



Contents lists available at ScienceDirect

## International Journal of Educational Development

journal homepage: [www.elsevier.com/locate/ijedudev](http://www.elsevier.com/locate/ijedudev)

## Successful globalisation, education and sustainable development

Angela W. Little\*, Andy Green<sup>1</sup>

Faculty of Policy and Society, Institute of Education, University of London, 20 Bedford Way, London WC1H 0AL, England, United Kingdom

## ARTICLE INFO

## Keywords:

Education  
 Successful globalisation  
 Sustainable development  
 China  
 India  
 Kenya  
 Sri Lanka

## ABSTRACT

This article examines the role of education in 'successful globalisation' and how this links with agendas for sustainable development. In the first part 'successful globalisation' is defined as economic growth combined with equality and social peace. Japan and the East Asian tiger economies – particularly South Korea and Taiwan – have been uniquely successful in the last half century in achieving both rapid economic growth over long periods and relative income equality and social cohesion. A host of factors have been responsible for this, including fortuitous geo-political circumstances and good timing. However, education has also played a major role. The article, based on a review of international and national research literatures, analyses how far China, India, Kenya and Sri Lanka have managed to develop their own forms of successful engagement with the global economy and what part education policy has played. In the second part we relate our concept of successful globalisation to the parallel discourses of sustainable development and education for sustainable development and reflect on what our notion of 'successful globalisation' can borrow from and lend to these literatures.

© 2008 Elsevier Ltd. All rights reserved.

## 1. Introduction

This paper draws on the analysis presented in the recent DFID book: *Education and Development in a Global Era: Strategies for Successful Globalisation* (Green et al., 2007). Here we extend the argument to draw connections with the broader development discourse of sustainable development.

The book examines the role that education has played and can play in what we term 'successful' engagements with the global economy. Based on secondary evidence drawn from the academic social science literature and official reports, its regional focus is East Asia and its country focus China, India, Kenya and Sri Lanka. A review of the general literature on globalisation, education and development, combined with our assessment of development of the East Asian tiger economies between 1960 and 1990 as 'successful' and of Sri Lanka's decline into civil war since the early 1980s as a negative aspect of development, led us to a working definition of successful engagement with the global economy as: *export-led economic growth with income equality and peace*. Our analysis of the literature on globalisation and development suggested that globalisation has changed the terms of development in important ways, including through increasing

the importance of trade, foreign investment and technology transfer. These changes make education and skills increasingly central to the process of development. Countries which have been most 'successful' in globalisation hitherto have been those which have achieved the most favourable terms of engagement with the global economy. Education, we suggest, has been an essential precondition for this.

The paper is in two parts. First we present the essence of our argument about successful globalisation through a brief conceptual analysis on globalisation, development and education followed by our case study countries and regions. Second we address the parallel discourses on sustainable development and education for sustainable development and reflect on what our notion of 'successful globalisation' can borrow from and lend to this literature.

## 2. Successful globalisation

## 2.1. Globalisation

Globalisation can be defined simply as the accelerated movement of goods, services, capital, people and ideas across national borders. It is not an entirely new phenomenon since the internationalisation of markets and cultures (e.g., the spread of global religions) has been occurring for millennia, but the latest phase of globalisation is qualitatively distinct. Triggered by the abandonment of the Bretton Woods' agreements on fixed exchange rates in early 1970s, and fuelled subsequently by the

\* Corresponding author. Tel.: +44 20 7 612 6623; fax: +44 20 3 073 8310.

E-mail addresses: [a.little@ioe.ac.uk](mailto:a.little@ioe.ac.uk) (A.W. Little), [andy.green@ioe.ac.uk](mailto:andy.green@ioe.ac.uk)

(A. Green).

<sup>1</sup> Tel.: +44 20 7612 6760; fax: +44 20 7612 6632.

liberalisation of trade and finance, and by the unprecedented improvement in the speed and costs of communications, the current phase of globalisation is marked out by the sheer rapidity of change and by the ever-growing power of multinational corporations.

There are, of course, competing accounts of how this process should be theorised. These range from the more skeptical approaches (Hirst and Thompson, 1996), which claim there is nothing much new in global capitalism, to the views of the so-called hyper-globalists (Reich, 1991; Ohmae, 1996), who see the process as an inevitable and linear global extension of the neo-liberal policy agendas of the global powers which will inevitably lead to global economic and political convergence. Our own research led to a different view and one more in keeping with the so-called transformationalist perspective (Held et al., 1999). This approach acknowledges that post-1970 globalisation is a qualitatively new phenomenon which is radically changing the power relations between the national and transnational levels. However, this does not herald the end of nation states as significant political units and is unlikely to lead to a wholesale global convergence in economies and cultures. Globalisation affects economic, political and cultural spheres in highly contradictory and uneven ways and cannot be seen as an inevitable or linear process. As we are reminded by the historiography of the global retreat from internationalisation during the period between the two world wars in the 20th century (James, 2001), globalisation is not a one way historical street and it is not predetermined. Its future course will depend not only on technology and economics but also on politics and the choices made in different regions of the world. This means that what policy elites in different states – including developing states – do, matters crucially.

Our comparative and historical approach underlines the complexity of the relationships amongst education, economic growth, equality and social stability. It is a complexity that urges caution about histories of education and development used to bolster the development policy rationales of national governments and the international development community. Chang's (2007) re-analysis of development history, especially in his native South Korea, reminds us how contemporary international advocacies of free trade and foreign investment for the poorest nations are accompanied by over-simple and often quite erroneous views of the history of economic growth.

## 2.2. Development

How we understand development in the contemporary context of a globalising world will, of course, depend in important ways on how we understand the process of economic globalisation. At the most basic level, whether we see globalisation as 'a good thing' for all nations or, on the contrary, a phenomenon which further enriches elites in the developed world at the expense of the poorest states, will fundamentally affect how we assess the possibilities for positive forms of engagement in the global economy on the part of the less developed countries. Optimists will point to East Asia as demonstrating what can be gained from globalisation by less developed countries. Pessimists will remind us that most of the countries in Latin America and Africa have so far gained little from globalisation and may even have suffered relative decline as a consequence. Some will take the more balanced view and agree with Nobel Laureate economist Joseph Stiglitz that globalisation is inherently neither good nor bad since it all depends on how it is managed. As he writes:

Globalisation itself is neither good nor bad. It has the power to do enormous good... But in much of the world it has not

brought comparable benefits. For many, it seems closer to an unmitigated disaster (Stiglitz, 2002, p. 20).

