Chapter IV

Community-Based Distributed Learning in a Globalized World

Elizabeth Wellburn
Royal Roads University, Canada

Gregory Claeys
Aboriginal Development Consultants, Canada

Abstract

Through information technologies, there is an increasing connectedness of people in both economic and educational domains. The globalized educational environment is seen by some to be an answer to poverty and other problems through enhanced distributed learning opportunities, while others are concerned that globalization of education is leading to homogeneity and a loss of autonomy for cultures and communities. The authors of this chapter maintain the viewpoint that respectful partnerships can be developed where communities control how their knowledge is used and retained, while at the same time tapping into the potential that the new technologies have to offer and maintaining an appropriate level of quality. Two pilot programs for Indigenous learners, built with this philosophy in mind, are described.

Introduction

For the main part, this short chapter is a relatively personal account of a view toward a consultative, community-based process of distributed learning in the global context and has as its heart the experiences of being involved in two distributed learning pilot projects with Indigenous communities in western Canada. As a sub-theme, this chapter also incorporates a broad-brushed picture derived from current literature on globalization's impact on educational issues.

It is no coincidence that topics for debate surrounding the general economic concept of globalization are also relevant to a discussion of the creation and implementation of distributed learning. The same technologies that have led to globalization in the production of goods and provision of services (allowing multinational corporations, call centres, etc.) also allow learning at a distance in ways that have never been possible before and, as is the case with all educational innovation, there are many complex factors to consider.

The Globalized World

In the most general sense, globalization can be defined as an increasingly connected economic space (Stromquist and Monkman, 2000). A main argument in support of globalization is related to the economies of scale that can be achieved through shared knowledge and to the lofty notion that world peace could be possible through the interconnectedness of economies if global sharing and interdependence were to take place. This view maintains that any nation, state or other grouping of individuals would have a huge incentive to cooperate peacefully if all other nations, states or groups were valued economic partners. Mussa (2000) describes this by referencing historical and current relationships of trade, social attitudes and technologies in a paper prepared for the International Monetary Fund titled *Factors Driving Global Economic Integration.* A statement from this paper is as follows: "Unwelcome efforts to exert control over an alien people, especially in the face of armed opposition, tend to be very expensive in blood and treasure. In contrast, devoting resources to domestic economic development through efficient investments in physical and human capital and development and exploitation of new technologies is an attractive and reliable path to improved national economic well-being" (The End of Empire section, paragraph 4). Another typical reference supporting globalization is found in a publication by the World Bank (2000), which states: "There is compelling evidence that globalization has played an important catalytic role in accelerating growth and reducing poverty in developing countries … in a

18 more pages are available in the full version of this document, which may be purchased using the "Add to Cart" button on the publisher's webpage: www.igi-global.com/chapter/community-based-distributed-learning-globalized/8563

Related Content

Using Gamification in Open and Distance Learning: Management of Learning and Human Resources

Serap Uurand Yusuf Levent ahin (2018). *Administrative Leadership in Open and Distance Learning Programs (pp. 289-318).*

www.irma-international.org/chapter/using-gamification-in-open-and-distance-learning/182912

Simulation Experiment and Teaching Research of a Land-Based Ship Engine Room

Yan Cong, Baojun Wangand Taili Du (2023). *International Journal of Information and Communication Technology Education (pp. 1-9).*

www.irma-international.org/article/simulation-experiment-and-teaching-research-of-a-land-based-ship-engine-room/331801

Faculty Adopters of Podcasting: Satisfaction, University Support and Belief in Podcasting

Jin Yang (2012). *Advancing Education with Information Communication Technologies: Facilitating New Trends (pp. 356-370).*

www.irma-international.org/chapter/faculty-adopters-podcasting/61258

Academic Workload in Online Courses

Geoffrey N. Dick (2005). *Encyclopedia of Distance Learning (pp. 1-6).*

www.irma-international.org/chapter/academic-workload-online-courses/12079

Choosing MOODLE: An Evaluation of Learning Management Systems at Athabasca University

Brian Stewart, Derek Briton, Mike Gismondi, Bob Heller, Dietmar Kennepohl, Rory McGrealand Christine Nelson (2007). *International Journal of Distance Education Technologies (pp. 1-7).*

www.irma-international.org/article/choosing-moodle-evaluation-learning-management/1705