

Introduction

Hermann Schwind, *Saint Mary's University*

To be invited as a guest editor for an academic journal is a great honour, and I would like to express my gratitude to the editors of the *Global Review*. Although my academic background is Business Administration and my special interest area Human Resource Management, I always had a strong interest in teaching and learning, which I believe, is a natural extension of the professional curiosity of most academics. Most will teach, but few will do research alone, and understanding teaching techniques or how students learn becomes an essential part of an academic's career.

The articles submitted to the *Global Review* offer a broad perspective on Teaching and Learning, as can be expected when the theme provided is broad in itself: Teaching Business in the Global Century. The focus of the journal is global and the topics of most of the accepted articles are truly international. Even if the content of an article is national, the results are relevant globally.

The first article, "Analyzing Terse Stories: Socialization into the Academy," has story telling as its topic and methodology. I have to admit that first I was skeptical about both topic and method. Being the product of PhD programs in the Seventies, we were indoctrinated with the dictum: If it cannot be measured it does not exist. Qualitative research, at that time, had been the domain of European academics and frowned upon in North America, where number crunching was the dominant analytical tool of an academic. I have mellowed over the decades and am now willing to accept qualitative research as an...almost...equivalent to quantitative studies. Yes, a bit of reservation remains. But this article makes a convincing effort, and succeeds, to be academically sound in its build-up (literature review), foundation building, appropriate methodology, convincing analysis by using valid measures, realistic results, proper discussion, and persuasive conclusions. In addition, it resulted in myself going back to my own PhD studies and "commiserating" with these students, as they tell their personal tales.

Cohorts of PhD students were asked to write stories about their three to four years of experiences in their programs, the insights they gained, and how they developed into credible academics. Seven key topics were identified: why I'm here; I don't belong; do they think I am good enough?; hey, I'm a PhD student after all; my cohort, my friends (or not); I need help; where is the conflict? As the authors describe it, this small study contributes to our understanding of the socialization process that pre-academics go through and provides some valuable lessons to PhD program directors and instructors.

In the next article, "Critical Thinking in the Globalized Business Classroom: The Existential Imperative," we jump from individual storytelling to a broad philosophical issue, the connection between critical thinking skills, a basic requirement for business students, and some aspects of existential philosophy. The critical thinking requirement is counterbalanced by the make-up of the typical current Canadian classroom, composed of millennial students from all over the world and with very diverse backgrounds. They are exposed to an excess of information and choices, making critical thinking essential. But these developments create a conflict. We live longer, thanks to improvement in technology and medical progress, yet at the same time we experience more stress, anxiety, and depression. People with critical thinking skills then tend to ask some basic existential questions: Who am I? What is the meaning of life? and How should I live? The authors suggest that modern university education needs to assist contemporary students to challenge conventional wisdom and gain an understanding of the self in the workplace. The authors make useful recommendation on how to deal with these issues in the curriculum and the classroom.

I must say that I was impressed with the expertise with which the authors, Business Professors, weave that network which combines the existential philosophy, originating with Kierkegaard in the eighteenth century and further developed by Nietzsche, Sartre, and Heidegger, with a modern business curriculum. They argue, and I have to agree, that we as educators have to equip our students with the capability to assess the value of their own existence and how to make it more relevant to themselves *and* society: a masterful opus.

In the third article, "Emotional Intelligence, Team Learning Effectiveness, and Academic Performance: A Quantitative study of Middle Managers Attending Corporate Education Programs," the author has bravely stepped into a somewhat controversial topic, the

use of Emotional Intelligence (EI) as a measure of performance. HR practitioners love EI, because it seems to describe the ideal characteristics required of an effective manager: emotional empathy, ability to be aware of, and in control of one's emotions; recognition of one's own and others' moods; responding with appropriate behaviours and displaying proper social skills. The controversy arises because some psychologists challenge the definition of EI as an intelligence dimension. They rather perceive it to be special knowledge or social expertise or skills.

The author acknowledges the controversy but believes his study will contribute to solving the question of what EI really stands for. I welcome his view. Only empirical studies will provide sound data to resolve this issue. Perhaps, as an HR person, I should be allowed to make a personal comment. I mentioned before that HR practitioners like EI, because of its desirable characteristics appeal. Looking at applied EI studies, there seems to be a preponderance of evidence that employees with higher EI scores perform better (Poskey, 2014). Of course, it does not answer the question of what the proper definition is: Intelligence, Knowledge, or Skills. However, EI gives us HR people a tool to make selection decisions which, according to these applied studies, provide positive organizational results. That is all practitioners ask for.

The author uses as subjects middle level managers of a consumer goods manufacturer, but makes recommendations to the application of the results in an educational environment, which makes the study relevant to this journal. It has significant limitations because of the sample used, as acknowledged by the author, but it is methodologically sound. As a minimum, it contributes useful data to the resolution of a popular academic controversy.

The fourth article, "21st Century Pedagogy in Open Society: Is it a Shadow Pedagogical System with Social Media as a Pedagogical Tool?", gave me two surprises. One, I learned something in Education I had not heard of, a "Shadow Pedagogical System"; and secondly, the author begins his discussion with a reference to 350 BC. It turns out that the Shadow System is just a different terminology for homeschooling, tutoring, online learning, and social media, short for all non-traditional ways of education, and the reference is to Alexander the Great, Aristotle (his teacher), and Plato (teacher of Aristotle). The author uses the latter reference to build his case to advocate the overcoming of the unequal access of a large part of the world's population to higher learning. He describes convincingly, using UN and US statistics, the negative economic

impact of lack of higher education on nations, from low wages, to inability to work in jobs requiring knowledge of advanced technology, to low national productivity and Gross National Product. As the author sees it, and he makes a good case, the Shadow Pedagogical System provides an effective way to allow disadvantaged population groups access to the necessary advanced education required now for more complex jobs.

