
Global Trends in Education

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INTRODUCTION

In the Twenty-first century, nations will become both more competitive and yet more interdependent, and their future ever more dependent on the knowledge, skills and resourcefulness of its people, creating new opportunities and difficulties for education. I believe that the opportunities created by global processes will be actualised only if we continue to insist that education is a basic human right and to resist the tendency to reduce education into yet another market commodity. If we fail, I fear that our world will become increasingly unequal, competitive, polarised, conflicted and dangerous.

GLOBAL TRENDS AND EDUCATION

There has been so much clamour about globalisation that I am loath to add to the confusion, but I will try at least to clarify my own position. First, 'globalisation' is a multi-faceted set of processes which include not only the changes which have flowed from the new information technologies and opening up of markets, but also new concepts which mean that 'shrinking space, shrinking time and disappearing borders are linking people's lives more deeply, more intensely and more immediately than ever before' (UNDP, 1999, p.1).

Secondly, these global processes will not only make our societies increasingly multicultural and ever more intercultural as the interactions among cultural groups intensify, but also they will force shifts in our educational and development priorities as we assume multiple cultural identities. The major battle in the Twentieth century has focussed on the right of everyone to education as set out in Article 26.1 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, but during this century I believe that the struggle will be about the purposes of education for all. Whereas education must and should contribute to the productive life of every society, its fundamental purpose is clearly set out in Article 26.2 of the Declaration: 'Education shall be directed to the full development of the human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. It shall promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations, racial and religious groups.'

My third point is that while there can be no doubt that the destinies of individuals, cultures and nations are being increasingly shaped by the decisions and actions of global players, globalisation is neither new (cf. great religions, empires of the past).

Fourthly, globalisation brings with it a mix of opportunities and threats for every nation, culture and educational system. On the one hand, the removal of barriers and new technologies create new possibilities for intercultural exchange and dialogue, but on the other, we face the danger of a new global imperial regime in which one political, economic and communication culture is unilaterally favoured over all others.

The global political and economic forces which lead to the collapse of the communist states can also unleash latent linguistic and racial tensions in states previously held together by force. More

generally, global forces may contribute to the undermining of what Gunter Grass calls the 'Kultur-nation,' the core values of the cultural, social and educational system of nations necessary for social cohesion and national identity. Global forces may liberate and empower people from all cultures and nations, but only if we use our new tools to empower the poor, to strengthen inter-cultural dialogue and to enable all cultural groups to participate in decisions affecting their lives.

The 1999 UNDP Report warns 'When the market goes too far in dominating social and political outcomes, the opportunities and rewards of globalisation spreads unequally and inequitably – concentrating power and wealth in a select group of people, nations and corporations, marginalizing others... If global opportunities are not shared better, the failed growth of the last decades will continue.' The challenge, it suggests, is to find the international institutions and rules for stronger governance to be raised to ensure that 'globalisation works for people - not just for profits.'

Inequality and polarisation

At least three global trends pose challenges for education in the Twenty-first century and will make the task of learning to live together ever more important and challenging: inequality, population movements and the new information and communication technologies.

UNDP and others have warned that globalisation is increasing the gap between the rich and the poor, between the connected and isolated cultural groups. Inequality **within** countries certainly has increased dramatically over the past 20 to 30 years. As measured by the Gini co-efficient, the greatest income inequalities are in Latin America (especially in Brazil and Paraguay), while the most dramatic rises since the 1980s have been in Eastern Europe and the CIS countries. Associated with these gaps is the upsurge in violence, crime, corruption and even genocide. Among the OECD countries, UK, USA and Australia show the greatest gaps between the richest and poorest 20 per cent of the population, with the UK registering an increase of over 30 per cent in inequality in disposable income in the 1980s.

