

## **Promise and Reality: A Critical Analysis of Literature on Distance Education in the Third World**

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### **Abstract**

This paper argues that the gulf between what could be done and what is actually being done by distance education in the Third World will remain. An examination of the literature readily available in Australia about distance education in the Third World indicates that the promise of distance education, which is expressed in the rhetoric, is that it can assist Third World development because it is a vehicle of large scale, quality education, effecting social equality in a cost-efficient manner. A critical analysis of the same literature, however, demonstrates that the evidence does not indicate that in reality this has been, or will be, achieved. Such an analysis also indicates that distance education as presently practised in the Third World is interwoven with the so called "modernization paradigm" of development. It is noted that this paradigm has eurocentric premises which are unsuitable for the Third World. It is argued that these two factors are related and that, until the development paradigm within which distance education operates becomes more appropriate to Third World needs, the difference between the potential and the reality of distance education's contribution to national development in the Third World will remain the striking theme noted above.

### **Résumé**

Cet article soutient que l'écart existant entre ce qui pourrait être fait et ce qui est fait en réalité persistera. Un examen de la littérature au sujet de l'enseignement à distance dans le Tiers-Monde, facilement accessible en Australie, indique que la manière rhétorique dont y sont exprimées les promesses de l'enseignement à distance laisse entendre que cette forme d'enseignement peut contribuer au développement du Tiers-Monde. Selon cette littérature, l'enseignement à distance est capable de véhiculer une éducation de qualité tout en réalisant l'égalité sociale du point de vue du rapport efficacité-coût. Cependant, une analyse critique de cette même littérature ne révèle aucune évidence que ce résultat ait jamais été atteint ou qu'il le sera dans l'avenir. Une telle analyse indique de plus que l'enseignement à distance tel qu'il est actuellement pratiqué dans le Tiers-Monde est en corrélation avec ce qu'il est convenu d'appeler le paradigme de modernisation du développement. Il est souligné que ce paradigme est centré sur des prémisses inadéquates en ce qui concerne le Tiers-Monde. Nous maintenons que ces deux facteurs sont apparentés et que, jusqu'à ce que le paradigme de

développement à l'intérieur duquel fonctionne l'enseignement à distance devienne plus conforme aux besoins du Tiers-Monde, la différence entre le potentiel et la réalité de la contribution de l'enseignement à distance au développement national du Tiers-Monde demeurera le "thème attrayant" mentionné plus haut.

### Introduction

From its earliest development in the late 19th century distance education, or correspondence education as it was then called, has always promised cheap, egalitarian, mass education of high quality. In practice, however, such promise has rarely been fulfilled.

The promise of distance education was revived in the 1950s in Latin America, and in the 1960s in Africa and South East Asia, because western style conventional education was increasingly perceived to have failed to impact on Third World development. The advocates of the widely accepted "modernization paradigm" of development argued that the failure was not because of the incorrectness of the paradigm itself, but rather because of internal structural deficiencies which distance education could overcome. In Third World terms distance education has been promoted as a means of reducing some of the crucial problems in Third World education such as urban-rural drift, the brain drain, over-dependency on expatriate advisors/experts, irrelevant curriculum, and particularly, growing neo-colonial links. However, it can be used simply as another way of dispensing western education.

This study critically and empirically analyzes the literature readily available in Australia, which advocates that distance education was, and is, suitable for the Third World. It argues that distance education, like face-to-face education, has failed to live up to its promise because it relies on a development paradigm that is based upon erroneous premises. It is a study at one level about distance education, but at another level it is a comment on decolonization and on the development paradigm which was, and is, an inextricable part of that process.

### Methodology

It should be emphasized that this is not an exhaustive literature review, nor is it meant to be. It is a critical review of the literature advocating the promise of distance education that was, and is, readily available in Australia to any who wanted information on the development aspects of distance education in the Third World. It is a critical review which looks beyond the rhetoric, establishes the reality, and draws out the underlying premises in the presumed development strategies.

