

**Increasing Opportunities and Removing Obstacles
for Lifelong Learning:
psychological, socio-cultural, economic, geopolitical
and legislative contexts that hinder the development of
lifelong learning in the two regions**

by

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The general thesis of this presentation

- Lifelong learning needs to be channelled by the State in the direction that is most suitable for the majority of its population most of the time
- This means removing obstacles in many instances but erecting them in some others.



Structure of the Presentation

- The nature of globalisation and its significance for the two regions.
- The complexities of lifelong learning - what type of lifelong learning do we want?
- The nature of the obstacles in the context of the nature of the State
- The economic, geo-political, legislative, socio-cultural and individual/psychological factors



Conclusion

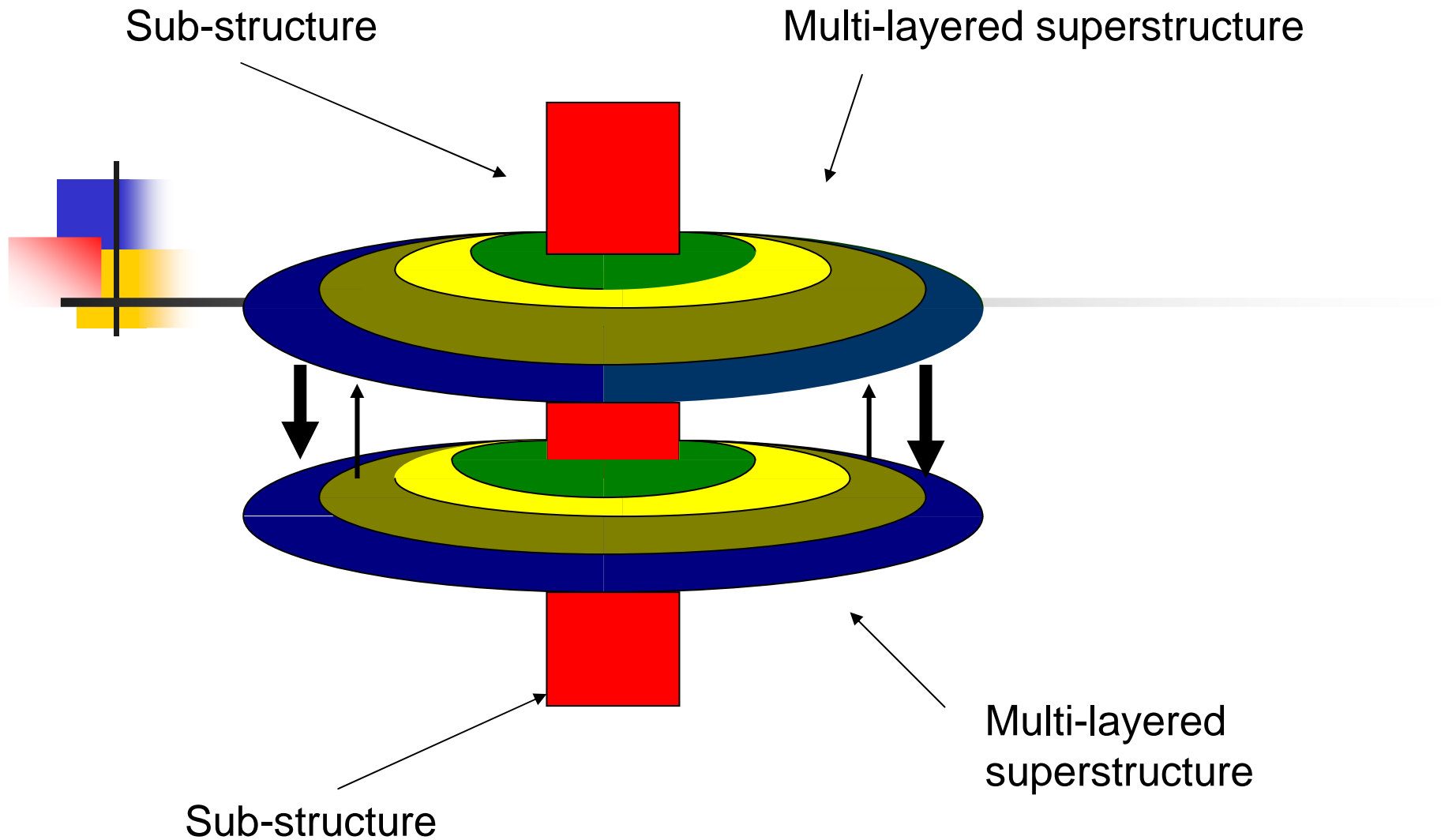
It is recognised that in most countries of the world teacher training has been restricted to teaching children but in order to deal with the complex problems of teaching adults, it is necessary to reformulate school teacher education and implement the training of teachers of children and adults, including training those who teach by distance.



