

Higher educating for and as sustainability: developing global awareness

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ABSTRACT

As a higher educator working in a sociology faculty at a private Japanese university since 1991 I have, for the past 15 years been developing, in consultation and negotiation with students, an integrated sociology content and additional English language higher learning. This pedagogical-learning mission has been directed primarily in service to helping to develop students' and my own as well—local, regional, and international-global civic and citizenship responsibilities. At the same time it has been an attempt to help integrate students' sociology content and additional English higher learning needs and desires within the sociology faculty where there has been and continues to be a rigid divide between almost 100% L1 Japanese language general and specialized academic sociology content study, and English language study. As I approach the end of my full-time teaching and researching career in higher education in Japan, I now wish to actively practice this citizenship development higher learning in service to a higher ideal: an educating as and for sustainability (EaS and EfS). There are educational justifications for adopting this approach in applied linguistics and the social science as outlined in Brady (2006, 2008, 2009 and 2010). This approach adopts what Forbes (2005) calls a learning that encapsulates *responsibility for and to society*. The latter is a clear recognition of where society now stands and what is or may be difficult, perhaps even undesirable, to (attempt) to change in society. The former is more of an imagination of what society can and ought to be, ways in which individuals and collectivities and groups of caring concerned individuals can better (their) society by first conceptualizing and then practicing new ways of being social, and being in and part of society and the natural world.

Key Words: educating as sustainability, educating for sustainability, critical global awareness

Religious and Moral Pluralism in Europe: Theoretical Discussions and Empirical Findings

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ABSTRACT

In this paper, we first briefly characterize what is meant by religion without engaging the endless discussions on the true meaning or definition of religion. In the sociology of religion, religion relates to the macro-, the meso-, as well as the micro-levels. At the macro-level, we call certain teachings, doctrines or dogmas a “religion.” We also distinguish between more or less religious societies. At the meso-level, a religion is understood as an organization like a church or a religious community. At the micro-level, religion is considered the property of an individual. We usually do not call this aspect religion, but religiosity. This paper focuses exclusively on this micro-level.

The conceptually distinguished dimensions of religiosity include practice, beliefs, experience, knowledge, and moral consequences. Based on empirical findings, we treat morality as a separate dimension. Theories of religious change usually do not distinguish between the remaining dimensions. In this paper, we focus on two dimensions, namely practice and beliefs.

The first section outlines theories and hypotheses of religious change. They are (1) “secularization” or “decline of religion” hypotheses, (2) “transformation” or “replacement” hypotheses, and (3) “religious market” or “economical approach” hypotheses. These major hypotheses are empirically tested in the second section. For this purpose, large-scale data sets from WVS, ISSP, ALLBUS, and European Election Studies are used. In the last section, the problem of moral change is discussed.

The results of data analyses suggest the directions of religious and moral pluralism. However, for the final conclusion, there remains a vast field for further research.

Key Words: religious pluralism, moral pluralism, macro-, meso-, and micro-levels, secularization theory, religious transformation theory, religious market theory, religious practice, religious beliefs, new religion/spirituality/the meaning of life

Resistance and Control in Waste Management: Life Wisdom of Migrant Workers Involved in the Recovery Industry in China

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ABSTRACT

In recent years, the Chinese government has been strengthening its control over the waste management industry. The purpose of this study is to demonstrate how peasants maintain their rights to these businesses. In China, the resource recycling business has shared by peasants – especially the urban poor who have relocated from the countryside. However, due to rapid modernization, it has been taken over by the official sector. Despite this situation, many peasants are still engaged in this business. They work in the “urban-rural mixed” area formed through urbanization and they use their blood relations for the business. Their practice is based on the wisdom that comes from their community.

Key Words: waste management, waste recovery business, farmers

Biplot and Multivariate Statistical Data Analysis

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ABSTRACT

Biplots are useful graphical representations of multidimensional data for displaying the rows and columns of a data matrix. Any element of the matrix is represented by the inner product of the vectors corresponding to its rows columns by the singular value decomposition (SVD) of a matrix.

This paper demonstrates principal component analysis (PCA) and SVD routines and biplots applied as graphical results using R programs.

Key Words: biplot, singular value decomposition (SVD), PCA, R, FactoMineR, Biplot GUI