Telos of Higher Education

Building Character or Mere Qualification

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First ... Allow me to share with you this quote...

On entering university, civil war erupted, preventing me from completing my studies. I had to abandon my university education and flee the war-zone, as I witnessed, one late warm summer afternoon, military tanks rolling towards the University gates, while I was sitting for one of my exams. It was a scare that did not stop there. Running from those tanks put me face to face with lifeless bodies on the streets leading to my grandparents’ house. Leaving behind my exams and tertiary education, after surviving a night of heavy fighting, I departed my grandparents’ house, and after passing through several roadblocks manned by personnel of different fighting factions, I managed to reach the airport. I fled the war zone and flew back to be with my family...
Yes...

This was me ... FEW years back - 😊

Yes, I abandoned my university studies ...

I am a late comer to tertiary experience and academic life...

I was able to build up a successful career WITHOUT MY UNIVERSITY DEGREE... However, the dream continued to be there...

Here I would concur with Beck (1992) that social change would be a great learning process. I felt as a late comer to academia, the practical wisdom that I developed while in the workforce had assisted me...
Well...

Not all our students would be that lucky 😊 - 😞

Thus... We need to seriously ask the question regarding the telos of higher education

They would be coming directly from school... And when they graduate they need to be WISE!
Telos of Higher Education

CHARACTER?

QUALIFICATION?
Telos of Higher Education

- CHARACTER BASED ON PRACTICAL WISDOM AND QUALIFICATION
- CHARACTER
- QUALIFICATION
- JUST THE EXPERIENCE – having fun
Higher Education

OR BUILDING CHARACTER

MERE QUALIFICATION

OR QUALIFICATION SUPPORTED BY GREAT CHARACTER
CBS Graduate Attributes

- Cultural understanding
- Technology skills
- Professional skills
- International perspective
- Learning how to learn
- Information skills
- Thinking skills
- Communication skills
- Apply discipline knowledge
Well...

We might say ---

• But unfortunately we have challenges

...  

• These challenges
In addition... Higher Education is not in isolation

Living and working in a contemporary society, characterised by:

• the techno-economic ongoing and fragmentary development,
• the individual is struggling with such emerging issues identified by Arisian (1993): lack of security, uncertainty, risk, stress, individualism, nihilism, relativism, subjectivism
• add to these: ambiguity and suffering as contended by Mansueto & Mansueto (2005)
Parameshwar (2008) summarised the situation

<table>
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<th>We are in the midst of a crisis of confidence in the leadership spearheading several of our domestic and global institutions. Parameshwar states that this is manifested in:</th>
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<td>spate of corporate frauds (<em>Schroth &amp; Elliot, 2002; Silver, 2002</em>),</td>
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<tr>
<td>sense of betrayal engendered by downsizing, reengineering, new technologies (<em>Giacalone &amp; Jurkiewicz, 2003</em>),</td>
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<td>economic recession with growing <strong>unemployment</strong> (<em>Farago &amp; Gallandar, 2002</em>),</td>
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<tr>
<td>Expanding threat and counter threat of war by nations together with domestic and international terrorism (<em>Ahmad, Barsamian, &amp; Ruggiero, 2001; Chomsky, 2001; Zinn &amp; Arnone, 2002</em>),</td>
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Individuals are struggling with emerging issues such as: uncertainty, risk, ambiguity and suffering and, in severe cases, might be feeling alienated in this society.

Such developments in this post-ideological period and post-modern society seem to threaten the very fabric of the society, by allowing individuals to stand alone, and to introduce change to or even reject the values that have hitherto defined the character of Western society.

This trend, if left unchecked, might lead to grievous consequences for the society as a whole.
Late last century

- Enron
- Worldcom
- HIH – Australia
- OneTel – Australia
- Parmalat – Italy
- Shell
- Bhopal
Events... 2008/2009
Events
Events

WE’D LIKE TO TAKE OUT A LOAN TO BUY OUR FIRST HOUSE, ASSUMING YOU CAN FIND SOMEONE TO LEND YOU THE MONEY TO LEND TO US, OF COURSE...

MORTGAGES

I’M WORKING ON IT
Events

1/9/2012

Theodora Issa - CBS - Curtin University
Events
Events

Freddie Mac

We make home possible℠
Events
Events
Events

Ethel May and Ronnie Mack who have a problem with the bank.

Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac who the bank has a problem with.
Events

1/9/2012

Theodora Issa - CBS - Curtin University
Events

1/9/2012

Theodora Issa - CBS - Curtin University
Events
Mainly...2008 - 2010
The question is:

Have the CEOs or CIOs or CFOs of these companies obtained their higher education degree – the answer would most probably be a resounding ‘YES’...

