

Editorial

The Evolution of Pedagogical Practices, Educational Policies and Internationalisation in the Asian Century: A Global Perspective

The dynamics of education in the modern world are profoundly influenced by socio-political, cultural, and technological changes. This edition of *New Era Journal* features three significant contributions that explore the evolution of pedagogical practices, educational policies, and the internationalisation of higher education. Gertrude Shotte's examination of English language teaching approaches, Tahira Yasmeen and David Turner's study on Pakistan's educational policy, and the collective work on China's role in the Asian Century all offer unique insights into how education is shaped by both local and global forces.

In the first paper, *Reconstructing and Expanding Pedagogical Practices: A Look at English Language Teaching Approaches*, Gertrude Shotte explores the impact of globalization and migration on language teaching. Shotte highlights that English has become the dominant lingua franca, particularly in multilingual and migrant-rich societies, necessitating an overhaul of traditional pedagogical approaches. She advocates for a more tailored and flexible pedagogy that grants teachers the autonomy to adapt their methods to meet the diverse needs of learners. This view aligns with the tenets of constructivist and social constructivist theories, which emphasise the active role of learners in constructing knowledge within a socially supportive environment (Vygotsky, 1978; Piaget, 1950).

Shotte's call for expanding pedagogical spaces is particularly timely in an age where technological advancements and global citizenship education are redefining educational landscapes. With an increasing demand for English proficiency across the world, educators must move beyond one-size-fits-all methodologies. By embracing the principles of scaffolding, teachers can provide learners with the necessary support while gradually promoting autonomy, thus fostering a more inclusive and adaptive educational framework. As Shotte notes, "Changing educational landscapes in a fast-paced technological environment necessitate the reconstructing and expanding of pedagogical practices." This insight underscores the importance of developing pedagogies that are not only responsive to current demands but also anticipate future shifts in global communication and knowledge exchange.

In their contribution, *The History of Educational Policy in Pakistan*, Tahira Yasmeen and David Turner use Karl Popper's philosophy of critical rationalism to examine Pakistan's educational policy from 1947 to 2000. They argue that educational reforms in Pakistan reflect an iterative cycle of problem-solving, where each reform, intended to address current issues, often generates new challenges. This cyclical nature of policy development is encapsulated in Popper's model, which suggests that solutions to societal problems inevitably lead to the emergence of new problems, requiring ongoing critical evaluation and flexibility in policymaking (Popper, 1972).

The authors note that Pakistan's educational reforms have oscillated between modernisation efforts and religious influences, reflecting broader societal tensions between secularism and religious conservatism. This tension has made it difficult to implement reforms that achieve long-term educational transformation.

The lack of sustained political commitment and the instability of the political environment have further hindered the ability to evaluate the impacts of these reforms over time. Yasmeen and Turner's analysis suggests that critical evaluation and adaptability are crucial for the success of educational policies. They emphasise that Pakistan's educational future will depend on its ability to break the cycle of failed reforms and develop policies that are responsive to both local needs and global educational trends.

The final paper in this edition, *Understanding China in the Asian Century: Is China the Future of Higher Education Internationalization?*, by Candice Xiyuan Zhang, Dora Dong Li, Stefan Reindl, Stephanie Hollings, Carlos Cardenas and Zhujun Jiang takes a bold look at China's growing role in global higher education. The authors explore how China's ancient cultural heritage and contemporary economic power are influencing its approach to higher education and its position in the international student mobility market. With China's increasing investment in education and its Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), the country is positioning itself as a major player in the global educational landscape.

China's rise as a hub for international students, particularly in the context of graduate studies, is part of a broader strategy to assert its influence in the Asian Century. The study presented in the paper highlights that China's success in attracting international students is not only due to its economic might but also its cultural and historical legacy, which offers an alternative to the neoliberal frameworks dominating Western educational models (Liu, 2020). The paper underscores the importance of China's higher education reforms in positioning the country as a viable alternative to traditional study-abroad destinations, such as the United States and the United Kingdom.

However, the authors caution that for China to truly lead in the internationalisation of higher education, it must continue to strengthen its educational systems and improve the quality of its higher education institutions. This includes developing programmes that not only attract international students but also foster cross-cultural exchanges and prepare students to navigate the globalised world. As the empirical study within the paper suggests, while China's global ambitions are clear, its success in shaping the future of international graduate education will depend on its ability to balance economic, political, and cultural factors.

Conclusion

The three papers in this edition collectively highlight the ongoing evolution of education in response to globalisation, technological change, and shifting political landscapes. Shotte's exploration of English language pedagogy points to the need for flexible, teacher-autonomous approaches that can adapt to diverse linguistic and cultural contexts. Yasmeen and Turner's historical analysis of Pakistan's educational policy offers valuable lessons in the cyclical nature of reforms and the importance of critical evaluation. Finally, the collective work on China's role in higher education internationalisation provides a compelling look at how cultural, political, and economic factors shape educational systems in the Asian Century.

These papers remind us that education is not a static entity but a dynamic process shaped by a multitude of forces. As we move further into the 21st century, it is essential that educators, policymakers, and international bodies work together to create educational systems that are responsive to the needs of a rapidly changing world. By embracing new pedagogical models, critically evaluating educational policies, and fostering international collaboration, we can ensure that education remains a powerful tool for social transformation and global cooperation.

Enjoy.

Ogunleye, J., Editor, *New Era in Education*

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