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MESSAGE FROM THE VICE CHANCELLOR
OF THE UNIVERSITY OF MALAYA

It is my great pleasure to present the first issue of the Journal of International and Comparative Education (JICE). This journal serves as a platform for the dissemination of original and high quality research in the field of International and Comparative Education.

This journal is born at a time when International and Comparative Education field is gaining momentum, especially in the South-East Asia region. The region is taking a leadership role in economic development and education advancement. The contemporary education system varies from one country to another, and also within an individual country. The effects of worldwide globalisation have also influenced the educational development of countries in this region. This is exactly what JICE will illuminate in this, and in subsequent issues.

Although the International and Comparative Education is a close-knit field, its significance has been increasingly highlighted in the past decade. Many scholars have been concerned with the overall education development in this region and what it entails. The increasing demand for education, driven by globalisation and internationalisation has meant that nations and policymakers have had to make decisions and choices pertaining to who needs education, and what needs to be taught at which level. These concerns have led to many researches on central issues in education being conducted. JICE acts as a medium to capture and present these researches and their methods to readers.

It is also important at this point to congratulate the Centre for International and Comparative Education (CRICE) for its success in putting together the first issue of this journal. As the latest addition to research centres in University of Malaya, I strongly believe that CRICE has great potential to becoming a leading research centre in the field of education.

Finally, I would like to express my heartfelt thanks to the Editorial Board and International Advisory Board for their efforts in ensuring a high quality journal is delivered. I hope readers get insights through reading, analysing and reflecting on the articles published in this issue. If these effects are reached, this already would represent an important *raison d'être* of JICE. I look forward to your continued support.

GHAUTH JASMON
Vice Chancellor

MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR OF THE
CENTRE FOR RESEARCH IN INTERNATIONAL AND COMPARATIVE EDUCATION
(CRICE)

Welcome to the first edition of *Journal of International and Comparative Education*. This new journal, I hope and believe, will become a seminal site for published work that will have profound implications in the International and Comparative Education field. This journal commemorates the launching of the Centre for Research in International and Comparative Education. A heartfelt thanks to the Vice Chancellor, Professor Ghauth Jasmon, Deputy Vice Chancellor for Research and Innovation, Professor Hamzah Abdul Rahman and everyone at University of Malaya for their rigorous support and assistance for the centre, and the journal. The papers in this journal are peer-reviewed and assured to be the quality readers expect. For that, I sincerely thank my Editorial Board and International Advisory Board who have worked hard to ensure standards of papers published in this journal are not compromised in any way.

In today's globalised world, many issues in education are interconnected and interrelated in one way or another. Consequently one cannot begin to discuss it effectively without recourse to International and Comparative Education. Most important educational questions can best be addressed by drawing an international-comparative dimension to them. Many practitioners have realised the significance of this academic field, thus the amplified popularity of it. This multi-disciplinary field of study concerns the educational policies and practices, international development in education and bridging theoretical frameworks to educational outcomes. The list, is but of course, not exhaustive. International and Comparative Education illuminates the contextual and cultural understanding of education, and the effects that globalisation have, and will have, on education.

The papers in this journal give us insights into theoretical discussions and empirical studies on the contextual implications of International and Comparative Education. This inaugural edition on 'Global Challenges and the Emerging Roles of International and Comparative Education' includes papers by Michael Crossley, Colin Brock and Richard Pring as presented in CRICE's first lecture series. Keith Watson discusses comparative education within the context of South East Asia. The issues of learning regions and knowledge societies are also addressed in this edition, with special reference to the Philippines and Malaysia (Lorraine Symaco). Garry Hornby follows with a discussion on the issue of inclusive education of children with special educational needs in New Zealand with reference to possible policies re-orientations for developing countries. Despite the focus on the Asia-Pacific region of this journal, it is envisioned that one paper outside the region will be included in every issue to present a broader perspective of issues in international and comparative education beyond the region. With this, Emefa Amoako illustrates how Ghana's Education Strategic Plan is shaped through the interaction of various stakeholders, specifically examining the role of globalisation through these points of connectedness.

I commend the journal to all readers involved and concerned with this field of study, as you, and I also, seek to find ways in which we can engage actively in International and Comparative Education. I hope you enjoy this edition and look forward to your readership.

