

# Why Learning Not Education?—Analysis of Transnational Education Policies in the Age of Globalization

Sayantana Mandal

University of Deusto, Bilbao, Spain

The profound influence of globalization seems helping outshine the concept of “education” with the more flexible notion of “learning” in the education policies of major transnational organizations. With considerable differences in concepts, all of them are promoting “learning”, more specifically LLL (lifelong learning) through their policies. However, there are considerable levels of resistance to that as well. Why then LLL is being projected by the transnational organizations as a part (sometimes ubiquitous) of the solution and a way forward? This multidimensional and ambiguous nature of “learning” in transnational policy arena seeks an analysis and asks: How are different worldviews of “learning” and LLL changes and modifies themselves in the age of globalization? Why is there a paradigm shift from “education” to “learning” within the global policy arena? The purpose of this paper is to explore the changes inside the UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization), the EU (European Union), the OECD (Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development) and the WB’s (World Bank) policies regarding the concept of LLL in the context of globalization in contemporary time. To analyze the issue critically, this paper takes the help of Jarvis’s (2008) theoretical model, as it links globalization and LLL with different entities with necessary flexibilities for analytical inputs.

*Keywords:* LLL (lifelong learning), education policy, transnational organizations, globalization.

## Introduction

LLL (lifelong learning) is gaining an increased importance in transnational policy arena, especially in the present age of globalization and due to faster changes at various levels in and around our society. Although education policies still exist, the concept of “education” seems overtrumped with the notion of “learning” which seems much flexible in nature. Major transnational organizations are, therefore, promoting “learning”, more specifically LLL instead of “education” through their policies. Overall, LLL is gaining an unprecedented importance in contemporary policy arena, and it is increasingly been linked with globalization and economy. Transnational policies, on the other hand, are also prone to change and receptive to the changes around. Policies at different levels can, therefore, foster, help, influence, modify, channelize, resist or reject modes, systems, ways, directions and opportunities of learning from their changing standpoints. These standpoints are often related to broader ideologies and goals which influence them to promote policies in such a way which could benefit their interests and core agendas. However, these needs for changes seek adjustments from the society, market and individuals. At the same time, the economic notion, which is directly related to the notion of LLL, brings resistance from the society (Jarvis, 2008, p. 36). Why then is LLL as popular among major transnational

organizations as a part (sometimes ubiquitous) of the solution and a way forward? Looking carefully, it could also be found that even though the transnational organizations termed it as LLL or learning, the dimensions are not exactly same among all. They are different in terms of focus, objectives and innate notions. Therefore, LLL gains its multi-dimensionality and a rather ambiguous nature while carrying a common thread among the major transnational organizations. This encourages arguing that globalization has a profound effect on international policy arena to outperform the traditional “education” paradigm with “learning”; however, it influences differently in different organizations and organizations reacts, changes and responds heterogeneously based on their natures and stands on globalization in present changing situation while formulating policies related to LLL. This multidimensional and ambiguous nature and increasing influence of “learning” in global policy arena seek an analysis in this area and asks how different worldviews of “learning” and LLL changes are and modifies themselves in the age of globalization? Why is there a paradigm shift from “education” to “learning” within the global policy arena?

The purpose of this paper was not to further criticize any specific aspect (e.g., economic) of LLL in policy arena, but historically explore the changes inside each organization regarding the concept of LLL and also analyze it in the context of globalization in contemporary time. This study could help to explore some of the multi-dimensionality and complexity of LLL among different organizations and analyze its importance in the global policy arena. It may contribute to the understanding of the increasing link between globalization and LLL, which is possibly devaluing “education” against “learning”. It can also raise questions and helps reveal the implicit ideas and concepts of the policy or the political agency. It can be said that policy is not just restricted exclusively in actions. “It begins with questions, continues through processes (decision-making procedures) and ends with the impact of the actions that provoke new policy questions” (Papadakis & Gravaris, 2002, p. 2).

This paper, therefore, seems significant for several reasons. First, it could help to explore some of the multi-dimensionality and complexity of LLL among different organizations and analyze its importance in the global policy arena. Second, it may contribute to the understanding of the increasing link between globalization and LLL, which is possibly gaining an ever increasing importance. Finally, this paper could encourage further studies at different country specific levels for better understanding of the complexities and the changing situations. Overall, this paper could help explore some aspects of the transnational policy discourse of LLL in the age of globalization.