Inequality **between** countries has also increased dramatically this century, the income gap between the fifth of the world's richest countries and the fifth living in the world's poorest jumping from 11:1 in 1913, to 30:1 in 1960, and to 74:1 in 1997. Thus today more than one quarter of the population, some 1.3 billion people live, in abject poverty on incomes of less than \$1 day, while the assets of the three richest people in the world exceed the combined GNP of all LDCs. Despite the commitments made at Jomtien, Beijing and Copenhagen and the rapid increases in GNP per capita within the OECD countries, there has been a dramatic decline in aid provided for developing countries since 1992. Private foreign investment and loans have replaced aid, but the UNESCO-ILO studies of structural adjustment show the burden of debt falls most heavily on the public education and health services available to poor and marginalised groups. The research clearly shows that the greater the inequality within a country, the greater the suffering of the poor and the greater the marginalisation of minority cultures.

Population Movements and Cultural Diversity

Global forces are also leading to increasing population movement and thus to an exponential increase in intercultural interactions and exchanges. Most nations have long been a mix of cultures, and after years of struggle, the various tribes and cultural groups that now make up modern democratic states have learned to co-exist, even to celebrate difference as a fact of life. But as the extent of intercultural mixing and exchanges increase, we will face new challenges in learning to live together.

Whereas globalisation is opening doors for a highly mobile, highly skilled international elite, it seems to be closing them for many others who will either seek to escape or remain locked in poverty. An estimated 130-145 million people now live officially outside their countries of origin, and there are at least as many illegal migrants. And over 23 million refugees struggle to survive: lacking papers, illegal immigrants, refugees and displaced persons face not only discrimination and exploitation, but also denial of human rights, including the right to education for their children. The sheer numbers of 'others' seeking a better life in another land creates irrational fears among the inter-culturally illiterate, fears too easily exploited by a racist far right.

Throughout human history, the majority of people lived in rural areas. But global forces are also accelerating the process of urbanisation. The year 2000 marks a divide from a predominantly rural world to one where the majority of people now live in cities. Of the more than 400 cities with over 1 million inhabitants, 28 are mega-cities with populations of over 8 million, two thirds of which are in developing countries. In the latter, over one third are under 14 years, very poor and make up the bulk of the 30 million or more 'street children.'

The renewed concern for lifelong education stems from such rapidly changing global realities. One can no longer learn enough to be a fully functioning member of a society in one's youth. Extended life expectancy coupled with dramatic changes in economic, social and cultural situations mean that both individuals and societies must continue to learn – or be left behind and become marginalised.

New information and communication technologies (NICT)

The most visible symbol of globalisation has been the spectacular development of information and communication technologies and the creation of planetary networks with no structured organization or centralised management. The NICTs constitute an extra-ordinary resource base for the storing, dissemination and sharing of information, and strengthen intercultural exchanges and democratic participation. They do offer new possibilities for providing access to education for large numbers and isolated communities with economies of scale, multiple channels of communication, visualisation and simulation, and powerful means for the exchange, processing and storage of information. While enhancing the free flow of information, the very openness of our new communication systems make money laundering and dissemination of paedophilia and the culture of violence and racism easier. In the absence of controls, education systems can be expected to be called upon not only to help equip the young with the skills needed to use new information and communication tools but also to promote moral development and to make wise choices.

The second issue of concern relates to the impact on cultures and languages of new technologies and media. In theory, the new tools are neutral – if we invest wisely, NICT can help preserve threatened languages and cultural products and promote inter-cultural learning and understanding. Amid the multitude of websites and programs that celebrate travel, adventure and nature, we can find some which do attempt to build a deeper understanding of the cultures of others. NICT also open new opportunities for cultural minorities to interact in their own language and to support multi-lingual instruction. But currently the production of world's cultural 'exports' is dominated by a handful of extremely powerful and wealthy global magnates: 60 per cent of the Internet hosts and 83 per cent of the usage of the net are in the USA, and only 11 per cent is outside USA and Europe. Global monopolies controlling NICT may accelerate the homogenisation of the world's cultures and the extinction of many of its 6,000 languages.

