 2010; Sammalisto & Lindqvist, 2008; Scott & Gough, 2007; Haigh, 2005). Despite the importance of universities’ role in training future leaders as well as representing the source of research and innovation necessary for developing solutions (Elder & MacGreagor, 2008), changing the core curriculum to reflect this important change in priorities has proceeded much more slowly. Although degree programs and course offerings in environmental fields continue to expand, less than 5% of colleges require all students to gain exposure to sustainability in the general education curriculum and students are less likely to be environmentally literate when they graduate than their predecessors (McIntosh et al., 2008). This paper examines factors underlying this discrepancy and presents findings from a curriculum inventory at St. Edward’s University to analyze strategies for integrating sustainability into the academic curriculum.

**Rationale for Campus Action**

College and university campuses play a crucial role in efforts to achieve a more sustainable society. In the United States alone, more than 4,000 two and four year schools serve over 18 million students and employ over 3 million people. With total annual energy expenditures exceeding $6 billion (Elder, 2008), they represent an important source of energy use and greenhouse gas emissions. More importantly however, is their role in training future leaders and representing the source of research and innovation necessary for developing sustainable solutions (Elder & MacGreagor, 2008). Thus in terms of both developing solutions and serving as a role model for other institutions, colleges and universities need to lead by more effectively integrating sustainability into the educational experience.
Improving sustainability on college and university campuses has been gradually gaining momentum over the past two decades. Internationally, this movement emerged in the 1990s with several international agreements including: the Talloires Declaration (1990), Halifax Declaration (1991), the Declaration of Universities for Sustainable Development (1993) and the World Conference on Higher Education (1998). These actions eventually led to the formation of the Global Higher Education Partnership for Sustainability (2001) to ensure that higher education would have priority on the program of the World Summit on Sustainable Development in 2002 where it was proclaimed that sustainability needs to be an integral component of all levels of education (Geli de Ciurana & Filho, 2006; Corcoran, Walker & Walls, 2004). This led to the United Nations declaring 2005-2014 to be the Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (Junyent & Ciurana, 2008). As global action has increased, the focus of these agreements has gradually evolved from general concerns about sustainability, to the awareness of the limitations of disciplinary boundaries in addressing these issues, to the notion that every educated person should possess “environmental literacy” (Hough, 2005).

Largely as a result of the interest generated by these agreements, economic, ecological and social sustainability has become a political priority for the European Union (Geli de Ciurana & Filho, 2006). As a result, universities throughout Europe have been implementing various sustainability programs over the past decade (Holmberg et al., 2008; Hopkinson et al., 2008). However, as recognized by the changing focus of these agreements, achieving the broader goals has been much more difficult than implementing specific programs (Pearson, Honeywood, & O’Toole, 2005; Haigh, 2005).

In the United States during the 1990s, action on sustainability lagged as the campus environmental movement instead was focused on expanding the number of degrees and courses in fields such as environmental science, environmental policy and environmental studies. However, sustainability differs from environmentalism in that “it includes not only environmental concerns but also social and economic considerations, with a focus on how to improve the quality of life for all future generations” (Elder & MacGreagor, 2008, p. 3). As a result, implementing environmental courses and programs does not necessarily imply a commitment to sustainability nor does the
option of taking courses imply that the general student body is being exposed to environmental literacy.

Early attempts to incorporate sustainability include the Tufts Environmental Literacy Institute in 1990 (Barlett & Rappaport, 2004), Tufts Climate Initiative in 1999 (Barlett & Chase, 2004), the Ponderosa Project at Northern Arizona University in 1996 (Chase & Rowland, 2004) and the Piedmont Project at Emory University in 2001 (Eisen & Barlett, 2006). Following these initiatives, and propelled by the growing concern over climate change, organizations such as the American Association for Sustainability in Higher Education (AASHE), American College and University Presidents’ Climate Commitment (ACUPCC) and National Wildlife Federation’s Campus Ecology have helped increase campus awareness and actions towards sustainability. Evidence of progress includes over 300 campuses having conducted sustainability assessments in the last five years, over 400 campuses with full time sustainability coordinators or offices of sustainability and over 500 schools implementing institution-wide sustainability committees (AASHE, 2011). As of January 2012, almost 700 university presidents had signed the Presidents Climate Commitment, committing their institutions to achieving climate neutrality. As a result of this interest in reducing carbon emissions, as well as the financial incentive of reducing energy costs, universities throughout the country have been increasingly implementing practices to reduce energy use in campus operations as well as other environmental initiatives such as composting and recycling (See ACUPCC, 2011; NWF, 2011; Barlett & Chase, 2004).

**Barriers and Alternatives**

However, integrating sustainability into the curriculum has proven much more difficult than in operations (Hazelton, 2010). In Rappaport and Creighton’s influential primer on campus climate action, *Degrees That Matter* (2007), only one of the twelve chapters focuses on curriculum. Nevertheless, AASHE (2010) identifies eight potential points of intervention:

- Freshmen orientation
- Requiring students to take courses introducing these concepts
- Providing elective courses on these concepts to all students
- Integrating these concepts into existing courses
- Offering existing courses to more students
● Creating new multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary courses
● New programs, institutes, and colleges
● Integration across the curriculum

As is evident, these alternative points of intervention differ in ease of incorporation and the extent to which the general student body is exposed to these issues. Sterling (2004) identifies three stages of integration. The first level, “bolting on” consists of adding courses and degrees to the existing curriculum. The second level “building in” integrates sustainability into general education and disciplinary courses, as well as into campus operations. The third level “transformation” involves complete curricular redesign based on sustainability principles. Rusinko’s (2010) matrix further refines this approach by combining bolting on (new courses) with building in (existing programs) and identifying how co-curricular opportunities can be integrated into both components.

Despite these numerous opportunities, as the NWF study makes clear, implementing sustainability into the curriculum has proven much more difficult than changing campus operations. Explaining this anomaly, scholars have identified numerous barriers that exist to the incorporation of greater sustainability in higher education curriculum. Dawe, Jucker & Martin (2005) examining the lack of progress in Europe in implementing sustainability into the subject disciplines cite the already overcrowded curriculum, perceived irrelevance of academic staff, limited staff expertise and limited institutional commitment. Examining the incentive structure of the academy, Haigh (2005) identifies the perverse incentives of universities that reward research and the acquisition of outside funding, rather than teaching. Moreover, emphasis on disciplinary specialization and reductionism, contradicts the necessary interdisciplinary and holistic thinking necessary for examining sustainability. The unique structure of university decision making also makes any type of curricular change more difficult than operational change. Power of curriculum is decentralized and the different stakeholders involved – faculty, students and administrators – occupy different cultures with limited interactions (Sharp, 2002), while individual faculty members frequently hold conflicting views on what is meant by sustainability (Aznar-Minguet, Martinez-Agut, Palacios, Pinero, & Ull, 2011). This has made higher education one of the hardest sectors to institutionalize sustainability and explains why in Europe, education for sustainable
development has progressed more rapidly at the primary and secondary levels (Geli di Ciurana & Filho, 2006). As an author of one case study of a European university lamented, "It will be shown that for every place in the system, elements exist that, to some extent, hinder the incorporation of sustainability issues into curricula" (Lidgren, Rodhe, & Huisingh, 2006, p. 800).

In terms of building in, the first stage of integration has proven relatively successful as over the past twenty years, environmental courses and degree programs have become commonplace as more than 800 colleges and universities currently offer bachelor’s degrees and hundreds more offer graduate degrees. Paradoxically however, the growth in specialized environmental courses and degrees over the past twenty years may have reduced the perceived need to incorporate these ideas more generally in the curriculum (Haigh, 2005).

Concerning sustainability specifically, there is still a need for additional bolting on. Overall, the number of universities offering sustainability-focused degrees, certificates or academic programs has increased dramatically in the last few years from 3 in 2005 (Elder & MacGreagor, 2008) to more than 30, including at least five that offer PhD’s (AASHE, 2011). Although this trend is encouraging, it still represents only a handful of the thousands of colleges and universities across the country and even of the hundreds that offer environmental degrees.

AASHE’s stated goal that 10% of all the courses offered in the United States “help students understand the interaction between social, environmental, and economic forces, and to apply that understanding to a real world problem,” exemplifies the support for the bolting on approach.

Although the bolting on approach has proven successful in increasing the prevalence of environmental courses and degrees available on college campuses, the NWF survey makes clear that making courses available has not notably increased the environmental literacy of the student body as a whole (McIntosh et al., 2008). Moreover, the lack of distinction between the campus environmental movement and campus sustainability movement has potentially helped limit widespread interest across the disciplines by the expectation that environmental courses are the logical place to discuss sustainability
issues and that they inherently do so (Reid & Petocz, 2006). However, although environmental courses are probably more likely to include discussions of sustainability than other disciplines, there is a wide range of variability between an environmental science courses which may not discuss sustainability at all to an introductory environmental studies course where it may be one of several topics to a course where it is the primary focus. Complicating this issue is the likelihood that environmental courses that cover sustainability focus primarily on its ecological dimension at the expense of the economic and social considerations. Thus, strategies for integrating sustainability need to extend beyond merely environmental courses.

The second approach, building in, has the potential to reach a much larger percentage of students. This approach supports findings at an English University showing that integrating environmental concerns into disciplinary courses was more effective than courses designed to increase awareness of sustainability (Holt, 2003). Several alternatives exist to implement this approach, including incorporating sustainability courses into general education, dorm orientations and the school’s mission statement. These options may be much more difficult to approve and implement due to the barriers discussed earlier facing any type of widespread institutional change. Moreover, they typically require replacing existing components, as well as the cooperation of a much wider range of university personnel, including administrators, staff and faculty from across the disciplines. However, the different dimensions of sustainability present an opportunity for inclusion in a wide range of potential courses. Rappaport and Creighton (2007) provide examples of how climate sustainability can be incorporated into courses as diverse as Engineering, Epidemiology, Literature and Art (279). Experimental programs at Tufts and Emory which involve inviting faculty to yearly workshops on sustainability have shown success in encouraging faculty members from across the disciplines to incorporate sustainability into their courses (Barlett & Rappaport, 2009).

Sterling (2004) claims the third stage, transformation, is ultimately necessary because as sustainability requires changing the prevailing cultural paradigm, sustainability education will require changing the prevailing educational paradigm. Although examples of American institutions exist, such as Unity and Green Mountain Colleges, with environment-centered curriculums that approach the transformation
level, at best this reflects a much more limited and long term alternative. Elder (2008) describes it as requiring sustainability to be identified as a social movement, which will require widespread philosophical change from both within the university and with societal actors to accomplish. Universities themselves will need to stimulate this greater social action, both locally and nationally, therefore reinforcing the need for action.

Table 1: Levels of Integration

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Levels of Integration</th>
<th>Implementation Strategies</th>
<th>Portion of Students Exposed</th>
<th>Extent of Exposure</th>
<th>Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bolting On</td>
<td>Adding courses and degrees</td>
<td>Low (if elective)</td>
<td>Low (course)</td>
<td>Arizona State PhD in Sustainability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>High (if required)</td>
<td>High (degree)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building In</td>
<td>Integrating throughout disciplines or general education</td>
<td>Medium (if disciplinary)</td>
<td>Intensive</td>
<td>Tufts, Northern Arizona, Emory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transformation</td>
<td>Curricular redesign; education for sustainability</td>
<td>All</td>
<td>Intensive</td>
<td>Unity College; Green Mountain College</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As is clear from this Table 1, the higher levels of integration offer more extensive exposure, but are also much more difficult to implement. In identifying the different approaches, Rowe (2002) proclaims “It may be most effective to have general education degree requirements AND to infuse sustainability concepts throughout the curricula AND to offer increased numbers of interdepartmental minors in sustainability AND to recognize the other sectors of the institution as an important part of the latent curricula AND to incorporate a commitment to sustainability in the strategic plan and mission statement of the university.” While this is undoubtedly true, most universities will need to prioritize and/or implement changes gradually.
which therefore heightens the need to identify the most effective points of intervention.

Curriculum Inventory at St. Edward’s University

A crucial finding of NWF’s nationwide study was the realization that few schools evaluate or recognize how faculty integrates environmental or sustainability topics into their courses (McIntosh et al., 2008). As conducting greenhouse gas inventories are deemed crucial first steps in conducting an action plan to reduce emissions, conducting a curriculum inventory is a necessary first step to integrating sustainability into the curriculum. In order to examine the potential for integrating sustainability into the curriculum, a survey was conducted at St. Edward’s University. The objectives of the survey were to examine the extent of sustainability in the current curriculum and identify possible areas for expansion. SEU is a private liberal arts university of 5,300 students in Austin, Texas, 4,300 of whom are undergraduates. Graduate students, most of whom are part-time, non-resident, were not included in the survey. The university has recently taken actions to incorporate sustainability including the creation of an Environmental Science and Policy major and a Sustainability Committee and has been actively pursuing areas to improve energy efficiency in operations.

Data was collected through surveys of faculty and undergraduate students. To identify the extent of sustainability in current courses, each course in the catalog was reviewed and courses that were likely to have covered sustainability issues were identified. The instructors of these classes were then asked to identify the portion of the course that dealt with sustainability issues. The courses were then divided by the total number of courses offered at SEU over the past two years. A second survey was administered to students to determine their opinions on sustainability courses. Surveys were administered in 17 general education courses in order to gain a representative sample of students from different majors. The courses were evenly represented between first year, second year, third year and fourth year courses to gain an even distribution of student tenure. The results of both surveys are presented below.
Results

Reflecting the nationwide trends discussed earlier, results indicate that few SEU courses discuss sustainability issues. Of the over 800 courses offered during the past academic year, only 14 (1.7%) included sustainability as part of the course content. Moreover, most of the courses that discuss sustainability, dedicate only a small portion of the course content to sustainability issues. The percentages are presented below in Table 2:

Table 2: Courses that include sustainability as a portion of course content

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Number</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>% dedicated to sustainability</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BIOL 1107</td>
<td>General Biology: Cells, Genetics and Organ Systems</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BIOL 1307</td>
<td>Cells, Genetics and Organ Systems Lab</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BIOL 1308</td>
<td>General Biology: Organisms and Populations</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BIOL 2324</td>
<td>Plant Biology</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GLST 1322</td>
<td>Global Issues</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ENSP 2341</td>
<td>Chemistry in the Environment</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ENSP 3302</td>
<td>Environmental Geology</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BIOL 3345</td>
<td>Advanced Topics in Biology</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BIOL 4342</td>
<td>Population Biology and Ecology</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ENSP 4330</td>
<td>Environmental Politics and Policy</td>
<td>66%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ENSP 2324</td>
<td>Environmental Science</td>
<td>82%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FSTY 1310</td>
<td>Freshman Studies: Ecology and Environment</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ENSP 1304</td>
<td>Environment and People</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ENSP 2349</td>
<td>Planning for Climate Change Sustainability</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Interestingly, disciplines that are frequently assumed to cover sustainability, such as Biology, devote a small (if at all) portion of class content to it. Moreover, reflecting the distinction between sustainability and environmentalism, not all environmental courses discuss sustainability extensively.
Results of the student survey reflected this dearth of sustainability content in the curriculum. Over half of SEU students have not taken a course that dealt specifically with sustainability or environmental issues (n=205 for all figures). Students were also asked if a course should be required covering environmental sustainability. 44% of respondents supported a required course, while 63% indicated that they would be willing to take a course as an elective. That almost two-thirds of students would be willing to take such a course as an elective, indicates substantial support for the course, even if the majority are unwilling to enforce another requirement at a school with an already extensive general education requirement.

Discussion

These results demonstrate several notable, if not unexpected, trends. Not surprisingly, most students do not choose to take a sustainability focused course, or even an environmental course. Secondly, environmental courses do not necessarily cover sustainability issues in depth.

