



An Institute of



Harmonizing Cultural Diversity in Education for Sustainable Development

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Dr Tricia Seow

INSPIRING LEARNING
TRANSFORMING TEACHING
ADVANCING RESEARCH

Education for sustainable development

17 SDGs cannot be achieved without fundamental changes in citizens' attitudes and behaviours, as well as the ways in which societies and economies function.

Education *for* sustainable development: need for education systems that can develop individuals with the necessary skills and attributes to face challenges related to sustainable development



What does quality ESD look like?



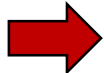
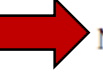
WHAT
COMPETENCIES DO
WE NEED TO
DEVELOP?



WHY DO WE NEED
TO FOCUS ON
HARMONY AND
CULTURAL DIVERSITY
IN ESD?



WHAT DO WE NEED
TO DO IN OUR
CLASSROOMS?

Key Competency Area	Example of Competencies	Example Evaluation Questions
Intrapersonal	Presenting, self awareness, stress management, meaning making, connection with self, capacity for inner peace, mental wellbeing, self-reflection	Are learners able to be present in themselves? Can learners hold (without having to resolve them or prejudice one or the other) contradictory feelings and or thoughts? Do learners practise self awareness? Are learners able to know when they or a group is stressed and take appropriate steps so that stress does not hinder action? Can learners find strategies to seek inner peace? Can learners make meaning in the work they do? Do learners practise love and compassion? Are learners aware of their mental and emotional health and do they have the abilities to maintain healthy mental and emotional states?
 Interpersonal	Communication skills, empathy, compassion, leadership, teamwork, mediation, cooperation, collaboration, participation	Are communication skills taught? Are learners facilitated to work well with others? Can learners assist each other in peer to peer learning? Are learners, across gender, ethnicity and other groupings, able to explore their leadership skills? Is empathy valued and encouraged? Are learners able to address conflict and develop mediation skills? Are their barriers to full participation in learning projects?
Future thinking	Visioning, developing scenarios, backcasting, recognising heritage, intergenerational equity	Are learners encouraged to imagine and envision sustainable futures? Can learners effectively use backcasting and forecasting skills in planning strategic activities? Do learners connect with their heritage and culture when looking to the future? Can learners identify future scenarios and use them to inform decision making? Are learners able to apply an awareness of intergenerational fairness to decisions and planning?
Systems thinking	Systems thinking, working with complex problems, promoting resilience, understanding tipping points and feedback loops	Are learners able to work with interconnectedness and complexity in a systemic context? Do learners have a functional knowledge of tipping points, resilience and feedback loops? Can learners understand how to work with socio-ecological systems? Do learners have a working concept of resilience?
Disciplinary and interdisciplinary	Understand the links between knowledge and experience, critical thinking, discipline specific framing, interdisciplinarity, expressing multiple ways of knowing	Have learners acquired an epistemological intelligence? Have learners developed awareness of different ways of knowing? Have learners explored disciplinary integrity and understood the academic norms of a discipline? Can learners work with disciplines that are not their core approach? Have learners developed their capacities for critical thinking? Can learners critically reflect on their own experiences?
 Normative and cultural	Ethical responsibility, development of world views and perspectives, awareness of values, understanding of justice, cosmopolitan perception, transcultural understanding, awareness of local context and global trends	Can learners identify ethical questions and evaluate ethical responses according to different frameworks? Are fairness and justice debated and explored? Are learners encouraged to engage with and understand different world views? Are different cultural contexts appreciated? Have learners engaged with questions of well being and happiness?
Strategic	Planning, decision making, implementing, addressing challenges, organisational development, use of Kolb's action reflection cycle.	Are learners able to practise decision making and analyse consequences? Can learners use planning and assessment tools? Can learners identify and address challenges with regard to strategies and their implementation? Have learners implemented a plan they have designed? Do learners know how to use the behavioural change cycle for effective action and reflection? Are learners aware of organisational development issues and practices?

Giangrande et al. (2019). A competency framework to assess and activate education for sustainable development: Addressing the UN sustainable development goals 4.7 challenge. *Sustainability*, 11(10), 2832.

Competencies for assessment of ESD

Implications for ESD

“...need to return to a **more humanistic education** that incorporates a new language and new content in which technical-professional training goes hand-in-hand with **moral and socio-emotional learning.**”
(Giangrande et al., 2019).