GLOBALISATION AND EDUCATION

How will these global trends affect education?

In part, the answer may lie in existing trends in the delivery of educational programs. Educational programs cannot operate without educational materials and equipment (or 'goods') and in the absence of quality educational 'services.' Increasingly educational goods and services are being privatised. The Education and Training industry is now North America's second largest accounting for nearly 10 per cent of GDP. It is also the fifth largest service export in the USA (and seventh in Australia). Of the \$26 billion spent on educational goods and services in 1997, \$2.1 billion was for the web and about \$1 billion for software. For other OECD countries, the export of textbooks and services is also big business: in 1997, the UK exported over \$114 million worth of textbooks. Worldwide, the market for educational software now stands at over \$4 billion.

In a highly competitive and polarised world, there has also been a significant growth in the 'shadow education system' – the world of private tutoring: more than half of the students in secondary school receive tutoring in countries like Japan, Mauritius and ROK. In ROK, spending on private tutoring in 1996 was half as much again as public expenditure. Such growth seems to be a social response to inadequacies in government support for education, both in quantitative and qualitative terms, and can only lead to further exacerbation of inequalities and polarisation.

If current global trends continue, commercial activity in educational goods and services can be expected to grow substantially and education itself will become more 'globalised.' Highly capitalised educational publishers are shifting from marketing individual titles to marketing services to local publishers, while modern testing agencies are following a similar path. Standards for educational performance are becoming international as we have seen from OECD's *Education at a Glance*. The student body, faculty, courses and teaching provided by major universities are all being increasingly 'internationalised.'

Globalisation and the right to basic education for all

Over the past two years, UNESCO and its partners (mainly UNICEF) have worked with 180 countries to assess their progress towards basic education for all (EFA) since 1990. Our statistics (UNESCO, 2000) show that most developing countries are making steady progress towards the goals of universal primary educational and reducing adult illiteracy, and that despite their limited resources, some developing countries (eg. Bangladesh) have made surprisingly good progress.

The quest to provide education for all has made little headway in countries ravaged by armed conflict, crippling debt and rapid population growth. In particular, the data show a worrying increase in the number of out-of-school children in the poorest countries, especially in Sub-Saharan Africa. Over the past decade, public expenditure for primary education in the LDCs remained static at about \$20 per pupil, while among the developed countries it rose to well over \$5000. In 1980, expenditure at the pre-tertiary level in the developed countries was 37 times higher than that of the LDCs: in 1997, it was 137 times greater. Education may be the key to poverty alleviation, but the education offered to the poor and in poor countries is one of the first victims when resources are being cut. Unless the global forces impacting on these countries and their internal situation changes dramatically, our estimates indicate they will fall further behind during the next decade.

While most countries have been able to keep pace quantitatively with the growth in numbers, few countries have been able to find the resources to provide a quality education for all. If anything, the quality of the education offered to the masses has suffered. For example, the picture emerging

from the analysis of the situation in Central and Eastern Europe reveals that the transition to a market economy has been extremely difficult for most countries in the region, the economic downturn precipitating cuts in educational expenditure and with that a deterioration in the conditions for teaching and learning, to growing inequality in education and high drop-out rates, especially in rural areas.

The evidence also suggests that even in the rich countries, increases in income inequality are associated with increases in education and social inequality. For example, not only does the UK have one of the largest income gaps among OECD countries, it also has the highest proportion (19.4%) of young people aged 16-19 years who are neither attending school nor employed, higher than Italy, Spain or Greece and roughly five times that of Denmark and Germany. The concerns about the quality of education expressed by the Heads of Government at the G-8 summit in Koln are predominantly related to this 'underclass' of disadvantaged young people most of whom leave school early, are functionally illiterate, and whose anti-social behaviour at school and in the community increasingly constitutes a threat to security and quality of life of others.