The low levels of exposure to sustainability reflected by these results present opportunities for integration through bolting on and building in. That only a minority of students has even taken a course covering environmental issues, and that few courses include discussions of sustainability, reflects a clear need to make additional courses available. That a majority of students expressed interest in taking such a course is a strong indicator of this need and also that they would likely be successful at meeting minimum class size expectations. For schools with general education requirements, such as SEU, incorporating a mandatory general education course on sustainability can be an effective means of avoiding the typical limitations of bolting on approaches. This approach was recently initiated at Furman University (Halfacre & Kazee, 2008) and would introduce all students to the issue, while requiring support and expertise from only the few instructors who would teach the course. General education courses are also more likely to be interdisciplinary, another aspect necessary for adequately addressing sustainability. And as Rowe (2002) discovered, students who had taken even one course were more likely to consider the future of society, think they could make a difference and more willing to participate in solving environmental and social problems.
Although a required general education course would impact most SEU students, several limitations exist for it to be the primary integration strategy. One complication is that although expertise on the issue will be required from only a limited number of faculty, support to add such a course will need to come from the much wider group of faculty responsible for the general education curriculum. In addition, existing course requirements for general education can already be substantial, making it difficult to support increasing the burden. SEU’s extensive general education requirement of 57 hours may explain the seeming contradictory survey results showing support for taking a class, while not supporting a required class. Perhaps students were hesitant to add another requirement to this already heavy load. It’s likely that if the question was asked if they would support a required course replacing an existing general education course, that the results would mirror more closely the two-thirds who supported taking a class as an elective. Of course replacing an existing course would also require convincing of the wider faculty that a currently required course is no longer necessary.

Thus, while incorporating a general education course appears to overcome the primary limitations of the bolting on approach, in most cases it will require either adding a course to an already extensive curriculum or replacing an existing course. These complications further reflect the importance of not relying solely on bolting on, but the need to build in sustainability content into existing courses. The preferred approach of building in sustainability content into existing courses will require not only agreement from instructors from across the disciplines, but also expertise, which is frequently limited (Dawe et al., 2005). As with bolting on, building in to general education courses can help overcome these limitations. Building in sustainability content into just a few of the existing general education courses would mean that all students would be introduced several times to sustainability issues in their coursework, while requiring expertise from a relatively small number of faculty.

However, in some cases this will require agreement from a large number of individual instructors as between 15-30 different instructors teach sections of some of the larger general education courses. And as is commonly the case, faculty members value the freedom to design their own courses and typically can be hesitant to support mandates requiring them to cover specific topics. However, in general
education, mandated curricula, or at least topics to cover, are much more likely than in disciplinary courses. As a result, faculty teaching these courses has different expectations regarding individual freedom in determining course content. One such course at SEU, *American Dilemmas*, which examines various social problems, currently requires instructors to cover four specific social problem areas, along with the option for instructors to add additional problem areas as well. Environmental concerns or sustainability could also be required or replace an existing social problem requirement. Currently only four of the 23 sections cover environmental problems, as one of the chosen social problems. Requiring that sustainability (or at least environmental problems) be one of the required sections would be a relatively easy way to ensure all students are exposed to sustainability. Of course, as sustainability covers economic and social dimensions as well, offers the opportunity to increase the discussion of sustainability while discussing other problems such as economic inequalities. Table 3 outlines the strengths and limitations of these different approaches.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Options for Implementation</th>
<th>Strengths</th>
<th>Limitations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Freshman Orientation</td>
<td>• Most students exposed</td>
<td>• Limited depth and retention • Isolated from academic courses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elective Courses</td>
<td>• Greater depth of exposure • Only a few faculty need to be involved</td>
<td>• Only students who opt to take course will be exposed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New programs, degrees</td>
<td>• Greater depth • Ability to integrate research and operations</td>
<td>• Even fewer students will be exposed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Required general education courses</td>
<td>• Requires relatively few faculty • GE faculty are already familiar with interdisciplinary courses, teaching away from their areas of expertise and accepting greater mandates into their course content • Can reach all students with just one or two courses</td>
<td>• Number of existing requirements may already be extensive • Existing curricula will have entrenched interests • General faculty will have to be convinced of significance • Mission may need to be altered to accommodate focus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Integration into existing courses</td>
<td>• All students exposed multiple times • Incorporate different aspects of sustainability • No new courses required</td>
<td>• Requires cooperation from wide range of faculty • Lack of knowledge of faculty • Need to convince faculty of its importance</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Conclusion

Overall, these results reflect both the limited sustainability literacy that exists nationwide as well the importance of moving beyond simply bolting on courses in sustainability as an effective means of reaching the general student population. Building in sustainability to existing disciplinary or general education courses will be necessary to reach a much wider percentage of the campus population, as well as to integrate the issue more completely into the educational experience. However, it will also be more difficult to implement due to concerns from faculty over academic freedom as well as necessary expertise. Moreover, as so few students currently are exposed to sustainability, bolting on, or adding new courses, is also necessary. For universities with a liberal arts or general education curriculum, using these common, required courses for either bolting on or building in will likely be more successful at reaching the widest number of students as well as avoiding the many barriers to curricular change in higher education institutions.

The tremendous increase in awareness and motivation on campus sustainability is extremely encouraging. This study has presented an initial indication of pathways for integrating sustainability, however much more research is needed. To move beyond awareness and intentions to achieving sustainability education for all students, much more knowledge on integrating sustainability into the curriculum will be necessary. More curriculum inventories are needed to determine the current state of exposure to sustainability of the student body. Research is also needed on methods of encouraging the integration sustainability into the disciplines, both for schools with general education programs and those that will rely on traditional disciplinary courses.

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Beck


Beck


The Sustainability of Foreign Policy in the Light of Social Change: How Globalization, Advanced Information Technology, and the Shift to a Service Industry Change Japanese Ethics and Foreign Policy

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Abstract
This paper examines two questions. The first question is how changes in Japanese society caused by globalization, advancements in information and communication technology and the shift toward a service industry have changed the ethics, priority and world-view of the Japanese people. The second question is how these changes will impact Japanese foreign policy. These questions are examined in the context of Japan’s youth, the young people who have ceased to be motivated to study diligently and to work hard. Their attitudes reflect recent changes in society. As such, the priorities of the older generations are no longer sustainable within Japan’s modern society. The attitudes of the youth will prevail and guide Japan into the future. An enquiry into these questions and the perspectives of Japanese youth can help one to understand how changes in, and evolutions of, an economy might impact foreign policy. An examination of changes in Japanese society is meaningful for other countries (who will invariability desire a more developed economy and social structure) as they might expect to follow a similar path.

Introduction
Japanese society has changed significantly in the last two decades. This change has been caused mainly by globalization, advancements in information and communication technology (ICT), and a shift from manufacturing toward a service industry. These influences, taken together, have led to what is referred herein as the ‘New Economy’. At the same time, people have become more affluent. Henceforth, the society with an improved economic condition and affluence shall be referred to as the ‘Mature Society’. The evolution and the impact of
the New Economy and the development of the Mature Society have brought about new phenomena or trends in Japan, have altered the priorities of the Japanese people, and, accordingly, have shaped new attitudes toward the world and the goals of Japan in the world. This paper examines one of the most significant consequences of such changes in the social priorities, personal priorities and world-views by highlighting the impact on future Japanese foreign policy. Specifically, the focus of this paper is the impact on future Japanese foreign policy as a result of the attitudes of Japanese youth -- young people who grew up in the Mature Society prefer an easy life with little effort exerted, in contrast to the older generation who made an effort to achieve a better life. Through this examination, this paper suggests that seemingly traditional world-views or ethics are, in fact, not sustainable in the face of new economic conditions. Finally, given Japan’s relatively closed nature and the lack of social mobility, it is arguably the most Mature Society, or at the least, one of the earliest. As such, an examination of the impact of the attitude of Japanese youth on Japanese foreign policy will prove meaningful for other countries because the people of any country will have or will desire and strive to become a Mature Society at some point.

Changes in Japanese Society

Among the factors that have changed Japanese society, globalization, the advancement of information technology and the move to a service industry are all intertwined and interdependent: Globalization, defined as an expansion of the connectedness of the entire world, cannot occur as rapidly or as thoroughly without the demise of the Cold War and the astonishing advancement of ICT. The dimension and extension of globalization depends on ICT development. On the other hand, ICT development relies on the competitiveness and the flexibility of the talent market, both of which are promoted by globalization. Further, by accelerating specialization, globalization promotes the more advanced economies to focus on high-value added industries, much being in the service industry including the ICT industry. In this way, these three factors must co-exist and drive each other.

The shift to a service industry might also be identified as causing a malfunctioning of existing social institutions such as marriage, schools, the form of employment, and local community. These institutions worked well in the context of a manufacturing industry, the leading
industry of industrialization, because they help craft and maintain the type of people that the manufacturing industry required -- diligent, patient, and well-disciplined workers. For example, the education system and the principles that trained and governed every Japanese youth to do and to act the same as other people and to obey their supervisors, largely due to the Japanese traditional way of thinking, groomed and sent to the factories well-disciplined and standardized people with minimum levels of education. But the service industry does not necessarily desire the same people. Highly demanding jobs such as doctors, lawyers, software creators, and consultants require an advanced education and creativity. Meanwhile, less demanding jobs such as nail manicurists, waiters, and truck drivers require little education. The purposes of the then existing schools no longer satisfied demand across the entire service industry.

In manufacturing, stability is critical for the efficient and consistent operation of the factory line. To guarantee such stability, firms sought to instill loyalty in their labor forces by providing them with comfort and little uncertainty, such as lifetime employment and seniority, that stabilized the working and living conditions of employees and produced an all-middle-class society. In high-value added service industries such as finance, ICT, consulting, law firms, and entertainment in globalization, diligence or consistency are no longer the most important sources of success, but rather imagination, high-levels of knowledge, flexibility, creativity and/or insight. Lifetime employment and seniority provide little benefit to such industries, and might even be regarded as harmful in global competition that requires efficiency, because these systems are based primarily on inflexibility, inefficiency, and conventionality. The rejection of lifetime employment and seniority reduce the stability and undermine the ‘all middle-class society’.

On the other hand, a dominant service industry tends to polarize high income and low income, destroying the ‘all middle-class society’ because that industry divides workers between highly paid people such as lawyers, doctors, consultants, and lower-pay people, such as waiters and nail manicurists.

In this way, a Mature Society is a polarized society where the gap between those who take advantage of these factors and those who cannot becomes wider. And this polarization causes serious problems:
Many people have lost jobs due to outsourcing in globalization or struggle to cope with unstable income caused by the newly introduced flexible job market. In Japan, employers traditionally hire new college graduates. But due to changing demands and the prolonged recession, many of these college graduates are unable to find jobs immediately upon completing their studies, being forced to start with part-time jobs. However, it becomes more difficult to secure full-time employment due to the perception attributed to part-time workers. Consequently one continues in a spiral of a lack of stability and tight finances. These hardships have caused serious problems in Japan: a high suicide rate, a decreased numbers of marriages, a decreased birth rate, increases in troubled or lonely senior citizens due to the reduction of marriage, and an increase in child abuse by low income couples.

The Emergence of New Priorities – Findings

As described above, Japanese society has changed. It has evolved into a Mature Society. This section discusses how those people who grew up in this Mature Society hold different worldviews and priorities when compared to earlier generations. This assessment will focus on the Japanese youth, those individuals who are currently young or are sufficiently young that they grew up in this new Mature Society. The fundamental premise herein is that Japanese youth prefer to make little or no effort and simply settle for an easy life, in contrast to the older generations who were driven and exerted effort in the pursuit of a better life.

New Priority

One of the most significant changes from the last century is that while once Japanese people worked hard and were proud of doing so, Japanese youth today do not. Although they do believe that working hard is virtuous and might lead to a better life than the one they have now, many youth are satisfied with their current living standards and make no effort to improve it.

Even as late as the 1990s, the Japanese people were known for their hard work and were often cynically labeled workaholics. People, within and outside of Japan, still believe that the unprecedentedly rapid modernization during the Meiji period (1867-1912) and the so-called miraculous economic growth after the defeat in WWII were
fundamentally due to each individual’s hard work. Extended work hours, long commuting time in extremely packed trains, life-time loyalty to a company, and internationally top-ranked Japanese students, among others, were seen as the symbols of their diligence and relentless effort. They were driven to do so for several reasons. First, around the 18th to the 19th century, Japanese merchants developed an ethic of hard work, though it did not prevail among all the Japanese (Maruyama, 1998). Secondly, they lost everything through the Fifteen Years War resulting in defeat in 1945. They had no choice but to reconstruct their nation and their lives. Thirdly, in the late 19th century, Japan was forced to quickly modernize the nation to avoid being colonized by the modernized Western countries. To achieve this goal, the government indoctrinated the ethic of hard work through education and enforced it on the people. For these reasons, patience and hard work had been a consistent and popular theme of TV shows, even including Manga (animation) until the 1980s.

Japanese work ethic has disappeared from the mentality of many youth. Takashi Iwata concluded in his survey of high school students that the priorities of the young people have clearly changed. His survey indicates that an increasing number of students reject hard work even if the result is less money and they prefer an easy and time-abundant life even if it means little respect or responsibility (Iwata, 2003). Additionally, the survey by the largest Japanese labor union demonstrated that almost 80% of the young union members under 35 years of age prioritize hobbies and leisure over work (Rengo, 2005). Similarly, a survey by Asahi Shinbun reported that while approximately 50% of those at least 60 years of age prioritized work over their private life, but only 35% of them placed priority on their own private life over work. Also, almost 60% of those 35 years or younger considered that they work merely to pay their bills and do not see any virtue in their work, while the older generation see work itself as virtuous (Asahi Shinbun, June 2010). Further, a survey indicated that when Japanese youth desire something but do not have enough money to buy it, 69% chose to save money or simply abandon their pursuit of their desire, rather than decide to work harder to obtain it (Asahi Shinbun “Rosuto jenereshon” Shuzaihan, 2007).

The lack of desire to work hard is reflected in the tendency of students regarding their attitude toward studying. Table 1 summarizes a remarkable survey of the attitudes of high school students in four
countries. It shows the percentage of students who strongly agree with each item in the left column and, in the final line of the table, the type of student they desire to be (Nihon Seishonen Kenkyujo, 2006).

Table 1

Comparison of High School Students who strongly agree with

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Japan</th>
<th>US</th>
<th>Korea</th>
<th>China</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Getting a Good Grade</td>
<td>33.2%</td>
<td>74.3%</td>
<td>73.8%</td>
<td>75.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Getting into the Targeted College</td>
<td>29.3%</td>
<td>53.8%</td>
<td>78.0%</td>
<td>76.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Making Effort to go to a Good College</td>
<td>25.8%</td>
<td>30.2%</td>
<td>61.2%</td>
<td>64.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Completing an MA Degree</td>
<td>7.0%</td>
<td>46.5%</td>
<td>14.7%</td>
<td>44.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Desirable Student</td>
<td>Popular</td>
<td>Smart</td>
<td>Smart</td>
<td>Smart</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Japanese students think that being smart, normally the goal of diligent study, is not their most important goal. Nor, relative to the other countries included in the survey, do they attach much importance to the results that flow from learning. Various critics and surveys indicate that Japanese students have spent less and less time devoted to studying since the 1980s (Sato, 2000, Yamada, 2004, Takeuchi, 2007, Nihon Seishonen Kenkyujo, 2009). Additionally, today’s parents do not urge their children to study as hard as the parents of the previous generation did (Yamauchi, 2002).

When asked what kind of life they wished for, as many as 80% of Japanese high school students in the survey (Yamauchi, 2002) chose easy and stress-free in lieu of sacrificing today for a better future. Being patient today with a view to securing a good future appears to have little popular appeal. Indeed, only 15% of the students sought to fulfill their lives through careful planning. Their attitude toward society is also marginal. Only 5% answered that they want to have a great society by working together. Other survey also supports the same broad conclusion that there is a discernable preference for an easy and comfortable life by focusing simply on the present without working hard (Kono, Takahashi, Hara, 2009). Such values and attitudes are often reflected in popular culture. Even as late as the 1980s, at a time when Japan had been the second largest global economy for some time, one of the most popular TV shows
emphasized the importance of being patient and of working hard to achieve one's dream. For example, Oshin is a TV drama broadcast from 1983 to 1984 that described a woman who became very successful by making an enormous effort despite her extremely poor origin and ultimately became the most watched TV drama in Japanese history. It appears that the change of priority and values among Japanese youth may well have been triggered in the 1990s.

Why, then, do Japanese youth exert less effort today than the older generation? There are two strong possibilities. First, they do not believe that making an effort is rewarding. Secondly, they believe that they can live comfortably without making an effort due to the affluence of Japanese society.

Causes of the priority Change

New economy in Japanese culture. First, many Japanese youth today do not see making an effort to be rewarding. One survey indicated that 74.8% of the respondents who were between the age of 12 and 19 years of age did not believe that anyone can be successful simply by making an effort and do not see making an effort as rewarding (Mirai Keizai Kenkyushitsu, 2003). In contrast, until the early 1990s, people did not doubt that making an effort would always yield what you wanted (Yomiuri Shinbun, 2011). In the past, when one could not get what he wanted or achieve what he aimed, he would think that his effort was not enough nor that making an effort was unrewarding. But if one does not believe that making an effort is rewarding, how can we expect one to make any effort?

