

Education from Location

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### Abstract

In order to have systems of education that will work to promote peoples and societies in regions all across the globe, educators must consider multiple aspects of the culture of each location. Educators should then tailor an education system to meet the desires, strengthen the advantages, and eliminate the challenges in each particular location. Factors of each culture that educators should take into account include resources available, participation in education, major difficulties in social arenas of society, advantages or disadvantages of the physical environment, health conditions, human interactions within the culture, desire to change or maintain societal or cultural norms, and numerous others. Since communities differ greatly from one another in at least one of these arenas, systems of education in one region of the world should not be identical to systems in other regions of the world. Place-based systems of education should be integrated into regions around the world in order to account for the prominent issues and practices of each area.

### Education from Location

Since each region of the world has its own set of values, practices, and challenges, education should be considerate of these and tailor itself to each specific geographic region. In order for different geographical regions to make significant progress, they must not look externally, but rather should examine their own advantages and disadvantages in order to be aware of which areas need improvement and which areas can positively affect the region as a whole. This idea of education can be referred to as place-based education, and it uses the local community and environment as a starting point from which to teach the different subject matters (Skoutajan, 2012, p. 34). Within a system of place-based education, the development of curriculum centers on the local, social, economic, and ecological resources of a community (Nikezic & Markovic, 2015, p. 9711). Place-based education also promotes learning within the local conditions. It uses the local surroundings as the context for curriculum integration into a single multidisciplinary approach (p. 9717). Creating an education from location would allow various regions around the world to efficiently maximize their strengths and diminish their weaknesses.

Focusing systems of education on location includes integrating aspects of a community into the classroom in order to prepare students to be effective citizens outside of the classroom. In order to develop a location-specific system of education that works effectively, educators must be aware of both the advantages and disadvantages of each region's geographical location, the beliefs and practices within the culture, and the current structure of the education system, if any, within that location. Education specialist

and philosopher David Sobel claims that developing hands-on education and providing real-world learning experiences increases the academic achievement of students, helps them develop stronger ties to their societies, enhances their appreciation for the natural world, and increases commitment to serving as active, contributing citizens (cited in Skoutajan, 2012, p. 34). When a people of a region are committed to serving their communities, they will bring about positive change and work toward advancing their societies. Additionally, recent studies have clearly shown how place-based education is able to connect what is happening in school communities to what is taught within the classroom in order to “engage future generations to become the innovators that can tackle the challenges of the future” (p. 34). Thus, “place-based or place-conscious education introduces children and youth to the skills and dispositions needed to regenerate and sustain communities” (Gruenewald & Smith, 2014, p. xvi). Education from location goes beyond teaching standardized subject matter and involves students in the affairs of their surrounding communities, allowing them to be effective members of society.

Within each system of place-based education, educators should focus on teaching pertinent content, such as establishing good health practices or making good use of the resources within a particular region, in order to connect the curriculum to the community. An education from location must also familiarize students with the way their health and security are reliant on the conditions and actions of everyone and everything surrounding them, since they are all functioning together to create a unified society (Gruenewald & Smith, 2014, p. xxi). Furthermore, when educators examine a region to determine what the school system should look like, they must consider education’s current accessibility

within that particular culture, since some regions do not even allow all children to go to school. Some areas have what the people would consider significant financial requirements, such as uniforms that are expensive and mandatory for schooling, which may inhibit students from going to school (M. Davis, personal communication, September 17, 2016). Additionally, some regions do not typically allow children the option to continue into secondary education due to household or community requirements. For example, some families in rural Africa cannot afford for their children to attend school regularly because the families need their children to remain home to help with the work on the family farm (D. La, personal communication, September 17, 2016). Educators must consider these factors since it is ideal that every child has the opportunity to go to school. They should work to discover how to address these circumstances within each specific region with the hope that each child will have an equal opportunity to receive the same high quality of education.