For the analysis, this paper selects four major transnational organizations (among others), namely, the UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization), the EU (European Union), the OECD (Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development) and the WB (World Bank), respectively, as they are actively modifying their policies which have a profound influence on the contemporary renewing dimension of LLL all over the world. To critically examine the issue, this paper takes the help of Jarvis’s (2008) theoretical model, as it links globalization and LLL with different entities with necessary flexibilities for analytical inputs. The model considers LLL as a dynamic process where different agents (from transnational organizations to individual nation states) are in different positions of a scale of supporting or resisting the global forces and global-substructures (such as worldwide market of multinational corporations) and reshaping the dimension of LLL continuously. Therefore, LLL, according to this model, is never neutral and it always occurs within a socio-economic and political context (Jarvis, 2008, pp. 34-59) and hence changes according to changes in the society<sup>1</sup>.

---

<sup>1</sup> See Jarvis (2007; 2008). *Lifelong Learning and the Learning Society* (Vols. 2 and 3) for a better understanding of the theoretical model(s).

To begin with, it is perhaps important to note that, overall, there are confusions among academics regarding when and how LLL started getting importance in the policy arena. Field (2006, p. 11) said that during 1990s, it started emerged onto the policy scene with the suddenness of a new fashion. Jarvis (2007, p. 69) contradicted his view and argued that the foundations underlying the policy shift were carefully laid for many years but they went unrecognized by many of us. He referred back to 1910s and 1920s to find the evidences of LLL in the policy area. He found that only in 1960s, the elements of LLL started being mentioned in transnational level policies. In 1960s and 1970s, the idea was broadly adopted by UNESCO (Jarvis, 2007; Rubenson, 2006). UNESCO was, in fact, the first wide spread transnational organization that championed lifelong education and latter LLL internationally. We, therefore, start with UNESCO's policies as an important and pioneering organization and agent of change in this arena.

### **UNESCO on LLL**

In 1972, the "Faure Commission" first benchmarked the lifelong education in the policy arena. The report stressed on two ideas, lifelong education and the learning society. It stated that every individual must be in a position to keep learning throughout his/her life. The idea of lifelong education is the keystone of the learning society. The lifelong concept covers all aspects of education, embracing everything in it, with the whole being more than the sum of its parts (Faure, Herrera, Kaddoura, Lopes, Petrovsky, Rahnema, & Ward, 1972, pp. 181-182). It laid the path of continuing education, where an individual can come back to learn anytime. This approach, therefore, asks for an open and flexible system. However, the general and idealistic nature of the report and its optimism created a period of "romanticism" (Jarvis, 2007, p. 68). Throughout 1970s and 1980s, UNESCO championed their ideologies, and it became the basis of many national education policies around the world, mainly in developed world. In developing world, it could not influence much, as UNESCO's approach towards learning was, to many, a luxury of the developed world. Nonetheless, it coined two topics: the foundations of lifelong education and pedagogical and curriculum aspects of it (Rubenson, 2006, p. 159). It also prepared the base for "life-wide" dimension of the LLL.

By the end of 1980s, other policies by OECD, EU and the WB suppressed the UNESCO's idealistic view on lifelong education (Mundy, 1999; Jarvis, 2007). In 1996, UNESCO published Delors Report or the report "Learning the Treasure Within" and came back to the transnational policy arena of LLL once again. Twenty eight years after the Faure's (1972) report, it finally replaced "lifelong education" with LLL. Like the previous one, this report is also based on humanistic approach, but it also focuses on the link between learning and world of work. It acknowledges the need to rethink and update the concept of lifelong education so as to reconcile three forces: competition which provides incentives, co-operation which gives strength and solidarity which unites. The most significant contribution of the Delors Report is the introduction of four pillars of learning. These four pillars are learning to know, learning to do, learning to live together and learning to be (UNESCO, 1996). At the same time, there is a recognition that developing countries need to embrace the world of science and technology and challenge it poses. In the document, UNESCO highlights a varied situation of tensions which are taken into consideration by the educational planners. Rubenson (2006, p. 166) classified them in the following ways:

- (1) Tension between the global and local;
- (2) Tension between the universal and the individual;
- (3) Tension between traditional and modern;
- (4) Tension between long-termed short-term considerations;

- (5) Tension between the competition and equality of opportunity;
- (6) Tension between extraordinary expansion of knowledge and the capacity of humans to assimilate it;
- (7) Tension between the spiritual and the material.

This report has become influential among adult educators but, unfortunately, failed to influence the education policies as a whole. It could not constructively provide a practical guideline on how the four pillars can be implemented and achieved in all sections of a society. The lack of operational elements forced it to remain another utopian report, apart from making some significant theoretical contributions (Watson, 1999; Jarvis, 2008).