Other less normative viewpoints also fundamentally affect how the process of development is understood in the light of globalisation. Two in particular stand out.

The first relates to the question of convergence and divergence in the global economy, as discussed above. If we believe, as many 'globalists' do, that convergence along the lines of the currently dominant neo-liberal market economies of the West is inevitable and desirable, we will be inclined to see only one viable path for development—more likely than not that which conforms to the principles of neo-liberalism advocated in what has been called the 'Washington Consensus'. On the other hand, if we take the view that there are manifestly divergent responses to globalisation across the world, and that a variety of models might be seen as 'successful', then it is possible to retain a more open agenda about what may constitute 'successful' globalisation in practice (Sen, 1999).

The second relates to the question of the role of nation states in a globalised world, which is probably the most controversial question in the entire globalisation debate. The view which maintains that states have severely diminished importance in a global economy may imply that states are not the main issue for development. They should be encouraged to withdraw from economic management to allow the market to do its work. Accordingly, the richer countries should focus less on the nature of weak or corrupt states and more on providing the resources and aid to kick-start the poorest economies (Sachs, 2005). On the other hand, the perspective that nation states remain of considerable importance despite globalisation may encourage the view that the nature of the state is a main factor in successful development, as is argued by developmental state theorists (Amsden, 1992; Johnson, 1982; Wade, 1990) or, more negatively, by those who say that failed states are the main impediments to successful globalisation (Wolf, 2004). To Wolf it is the failure of states in Africa that lies behind their underdevelopment and not globalisation. 'The world needs more globalisation not less. But we will only have more and better globalisation if we have better states' (Wolf, 2004, p. 320). Most recently Collier (2007) has argued that corruption, political instability and mismanagement of economic resources lie at the root of the problems facing the world's poorest billion.

Globalisation may be seen to affect the process of development, and the role of education and skills in this, in a number of key ways. In general terms it can be said to increase the importance of international trade in economic development since national economic competitiveness, and hence national incomes, increasingly rely on success in the ever-growing global markets in goods and services. In increasing the mobility of production factors, including capital, labour, materials, technology and know-how, globalisation also changes the terms of comparative economic advantage. This is no longer wholly constrained, as in Ricardo's day, by geography and natural resources (Gray, 1998). Comparative advantage can now be 'engineered' in national economies in more diverse ways without respect to natural resource endowments (Amsden, 1992; Wade, 1990). Increasing mobility of production factors also magnifies the importance in economic development of foreign direct investment since this is now possible on a scale not previously envisaged. Globalisation, associated as it often is with rapid advancements in science and technology, and particularly with information and communications technologies, also enhances the importance of knowledge and ideas in production and services. In the so-called 'knowledge economy' it is the intangible inputs of knowledge, know-how and ideas which constitute the greater part of the value in traded goods

and services and which therefore become most central to business profit and national economic development (Lundvall and Archibugi, 2001; OECD, 2001).

In as much as globalisation is associated with changing patterns of international governance and market regulation, not least in relation to trade, globalisation further impacts on the nature of economic development, changing the terms under which national governments and national economies can engage with the global market. Being an export-led economy is clearly a precondition for 'successful' development. But whether developing countries seek to engage with global markets through liberal free trade policies, or through the kind of successful strategic trading (mercantilist) practices adopted in much of Asia, will depend substantially on their geo-political and economic power – as accruing to China for instance by virtue of its huge internal markets – and on the nature and enforceability of the trading regimes which the dominant powers seek to impose.

### 2.3. Education and successful globalisation

The role of education in development is also substantially changed by the process of globalisation in as much as it is associated with the tendencies above. As it is generally argued, knowledge and skills become more important for economic development as countries compete internationally in knowledge-based goods and services. Education and skills become more important also as a means of attracting the foreign direct investment which is one of the primary engines of development for many countries (Carnoy, 1999; Daun, 2002). Equally important, education and skills determine the degree to which knowledge and technologies can be transferred and absorbed and thus the capacity of a state to build up its indigenous industries and to compete in world markets with their goods and services (Amsden, 1992). Education also plays an increasingly central role in mediating societal responses to the strains and contradictions thrown up by globalisation and to ensuring the social as well as economic benefits accrue from development and engagement with the global economy (Carnoy and Castells, 2001; Green, 1997). In international terms, education plays a vital role in determining the competence of the elites, both private and corporate, whose jobs it is to negotiate the most favourable terms for a country to engage with the global markets and its key institutions, such as the transnational corporations and the international economic agencies such as the World Bank, the IMF and WTO.

### 3. Japan and the East Asian tiger economies

Our key task in relation to the Japan and the East Asian tiger economies (Hong Kong, Singapore, South Korea, Taiwan) was to outline the common characteristics of their development trajectories and to assess the role of education in development relative to strategies and actions in other sectors. Although differentiated in significant ways these economies provide a distinctive regional pattern of growth with equality which has not been matched in any other region. Various factors help to explain this regional phenomenon, including most importantly, geo-political advantages, the fortuitous timing of initial industrialisation, and the role played by the developmental states which, as Wade argues, govern rather than follow the market (Wade, 1990). However, education and skills have also played key roles. Education has generally supported rapid economic growth through encouraging foreign investment, enabling technology transfer, promoting productivity and progressively upgrading the skills base as required for each successive economic shift to higher value-added areas of manufacturing and service industry. Education has also played a

generally positive role in promoting relatively cohesive national identities and in enhancing state capacity by producing a cadre of well educated and, on the whole, extremely competent civil servants who are the ones that have planned and implemented the industrial policies and all the complex mechanisms that have been used to implement successful strategic trading policies (Green, 2007).