### **Purpose of Education**

Before educators can decide how to create a beneficial and efficient system of education, they must first determine what the purpose of education is. If a system of education does not have a clear purpose or goal, it is not likely to advance in any direction. Education should exist to allow students to develop their abilities and ways of thinking so that they can positively influence their surrounding communities. Systems of education should provide students with the resources and strategies necessary to develop new skills and ways of thinking. Additionally, these systems should enhance students' skill sets in order to enable students to better themselves and ultimately better the

societies around them. Education should equip people to live and work to sustain the cultural and ecological integrity of the societies in which they live (Woodhouse & Knapp, 2000, p. 4). While each system of education may incorporate this tenet differently based upon factors unique to its region, each can incorporate this foundational idea into a model that suits its environment.

Regardless of people's location or resources, education should serve as a means through which they can progress, since it can provide them with the practical skills and knowledge necessary to thrive within an environment. Following this is the idea that education should also work to advance society positively, since the progression of the people in a society should result in the prosperity of that society. Educational experiences in a place-based system of education focus on developing a sense of relationship between young people and the places in which they live (Smith, 2007). Strengthening students' ties to their communities will ultimately promote a more just and sustainable world, since they will be informed about how to positively serve their societies and willing to act (Israel, 2012, p. 76).

Additionally, since each society has areas of strengths and weaknesses, the principle that each system of education should focus on is making advances toward diminishing the weaknesses while promoting the strengths. Systems of education around the world could adopt this basic principle, though each would integrate it into the classroom differently based upon its own location. Sharma and Monteiro (2016) argue that "education is the vital link that brings about social change" and "education is a precursor of change therefore educators are responsible for transforming communities

and initiating social change” (p. 72). In all, the goal of education from location “is to change the way students feel about and act in the places of their everyday lives in order to promote a more just and sustainable world” (Israel, 2012, p. 76). In order to progress a society, the people must be informed about how to benefit the area. Education from location would provide students with the information and skills necessary to advance their communities.

### **The Need for Education from Location**

In order to create an effective system of place-based education, educators must develop a specialized curriculum that accounts for the assets and hindrances of each region. A specialized curriculum will provide students with the skills they need to benefit their surroundings, and it will increase student motivation by connecting their formal education to their lives (Bartholomaeus, 2013, p. 17). Thus, teachers must examine a culture to determine how to connect education within the classroom to the matters students face outside of the classroom. Certain issues to consider are prevalence of natural disasters, sustainability within the area, percentage of students who go on to secondary schooling, prevalence of major social issues, physical needs in the area, desires of the people, and prominent vocational needs. A system of education that considers these issues allows students to gain an understanding of the factors that have shaped their communities, the resources available in their areas, and the ways in which they can contribute to the future of their locations (p. 18). An article in *Educational Foundations* by Berry and Candis defines cultural experience as events “specific to a group of individuals with shared beliefs, values, traditions, customs, practices, and language”



(2013, p. 44). In order to create a system of education that would allow a region to reach its full potential, it must consider each of these facets of culture.

### **The Need for Location-Specific Education in Taiwan**

Taiwan, in particular, could benefit from place-based education that addresses the pressing concerns of its region in the form of natural disaster safety programs. Chiung-wen Hsu (2013) states that Taiwan has recently endured numerous natural disasters, “including 921 Chi–Chi Earthquake, typhoons, and landslides, which affected a wide range of areas and caused casualty and death, agriculture loss, and property loss” (p. 39). Due to the prevalence of natural disasters in this region, disaster prevention, impact, and recovery education would be extremely advantageous.

Chien-Yuan and Wen-Cheng (2012) discuss the lack of location-specific disaster education in Taiwan and provide several potential solutions to the problem at hand. They point out that although Taiwan’s government has become more aware of the need for disaster reduction education and more invested in reaching a conclusion, there are still problems to address (p. 545). The article claims “only about 2 [percent] of colleges in Taiwan offer common education in the disaster-related fields, and most courses only introduce one single type of disaster” rather than mentioning each different type of natural disaster in Taiwan (p. 545). Yet, natural disasters affect people of all ages, not simply people who live to be college-aged. Thus, educators should implement natural disaster education programs into primary schools in this area, and the programs should focus on the specific disasters relevant to this area rather than simply on giving an overview of different types of national disasters worldwide.