Part 1

A Global Framework

Figure 1. A Global Model of Societies





The Global Sub-Structure

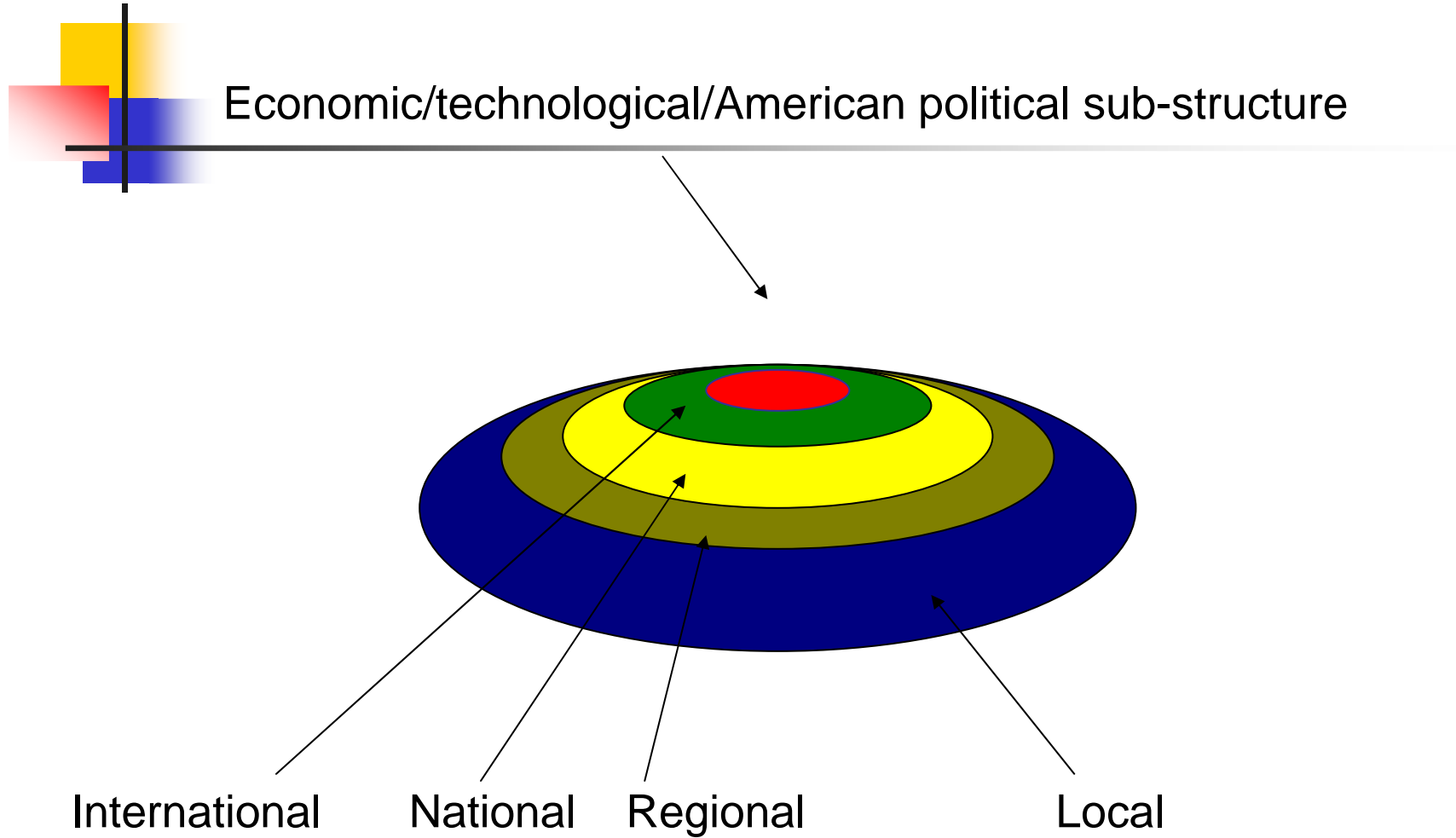
- Exercises a centralised power in each of the countries and, in this sense, it is a force for convergence between the different countries of the world.
-
- It consists of the economic system, and the technological one, especially information technology.
- It is controlled by large transnational corporations whose directors are un-elected.
- It is supported by the USA, which exercises power in support of the global sub-structure to such an extent that this process is sometimes called Americanisation