The reason why many students do not study is the same. They think neither that studying is rewarding, nor that studying leads to a better life in the future. In practice, they no longer believe a good university guarantees a better life. This decline in the importance of the link between one's educational background and one's success in society in Japan is also supported by an international survey of the high school students. While 51.7% of the American students, 37.4% of students in the UK and 23% of the Korean students think their educational background matters for their success, only 10.4% of the Japanese students think so (Naikakufu Seisaku Tokatsukan, 2009). It is no surprise that only 26% of the high school students in Table 1 indicated that they study hard to be accepted into a good college. However,
various surveys have indicated that the older the students become, the less hopeful and positive they are concerning their future (Yamauchi, 2002; Yamada, 2004). Perhaps as they grow and mature, they become more aware of how society works, where they are located in terms of status in society, and how their economic situation dictates what they can do.

Fundamentally, we must question why Japanese youth are convinced that making an effort is not rewarding and that going to a good college makes little to no difference in their lives. Additionally, why does this attitude exist when the very opposite attitude prevailed in Japan until recently? Masahiro Yamada (2004) insisted that many Japanese youth today have no hope for their own future. He thinks two factors are responsible, risk society and polarization, explaining both as follows: Risk society, a concept Ulrich Beck created, connotes that the modern society provides more freedom and choices, leading society itself to be more fluid and unpredictable. The polarization in the Japanese context is that while Japan had been characterized by being an entirely middle-class society, that society has now been polarized between winners and losers and, more importantly, the polarization has been fixated and deprives social mobility.

Japanese society has experienced an increase in its instability, unmanageability and unpredictability levels primarily due to globalization, advancement of ICT and a major economic shift from an industrial to a service industry since the early 1990s. In fact, Japanese society was once possibly the least risky – the most predictable and manageable – society among developed nations. This is true because until the early 1990s it had many protective and stabilizing customs and traditions. In practice, for example, people could predict their future very easily through customs such as seniority and lifetime employment. As highlighted above, these practices have been dismissed because they are unnecessary for the service industry and even harmful in the context of globalization. Consequently, the flexible labor market has replaced lifetime employment with a market that provides both employers and employees with more choices. Employers have access to a deeper labor pool. Employees now have more freedom in terms of work location and the structure of their working week. But it also provides workers with the risk of being laid-off or having reduced hours, thereby increasing unpredictability, unmanageability and instability in their lives.
The Japanese youth have witnessed that people who have worked hard for decades or the elites who went to distinguished schools and were hired by the top-rated firms have since been laid off and are struggling to regain their momentum regardless of their effort in the new economic environment. During the 1990s, many prestigious companies went bankrupt. Many elites lost their jobs. It is no surprise that the witnesses to the ruin of the elites and hard-workers have developed the attitude that making an effort and studying hard is not necessarily rewarding.

And Japanese youth are not just witnesses. The young people themselves are also the victims of the New Economy in Japan. The economic situation since the early 1990s is often referred to as the ‘Ice Age’ due to the extreme difficulty for young people to secure meaningful full-time employment. Japanese companies, who were the primary source of jobs for college graduates, are now employing less people. They were the source of jobs for graduates. In 1991, more than 81% of the newly graduated individuals with a BA degree found full-time jobs. However, since 2000, only 55% of recent college graduates have found similar opportunities each year. Consequently, the number of the youth without jobs or working part-time or on short-term contract work has increased dramatically (Asahi Shinbun ‘Rosuto jenereshon’ Shuzaihan, 2007; Yamada, 2006). In a job market in which the youth have little control given macro or global trends, they may well decide that their success is more a function of good fortune and lucky timing than the effort they make or the college they attend. The comparatively high percentage of the Japanese youth who think that luck and chance matters for one to be successful (39.3%) in comparison to those in other countries (South Korea 13.4%; US 8.4%; UK 12.4%) clearly reflects the feeling of the youth in the Ice Age (Nikakafu Seisaku Tokatsukan, 2009). ‘Those who do not work win’ is a phrase allegedly popular in the web community (Umeda, Sept 2011). This phrase implies that Japanese young workers today, either full-time or part-time workers, are not happy at all because even full-time employment, needless to say the same holds part-time workers, get paid little, treated roughly and remain unstable. In describing their misery, Yamada (2004) refers to these youth as ‘dreaming disposable labor forces’. He estimates there were potentially five million such people in Japan in 2002.
The ‘risk society’ is an inevitable feature of any Mature Society. It is a universal phase of a society enjoying economic development, even though it can take some societies a long time to reach this level of maturity. One might ask why Japanese youth are so much more affected by the risk society when compared with an even more risky American society? To answer this question, we need to understand the Japanese disposition of not accepting failure. That is, dropping out of school or losing in a competition is perceived very negatively in Japan. As a result, few take a risk. In a risk society, they rather make no effort in fear of failing than taking a risk by making an effort. On the other hand, in America, even if one lives in a risk society, if one does not mind failing in an attempt, one would try again and again with being dissuaded from repeating that same outcome. And this explains why, despite its highly risky society and New Economy, relatively more American students continue to study diligently and attach value to education. In contrast, Japanese society is very tough on those who fail. Anyone who follows a different path from the normal course, such as being a dropout, unemployed or bankrupt is no longer treated as a normal person. The cost of deviating from expectation and failing is extremely high in such a society. One must abandon a comfortable life. This Japanese mentality exaggerates the downside of a risk society: It discourages Japanese youth from taking risks, being ambitious, and making an effort and studying hard to achieve their goals. Rather, it simply encourages them to be content with what they have without desiring better.

Regarding polarization, it does not inevitably cause one to lose faith that making an effort is rewarding. American society is highly polarized but such a belief is apparent and solid. The difference between Japan and America lies in the fixation of polarization that tends to deprive the youth in the lower classes of hope and aspiration, and discourages them to make effort. When the service industry dominates an economy, one’s level of education determines if one will be a lawyer or a waiter, and one’s education level is, today, primarily determined by the family income level, because in Japan, parents are expected to fund tuition for higher education. A student cannot obtain a student loan as in the US, it is the parents that draw an education loan. In his best-seller book, Sato (2000) determined that white-collar and blue-collar classes have become more hereditary, and insists that Japanese youth are losing confidence in the idea that anyone who makes an effort can enjoy the fruits of their efforts, a confidence that
used to characterize an ‘all middle-class society’. Similarly, from the perspective of education, Takehiko Kariya (2001) determined that the levels of education are hereditary which further fixates the social class because education is crucial in the kind of job one can procure in today’s economy. Kariya believed that the current educational goal of establishing a strong individual by training children to make decisions on their own is the one of the major causes of education because such training actually leaves a child to its mother’s discretion and the mother’s education level largely determines a child’s performance and incentive to study in today’s Japan (162-165).

Additionally, the bubble economy in the 1980s also promoted a view that one’s birth polarized the people between the haves and the have nots relative to the ownership of real estate. Due to the ridiculously high price of real estate, many people are deeply convinced that regardless of their efforts, they can never match those who merely acquired their valuable real estate from their family. Most of the richest Japanese citizens have inherited their real estate from heirs. If one’s birth fixates their future, then they may well lack the motivation to work hard and study hard.

**Affluent society.** Another reason why Japanese youth are not focused on pushing themselves due to the perceived lack of reward is because of the affluence of Japanese society. Japanese youth were born at a time when they had access to everything required to live comfortably. Their lives, even without any effort to improve, are already at an attractive level. They have access to advanced cell phones, personal computers, Internet access, fashionable clothing and digital cameras, to mention but a few. The gap between the haves and the have nots is tolerable. Some are simply happy without the need for more. Making an effort is unnecessary. It adds little and detracts from a relaxed and easy life. Yukio Noguchi, an eminent economist, believes that affluence and not the emergence of a class society is one of the main causes for Japanese youth not valuing effort (Noguchi, 2001). This view might also explain the difference between Japanese youth and Chinese youth. As illustrated in the Table 1, Chinese youth consider it more important to work and study hard. One might argue that the reason for this attitude reflects the degree of poverty in China. Given that it is commonly accepted the gap in China between the higher and the lower social strata is wider than Japan (since Japan is regarded as an ‘all-middle class society’), poverty in China is therefore less
While most individuals who suggest the emergence of a new class in society tend to focus on how unfortunate and miserable the people are who fell into the lower classes, in his best-seller book, Atsushi Miura (2007) illuminates how happy and comfortable the people in the low-income people actually are. The comprehensive surveys in the book suggest that affluence has led the Japanese youth to willingly choose not to make an effort or to work hard. They choose to do so because they are happy with their current situation even if they have low income. Miura call the society where people have such mentality and choice as ‘lower-class society’. For example, those not making an effort and with a seemingly low standard of living are most optimistic about their future (61.9%) compared to those who are making an effort and working hard (41.7%). Miura contended that those who live in the low class are actually happier. Further, he asserts that even the so-called lost generation suffering from the Ice Age is not necessarily unhappy or grumpy. In another survey (Asahi Shinbun “Rosuto jenereshon” Shuzaihan. (2007)), almost 70% of those aged between the ages of 25 and 35 years of age were content with their lives, and 91% of them ranked their lives as being middle class, although their income level was very low and their work situation was very unstable, which is normally the major source of anomie or social instability.

Diversified goals are another result of affluence that also leads people to make little effort. Until recently in Japan, everyone shared the same goals: following WWII, their goal was to secure food, and once the goal was achieved, their next goal was to possess the same things as other people had. Once these goals are achieved, people start wanting and valuing things differently. Additionally, to minimize the damage caused by excessive competition in school and nurture the desired personalities for expanding service businesses, new education guidelines were introduced that emphasized the development of students’ social abilities, such as sociability and communicability. Accordingly, achieving a good grade ceased to be the main goal of studying. Psychiatrist Tamaki Saito analyzed why Takafumi Horie, a very successful young ICT entrepreneur, who considered himself to be a winner in society and was renowned for his materialism and arrogance, was very popular among the youth. Saito says that it is because Horie challenged the traditional ethic of working hard by
becoming successful without doing so (Saito, 2006). The themes of TV dramas, movies and books also indicated the clear change in the goals of the Japanese people, particularly of the youth. Today, many themes are supportive of Japanese youth who do not make an effort, implying the importance for society to accept such people as normal. People in the 1980s would not have accepted such an idea.

If the New Economy were the only reason why Japanese youth ceased making an effort, there might be some opportunity to motivate them. But if their reluctance is due to their affluence and diversified priorities, there appears little hope that this path can be altered. A Mature Society is an affluent society affected by globalization, ICT development and dominance of the service industry. These factors are irreversible which creates the perception that this trend will prevail. The attitudes of the Japanese citizenry are no longer sustainable within Japan’s Modern Society and the priorities of today’s Japanese youth will, henceforth, influence her progress. Less effort and a lack of work ethic will be the priority in Japan’s future.

New Priorities Toward the World

Has the new priority affected the Japanese world-view? Undoubtedly the answer is yes. This section will explore how the new priority – no longer driven to work hard and being content with what they have – has affected their world-view and how it will impact on the new generation’s attitude toward the world. These revised priorities ought to be examined in the light of two aspects: growth and sovereignty.

Growth

While both the older Japanese citizenry and the Japanese youth understand that the maximization of individual happiness is and should be the ultimate goal of Japan as a nation, the former tends to believe that it can be achieved through economic growth that requires diligence and focus. The senior Japanese citizens believe this because they lived during the miraculous economic development that allowed them to expect GDP growth every year and saw their lives consistently improved year by year. They enjoyed the growth of the Japanese economy first-hand and relished while Japan made progress in the world and enjoyed other people admiring the Japanese culture and her
way of managing progress. Their view is that no growth means national decline or a path toward ruin. Understandably, therefore, they pursue economic growth. Believing that making an effort is essential to economic growth, they insist that the Japanese people must restore an ethic of hard work.

Born when Japan was one of the richest countries in the world, the Japanese youth today have grown up in affluence, enjoying material comforts in their lives and have never experienced substantial economic growth. For many of them, they simply do not dream of better lives. Growth or progress is not something Japanese youth desperately desire because they have a comfortable life without effort. The hypothesis to be examined in case studies is that they are much less concerned with economic growth. Also it may be hypothesized that Japanese youth today are more likely to be okay without seeing Japan as a leader in Asia or in the world and are unlikely to pursue world power status. This deviates from current Japanese foreign policy because the presently stated goal is to maintain and increase world influence and to be a significant player.

**Sovereignty**

The second change in world-views among Japanese youth is that they do not care about Japanese sovereignty - her inalienable right to be a state; govern and protect herself; be independent; have the right to be an ultimate decision-maker within her borders; and be treated equally to any other country in the world. Japan lost her sovereignty when she was defeated in 1945 and was occupied for seven years. From that moment, her ultimate goal had been to be respected as a good and independent member of the world-community and to regain her sovereignty. Japan finally regained that sovereignty in 1956, but she was not only deprived of her own military force as well as her colonies, but was widely regarded as a protectorate of the U.S and often not treated as an independent nation. Such a situation created an inferior complex over her sovereignty among the Japanese people, which seemed to lead them to become overly assertive on her sovereignty and independence. There are three examples of such assertiveness. Firstly, any politician who gave the slightest suggestion of a concession toward the Northern Four Island, a disputed territory with Russia, was widely believed to lose his place in politics. Secondly, for a long time Japan did not apologize for crimes
committed to neighboring nations during WWII, in contrast to Germany who did. Thirdly, the Japanese government had strongly refused to open the rice market because that was regarded as the core of Japan’s food security, which was critical to maintaining her independence.

The persistence and attachment to Japan’s sovereignty among Japanese youth are not as determined as with the older generations. By the time current Japanese youth were born, Japanese sovereignty had been well established, their nation was the second largest economy, and Japanese companies had become successful competitors globally. The national concern has shifted away from how to establish state sovereignty or national identity toward how to maintain the sustainability of the earth (combating global-warming, human rights abuse, and similar issues) if they are to think of anything other than enjoying a comfortable private life. Additionally, globalization and advanced ICT certainly have given Japanese youth incomparably more access to information outside of Japan, thereby allowing them more access to global issues. Japanese youth are more willing to accept blame and apologize to neighboring nations. They are also willing to readily accept the responsibility of WWII more than the older generations even though they were not involved in the war (Makita, 2009). One of the main reasons for Prime Minister Abe’s decline to his once high popularity was, according to Sugawara (2009), that the young people did not like his persistence to nationalistic views including changing Article Nine, the basis of Japanese Pacifism.

Based on these priorities, the hypothesis is that the Japanese youth are relatively more peaceful and wish to simply enjoy their private lives without any onus to exert Japan’s influence in the world. Accordingly, they would support a foreign policy with a central theme of Japan not being assertive but more cooperative and concessional when addressing global problems. Additionally, there might be less concern with the Japan-US alliance. Whereas, the conservatives led by the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) often see the alliance as the tool to maintain influence in Asia, particularly against growing China, Japanese youth might be content with the protection it provides and be willing to remain a junior partner of the US without any desire to assert Japan’s sovereignty.
Conclusion

The examination of the literature, research, and accompanying data in this paper has demonstrated that the Japanese youth who grew up in globalization with advanced ICT and an expanding service industry (a Mature Society) has very different priorities for their lives than the priorities of the older generations. This shapes how they view Japan’s global influence. As a result, there is a discrepancy between the older citizenry in Japan and the Japanese youth over Japan’s positioning in the world. Often, the two dichotomous positions clash and are not wholly consistent with each other. An example of how these differing perspectives collide is seen in the gap among the three comments on the Asahi Shinbun survey (2010) that indicates that the Japanese people are no longer diligent, have lost confidence in their capability to maintain a presence in the world, and have accepted a declining Japanese status as a cost of not working hard. Related to these three propositions, two commentators, senior politicians Yoko Komiyama and Shigeru Ishiwa, are very critical of and concerned with the result, because they see the youth as lazy. So they emphasize the importance of diligence to restore the Japanese traditional work-ethic. From their comments, it was obvious that the two senior politicians want to see Japan respected and influential in the world. In contrast, another commentator, Toshiki Sato, a relatively young sociologist, says that such an attitude and feature, faceless and presence-less, exactly reflects the Japanese young and it is what we are to accept as the attitude of Japanese from now on. He goes further and states in the same paper that when Japan has previously been assertive, she has invariably done something wrong. So an invisible Japan is actually better.

