



CONTEMPORARY GLOBAL CONCERN AND TEACHER EDUCATION

Dr. Renu Chouhan

Principal, St. Jayacharya Public School Jaipur

E_mail- renu72_shekhawat@yahoo.com

Abstract

Globalization involves the diffusion of ideas, practices and technologies. It is something more than internationalization and universalization. It isn't simply modernization or westernization. It is certainly isn't just the liberalization of markets. Anthony Giddens (1990: 64) has described globalization as 'the intensification of worldwide social relations which link distant localities in such a way that local happenings are shaped by events occurring many miles away and vice versa'. This involves a change in the way we understand geography and experience localness. As well as offering opportunity it brings with considerable risks linked, for example, to technological change. .

Globalization, thus, has powerful economic, political, cultural and social dimensions. Here I want to focus on following themes i.e. to describe the concepts of a global concern, Educational responses, globalization and teacher education in India.

Key Words: Globalization, Global concern, Teachers Education.

The term 'globalization' means integration of economies and societies through cross country flows of information, ideas, technologies, goods, services, capital, finance and people. Cross border integration can have several dimensions – cultural, social, political and economic. In other words “The total education system of the world under one roof” it requires the unification of teaching curriculum, methodology and up gradation of knowledge and system to remain in the context for efficiency and effectiveness by which transformation of knowledge in justified manner to attain the goals of life.

Defining globalisation

Globalisation can be defined as a world-sweeping arrangement based upon: “...a creed of lower trade barriers; an end to exchange controls; freer movement of investment capital; and the displacement of public sector capital by the private sector”. (Fontana 1999, 367)

Globalisation has been understood to entail a homogenous set of economic forces impinging on every country, wherein nations are engulfed in a whirlwind-like global market, and induced to cut public expenditure and encourage private enterprise (Young 1998, 52). Despite the neatness of such descriptions and definitions, the global reality is very complex, and one must not succumb to the temptation of presenting globalisation in essentialist and reductionist terms; as an economic phenomenon homogenous in its effects and causes (Bray 2003, 210; Angus 2004, 24; Gallagher 2005, 126).



To start with, the phenomenon is not as new as it is frequently implied. Capitalism has had a 'global dimension' since it came into existence; involving places as distant as England, Portugal, Spain, Africa, India and China. In the 19th century, one could witness what may be called a 'global division of labour' between European manufacturing nations and colonial suppliers of raw material/markets. Moreover, such an economy was, after the 1870s, regulated according to an internally acknowledged parameter - the gold standard which fixed the international value of currencies (Fulcher 2004, 82/83). However, one has to acknowledge that global interaction has intensified in the past few years. Nowadays:

“Huge sums of money are transmitted across the world on a daily basis. Companies no longer produce in one country for export to others but run manufacturing operations in many different countries in distant parts of the world. Markets for goods and service, for capital and labour too, are in many ways global in extent.”(Fulcher 2004, 82)

Yet, despite these global forces and the growing power and influence of multi-nationals, globalisation is not a uniform phenomenon. The actual world situation comprises numerous divisions, different histories and traditions, and differing national policies (Young 1998, 52).

“Even though new financial centres have emerged in developing countries and investment in 'emerging markets' has become, for a time at least, fashionable, most of the money still flows between North America, Europe and Japan ... in 1998 emerging markets accounted for only 7% of the world's capital, even though their countries contained around 85% of the world's population.”(Fulcher 2004, 97)

Moreover, investment in poor countries is not spread over a large number of these, but heavily concentrated in a small number (China, India, Mexico, Brazil; whereas a continent like Africa is on the whole, excluded). Even multinationals generally operate only in a small number of countries and, in terms of production, cannot be considered 'global' given the number of countries involved (Fulcher 2004, 97/98). Hence rather than referring to an actual, fully-fledged reality, globalisation should be understood as a **trend**; the trend involves a process whereby worldwide social and economic relations, linking distant localities to one another in such a way that events in one place are shaped by other events occurring miles away, are being intensified (Armove 1999, 10).

Global concerns

What is it that teachers need to know if they are to help pupils make sense of the world in the early twenty-first century? Long standing global issues - those to do with poverty, environment, conflict and social justice - constantly take on new forms, whether in relation to the 'war against terrorism' or the complexities of climate change and globalisation. All of these issues have a major impact on the society that students will live in, both now and in the future (Worldwatch Institute, 2003, 2004).