Later, UNESCO came up with some important changes in its activity and policies. UNESCO institute for lifelong education in Hamburg, Germany, has been converted to UIL (UNESCO Institute for LLL). This symbolic change of name seems carrying a much specific political change in its direction of portraying LLL. Significantly enough, recent UIL reports mention about skills and competency development, collaboration with the world of work and knowledge economy with other UNESCO themes. In the recent (December 2009 in Belem, Brazil) global campaign for education and conglomeration of national leaders, the CONFINTEA VI<sup>2</sup>, (UNESCO, 2010), several issues have come up. The CONFINTEA VI recognized that:

We face structural shifts in production and labor markets, growing insecurities and anxieties in everyday life, difficulties in achieving mutual understanding, and now a deepening world economic and financial crisis. At the same time, globalization and the knowledge economy force us to update and adapt our skills and competences to new work environments, forms of social organization and channels of communication. These issues, and our urgent collective and individual learning demands, question our tenets and assumptions in this area and some aspects of the foundations of our established educational systems and philosophies. (UNESCO, 2010, p. 11)

Globalization here clearly influencing UNESCO to modify its policies and that argument can be further strengthened by their latest important report “Towards Knowledge Societies” (UNESCO 2005). LLL, according to this report, can provide a response to the growing job volatility that most forecasters predict. As people will be changing jobs several times in a lifetime, and education can no longer be limited to offering a single specialization, LLL must develop each person’s ability to change course during his/her lifetime and cope with economic and social change (UNESCO, 2005, p. 77). It also modifies the other three pillars of LLL, first mentioned in the Delors Report. The revised explanations suggest UNESCO’s concern about the changing world and a rather clearer guideline on where to put the main importance. In spite of a rather revised oracle in a particular report, UNESCO reports in post-2000 period are mostly mystifying and ambiguous in focus. However, it is very important to note that UNESCO still strongly manifests its keen interest of the holistic development of humankind. It, thus, offers a different worldview than that of other transnational organizations. “It is ethical, but also political” (Jarvis, 2008, p. 42).

UNESCO’s position in the world of policy is mostly considered a “referee” (Bhola, 1998, p. 489). In many cases, it is driven by the ideological position, and therefore, imagines of a utopian world. It could be justified from an ideologist’s point of view, but from a factual point of view, UNESCO’s view is rather unclear and superficial in focus. The change of terms or names is another issue noteworthy in this regard. The preference of names has shifted from adult education, fundamental education and social education in 1950s to adult learning, lifelong education, adult education and learning and finally LLL. Although almost all the terms are still in use,

---

<sup>2</sup> CONFINTEA VI—*The Sixth International Conference on Adult Education* hosted by the Government of Brazil in Belém from December 1 to 4, 2009 (UNESCO, CONFINTEA VI).

but the degree and relevance suggests a shift in preferences in the course of time. This changing nature within policy arena can also be seen in other transnational organizations. The EU is one of them.

### **The EU on LLL**

The EU as a major supra-national organization made a significant change in its policy domain through their championing of LLL in the 1990s. The 1992 Treaty of the EU, or the Maastricht Treaty, provided the legal basis for the EC (European Commission) to develop its European year of LLL in 1996 (Papadakis & Gravaris, 2002). Since then the EU tries to promote the learning concept, both in theory and practice (Murphy, 2005). In 2000, commission published a memorandum (Memorandum on LLL, (EC, 2000)), which argued that LLL was no longer “just one aspect of education and training, it must become the guiding principle for provision and participation across the full continuum of learning contexts” (EC, 2000, p. 3).

Looking back, prior to the 1970s, little interest was generated by individual member states regarding a common education policy in the community. The 1970s marked a watershed for European political economy—a period in which individual European states were forced to combine and co-ordinate their economic agendas (Murphy, 2005). Since the end of the 1980s, the European education systems have been going through a flow of criticism and reforms: decentralization, deregulation of the programs, more attention to skills than that of knowledge, diverse partnerships between education and industry, massive introduction of information and communication technology, fast development of private initiatives, for profit education. In 1992, the treaty of Rome outlined only the role of the community in implementing vocational training initiatives. The education policy at that time was legally under each member state. According to Khan (1994, p. 50), laws of education and matters relating to it as such do not presently fall within the powers of the EU, but remain... matters of national competence. However, EU expanded its remit from purely vocational training to the general field of education (Gould, 1989; Shaw, 1992; as cited in Murphy, 2005) and efforts, such as ERASMUS<sup>3</sup> and ESPRIT<sup>4</sup> in relation to education were welcomed by member states more or less simultaneously with the achievement of a consensus regarding the viability of the 1992 single market project. The role of education in the single market became necessary and probably inevitable in the EU policy domain (Murphy, 2005).

