

Translocal learning: connecting movements already taking on the crisis of our collective future



Jonathan Langdon
St. Francis Xavier University

Overview

- Critique of global design of sustainability Education
- Learning from movements taking sustainability action
- Translocal learning potential – non-hierarchical sharing
- Education as carrying each other's stories



Critique of global design of sustainability education

- It is important that SDGs acknowledge role of education in transformation

However,

- Global efforts to contend with climate change and sustainability moving slowly
- Global design (Mignolo, 2000) of knowledge hierarchy part of mainstream sustainability education/development
- SDG process dominated by governments – parallel process needed not just to contest but reimagine what sustainability means
- Local knowledge crucial for resilient/reimagined communities



Learning from movements taking sustainability action

- Learning through social action is a key dimension for deepening movement strategy (Foley, 1999)
- Indigenous resistance to oil and extractive projects premised on 7 generation learning
- Buen vivir movements and environmental rights movements have codified right to clean environment in a number of contexts
- Local cooperative livelihood movements work through complex dynamics of using a resource well
- Intergenerational indigenous education movements see cultural resilience and sustainability as crucial to survival
- Climate justice has been embedded in transition movements
- These are movements gaining momentum in localities in countless places, while we see inaction at the global and often at the national level



Translocal learning potential – non-hierarchical sharing

- Via Campasina (2016) has shown the benefits and deeper subtlety of understanding that emerged by connecting farmers in multiple places
- In our research, sharing creative approaches (songs/theatre) has been inspirational across distances; so have ways of thinking (Langdon & Jackson, 2017)
- The opening of spaces for activists to share leads to non-hierarchical sharing, where traditional forms of educational achievement are merely one way of knowing.



Education as carrying each other's stories

- Environmental justice (Hill 2003) critique reminds us who causes and who pays for environmental degradation
- Building relational and interdependent understanding a crucial part of a just transition
- Translocal engagements move away from charity and towards solidarity in action, where we are all engaging where we are, but aware and learning from one another.

References

- Foley, G. (1999). *Learning in social Action*. London: Zed Books.
- Hill, R. J. (2003), Environmental justice: Environmental adult education at the confluence of oppressions. *New Directions for Adult and Continuing Education*, 2003: 27–38. doi: 10.1002/ace.107
- Langdon, J. & Jackson, M. (2017). Translocal social movement learning and sustainability: The ongoing conversation between Antigonish, Nova Scotia, and Ada, Ghana. Paper presentation at *Canadian Association for the Study of International Development* Conference, Toronto, June 1st.
- Mignolo, W. (2000). *Local Histories/Global Designs: Coloniality, Subaltern knowledges and Border Thinking*. New Jersey: Princeton UP.
- Via Campasina (2016). KWPA and SPI undertake Farmer to Farmer exchange program in Indonesia. <https://viacampesina.org/en/kwpa-and-spi-undertake-farmer-to-farmer-exchange-program-in-indonesia/>