The cumulative social and educational effects of disadvantage have been well documented. The research shows that the impact of disadvantage on a particular child's education and subsequent behaviour depends on the cumulative effects of several risk factors including poverty, family breakdown, sustained patterns of impaired child-parent relationships, instability and disruption in key developmental contexts such as the family and school. The research suggests that irrespective of cultural context, it is difficult for families and schools to maintain the sustained care and interaction needed by a child to develop in conditions of poverty, conflict and constant change.

There have been many attempts to ameliorate the effect of disadvantage on educational opportunities. Mortimore and Whitty (1997) outline four: one based on the concept of meritocracy, one on the use of compensatory mechanisms, one on the creation of intervention projects, and the last, change through school improvement. The first emphasises **competition**, but the evidence show that although it works for a few (as many of us here can attest) it does nothing to improve the situation of those left behind – be they individuals, communities or countries. **Compensatory measures** may target individuals or families (eg. school meals), disadvantaged schools or groups (eg. Aboriginal Schools) or, at the international level, countries or even regions (eg. UN Special Initiative for Africa). In general, these are somewhat more effective, but targeting is not always easy and the root causes may remain untouched. **Intervention** projects such as *Headstart*, *Success for All* and the *Reading Recovery Programme* do seem to help combat the individual consequences of disadvantage but none of these remedies seem to be effective in altering the overall patterns of inequality in education. The roots of school **improvement** lie in the research on school effectiveness. This approach places the responsibility for change in the hands of the school and its community and the evidence suggests that when committed and talented school heads and teachers work in partnership with parents and the community even in disadvantaged areas, schools can improve.

Of course, it is not surprising that a strong negative correlation between most measures of social and cultural disadvantage and educational outcomes persist. Even a cursory glance at the league tables (cf. IEA, *Education at a Glance*) shows that schools and nations at the top are invariably those of the rich, and those at the bottom the most disadvantaged. Whatever changes are made at the school level or in the education systems of poor countries, their efforts will be constrained to the extent which inequalities within and between countries are structural and powerful mechanisms are maintained to reproduce existing hierarchies, and to the extent that 'social capital' continues to decline as relationships and supportive social networks collapse. The situation has been made worse by policies at national and international levels which deny the right of all to a

decent education and thereby undermine the principle that education is a public good and the responsibility of the whole society, especially of governments.

If we are to overcome disadvantage at the individual, national or international level, we need education programs which respect the cultures and address the realities of the families and children to be served and give priority to the alleviation of poverty and building support structures for families and nations in difficulty. The stark facts on growing inequality and polarisation presented above drive home the reality that it is simply impossible to improve access to education or the quality of the education in poor countries without extra resources, and that within countries extra resources must be found to improve the quality and functioning of schools, families and communities, particularly those located in disadvantaged areas.

But from where must these resources come? In the end, governments and international organisations (public and private) must assume their national and global responsibilities and reallocate resources to meet targets (eg 0.7 per cent for aid, 6 per cent plus of GNP for education etc) – even if that means taxing the rich, cutting arms expenditure or putting people before profits.

If we do not assume a new path, life will be particularly difficult during the Twenty-first century for the already disadvantaged. At the World Conference on Education for All (Jomtien, 1990), we insisted on meeting the basic learning needs of all, the emphasis being on learning achievement, not merely attending school. But acquiring the knowledge and skills needed to participate in the life and work of communities in the Twenty-first century is possible only if the essential conditions for learning are present in the formal and non-formal education programs. In the schools serving the poor and marginalised, these conditions are absent. Children cannot be expected to learn or to stay in school if they are sick, hungry and exhausted, if the school is overcrowded and unsanitary, if there are few or no books and teachers are unpaid and unqualified.