The introduction of the Maastricht Treaty (February 7, 1992) brought a huge transformation to the role of education in the EU. It introduced a distinction between education and training. By that time, EC started to look at the completion of internal market to greater adoptability and mobility of the workforce in the industrial era and tried to safeguard the competitive position of European industry on world markets. The main documents published during this time acted as the “launching pad” (Papadakis & Gravaris, 2002) for the European Year of LLL as well as the clear trend towards learning. Since the launch of the year, the EU has clearly pushed the agenda of LLL within both its own area of competence and also in the jurisdiction of each member state. In a projecting manner, the 1995 White Paper spelt out: “Everyone must be able to seize their opportunities for improvement in society and for personal fulfillment, irrespective of their social origin and educational background” (EC, 1995, p. 3).

---

<sup>3</sup> ERASMUS is the EU’s flagship education and training program, enabling 200,000 students to study and work abroad each year. In addition, it funds co-operation between higher education institutions across Europe. The program supports not only students, but also professors and business staffs who want to teach abroad, as well as helping university staff to receive training (European Commission).

<sup>4</sup> ESPRIT—European Strategic Program on Research in Information Technology.

A Memorandum on LLL (EC, 2000) seems to indicate the beginning of a paradigm shift where social and economic changes are interrelated. Three major institutional arrangements are given equal importance, namely, the state, market and civil society. Since then, this combined dimension has dominated the EU policy strategy (Rubenson, 2002). Therefore, the expansion of the ideologies of LLL within EU should not be viewed as economic means, only as it is related to a major social and political project. The aim was also to reunite Europe after the world war and focusing on a cohesive economic up-gradation plan which could serve the purposes well (EC, 2000, pp. 10-18).

This multidimensional aspect (state-civil society and market) of LLL is also incorporated to make Europe a homogenized place in terms of its economic and educational means. It is seen that economic inequality leads to unequal educational attainments. Therefore, LLL is used here to make the ground as level as possible. Also, the increased migration to developed states of Europe and outside Europe is of a great concern, as this could relate to internal anxiety and broadly with brain drain. At a national level, LLL, therefore, could bring a plethora of educational options, service providers and learners who are willing to learn and invest for it. The emphasis on learning rather than on education in EC's policy is, thus, highly significant, because it reduces the traditional preoccupation with structures and institutions, and instead, focuses on individual, civil society and market at the same time (Tuijnman & Bronstrom, 2002, p. 102).

More prominently than that of the EU, the OECD is another important transnational organization which is persistent with its economic outlook of LLL. However, as we can see in case of UNESCO and EU, the policies related to LLL in OECD are also not just unidirectional. There are other sub-directions, notions, connotations and so on. Some of them are discussed in the following section.

### **OECD on LLL**

Although OECD was established before the economic globalization of the 1990s, it has been maintaining a neo-liberal outlook throughout. In its initial stages, it did not include education as a concern for the organization (Papadopoulos, 1994). After the World Wars, enrolment in education had increased rapidly and several studies came up regarding the positive relation between investment in education and economic growth. Importance was given on the development of human capital which can benefit from the technological improvements of post-war period. OECD meanwhile appeared as a "prophet" (Rubenson, 2006, p. 153). However, the focus was mainly on formal education and this limitation made their policies less productive in real world. Therefore, OECD came up with another solution by introducing the term "recurrent education" which, at a glance, was similar to UNESCO's term "continuing education", but was actually different in many aspects. The aim of this was to provide governments with practical ways of realizing lifelong education. The concept of "recurrent education" intends to propose a concrete framework, within which a great part of the individual's LLL can take place. It differs from the concept of "permanent education" by making the principles of alternation between education and other activities central to the definition (OECD, 1973, p. 12). The main objectives are to reduce educational disparities between the older and younger generations, strengthen the efficiency of the labor market and the economy and increase linkage among different educational administrations.

Although, apparently the rhetoric of "recurrent education" seems so noble, but inside, it is pragmatic and related with the educational crisis of that time and was primarily promoted as a response to the question of how to constantly have a good fit among student profiles, the competencies of the labor force and the needs of the labor market (Lindensjo, 1981; as cited in Rubenson, 2006, p. 155). However, it did not properly address the

issue of quality and also the operational guideline was somehow unclear. Almost no country followed this guideline and before the end of 1970s, the term “recurrent education” had disappeared.

At the end of 1980s, OECD came back with its policies on LLL; and this time it directly proposed education as a generator of economic growth. It was also the booming period of global capitalism and neo-technological revolution. Therefore, the demand for up-graded skills and competition gained utmost importance at the enterprise level and OECD’s policy soon became popular. As a response to the economic development, the OECD published its report in consecutive years. In its 1989 report “Education and the Economy in a Changing Context”, OECD (1989) stressed on LLL as a means to increase human capital. It has been labelled the second generation of human capital thinking in educational policy where continuous up-gradation of skill and competencies for the workforce were a must (Marginson, 1997; as cited in Rubenson, 2004, p. 134; Bengtsson, 2009). Before 1990s, OECD (1989, p. 19) started embracing a more flexible path in education. It mentioned that education was less clearly distinct from “the economy”. This report was criticized due to its unidirectional and less humanistic approach between the economy and learning.