### 4. China, India, Kenya and Sri Lanka

Our key tasks in relation to our analysis of China, India, Kenya and Sri Lanka are threefold. The first is to identify the points in recent world history at which each country made a deliberate choice to forge a stronger integration between their respective domestic economies and the global economy. The second is to provide an assessment in each country of progress towards the three goals of successful globalisation; i.e., export-led economic growth, income equality and peace. The third is to provide an assessment of the contributions made by education and education policies to each of these goals.

#### 4.1. China

China embarked on her drive towards global economic integration from 1978, at the end of the Cultural Revolution. Her record of economic growth has been spectacular and closely resembles the earlier achievements of the East Asian tigers. Notwithstanding its communist ideology, China's 'socialism with Chinese characteristics' follows the developmentalist tigers in the way it links economic growth with its national identity and political role in the world. It has also made ample and effective use of the kind of industrial and strategic trading policies used by the other developmental states, assisted not least by the leverage in international relations afforded by its huge internal markets, access to which foreign powers all crave. However, in contrast to the tigers, China's economic development has been very uneven and its society is becoming increasingly unequal. The tensions caused by a widening urban–rural and east–west divide, combined with continuing friction between the majority Han and the non-Han minorities, threaten to undermine the image of national unity and social cohesion projected by the regime (Vickers, 2007). These divisions, and the huge costs to the environment caused by escalating energy consumption, place in question the sustainability of the Chinese model.

China's achievements in basic education, especially before and during the Cultural Revolution, have contributed significantly to her economic growth thereafter. The subsequent expansion of junior, secondary, technical and higher education from 1978 has enabled China largely to meet the rising demand for skills in higher-end manufacturing and service sectors. This process has been so dramatic, in fact, that it is now challenging developed economies in the hallowed areas of knowledge-based production, such as advanced software production, in markets like computer games and biotechnology, in the development of new crops. However, in contrast to the pattern observed earlier in the tiger economies, educational expansion is occurring very unevenly across the country, with implications for income and other equalities and for sustainability. This is largely due to the regime's embrace of neo-liberal market models in public policy, including fiscal decentralisation and increased reliance on user fees, which in turn is related to the post-Cultural Revolution reaction against the extremes of Maoist egalitarianism. Meanwhile, the Communist authorities have been attempting to reinforce their legitimacy and paper over the cracks in national unity and social cohesion caused by rising inequality by pursuing a broad programme of 'patriotic

education'. The government's re-emphasis of Confucian values, in order to maintain social harmony in the face of rising inequality, is understandable. However, this appeal to nationalist sentiment may unleash forces which the government cannot control and which may prove destabilising in the medium- to long-term, both domestically and in terms of China's relations with her Asian neighbours and the West (Vickers, 2007).

#### 4.2. India

India's drive towards export-orientation and greater integration into the global economic integration came in two waves. The first, during the 1980s, increased the role of the private sector, regularised imports and exports, reduced corporate and personal taxes and moved away from the model of state-led industrialisation and import substitution that had marked most of the period since independence in 1947. Following a downturn of the economy and political turmoil in the late 1980s, the second wave of economic globalisation started in earnest from 1991, when the government agreed an economic stabilisation programme with the IMF and the World Bank. This heralded a different economic regime in which deregulation was intended to create opportunities for the domestic private sector and, more importantly, to encourage international investment.

The economic record since the reforms has been mixed. Economic growth has not been consistently higher than in the pre-reform period, and while there appears to have been a very slight decrease in the proportion of the population judged to be living in poverty, consumption has become more skewed towards urban areas and the richest groups. Inter-state inequalities have also increased. Following independence, Nehru's vision of a national identity that would transcend caste, regional, linguistic and regional identities, while not undermining diversity and pluralism, led to the reorganisation of the country into linguistically constituted states. While this remains the pattern today, the demand for English proficiency and the process of cultural globalisation in general question the extent to which linguistic identities remain the basis for social cohesion. Undoubtedly, cohesion is maintained in part by the continuing force of the hierarchical caste system and feudal relations in rural areas (Kamat, 2007).

The contribution of education to economic growth has been largely due to the major investment in university education from the 1950s. With its strong focus on science and technology and the growth of public and private sector technical colleges, education provided the skills required by heavy industries and, unwittingly, created a bedrock of skills for the subsequent ICT revolution several decades later. Meanwhile the education of the rural masses was extremely slow to improve—and even now, after major thrusts to achieve Education for All, India's achievements in education fall far behind countries at similar levels of economic development. The state education system remains marked by huge disparities in terms of provision and opportunities for education and economic advancement and is paralleled by a massive and differentiated private system in both urban and rural areas.

The role of education in contributing positively to national identity and social cohesion faced its strongest test in 2000 when the then BJP government attempted to introduce its New Curriculum Framework. The framework proposed to 'Indianise, nationalise and spiritualise' the school curriculum and purge all 'foreign elements' from school textbooks. By referring to British colonial rule and Mughal rule in India, the framework threatened to undo the secular and pluralistic principles of the Indian constitution (Kamat, 2007). Since then, with the change of government, fresh efforts have been

made to develop a radically different National Curriculum Framework (NCERT, 2006).

Whether India's developmental model is sustainable remains, as with China, very much in doubt. It is not only that the inequalities and ethnic/religious divides pose a constant threat to stability. There is also a question as to how far a developmental model based less on manufacturing than on the highly localised knowledge-based service industries, in Bangalore and elsewhere, can be generalised across a country of a billion people, half of whom cannot read. It is hard to believe that there is sufficient global demand for such off-shore service provision to sustain growth in a country as vast as India.

