

## Title: Educating global citizens in Business Schools

### 1.0 Introduction

The 21st century society is underpinned by complexity, uncertainty and ambiguity, unsettling East and West (Saul 1997; Chomsky 2006). In spite of this rapidly changing environment, universities often fail to engage conceptually with the implications of global complexity or on the potential ramifications for staff, students and curricula. While universities claim to educate global citizens, frequently it conflicts with commercial priorities, resulting in incongruity between espoused societal values and organisational action (Argyris and Schon 1978 p. 71). It is widely accepted that universities are a key player for the well being and cohesion of modern society and have a role to graduate citizens capable of being change agents for good in their community (Altbach et al. 2009; McArthur 2011). In reality, economic pragmatism predominates with universities performing as a 'service provider' delivering a 'product' to the student 'consumer' (McArthur 2011). As a consequence, there is less academic focus on the societal need for educating global citizens (Taylor 2011). Nicolaides (2006) criticised universities for their failure to 'practise what they preach' in regard to their environmental and social conscience. He claimed they show little insight to their corporate responsibility and future consequences.

In contrast, market responses to globalisation at the university level are seen through internationalisation of higher education (Knight 2004), academic capitalism (Slaughter and Leslie 1997) and managerialism (Furedi 2011). In this environment, instrumental indicators designed for external accountability are frequently at odds with the social ethos of higher education, limiting the capacity of universities to prepare graduates as global citizens (Rhoads and Szelenyi 2011). Beyond market forces, Barrie (2007) argued there is conflicting terminology and poor conceptualisation of graduate attributes in the disciplines. Further Vu, Rigby et al (2011), claimed that educating global citizens is marred by inadequate conceptualisation of sustainable development, ethical practice and social responsibility attributes in Business Schools.

The global citizen is widely conceptualised in the literature but less so for higher education pedagogy and practice. Yet it can be conceptualised through an economic (neoliberal), political (radical) or social and cultural (moral and transformative) lens (Vertovec and Cohen 2002). Moral and transformative cosmopolitanism provides students with a way to view the interactions between humanity, society and the environment.

Through this lens, students are able to think reflexively and relationally about the impacts of globalisation from the political, economic, social, technical, environmental and cultural aspects. Moral and transformative cosmopolitanism promotes systemic, transformative and adaptive thinking about the impacts of globalisation and fosters moral reasoning and social responsibility in students' mindsets. In this paper, it is argued that this particular cosmopolitan approach fits well with the espoused social values seen in university and Business School policy statements (Kumar 2010). It also offers a theoretical basis to unite university and Business School social responsibility values to action. Leask (2012) developed a conceptual framework for internationalisation of the curriculum (IoC), intended to act as an institutional and curriculum guide. This model aims to develop all students as critical and reflexive global citizens, however Leask identified a research gap for understanding the student mindset in learning.

This paper is the first step in addressing this gap. It conceptualises the global citizen in higher education broadly and more specifically in regard to Business Schools, bringing the student 'mindset' to the centre of learning. The conflicting neoliberal and cosmopolitan paradigms in business education are considered. Conceptually it is argued that the global citizen, viewed through a moral and transformative cosmopolitan lens, is consistent with the humanistic aspects of global education called for in business education (Trank and Rynes 2003; Altbach, Reisberg et al. 2009; AACSB 2011; EFMD 2011). While Spitzbeck (2011 p. 419) pointed out that humanism in education is a principle not a skill, this paper transcends the principle. 'Global citizen learning' proposed in this paper emphasises the centrality of student identity and global business mindset. It provides a practical way of fostering the social imaginary, relationality and reflexivity in contextual learning activities. This form of learning equips students with a 'global business mindset' to engage in complexity and ambiguity posed by conflicting business and social paradigms. In contrast to the incongruity between espoused organisational values and action and vocationalism, 'global citizen learning' provides the 'conceptual glue', linking sustainability, social responsibility and ethical practice in Business Schools.