The global picture

- The large downward pointing arrows in the diagram illustrate that there is a relationship of power between all countries in the world while the two small black upward pointing arrows depict the national and cultural resistance to the forces of globalisation
- We have tended to downplay the significance of the national and cultural resistance to globalisation in recent years but I see it as a very important element in the struggle for democracy and citizenship in each country
- Each layer represents a country that is penetrated through the centre by the sub-structure.

Figure.2 Multi-Layered Model of Society.





Explanation

- The layers are depicted hierarchically in order to illustrate that it is not merely a geographical matter but that it is also one of power stemming from the centre to the periphery, although it has to be recognised that power is not a one-way process since, by the nature of democracy the 'lower orders' can and should be pro-active as well, but there also tends to be passivity at the lower levels to the pressures coming from the hierarchy.
- Individuals and organisations can find their place at any level where they play their role, some at a number of different levels.



Democracy and Citizenship

- The national governmental level for each country is not located at the core of the society:
- Greater power and influence stem from the sub-structure and that the international organisations, such as the World Bank and the European Union exercise more influence, in many ways, than do national governments.
- The nature of sovereignty has undergone considerable change and territorial sovereignty is almost a phenomenon of the past.
- This, in its turn, raises fundamental questions about the nature of democracy in contemporary society since major corporations with their unelected directors and transnational organisations having interests far removed from the level of daily and private life of the people exercise as much and maybe even more power over the people than do elected governments.



Balancing Act of the State

- The state apparatus is by-passed or utilised for corporate ends. It is these forces which are the drivers of change in societies and the change is in the direction of convergence
- Resistance to these forces comes from national and cultural concerns which might be placed in the lower three hierarchies of the state, that is the national, regional and local.
- Consequently, national and regional cultures play a significant role: in the West, for instance, the individual self is emphasised but in Confucian heritage countries the inter-personal self receives is much more significant and this is an important factor when we consider the development of learning regions later in this paper.
- However, it would be wrong to suggest that all the social pressures that emanate from these levels resist the forces of change – they do not – many support global change and some countries are much more wealthy as a result of them. However, it is at this intersection that lifelong learning policies and practices are located.



