

International Journal of Development Education and Global Learning **Editorial**

Global citizenship, sustainable development, and global education are the themes of the three articles in this issue. What they demonstrate, from different perspectives and from three different continents, is the continuing relevance of these themes for learning and making sense of our place in the world.

The first article, by Yoko Ito and Setsuko Nakayama from Chiba University in Japan, summarizes a major research project they have undertaken on education for sustainable development within primary schools. Articles in this journal that have discussed sustainable development have criticized the over-emphasis that practice and research in this area has had towards environmental education. This article, whilst recognizing these criticisms, suggests moreover the need for an approach to learning about sustainable development that emphasizes the senses, particularly of touch and feeling, to enable learners to be creative and pursue their personal interests and motivation. Ito and Nakayama also state that education for sustainable development, if perceived in the way they suggest, requires rethinking conventional approaches to teaching and learning.

The second article, by Silvia Moraes from the Federal University of Ceará in Brazil, takes the theme of global citizenship and discusses its relevance through the concept of the 'floating signifier' in analyzing the viewpoints of UK academics as part of a comparative research project with her own university. It makes links to current debates on internationalization in higher education and raises particularly the importance of the role of science within discussions on global citizenship.

The third article, by two academics from Slovakia, Eva Svitačová and Anna Mravcová from the University of Agriculture in Nitra, reviews the relevance and potential influence of global development education themes and principles within higher education institutions. Global development education is becoming an increasingly important feature of education practice in Slovakia but to date has had little direct impact within higher education. The article looks particularly at ways in which global development education can be reflected in economics courses within their university and others.

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All three articles also raise interesting questions about the relationship of global and development themes to broader approaches towards learning and their contributions to broader educational goals. All too often global issues and the principles behind development education and global learning have been seen as optional extras to the priorities of mainstream education programmes. For example, within higher education, global and development themes are often introduced through optional modules and courses. Within schools they are often limited to extra-curricular activities. The articles in this issue suggest the relevance of development education and global learning not just in terms of increased knowledge, but in terms of building skills and a values base that leads learners to question dominant assumptions about the world in which we live. Ito and Nakayama's article, for example, poses questions about sustainable development within primary schools through recognizing the importance of our senses in terms of understanding the world in which we live. Silvia Moraes suggests that the term 'global citizenship' needs to be understood from various perspectives and approaches. Svitačová and Mravcová in their article raise questions about the linkages between global skills and competencies and the needs of economics courses.

All three articles also finally demonstrate that to make sense of the relevance of development education and global learning within education requires more in-depth research. The articles are based on research with key stakeholders, interviews, reviews of existing literature, and critical analysis of key issues that have emerged. What we hope is that this journal will continue to encourage and promote research and the assessment of evidence that demonstrates the contribution of development education and global learning to broader educational goals and objectives.

Douglas Bourn

Editor

Director, Development Education Research Centre, Institute of Education,
University of London