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**Education: Unlocking the Doors to Development
Perspectives on the Role Education Plays in Development**

**A thesis presented in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of
Masters of Philosophy in Development Studies at
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Abstract

The needs of those living in the developing world are so great that no one area of learning or development can solve all those needs. If education is going to supply some of the keys needed to unlock the doors to appropriate and sustainable development then it needs to be education that is relevant, empowering, and available to all. This sort of education will enable individuals and countries to formulate the objectives and develop the skills necessary to engage in their own development. Human beings are born with the wonderful ability to learn, to communicate, to adapt, and to develop their environment. This ability is not limited to the information that can be gathered from the immediate surroundings. Through reciting, reading, writing, and information technologies, humans learn from the past and record today's lessons for the future. Humans have the unique abilities of being able to learn co-operatively, opening each other's minds to infinite possibilities. As a species we value education so highly we list it as a basic human right. Article 26 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights begins with the words. 'Everyone has a right to education' (Reprinted in Morsink 1999:335). It is the thesis of this paper that when everyone is allowed to exercise that right then many of the problems of the world and the doors that shut people out and deny them their basic human rights will be solved as together we learn how to live sustainably.

The year 2015 has been set as the goal for countries to achieve Education for All (EFA). Setting a goal like this generates all sorts of questions such as: How can that target be achieved? What sort of education will that be? What will be the purpose of that education? What should be taught in order to make a better, more sustainable world? How can developing countries compete against rapidly changing and expensive education systems when they can hardly afford to supply basic education, let alone food and health care to their expanding populations? It also places countries and lending agencies in the dilemma of asking what comes first, economic development and repaying debt, or educating the population?

In a short thesis, such as this, one can only hope to survey the surface of such a large topic and to point to some of the doors that the key of education can unlock in the quest for more sustainable forms of development. The thesis begins by showing that historically there has always been a strong link between education and development. The quantitative and qualitative issues associated with achieving Education for All (EFA) are then examined. The point is made that the 'banking concept of education' (Freire 1993:53) where education is seen as information that needs to be drilled into people is insufficient. Education that unlocks the doors to development needs to be education that, as Freire puts it, involves 'praxis and conscientization' (Narayan 2000:199). This sort of education places the emphasis upon the

process by empowering people to participate in their own development and trusting them to design their own solutions.

In Chapter 4 education is then placed alongside other development issues such as nutrition, health, and the environment. The relationship between each of these and education is analysed. Appropriate and relevant education is shown through the case studies as supplying some of the necessary keys so that the doors that trap people in cycles of underdevelopment can be unlocked. In the chapter on education without walls the ways alternative forms of education can be used to solve developmental problems and achieve life long learning for all is examined. Each chapter is illustrated with case studies drawn from the author's two decades of work with education in Asia and the Middle East. The conclusion of this thesis is that education does not need to be an impossible development goal on an ever-expanding list. Rather, when applied correctly, it can be part of the methodology for achieving those goals. As Dean Rusk very aptly put it, 'Education is not a luxury which can be afforded after development has occurred; it is an integral part, an inescapable and essential part, of the development process itself.' (Cited in Hanson & Brembeck 1966:28)

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List of Abbreviations.

AUB	American University of Beirut
AusAID	Australian Agency for International Development
BD	Batchelor of Divinity
CM	Captain Mike School Milk Project
CTBS	Comprehensive Tests of Basic Skills
ECIS	European Council of International Schools
EFA	Education for All
ERO	Educational Review Office
EWLP	Experimental World Literature Programme
HCT	Human Capital Theory
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
IDT	International Development Targets
ISO	International Standards Organisation
IMF	International Monetary Fund
MSA	Middle States Association of Schools and Colleges
NCHS	National Centre for Health Statistic Standards
NZODA	New Zealand Official Development Assistance
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
OFSTED	Office for Standards in Education
SAP	Structural Adjustment Programs
TEE	Theological Education by Extension
UBS	United Biblical Seminary
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Education, Scientific, and Cultural Organisation
UPE	Universal Primary Education

USA	United States of America
USDA	United States Department of Agriculture
WCED	World Commission on Environment and Development
WEF	World Education Forum
WWII	World War Two

Chapter 1 Introduction

Meaningful and sustainable development increases people's choices, empowering them and giving them tools to effect their own development. Education is an integral part of personal development and can be used as a key to unlocking the doors that stop individuals and nations developing. By increasing choices good education can enable people to become the principle actors in changing and reconstructing their own reality. Education is such an integral part of human growth and development that in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights it is considered to be a basic human right along with other basic needs like shelter, security, clothing, food, water, and health care.