## **1.2 Business Schools in a global environment**

Twenty-first century Business Schools are increasingly faced with competing demands of internationalisation, accreditation, rankings, competition and commercialisation, sustainability and a responsibility to educate global citizens equipped with global knowledge, skills and attributes (Caruana and Ploner 2012). Similarly, personal global capability (EFMD 2011) and developing global citizens have been identified as priorities for business education (AACSB 2011). Despite this, AACSB has claimed that Business

Schools have largely failed to contextualise global complexity and uncertainty in education. Further, it was claimed that universities are diverting the fundamental task of educating all students to become effective global citizens in their quest to become highly ranked global institutions (Hawawini 2011). As a result, Business Schools are criticised for not providing the education that students, employers and societies need (Trank and Rynes 2003 p. 189). In the product driven university, where it is alleged that student satisfaction is paramount, narrow educational expectations are rarely challenged. Whereas Scullion, Molesworth and Nixon (2011) claimed that blaming students for narrow expectations for education is flawed (p. 233). These authors felt there is a lack academic and organisational responsibility for broadening student-learning expectations in preparation for global complexity.

Also, business pedagogy is criticised for relying on existing theory rather than deepening understanding of global complexity (Cheng 2007; AACSB 2011; EFMD 2011). As such, curriculum fails to engage with humanistic education where an imaginative and reflexive mindset is required for innovative solutions in complex business situations (Nummela et al. 2004; Rizvi 2007; Randolph 2011). Expanding on these concepts, Kymlica and Norman (1994) explained that humanistic education fosters the ability to deal with ambiguity and complexity. They emphasised the importance of understanding the political, economic and moral basis of identity and citizenship as essential elements of global education. They felt education should be underpinned by virtues, responsibilities and cultural pluralism, arguing that economic pragmatism and vocational education are not entirely suitable to function effectively within a global environment.

### **1.3 Humanism versus the market**

Balancing 'humanism and the market' in Business Schools is challenging. According to Scullion et al.(2011), ethical conflicts are a casualty of history, neoliberalism and 'market fundamentalism'. In support of this view, Bennett and Kane (2011) argued that Business Schools have fostered an employability ethos for productivity and prosperity. As a result, education focuses on the 'known' workplace competencies and less on moral reasoning and sensitivity that are needed to nurture global citizens and civil societies (Altbach, Reisberg et al. 2009). Many authors argue that an exclusive employability emphasis is expedient and short-sighted. It fails to recognise the long-term social benefits made possible through business decision-making that is underpinned by moral reasoning and ethical practice (McCracken et al. 1998; Cornelius et al. 2007; Nicholson and DeMoss 2009; Scullion, Molesworth et al. 2011 p. 233).

It is claimed that ethics in business education is in decline. McCracken, Martin and Shaw (1998) felt that ethical approaches commonly taught in Business Schools do not promote a high standard of ethical practice. Similarly, Cornelius (2007) reported a decline of ethics education in MBA programs. Furthermore, Nicholson and De Moss (2009) reported a lack of academic concern for ethics and social responsibility in undergraduate business education and linked this finding to a lack of teacher training. These authors question the long-term wisdom of overlooking ethics in education. On the other hand, Scott (2004 p. 339) rejected the “fall and decline of ethics education” however, omitted to explain how ethics was maintaining ground in universities.

Vocational approaches to education limit the level of complex reasoning needed for ethical thinking. Peters (1987) and Tomlinson (1986) argued that a narrow education produces skilled and instrumentally-minded people. They are trained to be competent in a set of narrow competencies, can be prone to rigidity and inflexibility and value ‘good’ as something residing in future consumption. Whereas, a broadly ‘educated person’ is more likely to hold a set of moral and ethical values. Saul (1997) concurred with this view and explained the societal consequences. He argued that narrow education has resulted in developing an ‘unconscious civilization’ ruled by the mindless ‘corporate elite’ who hold little responsibility towards society and future generations. As a result, people fail to consider the difference between “what you know” and “what you do” and can be oblivious to the consequences of sustainable development beyond the ‘bottom line’. Similarly, Nussbaum (2010), Spitzack (2011) and Kumar (2010 p. 200) emphasised how important humanistic education is to the future of democracy and civil society. In contrast to mindless behaviour, it is argued that it is possible to transform students’ behaviour, attitudes and sensitivity with an education based on moral reasoning (Kumar 2010; Furedi 2011).