Harmony and cultural diversity in ESD

Harmony and cultural diversity

- “...harmony requires a sense of criticality that includes **embracing conflict and tension, valuing difference and diversity**, and striving for balance among divergent voices.” (Barton & Ho, 2022, 49)
- Working towards the joint realization of a common good
- A dynamic and flexible process – societies work towards *harmonization*

Curriculum for Justice and Harmony

Deliberation, Knowledge, and Action
in Social and Civic Education

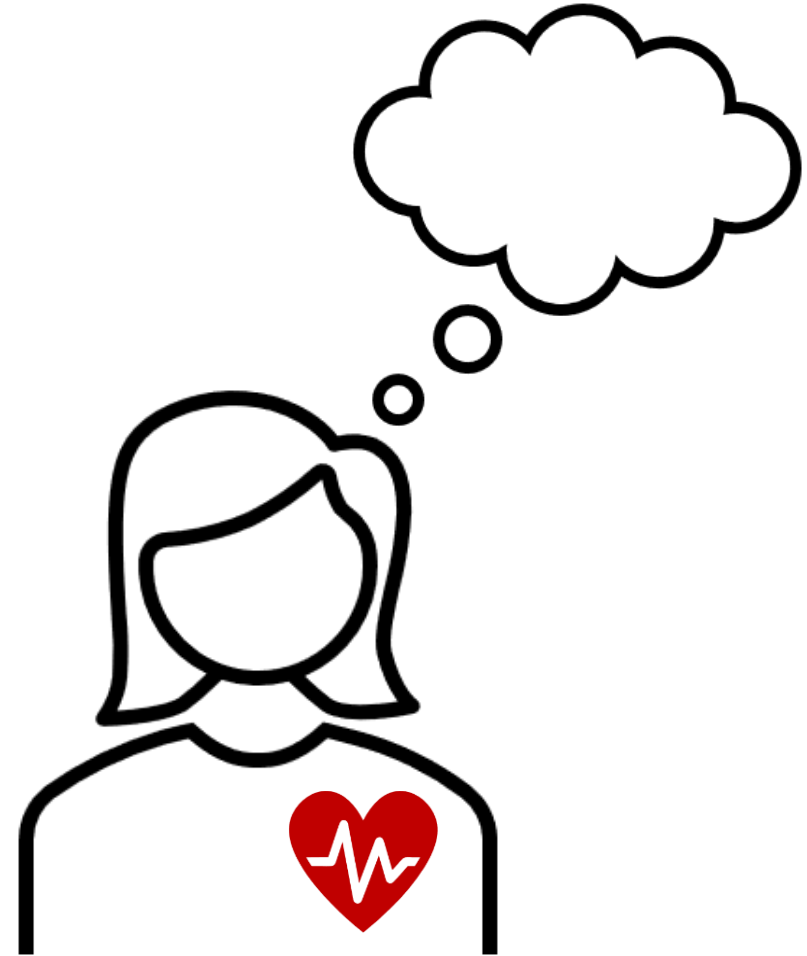


Keith C. Barton and Li-Ching Ho

Harmonizing cultural diversity in ESD

Educational goal in ESD:

Teach students to **recognize how other people see the world**, including the ideas, concepts, values, and beliefs that ground their lives and lie behind their actions.



Example1 : Recognizing other cultures' perspectives



Batasan island, Cebu Straits, Philippines

- The highest point on Batasan is less than 6.5 meters above sea level
- Much of the island is submerged during high tides, the monsoon season, and during typhoons
- The floods cause numerous problems, including health and sanitation issues, loss of freshwater wells, decline of non-salt-resistant vegetation, and flooding of communal toilets





Example1 : Recognizing other cultures' perspectives

- Economic and social identities as a fishing community with attachment to the sea
- Refused to move to a new hilly farming settlement in a nearby island

"This is where we have our livelihood," says Casquejo, who was born and raised there. "We know that God will not abandon us because we have many sources of food here. We will only leave this place when the water reaches the roofs."



Example1 : Recognizing other cultures' perspectives

Adaptation strategies used instead:

- raising their floors using coral stone, building stilted houses, and elevating belongings
- 54-hectare mangrove plantation to protect community from the impacts of strong winds and waves



Harmonizing cultural diversity in ESD

Importance of listening carefully to the social and cultural perspectives of members of climate vulnerable groups in order to generate and support the most appropriate sustainable development solutions.