Additionally, the little disaster education that currently exists in Taiwan fails to account for mitigation and recovery. Most programs merely stress preparing for natural disasters and the emergency response during disasters rather than also emphasizing how to take steps toward recovery after a natural disaster has occurred (Chien-Yuan & Wen-Cheng, 2012, p. 545). Educators in this area should design education around what resources Taiwan has and can use in disaster prevention, survival, and recovery. Several practical ways to integrate natural disaster education into early education include training teachers in disaster education programs, developing community-based disaster management, and integrating disaster awareness practices into curriculum (Chien-Yuan & Wen-Cheng, 2012, pp. 550-551). Providing quality disaster education to students will likely increase the preparedness for natural disasters and decrease the effects of the disaster on the region.

The challenges Taiwan faces with multitudes of natural disasters each year provide merely one example of how one area of the world faces different circumstances from another and how education can be used to integrate new skill sets that are in high demand. When developing curriculum and strategies through which to deliver the content of natural disaster programs, certain foundational aspects can be widespread throughout areas that face numerous natural disasters. Although each area will need its own instruction based upon which natural disasters it faces, an article from *Sustainability* suggests “developing a natural disaster risk assessment framework based on the consideration of three phases: a pre-disaster phase, disaster impact phase, and post-disaster recovery phase” (Lee, Chen, Pai & Wu, 2015, p. 962). Focusing on these aspects

of human and environmental interactions allows each region to be properly prepared for each phase of a natural disaster while also allowing enough flexibility to be beneficial to geographical locations that may not be exposed to the same elements. Thus, place-based education would be extremely beneficial to students within this region, since it would provide them with the knowledge and skills necessary to thrive within their environment.

### **The Need for Location-Specific Education in Spain**

Spain also has its own needs to face, and systems of education could address those needs properly and effectively within the classroom. The article “Greening Spanish Primary Schools” by María, Gutiérrez-Pérez, and López-Alcarria (2016) focuses on Spain’s need and desire to promote sustainability within the culture. Spain opted to integrate environmental education “into the curriculum by the implementation of new concepts, methods and techniques for innovation and greening the curriculum” (p. 2). In this case, the systems of education worked with the community to integrate the desire to promote sustainability within the classrooms. Within this region of Spain, there is a need to increase the involvement of the educational community in strategies for environmental management and intervention, and this can be done by focusing “on the socioenvironmental problems of the local area” (p. 2). Although programs in Spain have attempted to increase the connection between the people and their societies, the relationship between the population and its environment is underdeveloped. If school systems were to instruct students in practical ways to promote sustainability within their regions, they would develop stronger ties to their communities and have the skills to put

concepts into practice (2016). Developing a school curriculum that focuses on the concerns of this location would bring about positive change throughout communities.

### **The Need for Location-Specific Education in Sweden**

Another case in Sweden shows the importance of having school systems that are unique to their regions. Within Sweden, childhood obesity is a prominent concern, and it continues to grow. Despite the need for prevention programs in this area, there is a lack of educational programs for younger children and their families (Doring et al., 2014, p. 1). Since “eating and physical activity (PA) habits are established early in life, and become less malleable with age,” it is important to address these issues in young children in order to have the most effective prevention (p. 2). To provide instruction that is accessible to all children, educators could implement curriculum that focuses on healthy practices to combat obesity. If educators taught the strategies to prevent childhood obesity in primary schools to which all children in Sweden have access and mandatory enrollment according to “Education in Sweden,” no child would miss the life-altering health education from which he or she would greatly benefit (2016). Systems of education that do not concern themselves with the prominent issues within this region will not necessarily provide students with the instruction they need to remain healthy, which may prove detrimental to society.

### **The Need for Location-Specific Education in the United States**

Additionally, a study from *Journal of Cases in Educational Leadership* by Sallee and Boske (2013) discusses the importance of developing new ideas, strategies, and content based on the challenges in an area rather than simply providing a standard

education that does not function effectively within a unique community (2013). This article details a case study of a first-year principal faced with the task of revitalizing a charter school. The charter school faced several issues of safety and poverty, and these were present throughout the surrounding community as well. When describing this community, “local tenants shared stories with school personnel during the beginning of the year during community walks. They described weekly drive-by shootings and tensions between gangs that resulted in violence and sometimes death” (Sallee & Boske, 2013, p. 65). Instead of providing students with instruction that addressed the issues of poverty and violence within the community, this school received mandated curriculum, strategies, and content from central office personnel. Since those in the school’s central office did not have a direct relationship with the school or community but were developing the school’s instruction, the curriculum and methods of teaching were not sufficient to bring positive change to the area.