Today, Japanese foreign policy is guided by the older generation. In fact, when the Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) took power from the LDP, its foreign policies as well as economic policies were better suited to a Mature Society and the priorities of the Japanese youth. The DPJ insisted on cooperation and partnership with other nations, particularly in Asia, foreign policy more active toward environmental issues, prioritizing that standard of living for Japanese people above the US-Japan alliance, and a focus not on economic growth but on the enrichment of individual private lives and the reduction of unnecessary spending (Sakaibara, Oct 2009; Terashima, Oct 2009). However, many of these goals were not realized because voters in Japan are
predominantly 35 years of age or older and the Japanese youth are much less active in reaching to obtain what they want. As a result, the older citizenry has more representatives in the Diet, the Japanese parliament. But this study suggests that the direction DPJ adopted is more consistent with where Japan is heading. Despite being unable to assert and prevail with their preferences now, as the older generation wanes in influence and the Japanese youth comes of age in their influence, their attitudes will start to take effect. And so, in the Mature Society of Japan – a society with globalization, ICT advancement, a major shift toward the service industry and affluence – the new priority and foreign policy orientation will ultimately be dictated by the Japanese youth who will exert their desire for an easy and comfortable life. This is not isolated to Japan alone but demonstrates what one can expect ultimately in any society as that society reaches a mature state.

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Sasaki


Teaching About Sustainability Through Children’s Literature

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Abstract

Sustainability has multiple definitions but each indicates that current populations need to be aware of factors that may or may not contribute to the sustaining of our natural world for future populations. Teachers can use children’s literature to share information and encourage student engagement with content related to this multifaceted issue. Informational books convey useful background to pair with in-class and out-of-class student projects designed to develop affect or caring about our natural world. This article will offer selections of children’s literature and related resources that can be used to address complex issues of sustainability.

Introduction

Sustainability in today’s context addresses nurturing and maintaining our natural world for future populations. The term sustainability actually has a variety of definitions and is used in multiple contexts. The United States Environmental Protection Agency (2012) defines sustainability as “based on the principle that what we need for our survival and well-being depends, either directly or indirectly, on our natural environment. Sustainability creates and maintains the conditions under which humans and nature can exist in productive harmony, that permit fulfilling the social, economic and other requirements of present and future generations.”

Teachers can use children’s literature to draw student attention to the topic. Sharing information and structuring student engagement with complex content encourages multiple perspectives. Informational books convey useful background for student projects to develop caring about issues related to sustainability.
In *Smart by Nature*, Stone advised, “We need to cultivate thinking that comprehends complex systems, perspectives that widen empathy and nurture mindfulness, better techniques for gathering and sharing information, and new modes of cooperation (vi). He further advises, “We need to get beyond the thinking that puts humankind outside nature” (vi).

Children’s literature helps educators accomplish these important goals. In seeking selections for this purpose, it is clear that there are multiple aspects to sustainability. The list of books is grouped to indicate a sampling of the variety of topics that exist within the theme of sustainability. Users can gather titles related to one topic for exploration in depth or they can attempt breath across topics. Each topic lends itself to student projects that make a difference.

To sustain our planet for the future, educators must help the youngest of our world citizens to appreciate our environment, understand the complexity of factors affecting it, care enough to learn about the issues, and to act in responsible ways. It is hoped that this beginning bibliography of books and other resources will assist educators as they seek to enlarge students’ horizons.

**A Bibliography of Selected Books and Resources**

**Caring for the Earth (Soil)**


*Composting Stew: An A to Z Recipe for the Earth* by Mary McKenna Siddals. Illustrated by Ashley Wolff. Tricycle Books. (2010). Age level: 3 and up. Grade level: P and up. (P is pre-kindergarten)

*Earthworms* by Claire Llewellyn and Barrie Watts. Franklin Watts: A Division of Scholastic. (2000). Age level: 7 and up. Grade level: 2 and up.


*Soil* by Christin Ditchfield. Children’s Press; A Division of Scholastic Inc. (2002). Age level: 7 and up. Grade level: 2 and up.


Sustaining Forests


The Lorax by Dr. Seuss, Random House. (1971, 1999). Age level: 6 and up. Grade level: 1 and up.


Sustaining Plants Through Seeds

A Fruit is a Suitcase for Seeds by Jean Richards. Illustrated by Anca Hariton. First Avenue Editions. (2002). Age level: 5 and up. Grade level: K and up.


Appreciating and Sustaining Insects

Leavell


**Sustainability Through Recycling**


**Sustainable Economic Development**

Sustaining the Ways of the People


Sustaining Endangered Species


Outdoor Ecology


Magazines/Newsletters


Websites

Center for Ecoliteracy: www.ecoliteracy.org
The Cloud Institute for Sustainability Education: www.sustainabilityed.org
Facing the Future: www.facingthefuture.org
National Wildlife Federation, Reston, Virginia: www.nwf.org/ecoschools
www.takeawalk.com
www.NoStudentLeftIndoors.com
www.JaneKirkland.com
Keep America Beautiful: www.kab.org
Wild Basin Wilderness Preserve: www.wildbasin.org
Teacher Resources

BirdScope published by The Cornell Lab of Ornithology (Mission: To interpret and conserve the Earth’s biological diversity through research, education, and citizen science focused on birds.)

References


Pedagogies for Empowerment: Service-Learning and the Development of a Critical Consciousness

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Abstract

Critical theorists contend that the curriculum serves the dominant power in hidden ways by tacitly reinforcing and rewarding middle-class values, attitudes, and behaviors. These hidden, outmoded, and oppressive frameworks marginalize students of non-dominant backgrounds. Exploring the dynamics of service-learning through a lens of critical theory illuminates how service-learning may enable self-direction and the development of a critical consciousness for marginalized students. The harmful practices that result in marginalization can be countered by providing students with an avenue for knowing that they possess valuable knowledge. An exploration of the simultaneously intellectual and social spaces of service-learning that positions students as knowledge producers and change agents is the focus of this paper. Through service-learning, students may intellectually build new social spaces as they re-conceptualize the relationship of self, society, and other.

Introduction

Service-learning is an approach in which schools build collaborative partnerships with community organizations to immerse students in the complexities of real social issues. Pedagogically aligned with experiential education, the practice of service-learning has its roots in the 1960s. Early practitioners, the educators, professors, and community-based leaders who pioneered service-learning, espoused value-driven aims for social justice and change. Empowering both students and communities to inspire change in the world was a major motivation (Stanton, Giles, & Cruz, 1999). Can the school, through service-learning, foster children’s development as active members of society, giving them a new sense of themselves as change agents?
Winans

Skinner and Chapman’s (1999) report provided the first national estimates of the prevalence of service-learning in K-12 settings. Their results indicated that overall 32 percent of K-12 public schools reported offering service-learning, including 25 percent of elementary schools, 38 percent of middle schools, and 46 percent of high schools. Unfortunately, Skinner and Chapman also suggested differences based on socio-economic status of the school: schools with 50 percent or more of their students eligible for free or reduced-price lunch being less likely to offer service-learning opportunities. Looking more closely at at-risk students in low-income and low-performing schools, Bridgeland, Dilulio, and Wulsin (2008) found only 8 percent of students to indicate that their school offers service-learning classes, even as students in such schools demonstrate the greatest interest in learning through service. A wide gap remains between students who want service-learning opportunities and the number who have access to them, and this gap is largest for low-income, minority students.

The aims of service-learning and critical theory are complementary, as both are social change and empowerment oriented. To explore how service-learning may enable a social structure for student empowerment and the development of a critical consciousness, especially in regards to marginalized groups, this discussion is based in critical theory. Referencing the work of critical theorists such as Freire (1970, 2009), McLaren (1989), Kincheloe (2008), and others, the oppressive nature of schooling structures are detailed, leading into an exploration of how, as social structures laden with tacit dimensions of power, schools may empower or oppress. Then, the discussion turns toward service-learning to consider how collaborative partnerships with community organizations may immerse students in the complexities of real social issues. Interactions in community contexts have the potential to challenge students’ notions of self and society, reconstructing their perceptions of themselves as learners, community members, and change agents. The final section, by weaving the two fields together, addresses the potential for empowerment for marginalized groups.

Critical Theory

Despite decades of intensifying education reform, the degree of inequality present in our educational system has increased, remaining a critical flaw of schooling in the United States. The achievement gap
and the disparities of the educational experience for diverse children are widely documented. While appropriately the focus of much recent attention, the discussion of educational inequality originates in the study of critical theory. Critical theorists have examined the oppressive forces at work in society that implicitly support structures that enable inequalities. In their view, education consists of mechanisms of social and educational stratification that hurt marginalized students. This occurs as power is tacitly arranged within schooling structures to silence and exclude diverse voices. In response, critical education deals not only with questions of schooling, curriculum, and educational policy, but views these concerns through a framework for social justice and human possibility (Kincheloe, 2008).

Fine (1991) argues that “public schools have never been designed to benefit low-income students of color” (p. xi). As demonstrated throughout history, schools have served to preserve dominant ideologies that are harmful to students and humanity (Spring, 2010). Although education is touted as “the glorious equalizer of our free society” (McLaren, 1989, p. 223) that enables students to transcend their socio-economic status, we must acknowledge the myth of equal opportunity which shapes our worldview. Apple (1990) explains that as schools distribute cultural capital to more powerful groups, social inequalities are reproduced. The ways which schools oppress are intricately woven into teacher ideologies (McLaren, 1989). The curriculum serves the dominant power in hidden ways because we remain unconscious of these ideologies. When education claims neutrality, it supports the existing, dominant structure of power (Kincheloe, 2008).

Kincheloe (2008) reminds us that intelligence is politically inscribed and constructed within a nexus of power, concluding that “the closer a student operates in relation to dominant power, the more likely she is to be labeled intelligent” (p. 167). Implicit within school borders are forms of power that establish oppressive relationships of us and them, dichotomizing the school and student (McLaren & Giarelli, 1995). Power relations are clearly visible through Fine’s (1991) depiction of an inner city, “predominantly African-American and Latino, lower-income and working class” (p. 13-14) high school. She details how schooling routinely silenced students’ voices, delegitimizing their knowledge and experiences through teacher-centered classroom interactions, and stifled their resistance to unequal power through
discipline and exclusion. Fine’s account poignantly echoes Freire's (1970/2009) critique of the "banking" concept of education. The banking model views the student as an empty account to be filled by the teacher.

Freire (2009) contended that “Implicit in the banking concept is the assumption of a dichotomy between human beings and the world” (p. 75). The power relations implicit within the banking approach oppress by separating students from knowledge. However, few teachers are aware that their ‘neutral’ pedagogies are laced with harmful power arrangements. Critical theorists contend that the curriculum serves the dominant power in hidden ways by tacitly reinforcing and rewarding middle-class values, attitudes, and behaviors (McLaren, 1989). These hidden, outmoded, and oppressive frameworks marginalize students of non-dominant backgrounds (Kincheloe, 2008). Through such arrangements of power, McLaren (1989) portrays schools as zones of transaction and struggle between marginalized groups and the dominant ideology. Additionally, within schools marginalized groups “actively subscribe to many of the values and objectives of the dominant class without being aware of the source of those values or the interests which inform them” (McLaren, 1989, p. 174). The dominant culture, through this dynamic of hegemonic control, dominates subordinate groups through consensual social practices and structures. In schooling, hegemony is sustained through the myth of individual achievement and its view of academic failure as a personal inadequacy. As a result, the oppressed blame themselves for structural school failure and unknowingly contribute to their own oppression (McLaren, 1989).

Critical theory demonstrates how schooling delegitimizes the lived experiences of students. In response, as detailed by both Fine (1991) and McLaren (1989), students engage in a process of resistance to school culture. McLaren (1989) argues that resistance in schools is an effort of the students to bring their culture to the classroom, since the culture of the classroom is infused with a cultural capital to which they have little access. McLaren explains:

For low-track students, time in school may be more a burden than an asset. Such students often view knowledge as unrelated to their lives and instruction as an assault on their time. School becomes a place for enduring “dead time” rather than using it in the interests of self and social empowerment.
If such students learn anything, it is *in spite* of the degradation they endure. (p. 10)

Resistance to classroom instruction represents the resolve of students to retain their street identities (McLaren, 1989). Through their experience of schooling, students may come to realize that success in school may require a rejection of their ethnicities and cultural ways of knowing (Kincheloe, 2008). Conversely, resistance provides students an avenue for legitimizing culture and race (Kincheloe, 2008).

The widening achievement gap between dominant and non-dominant students is extensively documented. In response, Fine (1991) questions: How can equal access to educational resources, in an educational system that promises equal opportunity for all, result in unequal educational achievement? To critical theorists, the unequal outcomes experienced by non-dominant students, is an indication of the oppressive forces at work in schooling. Fine (1991) persists that “the crudest indicator of unequal educational outcomes” (p. 21) are high school dropout rates. In high schools, a central issue is the exclusion, or drop out, of disproportionately minority, poor students. The rate at which students are leaving schools is considered to be a ‘silent epidemic’ plaguing our nation (Bridgeland, Dilulio, & Morison, 2006). Indeed, recent reports of a 47 percent national graduation rate for African American boys present a dire picture of schooling today (Holzman, 2010).

Fine (1991) describes ‘dropping out,’ as opposed to ‘staying in,’ as a manifestation of school policies and practices that marginalize. Fine explains that:

> When students went, both educators and many youths themselves viewed these events as individual “choices” or due to personal inadequacies. Perhaps this is the most compelling consequence of institutionalized silencing. When the policies and practices of purging are rendered invisible, no one but the adolescent is held to blame. (p. 82)

We must begin to acknowledge that underachievement of disadvantaged students is not representative of individual failure; it is a much larger phenomenon of economic and social constructs (McLaren, 1989). The failure of inner-city education is not in the attitudes of the poor, but in the failure of society to change oppressive socio-economic structures, resulting from the interactive context between individual and society (McLaren, 1989).
Service-Learning

With a foundation of critical theory established, let’s switch gears and turn to service-learning. The aims of service-learning and critical theory are complementary, as both are social change and empowerment oriented. Service-learning is a teaching and learning strategy in which meaningful community service is integrated with instruction and reflection (National Service-Learning Clearinghouse, 2008). Stanton, Giles, and Cruz (1999) explain that “service-learning joins two complex concepts” (p. 2). First there is the “community action, the “service,” which is combined with “efforts to learn from that action and connect what is learned to existing knowledge, the “learning” (p. 2). Many authors also cite reflection as an essential third component. Reflection on service-learning experiences provides an avenue for the development of student voice as they construct interpretations of the social issues they encounter (Billig & Weah, 2008).

The author is presently conducting a qualitative case study on a service-learning program for high school seniors which requires their commitment of 100 hours to a service project of their choice. The aim of the research is to explore the role of service-learning on the ways in which five marginalized, male, urban high school students empower themselves and their learning practices. To explore service-learning from the perspectives of learners, data is being collected through interviews, observations, and documents. In this section students’ voices and perspectives gained through interviews are used to expand upon the existing literature on service-learning.

Student voices help to clarify the meaning of service-learning, which is not to be confused with community service. Here, a student has reflected on how his service-learning requirement was first explained to him as a freshman at an urban school where 90% of the study body is African American. He shares how the coordinator introduced the program: “Oh, you guys are gonna do community service and it's not going to be hard.” Now a senior at the top of his class, the student offers his reaction:

“I know a lot of people, like older men that got imprisoned, and they were sentenced to do community service. So I'm sitting here like wow, is she doing it because I'm of Black origin or like African American? Is this why she's saying this?
I know this sounds ignorant, but I was just uniformed at the time…. so I felt kind of disrespected, like less than myself since she said community service. I sat here like ‘Wow, community service. I'm not doing any community service.’ It actually angered me for a little while.”

The following year, a new coordinator elaborated on the program, telling students “It’s not community service, its service-learning!” The student describes his change in perceptions of the program:

“When she pitched it to me as service-learning, I was like, service, that's like serving people or something where you help your community, and learning, learning to me is like fun at the same time. I wanted to learn more about it. Learning to me is like fun, wow, put two and two together. Since she put it to me that way, I started asking more questions about it. They opened up a window for us to explore.”

The student points out the racial undertones implicit in community service terminology as well as important pedagogical differences between the two forms of serving. With service-learning, the student felt that he had options and control of how he could serve the community. This student has now completed over 230 hours of service through the service-learning program.