During 1990s, the globalization became more rapid, profound and wide spread and hence more significant. OECD continued focusing on the human resource development aspect, but with a renewed focus on the knowledge economy. LLL constantly became a theme and OECD policies became the dominant economic policies of the developed world. In fact, the major EU policies followed a similar path to that of OECD’s. According to Tuijnman and Brostrom (2002) and Rubenson (2006), OECD did not try to revive the “recurrent education” through its latest policies. Rather, it was replaced by LLL which is wider, less specific and less structured in nature.

“Social inclusion”, “social cohesion” and similar concepts started getting increased priority within OECD policy domain related to LLL. OECD started repeating the rhetoric of social inclusion and civil society in a rather continuous manner through its policies (e.g., OECD, 1997a; 1997b; etc.). But, the basic question was how far OECD can extend itself to prioritize the social needs over the economic counterpart. The motive behind the social inclusion seemed ambiguous, and it is perhaps clear that OECD continued to focus on economic development following a neo-liberal ideology over welfare ideologies. The rhetoric for LLL inside OECD policy domain, thus, mostly dominated by a more result-oriented, demand-driven paradigm where aims are set, standards are created and systems are modified to attain the goals. The concept of adult learning, therefore, comes in forefront in OECD’s agenda. However, OECD also acknowledges that literacy and initial education is the base for economic success (e.g., OECD, 1989; 1996; etc.). This pragmatic view of OECD’s dimension of LLL increased the interests of not only the member countries, but also others who have the knowledge stocks. The shift from “recurrent education”, which has an implicit social demand, is replaced by the LLL which focuses on individual demand. In other words, within OECD policy domain, LLL is not “as a right to be exercised, but as a necessary requirement of participation” in economic life and civil society (OECD, 1996, p. 89; as cited in Henry et al., 2001, p. 121).

Like OECD, WB has also followed an economic way of policy formulation in a utilitarian way. WB is not only limited within national and continental dimension, like the EU, but it is a player in transnational policy arena, spreading across many countries, both developed and developing.

### **WB on LLL**

According to the WB, its main aim is “sharing knowledge, building capacity and forging partnerships in

the public and private sectors”. However, as it portrays itself as a “bank”, it perhaps carries a more economic notion towards the issues it discusses. WB mainly influences the education and related developmental issues by funding projects and lending money. The SAP (Structural Adjustment Policies) of 1980s, jointly by the WB and IMF (International Monetary Fund), set the base for WB to successfully contribute in the arena of global education policy. Basically, it was a conditional money lending project where countries are supposed to make structural changes in their educational systems. However, the pro free-market strategy influenced by the “Washington Consensus” was criticized heavily across borrowing nations. To many, it was infringement to national sovereignty. It was criticized, also because it was less effective and mostly negative for the borrowing countries and profitable for rich donor countries like US and UK (Stewart, 1995; Carnoy, 1995). However, this policy (not only educational) has had a major impact on the overall policy discourse as SAPs set a new culture of understanding policy process and policy change. These policy conditions have located the WB as the main subject of globalization of education (Bonai, 2002, p. 4). During this era of Washington Consensus, the WB’s perception to LLL seems limited to barely a profit making tool where economic benefit was the main and perhaps the only important aim.

The post-Washington Consensus period shows some changes in WB’s stand on education and development. In other words, WB had to change some elements of its policies because of the negative results and rejection across the developing world. In the new reports (WB, 1999a, 1999b; including the World Development Report 2000-2001, etc.), the learning paradigm had been given increased importance. The contextual planning got more importance as compared to the previous one which argued for a unified approach. This time, the WB started improvising the role of education with development, but put forward its importance in a changing world. It stressed on creating human resources who are dynamic and lifelong learners in many ways. It stated that:

Tomorrow’s workers will need to be able to engage in lifelong education, learn new things quickly, perform more non-routine tasks and more complex problem-solving, take more decisions, understand more about what they are working on, require less supervision, assume more responsibility, and... have better reading, quantitative, reasoning and expository skills. (WB, 1999a, pp. 1-2)