One useful source of information relating to young people's global concerns comes from research into their hopes and fears for the future. A study of primary aged children in the UK by Hicks and Holden (1995) showed that their main global concerns related to issues of: war and peace, pollution of the environment, food and poverty, and relationships between countries. At secondary level a high proportion of Swedish teenagers were found to take a pessimistic view of the global future especially in relation to the environment and warfare (Oscarsson, 1996).

Australian teenagers reported considerable concern about wealth and poverty, war and peace, technological change and environmental damage (Hutchinson, 1996). Such issues were mirrored in a MORI poll (1998) in the UK where over a thousand 11-16 year olds were questioned about their knowledge of global issues. Pupils were asked what they knew about the reasons for: war in the world, destruction of the environment, famine, overpopulation, human rights abuse, and economic problems in developing countries. They were asked which of these they would like to know more about and how important they thought it was to be taught about such issues at school.

Shown a list of seven global...issues, most pupils say they know something about each.

Nonetheless, in all cases a notable minority either say they know nothing or that they do not understand the topic under discussion. Reasons for war in the world is the issue that most young people are inclined to say they know something about (72%), while at least three in five say they have some understanding of what causes environmental destruction (66%), famine (64%), overpopulation (63%)...Slightly fewer believe they have some insight into the reasons for human rights abuse (56%) and the economic problems of developing countries (51%) (MORI, 1998: 4).

Television was cited as their main source of information about global issues with school, newspapers and parents following close behind. Although some pupils said they learnt about such issues at school, three-quarters wanted to know more and felt they needed such understanding to help them in the future. Over half felt that environmental disasters, war and the increasing gap between rich and poor, would seriously affect them in their adult lives. They did not, however, feel they could do much that would help to change the world.

Global concern amongst the post-secondary age group has also been tracked by educators and many of the issues referred to by these respondents are the same as those for school pupils (Gidley and Inayatullah, 2002). A typical study is that by Eckersley (1999) involving 15-24 year olds youth in Australia. He writes:

...most young people see the future in terms of a continuation or worsening of today's global and national problems and difficulties ...Major concerns included: pollution and environmental destruction, including the impact of growing populations; the gulf between rich and poor; high unemployment, including the effect of automation and immigration; conflict, crime and alienation ...discrimination and prejudice; and economic problems, including the level of foreign debt (Eckersley, 1999: 77).



A number of educational fields have responded to these concerns from global education and futures education to peace education and citizenship (Goldstein and Selby, 2000).

Educational responses

Tye's (1999) international survey exploring the nature of global education revealed a wide variety of responses from educators in some fifty countries. Nearly half of the respondents agreed in whole or part with his definition:

Global education involves learning about those problems and issues which cut across national boundaries and about the interconnectedness of systems – cultural, ecological, economic, political, and technological. Global education also involves learning to understand and appreciate our neighbours with different cultural backgrounds from ours; to see the world through the eyes of others; and to realise that other people of the world need and want much the same things (Tye, 1999: 17).

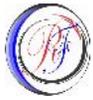
However, this survey revealed only a small number of teacher training courses anywhere in the world that attempted to promote global education. Amongst the most progressive are a number of those in the United States which, in part, flourish as a result of the decentralised nature of the education system (Merryfield, Jarchow & Pickert, 1997).

Some theoreticians (Surian, 2001; Jarvis and Holford, 2005) hold that 'globalisation' may positively influence education, since it may bring together different peoples, ideas and resources in a world-wide pool. The whole world is becoming a global society; media and cyberculture are becoming more widespread. This is providing new opportunities for research and interaction to people who previously had no access to major libraries or research institutions (Kellner 2005, 102). Technological tools and developments can be applied to good use, so as to serve the needs of students across the world. This position holds that with capital shifting into a knowledge-based economy¹, information and knowledge are fast becoming a high-priced new commodity. Knowledge has become a principal economic currency, and its rapid production and circulation have become a crucial input for economic performance.