BUT – what is the problem then! WHAT WENT WRONG?
As Ghoshal and Bruch, 2004 posit ‘The real gap was between knowledge and action.’ – yes, unfortunately, the majority of our institutions would graduate students who MIGHT have the knowledge, but feel lost when in the real world – unable to act! The real problem was that even though they knew what to do, they simply did not do those things.
Ghoshal and Bruch, 2004

They described as the pervasive “knowing-doing gap” in companies. Jeffrey Pfeffer and Bob Sutton of Stanford posed the question:

- “Did you ever wonder why so much education and training, management consultation, organisational research, and so many books and articles produce so few changes in actual management practice?... Why knowledge of what needs to be done frequently fails to result in action or behaviour consistent with that knowledge.”
Scholars... State

Lane & Klenke (2004),
(the influence of uncertainty)

Ghoshal (2005), (bad management theories are destroying good management practices)
Business schools do not need to do a great deal more to help prevent future Enrons; they need only to stop doing a lot they currently do.

They do not need to create new courses; they need to simply **stop teaching some old ones**. But, before doing any of this, we—as business school faculty—need to own up to our own role in creating Enrons.

Our theories and ideas have done much to strengthen the management practices that we are all now so loudly condemning.
Thus ... We need to listen to Scholars’ calls...

organizations (including higher education) to discover their inner power to balance energies and transform themselves into more humane systems (Biberman, 1999);

the recognition of management as the art of doing and getting done (Bruch & Ghoshal, 2004);

researchers in management should share the blame for the failure of businesses (Ghoshal, 2003), to cease solving the ‘negative problem’ of containing the costs of human imperfections, which led to pessimism in management research;
Scholars call on management researchers to recognize their social and moral responsibility towards business and management (Ghoshal 2005; Pfeffer, 2005; Swanson & Frederick 2003);

the existence of internal controls that ensure management in higher education provide assurance regarding reliability of their reporting in accordance with the generally accepted principles that include policies and procedures (McGee, 2008; Ramos, 2008);

research into the role of executives’ perceptions of ethical issues - which can be implemented within the curriculum (Stevens, 2004);
Higher Education should be...

looking beyond the meltdown and downfall of the economy and morality, **ceasing the blame game**, instead assisting in the shaping of tomorrow’s business leaders through the principles and practices of business ethics programs at the universities

(Cowton & Macfarlane, 2002; Gerde & Spencer-Foster, 2008; McDonald, 2004; Mele, 2008; Valentine & Fleischman, 2008)

employing individual’s self control

(Kim & Choi, 2007).
But how? 
(derived from Issa, 2009 thesis)

One approach would be to develop that which Weick and Sutcliffe (2001) describe as faculties to cope with errors and anticipate events before they occur, to develop capabilities for mindfulness, swift learning, flexible role structures, and most importantly, adapting a mindset of prevention prior to pre-empt the need for a cure.

While, Weick and Sutcliffe (2001) contend that human fallibility is like gravity, just another foreseeable hazard, well-developed skills to detect and contain failings in their early stages might be what is missing – skills which otherwise would allow a better understanding of how the different parties in the business world act together for the benefit of all.
Here lies our responsibility as educators

We need to develop those skills in our students...
Ghoshal and Bruch (2004)

Ultimately, what distinguishes human beings from almost all other species are two things: imagination and willpower. These two wonderful capacities have allowed the enormous progress that human society has forged over time.
But how? – DEFINITELY NOT by doing this...
But rather ... we need...
We need to continue to pay attention to...

Marketing,

R&D

Finance,

TQM

HR,

Production,
Yet with shift in the minds to pay proper consideration of...
Well... You might be

• Asking – HOW...

• While some are doing this... We need to...
Therefore...

- We need A SHIFT in our mindsets...
ETHICAL MINDSETS

- Aesthetic spirituality (Alpha 0.931)
- Religious spirituality (Alpha 0.903)
- Optimism (Alpha 0.846)
- Harmony and Balance (Alpha 0.853)
- Telling Truth (Truth seeking) (Alpha 0.852)
- Contentment (Alpha 0.842)
- Making a difference (Alpha 0.744)
- Professionalism (Interconnectedness) (Alpha 0.720)
- Contentment (Alpha 0.842)
Aesthetic spirituality (Alpha 0.918)

Religious spirituality (Alpha 0.838)

Optimism (Alpha 0.815)

Contentment (Alpha 0.842)

Making a difference (Alpha 0.744)

Inter-connectedness (Alpha 0.720)

Business ethical practices

Intrinsic variables (e.g., age, gender, education etc...)

Extrinsic variables (e.g., society, religion, culture, organizational culture etc)
Some moves have already taken place — principles of Responsible Management Education unprme.org

As institutions of higher learning involved in the education of current and future managers we are voluntarily committed to engaging in a continuous process of improvement of the following Principles, reporting on progress to all our stakeholders and exchanging effective practices with other academic institutions:
The principles of Responsible Management Education unprme.org

Principle 1: Purpose
Principle 2: Values
Principle 3: Method
Principle 4: Research
Principle 5: Partnership
Principle 6: Dialogue
The principles for responsible management education

**PRINCIPLE 1: PURPOSE** - We will develop the capabilities of students to be future generators of sustainable value for business and society at large and to work for an inclusive and sustainable global economy.