Education enables people to access and use knowledge for both personal and national development. Education that leads to development will be defined in terms like social responsibility, liberation, and empowerment. As Freire put it 'Liberation is a social act' (Freire and Shor 1987:109). This is just as important in the developed world as in developing countries. In New Zealand, *The Knowledge Wave Conference, Auckland August 1-3, 2001*, was held to 'bring together international experts to devise a programme to enable New Zealand to "catch the knowledge wave".' (McLoughlin 2001:2). In the developing world, many invest a great deal of their limited capital and hope in education, particularly the education of their children. Most believe that the search for knowledge and truth through education is the foundation of a freer and better-developed world.

With all the manpower, thought and money currently being poured into the knowledge industry and the global educational enterprise one could expect the human species to be well educated. One could also expect a wealth of literature and analysis on how education can open the doors to national development as well as personal development. It is true that humans have harnessed many of the forces of nature and applied the lessons of science to create technology. Many use this technology for lifestyles that were not possible a few decades ago. It is also true that humans are very good learners. As John Abbot puts it 'humans are born to learn and learning is what we are better at than any other species' (Abbott & Ryan 2001:7). And yet as the human species begins the third year of the twenty first century, rather than celebrating our achievements, we are faced with a world where according to the World Bank an estimated 125 million children do not attend school and millions more adults will live their lives without functional literacy and numeracy (Wolfensohn 2000:2). Out of this, 97 per cent of them are in the less developed regions and 60 per cent of them are girls. (WEF 2000a:8). The most recent

figures on illiterate adults date to 1998 when it stood at 880million.(WEF 2000a:11). It is one thing to acknowledge the role of education in development and it is quite another to achieve it.

Even if people do manage to get an education they may waste years learning things they will never be able to use or apply. In the developing world most will never get the jobs or be able to live the lifestyles they read of or see on television. In many parts of the world, village schools have been built but they stand empty because of lack of teachers, funds or because the opportunity cost to families of not having children working is too great for them to bear. When thinking of achieving Education for All (EFA), the questions that need to be asked include, why build expensive schools and teach children subjects that are completely irrelevant to their daily lives? Why have so many vocational programmes failed and why are there so many unemployed graduates in developing countries? Does Information and Communication Technology (ICT) open doors for even the most rural villager, or has it instead simply increased the divide between the haves and the have-nots?

In much of the developing world, education can become the domain of the elite propagating unequal social structures, increasing the gap between the haves and have-nots, and providing an escape route to the west. Schools are often criticised as arenas of political indoctrination rather than a place of enlightenment and empowerment. There is also the danger of education becoming a never-ending spiral with an endless demand for higher and better qualifications. This can result in unemployment and disillusionment of graduates whose aspirations have been raised. Educational inflation can result in what Dore calls 'Diploma Disease' with a 'supply-led spiral' and qualifications being simply a 'filtering device' (Dore 1980:28). The 'Law of Zero Correlation for Development' (Fagerlind & Saha 1983:238) states that, as people participating increase, the social benefit of those achieving that level of education will decrease.

While it is important to keep all these things in mind when designing educational solutions we should not lose track of the fact that for individuals and families, education is still the key to self-improvement and family advancement. For governments it is still considered to be a necessary component of development. Gould (1993:13) points out that in the last thirty years there has been a rapid growth in the private demand in almost all Third World countries for education and suggests it is 'part of a universal movement'. Education in the Third World is a major criteria for individual's 'lifestyle, career opportunities and life chances generally' and cost benefit analysis has shown a 'strong and positive correlation between lifetime earnings and level of education.'(Gould, 1993:16). World Bank research shows high rates of return in excess of 20 to 30 percent for education showing that even if students have to borrow money

for an education it is still considered to be 'a very highly productive private investment' (Psacharopoulos & Woodhall 1985:119).