### **The Need for Location-Specific Education in Australia**

Another study looked into education in rural portions of Australia. The study notes that rural education in this region faces issues that have been present throughout the years. In the article, Bartholomaeus (2013) states that “classrooms and their pedagogy have historically been characterized by a disconnection from the community outside, and this trend is particularly problematic for rural schools” (p. 101). This article suggests place-based education as a solution to this issue in rural schools. It argues that “place-based education is not about replacing the national curriculum but about having a better balance between the local and that which is beyond the lives of the students” (p. 103).

Place-based education enables students to adopt their local environments and provides “an opportunity for students to build an understanding of the local place where they live, and opportunities for students to participate in working for change” (p. 103). This system of education in rural settings would integrate environmental issues into the classroom and restore the relationship between the people and their locations.

Although most authorities within education have good intentions to promote student learning, they often “promote curriculum, pedagogies, and school policies that dismiss the lived experiences of children and focus on teaching mainstream beliefs, norms, and language to redefine school” (Sallee & Boske, 2013, p. 67). Educators must instead look to a more place-based system of education that focuses on the specified beliefs, norms, and languages essential to progressing their individual communities rather than simply adhering to a set of practices deemed sufficient for education as a whole. Without such considerations, “teachers and school leaders might run the risk of promoting culturally unresponsive practices that cause more harm than good” (p. 67). Without curriculum that is connected to the community, students will not have the ability to utilize the skills and content they learn within the classroom.

### **Research on and Analysis of Current International Education Systems**

In an attempt to understand whether location-focused approach to a system of education would be beneficial or welcomed in a community, a group of college-aged females who spent a significant amount of time in various cultures and systems of education answered a questionnaire (See Appendix). Each participant completed, or is working to complete, her college education within the United States of America, and the

participants' ages range from 19-25. This group includes individuals who were indigenous to other countries, who had moved to other countries for work or school, or who grew up in other countries. The questionnaire addressed the following issues: location, time spent in the location, whether the location was rural or urban, what particular challenges or advantages were present in the area and if they could be addressed in the classroom, whether existing education accounted for these concerns, prominent vocations in the area, and access to secondary education. Those who completed the survey were also able to add any information they considered significant about their location and its relationship to the education available within that area. In order to discuss the findings from this questionnaire while preserving anonymity, the participants' last names will be used to refer to each individual.

### **Education in Urban Kazakhstan**

One individual who completed the survey, Gwartney, recently spent a semester abroad in an urban area of Kazakhstan. While she was in the area, she spent time visiting and assisting in various schools in the region. She noted that one aspect of the school systems that is present in this region of the world is the grouping together of students. Students in the primary grades are grouped together to go through the same classes with each other at the same time. Gwartney also expressed that this system is believed to have come partially from the former Soviet Union. Additionally, throughout her time in the school systems, she noticed that there was a great desire to learn English. People from this area in Kazakhstan view English as such a global language that many of them conveyed their feelings of having to learn English in order to achieve any level of success

in daily life outside of the classroom. In order to meet this need, the current education system teaches English in the primary grades as well as in universities, and the majority of students within this region go on to secondary schooling since the government pays for the majority of schooling in this region. However, Gwartney stated that this region plans to change its education system within the next year to become more similar to the American system of education (C. Gwartney, personal communication, September 17, 2016). Although this region benefits from learning English, there is no guarantee that it will continue to progress by adopting a more Americanized system of education. Not only could this new system fail to preserve certain aspects of the culture that have been maintained through the school system, such as the grouping together of students in primary grades, but this new system could also cause a shift from instruction about certain concepts that people in this region desire to learn about or from which they may greatly benefit.