Conceptualising the global citizen in higher education through moral and transformative cosmopolitanism is more meaningful to learning than simply focusing on individual attributes. The fundamental basis of cosmopolitanism describes the shift of citizenship from a purely national perspective to a broader concept and can be traced back to Plato, Aristotle and the Stoics (Appiah 2008). It rejects a notion of world government and promotes caring for humanity, society and planet, and values dialogue about differences with ‘others’ (Appiah 2008). The moral form of cosmopolitanism applies to human rights and reasoning, taking responsibility for a moral stance on human dignity, respect and concern for issues that impact global society. Transformative cosmopolitanism is associated with a reflexive mindset that considers the

interconnections and transformation of knowledge across complex constructs (Vertovec and Cohen 2002). It promotes a form of 'world thinking'. Therefore, conceptualising the global citizen through moral and transformative cosmopolitanism promotes a level of systemic and adaptive thinking required in challenging business environments and provides a strong epistemological basis for business pedagogy.

The concept of the global citizen is plagued by definitional criticism and is frequently thought of in terms of attributes including, intercultural competence, (Deardorff 2004) intercultural capability, openness, tolerance, respect for self, others and the planet (Killick 2011) and responsibility, awareness, mobility, participation and cultural empathy (Schattle 2008). A great deal of global citizen research in higher education has focused on student behaviour and attitudinal change as a result of mobility experiences, focusing largely on the empirical measurement of individual attributes. In contrast, little attention has been paid to understanding the nature of the student mindset in learning or how and why all students develop as global citizens.

It can be argued that the global citizen is not well suited to research based entirely on positivism. For example, Furedi (2011) criticised the damaging trend of measuring attributes as a way of understanding 'tolerance'. He believed that moral reasoning is the key to developing tolerance and is, in most cases, amenable to education. He argued that focusing solely on positivist research contributes to the censoring of important discourses on values in education. In support of this view, Savicki (2008) and Deardorff (2009) argued respectively that transformation of perspectives and intercultural competence are processes not traits, and as such are not amenable to instrumental measurement. Kucukaydin and Cranton (2012) further clarified this point by arguing that positivist research is less sensitive to the shifts of mind and reason experienced during perspective change. This paper proposes that moral and transformative cosmopolitanism provides a strong philosophical and epistemological basis to conceptualise the global citizen in higher education. It accommodates mind and reason. This basis is consistent with the social values aimed for in ethical practice, social responsibility and sustainability in Business Schools. The cosmopolitan lens provides the basis for graduates to engage in the contemporary business environment with a broader perspective.

#### **1.4 Ethics, social responsibility and sustainable development**

Business Schools are under pressure to show a commitment to corporate social responsibility and sustainability (Lotz-Sisitka 2004). However these objectives are

sometimes at odds with the traditional business paradigm and theory many schools use (Springett 2005 p. 148). From the curricula perspective, social responsibility and sustainability strategies are often viewed as an add-on to the formal degree program, are offered at the postgraduate level, and can be driven from an executive policy level or as part of a university-wide disciplinary strategy. In this climate, it is claimed that reactive responses occur in schools with little theoretical reflection on the depth of these educational demands (Lotz-Sisitka 2004 p. 8) or on the overlapping nature of these value-based courses to the espoused value of educating global citizens.

