



VISION 2030

**CONTRIBUTIONS OF EDUCATIONAL
RESEARCHES ON NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

St. Thomas College of Teacher Education, Pala, Kerala

VISION 2030

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QUALITY EDUCATION FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND HUMAN WELL-BEING

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Abstract

Education as a phenomenon is rather complex which makes it difficult to define its quality. Definitions of quality must be open to change and evolution based on information, changing contexts, and new understandings of the nature of education's challenges. The main objective of the paper is to find out the significance of quality education for social development and human well-being. Access to education is critical. But it is not enough. Millions of children go through school and come out without basic literacy and numeracy. Many students around the world are banking their futures on poorly trained. The goal of social development in the context of modern welfare is to produce social well-being and educational quality has become the central pivot for many education systems in developing countries. Quality education plays an important role in human development. Human development encompasses development in several dimensions of human well being. Social development is one of the important dimensions. It has the power to shape a sustainable future and better world. Education policies should promote peace, mutual respect and environmental care. At the core of the pursuit of quality education, the focus should be on strengthening learning performance and providing learners with the capacities to address the challenges of a sustainable future for all.

KEY WORDS: Quality Education, Social Development, Human Well-Being.

INTRODUCTION

Education is one of the most important means to improve personal endowments, build capabilities, overcome constraints and in the process, enlarge available set of opportunities and choices for sustained improvement in well-being. The process of education and attainments

thereof has an impact on all aspects of life. The goal of social development in the context of modern welfare is to produce social well-being and educational quality has become the central pivot for many education systems in developing countries. In this context, the present paper makes an attempt to assess the contribution of quality education to one of such several dimensions of life of individuals, i.e. social development and human well-being.

OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

The objective of the paper is to find out the significance of quality education for social development and human well-being.

WHAT DO WE WANT FROM THE EDUCATION AND WHAT KIND OF EDUCATION DO WE WANT?

In the recent educational theory and practice the concept of quality has been used frequently, but has not been defined frequently insomuch.

Education as a phenomenon is rather complex which makes it difficult to define its quality. It can be analyzed and interpreted as a system as well as an activity (process), interaction, results, etc. In every of those aspects the question about the quality comes to the fore - what it constitutes, how to ensure and how to assess it.

A problem in defining the quality of education arises when one chooses the aspect of education that will be the focus of attention. Since education has many purposes and components, questions regarding quality may reasonably be posed about any important aspect of a system: infrastructure, school buildings, administration, teacher training, educational materials, teaching or achievements. All these elements... are interrelated, and a serious deficit in one is likely to have implications for quality of others. (Kellaghan, T., V. Greaney, 2001)

In the absence of generally accepted definition of quality of education, it may be suggested to us by the ordinary practical use in which the term of quality refers to the correspondence of objects and processes to the goals of which they are provided for. Obviously this is one of the directions where one can look for an acceptable and workable definition about the quality of education (the term).

Moving in this direction, however, compulsorily goes through the clarifying of the difficult problem of the goals of education in general and at an international level in particular.

So the resolving of the problem of the quality of education goes through the answer of the question: “What do we want from the education and what kind of education do we want?”

WHAT DOES QUALITY MEAN IN THE CONTEXT OF EDUCATION?

Many definitions of quality in education exist, testifying to the complexity and multifaceted nature of the concept. The terms efficiency, effectiveness, equity and quality have often been used synonymously (Adams, 1993). Considerable consensus exists around the basic dimensions of quality education today, however. Quality education includes:

- Learners who are healthy, well-nourished and ready to participate and learn, and supported in learning by their families and communities;
- Environments that are healthy, safe, protective and gender-sensitive, and provide adequate resources and facilities;
- Content that is reflected in relevant curricula and materials for the acquisition of basic skills, especially in the areas of literacy, numeracy and skills for life, and knowledge in such areas as gender, health, nutrition, HIV/AIDS prevention and peace;
- Processes through which trained teachers use child-centred teaching approaches in well-managed classrooms and schools and skilful assessment to facilitate learning and reduce disparities;
- Outcomes that encompass knowledge, skills and attitudes, and are linked to international goals for education and positive participation in society.