At best progress towards the alleviation of poverty will be slow if the present international economic and political order remains unchanged – if the poorest countries and groups are locked into a seemingly endless downward spiral of poverty, debt, conflict and misery and if inhuman traffic in weapons, drugs, arms, women and children continues unchecked. Education may be the key to the alleviation of poverty and to sustainable development, but not if the global economic order leads us to high quality private education for an elite and a poorly funded and inferior public education system for the masses. There will be a global crisis in education if we allow our market forces to polarise the world of education, internationally and nationally.

Globalisation and Higher Education

Today, global wealth is concentrated less and less in factories and the land, and more and more in knowledge and skills. In the USA human capital is now estimated to be at least three times more important than physical capital. Participation in the rapidly changing knowledge society of the Twenty-first century demands new knowledge and skills and learning throughout life, and higher qualifications than ever before. As a result, the demand for higher education is growing constantly, higher education systems are under great strain to cope with dramatic increases in numbers without a commensurate increase in public funding. In many countries, expansion, both public and private, has been ‘unbridled, unplanned and often chaotic’. The results – deterioration in average quality, continuing inter-regional, inter-country and intra-country inequalities, and increased for-profit provision of higher education – could have serious consequences’ for developing countries and disadvantaged groups and the very concept of the ‘university.’

The World Conference on Higher Education (Paris, 1998) sought to ‘set the direction needed to prepare higher education for the tasks that await it in the Twenty-first century, and to help

mankind and the community of nations to strive out towards a better future, towards a world more just, more humane, more caring and more peaceful' by establishing a few key principles and priorities for action. The Conference showed the need to strengthen the traditional research and specialised teaching functions of the university, while at the same time to insist on its intercultural and international mission of higher education in the Twenty-first century.

Globalisation processes have led to an unprecedented demand for access to higher education while at the same time most governments are unwilling or unable to provide the necessary support to public institutions. Thus the dramatic growth in private and open higher education, the financial and identity crisis facing universities worldwide, and the intense and increasing competition for overseas students among the big league of internationalised universities and for adult learners from open and virtual corporate universities. In this context, I would hope that governments see beyond the immediate and understand that within the walls of the University there is a treasure within.

Globalisation and Teacher Education

The Delors report (UNESCO, 1996) sets out an agenda for the future which implies that significant changes are needed in pre-service teacher education programs if we are to select and prepare a new generation of teachers equipped with the knowledge, skills and values to help their culturally different and their socially disadvantaged students to learn, to resolve conflicts peacefully, to respect each other's dignity and cultures, and to become socially responsible citizens. What emerges from the research is that teacher education which follows the 'Do as I say, not do as I do model' has to be replaced by one which sees learning to teach as a deeply personal activity in which includes activities designed to develop sensitivity to cultures, languages and lives of children coming from different social and cultural groups, and which provides constant and significant support, working with cohort groups, and a systematic long-term message which provides guidance and direction for personal development.

The direction and culture of educational research must also change if we are to reform educational policies, established practice, curricula and teaching materials in ways which facilitate intercultural learning and ameliorate the problems created by disadvantage and discrimination in education and society. For example, there is a great deal that we do not know about the impact of international and government policies what is happening in our multicultural schools and universities; about the content and processes of education in traditional and contemporary cultural contexts; about the conditions under which intercultural learning and conflicts are resolved peacefully in different settings; about how best to select, prepare and support teachers and communities to cope with the realities and contradictions created by shifts in population, technology and policy; about the effectiveness of different approaches to combating violence, racism, substance abuse and suicide in our schools and universities.

Another research agenda for the Twenty-first century relates to the impact of different types of student and faculty exchange programs, citizenship education, interactive multimedia packages and the web on intercultural sensitivity and the conditions under which various types of learning experiences transfer into acceptance of difference and tolerance in one's own community, school or university.