The Brundtland Commission defined sustainable development as meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs (WCED 1987). Whilst sensitivity is identified as an essential attribute for sustainable development (Vu, Rigby et al. 2011), it is rarely fostered in learning. Similarly, sustainable development requires complex reasoning, adaptive management and systems thinking across conflicting paradigms (Tilbury et al. 2004). In light of these complex learning requirements for sustainability, conflict has been identified when teaching attempts to move beyond the neoclassical growth paradigm used in other business courses (Springett 2005). Ironically, the growth paradigm disregards the fundamental human values of sensitivity and responsibility to self, others, the planet and future generations.

Other authors have provided substance to the conflict between neoclassical and cosmopolitan paradigms in business studies. First, Gladwin, Kennelly et al. (1995) argued that that fractured epistemology in management theory separated humanity from nature. Therefore, sustainability taught solely through a business case lens risks isolating students from the level of moral reasoning needed to understand the fundamental basis of sustainability. Second, Hill (1983) explained the essential link between moral reasoning and sustainability. He linked an individual's complacency towards environmental and social responsibility to an absence of cultural humility. Further, Hill (1983) identified the moral imagination as an essential virtue for developing cultural humility, sensitivity and insight into our own fallibility. He claimed that cultural humility enables the individual to imaginatively and reflexively challenge assumptions and cultural beliefs, particularly in regard to the environment (p. 211). Learning that is underpinned by moral and transformative cosmopolitanism provides a basis for fostering a global mindset for social responsibility and sustainability. It provides a sound epistemology for teaching and learning and promotes virtues that are consistent with the needs of Business School graduates.

In defence of Business School strategy, social corporate responsibility and sustainability are becoming more main stream in Business Schools. These broader aims for education in Business Schools are frequently articulated through individual courses/subjects. In the majority of Australian Business Schools, competencies for these values are translated through graduate attributes statements (Vu, Rigby et al. 2011). However, these authors claim that social responsibility, sustainability and ethical practice are poorly conceptualised in business curricula. Three different ways of approaching social responsibility in Business Schools are compared.

First, Randolph (2011) developed a one-semester course to promote a global mindset in MBA students. His course/subject is based on Minzberg's (2004) five global mindsets (reflexive, analytical, worldly, collaborative and action). While this course promotes an integrated framework (including a mobility experience) for global business decision-making, the framework does not seem to be integrated across the entire program. Second, Hallows, Wolf and Marks (2011) found that a transformative approach to learning during the mobility experience created a significant paradigm shift in business thinking towards a global mindset, but again this is not an integrated aspect of the business program. In contrast, Bournemouth University (BU) runs a university wide 'global citizenship', 'global perspectives' program (Shiel 2007) which has been recognized by the United Kingdom People and Planet Green League 2012 (Bournemouth University 2012). As part of this program, the university is a socially responsible corporate global citizen and all curricula embed global perspectives. Further to the formal program, extra-curricula activities support citizenship and global awareness. Shiels (2007) found as a result of this program at BU, some progress was being made in staff and student awareness of justice, equity and sustainability; however greater attention needed to be paid to cultural paradigms beyond Western assumptions. Currently, there does not appear to be an extensive pool of empirical evidence for exploring the global citizen mindset in Business Schools.

## **1.5 Global citizen learning**

This paper argues that global citizen learning is a process for developing the moral capacities needed for a global mindset in Business Schools. This form of learning is proposed as the 'conceptual glue' needed to link ethical practice, social responsibility and sustainability principles in business learning. The learning virtues involved with global citizen learning include the social imaginary, criticality, reflexivity and relationality (see Figure 1). The complex interactions that occur between these virtues in various situations forms the basis of global citizen learning and results in enhanced moral awareness,

reasoning and sensitivity in the student mindset. This form of learning is well suited to a complex globalised existence in contrast to business education solely based on neoliberal conceptualisations. While the learning virtues are described separately, they work together progressively and developmentally to shape individuals' moral capacities and mindset.