#### 4.3. Kenya

Kenya represents a very different case which provides the biggest challenge in terms of learning any relevant lessons from the East Asian experience. It has none of East Asia's geographical advantages, lacking as it does long strategic coastlines and having severe disadvantages in climate, land fertility and population dispersal (Herbst, 2000). It has also lacked East Asia's luck in geopolitics. Far from being at the centre of western geo-political concerns, Kenya, and Sub-Saharan Africa generally, have represented something nearer to a forgotten region to western powers and have not attracted a fraction of the investment during the past 40 years going to developed countries and East Asia. Under such circumstances it has not been obvious what successful globalisation might mean. For all this, Kenya grew rapidly during the period from 1965 to the mid-1970s, at close to the rates of the East Asian countries. Economic inequality remained high, but productivity improved in agriculture and rural poverty declined. However, from the mid- to late-1970s development in Kenya went into reverse. The reasons for this are multiple and complex. The terms of trade for its primary agricultural export, coffee, declined, political instability drove out foreign investment, and major new areas of manufacturing exports did not develop. Our analysis suggests that failure to make an early transition to export-led growth through manufacturing, East Asian-style, provided a major brake on development. Kenya has not, for the most part, globalised and the fruits of globalisation have not been there to distribute widely (Oketch, 2007). The outbreak of ethnic conflict following elections in December 2007 must in part be seen as a symptom of income inequalities and high rates of youth unemployment.

Our analysis does not show education to have been at the root of Kenya's difficulties since the mid-1970s. In fact educational expansion has been considerable, even though economic reversals, and the catastrophe of HIV/AIDS, have impeded the progress since the 1980s. Educational reform played a major role in nation-building, particularly in the early years after independence, as in East Asia. Whether, it could have done more, given the other adverse circumstances, to hasten global economic integration remains, at the least, highly debateable. In its early post-independence period education policy in Kenya contributed significantly to nation-building, particularly through its language policy which emphasised English.

The policy requiring government boarding secondary schools, where elite political socialisation and formation begins, to admit no less than 20% of pupils from various geographical locations encouraged a tribal mix in the social composition of schools. This fostered a degree of national unity. Education contributed to economic development, particularly in the phase up to the mid-1970s during which the economy grew at a comparable rate to those of East Asia and when agricultural improvements benefited from educational advance. Policies of Free Primary Education introduced in 1974, 1978 and again in 2003 have encouraged

educational access by poor households. However, rapid educational expansion in the 1960s and 1970s acted to increase rather than decrease inequalities that were inherited from the colonial administration. Education has not contributed to the reduction of inequalities in Kenya because much of the rapid enrolment expansion occurred through low quality community self-help schools (harambee schools). Moreover the academic orientation of the education system emphasised progress to higher levels where both access and provision remained unequal among regions and between rural and urban areas.

Kenya has recently successfully re-implemented a policy of free primary education. The durability of such a policy, alongside increased transition to quality secondary education, is likely to determine Kenya's future global economic integration (Oketch, 2007). In the absence of an effective, let alone developmental, state in Kenya, the sustainability of such policies remains doubtful.

#### 4.4. Sri Lanka

Sri Lanka embarked on her drive towards global economic re-integration from 1977 when the government eschewed policies of import substitution industrialisation (ISI) in favour of export-led growth. High economic growth ensued during the first six years but slowed thereafter. The role of agricultural exports, so important throughout the colonial period, declined while that of manufacturing exports and services grew. The distribution of income across the country as a whole has remained more or less unchanged over the past 50 years, though differences between the urban, rural and estate sectors<sup>2</sup> have increased. Moderate economic growth and relatively stable income equality/inequality have been accompanied by significant breakdown of political and social relations between the majority Sinhalese and minority Tamils. And while economic liberalisation is not the root cause of the on-going conflict, the condition of war has substantially retarded the rate of economic growth and the widespread distribution of its benefits and restricted the room for manoeuvre in the political negotiations for peace (Little, 2007). Other factors that impeded Sri Lanka's engagement with globalisation post-1977 include historically low rates of saving and investment, the failure of trade and industrial policy to shift from its import substitution orientation soon enough, the continuing trade-off between growth and welfare orientation, the maintenance of too large a state, and autarkic policies of state controls preventing the economy from becoming internationally competitive (Lakshman, 1997).

Another reason why Sri Lanka has not grown faster and had more to redistribute has had to do with its policy goals for education. Since the 1930s Sri Lanka's education policies have been oriented more to equality of opportunity than to economic growth (Perera, 2005). Notwithstanding the policy orientation, the contribution of education to economic growth has been marked and is underlined by high social and private rates of return to all levels of education. Income equality has been served well by state provision of educational opportunities which have been well distributed across the country, particularly at the basic education level (primary and junior secondary). Fee-free education and subsidies on textbooks, uniforms and school transport, and bursaries for secondary and tertiary education, have contributed to the ability of the poorest households to support their children's education. Direct income support for the poorest families has also contributed significantly to moderate and stable income equality.

<sup>2</sup> In Sri Lanka the economy is classified as urban, rural and estate. Estates are large areas of land on which tea, rubber and coconut are grown commercially and for export.

Education's contribution to our third dimension – peace and war – is difficult to disentangle. To suggest that education has contributed to war may seem perverse, yet the division of the education system based on ethnicity and Sinhala/Tamil medium of instruction appears to have failed to create strong common and national identities among Sinhala and Tamil youth. A series of changes in selection practices for university education introduced in the early 1970s contributed significantly to the perception of grievances by both social groups. In the case of Tamils, this educational grievance contributed to the calls for political separation. Education reforms proposed in 2003 (NEC, 2003) in the greater use of English as a medium of instruction in some subjects, and in English, Sinhala and Tamil as languages of communication between the Sinhalese and Tamils, combined with more determined efforts to admit students from all communities to the same schools, need political will of the highest order if they are to turn education into a pro-active force for peace (Little, 2007).

#### 4.5. Comparisons

The relationships, within each country, between education, economic growth and social outcomes in income equality, poverty reduction, health and social cohesion/national unity, have been shown to be complex, due to a range of endogenous and exogenous characteristics and influences. The endogenous factors include not only those not amenable to policy change, such as basic geographical and geo-political attributes, but also those subject to change, such as the nature of the state and its policies in diverse fields. The exogenous factors include the characteristics of the global economy and other global conditions current at the point in world history when these countries embarked on drives for economic development, modernisation and economic integration. The post-1980 phase of globalisation promoted by the developed OECD economies has been characterised by the introduction of policies designed to forge a greater integration of economies with global markets and the growth of information technology. The goal of economic growth, entailed by these policies, nationally and globally, appears to have overshadowed equally important goals of sustainable development—equality and peace.