Part 2

Lifelong Learning



Two forms of learning

- We have confused two types of learning
- Learning is primarily a natural, personal process that cannot be institutionalised but which acts as the driving force for the development of the person throughout life (Jarvis, 2009): this is almost universally regarded as something good and important for people.
- But learning has also been equated with social and institutionalised processes and this has also had the value of something good, and so on
- The second form of lifelong learning might not always be universally good



Changes in Institutionalised Adult Education

- Traditional adult education was a cultural and leisure time pursuit - but
- The knowledge economy began to demand knowledgeable workers and adult education expanded to incorporate continuing professional development, continuing education, recurrent education, lifelong education, lifelong learning and human resource development and these became institutionalised.
- **The lifelong learning that emerged was a truly Western and neo-liberal concept which has become adult learning**
- Now claimed, for instance, that there is no adult education in UK, although there is 'adult learning and education' (ALE) – (see NIACE, 2008) and traditional leisure time adult education is now consigned to a category of informal learning (DIUS, 2008, 2009).



European Union's Involvement

- It was 1995 before the European Union commented upon this new phenomenon and then in three publications (EC 1995; 2000; 2001) there was considerable debate about lifelong learning policies.
- The policy statements suggested that there were four aims of lifelong learning:
 - Vocational
 - Citizenship
 - Social inclusion
 - Personal development



European Union's Involvement: Adult Learning

- In 2006 (EC 2006) the term lifelong learning was relegated and 'adult learning' arrived
- Older adults – those who have actually retired from work – assumed a more prominent place in the report. Any effective policy of lifelong learning needs to consider the elderly – both the third and the fourth ages.
- But it also needs to consider both the mentally and physically disabled
- This is part of the welfare provision of lifelong learning that is absent from the neo-liberal discourse in which a great deal of lifelong learning is encapsulated.
- Its very encapsulation in the neo-liberal discourse is an obstacle to a broader lifelong learning policy.



UNESCO – Delors Report

- Four pillars of learning –
 - to know,
 - to do,
 - to be
 - to live together.
- Unfortunately, a fifth pillar was omitted – learning to care for the planet.



Three Other Factors

- The development of information technology in HE –Open and Distance Learning
- Changes in higher education – now centres of Lifelong Learning
- A re-assessment of what people want out of their lives – people more interested in happiness?



Learning Through Life (2009)

Ten themes – aims of lifelong learning?

- Prosperity, employment and work;
- Demography and social structure;
- Well-being and happiness;
- Migration and communities;
- Technological change;
- Poverty reduction;
- Citizenship and belonging;
- Crime and social exclusion;
- Sustainable development;
- Roles of public, private and voluntary sectors.



What types of Lifelong Learning do the People Need?

- The aims and the outcomes of policies are different matters but the question that confronts every government is –
- what types of lifelong learning constitute the country's priorities in this globalised knowledge economy?
- What are the most beneficial to the majority of the population since not all can always be satisfied?
- What policies can be devised that will further these aims?



Government's Responsibilities

- Which part of government will take responsibility for the different forms of lifelong learning that are necessary?
- Government needs to have an integrated approach to the implementation of these complex phenomena – an inter-departmental approach.
- Failure to do this is itself an obstacle to the implementation of effective and efficient lifelong learning programmes.



Part 3

The Role of the State



The Balancing Act of the State

- The State lies midway between the global core and the international agencies on the one hand, and the regional and local forces on the other.



International forces

- Are less united (Jarvis, 2008) than corporate capitalism:
- The World Bank supports the forces of global capitalism but for slightly different reasons since it also stresses that lifelong learning improves people's ability to function as members of their communities, education and training increases social cohesion, reduces crime, and improves income distribution (World Bank, 2003,p.xvii). Fundamentally, the World Bank accepts the knowledge economy, almost uncritically, and offers its very strong support to developing societies helping them to acquire the knowledge and skills necessary to function in the global society.
- In contrast, UNESCO states much more critically:

As we have seen, the information revolution clearly reinforces the supremacy of technological and scientific knowledge over other kinds of knowledge, local knowledge, oral traditions, daily knowledge, and so on. Oral and written traditions correspond to different knowledge systems, and this plurality mainly accounts for cognitive cultures. (UNESCO, 2005,p.148).