But what are we doing – we are only trying to load them with more of ECONOMIC theories – looking at growth only as economic growth.
The principles for responsible management education

PRINCIPLE 2: VALUES – We will incorporate into our academic activities and curricula the values of global social responsibility as portrayed in international initiatives such as the United Nations Global Compact.

We need to move our students from the UTILITARIAN LIBERATRIAN way of thinking towards DUTY AND VIRTUE coupled with partial ordering of values – and try to prepare our students for the global reality.
The principles for responsible management education

PRINCIPLE 3: METHOD – We will create educational frameworks, materials, processes and environments that enable effective learning experiences for responsible leadership.

We need to move the students to become stewards of this planet and its inhabitants.
The principles for responsible management education

PRINCIPLE 4: RESEARCH – We will engage in conceptual and empirical research that advances our understanding about the role, dynamics, and impact of corporations in the creation of sustainable social, environmental and economic value.

We need to have our students consider a sustainable business, sustainable society and sustainable planet.
The principles for responsible management education

PRINCIPLE 5 – PARTNERSHIP: We will interact with managers of business corporations to extend our knowledge of their challenges in meeting social and environmental responsibilities and to explore jointly effective approaches to meeting these challenges.

Trying to do this... Yet, still the challenges are immense... More work needs to be done...
The principles for responsible management education

PRINCIPLE 6: DIALOGUE: We will facilitate and support dialog and debate among educators, business, government, consumers, media, civil society organisations and other interested groups and stakeholders on critical issues related to global social responsibility and sustainability

On the way... We are now GREEN CAMPUS...
Thus...

We understand that our own organizational practices should serve as example of the values and attitudes we convey to our students... (Source: www.unprme.org)
Citizen Ethics in a Time of Crisis
Virtue ‘common, public and civic’ (Pullman, 2010)

- Delight
- Service of a decent human standard of life
- Intellectual curiosity (wakefulness of mind)
- Modesty
- Courage
Citizen Ethics in a Time of Crisis

To sustain virtue of a nation we need to remember:

- How the private connects to the public
- How the poetic with the political
- We need to praise and cherish every example we can find of:
  - Imaginative play
  - Energy of creation
  - Enchantment of art
  - Wonder of science
- A nation that would be:
  - Brave
  - Modest
- Curious sounds to be like one that understood that if it told its children stories, they might grow up to feel that virtue was in fact as interesting as vice.
So... As higher educators

We need to teach our students – and deriving from Jackson, 2009
Economic growth is supposed to deliver prosperity. Higher incomes should mean better choices, richer lives, an improved quality of life for us all. That at least is the conventional wisdom. But things haven’t always turned out that way.

We might need to redefine prosperity and growth... Leading to a more sustainable life.
To turn their back to...
Yes... We need to redefine prosperity

The prevailing vision of prosperity as a continually expanding economic paradise has come unravelled. Perhaps it worked better when economies were smaller and the world was less populated. But if it was ever fully fit for purpose, it certainly isn’t now.
So, Statistics show it is not work or money – it is family and relationships! This what we need to share with our students -😊
Yes... Move to Green economy

"The new, green economy would provide a new engine of growth, putting the world on the road to prosperity again. This is about growing the world economy in a more intelligent, sustainable way."
Yes... Moving towards sustainability

Macro-economics for Sustainability

"Under existing macro-economic arrangements, growth is the only real answer to unemployment – society is hooked on growth."

Douglas Booth, 2004
Therefore...

Flourishing – within limits

“We must bring back into society a deeper sense of the purpose of living. The unhappiness in so many lives ought to tell us that success alone is not enough. Material success has brought us to a strange spiritual and moral bankruptcy.”

— Ben Okri

October 2006
I would conclude with... Jackson, 2009

Achieving a lasting prosperity relies on providing capabilities for people to flourish - within certain limits. Those limits are established not by us, but by the ecology and resources of a finite planet. Unbounded freedom to expand our material appetites just isn’t sustainable. Change is essential.
Principle 1: be transparent and participatory, and demand the same standard for others

Principle 2: Ensure that communications and campaigns embody the values that they seek to promote

Principle 3: Be prepared to work for systemic change

Principle 4: Build new coalitions

Principle 5: Understand the full impact of policy

Principle 6: Manage trade-offs where they are unavoidable

Principle 7: Tailor the message to the audience

Common Cause, The case for working with our cultural values – Sep2010 – From Theory to practice: working with values and deep frames

(Climate Outreach and Information Network, Campaign to Protect Rural England, Friends of the Earth, Oxfam, WWF)
The question – can we?

[Image of a bracelet with beads spelling "YES WE CAN"]
Acknowledgement

- I acknowledge the resources that were used from the peer-reviewed journal articles, the world wide web and other sources. And, for the full list of references, please liaise with the author.
Thank you!

- Any questions
Yes...