The Khan Academy is a well-known example of an institute that provides free education to millions of students around the world. This open access, according to the author, will be a critical educational component of the ongoing information revolution. This increased access to education will in turn facilitate positive global connectedness and democracy.

The next article, “When You Really Don’t Mean it: A Model of Plagiarism Behaviour and its Correlates,” discusses, on a theoretical basis, the issue of student plagiarism, certainly a popular and current topic. There is no doubt that cases of student plagiarism are on the rise, but what causes it is not that clear. The authors offer a number of reasons, ranging from an increase in enrollment of international students coming from cultures where individual property, especially literature and intellectual assets, are not perceived to be proprietary to students who cheat for personal gains. They propose, and make a good case for, classifying the occurrence of plagiarism into four categories: True Deception, Naïve Deception, Clueless Deception, and Hapless Deception.

In Eastern cultures students are more prone to learning by rote. They are taught to memorize the sayings of great masters and quoting them is perceived to be a sign of higher education. In such a culture citing the source of a quotation is seen as unnecessary, because it is assumed that the reader is familiar with it. According to the authors, transposing such students into a Western academic environment can cause clashes with academic plagiarism policies and rules. Avoiding plagiarism in the first place would be the preferred solution. This could be achieved by exposing foreign students early in their enrollment process to information sessions or asking instructors to clearly explain the consequences of plagiarism in each course and course outline and, very importantly, explain why this is so important in Western cultures. It is, of course, assumed that Western students are familiar with the plagiarism rules, because they very likely were exposed to them in high schools.

While the authors of the article have come up with a convincing model of plagiarism based on the two dimensions—

Significance of Academic Integrity to the Individual and Significance of Academic Integrity in the Socio-cultural Environment—they have not addressed the issue of its operationalization. The four categories of their model make intuitive sense and the authors provide sufficient content validity. It will be more difficult to develop appropriate measurements, because that will require construct validity. Luckily, in my opinion, there is sufficient literature available in the Cross-Cultural Management field (Hofstede comes to mind) and in Psychology. Undoubtedly, the authors have laid the groundwork for future studies.

The last article, “An International, Trans-Disciplinary Graduate Student’s Journey Through Academic Writing at a Canadian University: On the Intersection of Linguistic, Cultural, and Cross-Disciplinary Challenges,” is one of those rare publications with a sample of 1, a personal experience intertwined with a discussion of the internationalization of our institutions and the problems caused by interdisciplinarity, a new term for me, but which made immediate sense due to my background in Mechanical Engineering prior to Business Administration. While the authors explain the general difficulties international students experience when studying in another culture and language, the discussion also addresses the problem when the switch is compounded by taking on another discipline. One of the writers then uses her own experience to offer some practical aspects of the two switches, i.e., language and discipline. It certainly makes for an interesting reading.

The article begins with description of the problems international students face when they change from their studies in their mother tongue to studies in the language of their host country, in this special case from China to Canada. The authors argue that first the international student has to achieve an adequate proficiency in the new language, especially if a career is envisioned which includes working in the new language. The problem will be exacerbated if the student switches disciplines, e.g., from Engineering to Management, or, as in this case, from Journalism to Education. Each field of study has its own language, often called jargon, because it is commonly difficult for “lay people” to understand the experts when they talk to each other.

I remember, coming from Engineering, my first encounter with a course in Introduction to Psychology. What a nightmare to read all about these new terms and concepts that made so little sense in the beginning. And it was in a foreign language. So I have sympathy for this writer and her struggles.

The authors offer helpful recommendations to university administrators and educators to assist international students in their adaptation to a different culture in general and a different academic culture in particular. Their advice aims specifically at instructors, who encounter in their discipline-specific courses students who come from other fields of studies. In such a case very personal feedback is essential for the success of the student.

This last article offers a fitting conclusion for six studies that relate to a discussion of global aspects of Education. I have to say that I was generally very pleased with the quality of the contributions and it was a pleasure to comment on them. My congratulations to the editors, who made a fine selection of topics, all covering different aspects of the subject matter of international studies. I feel that this volume makes a genuine scholarly contribution to the field.

Dr. Hermann Schwind is Professor Emeritus, Human Resource Management, at Saint Mary's University in Halifax, Canada. He received his PhD from the University of British Columbia, BBA and MBA degrees from the University of Washington, and mechanical and industrial engineering degrees from German institutions. He worked as a Service Manager and Training Director for ten years with the US Caterpillar Tractor Company's German dealership, five years as a technician with the German Railroad, and retired in 2000. He is the principal author of *Canadian Human Resource Management*, a best-selling Canadian textbook (McGraw-Hill Ryerson; currently in its 10th edition), published over 80 articles and papers, and contributed chapters to 7 books.

References

- Poskey, M. (n.d.). *The importance of emotional intelligence in the workplace: Why it matters more than personality*. Retrieved May 15, 2014, from <http://www.zeroriskhr.com/articles/emotionalintelligence.aspx>