Example 2 : Cultural perspectives on nature can affect sustainable development

- Cultures tend to focus on harmonising **relationships** with others in society and other living and non-living entities in nature
- Focus is on **protecting the entire ecosystem**, while utilising the different resources of nature



Example 2 : Cultural perspectives on nature can affect sustainable development



Colombian Rainforest, Southeastern Amazonas province

- Indigenous peoples see nature as a collection of subjects, each with souls, power and an owner.
- Trees are treated like humans and are the source of life
- Permission from the shaman before cutting any trees, and only certain species can be cut

Example 2 : Cultural perspectives on nature can affect sustainable development

- In Latin America, indigenous lands show lower deforestation rates than other forest areas (UN 2021 report)
- Benefits of indigenous stewardship of forests is now **influencing funding priorities**, with more money being spent to strengthen indigenous cultures and protect their rights and unique knowledge.
- Indigenous views are being increasingly **integrated into laws** in countries like Bolivia and New Zealand granting "rights of nature" to trees and animals to prevent the allocation all of a river's water to human users



Harmonizing cultural diversity in ESD

- Conflict between groups that view the **environment as a resource** to advance economic growth and human interests versus those who feel that the environment has **intrinsic value** and cannot be developed.
- Students must learn to consider different points of view on an issue, including views that fall outside of neo-liberal economic beliefs, in order to understand that there are alternative world views and other models of sustainable development.
- Seek to harmonize cultural differences to look for best solutions.



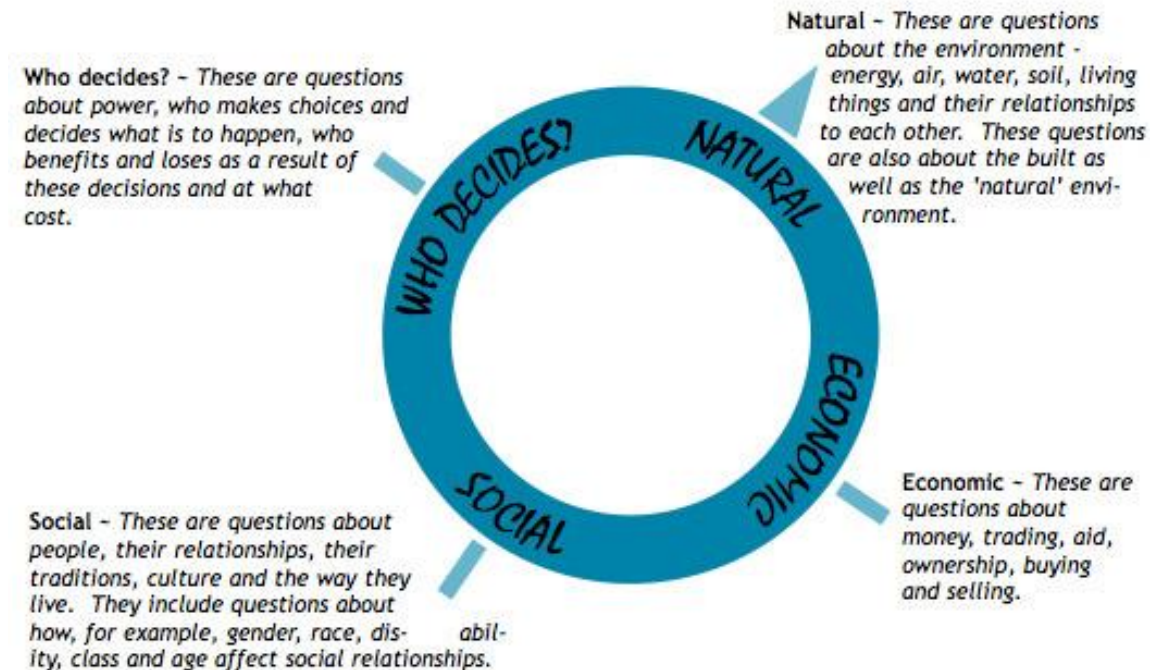
Implications for ESD

1. Provide students with examples of how other cultures view a sustainable development issue which is different from their own.
 - Use compelling and engaging first-person points of view in lesson materials
 - Use images, videos and other materials that show other cultures and environments as part of other people's lived experience
 - Provide authentic experiential examples if possible (fieldwork)



Implications for ESD

2. Teach students to deliberate on alternative approaches to sustainable development issues using case studies from their own and other cultures.
 - Provide frames to help them to evaluate alternative points of views
 - Encourage them to come up with harmonizing suggestions that consider alternative view points



In conclusion

We need to focus on harmonising strengths, wisdom and resources of diverse cultures if we are to become sustainable societies.

Education for sustainable development will need to develop inter-personal and inter-cultural competences to achieve this aim.



References

- Giangrande, N., White, R. M., East, M., Jackson, R., Clarke, T., Saloff Coste, M., & Penha-Lopes, G. (2019). A competency framework to assess and activate education for sustainable development: Addressing the UN sustainable development goals 4.7 challenge. *Sustainability*, 11(10), 2832.
- Barton, K. C., & Ho, L. C. (2021). *Curriculum for justice and harmony: Deliberation, knowledge, and action in social and civic education*. Routledge.

tricia.seow@nie.edu.sg