LORRAINE SYMACO
Director

COMPARATIVE EDUCATION AND RESEARCH CAPACITY BUILDING: REFLECTIONS ON INTERNATIONAL TRANSFER AND THE SIGNIFICANCE OF CONTEXT

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ABSTRACT: *Recent years have seen a resurgence of interest in comparative and international education, along with a fundamental reconceptualisation of this distinctive multidisciplinary field of study. The nature and significance of these developments are explored with particular reference to their implications for broader research capacity building initiatives worldwide. In doing so, a critique of the international transfer of globally dominant research modalities and strategies is presented – along with arguments for increased attention to context sensitivity in both international development cooperation and educational research in general. Illustrative examples that support these arguments are drawn from the author’s own research, from an analysis of emergent educational policy debates in the UK, and from related studies being carried out in Malaysia. In concluding, the strategic role of comparative research traditions and perspectives in a rapidly globalizing world is highlighted, while supporting the promotion of new initiatives and research centres for comparative and international education.*

Historical Foundations

Comparative and international education has a long and distinguished history in the western academic literature, with writers identifying the seminal 19th century work of the French scholar Marc-Antoine Jullien as the foundational benchmark (Fraser, 1964; Jullien, 1817). Indeed, Jullien is often seen as the ‘father’ of comparative education for his first use of the term, and for his efforts to apply systematic research on foreign education systems to help shape the reform, and competitiveness, of education in France itself. This is a familiar rationale for change, and one that continues to influence the fact-finding travels, deliberations and initiatives of many education policy-makers to the present day. Reflecting the scientific spirit that characterized early 19th century Europe, Jullien argued that detailed, statistically informed research on aspects such as student enrolments and standards, teacher recruitment and performance, administrative procedures and the financing of education would help ‘to deduce true principles and determined routes so that education would be transformed into an almost positive science’ (1817, cited in Fraser 1964, p.20). Today, the positivistic spirit and nature of Jullien’s ‘plan’ can be seen in the statistical work of many international organizations and in the large-scale cross national comparative studies of educational achievement that have come to command the global attention of policy-makers and the general public alike. The influence of UNESCO’s annual Education for All (EFA) Global Monitoring Reports is, for example, well documented by national and international education agencies, as many systems adjust their priorities and work towards the agreed EFA and Millennium Development Goals (MDG) and targets, that are currently set for 2015 (UNESCO, 2009). The visibility of large-scale cross-national studies of student achievement is even more dramatic, with the influence of those pioneered by the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA) (see Postlethwaite, 1999), being extended by the worldwide impact of the findings of the more recent OECD, Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) surveys (OECD reports 2001, 2004, 2007, 2010). Researchers such as Grek et al. (2009) go so far as to suggest that such comparative surveys are increasingly steering the trajectories of educational systems worldwide as a new, and questionable, form of policy initiator and driver.

In the UK, the historical foundations of comparative and international education can be traced back to work Sir Michael Sadler carried out at the outset of the 20th Century (Higginson, 1979). Sadler’s influence upon the emergent field was, however, very different to that of Jullien – representing distinctively socio-cultural and interpretivist

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paradigmatic perspectives and principles. Sadler challenged the scientific aspirations embodied in Jullien's search for the 'best' way forward for education. This prioritized greater attention to contextual differences and inspired the development of a more philosophically and historically informed tradition for comparative and international studies in education. In doing so, the work of Sadler, and of influential scholars such as Isaac Kandel (1933) who built upon his foundation, increasingly challenged the uncritical international transfer of educational policies and practices. This is well captured in the frequently quoted words of Sadler. As long ago as 1900, he argued that:

We cannot wander at pleasure among the educational systems of the world, like a child strolling through a garden, and pick off a flower from one bush and some leaves from another, and then expect that if we stick what we have gathered into the soil at home, we shall have a living plant (Sadler, 1900, quoted in Higginson, 1979, p.49).

Also pertinently for this present analysis, Sadler's work drew attention to the multidisciplinary nature of comparative and international education by emphasizing that:

In studying foreign systems of education, we should not forget that the things outside the schools matter even more than the things inside the schools, and govern and interpret the things inside (ibid).

Similarly, Kandel:

...relied heavily on qualitative rather than statistical studies in his comparative work. His examination of a nation's education system, political framework, history, sociology and philosophy showed how such extra school forces and factors could lead to either innovation in education or to extreme reliance on traditional practices (Pollack, 1993, p 2).

Such thinking clearly challenged the more positivistic traditions that had developed within the early history of this field of study, and generated tensions between different approaches to comparative research that continue to the present day. The following sections of this article briefly explore how comparative and international research in education has been both advanced and reconceptualised since these initial foundations. The analysis then revisits the issue of international transfer as it applies to the increasing globalization of dominant research modalities, and to related implications for research capacity building and international development co-operation.

