

REVIEW

Education for sustainable development in the Caribbean: pedagogy, processes and practices

Lorna Down and Therese Ferguson, Jamaica: The University of the West Indies Press, 2022.

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The book *Education for Sustainable Development in the Caribbean* authored by Lorna Down and Therese Ferguson aims at individual and community (life on the planet earth) transformation and development. The authors of the book are very clear in setting the stage for the exploration of the pedagogical approaches required to promote a sustainable world. As such, chapters 1 to 4 provide knowledge of and understanding of fundamental concepts and present the theoretical and empirical literature and research on education for sustainable development (ESD) within the Caribbean context. Chapter one presents the concept of ESD, while chapter two focuses on values ESD. Chapters 3 and 4 present the major sustainability issues and the recognition of the fundamental role of teacher education in the Caribbean to promote an understanding of sustainability, skills, values, and behaviors with students. All four chapters aid in the explication and comprehension of the chapters that follow. I was drawn to chapters five and six for the practicality of the approach for infusing ESD into core disciplines and the authentic assessment activities relating to ESD, especially in relation to transformation. As such, for the most part, this review focuses on these two chapters which see the authors clearly and creatively presenting the ways teachers and students can imagine a sustainable world and how the teacher educator can relate different disciplines to a sustainable vision and assessment that is transformative in nature.

The authors' focus on ESD is one that seeks to encourage modifications in knowledge, skills, values, and attitudes toward a more sustainable society. As such, system thinking is one of the competencies highlighted by the authors when ESD is being considered. They propose that systems thinking is the "ability to recognize and understand relationships [and] to analyse complex systems . . ." (p. 82). The other competencies (anticipatory normative, strategic, collaboration, critical thinking, self-awareness, and integrated problem-solving) that the authors present in the book for teachers to consider, are worth taking note of, especially whenever thought is being given to incorporating sustainable development in the classroom. Together, the competencies are intended to transform individuals who may be inclined to want to embrace new values, enhance their skills (critical thinking, problem-solving), and to foster acquisition of new knowledge, all aimed at developing confidence and responsibility in individuals to assist them in contributing to shaping the future (OECD, 2019).

In chapter 5, the authors present the importance of ESD within teacher education and take it a step further to examine the appropriate teaching and learning (pedagogy) strategies that are imperative to creating a sustainable world, and the main approach for the infusion of ESD.

They emphasize the importance of a vision in teaching and learning for sustainable future and the distinctive role of the teacher as facilitator in the acquisition of a vision. A vision aimed at learners developing sustainable relationships. Alongside this, they examine how the teachers and learners envisage a sustainable society and establish a link between the vision and their disciplines. Embracing a vision for a sustainable world and the use of the (3Cs) approach to infuse ESD in the core disciplines is commendable. This is in addition to their diligence in pointing to research on the 3Cs methodological framework that concentrates on the selection of the pedagogical approaches and its efficacy in infusing ESD into core disciplines. The authors' response to the infusion of ESD into core disciplines concur with the understanding shared by Roofe et al. (2021) that "ESD is part of curricula development and that capacity building of teachers to facilitate ESD takes place are both crucial" (p. 133).

Chapter 5 specifically presents ways to apply a vision and idea of sustainability within the Caribbean regional and local context and address how the vision for sustainability and action to be taken within a community is geared toward transformation for a sustainable future. Overall, the authors provide teachers with a clear understanding of and knowledge of how to appropriately apply knowledge and skills (inquiry, critical thinking, problem-solving and collaborative skills) garnered to effectively infuse ESD into the core disciplines of the teaching curriculum and core subjects (language, literature, mathematics, science, and geography) of educational institutions within a context (Caribbean) to which readers, including researchers, are familiar.

The next chapter I want to share is chapter 6 which is on revisioning assessment in ESD. I found this chapter quite noteworthy as the authors take on the task of sharing ideas of how the vision of a sustainable world can be achieved. This achievement they surmise can be realized by way of a robust assessment system where there is variety of learner centered assessment activities geared towards not only content but skills and values that are critical to the "transformation of the individual and the local and global society" (p. 97).

The book is well organized and (1) utilizes research conducted in the Caribbean to provide comprehensive examples of ESD pedagogy, process and practices and (2) emphasizes, that in the pursuit of SD in the Caribbean region, ESD is the foundation to ensure that everyone understands sustainability. It would have been useful to explore some more of the competencies mentioned in chapter 5 where readers are provided with information and strategies on how teacher educators can develop these skills and build their capacity to carry out the incorporation of ESD in the curriculum. Nonetheless, this book on ESD in the Caribbean, authored by Lorna Down and Therese Ferguson, is an informative and useful text for curriculum specialists, educators, and students in teachers' colleges and universities, especially as it presents practical approaches to the emergence and development of ESD, values, and skills in teacher education.

References

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