### **Education in Urban Vietnam**

Another individual who completed the survey, Nguyen, grew up in an urban area of Vietnam. She reported that one aspect of the culture within the region that educators could integrate into the educational system was the concerns of people's self-awareness. Additionally, Nguyen argued that the educational systems in this area should contain more practical assignments in school instead of simply discussing theories, and that they should also teach road safety (N. Nguyen, personal communication, September 17, 2016). Since there is an apparent lack of practical assignments in this area, there may also be a disconnect between what is taught in the classroom and what is involved in daily life



outside of the classroom. If schools are not able to teach students how to function practically outside of the classroom, the theories and patterns of thinking that students are learning within them may ultimately be of no great advantage. Nguyen also indicated that the majority of students in this area go on to secondary schooling, and that the most prominent vocations in the region are lawyers and teachers of Math and English (N. Nguyen, personal communication, September 17, 2016). Given these needed and valued vocations, schools should work to equip the students in this area by focusing a portion of primary school instruction on concepts that are in relation to these fields. In order for students to become successful lawyers or teachers, they must have adequate instruction, which could begin at an early age in order to promote the most success possible in students.

### **Education in Urban China**

Yang, an individual who grew up in an urban region of China, stated that areas of performance were highly emphasized in school systems in her area. She claimed that the educational system in this area focuses on high performance in the classroom, even at the cost of the belief in the value of the individual as a human being. Rather than placing an innate value on student life, the system of education in this region appears to look merely to what students can accomplish in the classroom in order to guarantee success outside of the classroom. To better students' chances at obtaining the most successful work position possible, students go to school six days a week starting in elementary school to increase the chances of testing well in order to continue on a positive track throughout the educational system. Rather than emphasizing the value of the individual or the idea that

people should pursue vocations that they have a passion for, these schools apparently teach students that they should work hard simply in order to receive the highest paying job they can find (S. Yang, personal communication, September 17, 2016). Despite the value of obtaining the best possible vocation to make for a secure future, the issue remains that there is a lack of individual value or purpose within the area. Although students should be encouraged to succeed, they should not focus on success to the point of losing the value of the individual or the importance of motivation in the learning process. An increase in student motivation will also increase student engagement with the material, and thus increase the potential for student success in his or her area of interest (Subramanian, 2009). Consequently, placing a large amount of attention on mere success does not account for individuals finding importance in their careers, and this may fail to motivate individuals to work diligently and passionately in their vocations.

### **Education in Urban Spain**

Williams, an individual who grew up in an urban area of Spain, also agreed to answer the questionnaire. Williams stated that the primary desire within the classroom is to learn English, and that schools need an increase in English speaking teachers in order to accommodate this desire. This culture also values communal activities, and the majority of students in this region receive secondary schooling (S. Williams, personal communication, September 17, 2016). Since this culture emphasizes community, the classrooms could benefit from communal approaches to education. Rather than merely using lecture based teaching strategies, educators could design classrooms to integrate methods such as group work, class discussions, and community outreach.

If teachers simply attempt to teach students in this region based on the typical standard methods of traditional education, they may lack the approaches necessary to reach students based on the values of the community. They may also fail to equip students to be successful members of society who have the adequate skills to engage in their community. Furthermore, Williams asserted that, although the area is extremely secular, there is a desire to provide moral instruction to the younger generations (S. Williams, personal communication, September 17, 2016). Integrating character education into primary classrooms could serve as an effective means through which to inform and encourage each child to develop moral character, and thus could potentially reform the community as a whole. If children are given practical methods and encouragement to demonstrate their character instruction outside of the classroom, they could come together to change the character of others, as well as to create a moral atmosphere for future generations.

### **Education in Urban Romania**

Graef, who lived in an urban area surrounded by rural areas in Romania for six years, completed the questionnaire. She outlined numerous aspects of this culture that educators should consider. She detailed the financial gap in the city where most of the people earn a healthy living, but those who are unable to find work are marginalized in society and left to fend for their own survival. According to Graef, there are many orphans in this region because the former communist leader Ceausescu implemented a tax to force mothers to put their children in orphanages in order to allow him to create a child army. Since there are now so many orphans, issues of sex trafficking and mafia

involvement are extremely prominent, and those who enter into these arenas often have no hope of escape. Some families face the decision as to whether or not to sell their children into the sex trade or mafia in exchange for money or protection. Moreover, since these orphans desire love and belonging and often see no hope of a bright future, some of them voluntarily enter the sex trade. Graef argued that simply teaching children that they are valuable and have the hope of a future will help decrease these issues (H. Graef, personal communication, September 17, 2016).

