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Douglas Bourn

The International Journal of Development Education and Global Learning

The International Journal of Development Education and Global Learning was founded at the Development Education Research Centre at the Institute of Education, University of London under its Director, Douglas Bourn, in October 2008. This new internationally refereed journal publishes the outcomes of research and current debates on development education and related concepts such as global learning, global education and global citizenship. It is published three times a year (October/February/June).

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The International Journal of Development Education and Global Learning Editorial

Common themes running through the discourses in and around development education, global learning and global citizenship education are concepts of dialogue, complexity, understanding differing voices and perspectives and transformation. The three articles in this issue address these themes from different standpoints but all recognise the need for greater dialogue and debate on these key questions.

Namrata Sharma's article argues the need to revisit the concept of dialogue in teaching global citizenship education. Through the paradigm of the 'self' and the 'other', Sharma addresses key policy documents in the UK on citizenship education. She brings to the debates on these themes a new and innovative approach through the influence of the Japanese philosopher, Daisaku Ikeda, and the importance of dialogue to facilitate to individual self growth.

Sharma's study raises an important issue within the discourses in and around Global Citizenship Education by stating the need to generate more philosophical based discussions including addressing the views and beliefs of subordinate groups.

Eleanor Brown from the University of Nottingham in England summarises her study on student teachers' perceptions as to how complex global issues should be taught. Key to her article is the challenge of the viewpoint that many student teachers have about their role within education as mere reproducers and gatekeepers of knowledge within the classroom.

Brown's study recognises that many student teachers find dealing with controversial issues and handling complexity problematic within the classroom. What this means, as she states, is that teachers need to have the skills and confidence to comfortably engage in mutual learning and dialogue where there is no clear right or wrong.

Lorna McLean and Sharon Anne Cook from the University of Ottawa in Canada also address teacher education. Using Kotter's Strategic Model for Transforming Organisations, McLean and Cook outline how they have implemented a Global Education project within their teacher education programme. Initiatives like the one outlined by McLean and Cook can be seen in many universities around the world. What however is distinctive about the activities at Ottawa has been the way in which the Global Education activities moved from being primarily NGO led and extra curricula to being part of the curriculum of their education courses.

McLean and Cook's study also raises some wider questions about the importance of Global education type initiatives cutting across curriculum and organisational boundaries. This raises the issue of ownership and leadership. All too often programmes within universities that attempt to raise the profile of the Global Dimension are left to 'committed enthusiasts'. Only by integrating themes such as global citizenship within mainstream learning will development education become recognised as an important approach towards learning in the twenty first century.

Douglas Bourn

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