Our studies of East Asia, China, India, Kenya and Sri Lanka have shown that education is an important factor in achieving successful forms of globalisation but that it is not necessarily the main factor in each case. While economic and political policies have usually been the more important drivers of development, education has been a necessary, if not sufficient, component. There is no single educational panacea for all dimensions of development for all countries at all times. However five sets of policy appear to offer pertinent lessons. The first is the achievement of mass education which brings marginalised and rural populations within the mainstream of national development. The second is the planned expansion of secondary, technical and higher education that creates the skills needed for each successive phase of sustained economic growth. The third is the development of communication skills that facilitate international economic transactions. The fourth is the equitable expansion of education in order to enhance its contribution to social equality. The fifth is the awareness of the potential of both the official and hidden curriculum of educational institutions to promote positive – and perverse – contributions to national unity and social cohesion.

Globalisation is a process that occurs simultaneously at national and supra national levels. The dominant form of globalisation in our era has not issued from the countries discussed above but from the more affluent and powerful countries of the West. The most powerful global players have largely determined the rules of the game as far as the current

global economy is concerned. However, the role of the countries discussed above has been more than merely reactive. Some have managed to modify the rules to their own advantage and thus engineered more favourable terms of engagement with the global economy. Where globalising states have gained the widest range of economic and social benefit, it has mainly been on account of their own national efforts. International agencies and agreements play their part but these parts are always conditioned by national and local histories, contexts and aspirations. In securing the most favourable terms of engagement with the global economy and the most productive relationships between international, national and local resources for development, education has a doubly important role to play. Economic globalisation and international agreements do not just happen on their own. They happen in part because of decisions taken and policies made in different parts of the world, by – for the most part – educated people. Staying on top of economic globalisation and the amelioration of its perverse impacts require an education system that distributes skills and values widely.

## 5. Sustainable development

The notion of sustainable development entered the political centre stage of policy discourse over 20 years ago when the Brundtland Commission used it to connote a development strategy that, in a much quoted statement,

meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs (WCED, 1987, p. 43).

As Pearce (2007a) has pointed out, the more complete definition contained two key concepts.

The concept of 'need', in particular the essential needs of the world's poor, to which overriding priority should be given, and

The idea of limitations imposed by the state of technology and social organisation on the environment's ability to meet present and future needs (WCED, 1987, p. 43).

While attending to the 'needs' of the current poor is not necessarily consistent with the needs of future generations it is clear that the Commission intended to draw political attention to the fact that millions today and in the future are and will be denied what millions of others take for granted—'supplies of energy, clean water, clean air, political freedoms, protection from crime and war' (Pearce, 2007a, p. 616).

Economists define the concept of sustainable development as 'a path of rising per capita well-being' (Pearce, 2007a, p. 616). While definitions of well-being vary, most concentrate on the underlying capital components of total wealth—man-made capital, human capital, environmental or natural capital, and social capital. Sustainable development implies

not only that total wealth rises through time, but also that technological change outpaces population growth (Pearce, 2007a, p. 616)

Capitals can substitute for each other so that for example human capital can substitute for man-made capital to a degree. However,

Total stocks of individual forms of capital cannot be substituted – the disappearance of, say, all the world's forests would be catastrophic. But it is hard to avoid the fact that capital stocks

are substitutes at the margin, although little is known about the relative elasticities of substitution (Pearce, 2007a, p. 617).

In 1992 most of the world's governments adopted Agenda 21 at the Rio de Janeiro 'Earth Summit' (UNCED, 1992). Agenda 21 introduced the notion of 'sustainable consumption' and the idea that people in rich countries needed to change their consumption patterns if sustainable development was to be achieved. However, as Pearce (2007b) points out, Agenda 21

shares much of the ambiguity surrounding discussions of sustainable development, speaking interchangeably of 'sustainable consumption patterns', 'lifestyle changes', 'sustainable consumption', 'optimisation of resource use' and the 'minimisation of waste', without offering definitions (Pearce, 2007b, p. 612).

While some suggest that the goal of Agenda 21 is the raising of consumption while reducing the use of natural resources, others interpret it as a call to rich countries to reduce their levels of consumption.

Pearce suggests that a theory of sustainable development permits a more rigorous definition of sustainable consumption.

Sustainable development is about ensuring that there are rising per capita stocks of overall wealth. In turn, total wealth increases if and only if savings (capital formation) exceed depreciation on all forms of capital assets – man-made, human and environmental. Deducting this depreciation from the conventional notion of savings produces the notion of genuine savings. The maximum sustainable level of consumption is then the level which is consistent with genuine savings being zero (Pearce, 2007b, p. 613).

Policies to ensure sustainable consumption include investment in education, investment in technology, investment in social capital, reduction of environmental damage and encouragement of savings.

Pearce (2007b) goes on to suggest that weak sustainability requires that the total capital stock rises over time, with the possibility of substitutions between different types of capital. By contrast, strong sustainability requires restrictions on natural and environmental capital, assets that are so special that they must not be permitted to decline.

## 6. Education for sustainable development

The second World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) convened in Johannesburg in 2002 recognised that education had the potential to play a major role in the future realisation of a 'vision of sustainability that links economic well-being with respect for cultural diversity, the Earth and its resources' (UNESCO, 2007, p. 6). Subsequently the United Nations General Assembly adopted Resolution 57/254 and declared the period 2005–2014 as the Decade for Education for Sustainable Development (DESD). The overall goal of the DESD, led by UNESCO, is

to integrate values, activities and principles that are inherently linked to sustainable development into all forms of education and learning and help usher in a change in attitudes, behaviours and values to ensure a more sustainable future in social environmental and economic terms (UNESCO, 2007, p. 5).

Sustainable development is seen to lie in the 'three spheres' of environment (including water and waste), society (including employment, human rights, gender equity, peace and human security) and economy (including poverty reduction, corporate responsibility and accountability). Issues such as HIV and AIDs,

migration, climate change and urbanisation involve two or more of these spheres.

Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) is essentially a call for change in the way we educate our children and ourselves with the express purposes of ensuring a sustainable future. While countries and stakeholders are already interpreting this call in diverse ways UNESCO presents ESD as a development project with four objectives and four thrusts. The objectives are to

Facilitate networking, linkages, exchange and interaction among stakeholders in ESD.

Foster an increased quality of teaching and learning in education for sustainable development.

Help countries make progress towards and attain the Millennium Development Goals through ESD efforts.

Provide countries with new opportunities to incorporate ESD into education reform efforts (UNESCO, 2007, p. 6).

The four thrusts of ESD are improving access to quality basic education, reorienting existing education programmes, developing public understanding and awareness and providing training.

With its aim being to change the ways in which children and adults learn to think, value and act, ESD bears many similarities with earlier and parallel curriculum movements such as environmental education, peace education, population education, human rights education, citizenship education and development education. While the curriculum and pedagogic approaches and boundaries between these 'subjects' or 'cross-curricula themes' are sometimes contested by the educators who promote them, they share a commitment to changes in educational content and delivery (see for examples, Stables and Scott, 2002; McKeown and Hopkins, 2003; Jenkins and Jenkins, 2005). They vary most in terms of their intended reach (from school children to university students, corporate business and policymakers) and content and design (with some emphasising the delivery of specific messages; others the development of skills of reasoning about and engagement with the wider world) (Scott and Gough (eds), 2004).

ESD is characterised by its breadth of vision, holistic approach and an extension of earlier concerns about the sustainability of the environment to the sustainability of society and economies. With a super-inclusive approach it claims to be 'interdisciplinary' (i.e., all disciplines can contribute to it). It is promoted through formal, non-formal and informal modes of education at all levels. It promotes lifelong learning. While intended to be locally relevant and culturally appropriate it simultaneously acknowledges that the fulfilment of local needs can have international effects and consequences. It claims to build capacity for community-based decision-making, social tolerance, environmental stewardship, adaptable workforce and quality of life and uses a variety of pedagogical techniques that promote participatory learning and higher order thinking skills (UNESCO, 2007, p. 6).

In our book we defined development in the current global era as 'successful globalisation' which was defined further as *growth with equality and peace*. While this resonates strongly with some of the themes of sustainable development outlined above there are also differences in emphasis. In the following section we explore, first, how our concept might usefully borrow and incorporate some of the above ideas and second, how it might usefully lend and contribute to them.

## 7. Successful globalisation, sustainable development and education

Our concept of successful globalisation did not incorporate the ideas of *sustainable* development, sustainable growth, sustainable

consumption, sustainable equality or sustainable peace. When we discussed the dimension of economic growth we described its export-orientation, its rate and its size. We positioned economic growth as central to 'successful globalisation'. We did not explore in each of our country cases whether stocks of all types of capital – man-made capital, environmental or natural capital or social capital – had increased over time. Through our emphasis on education we charted growth in human capital and, where available, described returns to this capital investment for different levels and types of education. We also related changes in the stocks of human capital to population increases and decreases over time and, in several cases, the inability of economies to absorb this human capital for further production and productivity, with, in some cases, major implications for social unrest. And, as noted earlier, we did not trace growth in the other components of total wealth. While we attempted to trace shifts in the levels of foreign direct investment we did not trace consistently the changes in overall 'genuine savings' which would indicate sustainable or unsustainable growth.

Our concept of 'successful globalisation' would certainly benefit from the addition of notions of *sustainable growth* and *sustainable consumption*. Strategies for globalisation should not be considered to be successful if they are not also sustainable into the long-term future. Strategies for globalisation should not be considered to be successful if they so deplete natural and environmental resources that the needs of future generations are compromised. Export-oriented growth strategies may not always conserve a country's natural resources for the production of food and water for domestic consumption, which must be considered the most basic resource of all for the survival of people both in the present and the future. Successful globalisation is sustainable globalisation.

It is the third dimension of our definition – peace – where we feel we can contribute usefully to current notions of sustainable development. As noted above, peace and human security are integral to the DESD's societal sphere. And peace and human security are also implied in economists' notions of the social capital integral to the total wealth of a country and the planet. But peace and human security appear subordinate to the more dominant concerns of economic growth, environmental sustainability and calls for increased levels of well-being and social justice.

We chose to privilege the dimension of peace in our definition of development for two main reasons. The first was the difficulty we faced in describing the development trajectory of Sri Lanka over the past 30–40 years. Here is a country that in the early 1980s was hailed by many in the international community as offering a model for development. Sri Lanka showed how, through choices made by policy elites, welfare and social justice could be achieved even when economic growth was low (e.g., Isenman, 1980; Sen, 1981). And here was a country that, following the introduction of export-oriented liberalisation strategies in 1977, had grown moderately and has more or less maintained levels of income equality that, historically, had been considered 'good' in relation to countries with similar levels of wealth. On our first two criteria then Sri Lanka might be considered to be a moderately successful globaliser. Yet, despite economic growth and modest equality Sri Lanka has also been in the grip of civil war over the past 30 years. How could we possibly assert that a country is a 'moderately successful' globaliser when thousands of young people have died and many more injured and maimed for life in the competition for economic, political and social resources?

The second was that social cohesion and national unity appeared to us to be critical elements in the 1970–1980s story of East Asia's economic growth on the one hand and growing equality on the other. While conflict had characterised the early transitions to growth in some of the East Asian countries, for most

of the past 40 years these countries have enjoyed relative peace. We judged, as would most, that peace was a more desirable developmental outcome than conflict, war and societal breakdown and needed to be emphasised, not only as a characteristic of a successful model of development in the past, but also as a goal for development in the future.

There are four further reasons to emphasise peace. The first is the relative lack of progress in economists' work on social capital. The largest theoretical and empirical strides in the theory of sustainable development have been made in relation to the capital stocks on man-made capital, human capital and natural and environmental capital, but, as Pearce (2007a, p. 616) underlines

the ever-present nature of social discord and war is a reminder that social capital deserves a very high status in discussions about sustainability and development.