The Revitalisation and Reconceptualisation of Comparative and International Education

The growth of the field of comparative education, and of its symbiotic relationship with what some scholars define as 'international education', is examined in detail elsewhere (Crossley & Watson, 2003, 2009). For present purposes, however, it is significant to note that the 1960s and 1970s are recognized as a 'golden age' in terms of comparative education's popularity and influence in educational studies in the UK and other Western nations. The influence of the socio-cultural paradigm increased along with the emergence of a diversity of alternative theoretical and methodological approaches to research across the social sciences – including critical theory and postmodern and postcolonial perspectives. The influence of quantitative, statistical methodologies also remained strong, however, and the 'paradigm wars' of the 1960s and 1970s were clearly visible within this multidisciplinary field. This is evidenced by the tensions and debates surrounding the publication of Brian Holmes's (1965) arguments articulating a neo-positivistic, problem-based approach to comparative education – and the impact of the American text, *Toward a Science of Comparative Education*, published by Noah and Eckstein (1969). By the mid 1970s these buoyant times began to fade in the UK in the face of changes in the political and economic contexts of the day. Funding cuts to teacher education played a significant part in this decline as university and college courses in many foundational disciplines – including comparative education – were reduced in number in favour of '...the development of specific teaching competencies...that are related to actual performance in the classroom' (O'Sullivan, 2008, p.138). This was the start of the 'practical turn' that challenged, and continues to challenge, many of the disciplines of education, within and beyond the UK, to the present day (see Furlong & Lawn, 2011). McGrath captures this well by saying:

In the educational sphere, globalization leads to the hegemony of the view that education is about economic competitiveness. This privileges human resources over liberal or critical perspectives of education and privileges the market over all other areas... The stress is on essential competencies and, as can be seen from the curriculum of teacher training across Britain, non-essential perspectives (historical, religious, international) are marginalized or ignored (2001, p.392).

Within the field itself, criticism emerged relating to a perceived preoccupation with the nation-state as the primary unit of analysis, with the descriptive nature of much work, and with a restrictive focus upon comparisons of policy in ways that overlooked the realities of practice in real educational contexts.

In response to these challenges, new generations of scholars recognized how a revitalisation of the field was emerging that emphasized its research potential in a rapidly globalising world. This revitalisation was spurred on by increased interest in, for example, multi-level forms of analysis, in-depth qualitative studies of teachers and learners in practice, grounded analyses of the implementation of educational policy in diverse contexts, the intensification of globalisation, and post-colonial interrogations of international development processes and agencies (Bray & Thomas, 1995; Crossley & Vulliamy, 1997; Crossley & Tikly, 2004). Throughout the 1990s and early 2000s, this revitalisation was visible in an increase in the number of national comparative and international education societies, in the growth of the World Council for Comparative Education Societies (WCCES), and the emergence of new research journals and dedicated research centres (see Masemann, Bray & Manzon, 2007). In addition, new constituencies of stakeholders began to express an interest in the findings of comparative research in education – and in the implications of the increasingly prominent international studies of student achievement carried out by bodies such as the IEA and OECD. As already indicated, policy-makers, parents, and other stakeholders began to be influenced by the proliferation of local, national, and international league tables – and this, in itself, generated renewed interest in their methodological and theoretical foundations.

Today, the field of comparative and international education is, therefore, very different from the descriptive, nation-state and teacher education focused activity that once characterized much work within the international constituency. Leading centres in the field are now distinctly research oriented, making significant contributions to innovative forms of empirically grounded and theoretically informed analyses of contemporary educational and international development issues and problems. As detailed elsewhere, a fundamental ‘reconceptualisation’ (Crossley, 1999) has taken place. This continues to be inspired by engagement with new research paradigms, the new geo-politics of the 21st Century, new technologies and new challenges.

In the following sections of this article, it is argued that one of the most significant challenges facing the future of comparative and international research in education relates to the very nature of educational and social research itself, and to ways in which this is connected to the building of, and the current international transfer of, research cultures, paradigms, and modalities. In doing this, it is argued that while much has, indeed, changed in recent decades, concern with context sensitivity and the processes of international transfer continue to lie at the heart of much disciplined comparative and international research in education. In many cases, this relates to familiar forms of the uncritical international transfer of educational policy and practice, as illustrated by my own early studies of the inappropriate exportation of school-based curriculum development from Australia and the UK to the very different context of Papua New Guinea (Crossley, 1984). More recent research by writers such as Beech (2006) and Rapplepe (2011), however, revisits the education policy transfer literature in new and innovative ways, pointing to wider theoretical implications.

This present article also moves beyond the traditional educational transfer literature and debate. Here, therefore the focus is not upon the transfer of substantive policies and practices, but upon dilemmas generated by uncritical international transfer relating to the processes of educational research. This incorporates an analysis of the nature of research capacity building, an original critique of the use of research to identify ‘best practice’, and critical reflections upon the selective application of international studies of student achievement to shape or justify emergent educational policy and practice.