The documents focuses more on a cohesive approach of LLL, combining all the educational sectors (primary, secondary, tertiary and formal, non-formal and in formal) in such a way which can be proven beneficial to the national economic development and poverty mitigation. However, it was not a complete shift from its previous stand, as it continued to support deregulation, open competition and pro-market strategies, even for the poorer developing countries. The issue of economic equality have been emphasized, but without mentioning the importance of redistribution of wealth from the private sector to all sections of the society. The difference between pre- and post- Washington Consensus are significant. First, WB modified its aggressive neoliberal model to a softer neo-classical one (Bonai, 2002). Second, the new policy orientation is more socially sensitive which enables WB to venture into non-economic matters. It also helps to portray the Bank as a more acceptable political agency, much wider than the former economic-oriented one. Recently, after 2000, the WB engages itself more into the learning paradigm through various programs and ambitious projects. Learning, as a part of the WB Education Strategy 2020 (WB, 2011), is one of them. In these reports, WB repeatedly mentions about the challenges posed by the present time, the need to change fast and effectively. It also puts high importance on learning, inclusivity and more investment on learning with increased involvement

of the civil society to foster it. WB, interestingly, stresses more on learning and not on education in its recent documents (WB, 2011, p. 3).

This optimum importance on learning (and not on education, which to the WB refers to a more traditional way of learning) from the post-Washington Consensus significantly states the difference between the traditional learning and the LLL very clearly (WB, 2003, p. 29). All the way, the WB gives priority to a learner centric approach where learners are supposed to be autonomous, interactive in using tools, able to function in socially heterogeneous groups and able to gain skills and competencies throughout his/her lifetime. Skills include technical, interpersonal and methodological skills where technical skills include literacy, foreign language, math, and science, problem-solving and analytical skills. WB thought that working on real-life problems or issues that are relevant to participant increases interest and motivation and promotes knowledge transfer (Cibulka, Coursey, Nakayama, Price, & Stewart, 2000; Oxenham, Diallo, Hamid, Katahoire, Mwangi, & Sall, 2002; as cited in WB, 2003, p. 33).

Overall, it seems that, as per WB, skills and competencies help citizens to better integrate with the changing time and world of work. However, LLL in WB documents is also seen more and more linked with community participation, civil society and extension. The bank repeatedly highlights the importance of extend learning opportunities among all through various processes (outreach, distance education, etc.) and make learning accessible. It recommends the use of modern technologies, such as computers and Internets and through the partnership between the private sector and civil society. This new strategy also comes up with a catchy bottom line: “Invest early, invest smartly and invest for all” (WB, 2011, p. 4). It infers to the investment on learning before and beyond schooling, investment which actually contributes to learning outcomes and also an investment for all irrespective of their economic or educational superiorities or inferiorities.

Perhaps, it would not be an overstatement that these new age policies by the WB are apparently wider in their approach and poses less threat to the developing nations. Probably therefore, the bank leaps forward and tries to formulate different strategies and recommendations for developing countries. However, in all sections, the bank tries to inject a sense of increased competition and the need for a radical improvement in the systems of education to make it more globally and market-oriented. Depending on the countries’ conditions (mainly economic), the bank recommends such reforms which in one way or another lead them towards the competitive knowledge economy and knowledge-based society.

### **Viewing Together—Transnational Organizations on LLL**

After discussing the dimension of LLL in four aforesaid organizations, it could be noticed that the modifications have happened due to several complex factors ranging from changing economy, globalization to civil society movement and changing role of individuals. We can see this nature among UNESCO, EU, OECD and WB. They have different priority areas and focuses, although at many points, they have similar goals and objectives as well. But in fact, these different stands make their perceptions of LLL distinct from each other. Starting from UNESCO, we can see that they have changed the name from “education” to “learning”, but the core values have not changed much (Rubenson, 2006, p. 167). Overall, it still carries a more humanistic tradition, emphasize on state’s role and inclusion of all. Interestingly, UNESCO now acknowledges the power of economic globalization and tries to include the economic aspects into the discussion of LLL. The changing nature of work and a need for LLL to achieve a learning society has been linked in recent UNESCO documents along with the existing connections. For the EU, LLL could bring harmony and homogeneity at a

socio-political level and opportunities to make Europe a better, united and attractive place for economic activity. It could also give Europe a strong ground in the global economic arena. LLL, here, can fulfill a number of mandates at ones: those of the state, the Union, market and society and foster growth to achieve the Lisbon objectives. OECD, on the other hand, emphasizes LLL as a part of their employment and labor market policy (Jensen, 2006, p. 207). The discourse of economic development has played a major role in curving the facets of LLL within these two organizations (EU and OECD), and in many ways, their views are complementary to each other. However, the aims of OECD have widened gradually and now it includes civil society with increased importance. Jensen (2006, p. 208), at this point, argued that the market, more specifically the labor market, was the dominant element and economy and job creation were still given a higher seat. A somewhat similar trend is found in the WB's perception on LLL. The role of state has given lower priority over a dynamic civil society. A specific set of skills and competencies, needed for the knowledge economy, are given priority among others. According to Jarvis, the WB has a restricted definition of LLL, which is neo-liberal in many ways and rather focuses on working life education (Jarvis, 2008, p. 52). Probably because the WB recognizes education and LLL as a solution to almost everything like the new age economic situation, inequality, social cohesion, poverty alleviation and so on. Jarvis (2008, p. 37) contradicted this view by saying that finding education as a universal solution was not justified in real world, as real situations are more complex. They are consisting of many other important factors which are beyond generalization.