Service-learning “requires engagement in complex social and institutional endeavors” (Kahne & Westheimer, 1999, p. 34). A primary intention is to support the academic, social, and emotional growth of students. Service-learning also aims to establish ways for students, teachers, and communities to work together toward mutually beneficial, common purposes (Kaye, 2004). Furthermore, as a movement, the goals of service-learning are “educational improvement, community development, and social change” (Billig & Weah, 2008, p. 12). Empowering both students and communities to inspire change in the world was a major motivation of service-learning’s first practitioners in the 1960s (Stanton, Giles, & Cruz, 1999). Through these processes, service-learning has the potential to exemplify the ideals of critical theory while providing greater insight to processes for student empowerment, self-authorship, and the development of a critical consciousness (Niesz, 2008).

Student participants in my ongoing case study also describe a linking of self, school, and society through service. Students report that service-learning benefits their community, while uplifting them and
their school. Service-learning is an avenue for, as students explain, “finding yourself, a means of personal development and growth.” Students also detail how service-learning has helped them to “grow mentally,” through “learning about themselves and about the world.”

Service-learning is an interactive process that engages students as learners, citizens, and community members. Furco (2001) found that the outcomes of service programs are dependent on the unique contexts and interactions that occur between students, service activities, and communities. Similarly, Cress (2005) offers that service-learning is about what happens when students “grapple with the essence of what it means to be a learner, a citizen, and a community member” (p. 1). Service-learning plays out in practice in interdependent ways that integrate course content with first hand student experience in community (Cress, 2005). Notably, as students are situated as learners, citizens, and community members, they encounter complexities and ambiguities which position them to reconceive social spaces (Butin, 2005). It is important, then, that a vision of service-learning incorporates this dynamic, experiential nature.

Experiences in community may engage students in a direct confrontation with issues they feel oppressed by. The intersection of students’ lives and service experiences can play out in deeply personal and meaningful ways and may prompt students’ reflection on the oppressive forces they navigate in their everyday lives. To clarify this point, I again draw on the experiences of student participants. During our first interview a student described his service-learning project to produce an anti-violence campaign. He detailed how the last day of the project, as he completed a radio program to be broadcast in his community, a friend fell victim to youth violence. The student explained this issue as very real and critical not only within the community, but within his life, this being the third time that he experienced the loss of a peer through a violent act. Given this tragically personal connection, is it possible that this students’ reflection on the underlying causes of youth violence could facilitate his engagement as a change agent and enable his empowerment?

**Interactions**

Exploring the dynamics of service-learning through a lens of critical theory illuminates how service-learning may enable self-direction and
the development of a critical consciousness for marginalized students. Service-learning is a postmodern pedagogy according to Butin (2005) in that “it is a pedagogy immersed in the complexities and ambiguities of how we come to make sense of ourselves and the world around us” (p. 98). Critical theory maintains that schooling must permit new spaces, relationships, and identities. Through service-learning, students may intellectually engage in “building new social spaces” as defined by critical theorists (McLaren & Giarelli, 1995, p. 8). This may involve re-conceptualizing the relationship of self, society, and other (Giroux, 2005; McLaren & Giarelli, 1995). An exploration of the simultaneously intellectual and social spaces of service-learning that positions students as knowledge producers and change agents is the focus of this final section.

In reviewing the literature, three areas emerged which demonstrate the potential of service-learning to exemplify the ideals of critical theory. The first of these is an enhanced sense relevancy to the academic content. An aim of service-learning is to construct a new place in which different ways of learning emerge in a shared territory, shifting the dynamics of learning space and power (Clark & Young, 2005). By placing the student and community central within knowledge development related to working on real, local issues, students report an enhanced sense of relevancy to their academic work. It is well documented that, according to students, service-learning experiences are richer and more relevant than methods used in traditional classes (Astin & Sax, 1998; Eyler & Giles, 1999; Kovarik, 2010; Prentice & Robinson, 2010). Students’ increased engagement may be due to their affinity for the issues addressed through their service experiences (Furco, 2001; Prentice & Robinson, 2010) and in doing work that creates change in people’s lives (Eyler & Giles, 1999).

Across numerous programs, Eyler and Giles (1999) found that at the college level, service-learning students had a deeper and more complex understanding of the issues they were studying and had more confidence in applying what they learned: “service made the subject matter come to life and put them inside the subject matter rather than outside, as abstract, disinterested observers” (p. 70). Students in these programs report enhanced learning as the result of deeper engagement and intrinsic curiosity that developed due to genuine experiences in their community. Encountering the complexities involved in working on relevant social problems may engage and develop students’ critical
thinking capacities (Batchelder & Root, 1994; Eyler & Giles, 1999; Prentice & Robinson, 2010), while providing opportunities to apply academic content in a meaningful way (Kovarik, 2010). Students also express an increased retention of academic content because, as they explained, of experiences that had real-life consequences (Prentice & Robinson, 2010).

At the college level, student reports also indicate increases in reasoning, logic, leadership, and confidence (Prentice & Robinson, 2010) as well as overall gains in a sense of academic achievement (Kovarik, 2010; Prentice & Robinson, 2010). Astin and Sax (1998) found service-learning to support an increase in the amount of time dedicated to academic work and number of contacts with faculty. Students’ positive perceptions of academic growth through service-learning have been reiterated by college faculty. Faculty respondents to Prentice and Robinson’s (2010) survey affirmed that service-learning enhanced learning by engaging students in a variety of real, rigorous experiences that could not be replicated in the classroom. Faculty also expressed that service-learning uniquely positioned students to transfer and apply academic knowledge to a real world situation, which they reported increased student engagement.

Relationships emerged as a second major area. Service-learning is commonly regarded for its potential to unify students, schools, and communities, by forging relationships across socio-economic boundaries. Service-learning relationships are complex and with wide reaching implications for student growth, social change, and community development. Relationships cross the boundaries existing between students, community organizations, faculty, campus administrators, and community residents. These relationships may demonstrate a merger of purpose, identity, and outcome, enabling collective problem solving and shared knowledge production (Bringle, Clayton, & Price, 2009). However, relationships in service-learning are not necessarily mutually beneficial and collaborative (Bringle, Clayton, & Price, 2009). The research suggests that the power structure of the relationships created through service-learning are essential. In the most empowering service-learning programs, reciprocity is established between constituents (Furco, 2001); it is also important that adults espouse a willingness to learn from students (Dymond, Renzaglia, & Chun, 2007).
Service-learning may restructure student-teacher relations. Prentice and Robinson (2010) described the benefits faculty perceived from teaching through service: "My relationship is better with my students. I get to know them better. I get to work with them on a closer level. And so you really become a mentor for them as they learn these life skills" (p. 11). Even after controlling for student characteristics, Astin and Sax (1998) found service-learning students to demonstrate statistically significant increased contacts with faculty compared to non-service students. By working closely together, sometimes even as peers, more personal relationships are developed between students and teachers (Astin & Sax, 1998; Eyler, Bradley, Goldzweig, Schlundt, & Juarez, 2010; Eyler & Giles, 1999). Improved relations between students and teachers have vital implications for enhancing school climate, and students’ sense of community belonging has been found to significantly increase after their participation in service-learning (Nelson & Stroink, 2010). The relationships developed through service-learning enable learning, growth, empowerment, and social change (Stukas & Dunlap, 2002).

From his research, Furco (2001) concluded that the “unique interactions between the student, the service activity, the community” (p. 45) are the most influential on the ultimate outcomes of the service-learning programs. The relationships developed through service-learning enable learning, growth, empowerment, and social change:

It may be the case that true social progress and social change may occur only to the extent that positive, mutually fulfilling relationships among the constituent groups in a community are created. Such relationships should entail mutual respect and understanding of the diverse backgrounds and experiences of all members of our increasingly multicultural communities. (Stukas & Dunlap, 2002, p. 418)

The development of relationships across boundaries prompts students’ reflection on issues of equality and community. Students’ construction of an understanding of community need and social justice may facilitate and enrich their personal development (Astin & Sax, 1998).

Self-authorship is an additional area worthy of consideration. Giroux (2005) proposes that as border crossers, students are positioned to “rewrite their own histories, identities, and learning possibilities” (p. 22). The literature touches on the relationships that exist between critical reflection of social issues and identity development, especially
the development of citizenship as a form of political identity (Eyler & Giles, 1999; Yates & Youniss, 1998). Service-learning can be an avenue through which students encounter their own privilege, facilitating growth in their perspectives on social issues, commitment to social justice, and intention to personally effect change (Batchelder & Root, 1994; Eyler & Giles, 1999; Henry, 2005). According to Baxter Magolda (2000), the potential for opportunities that develop self-authorship is central to service-learning: “Connection to others in service contexts can create dissonance with perspectives adopted from external sources” (p. 154). Baxter Magolda (2000) views self-authorship as a process of constructing a self-directed identity based on the creation of knowledge of oneself in relation to one’s reading of the social world. Therefore, social interpretations and constructions of the self are interdependent.

Both Jones and Abes (2004) and Yates and Youniss (1998) found service-learning to have a lasting influence on students’ identity development and self-authorship several years after their participation in a service-learning course. Jones and Abes (2004) suggest that service-learning’s “enduring influence…was [the] construction of a more integrated identity evidenced by complexity in thinking about self and relationships with others, and openness to new ideas and experiences, and shifts in future commitments” (p. 149). Yates and Youniss (1998) similarly concluded that service-learning’s social processes facilitate youth’s identity development, including social relatedness, agency, and moral-political awareness. These studies demonstrate how interactions at community organizations “disrupted, challenged, and reconstructed” students’ notions of self and other (Jones & Abes, 2004, p. 163).

Yates and Youniss’ (1998) findings also highlighted students’ self-authorship within the context of racial inequalities: “As students considered the societal distribution of power and government policies toward minority groups, they reflected on their own political status in society and their ability to alter that status” (p. 503). Service-learning positioned youth to critically reflect on political ideologies used to interpret society, and years later, Yates and Youniss (1998) found students’ experiences continued to inform their thinking as adults. By using social skills to intervene in the status quo, students experienced having agency and developed a sense of responsibility for social justice (Yates & Youniss, 1998).
Conclusion

Returning to empowerment-oriented critical theory, Kincheloe (2008) contends that the least empowered our students “need to be respected and viewed as experts in their interest areas, and inspired with the impassioned spirit to use education to do good things in the world” (p. 8). Oppression in schooling must be countered by providing students an avenue for knowing that they possess valuable knowledge (Kincheloe, 2008). Through service-learning’s promising areas of relevancy, relationships, and self-authorship, schools may have the potential to liberate and empower. McLaren (1989) explains that empowerment means not only engaging students in the world around them, but facilitating their development of the courage needed to change social order. Giroux (2005) adds that students need to encounter opportunities for challenging and transforming social and political inequalities, a clear aim of service-learning. This can occur as students reclaim their power and identity as they re-write the relationships between self and society while cultivating a political imagination (McLaren & Giarelli, 1995).

An essential component of empowerment may be what Freire termed dialogue. Freire (2005) persuades teachers to experience “a rich moment of learning in their teaching” (p. 32) through dialogue. To do so, the notions of teacher and student need to incorporate reciprocity, with both simultaneously sharing roles of learning and teaching (Freire, 2009). The teacher, Freire offered, must be willing to relearn. His vision of dialogue with respect, does not involve one person acting on another, but rather people working with each other. As teachers invite students’ lives into classroom discourse, they interrupt the institutional silencing of schooling (Fine, 1991). In this sense, dialogue isn't just a way of knowing, but is a way to change the world by building communities that enable justice and human flourishing (Freire, 2009).

Giroux (2005) calls for the creation of pedagogical structures in which students become “border crossers” (p. 20). Giroux’s concept of borderlands positions knowledge, social relations, and discourses as socially constructed manifestations of power. As border crossers, students can explore and critique the ways power inscribes social situations (Giroux, 2005), enabling students to make judgments about social practices and the constructions of power (McLaren & Giarelli,
As they do so, students will construct new social spaces that are built through an understanding of the multiplicity of truths (McLaren & Giarelli, 1995). As borders are “challenged, crossed, and refigured...students rewrite their own histories, identities, and learning possibilities” (Giroux, 2005, p. 22).

Service-learning has the potential to exemplify the ideals of critical theory while providing greater insight to processes for student empowerment, self-authorship, and the development of a critical consciousness (Niesz, 2008). Through service-learning, students intellectually engage in “building new social spaces” (McLaren & Giarelli, 1995, p. 8). These spaces, which may physically lie outside the school borders, are the intellectual ground that students will cross over to re-conceptualize the relationship of self, society, and other (Giroux, 2005; McLaren & Giarelli, 1995). Service-learning may intentionally strive for empowerment by engaging students as self-directed social agents who re-write their understanding of local social problems and inequalities (Niesz, 2008). The re-authoring of these relationships and the production of new social interpretations, directed by students, speaks to Freire’s (2009) and other critical theorists’ efforts to reshape the world through such transformative actions that occurs through liberation and empowerment.

References


Winans


Educating for Human Rights in the 21\textsuperscript{st} Century: Should Human Rights Language be used to Justify Military Intervention or War?

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Abstract

Human rights education has become increasingly complex in the post-Cold War era. While it is important for human rights educators to have a methodology that includes political, cultural, economic and ecological human rights documents, it is critical that educators develop criteria to discern when human rights language would be justified in advocating military intervention. With human rights language being used to justify military action in the Balkans and Libya, historian Samuel Moyn argues that without clear criteria to determine just cause, the use of the military in could lead to human rights becoming the latest failed utopia. This analysis will focus on the short and long term impact of using human rights language to justify military intervention and action.

Theoretical Framework

Samuel Moyn, the Columbia University historian, in his recent book titled \textit{The Last Utopia: Human Rights in History}, argues persuasively that “the lesson of the actual history of human rights is that they are not so much a timeless or ancient inheritance to preserve as a recent invention to remake – or even leave behind – if their program is to be vital and relevant in what is already a very different world than the one into which they exploded. It is up to us whether another utopia should take the place of human rights, just as they emerged on the ruins of prior dreams” (Moyn, 2010). Moyn’s thesis is that human rights language, as we understand it today, is a product of the post-World War II era and is a result of the search for a new utopia to replace the failed utopias of the 20\textsuperscript{th} Century. These include Marxism/Leninism, National Socialism and unregulated capitalism. If world leaders and grassroots activists promote human rights as a new utopia it creates the possibility that human rights will become the next failed utopia.
The theme of utopia has an uplifting side and a dark side. The uplifting aspect is the idea of being part of a movement to free ourselves and others from oppression and injustice. This is simultaneously exhilarating and addictive. The addictive part of utopia, however, always ends up trumping the initial idealism. Why? Utopians inevitably adopt a messianic image of the world. There have been three messianic revolutions in history: the American, French and Bolshevik revolutions. All three were global because their leaders and followers were convinced that the founding principles were universal. Utopians ultimately end with the goal of converting the world, that is, the creation of a new “man” on a global scale. Noble ends are never achieved because the means used become diabolical. The historian Barbara Tuchman writes that “revolutions produce OTHER men, not NEW men” (Tuchman, 1988, p. 300).

Images of a utopia are created ones. It is impossible to talk about justice and peace if one does not have an image of a just community and a world without violence. Myth plays an important role in the creation of images of utopia (Hufford, 2009, p. 128). Western civilizations begin with Hebraic imagination and Adamic myth of good of evil. It is followed in historical sequence by the Hellenic imagination which includes the Promethean myth along with Plato’s and Aristotle’s understanding of image and myth; the Medieval imagination refers to the Christian synthesis of writers such as Aquinas and Bonaventure; the Transcendental imagination would be illustrated in the writings of Kant; the Existentialist imagination in the writings of Kierkegard, Nietzsche, Camus and Sartre; the Parodic imagination would be found in the works of Althusser, Foucault and Derrida; and, today’s Postmodern era in the works of Beckett and Pynchon (Hufford, 2009, p. 128-129).

The task in transcending the Postmodern era is to see that imagination is nourished but not in an utopian sense. John Paul Lederach, a professor of Peace Studies at the Kroc Institute of Peace Studies, Notre Dame University, defines moral imagination as “the capacity to imagine something rooted in the challenges of the real world yet capable of giving birth to that which does not yet exist” (Lederach, 2005, p. ix). Lederach builds upon Camus while promoting the use of one’s moral imagination to create greater justice and peace through the philosophy and theology of nonviolence. In this conceptualization the moral imagination is at the core of understanding that creating more
justice and peace is an art, not a science. Thus, the imagination “must 
emerge from and speak to the hard realities of human affairs” 
(Lederach, 2005, p. x). Justice and nonviolent communities are 
relational. Building positive relationships is an art and must be 
imagined prior to efforts to create them.