The Balancing Act

- Governments crudely have two options: try to cushion the people from the forces of global capitalism or hope that the transformative power of national politics will catch up with the runaway markets (Habermas, 2006, p.81).



Competing Obstacles

- The questions which the State faces are, therefore, extremely complex
- obstacles that help protect the people from the worst excesses of global capitalism on the one hand
- obstacles that prevent the people from being able to obtain a learning relevant to or necessary to their livelihood and even to their world and their very existence on the other.



Obstacles

Both personal and structural



Part 4

Confronting Potential Obstacles



Five Sets of Obstacles

- economic;
- geo-political;
- legislative;
- socio-cultural;
- psychological



Paradox of economic obstacles

- Every society needs some of the benefits that globalisation offers and so the educational policy makers have almost without exception regarded lifelong learning as a means to labour - but it is necessary for the State to place some barriers around the demands of global capital and see lifelong learning as a means to civilised living as well: this is a very difficult balance.



Paradox of economic obstacles

- what does global capitalism demand from different countries?
- In many ways this is a most crucial question –
- In the West, global capitalism has sought knowledge workers because the unskilled aspects of production have been located elsewhere,
- If the global core wants only cheap labour from a country, the last thing it wants is an educated labour force that would increase its production costs
- Hence, the paradox is that the very driving force for the development of lifelong learning in some countries can be an obstacle to it in others.



Economic Issues

- The extent to which the State can afford to make the provision of lifelong learning
- The extent to which the people can afford to meet the cost of lifelong learning

Models of Financing Lifelong Learning



- Self-funding schemes: income contingent student loans – students to repay after completion of their education dependent upon the level of their salary; individual learning accounts - tax friendly individual savings for educational purposes; individual drawing rights – extended social security to cover non-work activities.
- Employer funding: paid educational leave and collective bargaining.
- Collective funding – employers, the state and individual learners contributions administered centrally; pay-roll levy schemes whereby companies not offering training pay a levy to increase training funds.
- State funding through taxation, student grants and individual entitlements (vouchers).
- Schuetze (2009, p.381)



Corporate Responsibility

- Corporations are amongst the largest funding agencies in many countries so that it becomes increasingly necessary to make them aware of their corporate responsibilities and to convince them that they can help meet this problem. But the capitalist demand for corporate profit constitutes a major obstacle



Geo-Political:

- Aid comes in two forms:
- Grants – some countries, UNESCO
- Loans – World Bank, IMF.



Loans

- As W. Rivera (2009) points out – the World Bank regards **lifelong learning as the handmaiden of the economic market and so its aims tend to be rather restricted.**
- Additionally, it has endeavoured to assist societies to function in what it believes to be more efficient and effective ways by expecting certain forms of societal structural re-adjustment. **However, these neo-liberal policies have not always been successful as Torres (2009, p.69) argues that 'the constraints of structural adjustment policies have forced ministries of education to sacrifice equity and efficiency in order to reduce their educational expenditures'** and even in the UK and the USA it is recognised that neo-liberal economic policies that shape education in economically orientated directions curtail welfare and fail to improve the lot of the poor (L.Rivera, 2008, p.119). **Consequently, a fundamental paradox arises – policies designed to foster lifelong education sometimes prove to be obstacles to those who suffer structural adjustment policies: the position of the State is contentious as it tries to balance the global neo-liberal demands with the welfare demands of the people.**



Legislative

- The State needs to create some form of adult learning or lifelong learning legislation: **not a law that compels people to attend education but one that gives them the right to do so.** This might also entail laws that provide workers with the right to paid educational leave, e.g., some many days a year.
- Naturally there might be resistance to this from those organisations which invest capital into the country in order to maximise their returns
- In the battle to attract investment national governments might not wish to put obstacles in the way of potential investors.



