

BOOK REVIEWS

ROBIN MASON (1998). *Globalising education – Trends and Applications*. London: Routledge, pp. 167, NZ\$45.58.

Mason begins with the question, "Is the advent of global education a threat or a promise?" The answer, she concludes, is that it is neither:

The higher education market is changing rapidly and there is much evidence to support the rumours of large scale closures of existing institutions, of very different working conditions for staff at those educational establishments which remain, and of wholesale re-thinking of the organisational, pedagogical and technological delivery of higher education. Many of these changes are caused by or informed by the growth of some forms of global education (p. ix).

The globalisation of education is a development that is becoming increasingly significant to many distance education professionals although the implications of this trend for institutions, programmes and careers is not at all clear. Mason provides a timely examination of the globalization of education in an appropriately international context together with the media that make this possible. Attention is given to the social and cultural implications of globalising education for developing countries and for the expanded markets it provides for established providers.

Mason is well placed to write on this subject as head of the Centre for Information Technology in Education at the UK Open University. Her criteria for offering global education include: (i) having students in more than two continents of the world able to communicate with each other and with the

teacher, (ii) an express aim on the part of the teacher or institution to attract international participation, (iii) course content devised specially for transnational participation, (iv) support structures, both institutional and technological, to tutor and administer to a global student body, and (v) operations on a scale of more than one programme and more than one curriculum area, with more than 100 students. However, the author's search found not a single institution offering global education according to these criteria.

A major argument for global education, according to Mason, is the benefits it provides for students, who become part of a diverse, international student body within which interaction is encouraged. The taste of global interaction in a course reported by one teacher on his first venture onto the information superhighway left him concluding:

I cannot imagine ever passing a semester in the classroom again without the umbilical cord to the network to energise, diversify, and deepen what we do (p. 4).

A second and particularly powerful argument is the improved access to education that is provided for more students, especially those in the developing world. There is an educational rationale for global education in making "the expertise of the few" widely available and, finally, there is the growing realisation that many areas of the curriculum are global in nature and lend themselves to development on an international scale. The European Association of Distance Teaching Universities, for example, has encouraged the joint authorising amongst its members of the European MBA and of a comprehensive course in the humanities called "What is Europe?"

With the increasing prominence of the internet in teaching and learning and an expanding range of educational software, the means of making one's courses and educational products globally available is becoming an option for more institutions. One of the most powerful arguments for considering the globalisation of education is simply the access it provides for many people. As one commentator noted:

Technologically-mediated knowledge provides the basis of individualising learning in a more complete and active way...Here distance is subservient to the discourse of open learning and 'educative' processes are displaced and reconstituted as relationships between producers and consumers in which knowledge is exchanged on the basis of the usefulness it has to the consumer (Edwards, 1995).

The implications of global education for those who teach at a distance are exciting but, as this book sets out in some detail, the process is complex and there is much to be considered by institutions considering global expansion.

Five case studies of the applications of global education provide a broad overview of recent developments in this area and form the basis of a discussion of recent trends: The Duke University Global Executive MBA programme, the Graduate Certificate in Open and Distance Learning of the University of Southern Queensland in Australia, the move from TV to the internet of the Jones Educational Company, IBM global training and education and the UK Open University. These are collectively examined in the final section of the book in terms of the technologies that these institutions use, joint course development, on-line support systems, individualised learning and, of course, use of the internet.

Mason concludes with a look at future trends, focusing on the future transformation of universities, the social and cultural impact of

global education and the 'educational exploitation' of computer and communications technologies.

The implications of globalised education are becoming increasingly apparent to those who use the internet and its growing number of applications. The move from traditional, centralized distance education institutions to mass teaching and learning on dispersed sites that is possible from teachers' internet-linked computers, opens the possibility of global teaching and learning. While the range of teaching and learning at a distance has been considerably extended by advances in information and communication technologies, the pedagogical, social, cultural, political, professional and financial implications of doing so are enormous. This book is ambitious in attempting to draw together an exceptionally complex and rapidly changing area of education.

I found the chapter on pedagogy and global education to be of particular interest for the way in which it brought together a range of ways of organising teaching and learning in this emerging environment. Mason provides a useful section in this chapter on assessment, and a discussion of some of the cultural implications of teaching across national boundaries.

This is a timely discussion of contemporary practices in global education based on diverse institutional case studies. It provides anyone contemplating teaching transnationally with an overview of the complexities of an emerging area of distance education.

REFERENCE

EDWARDS, R. (1995). Different discourses, discourses of difference: Globalisation, distance education and open learning. *Distance Education*, 16, 2.

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GEOFF SCOTT (1999). *Change matters: Making a difference in education and training*. Sydney: Allen and Unwin, pp. 236, NZ \$39.95.

As the introduction to this book points out, there were some 800 books published in the US in the first half of the 90s on change. Some would have been 'snake oil', most had relevance to business and a few related to change in education. Managing change in educational institutions is not the same as managing it in the corporate sector. Some change managers describe educational change as not unlike herding cats. Scott's book reminds us that the best way to manage cats is to put out milk and give them a comfortable environment. Inasmuch as Scott recognises the real issues in managing educational change, this book is highly recommended as a useful, practical and enthusiastic work.

Chapter One examines the dynamics of the change process in education. Scott describes a number of myths about change management, mostly drawn from the non-education sector. He proposes an educational framework consisting of the milieu, learning programmes, leadership and the external context. These are displayed in an atomic molecular diagram below which runs the horizontal version of the action-research spiral.

Chapter Two offers a change management process for learning programme innovation and enhancement. Scott proposes a 'swamp' model of educational programming where the outcome of an effective learning programme must survive navigating the nature of the subject, similar programmes elsewhere, accreditation requirements, available resources and tools, conditions of learning and the nature of students. A cloud entitled 'general conditions' hovers above the swamp. Apart from risks entailed in crossing the swamp, Scott shows that startup shortfalls, inadequate planning and ineffective consultation are key factors causing innovations to fail.

Chapter Three focuses on workplace

improvement and the need for supportive workplace cultures if change is to be effective. Scott advocates continuous quality improvement (CQI), an extension of the business TQM model, as a change mechanism in education. He describes how CQI can placate angry 'tribes' who inhabit the swamp by making the workplace conditions more conducive to change.

Chapter Four examines workplace action-research in the educational context. Here he identifies some new 'tribes' who live in the broader educational context and whose adherents or allies might be found among the locals. He identifies Photographers, Experimenters, Naturalists and Activists. He uses metaphors to describe how each tribe operates and what it believes in. Knowing this helps the change manager identify and use particular strengths and insights about the task on hand.

Scott deals with one of the key elements of change later in his book. He notes that leadership is not about the powerlessness of the led. He uses the reflection-in-action model to show how successful educational leaders think and act. He draws on Fullan's ideas about emotional and cognitive intelligence, knowledge and skills, as well as highlighting the need for an ability to encourage a critical mass of staff to 'ride the wave of change'.

So, is all change progress? We know it is not, but progress will not occur without change. Scott concludes that educational institutions and change managers are having a rough time navigating the swamp. In the end he states "it is people that matter, that the golden rule is doing unto others...and that actions speak louder than words", which, although hardly new, constitute the combination of the 'what' and 'how' of change that makes the difference. The book is highly recommended to those responsible for delivering educational services and to those who participate, willingly or otherwise, in educational change.

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