

Review of: "Tackling Tradition in Education"

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Over the past few years, there has been a rapid expansion in the debates and publications, relating to the problems facing education. Articles are constantly appearing in the news, academic journals and books, and the future of education is the focus of numerous conferences and workshops held at educational institutes worldwide and in government departments. Consequently, there are a range of new government initiatives being developed in order to attempt to change educational establishments, whether they be schools or universities, and make them fit for purpose in the 21st Century.

Rosemary Sage's article 'Tackling Tradition in Education' is a very well written and informative paper. She provides an excellent perspective, highlighting the problems associated with the flawed processes of numerous educational institutions, and the 'clash of cultures' compounded in 'passive versus progressive approaches' to education.

The paper considers a fundamental problem which is that (to quote from the article) 'Traditional education tends to be prescriptive with a "one-size-fits-all" approach geared to national and an international comparison test'. The paper qualifies why this 'prescription' has passed its sell-by-date, and why a progressive approach is required to provide students with the freedom to pursue their individual interests and exploit their talents within a multi-cultural society. In this context, the focus on vocational education and earn-as-you learn programs are becoming an increasingly important theme.

A central, and, extremely valuable component of the paper, is the historical perspective that is provided in Section 4: 'World Education'. This section briefly describes the approach to education in a diverse range of countries and cultures during the middle-ages, including Japan, China, Europe and India. The work then goes on to discuss 'Education Post 1500', which I found to be particularly interesting, and provides an excellent prelude to the section on 'Education in the 21st Century'.

The latter part of the paper reports on the transitions that are taking place in education on a world-wide basis, expanding on the general theme associated with the 2020 World Bank report "*The Education Crisis: being in school is not the same as learning*". In this respect, the paper provides an excellent review of the current problems and potential solutions that need to be put into place, in order to give future generations, the opportunity to fulfil their aspirations, and contribute to a society that understands the value of strength through diversity. This is based on aspects concerning 'communications, tradition and cultural awareness' in which the paper considers issues that include:

- 'Learning how to learn';
- 'Mathematical, digital, scientific and technical abilities';

- ‘Social and civic engagement’, and;
- ‘Initiative and entrepreneurship’.

In conclusion, I recommend the paper to all those involved either directly or indirectly in education. The paper is very informative, and paints a well-balanced ‘portrait’ on the state of education world-wide, providing a fascinating historical context in regard to an international setting.

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