With this intention in mind, a bibliography was generated from three major sources, namely, computer files, library held books, and personal contacts. A computer generated search of the ERIC Files using the descriptors, "correspon-

dence study/distance education" with "post-secondary education" and "higher education," gave 181 references which were reduced to 22 relevant to the Third World. The monthly ERIC document service also produced 13 Third World distance education references. A search of the holdings of the library of a college of advanced education, offering, amongst others, teacher education diplomas and degrees, gave a significant contribution from the bibliographies in *Distance Teaching In The Third World* by Young, Jenkins, Perraton, and Dodds (1980), and *Trends and Status of Distance Education* by Holmberg (1981). *Books in Print* also was consulted under the sub-heading, "Correspondence Schools and Courses." The bibliography thus compiled was then processed for Inter-library loan. This acted as a culling process because some of the references, particularly in Young et al.'s book, were either inadequate or referred to unavailable material. Nevertheless, this method resulted in the acquisition of 85% of the material reviewed. The other 15% was acquired through professional contacts with members of the Australian and South Pacific External Studies Association (ASPESA) and the International Council of Distance Education (ICDE). *The Distance Teaching Universities* by Rumble and Harry (1981) was also referred to, as were *Distance Education: An International Perspectives* by Stewart, Keegan, and Holmberg (1984), and *Distance Education: Theory and Practice* by Keegan (1984). The final result of this three-pronged search was a review of a mixed collection of readily available academic journal articles, authored books, and edited books.

### The Promise of the Rhetoric

The literature suggests that a great attraction of distance education is that it promises quantity education not only through university primary education,<sup>1</sup> but also through upgrading teachers,<sup>2</sup> bureaucrats,<sup>3</sup> professionals,<sup>4</sup> and even new target groups.<sup>5</sup> The rise of distance education professionalism, manifest in the appearance of professional bodies like ICCE (see Daniel, Stroud, & Thompson, 1982) and ASPESA, as well as in the writing of manuals<sup>6</sup> and the use of modern technology,<sup>7</sup> promised that such education would be of a quality which could facilitate education in areas where conventional teaching was inadequate.<sup>8</sup> This education promised to encourage a shift to social equality by educating the masses (Brumberg, 1975; Edstrom, 1969; Fleming, 1982; Hurley, 1981) and effecting social change (Arrove, 1976; CEDO, 1974; Dodds, 1973; Kinyanjui, 1974). Perhaps the greatest attraction of distance education to the Third World was its potential cheapness, both because it would not cost much to establish<sup>9</sup> and because it would attract foreign aid.<sup>10</sup>

In total, the promise of distance education was portrayed as its ability to offer mass, quality, cost-efficient education which could effect social change. A great promise indeed! Such rhetoric, however, evokes such questions as, "Is this promise valid? Is it based on empirical evidence?" To answer these questions the

remainder of this paper critically examines the evidence given in the same literature in which these promises were expressed.

### The Reality of the Action

#### The Reality of Quantity

The ability of distance education to produce (as promised) large quantities of educated manpower is dependent on the presence of certain prerequisites in the Third World. Edstrom (1966) noted these as being: a good mass communication system; a good home environment; language fluency; skilled course writers; printing capabilities; recognition of distance learning as legitimate; and being geared to specific goals rather than long term goals (p. 21). Unfortunately, such prerequisites are not found in abundance in the Third World. Yet very little awareness of these difficulties is apparent in more recent literature. Nevertheless, their validity remains, and reports of postal mishaps (Heap, 1972, p. 12); poor broadcasting reception (CEDO, 1974, p. 202); inadequate home conditions (Kember, 1981, p. 182); poor language proficiency (Edstrom, 1966, p. 47); the shortage of trained distance educators (Gupta, 1982, p. 66); print-shop deficiencies (Hakemulder, 1979, p. 48); and even paper shortages (Kaye, 1978, p. 6); as well as the resistance of traditional educators and students (Daniel et al., 1982, p. 52); are numerous and cannot be dismissed lightly. As noted above, these are prerequisites for distance education, not minor problems to be overcome in the implementation of the system. Without such facilities the promise that distance education can produce large quantities of trained manpower is seriously compromised. Yet such problems are characteristic, almost by definition, of the Third World. They can only be eradicated by the very development that distance education promises.