Although none of these organizations denies the fact that LLL should be from cradle to grave and it should be life-wide as well, there are limitations, delimitations and contradictions present with their own conceptualization of LLL. Based on their pro-market, market-indifferent or anti-market tendencies, it is perhaps plausible to rank these organizations on a continuum, with the WB at the hard (pro-global and neo-liberal) extreme and UNESCO on the soft (Welfare and anti-market capitalism) extreme. However, there is a bit of UNESCO trying to move towards the other end. The OECD (and EU) is towards the WB side, but trying to move towards the centre (Henry et al., 2001, p. 17). Jarvis's (2008) model also supports this trend in a different way. There, WB is, on one extreme, supporting the global forces, but UNESCO is not quite opposing it, UNESCO is rather generating fundamentally different forces as a result of its policies. OECD stands close to the WB, whereas the EU is balancing itself between pro-people and pro-market situation (Jarvis, 2008, pp. 34-58).

### **Conclusions**

From the above discussion followed by the analysis, it can be seen that over time, the concept of LLL has been constantly altered and modified. However, these transnational organizations carry their signatures in individual policies related to LLL. In other words, each organization has carried their core stand on LLL, but that too has partly modified over the course of time. It is perhaps quite clear, at this point, that LLL is no longer just a concept limited to its theoretical definition of learning from cradle to grave. It is not neutral either. Rather, it is interdependent on a plethora of factors, space and ideologies. The political agenda, the socio-economic goals and moral focus are only some of them to mention. LLL is dynamic and prone to changes depending on the reactions around. Here, the word "around" could mean the space within which LLL is perceived. It ranges from an individual perspective and space to that of a transnational organization and everything in between.

There could be several questions emerging out of the discussion above. First, how "lifelong" is LLL within the global policy domain? It is seen that most of the limelight is on the economic means and learning

which can support that, irrespective of the age and formal qualifications. Therefore, it seems plausible to re-search the lifelong and life-wide dimension of LLL in reality. Second, how does each of these transnational organizations influence other national or even micro-level policies? This looks for the actors and stakeholders who are involved there and how are they interacting in shaping LLL in specific contexts. There could be several other questions like these which may be useful to further unfold the complexities of LLL. It will also help to ask several new questions which may again lead to other policy questions and discussions. This quest seems relevant enough, as the dimensions of LLL are changing and increasingly getting intertwined with our individual, social, political and economic life and development.

## References

- Bengtsson, J. (2009). *National strategies for implementing LLL (lifelong learning): An international perspective*. Melbourne: PASCAL Observatory.
- Bhola, H. S. (1998). World trends and issues in adult education on the eve of the 21st. *International Review of Education*, 44(5/6), 485-506.
- Bonal, X. (2002). The World Bank education policy and the post—Washington Consensus. *International Studies in Sociology of Education*, 12, 3-21.
- Carnoy, M. (1995). Structural adjustment and the changing face of education. *International Labour Review*, 134(6), 653-657.
- Cibulka, J., Coursey, S., Nakayama, M., Price, J., & Stewart, S. (2000). *Schools as learning organizations: A review*. National Partnership for Excellence and Accountability in Teaching. Maryland: University of Maryland.
- European Commission. (1995). *White paper on education and training, teaching and learning towards the learning society*. Brussels: European Commission.
- European Commission. (2000). *A memorandum on lifelong learning*. Brussels: European Commission
- Faure, E., Herrera, F., Kaddoura, A. R., Lopes, H., Petrovsky, A., Rahnema, M., & Ward, F. C. (1972). *Learning to be: The world of education today and tomorrow*. Paris: UNESCO.
- Field, J. (2006). *Lifelong learning and the new educational order*. Sterling: Trentham Books.
- Field, J., & Leicester, M. (2000). *Lifelong learning: Education across the lifespan*. London: Routledge.
- Gould, S. (1989). Equality of access to education? *Modern Law Review*, 52, 540-550.
- Henry, M, Lingard, B., Rizvi, F., & Taylor, S. (2001). *The OECD globalisation and education policy*. London: IAU Press.
- Jarvis, P. (2007). *Globalization, lifelong learning and the learning society*. New York: Routledge.
- Jarvis, P. (2008). *Democracy lifelong learning and learning society*. New York: Routledge.
- Jensen, T. W. (2006). World system and lifelong learning: A comment. In S. Ehlers (Ed.), *Milestones towards lifelong learning systems* (pp. 203-214). Copenhagen: Danish University of Education Press.
- Khan, A. (1994). European common market and education. *Journal of Law and Education*, 23(1), 47-60.
- Lindensjo, B. (1981). *School reform: A study in public sector reform strategy*. Stockholm Studies in Political Studies in Politics. 20.
- Marginson, S. (1997). *Markets in education*. St. Leonards. Allen & Unwin.
- Mundy, K. (1999). Educational multiculturalism in a changing world order: UNESCO and the limits of the possible. New Delhi. *Journal of Lifelong Learning*, 22, 566-579.
- Murphy, M. (2005). Oil, recession and the search for the European champions: Exploring lifelong learning in the European Union. In N. Papadakis, & D. Gravaris (Eds.), *Education and education policy between the state and the market*. Athens: Savvalas.
- OECD (Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development). (1989). *Education and the economy in a changing context*. Paris: OECD.
- OECD (Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development). (1973). *Recurrent education: a strategy for lifelong learning*. Paris: OECD.
- OECD (Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development). (1996). *Lifelong learning for all*. Paris: OECD.
- OECD (Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development). (1997a). Lifelong learning to maintain employability. Paper prepared for the Meeting of OECD Labour Ministers, DEELSA/ELSA(97)4REV2 (drafted by G. Wurzburg, & P. McKenzie). Paris: OECD.
- OECD (Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development). (1997b). *Societal cohesion and the globalising economy: What does the future hold*. Paris: OECD.