INTERCULTURAL EDUCATION IN THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY

To return to my central theme, global trends mean ever greater mingling of cultures and thus learning to live together, cultural identity and inter-culturality will become priority issues. Given the long history of violence as a means of resolving conflicts among cultural or religious groups,

the Delors Report placed learning to live together not simply as one of the four pillars of education for the future, but as the greatest challenge facing education. It insisted that every national education system must give priority in the Twenty-first century to learning to live together ‘by developing an understanding of other people and an appreciation of interdependence – carrying out joint projects and learning to manage conflicts – in a spirit of respect for values of pluralism, mutual understanding and peace.’

The Delors Commission met in a context in which many of the former communist states were falling apart: cohesion was imposed by an all powerful state apparatus rather than being the product of a participatory and educational process for building unity in diversity and for resolving conflicts. Even in the west, social cohesion seems under threat from a polarised and at times violent ‘underclass.’ For the Commission, the most acute crisis facing many countries is that of social cohesion, a crisis fuelled by growing inequality, poverty and exclusion, and a sense of ‘social crisis compounded by a moral crisis and the spread of violence and crime.’ Its hope for a better future rests with the type of education which promotes cohesion while striving ‘to take the diversity of individuals and groups into consideration while taking care that it does not itself contribute to social exclusion.’

How do education systems respond to ever increasing cultural diversity?

In every country, one of the prime functions of education has been that of building a social cohesive society – one held together by shared values, purposes and activities. While economic growth often seems to be driving government policy, building social cohesion still remains one of the main purposes of public education, and particularly as our societies become ever more multicultural.

Historically, at least four different approaches to cultural diversity have emerged: (a) **assimilation**: imposing a common nationality (b) **melting pot**: gradually developing a national culture (c) **differentialist**: developing a common nationality but minimizing interaction with and among minority cultures, and (d) **multiculturalism**: developing unity within diversity.

Until recently, most national education systems were designed to more or less impose one culture – usually that of the dominant race, class or political party or colonial power. While there has been almost as much backsliding as progress, countries like Australia, Canada and New Zealand are beginning to understand that that their diversity of cultures is a treasure within and not a threat to social cohesion – provided that the rights and cultures of all groups are respected.

UNESCO’s constitution stresses both the ‘fruitful diversity of cultures,’ and ‘the intellectual and moral solidarity of mankind.’ In a globalised world, we all must face the problem of reconciling the ideal of respect for diversity with concerns for societal cohesion and the promotion of universally shared values and norms.

Even in well-established democracies, the will to learn to live together in a society with increasing cultural, religious and racial diversity is not assured. At first, immigrant cultural groups and the establishment tend to live out their separate lives, co-existing with limited interaction or understanding of each other in a society that is multi-cultural only in the demographic descriptive sense. Yet as nations become more multicultural, the intertwining of cultures leads to specific types of programmes and policy initiatives designed to respond to and manage ethnic diversity. It was in this usage that ‘multiculturalism’ first gained currency after it was recommended in the 1965 Canadian Report on Bilingualism and Biculturalism.

In the normative sense, multiculturalism represents a position about the place of cultural identities in contemporary society, stressing that acknowledging the existence of ethnic diversity and ensuring the rights of individuals to retain their culture should go hand-in-hand with enjoying full access to, participation in, and adherence to principles and values of the society. Nations adopting a multicultural approach to education have all sought to develop programs in which children and adults have opportunities to develop to a reasonable level of competence, both the national language(s) and their mother tongue, and an understanding of the major cultures (language, literature, history, religious values, and so on) of the nation. Participation in the multicultural knowledge society of the future will demand even higher levels of language competence and cultural sensitivity as the world shrinks. Thus progressively we can expect language policy to include elements of plurilingualism, NICT and lifelong learning. Thus in April 2000, the US Secretary of Education (Richard Riley) proclaimed: 'It is high time we began to treat language skills as the asset they are, particularly in this global economy. ...Our nation can only grow stronger if all our children grow up learning two languages....Our global economy demands it; our children deserve it.'