When such prerequisites are not met, the problems inherent in the preparation, production, and delivery of courses increase significantly. The "dearth of competent writers" (Edstrom, 1966, p. 47), or writers "unused to methodology, editing and communication" (Hakemulder, 1979, p. 220), result in material that is "written in essay format in the third person" (indicating lack of involvement), in an "unattractive mimeographed form" (Gupta, 1982, p. 66). Radio programs also suffer greatly from low levels of technical expertise (Spain, 1977, p. 88; Agarwal, 1976, p. 712; CEDO, 1974, p. 202). The promise of a large quantity of educated manpower through distance education techniques cannot materialize unless the structural prerequisites necessary for the system to operate are present.

There also are severe delivery problems. Postal delays have been noted, but Dodd's (1972, pp. 16-17) comment that in Tanzania the postal delay meant that up to half the participants (including the group leaders who were to lead the discussions) did not receive the books while the radio programs were in progress indicates the magnitude of the problems. In this case the campaign failed. Perhaps

the other delivery problem, which has often been ignored, is the simple fact that many areas of the Third World do not have electricity. Kaye (1978) reported that in Pakistan only 9% of the population had it. Agarwal (1976) further argued that batteries were uneconomical. Thus, not surprisingly, the Commonwealth Secretariat (CEDO, 1974, p. 202) concluded that the ephemeral nature of broadcasts, poor quality of reception, repair of sets, theft of sets, and lack of feedback are a substantial and, it is suggested here, crippling problem.

In short, the logistical capabilities in the Third World to prepare, produce, and deliver distance education programs, which would result in large quantities of skilled, educated manpower, are severely limited. Moreover, the planning for educational programs is often based on information that is inaccurate, using poor statistics, and an unsatisfactory survey of skills. Thus, the academic courses offered are not necessarily the most appropriate, given the manpower needs of the country in general and the growing problem of graduate unemployment in particular (Edstrom, Erdos, & Prosser, 1969; Goodenough, 1978; see also Carnoy, 1980; Blaug, 1970; Dore, 1976). Indeed, given this last phenomenon, the wisdom of a large scale increase in the quantity of graduates produced by distance education methods must be seriously questioned.

As far back as the sixties Edstrom et al. (1969, p. 251) warned that African adult students' main interest was in the paper certificate and formal qualifications. This was true of much of the Third World, and the consequences soon emerged. Dodds (1973, p. 20) wrote of the enormous competition for jobs and the concentration on academic qualifications, characteristics of the "diploma disease" that Dore (1976) had cogently written about. Pereira (1969) noted a similar phenomenon in Asia. Datt (1982, p. 63) put it in even more stark terms when he argued that correspondence directorates were nothing but extensions of university departments created to accommodate their overflow, and that the demand for education was a consequence of unemployment. Even if this was not applicable to all education, it certainly throws a great question mark over the claim that, if distance education can, it should increase the number of formally trained graduates in the Third World. However, in fact, such ethnocentrism was also applicable to rural education. It was argued that, for many, rural education was a vehicle by which to escape the rural area. So distance education was "useful in the process of rural education but rural education emerges as hardly useful at all" (Spain, 1977, p. 69).

In sum, the ability of distance education methods to produce vast quantities of graduates without changes in the real socio-economic structures of the Third World is seriously questioned. Moreover, if it were successful, it would lead to an increase in the number of qualified graduates which, in turn, would escalate the "diploma disease" problem and rural-urban drift.