- Oxenham, J., Diallo, Hamid, A., Katahoire, A., A., Mwangi, A., & Sall, O. (2002). *Skills and literacy training for better livelihoods: A review of approaches and experiences*. Africa Region Human Development Working Paper Series. Washington D. C.: World Bank.
- Papadakis, N., & Gravaris, D. (2002). *Towards the end of education systems? Europe in a world perspective*. London: XXth Cooperative Society in Europe (CESE).
- Papadopoulos, N. (1994). *Education 1960-1990: The OECD perspective*. Paris: OECD.
- Rubenson, K. (2002). *Lifelong learning for all: Challenges and limitations of public policy*. Published Proceedings of the Canadian Association for the Study of Adult Education, Toronto.
- Rubenson, K. (2004). Global directions in adult education. In J. M. Steinøien et al. (Eds.), *Challenges for adult learning: A Nordic perspective*. Trondheim: Vox & Mimer.
- Rubenson, K. (2006). Constructing the lifelong learning paradigm: Competing vision from the OECD and UNESCO. In S. Ehlers (Ed.), *Milestones towards lifelong learning systems* (pp. 151-170). Copenhagen: Danish University of Education Press.
- Shaw, M. (1992). Education and the law in the European community. *Journal of Law and Education*, 21(3), 415-442.
- Stewart, F. (1995). *Adjustment and poverty: Options and choices*. London: Routledge.
- Tuijnman, A., & Brostrom, A. K. (2002). Changing notion of lifelong education and lifelong learning. *International Review of Education*, 48, 92-110.
- UNESCO. (1996). *Learning: The Treasure Within Report to UNESCO of the International Commission on Education for the 21st Century*. Paris: UNESCO.
- UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization). (2005). *Towards knowledge societies*. Paris: UNESCO.
- UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization). (2010). *CONFINTEA VI: Belém framework for action*. Paris: UNESCO.
- Watson, K. (1999). UNESCO's vision for education in the 21st century: Where is the moral high ground? *International Journal of Educational Development*, 9, 7-16.
- WB (World Bank). (1999a). *Education sector strategy*. Washington D. C.: World Bank. Retrived August 11, 2011, from [http://www.siteresources.worldbank.org/EDUCATION/Resources/ESSU/education\\_strategy\\_1999.pdf](http://www.siteresources.worldbank.org/EDUCATION/Resources/ESSU/education_strategy_1999.pdf)
- WB (World Bank). (1999b). *Educational change in latin America and the Caribbean*. Washington D. C.: World Bank. Retrived August 12, 2011, from <http://www.fmmeducacion.com.ar/Sisteduc/Banco/bmeducamerica.pdf>
- WB (World Bank). (2001). *World development report 2000/2001: Attacking poverty*. Washington D. C.: World Bank.
- WB (World Bank). (2003). *Lifelong learning in the global knowledge economy: Challenges for developing countries*. Washington D. C.: World Bank.
- WB (World Bank). (2011) *Education for all: Investing in people's knowledge and skills to promote development*. Washington D. C.: World Bank.
- WB (World Bank) Website. (2011). Retrived August 11, 2011, from <http://www.go.worldbank.org/J4OW7MGS80>