Countries adopting a multicultural approach generally acknowledge the need for greater knowledge and understanding of the major religions and other cultures and nations, their languages, history and values, and they increasingly employ staff from diverse ethnic backgrounds. The experience that has accumulated in these countries shows that neither special language programs nor educational programs may, in themselves, be sufficient to ensure equality in participation or mutual respect and understanding. The effectiveness of their policies for managing cultural diversity depends not on any one program of policy initiative but on their cumulative effect. What has also become increasingly clear from a range of studies of social justice initiatives is that there is a need to change the way in which the system and its institutions relate to its students.

UNFINISHED NATIONAL AGENDAS

Turning now to some of the issues to be resolved in the future, in South Africa after apartheid, the task was seen as one of questioning and transforming the canons, assumptions and purposes that underlie the curriculum, the assumption being that prejudicial attitudes and behaviours, if learned through the medium of socially constructed culture, must of necessity be deconstructed and reconstructed through the process of multi-cultural education. The emphasis is not so much on creating a nation but a civic consciousness, with overarching or generic common ideals that are unifying and to which all citizens can subscribe. The task of reconciling national unity with cultural diversity in South Africa is made more challenging by the history of socio-cultural violence and abuse of human rights, regional and tribal claims to autonomy and the influx of migrants, but unlike some other ethnically diverse African countries, ethnic diversity is not seen as an obstacle in the reconciliation and reconstruction of national unity but rather as its fundamental and necessary ingredient.

For countries in transition to an open society, the problem of learning to live together is significantly different than under a highly centralised and powerful Party/state. As in South Africa, there is the problem of deconstructing the culture of the state and of the educational apparatus that supported it, and building a new civic consciousness and/or a new nation through education. Countries like Hungary have moved towards a performance-based curriculum in which performance standards are 'inspired by democratic values' which give equal weight to interests of the individual and the wider community. The origins of these 'standards' lie in the need for social cohesion within the nation, integration with the European union and world-wide integration on the one hand, and individual (eg career orientation) and local needs (eg. ethnic minorities) on the other. As in the UK and the USA, there has been an upsurge in interest in developing citizenship

education programs in many countries in transition, in most cases with considerable emphasis on human rights and tolerance as universal values that are at the heart of intercultural education. The recent UNESCO-Council of Europe Conference on civics education in Poland (Warsaw, December, 1999) showed considerable efforts are being made to build unity within diversity, but that it is never easy (even in Australia) to draw a line between the need for a national culture and the rights of local minorities.

Since the signing of the Dayton Peace Accord (December, 1995) the three main ethnic groups in Bosnia Heregovina have been using different curricula and textbooks in three regions in which they are in a majority. The content of these textbooks raises concerns about whether they would increase ethnic divisions, exacerbate differences and prevent social cohesion: the approach is certainly not one designed to promote critical thinking, tolerance or inter-cultural understanding. Certainly there are many examples of xenophobia, ethnic bias and extremism in the texts, but so far, despite all our efforts, the three groups refuse to work together on the reform of history teaching methods and textbooks: the region needs a textbook policy which follow the criteria and guidelines for the elimination of racism established by UNESCO.

Racism, Discrimination and Protection of Minorities

The UN Sub-Commission on the Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities regularly reports on current trends in racism, racial discrimination, intolerance and xenophobia. It notes with alarm the rise in serious incidents attributable to these phenomena especially in Europe and the tendency to deny the existence of malignant processes in one's own nation, community and life. It warns of the emergence of neo-racism not grounded on biology but on anthropology and of the dark side of an excessive ideological commitment to the virtues of difference which may lead us to believe that different cultures are incapable of learning from each other.

Ignoring the psychology of racism, our schools, universities, media and national leaders have intensified the problems. If OECD countries had expanded their vision of social cohesion, they may well have profited more from the opportunities presented by the end of the Cold War and globalisation. Recognition of the problem of neo-racism and wide public education about the psychology of racism and the impact of the confusion of identities which is taking place in a changing world should make it possible for leaders and educators alike to summon into the public forum what Abraham Lincoln called the 'better angels of our nature.'