#### The Reality of Quality

One of the hopes expressed in the literature was that not only could distance

education increase the number of graduates, but that this would result in improved use of resources and reduced wastage or dropout (Edstrom, 1966). Is this indeed the case? Has the advent of distance education systems in the Third World reduced dropout rates and wastage?

Kinyanjui (1975, p. 182) rightly argued that dropout rates were difficult to estimate, particularly in open courses. Nevertheless, he went on to note that in the Kenyan School Certificate program, there was only 15–25% failure rate amongst “highly motivated teachers.” This, he implied, was some form of dropout or wastage (attrition). The following statistics cast further doubt on the quality of distance education in Third World contexts. If this is the case then the promise of quality distance education must be questioned. The pass rate in Zambia Junior Secondary Certificate by correspondence was only 17.6% in 1970 (CEDO, 1974, p. 250). In Tanzania the cooperative Correspondence Course had a 50% dropout rate between 1965 and 1969 (Grabe, 1975, p. 602). In Jamaica the results also were discouraging as the “unexceptional results” in 1971 show. Here, of the 44,000 or so candidates who sat for the examination, 19,000 passed no subjects at all, 22,000 passed four or fewer subjects and so did not qualify for the certificate, while just under 3,000, or 6%, of the students passed five or more subjects (Ahmed & Coombes, 1975, p. 143). Fleming (1982, p. 143) reported failure rates in Pakistan in 1979 of up to 99.5% of some subjects. Rumble (1982, p. 82) noted that the dropout rate at UNED in Costa Rica was 74% in the 1980/81 graduation, while Datt (1982, p. 64) stated that 35–40% was usual in India.

Although there are no consistent attrition figures, those given here clearly threaten the validity of the claim of “improved use of resources” being an outcome of distance education. A major reason for this, often overlooked by distance education educators, was that many young students had had no self-directed study experience, and many lacked the motivation of the successful adult student (Kinyanjui, 1975, p. 198; Ahmed & Coombes, 1975, p. 143). Unless students are equipped or prepared to learn independently, distance education methods will result in a greater waste of resources than occurs with face-to-face instruction. In any case, it is questionable to claim that *quality* education is the result of such efforts.

Dropout rates and wastage clearly are even more complex to calculate in the radio broadcasting area. However, one study found that only 15% of students listened to radio lessons regularly, 37% occasionally, 22% seldom, and 17% never, while 9% did not respond (CEDO, 1974). Indeed, Arrove (1976b), in a very powerful condemnation, argued that the “showcase” countries for educational television (ETV) were less than successful. For example, El Salvador ETV catered to only 25% of those who entered primary school. In areas receiving ETV Columbia, less than 10% of the children who started primary school completed this level. In Niger only 50% of the school age children ever went to school much

less watched television. In American Samoa, the near universalization of primary and secondary schools using ETV involved “massive disruption of traditional cultural patterns.” These kinds of failure cannot be dismissed as atypical because they represent a wide cross-section of distance education systems. Hence, they throw further doubt on whether the promise of quality distance education in the Third World can be fulfilled.

It was observed earlier that part of the promise of quality distance education was that it could use modern technology within a multi-media approach. Unfortunately, in reality this line of argument has two weaknesses. The first is that often new technologies, particularly ETV, are simply inappropriate for the Third World. In fact Silk (1975), in an implied warning to the Third World, noted that the U.K.’s Open University spent one third of its budget on television only to discover that few of its students were watching. Young, Perraton, Jenkins, and Dodds (1980) argued that because of television’s inherent hierarchical and one-way communication characteristics, American Samoan ETV was dead after ten years. In the Ivory Coast it survived, but in 1975 it depended on 187 expatriates; in Niger it looked like a grand failure. In other words, the technology used was inappropriate for the conditions. But perhaps the most inappropriate aspect of the new technologies, in view of their purpose, was their cost: “...the development of quality open learning is expensive. For underdeveloped countries this may be the greatest problem” (Daniel et al., 1982, p. 68).