The moral imagination of Lederach also incorporates a positive view 
of pessimism. This pessimism is “not a bad attitude, a lack of 
engagement, or bitterness gone wickedly off track.” “If simple answers 
are reached as if complexity did not exist, then as Oliver Wendell 
Holmes suggests, they are not worth a fig” (Lederach, 2005, p. 55).

The complex and rapidly changing nature of today’s conflict systems 
makes it more difficult than ever for human rights actors to understand 
and adapt the environment in which they operate. Simon Addison of 
the Refugee Studies Centre at the University of Oxford, has written 
that today human rights activists are “…operating within asymmetric 
warfare environments. These are characterized by the existence of a 
multitude of interlinked insurgent and terrorist organizations 
articulated with complex commercial, criminal and diaspora networks 
that operate internationally. Not only do these organizations and 
networks tend to change rapidly, fragmenting, splintering and 
reconfiguring as they evolved, but they also tend to operate in the 
shadows and beyond the law” (Addison, 2009, p. 7).

International intervention to prevent or stop human rights abuses 
Involves a contest of two fundamental principles: state sovereignty and 
the responsibility to protect lives. The clear tension between the 
principle of state sovereignty and the progressing demand for respect 
to human rights has led to the re-conceptualization of what “security” 
and “sovereignty” mean. In this sense, the concept of human security, 
though still lacking a consensual definition, has served the purpose of 
shifting attention “from a state centered to a people-centered approach 
to security.” This new approach towards security entails many 
problems, one of the most prominent being that of humanitarian 
intervention, or, in other words, the issue of: when should military 
force be used to ensure the security of people in need?

The principle of non-intervention based upon sovereign equality of 
States is enshrined in Article 2.1 of the UN Charter whereas the 
corresponding norm for non-intervention is articulated in Article 2.7 In
international law, a sovereign State has the right to exercise exclusive and total jurisdiction within its territorial borders. Other States have the corresponding duty not to intervene in the internal affairs of a sovereign State. If that duty is violated, the victim is empowered to defend its territorial integrity and political independence.

At the beginning of the twenty-first century, the adoption of new standards of conduct for states in the protection and advancement of international human rights has gradually led to a shift from a culture of sovereign impunity to a culture of national and international accountability and recognition that concepts of security must include people as well as states. The doctrine of international intervention recognizes as lawful the use of force by states to stop maltreatment by a state of own nationals when the conduct is brutal and large-scale as to shock the conscience of other nations. The UN Security Council is increasingly taking action to deal with large-scale violations such as humanitarian intervention under the powers that Chapter VII of the UN Charter confers on it.

There are three kinds of internal conflicts that might disrupt international order: when conflict within a State threatens to cross borders; when conflict within a State creates a grave humanitarian emergency; and, when conflict challenges fundamental principles of the international order. However, the crucial question is how to determine the deterioration or tolerance threshold after which a situation ceases to be a matter essentially within the domestic jurisdiction of a State. Put differently, it is a matter essentially within the domestic jurisdiction of a State. Ultimately, it is difficult, if not impossible, for the Security Council to account for why certain cases need a wholesale intrusion while others had only recommendations, if anything at all.

Case Studies

Rwanda is an interesting case study related to military intervention and human rights. Clearly genocide was occurring yet the nations of the West refused to use the word genocide. Ultimately, nations represented on the UN National Security Council voted to remove the UNAMIR peace keeping force from Rwanda. The genocide in Rwanda occurred after the debacle in Somalia which saw US soldiers being killed and the bodies dragged through the streets of Mogadishu. The United
Nations did not want to approve action that might have led to a second failure in Africa. Among the Western nations there was no political will or leadership to create political will among the citizenry. The result was the slaughter of an estimated 800,000 persons in approximately one hundred days.

In the case of the Balkans, once again there was no political will in the West for introducing ground troops to stop or prevent clear violations of human rights. There was among leaders of NATO countries initial consensus that there should be a general presumption of state sovereignty. The consensus at the time among NATO’s leaders was that human rights abuses, by themselves, do not legitimize military intervention. Such intervention should remain an instrument of last resort; therefore, the question is to define when human rights abuses in another country justify that last resort. Another question is whether military intervention can be justified when there are massive human rights abuses but no UN sanction and approval. The ultimate NATO bombing campaign in Serbia and Kosovo was designed as much to prevent loss of life by NATO soldiers as to prevent further human rights abuses. Bombing campaigns inevitably lead to loss of civilian lives. The question for any military intervention including bombing campaigns is how much collateral damage (killing of innocent civilians) is acceptable to defend human rights.

The three Obama appointees most influential in convincing the President to approve and support military intervention in Libya were: Secretary of State Hilary Clinton; Ambassador Susan Rice, who serves as the US Ambassador to the United Nations; and, Samantha Powers, a member of the National Security Council and foreign policy advisor to President Obama. Powers, the author of A Problem from Hell: American and the Age of Genocide, is, according to Kenneth Roth (executive director for Human Rights Watch), “the foremost voice for human rights within the White House” (Stolberg, March 2011, The New York Times. Retrieved from http://www.nytimes.com/2011/03/30/world/30power.html).

Samantha Powers views were formed in her days as a young war correspondent in Bosnia. Since that time she has championed the idea that nations have an obligation which includes the use of military force to prevent genocide. Ambassador Susan Rice served President Clinton’s administration in various capacities at the National Security Council.
Council from 1993 to 1997; as Director for International Organizations and Peacekeeping from 1993 to 1995; and as Special Assistant to the President and Senior Director for African Affairs from 1995 to 1997. At the time of the 1994 Rwandan Genocide, Rice reportedly said, "If we use the word 'genocide' and are seen as doing nothing, what will be the effect on the November [congressional] election" (Powers, 2002, p. 359)? Rice subsequently acknowledged the mistakes made at the time and felt that a debt needed repaying. The inability or failure of the Clinton administration to do anything about the genocide would inform her later views on possible military interventions. She stated: "I swore to myself that if I ever faced such a crisis again, I would come down on the side of dramatic action, going down in flames if that was required" (Calabresi, 2011). Thus, three persons well known for their liberal position on human rights were the strongest advocates of US military intervention in Libya. British Prime Minister David Cameron and French President Nicolas Sarkozy both stated that the military campaign in Libya saved “hundreds of thousands of people from a humanitarian disaster” (Watt & Norton-Taylor, 2011). Of course, providing air support with very little chance of loss of French, British or American lives is quite different from putting ground troops on Libyan soil. It appears that preventing genocide in Libya was not worth losing Allied lives even though a bombing campaign involved considerable “collateral damage”, that is, loss of non-combatant Libyan lives. Nonetheless, the greatest dilemma still remains. As the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty (ICISS) states; “it is a real question in these circumstances where lies the most harm: in the damage to the international order if the Security Council is bypassed or in the damage to that order if human beings are slaughtered while the Security Council stands by” (Kuwali, 2002, p. 9). There are hazards to the international community that could follow from either unauthorized intervention or inaction.

**Human Rights Education**

In educating for human rights it is important to acknowledge the complexity of using human rights language to justify military intervention and/or war. Educators must discuss the question of when force should be used and who has a legitimacy to use it for humanitarian purposes. Could unilateral use of force ever be justified to support humanitarian intervention? A major problem for peace educators is to include in the curriculum of human rights education a
discussion of the relation between ends and means in using human rights language to justify humanitarian intervention as humanitarian war inevitably requires means that are inherently inadequate to its ends. The failures of the 1990s and the current state of affairs in Darfur, the DR Congo, Syria and Bahrain, for example, demonstrate how far the international community has to go in order to develop more appropriate means for dealing with critical situations of humanitarian concern.

Although intervention forces cannot create peace, it is the position of some scholars that the use of the military in specific situations may create space in which peace can be constructed. This would not involve using “frontline” weapons but would employ organizational competence and operational skills of military to advance security while promoting peace (David-Miller, 1992, p. 40). Under this model the military intervention force would need training in non-violent conflict resolution techniques to achieve the long term strategic goal of transcending human rights violations. In proposing criteria to determine whether military intervention to counter human rights abuses/genocide was humanitarian, five questions should frame the discussion:

(i) was there a humanitarian cause? (ii) was there a declared humanitarian end in view? (iii) was there an appropriate humanitarian approach – in other words, was the action carried out impartially, and were the interests of the intereners at any rate not incompatible with the humanitarian purpose? (iv) were humanitarian means employed? (v) was there a humanitarian outcome? (Ramsbotham & Woodhouse, 1996, p. 226)

The questions above are after the fact. Therefore, they provide little guidance for prevention. Utilizing a holistic conceptual framework for educating for human rights (synthesizing political, cultural, economic and ecological human rights documents) within a human security context would be preventive in a meaningful sense. By emphasizing the rights to assistance and protection of people in need, a human security approach underlines the inevitability of crisis management often leading to the use of military by analyzing causes that overcome the dualistic framework of “just war” or “just peace.” By waiting to act until a crisis occurs, military interventions often fail to deliver what they promise because the immediate human rights crisis/genocide is
only part of a much bigger puzzle. Human rights education, therefore, must include in a discussion of the “responsibility to protect” issues of development aid, debt relief, capacity building, eradication of grievances in the early stages of conflict and the promotion of human rights to those in need.

Unfortunately, the international community has a history of waiting until a crisis is so severe that the solution appears to be the use of force. Human rights educators have a responsibility to educate for prevention of human rights abuses while promoting international law by finding solutions within the law. The international community should not find itself in a position where human rights language is used to create a justification for military intervention or war. Otherwise, human rights will become the next failed utopia.

References


Instructional Material Preferences of Adult Literacy Learners in a South Texas Literacy Program

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Abstract

A research study examining adult learners’ preferences for instructional materials was conducted in a South Texas nonprofit literacy program. Special focus was placed on the use of authentic materials. Participants included four self-selected members of an Adult Basic Education class. Participants completed an orally administered survey and participated in follow-up interviews. Data indicated no pattern in the adult learners’ preferences for instructional materials. Results of the interviews indicated that adult learners have specific career and personal goals when they enter literacy.

The growth of globalization, the pervasiveness of technology, and need for better communications at all levels increase the demand for literate citizens and workers. The United States is just one nation that recognizes its need to improve the literate rate of its population. The National Assessment of Adult Literacy (NAAL) showed that 12% to 14% of adults in the United States scored Below Basic; they can perform no more than the most simple and concrete literacy skills (Kruidenier, MacArthur & Wrigley, 2010). According to NAALs data, 29% scored at Basic; they can perform simple and everyday literacy activities.
Adult literacy, then, deserves attention and support and it is a concern in this country. There are federal programs that provide some funding to state and local literacy organizations, and limited research money is directed to universities to develop and monitor programs. But the actual instruction of adults needing literacy help often falls upon nonprofit literacy programs and volunteer tutors. Those programs work best when they address the personal goals of the individuals and when they use meaningful and authentic materials (Comings 2007, Curtis & Kruidenier 2005).

The authors explored the role of personal goals and student-preferred instructional media in a qualitative study involving a nonprofit literacy provider in South Texas. One of the authors has been on the advisory board of the provider for more than 10 years. The other two authors conducted the research. One of the researchers had a personal interest in the project. As a former member of the community of adult literacy learners, she related to the burden of embarrassment, guilt, and secretiveness of illiterate adults. A head injury rendered her unable to remember her family, her former college education, how to read, how to calculate math, and how to perform the daily tasks of a wife and mother. Her struggles with no longer being able to drive, nor select foods at the grocery store because she could not read labels, and no ability to understand money and how much was needed to pay for groceries was aligned with some of the stories of other adult literacy learners (ALLs). Thus, her interest in ALLs at a local literacy council’s program both sparked her curiosity and tugged at her heart strings as she and her co-investigator observed and talked with the learners and the instructor about their program.

**Adult Learners: Background Issues**

There are many issues that frame the daily lives and struggles of adult literacy learners. The Adult Stories of Literacy 2007 ProLiteracy Worldwide (Harvey, 2007) relates literacy challenges of these learners as they work to achieve higher levels of literacy than they have previously known. Some ALLs spoke of the difficulties that had plagued them since their public school days. Others had never enjoyed extended public school learning due to their parents’ labor needs on the family farm. Still others spoke of the challenges as immigrants to the United States unprepared for the lack of employment as a result of nearly no English. No matter the cause, each related the changes in
their lives as they participated in adult literacy programs. Many of them were able to improve their employment status while others experienced personal growth; a senior female was able to embrace activities within her community, which led to the discovery of a lighthouse that had been only twelve miles from her life-long home.

Similar stories of improved life satisfaction levels were reported by Bingman, Ebert, and Smith (1999) as they conducted a longitudinal study for the Center for Literacy Studies (CLS) which looked at the Adult Basic Education (ABE) program as implemented in Tennessee from 1991 until it lost funding in 1995. The researchers were looking for participants of ABE who reported positive changes to their lives in the areas of employment, literacy practices, involvement in their children’s schooling, community awareness, self-esteem, and overall life satisfaction at the point of one year after enrolling in the ABE program. Participants reported improvements in “socio-economic well-being (jobs, income, survival), social well-being (family and community life), personal well-being (self-esteem, life satisfaction), and physical well-being (health, and access to health care)” (Bingman, Ebert, & Smith, 2007, p. 1).

These research studies illustrated the persistence of ALLs and its influence on participants’ accomplishments in the program and their feelings of satisfaction. In one article, adults showing low life satisfaction levels had completed fewer weeks of participation in the ALL programs in their locale (Bingman, Ebert, & Smith, 2007). Comings (2007), in his review of literature, describes the “specific or short-term goals” of ALLs and the need of ALL programs to expend effort to support learners’ persistence “(hours per month of instruction)” (p. 24). His research also found that ALLs with “150 hours of instruction, adult students in Massachusetts, had a 75% probability of “improving their reading by one or more grade levels (p. 25). Participants with less than 58 hours had less than one-half year improvement. This is in line with Bingman, et al. (2007). Persistence was also found to be a significant factor in Pannucci and Walmsley’s (2007) study. They found that students with organizational skills, strong rapport with their instructor, and support of family members were persistent students.

The U. S. Department of Education (2002) concluded that “research confirms that teachers are the single most important factor in gaining
student achievement” (Reutzel & Cooter, 2008; Coming, Garner, and Smith 2007). Smith and Gillespie (2007) believe that the standards education of K-12 has serious implications for ABE and those instructing ALLs. Smith & Gillespie believe ABE instructors need to have continuing professional development to adapt to the realm of teaching adult learners seeking General Educational Development (GED) testing, English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL), and the unique set of educational needs of ALLs.

Hock and Mellard (2005) call for increased research to determine successful teaching and learning strategies for ALLS. They believe that research in this area must include experts in multiple areas of education that include “learning disabilities, speech, language, and hearing” (p. 193). Furthermore, adults need employment so assessments of employability should be included. Hock & Mellard assembled a team of experts as described above to review the reading strategies that work with ALLs and compare those results to strategies used in the Adult Basic Learning Examination (ABLE), the Comprehensive Student Assessment System (CASAS), Test of Adult Basic Education (TABE), National Assessment of Adult Literacy (NAALS), and the General Educational Development (GED) (Hock et al, 2005). This team designed the research to analyze text structure, reading comprehension strategy, and specific intervention strategy. Within text structure, the team chose to analyze narrative, expository, and documents, which is a subcategory of expository but very important in adult lives for seeking job ads and applications, as well as others like rental agreements or mortgages. The team looked at the adult learning programs listed above for reading strategies of

- Identifying the Main Idea,
- Summarizing,
- Drawing Inferences,
- Generating Questions
- Creating Visual Images,
- Looking for Clues (p. 193).

The research team used scientifically proven reading strategies called the Strategic Instruction Model (SIM), normally used with children, to conduct research to find successful reading strategies with adult participants in this study. Research revealed that Summarizing and Drawing Inferences from SIM proved to be the most important of all
the strategies and Paraphrasing and Self-Questioning were determined by the team as the ones most likely to improve participants reading comprehension scores. They further concluded that ALLs need instruction in test-taking skills. Research results indicated that just like children who struggle with reading, adults also need several reading strategies to be successful readers. ALLs, like children, must be instructed in how to use strategies, when to use the strategies, and must be proficient in each strategy’s use.