A second reason stems from our analyses of the role of education in promoting social cohesion and conflict. While much of the DESD literature regards education curricula as a source of peace, human security and social justice, our case studies have highlighted how the systemic structure of education can also act as a source of peace—and conflict. In the Kenya case we judged that post-independence programmes to use a common medium of instruction for ethnically mixed student bodies contributed positively to ethnic tolerance in the early post-independence years. In the Sri Lanka case, by contrast, we suggested that the post-independence policy of two media of instruction (Sinhala and Tamil) promoted a stratification of education among the middle classes that ensured that Sinhalese and Tamil middle class youth were socialised separately. Peace education, population education, environment education, life skills education and education for conflict resolution have all had their place in the Sri Lanka curriculum—but these, we suggest, are less powerful influencers and drivers of knowledge, values and ways of thinking than the hidden or implicit curriculum of daily, informal experiences of learning together in the same schools and building trust across ethnic groups. So while we do not deny the power of formal curricula to both promote and hinder the formation of knowledge, skills, attitudes and values influence we would suggest that the ESD discourse acknowledge to a greater degree than at present the role of the *social organisation of learning* in its contribution to both peace and conflict.

A third reason stems from the second and has to do with the need for more research on the education conditions – in terms of content, pedagogy, social organisation and structure – that lead to peace and social stability. The ESD and related discourses are largely characterised by *advocacy* for education, awareness and training programmes. To date there appears to have been little *analysis* of whether programmes that promote peace, human rights, citizenship, patriotism, gender rights and environment sustainability make any difference in the longer term to individuals and societies. For example, is there any evidence that Environmental Education or ESD has made a difference to economic, environmental and societal sustainability over a period of time, or to the development of democratic political systems? Conversely, do we know whether countries which are already more democratic or more equal and/or enjoy better records on human rights, gender equality or tolerance for minorities are more likely to promote ESD?

A fourth reason stems from the privilege of our position as academic researchers who continue to enjoy political freedoms. We are less constrained than are the members of the community of international development organisations in what we can analyse, write about publically and conclude. International and national

politics are usually 'off-limits' in the public documents issued by inter-governmental agencies for development of national governments. While they may be off-limits in much public documentation they are clearly fundamental to the negotiations 'behind the scenes' over international development goals, strategies and policies which in turn are linked with foreign policies. International and national peace must be a goal of long-term development strategies if the future of the planet is to be assured. This is elaborated further in our conclusion below.

## 8. Sustainable development and international power

The central focus of our book on 'successful globalisation' – that is economic growth with equality and peace – was based on a concern for countries which have not yet been able to succeed in engaging successfully with the global economy. But there are also more international implications for our argument which bear on developing and developed countries and which relate to the agendas of sustainable development. While striving to stay on top of economic globalisation makes sense for those nations at or near the top of the ladder it may not be the only, or most important, objective for the sustainable development of the world as a whole.

One of the implications of our argument concerns the importance of achieving development while maintaining equality and peace and social cohesion. This matters enormously to international relations. An unequal and unstable China, for instance, is likely to provoke intensified nationalism from a government seeking to use it to foster social order in the face of mounting internal difficulties. This becomes a danger for international peace when other countries in Asia, including Japan, India and Taiwan, are vying for leading economic and political roles in the regional and global economies. Western responses to the rise of Asian superpowers are also crucial, given the temptation, in the face of a global war on resources, for western superpowers to use tensions in Asia and elsewhere as a way of gaining or maintaining geo-political advantages. Where developing countries are able to sustain growth, but also to distribute this new wealth more equally, the more likely they are to move gradually towards forms of democracy which would improve the possibilities for more open dialogue between international powers, not least through limiting the credibility of those who use arguments about 'civilisational conflict' (Huntington, 1997) to stir up international tensions.

As China and India continue their economic rise, western powers will increasingly realize that their remaining comparative advantages in tradable sectors – those in the so-called knowledge-based industries and services – cannot be sustained indefinitely. China's and India's wage advantages will not soon disappear, as they did in Japan and have begun to do in the tiger economies. China still has some half a billion people waiting in the rural areas to enter urban labour markets which will prevent wages rising fast in the urban economies. Soon many developed countries will be forced to recognize that remaining competitive is likely to require competing on price and quality, even in the knowledge economy sectors. This implies tough times for sustaining western living standards and, combined with strains over limited energy resources, major international tensions ahead. Global – and environmentally sustainable – solutions will require open international dialogue of the highest order. The quality of education, social cohesion and democratic debate in developing countries could be a major factor in achieving political solutions to the huge problems facing the global economy over the coming decades.

Contrary to the liberal myth, international trade has always been about power relations between nations, rather than about free trade orthodoxies, which have usually only benefited the already powerful states (Hobsbawm, 1969). The economically

powerful states which have adopted free trade policies have generally only done so selectively and where and when they were strong enough to benefit. Historically, with the exception of India, very few powers have developed as full democracies, let alone as free trading democracies. Democracy has usually followed industrialisation—not preceded it. Thanks to education, but deviating from the current liberal nostrums of the dominant powers, East Asia has had a remarkable record not only in growth with equity but also in gradual democratisation, most obviously to date in Japan, South Korea and Taiwan. If growth can continue, and equity and cohesion be enhanced in Singapore and China, there are good chances of long-term democratisation on Chinese models in these states also. This would increase the prospects of global sustainable development immensely. A great deal here is at stake and education has a major role to play in sustainable economic growth with equality and peace.