Another factor contributing to the weakness of distance education in the Third World has been that the production of quality material required experts not readily available in developing countries. There has thus been a long and entrenched tradition of overseas experts being used in distance education development (Kinyanjui, 1975; Edstrom, 1966; CEDO, 1974; Arrove, 1976). The immediate consequence of this sort of involvement is that irrelevant programs have often been developed (Dodds, 1975; Grabe, 1975; Warr, 1978; Scott, 1973).

One of the arguments in favour of the ability of distance education to provide a quality education was the rise of professionalism, manifest in the development of manuals, and the growth of professional bodies. The value of many such manuals would likely be dismissed by the Third World because of their eurocentric paternalism. Greenholm (1975, p. 22) even felt obliged to suggest that cardboard boxes would be of assistance in establishing a correspondence unit. On the more substantive side, Crocombe (1981, p. 129), summed up the failings of professional bodies in his reply to the ASPESA President at the ASPESA Forum 1981:

In congratulating Eric on his magnificent ideological statement we must remember that a major function of ideology is to hide reality. The ideology that Eric expanded so lucidly hid the important realities. It was in essence the same speech that we hear from almost every ambassador, every aid delegation, who rather than saying; “What we are about to do is going to

strengthen the 'donors' and increase your dependency," say, "We are here in a spirit of co-operation as equals."

In fact the Suva Conference probably had no impact whatever on regional cooperation. There was a lot of rhetoric but no action.

To reiterate, the reality is that distance education cannot deliver quality education until the necessary socio-economic prerequisites are established. This is necessarily a process of fundamental, structural, politico-economic change which goes far beyond mere educational reforms.

### **The Reality of Equality**

Perhaps the most desirable goal that distance education promises is that in offering education to the masses it can effect educational and social change. Unfortunately, this does not seem to have happened. The "new target groups," if reached at all, are still the elite. Student profiles from Ghana and Papua New Guinea show a remarkable similarity in this regard (Ansere, 1978; Kember, 1981). This should not be surprising, even if it is disappointing, because there is evidence in the literature that distance education is used by the elite in much the same way they use any other educational process. Rumble and Keegan (1982, p. 208) argued that distance teaching universities have been used, as in Iran, as a means of keeping students out of the campuses where it is likely they will be "politicised." Silk (1975, p. 17) referred to the far more obvious manipulation of distance education by a minority elite at the University of South Africa where, the President said, "we fit right into government policy...we are providing separate and equal education." Arnove (1976, p. xiv) wrote cogently and in detail about the use of ETV by the dominant elite. He argued that ETV:

...generally had not been aimed at teaching the most disadvantaged population, the rural poor and urban unemployed and their children...content is often inappropriate and represents models of behaviour and values which are characteristic of the dominant groups in society...with regard to ETV utilization for social development these programs tend to be used for purposes of domesticating and channeling change in directions desired by existing elites, rather than developing the critical consciousness of program participants...

He further argued that the consequences of this were: increased rural-urban migration; excessive strain on existing school resources; increased numbers of unemployed school-leavers; increased dependence on foreign technical assistance; and increased dependence on external models of development, circumscribing the autonomy of a country in deciding its own future. In other words, the consequences of this form of distance education were the very opposite of what the literature predicted. Carnoy (1976, p. 59) went even further when he concluded a detailed economic argument about educational projects in El Salvador, Samoa, Niger, Puerto Rico, Korea, Ivory Coast, and Nigeria, with the scathing comment:

...none of the educational projects we have discussed in this chapter significantly change the distribution of education within the society, nor are they designed to effect fundamental economic and social change.

Yet, as was argued above, it is only through effecting socio-economic change that the promise of equality in education can be achieved.