This urban area of Romania also pressures students into pursuing careers that will provide the most money. Instead of promoting the idea that students should seek professions in which they are gifted or passionate, society simply places the value on the amount of money a student has the potential to receive. Graef stated that it is expected that students finish primary and secondary schooling in order to be respected by society. In the current education system, students in eighth grade choose a profession to study, and then ninth grade marks the transition into vocation-specific schools. Students then study their chosen profession from ninth grade through college, and Graef said that “it would be dishonorable to switch professions before finishing college” (H. Graef, personal communication, September 17, 2016).

Although this region does well to provide basic education for primary students before integrating specialized curriculum, it does not address the prominent issues of the region. In this area, teaching children the value and potential of their lives would impact the community, and school systems could also be used to meet the basic physical needs of the members of societies. Educators could accomplish this by creating boarding

schools in the region that would allow shelter and protection for children while they receive an education that provides them with the opportunity to develop the necessary skills to obtain decent jobs. This would allow children to not only be removed from the physical and emotional dangers of their society, but it would also give them the practical means by which they could fully develop themselves to achieve a future that holds more for them than simply wandering the streets or being involved in criminal activity.

### **Education in Rural Ethiopia**

Alrutz, who also answered the questionnaire, has lived in a rural area of Ethiopia for over a year. She discussed that several challenges of the region include hunger and poor health, which is “often related to poor nutrition, dirty conditions, exposure to certain bugs, etc.” (D. Alrutz, personal communication, September 17, 2016). Alrutz also claimed that many of these issues could be resolved simply by providing better education and practical steps to take toward reaching solutions for these issues. These solutions include promoting the practice of hand washing, providing better sex education including the health risks involved, teaching practical ways to obtain better personal nutrition, and teaching about road safety (D. Alrutz, personal communication, September 17, 2016).

Merely providing more information to the people about dangers and prevention steps concerning these issues would allow for progress toward simple and attainable solutions. Alrutz stated that the majority of the people in the countryside are subsistence farmers, and in the nearby towns many people are health workers or shop owners. Despite the programs that make education available for anyone who is hard working and deemed capable of learning, a significant portion of students from the countryside do not

go on to secondary schooling since their families often need them to help maintain the farms. In addition, children who struggle in the education system due to a variety of reasons, such as learning disabilities or poor vision, are likely to drop out because there are no accommodations for them within the classroom (D. La, personal communication, September 17, 2016).

Given this information about this area, educators could adjust systems of education in this region in order to allow for the progression of the community. Initially, simply integrating programs that teach about the dangers of certain diseases and provide information that details practical steps to take toward prevention would potentially prove to be extremely helpful to students. Devastating issues could be resolved through practices as simple as the washing of hands or understanding how to act in relation to others who may have health concerns. Thus, it is necessary for systems of education to provide the critical instruction students need to promote their chances of maintaining good health. If numerous jobs in the town are in relation to health care, it is essential to inform the people in order to ensure that their actions are truly working toward the prosperity of the community as a whole. Finally, if a significant number of students are unable to go on to secondary schooling due to the basic physical needs of their families, these students could receive primary instruction about how to practically help their families to be self-sustaining long-term. Education in this region may provide the most aid to students by focusing primary instruction on making progress toward basic health, farming, and familial needs so that each student will be informed and properly equipped to make a lasting positive impact on himself as well as his community. Then, students

who are able to go on to secondary schooling could receive more focused attention on developing the proper skills for specific fields or vocations.