Part of the problem is that many of the effects of education may not be easy to see directly. A number of human development indicators show an indirect and yet strong correlation to education. Gould (1993:135) points out 'a truly astonishing sensitivity of childhood survivalship in developing countries to the length of formal schooling of the mother.' Even after adjustments for economic factors, child mortality rates fall by 20%, improving with each level of educational attainment. For example 'Indian children are twice as likely to survive if their mother attended secondary school.' (Gould 1993:135). Education gives women choices and more control over their lives and those of their families. Many other studies have established a causal link between education and other Human Development Indicators. In India if a woman has more than a secondary education the incidence of domestic violence falls by more than two thirds (UNDP 2000:34). For mothers 'the rate of under nutrition in children is as much as 20% lower amongst children of women who have gone no further than primary school compared with children of illiterate mothers' (UNDP 2000:76).

Education, however, cannot be seen as a simple panacea for the world's ills, as a simplistic model or solution to the development needs of the world. The relationship between education and development is highly complex and not all schooling results in better educated, more productive, and empowered people. There are also many quantitative implications associated with the millions of uneducated people without an education throughout the world. Governments and aid agencies must constantly place education alongside the other competing demands and needs. There are qualitative implications of what form and direction education should take and how standards can be maintained and improved. Human Capital Theory (HCT), for example, initially linked education directly to economic development. This was much criticised in the 1970s and 80s because it failed to take into account the complex array of factors that affect human beings in developing countries. HCT has recently re-emerged, now acknowledging the complexity of relationships between education and development. The basic proposition that education makes individuals more productive still holds firm and is now widely accepted by academics, politicians and people in general. As Schultz (1993:18) reaffirmed, 'It is 'human capital', not space, cropland, energy and other physical properties of the earth, that is decisive in improving the income and welfare of people.'

Education should not be seen in simplistic terms, as a fast track for governments and individuals to achieve economic prosperity. There is a need for a critical awareness of the issues associated with development and what kind of development is best for a particular

country. To simply follow present western models of education and development means not learning from the past and to unquestioningly propagate a form of western cultural dominance. What is needed is a kind of education that takes into account all the qualitative, quantitative historical and cultural complexities of a particular country and uses this information to create new and innovative educational models that will lead to sustainable and appropriate improvements for all.

Thesis Structure

In this thesis the author explores the complex relationship between education and development and the ways in which education can be the key to a more equitable and sustainable process of development. Chapter 2 is a survey of the historical relationships from the colonial education systems, that educated many of the first leaders of less developed countries, through to the April 2000 Education for All (EFA) Conference at Dakar. The quantitative and qualitative issues associated with achieving Education for All are analysed in Chapter 3. This chapter also includes a case study of the two EFA Conferences at Jomtein in 1990 and Dakar in 2000 and some analysis of what has been achieved. Included in this chapter is a model for self-assessment that is used in educational institutions world wide as a means to encourage institutional learning, evaluation, and improvement.

The way education has to stand alongside other developmental needs and can help solve some of these other issues is examined in Chapter 4. Examples include school feeding programmes, the effects of war in Lebanon, and the influence of education in the state of Kerala in India. The section concludes with a case study of the Captain Mike School Milk Project in Lebanon, in which the author was an educational and development consultant. It illustrates how an educational project can incorporate nutritional, environmental, and financial issues. It is also an example of how both multinational and national companies are willing to underwrite developmental projects when there is a perceived advantage to them.

In Chapter 5, Education Without Walls, the role of non-formal and distance education in achieving educational and development goals is examined. Both distance and non-formal education are not space or time bound and can be used widely to meet the rapidly increasing demand for education in developing countries. Because the learners remain in their context, there can be a synergetic use of international expertise, indigenous resources and effective teaching, allowing learners to construct immediate applications. This kind of education can become an engine of mediation between the classroom and the community, empowering people

in their own political, cultural, economic, and social transformation. It can also make life long learning a reality and not just a nice idea. This section concludes with a case study based on a survey of Distance Education students in Pune, India.

The final chapter brings together some of the complex array of ideas and relationships that exist between education and development. Education for all is shown to be more than an ambitious development objective. It is presented as an essential part of the methodology of any development effort. It is the conclusion of the thesis that education that is culturally relevant, appropriate and accessible can be the key that empowers people to unlock the doors that block their own and their nation's development.