Such manipulation of distance education by the dominant group is widespread. The promise of equality through distance education is dependent on opening formal education to the masses and also increasing informal education. Yet, in Venezuela (Freidman, 1978), Costa Rica (Rumble, 1978), India (Pereira, 1972), Pakistan (Kaye, 1978), and Mexico (Schmelkes de Sotelo, 1977), this was not the case.

As Ingle (1976, p. 115) argued:

...because the expected outcomes of distance education linking the education sector with the socio-economic development thrust of the country—were largely left to chance on the assumption that things would take their course—reinforcement of the status quo occurred.

This was partly because education remained the monopoly of the relatively better-off students (Schmelkes de Sotelo, 1977, p. 45), partly because, as Spain argued (1977, p. 78), "it is not uncommon that innovations are used most by those who really need them least," but more so because the dominant group in society, by definition, dominates. This phenomenon also emerged in the resistance to distance education by elitist academics (Goodenough, 1978; Freidman, 1978; Singh, 1982; Datt, 1968; Dodds, 1975). Thus, it is perhaps not too surprising that Adedeji noted that "the absolute number of illiterates is increasing despite the literacy programmes" (cited in Hakemulder, 1979, p. 20). It should, however, be emphasized that these literacy programs were run in isolation without any accompanying socio-economic change (Kaye, 1978; White, 1977a).

The conclusion of Musto (quoted in Beltran, 1976, p. 229) is also worthy of consideration. He reported that ACPO had not helped change the structure of Columbian society. Since these radiophonic schools were one of the major examples of rural education within distance education, such findings certainly call into question the premises of distance education's contribution to Third World development. In fact, Musto further argued that ACPO had not achieved change in the prevailing social and economic structures; to the contrary, ACPO's radiophonic students were, as a rule, more conservative than peasants not under the influence of ACPO. The program, he argued, produced frustrations which encouraged passivity in the peasants and they no longer appeared very interested in literacy training.

Musto concluded that, "ACPO may be helping to perpetuate the prevailing unjust social order" (Beltran, 1976, p. 241). However, what is perhaps even more condemnatory in terms of distance education's supposed momentum toward equality is Beltran's own argument (1976, p. 239) that such apparent failings:

...may not be incompatible with ACPO's ideology, which puts the blame of backwardness on the individual's personality as if it were independent of the culture imposed by society, 2) identifies the locus of undevelopment in the person's mind, 3) consequently takes the transformation of individual mentality at [sic] the point of departure for development, 4) emphasises the growth of individuals and small groups (through motivational, cultural, productivity and social integration) over broader collective advancements, and 5) expects overall social transformation eventually to occur as a product of the long-term aggregation of individual progress.

Likewise, White (1977a) came to a similar conclusion for the case of Honduras

In conclusion, perhaps Bandiera, as a chief promoter of Brazil's Basic Education Movement (MEB), one of the few successful "Freirean" radiophonic literacy schools, should be given the last word. Unfortunately, this comment seems a reasonable reflection of distance education's failure to fulfil its promise of creating equality in education in the Third World.

Many make use of modern and elaborate methods of transmission of information. But I should like to ask how many of them, consciously or unconsciously are aiming at the maintenance of a dual society with an elite versus the masses? (Beltran, 1976, p. 244)

#### The Reality of Cost-Effectiveness

Perhaps the most crucial aspect of distance education's promise is that it is cost-effective. It promises a quality, relevant education for the masses which can effect educational and social change *at less expense than conventional education*. However, in reality this seems more an article of faith than an inevitable result. Kinyanjui (1974a) noted that what may be an economical and effective model of education in one situation might turn out to be expensive and unsuitable in another. He then went further and pinpointed that what Young et al. (1980, p. 14) called "economies of scale" was a "question of optimum numbers." Unfortunately, the only references in the literature to this problem are somewhat unrealistic, and this hints at the depth of the problem. For instance, in one of the few attempts to estimate target numbers, Jamison noted that in Korea, if  $N=100,000$ , the average cost per student per year is \$22.36; if  $N=1,000,000$  this cost drops to \$5.84 (in Bates & Robinson, 1977, p. 78). (This cost included television, print, and radio.) Such low costs clearly are attractive to the Third World, but 1,000,000 students is a somewhat unrealistic target number given the above mentioned logistical problems within the Third World. Moreover, as Young et al. (1980) rightly argued, it is often the small projects that have the greatest appeal. Given that this was one of the few attempts to quantify the "optimum of numbers," it is not surprising that as Carnoy (1976) has pointed out, substantial investments of time, energy, and scarce resources were being made by low income countries without adequate information on the economic returns.