Legislative

- The work place as a site for learning is an important and now widely accepted development (Hager and Halliday, 2009) which actually demands **a new approach to learning since it is the person who learns (Jarvis 2009) in everyday life experiences**: it is informal learning that is central to our understanding of learning and this should be embodied in government policy. **Changing perceptions of significant learning is an important step in introducing lifelong learning but the common perceptions of learning can themselves be obstacles in the process.**



Legislative

- The structures need to exist to make lifelong learning possible and these include:
 - highly sophisticated open and distance learning – e-learning, m-learning;
 - part-time higher education – restructure curricula and even times of delivery,
 - extended schools – school use in and by the community,
 - literacy campaigns – decade of literacy - UNESCO
 - accreditation facilities – of prior learning and the ability to transfer credit .
- However, there is sometimes resistance in education itself to these changes – it is paradoxical that education may itself be an obstacle in the development of lifelong learning.



Legislative

- Change, however, demands financial support and as Olssen *et al* (2004, pp.247) state clearly:
'(G)overnments with fewer scarce resources to reallocate will need to increase taxation levels' but they also recognise that in a global economy this is a dangerous practice.
- Even slight changes requires political will
- Governments need to take the lead but socio-cultural resistance adds to the dangers to the government in introducing educational innovation.



Legislative

- Governments sometimes lack the political will necessary to take the lead



Legislative - learning regions

- The introduction of learning fairs and learners' weeks (UK, South Korea)
- .
- Their aim is one of social inclusion – to draw all people into lifelong learning for the good of the whole community. They generate wealth and bring together the wider resources of the whole community which is far broader than that of single institutions, but they also overcome one of the major disadvantages of the neo-liberal knowledge economy – they offer opportunities to learn across the whole spectrum of knowledge and they can generate great enthusiasm for learning. Longworth (2006, p.163) states:
- *Embryo learning cities and regions will depend heavily on the commitment of leaders within the city and communities they serve. They broadcast the message of lifelong learning and facilitate its acceptance in the community. Any strategy to engender progress must therefore inform and engage the decision-makers, opinion-formers and community leaders and expand their number as quickly and innovatively as possible.*
- Not having such leaders is an obstacle to introducing lifelong learning in the regions
- One of the major ways of overcoming it is for local government to start seminars and courses to create local leadership, including the use of volunteers and part-time leaders which is an extremely good investment for the expansion of lifelong learning.



Socio-Cultural

- Every learning society needs a culture of learning and the responsibility for its creation lies with both the State and the educational system. Through the wide variety of resources at its disposal the State needs to demonstrate to the population through its own educational programme how it is advantageous to continue learning and even to return to school so that the people begin to take it for granted - especially as they begin to realise its wider benefits.



Socio-Cultural

- Cultural change is a major part of the government's activities in introducing lifelong learning but it is not just a matter of teaching the people that they need to keep on learning and even returning to school to learn. People also have to recognise that learning is natural and everyday – but we make it otherwise
- Public and private education is another example of the lengths to which ET (extension transference – transferring from the personal/individual to the institutional –PJ) distortions can go. Not only children but people of all ages have the capacity to learn naturally. What is more, learning can have its own reward. Like eating and sex, the drive is powerful indeed. Yet the process has been distorted in the minds of educators, who have confused what they call education with learning. The popular notion is that schools contain the learning and their job is somehow to get the learning into the child.
- (Hall, 1981, p.35)



Socio-Cultural

- It is necessary to show people that learning is part of living and that they can and do learn all the time –
- The popular cultural notion that learning is something that occurs in established educational institutions might be an obstacle to lifelong learning
- It is necessary to disabuse the people of this false understanding. But it is also necessary to teach educators that they are not the source and fountain of knowledge but adjuncts in the learning process because while they have this false perception of themselves and their roles, they are actually obstacles to lifelong learning.



Socio-Cultural

- It is also necessary to teach educators that they are not the source and fountain of knowledge but adjuncts in the learning process
- This false perception of themselves and their roles is actually an obstacle to lifelong learning.