In no field of education does the issue of intercultural education as a human right have more poignancy than with respect to the rights of indigenous peoples whose languages and way of life is seriously threatened by globalisation and whose right to choose the form of education appropriate for their children (as set out in Article 26.3) has so often denied by assimilation policies. Only recently has Australia acknowledged the existence of the 'stolen generation' of aboriginal children who were removed from their families between 1910 and 1970 to attend religious or state schools. The broad international consensus that has emerged over the past 20 years on the rights of indigenous peoples has certainly played a key part in changing policy and legislation in at least 30 countries. While it would be fanciful to assume that these changes have eliminated centuries of injustice, prejudice and disadvantage, there is a growing acknowledgement, even appreciation, of the diverse cultures that make up national and global societies. Concurrent with this change have been significant changes within many indigenous communities in some cases a veritable renaissance among indigenous peoples in their cultures, languages, histories and traditional ways of learning.

Article 15 of the draft UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous peoples provides the right to full access to all levels and forms of education of the State, and the right of indigenous peoples to establish and control their own educational systems and institutions. The aboriginal peoples with whom Bob Teasdale and I worked with while I was at Flinders University sought nothing less than what they called two-way schooling – they recognised the need for the 'white fella stuff' because they very much want to participate fully in decisions being made outside their tribal lands which are affecting their lives, but at the same time wanted to control 'their own stuff', the key elements of their own cultural identity. They must live in two worlds and resolve the inconsistencies between their traditional cultural roots and those of the dominant culture.

CONCLUSION

The effective functioning of families, schools and educational systems is sensitive to the existence of supportive public policies at the community, national and international level: it has been the poor and marginalised cultural groups who suffered the most from the global economic and political ideologies which led to the imposition of the structural adjustment, privatisation and cost-sharing programs which they could ill afford and which have led to a deterioration in the education available to their children. As the **World Education Report 2000** asks: 'If selected economic or other principles are to be given priority over principles which are embodied in one or more of the rights proclaimed in the Declaration, especially the right to education, how can it be convincingly explained to young people that such rights, indeed any of the rights proclaimed in the Declaration, are 'inalienable?'

The responsibility for respecting human rights and for setting the framework for the educational reforms needed to actualise a shared national vision of education for the Twenty-first century rests first and foremost with governments. The pattern of public expenditure and taxation does have a significant effect on poverty reduction and on the quality and inclusiveness of the education available to all groups in a multicultural society. The research (DFID, 1999) does point to the types of international and national educational policies, schools and educational programs necessary to overcome social and cultural disadvantage. While we need more ethnographic research on intercultural learning, we also need to put the research evidence on the table to ensure that governments do assume their responsibilities to ensure a just distribution of the benefits of globalisation within and among nations – otherwise, the rich will get richer (and meaner), the poor poorer (and more desperate), and our world ever more polarised and insecure.

The rise of the far right, racism, anti-semitism and one-nation agendas is a product of the fear of large population inflows interacting with ignorance of the other which have created so many conflicts and abuses of human rights in the past. As nations and cultures become ever more intertwined, it becomes ever more imperative that education systems develop policies and programs to counter the resurgence of discrimination, racism, ethnic violence and xenophobia which has erupted at the close of the Twentieth century. For both the dominant and minority cultures in a multicultural world, learning to live together must become a two way intercultural process – for it demands that each learn about, understand and respect the culture of the other, accommodate differences and resolve contradictions and conflicts peacefully and democratically. As I (Power, 1999) have argued elsewhere, it is also vitally important that educational reforms systematically focus on creating unity within diversity by developing the basic human values which underlie most cultures and major religions and are embodied in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Our common future will depend on the degree to which we all become better world citizens, creating the unity within diversity which stems from an intercultural education which helps us to

build strong cultural roots, to understand and respect the cultures of others and to learn to live together harmoniously in multicultural communities.

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