The point was made above that the modern technology which has been

suggested as suitable for distance education in the Third World is expensive. It should also be stressed that there often is a hidden socio-economic cost. For example, Venezuela was obliged to buy expertise (Freidman, 1978); in Columbia the Peace Corps had to be used (Perron & Kirst, 1976, p. 93); and in Samoa, American values were introduced into the society (Masland & Masland, 1976). The social spin-off that is cited in the literature as a valuable aspect of cost effectiveness also has its hidden costs. Brumberg (1975), for instance, noted that the ACPO had over 120 minutes of news per day and that much programming was built around music. The Commonwealth Secretariat (CEDO, 1974) noted that in Kenya, when the CCU realized that 400,000 adults listened to their radio programs, they modified the programs. Social spin-off of this sort reduced the pedagogical content of programs and increased the hidden costs, thereby throwing doubt on the actual cost-effectiveness of distance education.

Thus, overall there are grave doubts as to whether the promise of cost-effectiveness is, in fact, based on reality. The questions of optimum numbers and hidden costs remain unresolved. Indeed there seems to be some reluctance to examine such questions in any detail. However, as was argued above, the promise of cost-effectiveness has been closely linked to the promise of international aid. Despite the popular myth displayed in the literature, evidence outside the literature shows that aid within the modernization paradigm, "is a waste for the poor in the Third World, whom it is supposedly designed to benefit" (New Internationalist, 1979, p. 3; see also Payer, 1974). Aid benefits the "core of the core" or the "core of the periphery," and careful examination of modernization literature show that this was, and is, its major intention. In a book actually financed by the Ford Foundation (a foundation which significantly Henry Ford himself said, "was a creature of capitalism"), it was said that "there are foreign policy imperatives, in the name of which universities are influenced to participate in international educational exchange and to cooperate with government programmes" (Deutsch, 1970, p. 183). A Carnegie Foundation representative, Alan Pifer, was even more blunt when he said, "the basis of our concern with Africa in the future is self-interest." Perhaps the clearest admission that aid was, and is, designed to benefit the western capitalist donors was President Kennedy's comment that: "...Foreign aid is a method by which the U.S. maintains a position of influence and power around the world" (New Internationalist, 1979, p. 3).

Ultimately, the role of aid-giving, international education agencies within low-income countries is, "to influence the change in certain directions consistent with the interests of the transnational bourgeoisies" (Carnoy, 1980, p. 280; see also Berman 1971). It is within this perspective that the promise of aid for distance education must be seen. In the final analysis then, the promise of cost-effective distance education systems in the Third World is at best based on doubtful costing; at the worst, it is deliberate deceit.

### Conclusion

What emerges from a critical review of the literature is the suggestion that, in reality, distance education's promise of being able to provide a quality, cost-effective education for the masses of the Third World remains unfulfilled because the modernization paradigm on which it is based consists of false assumptions. A critical analysis of the literature also indicates that, in reality, development is not linear. Like underdevelopment, it is a historical process which is perpetuated by maintaining the international order for the benefit of the internal and external elite. Thus, the claim that distance education can overcome the so-called "internal deficiencies which prevent development" is unfounded. Distance education, like other modes of education based on the modernization paradigm, cannot fulfill its promise without associated socio-economic change and a shift away from ethnocentric, naive assumptions about implementation strategies. Without such changes distance education can do no more than maintain the status quo:

An education system which "attempts to help students to liberate themselves from poverty, ignorance and exploitation, and an elite political and economic system which seeks to maintain itself and its privileges cannot be in harmony with each other. (Young et al., 1980, p. 101)

This analysis of the literature suggests that for distance education to fulfill its promise, its underlying premise must be changed to embrace the assumption that strategies of liberation which foster egalitarian, socio-economic, and politico-cultural change are both attainable and desirable. Distance educators must look beyond the mere technical application of their system. They must question and change the "real politik" of development to ensure that distance education systems are implemented within a development paradigm that is relevant to the Third World, rather than to the Industrial World.

### Reference Notes

- <sup>1</sup> Ansere, 1982, p. 53; Goodenough, 1978, p. 13; Hooper, 1976, p. 125; Kabwasa, 1969, pp. 224-245; Rumble & Harry, 1982, p. 190; Singh, 1979, p. 77.
- <sup>2</sup> CEDO, 1974, p. 234; Edron & Clarke, 1971, p. 13; Edstrom, 1966, p. 17; Edstrom, Erdos, & Prosser, 1970, p. 126; Kabwasa & Kaunda, 1973, p. 54; Kinyanjui, 1974, p. 5; Kiporir, 1975, p. 202; Perraton, 1973, p. 5; Pires & Bartram, 1975, p. 278.
- <sup>3</sup> CEDO, 1974, p. 247; Edstrom, 1969, pp. 218-221; Edstrom et al., 1970, p. 364; Heap, 1972, p. 73; Kabwasa, 1969, pp. 243-246; Kabwasa & Kaunda, 1973, p. 36.
- <sup>4</sup> Beardsley, 1975, p. 192; El-Bushra, 1973, p. 56; Falkes, 1973, p. 16; Harry, 1978, p. 101; Kabwasa, 1969, pp. 243-246.
- <sup>5</sup> Ansere, 1982, p. 62; Edstrom, 1966, p. 18; El-Bushra, 1973, p. 8; Hakemulder, 1979, p. 220; Kaye, 1978, p. 15; Perraton, 1973, p. 43.
- <sup>6</sup> Edstrom, 1969; Erdos & Clark, 1971; Greenholm, 1975.

- <sup>7</sup> Dodds, 1972, p. 45; see also Dodds, 1972, Introduction; Hurley, 1981, p. 358; Perraton, 1973, p. 19; Rogers & Braun, 1977, p. 362; White, 1977b, p. 172; Young, Perraton, Jenkins, & Dodds, 1980, p. 37.
- <sup>8</sup> CEDO, 1974, p. 239; Edstrom, 1969, pp. 18-20, 212; Hakemulder, 1979, p. 376; Kinyanjui, 1977, p. 156; Rumble & Harry, 1982, p. 242; Young et al., 1980, p. 46.
- <sup>9</sup> Adedeji, 1979, p. 28; Cassiper, 1977, p. 30; CEDO, 1974, p. 221; Erdos & Clarke, 1971, p. 12; Edstrom, 1969, p. 227; Edstrom et al., 1969, p. 275; Hakemulder, 1979; Holmberg, 1979, p. 48; Kabwasa, 1973, p. 145; Kagaruki & Mwakajobe, 1973, p. 34; Pereira, 1972, p. 70; Singh, 1979, p. 77; White, 1977b, p. 174; Young et al., 1980, p. 58.
- <sup>10</sup> Ahmed & Coombes, 1975, p. xi; Cassiper, 1977, p. 38; Edros, 1973, p. 78; Edstrom, 1966, p. 80; Hakemulder, 1979, p. 381; Hurley, 1982, p. 256; Kabwasa & Kunda, 1973, p. 78; Nsibandze & Green, 1978, p. 116; Petrouchine, 1969, p. 302; Wiedhaup, 1976, p. 43; Young et al., 1980, p. x.

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