Individual

- The implications of the term 'individual' contain one of the greatest of all the obstacles to lifelong learning.
- One of the other implications of 'individual' presents a major obstacle to lifelong learning – the idea that learning is psychological, that is just a cognitive phenomenon. Learning is something that the whole person does – and does naturally from the foetus is aged about twenty weeks until the moment of death (Jarvis 2009). It is not limited by something called intelligence

But when it is recognised that it is the whole person who learns, an awareness dawns that there are many more ways of viewing learning itself and therefore many more ways of interesting people to want to continue their learning.

- **Learning, then, is a process change and so we – as people – are always undergoing change.**



Individual

- We live in a society that is structured and structures tend to ossify into patterned behaviour and even bureaucracies – individuals learn to conform and achievement of the expected (even competency) - is the apparent end of our learning. When competency is achieved no more learning is required. Societies are built upon the idea of non-learning: this is the actuality and people are happy with it. Individuals tend to be happy when they find 'their place' in the world and just fit in and conform.
- But when there are interruptions in people's patterned existence, they tend to learn and change and live life differently. **But lifelong learning is more than this – it is about realising our potentiality – it is about a process of change and not just re-establishing patterns. It is not about arriving at the end of a journey – it is about going further.**



Individual – two other obstacles

- There is a need to re-conceptualise 'learning' since the current one encourages people to stop learning when they think that they have arrived, that is it actually hinders learning.
- Learners themselves have to be confronted with the psychological realism that their humanity is about growth and development – and in order to achieve their potential they have to have a vision and look forward rather than just seeking to fit in and conform but to reach beyond to things new – the lack of vision is a fundamental obstacle to lifelong learning.



Concluding Discussion

- While lifelong learning is part of the human drive of social living, the type of society in which it has assumed an institutionalised appearance appears much more questionable and so its every manifestation needs to be examined critically and obstacles put in the way of some of it when it reflects the worst ravages of neo-liberalism but the obstacles have to be removed in order to facilitate many other opportunities to achieve human potential through learning.



Concluding Discussion Teacher Education

While lifelong learning is itself a natural process, teachers are still a vital part of many aspects of the educational process. This is something that the World Bank (2003, pp.34-43) discusses but this does not go far enough. **Indeed, it is necessary to start at the beginning and re-consider this process:**

(and indeed when I was a teacher-educator I said it myself), 'I teach maths' or 'I teach history', and so on – but then I realised that something is wrong about these claims – fundamentally

We all teach persons!



Concluding Discussion

Teacher Education

- But we probably all know of many people whose school experience has not inspired them to return to institutionalised learning later in their lives –

- one of the obstacles to lifelong learning might be education itself

- A major need – that of training school teachers and teachers in further, higher and distance education and other forms of education and training. Such training is not just about how to prepare a lesson or how to deliver a lecture but it is about how to inspire learners to want to continue to learn.



Concluding Discussion

Teacher Education

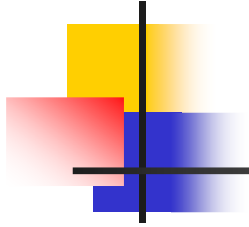
The 'inclination to learn from life itself and to make the conditions of life such that all will learn in the process of living is the finest product of school' Dewey 1916, p.60).

Schooling should inspire a love of learning and school teachers who fail to do this are themselves obstacles to lifelong learning – but so are university professors and distance educators. All need thorough training to become enablers and not obstacles.



Concluding Discussion

- Lifelong learning is about human potentiality – it is being and about the process of becoming. A learning society is one where the greatest proportion of the population are enabled to achieve their potentiality and be happy, and to slightly adjust the UNESCO Delors Report (1966)
- **It should be the job of every educational policy maker and every educator to ensure that all the obstacles to this end are removed so that we can all learn to be, to know, to do, to live together and to care for our planet.**



Thank you for listening to me