

Editorial Introduction

Ali A. Abdi

University of Alberta

aabdi@ualberta.ca

In this issue of the journal, the topical focus continues to be on the possibilities of creating effective trajectories and platforms that define and operationalize the meanings as well as the practices of educational equity, knowledge systems and the contested interplays of learning programs and probable clusters of social development. As I have stated few times in the pages of this journal and elsewhere, regardless of the analytical qualities we employ or the critical lenses we deploy in our work, the general congruency of the type of education we discuss and the human well-being objectives we aim for, should be central to both the *problematique* and the prospects of the research ‘stories’ we are advancing. As such, in any educational research forum, a constant question could be, are the recommendations extracted from the projects capable of inducing ameliorative possibilities in the lived contexts the articles and related forums of description and debates are examining. Indeed, with education representing for me, and I hope for you, one important dimension of the overall plains of social development, all educational research in the postcolonial period, should, *sans exception*, analyze and seek those inclusive spaces of the social, the political and by, extension, the discursive, which could all liberate the minds as well the corpus of especially those who are intersectionally marginalized in today’s selectively networked, still locally situated, and extensively globalized world space.

It is in the spirit of these local and global theorizings and expected practices that the three articles in this issue focus on education, multiculturalism and racism; the need to ‘de-binarize’ knowledge systems as they pertain to Western societies and Indigenous peoples, and a re-examination of the impact of industrial development on the lives and the education of native peoples in Northern Canada. In the first article, “*The ‘Equity Waltz’ in Canada: Whiteness and the informal realities of racism in education*,” Paul Carr discusses how Canada, with its early adherence to the policies of multiculturalism and multicultural education, was seen by many as one country that has achieved a concomitant project of respect and diversity that could uniquely define its identity. Despite this *de facto* multicultural country status, though, Carr notes, Canada has not been that successful in effectively responding to its rapidly evolving demography, especially with respect to the explicit advisements that are explained in its Constitution. As such, there are a number of equity, diversity and human rights issues that Canadian education and policy makers need to address. It is with this in mind that Carr explores the structures of racism in education with one important intention of critically locating the continuing predominance of whiteness. Closer to the end of the article, the author looks at policy issues, and how accountability for anti-racism and social justice can be achieved in the context of actual

governance systems and their attendant social and educational categories. The importance of these analyses cannot be overstated, and despite all the rhetoric about multiculturalism and multicultural education, the promise of learning programs that focus upon, and effectively deal with, the world of all learners seems to be still elusive.

In the second article, "*Information and wisdom in the practice of knowledge*," Satoru Nakagawa discusses and analyzes the possibilities of bringing together the usually binarized western and Indigenous ideologies and attached notations that constitute their knowledge systems. As he says, this fusion of information-based knowledge (IBK) and wisdom-based knowledge (WBK) will be beneficial for all learners, but especially those whose knowledge systems have been marginalized over time and space. Nakagawa discusses how, in the current configuration of educational systems, most schooling is based on IBK, a reality that has not only assured the problematic cooptation of local contexts, but also the outright exclusion, or at best the nominal inclusion, of Indigenous knowledge and epistemological systems from/into global platforms of learning. As he rightly notes, children first experience WBK in their environments, and that is where their ideological formations are established, an issue advanced, not only by contemporary anti-colonial philosophers of education, but as well, by the West's most important philosopher of education, John Dewey, who, in that moment at least, might have been ahead of his time. The author then notes the need, especially with those who have higher education and are recognized by the dominant society, but also within Indigenous societies, to engage in critical self-evaluation, see their position vis-à-vis the rest of society, and undertake the necessary changes to achieve the fusion of knowledges that should eventually enfranchise the place of WBK in all areas of learning and teaching.

In the third article, "*Marketing adult education for megaprojects in the Northwest Territories*," Andrew Hodgkins undertakes an empirical study of the interplay of the current economic programs, which are mostly based upon the extraction of non-renewable resources in Canada's Northwest Territories, and Aboriginal people's education and social development. To achieve his descriptive and analytical intentions, he uses qualitative methodology which includes content analysis and open-ended interviews, and that helps him see how local realities of the labour market could influence educational policies, and how that will, in turn, impact general policy processes and practices. The interviews were conducted at Aurora College in the Northwest Territories and the interviewees included policy people and other stakeholders involved in Northern development, adult education and training programs. At this stage of the study, it is clear that adult education programs have been highly influenced by market forces with important community and sustainability implications.

Besides the three articles, we also have one book review in this issue: Reva Joshee and Lauri Johnson's (Eds.) *Multicultural education policies in Canada and the United States* (2007), reviewed by Ranilce Guimaraes-Iosif. Again, the contents of this issue should expand our boundaries of understanding and analyzing the role of education in ecological well being, and from there, should lessen the ideological rigidities that limit the spaces of the possible, thus according us all more ways of questioning, not only the ways the world is structured, but as well, the quality of the debates we undertake so as to

prospectively harness the still elusive promise of inclusive educational and social development.

Ali A. Abdi
Editor
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