### **Figure 1      Understanding the learning virtues for a global mindset**

**Sources: Marginson and Sawir (2011) and Rizvi (2009)**

Understanding the transforming nature of our own identity is central to global citizen learning. This complexity is described by 'hybridity'. The term explains the complex notions of identity created by globalisation and characterises intersecting social and cultural histories and the social existence of multiple belongings (Luke and Luke 2000; Scholte 2005; Rizvi and Lingard 2010). It is claimed that 'hybridity' can be considered as a theoretical alternative to former fixed notions of cultural essentialism (Rizvi 2009). Rather than holding fast to fixed ideas of other cultures and traditions we must recognise how the impacts of globalisation and the ongoing global flow of images, ideas and cultures influence our identity and conscious reasoning. Understanding these influences enables us to open our minds and consider beyond 'the way it has always been'. Significantly however, the consequences of students' developing global mindset are rarely considered in business pedagogy, yet Marginson and Sawir (2011 p. 142) claimed that our identity changes during every transition in learning.

It is also rare to hear the social and moral imagination discussed in business learning. Appadurai (1996) discussed the essential role of the imagination, beyond mere fantasy. He argued that the imagination is key to engaging in a globalised world, because it is the mediator of reason and 'sense making' in contextual engagement, enabling the individual to construct and consider possibilities. Taylor (2004) attributed the social imaginary as the way to deal with the unstructured, complex, empirical and affective aspects of our existence and can be a way of thinking that makes a common understanding possible. The social imaginary enables the global citizen to imagine other possibilities and perspectives. It fosters the ability to engage in a relational and reflexive way to adapt to changing and complex situations and opens the mind to ambiguity.



Reflexivity describes the way we become aware of our own perspectives, question our assumptions, embrace engagement and critically explore different contexts in learning (Beck 2000). Reflexivity is the virtue needed to question our Western assumptions of superiority and be open to other possibilities, perspectives and cultural paradigms in business learning. Rizvi (2009) described relationality as the way we critically reflect and think about others in relation to ourselves rather than as completely separate. Collectively relationality, reflexivity, criticality and engaging the social imaginary are recognised as important virtues needed to cope with global complexity (Rizvi 2009). These virtues are enablers for the business student global mindset. They allow students to engage with an open mind, to imagine other possibilities and perspectives across conflicting paradigms.

Education plays a critical role in developing students' imagination and moral capacities. In order to have the mindset to deal with global business complexity, students need to have the ability to inquire, adapt and transfer contextual factors to construct meaning and transfer ideals across business paradigms (Nussbaum 2010; Rizvi and Lingard 2010). These authors felt that students need to be capable of interrogating given constructs (sustainability for example). They should examine the historical, contexts in which such ideals were constructed to develop the ability to imagine and think, using their moral capacities. Engaging students in discourse on identity and the social imaginary in global business learning holds great potential for developing a reflexive and relational global student mindset. Cunliffe (2009) identified the centrality of ethics, relationalism and reflexivity in fostering business leadership capacities. She felt this epistemology provides a strong basis for responding to uncertainty and ambiguity in a global business environment.

Scholarly discussion on moral issues associated with the global citizen is frequently vague and implicit. Whereas, Kohlberg (1984) argued that organisational ethos and values must be made explicit to students if they are to develop a set of defensible moral values. However, avoiding discourse on morality has become common. Scott (2004 p. 439) referred to this gap in higher education as "an apparent conspiracy of silence and/or culture of disinterest". Further, De Botton (2012 p. 12) explained that secular society has grown frightened of the word morality. While Business Schools address moral issues such as ethical practice, social responsibility and sustainable development, the links to morality, moral reasoning, the moral imaginary and moral sensitivity are implicit and rarely explained to students in these terms. Gentile (2010) provided a framework for values-based decision making in Business Schools. However the centrality of student

identity, global mindset and self-formation are not explicitly emphasised to students in this framework.