### **Education in Rural Zambia**

Davis, who spent ten years in a rural portion of Zambia, detailed a situation similar to Ethiopia. She conveyed that the primary need in this region is in relation to obtaining good healthcare for people of the community. Additionally, many of the issues in this region have reasonable solutions that are within reach if the people of the area are simply better educated about the issues at hand. She stated that “teaching good health practices like washing hands, bathing, not touching other’s blood, and sex education” would greatly decrease health issues in the region. Davis asserted that although there are conferences held in the area to teach about AIDS awareness and cleanliness habits, there are still gaps in instruction (M. Davis, personal communication, September 17, 2016). Educators could address these discrepancies in health education in the classroom. This would ensure that more people received the proper education they needed and that they would receive practical steps to take toward preventing health issues. Davis pointed out that the majority of students do not receive secondary schooling (M. Davis, personal communication, September 17, 2016). Since the majority of students do not have the option of secondary schooling, their primary education should mainly focus on learning practices that will help them advance their local communities through better health and sustainability. In order to meet the needs of those who do have a desire and have access to secondary education, the later years of primary education may focus more on vocational skillsets.

**Education in Urban Botswana**

Another individual who spent seven years in an urban city in Botswana, Davis, detailed different aspects of this culture. She said that the main desire in this region is to learn English, but there is a lack of English classes that are accessible to the whole community. If the people of this region are unable to learn English, they have difficulty finding jobs, and not only this, but they are unable to progress to secondary education if they do not master English as well (P. Davis, personal communication, September 17, 2016). Given this situation, this area would greatly benefit from primary education strongly focused on English. Since difficulty in English will not only keep students from secondary schooling but will also prevent those students from being able to successfully obtain a job, it should be the main focus of early education. Then, students who are able to progress into secondary instruction can receive an education that is tailored to learning specialized skills that will be useful for various vocations.

**Education in Suburban Canada**

Finally, an individual who grew up in a suburban area of Canada, Sinclair, interacted with the questionnaire to provide more information about her particular region. She portrayed this region as fairly affluent, but with cases of urban poverty, homeless, or mentally ill individuals who walk the streets. She claimed that incorporating how to care for the needy into the systems of education in this area would be beneficial. Some of the needy people “have become ‘icons’ in the local area, and as much as they are talked about by school attendees, there is little being done to help improve their quality of life” (L. Sinclair, personal communication, September 17, 2016). Sinclair pointed out that



there are currently no strategies to help the needy within the area's education systems, and that, like most underprivileged people, they are mostly marginalized by society and seen as a burden. Sinclair noted that education could be used to "reduce this stigmatization and empower the youth to reach out to those in need" (L. Sinclair, personal communication, September 17, 2016). If this area were to integrate positive ways of thinking about the less fortunate or promote practical strategies about how to care for those who are underprivileged, progress could be made toward reducing poverty in the region. Furthermore, the education systems could also work to provide students with the skills they need to ensure that they can fight to keep themselves out of poverty throughout their lives.

### **Conclusion**

Research asserts that place-based education benefits its community by increasing students' involvement and commitment to their communities, as well as providing them with the ideas and skills they need to benefit those societies (Nikezic & Markovic, 2015, p. 9717). Education from location looks at the challenges and advantages of each place in order to determine which issues within a region are crucial enough to incorporate into the limited amount of education some students receive. While there is no one model of education that will be sufficient for each region and economy, educators can focus on certain aspects of education to alter from region to region in order to promote the highest number of children receiving the highest degree of education possible. Educators must be cautious when implementing a successful aspect of one educational system into another region, since success could be either due to the quality of the method or the

cultural structure of the region. Systems of education must be adapted to account for the aspects of the culture that influence life outside of the classroom. Johnson (2012) argues that the trend toward universal education has resulted in a loss of the connection between people and their cultures. This has consequently disconnected people from their environments and the knowledge that is stored within those environments (p. 830). Reconnecting people to their locations through place-based education would restore people's access to the richness of their cultural knowledge and allow them to revitalize their communities.

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Appendix

Questionnaire Given Concerning Education in Various Countries

1. How long have you spent in which international country and city?
2. Would you consider the area rural, urban, or a mix of both?
3. Are there any particular advantages, needs, or desires in this region?
  - A. If so, do you think educators could teach any practices or strategies in the classroom to help reach solutions to these problems?
  - B. Are there any existing teaching strategies in the systems of education to address these issues?
4. What types of jobs are prominent in the region?
5. Do the majority of primary students from this area go on to complete secondary education?
6. Is there any other aspect of the culture to consider in relation to education in this area?