## References

- Amsden, A., 1992. *Asia's Next Giant. South Korea and Late Industrialisation*. Oxford University Press, Oxford.
- Carnoy, M., 1999. *Globalisation and Educational Reforms: What Planners need to Know*. UNESCO International Institute for Educational Planning, Paris.
- Carnoy, M., Castells, M., 2001. Globalisation, the knowledge society and the network state: *poulantzas at the millennium*. *Global Networks* 1, 1–18.
- Chang, Ha-Joon, 2007. *Bad Samaritans – Rich Nations, Poor Policies and the Threat to the Developing World*. Random House, London.
- Collier, P., 2007. *The Bottom Billion: Why the Poorest Countries are Failing and What Can Be Done About It*. Oxford University Press, Oxford.
- Daun, H. (Ed.), 2002. *Educational Restructuring in the Context of Globalisation and National Policy*. Routledge/Falmer, London.
- Gray, J., 1998. *False Dawn: The Delusions of Global Capitalism*. Granta, London.
- Green, A., 1997. *Education, Globalisation and the Nation State*. Palgrave, Basingstoke.
- Green, A., 2007. Education, globalisation and development. In: Green, A., Little, A.W., Kamat, S., Oketch, M., Vickers, E. (Eds.), *Education and Development in a Global Era: Strategies for 'Successful Globalisation'*. DFID, London.
- Green, A., Little, A.W., Kamat, S., Oketch, M., Vickers, E., 2007. *Education and Development in a Global Era: Strategies for 'Successful Globalisation'*. DFID, London.
- Held, D., McGrew, A., Goldblatt, D., Parraton, J., 1999. *Global Transformation: Politics, Economics and Culture*. Stanford University Press, Palo Alto.
- Herbst, J., 2000. *States and Power in Africa*. Princeton University Press, New Jersey.
- Hirst, P., Thompson, G., 1996. *Globalisation in Question: The International Economy and the Possibilities of Governance*. Polity, Cambridge.
- Hobsbawm, E.J., 1969. *Industry and Empire*. Penguin, Harmondsworth.
- Huntington, S., 1997. *The Clash of Civilizations: Remaking the World Order*. Simon and Schuster, New York.
- Isenman, P., 1980. Basic needs: the case of Sri Lanka. *World Development* 8, 237–258.
- James, H., 2001. *The End of Globalisation*. Harvard University Press, Boston.
- Jenkins, K.A., Jenkins, B.A., 2005. Education for sustainable development and the question of balance. *Current Issues in Comparative Education* 7 (2), 114–129.
- Johnson, C., 1982. *MITI and the Japanese Miracle: The Growth of Industrial Policy 1925–1975*. Stanford University Press, Palo Alto.
- Kamat, S., 2007. Walking the tightrope: equality and growth in liberalising India. In: Green, A., Little, A.W., Kamat, S., Oketch, M., Vickers, E. (Eds.), *Education and Development in a Global Era: Strategies for 'Successful Globalisation'*. DFID, London.
- Lakshman, W.D. (Ed.), 1997. *Dilemmas of Development: Fifty Years of Economic Change in Sri Lanka*. Sri Lanka Association of Economists, Colombo.
- Little, A.W., 2007. Paradoxes of economic and social development in Sri Lanka: the wages of civil war. In: Green, A., Little, A.W., Kamat, S., Oketch, M., Vickers, E. (Eds.), *Education and Development in a Global Era: Strategies for 'Successful Globalisation'*. DFID, London.
- Lundvall, B.-A., Archibugi, D., 2001. *The Globalising Learning Economy*. OUP, New York.
- McKeown, R., Hopkins, C., 2003. *EE≠ESD: defusing the worry*. *Environmental Education Research* 9 (1), 117–128.
- National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT), 2006. *National Curriculum Framework, Syllabus for Classes at the Elementary Level*. NCERT, New Delhi.
- National Education Commission (NEC), 2003. *Proposals for a National Policy Framework on General Education*. National Education Commission, Colombo.
- OECD, 2001. *The New Economy: Beyond the Hype*. OECD, Paris.
- Oketch, M., 2007. Promise unfulfilled: educational development and economic decline in Kenya. In: Green, A., Little, A.W., Kamat, S., Oketch, M., Vickers, E. (Eds.), *Education and Development in a Global Era: Strategies for 'Successful Globalisation'*. DFID, London.
- Ohmae, K., 1996. *The End of the Nation State: The Rise of Regional Economies*. Harper Collins, London.
- Pearce, D., 2007a. Sustainable development. In: Clark, D.A. (Ed.), *The Elgar Companion to Development Studies*. Edward Elgar, Cheltenham, UK, pp. 615–619.
- Pearce, D., 2007b. Sustainable consumption. In: Clark, D.A. (Ed.), *The Elgar Companion to Development Studies*. Edward Elgar, Cheltenham, UK, pp. 612–615.
- Perera, S., 2005. *Education Proposals for Reform*. Paper presented at the seminar on Globalisation and Education, Co-hosted by the Social Policy Analysis Research Centre, University of Colombo and the Institute of Education, University of London, September 20.
- Reich, R., 1991. *The Work of Nations: A Blueprint for the Future*. Vintage, New York.
- Sachs, J., 2005. *The End of Poverty: How We can Make It Happen in Our Lifetime*. Penguin, London.
- Scott, W., Gough, S. (Eds.), 2004. *Key Issues in Sustainable Development and Learning: A Critical Review*. Routledge/Falmer, London/New York.
- Sen, A.K., 1981. Public action and the quality of life in developing countries. *Oxford Bulletin of Economics and Statistics* 4, 287–391.
- Sen, A.K., 1999. *Development as Freedom*. Oxford University Press, Oxford.
- Stables, A., Scott, W., 2002. The quest for holism in education for sustainable development. *Environmental Education Research* 8 (1), 53–60.
- Stiglitz, J., 2002. *Globalisation and its Discontents*. Allen Lane, London.
- United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), 1992. *Agenda 21, Rio de Janeiro, June 3–14*.
- UNESCO, 2007. *The UN Decade for Education for Sustainable Development (DES 2005–2014): the first two years*. UNESCO, Paris.
- Vickers, E., 2007. China's uneven development: nationalism and inequality on the mainland. In: Green, A., Little, A.W., Kamat, S., Oketch, M., Vickers, E. (Eds.), *Education and Development in a Global Era: Strategies for 'Successful Globalisation'*. DFID, London.
- Wade, R., 1990. *Governing the Market, Economic Theory and the Role of Government in East Asian Industrialisation*. Princeton University Press, New Jersey.
- Wolf, M., 2004. *Why Globalisation Works*. Yale University Press, Boston.
- World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED), 1987. *Our Common Future*. Oxford University Press, Oxford.