Global citizen learning conceptualised in this paper is consistent with 'intercultural learning' described by Marginson and Sawir (2011), 'cosmopolitan learning', described by Rizvi (2009), border pedagogy (Giroux 1988), dialogic pedagogy (Friere 1973; Friere and Shor 1987) and transformative learning, described by Daloz (2000). These approaches to learning are ethically engaged and adaptive to new social formations. Global citizen learning is underpinned by transformative learning theory (Mezirow 2000). According to Mezirow, transformative learning theory is only applicable in contextual situations where critical reflection and reason come into play (2000, xii). Mezirow explains that we must question our underlying assumptions of our historical and biographical 'self' in relation to others (reflexivity and relationality). In this way we develop our frame of reference, our 'habits of mind' (learning virtues) and 'points of view' as we engage with mind and reason. Our values and sense of self (identity) are anchored in our frame of reference, where we filter and interpret meanings from situational encounters (learning activities). In this frame of reference, filtering occurs through our sense of identity, imaginary, reflexivity and relationality. Marginson and Sawir (2011 p. 140) described self-formation in terms consistent with the transformation that occurs during global citizen learning. Global citizen learning allows students to think more broadly and critically about the content and context of their local and global business studies.

## **1.6 Recommendations for Business Schools pedagogy and future research**

It is beyond the scope of this paper to propose specific curricula for global citizen learning in Business Schools. However, it is suggested that the learning virtues discussed in the paper can be fostered in existing curricula through contextual learning activities. Central to global citizen learning is student engagement with their identity and self-formation during learning as they grapple with increasingly complex and contested situations. By engaging students with the learning virtues in contextual situations 'global citizen learning' can be facilitated. The aim is for global citizen learning to become a 'habit of mind' for students to engage mindfully in their globalised existence. Suggested ways to achieve this in the classroom are to:

1. Make explicit to students the university and Business School social and moral values

2. Demonstrate to students how social values and global citizen learning are relevant to their business program and learning objectives
3. Provide students with explanations of the learning virtues (see Figure 1), global citizen learning and their developing global business mindset
4. Foster the learning virtues (ways of thinking) in contested ethical, historical, sociological, ecological and business perspectives
5. Engage students in 'dialogic' practice to interrogate and resolve conflicting neoliberal and cosmopolitan paradigms in an integrated way during learning activities
6. Encourage students to consider and imagine other business possibilities, paradigms and solutions in complex problem solving
7. Create, compare and contrast global contextual meaning and assumptions in learning activities
8. Raise students' awareness towards their developing moral capacities and self-formation.
9. Promote research on understanding the business student mindset during global citizen learning.

## 1.7 Conclusion

The competing demands facing Business Schools in a global environment have been discussed through the conflicting neoliberal and cosmopolitan paradigms. Criticisms of business curricula for social responsibility, ethical practice and sustainability have been identified in the literature. This paper proposes that conceptualising the global citizen through a moral and transformative cosmopolitan lens provides the philosophical and epistemological basis to address these criticisms. Global citizen learning supports a global business mindset and the level of employability aimed for in Business Schools. In contrast to a moral crusade, 'global citizen learning' is explained as a process. It fosters students' 'ways of thinking' and 'global mindset' to deal with complexity and ambiguity. 'Global citizen learning' fosters students' appreciation of their transitioning identity, hybridity and self-formation. It fosters the social imaginary, reflexivity and relationality and can be easily utilised in existing business curricula. By engaging explicitly in moral learning, business students and teachers can be encouraged to routinely consider how knowledge applies in relation to other contexts, to think about the possibilities imaginatively and reflexively. Through global citizen learning, students are provided with 'ways of thinking' to understand how knowledge is constructed through multiple perspectives. As a result, students develop the confidence and ability to engage beyond what is known to consider broader business contexts, possibilities and conflicting paradigms. By understanding

hybridity and engaging in global citizen learning and self-formation, students and teachers can mutually benefit to become global citizens. This paper explains global citizen learning as the 'conceptual glue' linking social responsibility, sustainability and ethical practice principles in Business Schools. From the practical sense it fosters and facilitates an adaptive and systemic global mindset in business students to deal with their complex and ambiguous global career.

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