Definitions of quality must be open to change and evolution based on information, changing contexts, and new understandings of the nature of education’s challenges. New research - ranging from multinational research to action research at the classroom level - contributes to this redefinition.

Systems that embrace change through data generation, use and self-assessment are more likely to offer quality education to students (Glasser, 1990). Continuous assessment and improvement can focus on any or all dimensions of system quality: learners, learning environments, content, process and outcomes.

QUALITY EDUCATION: A PATHWAY FOR GLOBAL EDUCATION REFORM

The centrality of education in achieving social development and human well-being that is sustainable is well established. There is a need to transcend academic achievements and cognitive skill development based mainly on memorization/rote learning and to include learning on non-cognitive, affective skills in addition to educating for social cohesion, global citizenship, creativity, and social and emotional development (UNESCO BKK, 2013).

Enhancing the focus on quality education is necessary, and it is argued that efforts in this regard should be accompanied by policies to enhance principles of quality education through 1) availability of educational institutions and programmes, 2) accessibility by all with full inclusion of the most marginalised populations, 3) acceptability of form and substance (ensuring that the content of education and process of teaching are relevant and of good quality), and 4) adaptability with regard to changing needs of learners and society (GCE, 2013).

Although the core educational principles of quality education are universal, their application must be adapted to different contexts as the measure of educational success depends on variable criteria including what students and teachers bring to the learning arena, the appropriateness of teaching/learning approaches, and the end-use of the acquired education by the learner. Quality education should therefore take into consideration several important factors:

- The pre-learning world-view and psychology of the learner (e.g. a child's home conditions),
- The competence of the teacher,
- Interactions with various social actors (namely individuals, groups, the community and society),
- The learning environment and educational setting,
- The content of the learning materials and types of teaching/learning processes,
- Knowledge construction dynamics and its relevant application,
- The mode(s) of learning/teaching assessment,
- The dynamism of culture and languages, and
- Individuals' values in relation to sustainable lifestyles that promote equality.

Quality education provides added value as it produces significant benefits for human and social development, often with lower resource costs (Didham and Ofei-Manu, 2013).

CONCLUSION

Access to education is critical. But it is not enough. Millions of children go through school and come out without basic literacy and numeracy. Many students around the world are banking their futures on poorly trained, weakly motivated teachers without enough books and other basics to facilitate their learning.

A child who has received a good education is more likely to develop into a better parent, make informed decisions, earn a better living, adopt new technologies, cope with crises and be a responsible citizen (World Bank, 2011).

Education is much more than an entry to the job market. Everyone has the right to quality education and this right begins at birth.

- Education is a fundamental human right for all, and a public good.
- Quality education needs an inclusive and holistic approach.
- Fairness and equity is fundamental to quality education.
- Quality education requires quality teachers.

Quality education plays an important role in human development. Human development encompasses development in several dimensions of human well being. Social development is one of the important dimensions. It has the power to shape a sustainable future and better world. Education policies should promote peace, mutual respect and environmental care.

- Quality education must take into account proven elements that enhance teaching and learning, such as:
 - Percentage of teachers trained or certified according to internationally-adopted standards and with opportunities for ongoing professional development.
 - Teachers trained with specific academic and gender awareness skills.
 - Adequate supply of textbooks, equipment, and other learning materials.
 - Availability of sanitation and toilet facilities for boys and girls.
 - Conflict- and violence-free environments for students en route to and within schools.
- An equitable access to a quality education cannot be achieved without gender equity, something that can only be achieved when the systemic barriers to education that affect girls are overcome.

- Parent, teacher, and community interaction and engagement on education are essential to improve learning.

At the core of the pursuit of quality education, the focus should be on strengthening learning performance and providing learners with the capacities to address the challenges of a sustainable future for all.

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