Although the number of reading comprehension strategies and categories of strategies of ALLs and children are similar, actual instruction methods are very different. The results of Hock et al. (2005) are important, especially when coupled with those of Strucker and Davidson (2003), whose research concluded that ALLs benefit most when literacy instruction is presented more like foreign language instruction than literacy instruction of K-12 learners.

**Authentic Texts as Instructional Materials**

Many literacy programs use authentic texts for instruction. Authentic texts include newspapers, magazines, books, informational pamphlets, and other materials that help individuals locate information, solve problems, or enjoy reading. Jacobson, Degener, and Purcell-Gates define an authentic text as one that is used by “people in the world outside of a learning-to-read-and-write setting, such as a school (p.43). Curtis and Kruidenier (2005) state that instruction should include adult oriented materials that will motivate students. The Office of Adult and Community Education in the Fairfax (Virginia) County Public Schools (2005) is an example of a literacy program that provides information about using authentic texts, such as newspapers, in its staff development materials.

Adult learners, then, deal with many life situations that require them to improve their literacy skills, from work requirements to family affairs. Effective literacy programs are those that determine what will motivate adult learners and those that provide authentic instructional materials appropriate to the learners’ needs.
A Study of Adult Learners

The purpose of this research was to document the materials used in a South Texas Literacy Council program and the adult literacy learners’ perceptions of those materials. The researchers also sought to explore, describe, and document the adult learners’ perceptions about the helpfulness of those materials, their ideas about possible other materials for learning literacy, their personal literacy goals, and what would make literacy learning easier for them.

Research questions guiding this study are:

1. What are the materials you use for literacy learning and what are your perceptions about them?
2. What other materials do you think would be beneficial to the personal learning goals of adult learners?
3. Why did you choose to participate in an adult learning program at this time?

The research was conducted at a South Texas Literacy Council (STLC) located in a South Texas Public Library (STLC is a pseudonym for the actual literacy provider). The first three meetings with the subjects of the study were in the large, main classroom at the location. The researchers introduced themselves at their initial observation of the STLC class. The researchers brought refreshments to the second observation of the class. The third observation, the researchers introduced the survey with interpretation provided by the class instructor. The final, in-depth interviews were conducted in two separate offices at the STLC; each researcher and a volunteer translator met with individual adult learners. The materials listed on the survey consisted of workbooks, newspapers, novels, magazines, and computers. Although no patterns were found among the participants in the survey, individual preferences were explored by the researchers in the interviews which indicated commonalities of participants’ individual preferences. Their reasons for learning material selections reveal the influence of individual interests.

Participants

Participants for this study were four adult learners enrolled in the Monday and Wednesday evening Adult Basic Education Course at the STLC. Although 25 students participated in the STLC literacy class, only four students agreed to participate. They were assessed by
the Director of the STLC as having reading levels below sixth grade at the
time of their initial entry into the program. They had self-identified
as needing literacy tutoring, set individual learning goals for
themselves, and were working to achieve their personal literacy goals.
The two males, Martin and Pedro Antonio, and two females, Maria and
Pat, volunteered to participate in the study that was being conducted by
the researchers (all names are pseudonyms). All four of the participants
were unknown to the researchers prior to the investigation. The
participants were of varied academic levels and demonstrated English
speech between that of a typical five-year-old child and an adult.

Methodology

The attitudes of the adult learners toward different texts, such as
newspapers, workbooks, etc., were assessed with a survey that was
administered orally. The principal investigator and co-principal
investigator met with an Adult Literacy Class at the South Texas
Literacy Council (STLC) that was held on Monday evenings for four
consecutive weeks. The researchers felt it was important to build a
good rapport with the students in the class; before the research began,
they started attending the class and observing. This allowed them
insight into the adult learners’ needs, their life, and classroom
experiences, as well as an opportunity to build a professional and
trusting relationship with potential participants. At each meeting, the
researchers performed a different step of the research process: the
research topic and purpose were presented to potential participants at
the first meeting, appropriate consent forms and information sheets
were distributed at the second meeting, the survey was conducted at
the third meeting, and the researchers returned with two translators to
conduct in-depth conversational interviews with each of the four
participants at the last meeting. On the third meeting, the four
participants had the information from the survey read to them in
English by the researchers and translated to their native language,
Spanish, by their teacher. The researchers also played the role of
scribes during the conversational interviews, and each interviewer had
a personal translator. Each interview was recorded as well.
Data Collection and Analysis

Survey results. Qualitative data were collected using the survey and interview. Each participant was given a survey sheet where they wrote their pseudonym of choice and circled their responses to the questions about the materials they liked using for instruction. The survey listed the learning materials as books/workbooks, newspapers, novels, magazines, and “other”; some students listed visual aids that they used for learning purposes such as television, pictures, Spanish/English dictionaries, and videos.

Results of the survey demonstrated that adult learners are persons who have individual preferences for textual materials. There was no one text that was liked or disliked by all four participants. See Table I for their individual responses.

Table I
Adult Literacy Learners’ Preferences for Instructional Materials

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Learner</th>
<th>Likes</th>
<th>Dislikes</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Females</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pat</td>
<td>Workbooks</td>
<td>Computers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Newspaper</td>
<td>Books</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Magazines</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Tape recorder</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Dictionary</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>White board</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maria</td>
<td>Newspaper</td>
<td>Computers</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Magazines</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Television</td>
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<tr>
<td>Males</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Martin</td>
<td>Computers</td>
<td>Books</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Television</td>
<td>Workbooks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pedro Antonio</td>
<td>Newspaper</td>
<td>Computers</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Teacher</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Television</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Interview results. The interviews provided additional in-depth information about the individuals. Martin was a Hispanic adult from Mexico who was unemployed. Currently a resident of the United States, Martin’s goal was to achieve U.S. Citizenship, and the Adult Basic Education Class at the STLC was assisting him in achieving his dream. He was very proud and considered himself to be “modernized” because he was fluent in the use of computers. He knew very little English and wanted to learn to read, write, and understand the language. He enjoyed using computers because they helped him pronounce the words correctly in English and showed the word spelling. When asked to elaborate on his computer use, he stated, “I use the computers at class. I don’t have one at my house”. He also used the television to assist him in learning English; he enjoyed watching cartoons and movies. Although Martin enjoyed using televisions and computers, he did not like learning materials such as books and workbooks. The words in the books were different and very complex, and the workbooks that were provided for the program were unable to be written in by the students. He also stated that magazines and newspapers were of moderate help to him, but he did not have a lot of time to read them when he was working and there were a lot of words that were unknown at this time. Martin had no fears of not meeting his goal because he felt as if he could do it without any assistance if he was unable to continue with the program. “If there is no money to pay for class, I will be okay. I will learn to read by myself” (Martin, personal communication, November 12, 2010).

Pat was employed by South Texas Health Systems at the time of the interview. Like Martin, she came to the United States from Mexico. She was very proud that her two daughters were enrolled at South Texas University-Corpus Christi. Her goal was to learn English so that she might someday obtain her G.E.D. This would enable her to read the medication labels and understand doctors’ instructions. Pat’s ideal method of learning was a workbook because she could see the pictures and see the spelling of the word. She also used newspapers and magazines to learn to read English; they too have pictures that describe the words. Other materials that Pat chose to use for learning were an English-to-Spanish dictionary, a tape recorder with pre-recorded Spanish-to-English translations, and a white board to write English and Spanish words. She bought alternative learning material, such as compact discs to use with a computer, but she was unable to work a computer and could not install the program. “I go to the
bookshop and bought the CDs to learn, but my girls won’t teach me how to put them in the computer”. With more family and friend support, a more convenient place, and a better form of transportation, Pat felt it would be easier to come to the learning program and meet her literacy goals. She worried that the program would end because of lack of funding and she would not learn English; this weighed heavily on her mind, and it was obvious during the interview because she began to cry when she discussed the possibility. “I don’t know what will happen to me if we have no money. I will not learn to read. We are trying to get money to pay our teacher so we can keep learning to read.” (Pat, personal communication, November 15, 2010).

Maria was a middle-aged, Hispanic woman who was currently employed. Her ideal learning environment was to have someone tell her the word and spelling, and then have her write it down. When she was told something, and wrote it, she was able to retain it. She also liked looking at and reading magazines and the advertisements in the newspapers. Cartoons were also a way of learning for Maria; the language and word use in cartoons is basic. “I like to watch the shows for kids because it is easy to understand. They don’t use big words”. With more support from her family, Maria felt it would be easier to attend the classes and achieve her goals. Like Pat, she also feared the program being ended due to insufficient funding. She also feared cruelty from others because she was unable to speak or understand English. She wanted to better herself by advancing in her occupation; she wanted to become a chef. Maria also knew that she needed to learn how to use a computer to be successful in today’s society. She knew that she could achieve her goal by learning how to understand English, how to read it, and write it as well.

Pedro Antonio was of Hispanic culture, and like Martin, he was unemployed at the time of the interview. His goal was to learn English so he could ascend to a higher position in the construction industry. “If I can read and speak English, then I can get a job. They don’t want to hire you if they can’t talk to you and you can’t read.” He also wanted to learn to use a computer. He occasionally read the newspapers to try to find a job, but said his teacher was his main source of learning. He also used an English to Spanish Dictionary. Being able to share ideas with others and have conversations in English was what he enjoyed most about learning with a group. Having instruction from the teacher and conversations with others assisted him with his English literacy.
With a twenty-five minute drive to the South Texas Literacy Council, a closer, more convenient location would make it easier for Pedro Antonio to attend classes. Pedro Antonio’s beautiful smile faded to sadness as he explained that his daughters would take his truck without permission to keep him from attending “his English class”. “They take the truck and I can’t come. I have to miss class and don’t learn.” He felt having more support from family and friends would also assist him in meeting his goals. Pedro Antonio was confident, yet humble. He knew that he needed help from others, and he was more than willing to take any help that he received in order to achieve his goal (Pedro Antonio, personal communication, November 15, 2010).

The topics that received the agreement of all four participants were the use of visual aids to increase understanding of words and texts and their motivation to attend class in order to improve their employability through stronger reading and language. Although three participants indicated on the survey they disliked computers, the interview revealed that they desired computer skills, but could find no one to instruct them in computer use. Three of the four participants liked to use newspapers while the fourth did not. Two of four participants liked to use magazines to help them learn words and three of four liked to use television as a learning tool. Yet, no consistent and distinct pattern related to gender, or age emerged within the data.

**Conclusion**

The results of the study suggest that adult literacy centers should use a variety of materials in the students’ lessons, diverse real-life materials that have specific application to learner’s lives. These specific applications can improve life satisfaction levels for participants. With the knowledge of the students’ goals, programs may also be formatted to fit the needs of the students. Having individualized plans may assist the students with a more rapid achievement of their goals. Long-term improved life satisfaction can offset current embarrassment about low literacy skills. This study of adult literacy learners, the materials they use for learning, and their personal literacy goals is an important addition to existing professional literature and publications, which is a somewhat limited area for research and publication. Furthermore, this study informs future STLC teaching and learning opportunities for these students and others within the group. Currently, the online websites National Center for the Study of Adult Learning and Literacy.
(NCALL) and ProLiteracy Worldwide are the best sources for information about adult literacy learners, their issues, and the most recent research publications about adult literacy.

References


Project SAVE (Stop All Violence with Education): Creating a Global Non-violence Youth Movement through Education and Technology

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Abstract

Violence perpetrated by and on youth is a growing issue of concern across the globe. Traditional educational institutions have been challenged by their limited ability and capacity to address this critical community issue. At the same time youth are displaying tremendous capacity and connectivity to the global world through the internet and other web-based means to organize, relay information in real time and address themselves to those concerns that are most salient to them. This article examines the opportunity to leverage the capacity of youth to connect to one another globally with the opportunity to organize around educational strategies and approaches that mitigate and support the decline of various forms of youth violence. This article considers in some detail the Project SAVE initiative and seeks to explore innovative strategies and activities that leverage web-based technology to grow the capacity of youth to stem the tide of youth violence in their communities, while setting the stage for sustainable youth-driven community action related to the issue. Moreover, this article provides some insights into how academic institutions might serve as a catalyst for the youth anti-violence efforts and provide the facilitating infrastructure essential to sustaining and growing youth anti-violence education and training, while advancing the development of promising practices related to youth anti-violence, as well as support academic research on the topic of youth anti-violence initiatives.
The Global Nature of the Multiple Forms of Youth Violence: An Overview of the Problem

Violence by young people is one of the most visible forms of violence in society. Around the world, newspapers and the broadcast media report daily on violence by gangs, in schools or by young people on the streets. The main victims and perpetrators of such violence, almost everywhere, are themselves adolescents and young adults (1). Homicide and non-fatal assaults involving young people contribute greatly to the global burden of premature death, injury and disability (1, 2). Youth violence deeply harms not only its victims, but also their families, friends and communities. Its effects are seen not only in death, illness and disability, but also in terms of the quality of life premature death, injury and disability (1, 2) (World Report on Youth Violence and Health: Chapter 2, page 25).

Over five thousand young people (ages 10–24) were murdered in the United States in 2002. Over 80% of these victims were killed with firearms and were males. Furthermore, homicides among youth are a problem worldwide. However, homicide rates are lower in Western Europe and parts of Asia and the Pacific and highest in Central and South America as well as Africa. In North America, the youth homicide rate in the U.S. is 11 homicides per 100,000 while in Canada it is 1.7. (Mercy, et.al, 2002). The Swedish National and Stockholm County Councils Centre for Suicide Research and Prevention of Mental Illness Health stated that, suicide among young people is a major health problem in many societies and preventive measures are strongly recommended (World Psychiatry, 2005). In a WHO (World Health Organization) global suicide study that included 90 countries (out of 130 member states), some of the highest suicide rates are youth between the ages of 15-19 living in Russia (2,883 in 2002) and U.S. (1,616 in 2000) which accounted for 37.3% of the total countries researched. WHO’s data revealed (between the period of 1995 – 2002) higher rates of suicidal deaths in males (10.5 %) than females (4.1%). Statistics such as these give a true picture of the pervasive problem of youth-on-youth violence as it relates to violence that is self-inflicted and perpetrated by youth and helps to connect these common issues of youth well-being.

Social injustices such as racism, classism, and sexism are also connected to youth violence. More extensive research and global
comparisons of race, class and gender youth violence provides for the recognition of the negative impact of various forms of prejudice, stereotyping, and discrimination. For instance, discrimination regarding race, class, and gender in the classroom reveal similarities world-wide. Students of oppressed groups frequently experience classroom bias in harsh sanctions, inequality in the amount of instruction time, bias selection of curriculum materials, hostile and insensitive acts, segregation in the classroom, and so forth. (Donaldson 2001; Thorat and Sadana-Sabharwal, 2011)The results of such discrimination have often led to students dropping out of school, and participating in violence and other high-risk anti-social acts. Schools have yet to become strong proponents of gender, class, and race issue-based curriculum. Formal schooling is central to teaching and reinforcing cultural expectations for both males and females. (Stromquist – UNESCO, 2007). Integrating cultural difference and acceptance concepts into teaching and learning strategies can help to change socialized violent behavior.

Youth spend a considerable amount of their time in their formative years in formal educational settings. The classroom is also a venue where we as a society make a tremendous financial commitment to the education and development of our youth. The classroom must provide a vehicle for equipping youth for the world they will encounter. However, educational institutions often struggle to address the proliferation of youth violence, an unfortunate fact that is true within the US and globally.

In today's reality the classroom has the potential to be the window to the world and the facilitator of connections to global communities and networks. Internet access and the worldwide web can bring the world to the classroom with the stroke of a key. YouTube, Twitter and Facebook, only to name a few web-based virtual community forums, support snippets of the world’s events “going viral,” suggesting that teaching and learning moments are now completely without boundaries and should no longer be considered to be narrowly prescribed by the container within traditional educational institutions that we call the classroom, where students spend so much of their time in their formative years.