As to the role of teachers, contemporary teacher education, at best, tends to take a politically neutral direction and, as a consequence, it is limited in the ways it can equip teachers to understand how forces of globalisation and Neo-Liberalism are not forces in their own right but connected to a wider system of exploitation

Globalization and Teacher Education in India

In any educational system, the teacher performs a significant function of perpetuating society's heritage and energizing human resources towards social progress. The level of a nation's education cannot rise far above the quality of the teacher of that nation. This therefore, makes the preparation and selection of teachers a significant social concern. There is a need to review and transform both the professional preparation of teachers and their in-service training. There is little doubt that like all developing countries, educational

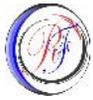


particularly in its quest to achieve education for all by 2020. Undoubtedly, teachers lie at the heart of this educational crisis because only the teachers who possess the necessary technical competence and professional skills through a well coordinated teachers education program that can rise to meet the challenges of the crisis.

The Education commission recommended the introduction of “a sound program of professional education of teachers”. It further remarked that investment in teacher education can yield very rich dividends because the financial resources required are small when measured against the resulting improvements in the education of millions. As a teacher tries to teach in the way in which he himself was taught by his favorite teachers, this tends to perpetuate the traditional methods of teaching. Such an attitude becomes an obstacle in progress in a situation like the present when new and dynamic methods of instruction are needed. This situation can be modified only by effective professional education which will initiate the teacher to the needed revolution in teaching and lay the foundations for his future professional growth.

Classroom management is not an end in itself but indicative of teachers’ authority, inner strength, interpersonal relations and leadership role. A learning environment that seeks student cooperation and minimizes disciplinary problems would be achieved by teachers who have expertise in content and instructional strategies, who make wise decisions about time and space, who demonstrate an attitude of valuing and caring their students. Preventive classroom management can be effected by planning rules and procedures beforehand as well as developing accountability in students for their academic work and classroom behavior. Effective managers have intervention skills for dealing quickly with disruptive in direct and fair ways. The development of personality traits and cultivation of skills required for effective management is be achieved through theory, practice and effective monitoring.

The focus of teachers training should depart from the traditional method of professional teacher educational program which thus far has not produced the desired quality and professionalism. This system exposes the teacher to acquire a body of knowledge in a subject discipline. He/she takes courses in education, which involves methodology of teaching learning. Lastly, he/she goes through a supervised teaching practice which is referred to as apprentice. This system has not produced the desired result for a **Transformative educational system** in a globalized world, innovation required for both for teacher pre-service preparation and teacher in-service training. It is for this reason, the school-based teacher professional preparation and development is advocated. This enables schools and teachers to play a much larger role in teacher’s professional development. This will eventually make the schools be the first to reap the benefits of generation of good new teachers. The cluster school-based teacher in-service teacher development is an innovation being carried out. It is a system of mentoring whereby teacher’s educators and or professional teachers support teachers directly in their classrooms with intensive period of mentoring and discussion in teachers meetings within the schools and across a cluster of schools to develop reflective practices and reflective practitioners. The goal of global competitiveness, demands



that both the curriculum and the teaching methods to be more focused on developing generic and attitudinal skills, such as critical thinking and problem solving as well as promoting national reconciliation.

References

1. B.N. Panda – A.D. Tiwari, *Teacher Education*, APH Publishing Corporation, New Delhi – 2009
2. S.K.Murthy, *Teacher and Education in Indian Society*, Tendon publications Ludhiana
3. Dr. N. Ramnath Kishan, *Global Trends in teacher Education* APH Publishing Corporation, New Delhi – 2008
4. Angus, Lawrence. “Globalization and educational change: bringing about the reshaping and re-norming of practice.” *Journal of Education Policy*, 19, no. 1 (2004) : 23 - 41.
5. Hill, Dave. “Critical Teacher Education, New Labour, and the Global Project of Neoliberal Capital.”
6. Kellner, Douglas, “Globalization, September 11, and the Restructuring of Education.” In *Critical Theories, Radical Pedagogies, and Global Conflicts*. Eds. Fischman, Gustavo E., Peter McLaren, Heinz Sünker and Colin Lankshear. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2005.
7. Tikly, Leon. “Globalization and education in the postcolonial world: towards a conceptual framework.” *Comparative Education*, 37, no. 2 (2001) 151 - 171.