Youth are social beings concerned with the never ending dramatic and compelling daily events to which they are a witness. The statistics of
violent acts among youth are staggering. World Report on Youth Violence and Health states that “an average of 565 children, adolescents and young adults between the ages of 10 and 29 years die each day as a result of interpersonal violence (2002).” Youth seek to make sense of the world around them that too often involves devastating incidents of youth violence. Yet, many youth are unlikely to have information in school curricula that help them understand, process, and be agents of change with respect to youth violence. Many youth are disheartened by the curriculum taught in schools especially when that curriculum does not reflect real life situations they confront. (Donaldson, 2009) Thus, youth look elsewhere to become more informed and cope with issues that affect their generation. For instance, You Tube, Twitter and Facebook are social networks that young people are able to post to, view, and discuss real-time events. Issues such as the youth mob beating death of 14 year-old Derrion Albert of Chicago, (2009), the police shooting of 22 year-old Oscar Grant of Oakland (2009), 19 year-old cheerleader Allison Myrick, murdered by her boyfriend of Massachusetts(2010), the cry for help of 14 year-old gay bullying suicide victim Jamey Rodermeyer of New York (2011), or 18 year-olds Deryl Dedmon Jr. and John Aaron Rice racially-motivated murder of James Craig Anderson, 49 years old of Mississippi (2011) are important incidents that have been brought to the attention of the general public through traditional news outlets. Information regarding all these incidents can also be found on social networks that youth frequent, thus we must create opportunities for youth to process troublesome events and support youth in gaining a voice, as well as enhance their capacity to cope with and address themselves to instances of youth violence.

Youth-on-Youth Violence and the Need to Address the Void of Integrating Real-life Issues in the Globally-Centered Classroom

Most youth are eager to become empowered to change the world for the better. Yet, they often do not have the tools to do so. A Chicago youth leader put it best when he said, “It is our world to craft, give us the tools and we will change it.”

Current events within our global society suggest that youth alienation and disaffection with emerging economic and political trends may be growing. Organizing by youth in order to promote social justice and human rights is advancing and is being facilitated by technology.
The “Occupy Wall Street” movement on the one hand, and flash mob outbreaks in Philadelphia, Maryland, Cleveland, Chicago, Washington, D.C., Ottawa and London on the other hand may be the bell weather of youth disquiet and discontent.

It is abundantly apparent that the emerging realities of violence in the lives of today’s youth are central to the status of youth and their development. Yet, non-violence education curriculum and global forums for youth to share in violence prevention dialogues are presently severely lacking. The global nature of this challenge requires a new intervention paradigm that is built on best practices and youth-centric knowledge building and awareness, as well as an appreciation of the organizing efficacy and expanding technological capacity of youth today whose understanding of the world has been shaped by the internet driven, technology-centered and social networking global world.

In large measure, society in general and educational institutions specifically have readily embraced internet and web-based technology as a vehicle for information and knowledge transfer, relational connectivity, political galvanization and private market creation, but rarely as a vehicle for a longstanding legitimate and sustainable social movement.

**Project SAVE: Making the Case for Global Action through Education**

Project SAVE is a youth–based global initiative that seeks to leverage best practice, evidence-based curriculum, sustainability, and youth driven organizing and interventions through the use of web-based technologies to stem the tide of pervasive global youth violence. The motto of Project SAVE is “Tomorrow begins when violence ends today.” Specifically, Project SAVE seeks to reduce youth violence worldwide by 10% within the next 5 – 7 years, by sponsoring a highly visible education campaign to make the world a safer place for youth around the world.

For the purpose of executing its goals, Project SAVE is housed within two partnering organizations, MIDC (Multicultural International Development Co.) and PACT (Parent and Community Technology and
Law Center). This partnership collaboration between MIDC and PACT provides a number of immediate resources for Project SAVE such as web-based technologies, curriculum, and international partnerships.

First incorporated in 2002, MIDC is a socially conscious education services and management LLC company. MIDC leverages emerging technology via new media and provides strategies for local, national and international venues seeking to infuse or create cross-cultural and creative modules, programs, products, and instruction in areas of education and business. Its properties include: the Kuumba Learning Model (KLM), SUN (Scholars Unite Network), Cross Cultural Studies Institute, KO Publishers, Unity through Creativity Productions (UTCP), and the Social Justice Education International Study Abroad Program.

Parent and Community Technology (PACT) Law Center is a 501 (c)(3) non-profit corporation that seeks to promote and advance family strengthening and community building through strategic partnerships and collaborations. PACT Law Center seeks to leverage web-based technology to demonstrate the power of and model the possibilities of virtual non-profit operations that can efficiently and cost-effectively bring to scale social solutions by improving the social justice agenda setting process and the organizing capacity of communities, constituencies and/or concerned stakeholders.

The collaboration between MIDC and PACT Law Center in support of the Project SAVE initiative is built around four key precepts. The first fundamental guiding principle of the Project SAVE initiative includes the idea that institutional cultural change regarding violence requires that there is a recognition that violence is endemic to our society and embedded in our social relations. Violence as a human phenomenon is defined as behaviors that inflict or threatened to inflict physical injury on other persons. Violence is further defined as “the intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against oneself, another person, or against a group or community that either results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, mal-development, or deprivation (WHO, 2002, p.5).” Historically, at best, varying degrees of violence have been overlooked and sanctioned in the context of class, race and gender power dynamics (Donaldson, 1996; Hawkins, 1996; Seifert, 2012).
The legacy of these historic patterns is replicated and influences the social development of youth and ultimately shapes the attitudes and behaviors of youth (Seifert, 2012; World Youth Report, 2003; Esbensen, et al., 2010). Project SAVE acknowledges the pervasiveness of violence in our society and how deeply embedded it is in our social constructions and relationships that are highly impactful upon youth. In short, violence is considered a learned behavior and has become a dominant aspect of socialization within many societies. Due to its prevalence many youth accept violence as a social norm.

Second, Project SAVE seeks to promote the efficacy of youth as one critical set of stakeholders essential to the solution of youth violence. This suggests that youth must take on leadership roles and be able to effectively manifest influence over their peers and be purveyors of information based on evidence-based best practice, as well as offer practical strategies for navigating various forms of youth violence. In that capacity, youth then become the voice and leadership in violence prevention and violence intervention in their communities and can then model their practices globally.

Third, there is a belief that educators and other adult professionals must understand their role as facilitators with respect to knowledge acquisition and skill building related to youth anti-violence practices. Violence prevention and intervention education should be a part of the pedagogical repertoire of educational professionals and other adult community members. As essential stakeholders in the youth anti-violence effort, education professionals must be versed in the curriculum and best practices that enhance the safety and productivity of the educational environment of their classrooms. Professional development for educational professionals should include the development of expertise in youth violence prevention such that classroom and school management are facilitated, so that we enhance opportunities to grow safe, healthy and productive educational environment in our schools and in the broader community.

The last consideration that frames the Project Save model is the enormous potential for the deployment of technology to advance social outcomes. Today's technology has enormous capacity to efficiently and cost-effectively deliver information, educational tools, training and social networking opportunities in “real-time” to a large number of people and then has the capacity to organize those individuals into a community. Because technology is scalable, with a little additional
effort and planning a community of learners can be a global learning community.

The four ideas articulated above constitute the foundational framework for the Project SAVE initiative. Growing these ideas over time within a community that has a significant reach and which is committed to growing a global “learning community” around youth anti-violence information, training and best practices is compelling.

The Recognition That There’s A Need for An Organization that Promotes a Sustainable Anti-Youth Violence Movement on a Global Level

The leadership of Project SAVE realized there was a need for a sustainable infrastructure for a global youth anti-violence movement. In 2012, Project SAVE will host its first annual global virtual conference. The mission of the first annual conference is to educate and prepare youth leaders worldwide to become advocates for the reduction of all forms of youth violence and to create and sustain youth global non-violence alliances and networks.

The Virtual Annual Global Project SAVE conference is a foundational activity and serves as the point of initiation for the development of a sustainable global anti-youth violence organization. The connectivity that youth presently have to the internet and web-based forms of communication have revolutionized opportunities to galvanize and organize youth and ensure their voice is heard. Global events where youth have taken leadership to democratize and advance the cause of inclusion and participation have captured the attention of the world. Project SAVE seeks to capture that energy and possibility and seeks to cultivate an organizational structure that can house the activity, creativity and expansive outreach that web-based forms of communication driven by youth can generate. Project SAVE endeavors to advance the concept of the “Digital Divine” affirming and promoting all that is possible and all that is promising when youth come together to solve their own problems, to advance their own causes and to grow as future leaders.

The notion of the “Digital Divine” serves as a framework for the virtual organizing of youth and creates the imperative for the infrastructure that supports youth development and capacity building
while engaging community and university partners in the work of youth anti-violence. The Digital Divine concept is driven by the “Lifeline Network,” which is a web-based organizing and action platform in which youth are the essential actors in promoting anti-youth violence while enhancing their own sense of efficacy, skills and leadership that creates a “lifeline” in thwarting violence which impacts them, their family members, their network of friends and their physical and virtual communities. The Life-Line Network has four major components. These components include:

- Tweeting for Peace
- In Your Face
- Project SAVE Ambassadors for Life
- Global Learning Forum for Peace: Annual Project SAVE Virtual Conference

Youth can enroll in the Project SAVE initiative and have the opportunity to engage with any or all four components of the initiative. Each component will be explained separately in some detail below.

**Tweeting for Peace.** Mobile devices and the use of hand-held electronic tools have become a common vehicle for “real-time” communication between youth. Twitter is a real-time information network that connects individuals to the latest information about issues, ideas, topics or activities that they find interesting. At the core of Twitter are small packages of information called Tweets. Each Tweet is 140 characters in length allowing individuals the opportunity to quickly share discreet pieces of information. Connected to each Tweet is an information pane that provides additional opportunities for the individual to offer deeper context and embedded media. Twitter can be used by people in nearly every country in the world. Tweets can be produced in English, French, German, Italian, Japanese, and Spanish, and individuals can change their language preference with ease.

The Tweeting for Peace concept would utilize twitter as a vehicle for youth to share their experiences related to violence and anti-youth violent activities. Youth could discuss their day-to-day experiences; share how they navigate the particular circumstances related to youth violence, and offer ideas and suggestions to others about how to successfully address violence in their own lives and in their
communities. This would be done in “real time” where users could share their tweets and grow a community that has both national and global scope.

**In Your Face.** Under the “In Your Face” component, Project SAVE would support the convening of small groups of youths from across the globe to convene periodically as learning communities using Skype as the electronic platform for the virtual meeting. This component will be more formal than the Tweeting for Peace component. This component will engage youth based on a peer-to-peer support model in which youth would be in small “learning communities” in order to advance particular issues and concerns that are more customized to their unique circumstances, community character and/or the nature of violence they seek to address. These meetings would be supported by Project SAVE “mini-curriculum” that youth would have at their disposal in order to guide discussion and offer a structured approach to addressing youth violence. The “mini-curriculum” would also help youth appreciate youth anti-violence strategies and best practices, while they contemplate the design of their own unique responses.

Very important to the In Your Face component of Project SAVE is that the virtual face-to-face meetings capacity of Skype that will facilitate a more intimate personal connection between the youth and will help solidify the proliferation of global youth “learning communities” that will be built both on interpersonal relationships and subject matter interests. The advantage of growing these “learning communities” is that they will ultimately become self-sustaining, albeit initially facilitated by the Project SAVE, “In Your Face” component.

**Project SAVE Ambassadors for Life.** Youth will be offered the opportunity to develop subject matter knowledge and leadership skills under the Project Save Ambassador for Life component. In partnership with collaborating universities, Project SAVE will develop a youth leadership program that combines virtual training and engagements with residential training and skill building opportunities at partnering universities. University partners will serve as regional hubs for Project SAVE year round activities and will serve as hosts for Project SAVE Ambassadors in training. Project SAVE Ambassadors in training will be required to engage in specific research endeavors that explore youth violence issues, causes, interventions, strategies and policies that mitigate and cease such violence. Project SAVE Ambassadors for life
will have the opportunity to present their research, findings and recommendations at the Project SAVE annual global virtual conference. Project SAVE in conjunction with university partners will reward those who successfully navigate and complete the research enterprise with a Project SAVE certification and/or diploma designating the ambassador as having acquired specific leadership and subject matter competency in the area of youth anti-violence. In order to maintain the Project SAVE Ambassador for Life status, individuals will be required to engage in ongoing continuing education focused on peace studies and/or anti-violence skill development that seeks to advance the cause of preserving youth life. This will be made available to participants through Project SAVE professional development curriculum modules. Ambassadors will have to engage in this continuous education on an ongoing basis, thus these individuals are Ambassadors for “youth life” over the course of their lives, thus the double entendre designation as Project SAVE “Ambassadors for life.”

**The Global Learning Forum for Peace: The Annual Global Project SAVE Virtual Conference**

As a culminating event, the Global Learning Forum for Peace, via the Project SAVE Virtual Conference will annually bring together the various learning communities, stakeholders and constituencies across the globe working to advance peace through anti-youth violence initiatives and practices. The conference will be supported on a web-based virtual conference platform that allows individuals to participate via their computer and internet access, allowing them all the benefits of audiovisual engagement as well as the opportunity to engage in real-time with other conference participants. The conference will expose participants to well-developed curriculum and best practices associated with anti-youth violence efforts. There will be various virtual workshops, presentations and keynote addresses accessible to a global conference constituency vis-à-vis their computer and internet access. The global virtual conference will provide an exemplary introduction to the Project SAVE curriculum and offer an opportunity for participants to be certified in the utilization of the curriculum so that they can lead non-violence leadership training within their countries and local communities. Additionally, in support of the global conference, Project SAVE will be able to test new ideas and curriculum under development. It will also provide an opportunity for learning communities to present their emerging ideas and practices.
associated with mitigating youth violence. The virtual conference will provide an opportunity for Project Save Ambassadors for Life, as well as, others to present their research. Additionally, the virtual conference will create an opportunity for cultivating new research ideas and engaging new individuals who would like to participate in the Ambassador for Life program. In short, the global virtual conference is an opportunity for sharing developed materials, provides an opportunity for sharing best practices, offers a forum for testing new and emerging ideas and creates the vehicle for bringing together various youth learning communities, youth supportive stakeholders and various constituencies to grow new connections and global networks.

In preparation for the first annual conference, an estimated fifty youth from at least 12 target countries are being selected to serve as Project SAVE Youth Ambassadors and will be trained as youth conference co-facilitators. These trained Youth Ambassadors will help to assess youth needs in their countries, conceive strategies for global outreach and project sustainability, assist in the building of non-violence youth alliances, and co-host the global virtual conference.

The virtual conference will be co-facilitated by Project Youth Ambassadors and SUN (Scholars Unite Network) selected members. The SUN/Host Scholar will be college professors preferably teaching courses in the following subject areas, Peace Education, Cross Cultural Studies, Social Justice, Multicultural and/or Global Education. Conference participants will be college students invited by SUN/Host Scholars (inviting college students/classrooms to participate as a course project will be encouraged). Secondary students will also be invited to participate via youth organizations and/or individual registration.

Project SAVE leadership is excited to see the engagement of youth, especially college students and young professionals, submitting the Youth Ambassador Application. Most of these applicants are already involved in their local and national communities, and seeking the global education and alliances to reduce youth violence worldwide. For instance, applicant backgrounds have included but not limited to, Global Development and Social Justice, B.A. degree (Morocco), WCCI International Peace Education Intern (United States/Philippines), President and Founder of Rwanda Youth Health Association (Rwanda), Community Project Management (Zambia), International/Environmental Studies, B. A. degree (Sierra Leone),
Gender and Social Exclusion (India), Conflict Management (Turkey), and so forth. The implication for global youth violence reduction is highly probable with youth of such backgrounds being involved with Project SAVE training and research.

The virtual conference technology support systems will connect all registered colleges, youth organization and individuals to the conference. All participants will be able to virtually dialogue, and attend Project SAVE Virtual Conference webinars and live presentations throughout the 3-day event.

The Global Learning Forum for Peace seeks to be the “gold standard” for organizing youth anti-violence constituencies and advocates, while offering state of the art training and skill development in anti-youth violence strategies and practice, using globally accessible state of the art web-based conferencing technology.

**Conclusion**

This article has demonstrated the pervasiveness of youth violence and the need to create a sustainable youth movement through education and technology. Project SAVE is a promising youth initiative in its beginning developmental stages. Albeit ambitious, Project SAVE’s objective is to grow a global youth movement focused on stopping youth violence through education that is sustainable and led by youth in partnership with various local community stakeholders and universities across the world. Our hope is that this idea stimulates a wave of engagement that quells the fire of youth violence globally and that we can excite an array of education institutions, educators, communities, youth organizations, and other supporters to join this life saving work that defines the Project SAVE initiative.

**References**