Educational Research Capacity Building and International Transfer

Recent years have seen the growth of academic and professional interest in the processes of research capacity building. A major stimulus for such activity in the UK and USA was sustained criticism directed at educational and social research dating from the mid 1990s. Authors such as Hargreaves (1996) in the UK and Kennedy (1997) in the USA initiated debates that suggested that too much educational research was too distant from the needs of policy-makers, was lacking in a cumulative sense of authority, was insufficiently cost-effective and was too inaccessible for many stakeholders.

The response to this criticism took many forms, and in the UK it led to major investments in research strengthening and capacity building initiatives. These included the £40million Teaching and Learning Research Programme (TLRP), the generation of collaborative educational research networks, and the intensification of university level research assessment and evaluation processes (Gilroy & McNamara 2009, p.321). To cite Menter and Murray (2009, p.315), ‘...in these times of accountability and audit, it should come as no surprise that there has been a great concern – some say obsession – with “capacity building”’.

In defining research capacity building, writers draw attention to the many dimensions and processes involved. There include the number and quality of experienced and qualified researchers, the range of skills involved, the nature and extent of the research infrastructure and facilities, the control, type and level available funding, and the

sustainability of systems and processes. Pollard (2008, p.47) helps to conceptualise research capacity from a more theoretical perspective by exploring the implications for capacity building on three different but mutually supportive levels:

...a macro-level perspective upon the knowledge management system as a whole; a meso-level perspective upon a 'community' level of activity systems and institutions; and a micro-level focus on individuals' research capacity. The systemic perspective is abstract, considering the knowledge management system as a whole. The community perspective focuses upon activities, networks and outputs. The micro-perspective of the research capacity of individuals enables attention to be given to the working conditions, professional development opportunities, and career routes of those working within the field. An effective research capacity building strategy will need to provide a means of addressing research capacity at these different levels.

While such developments in the UK context have much to offer, other researchers such as Peters (2001), Onancea (2005), Hammersley (2008), and Watson (2011) draw attention to the dangers of educational research and research capacity building becoming too closely associated with policy-making processes and the goals of the state. Watson (2011, p.968) thus argues that neo-liberal principles of marketisation have moved the academy too close to a global economic model, 'that has brought us close to collapse'. These arguments are especially pertinent here, since they point to the dangers of marginalizing the role of the independent academic voice, and of undermining the place of the public intellectual. Perhaps even more pertinently, such cautionary voices also draw attention to the need to challenge some of the critics themselves, and to do more to acknowledge the importance of defending what Furlong refers to as 'a rich and diverse range of approaches to research, promoting debate about quality within different sub-communities and encouraging open discussion across epistemological and methodological boundaries,' (Furlong, 2004, p.343). This is especially important in cross-cultural and comparative arenas where differences in worldviews (see Hayhoe & Pan, 2001) add to the complexities and ethical and political implications of research processes, methodologies and capacity-building initiatives.

We should, in sum, be careful not to let one conception of research and of research capacity building to overly-dominate our thinking, especially where assumptions about the relative merits of different philosophical and epistemological paradigms, cultures, management structures and evaluation systems are within embedded. Moreover, it is argued that comparativists should apply their long held commitment to context sensitivity to the analysis of the uncritical international transfer of the processes and mechanisms of educational research capacity building. Without this, it is argued, there are very real dangers that educational research capacity within a diversity of international contexts may come to be shaped and 'built' in ways that may do more to maintain dependency and hegemony, than it will do to strengthen stakeholder ownership and voice, and to genuinely meet local needs.

To understand the magnitude of these issues, it is revealing to examine the global political economy of educational research in a little more detail. St Clair and Belzer (2007), for example, challenge the increasing dominance of powerful discourses that have come to dominate the shape of contemporary educational research cultures in the UK and the USA. In brief they argue that rather than improving the quality of educational research many of the 'structural transformations' that have been introduced over recent decades, 'can be seen as an attempt to promote market managerialism in educational research for political ends,' (St Clair & Belzer, 2007, p.471). For these authors the continued globalisation of related research modalities warrants critical, comparative interrogation both at home and abroad. Providing what is, perhaps a clearer glimpse of these dangers, Vulliamy addresses an audience of comparativists directly by arguing that:

A concern for sensitivity to cultural context has been a key part of the field of comparative education in England – all the way from its pioneers...to current exponents... Such concern for cultural context also pervades sociological traditions underpinning the development of qualitative research... The challenge for future comparative and international researchers in education is to harness the symbiosis of these two traditions to resist the increasing hegemony of a positivist global discourse of educational research and policy-making (2004, p.277).

Building upon Vulliamy, it is argued here that while research capacity building is important within the field of international development, and within the comparative education constituency itself, the international transfer of currently dominant Western models and modalities deserves urgent and critical attention. In doing so, comparativists should ask whose capacity will be strengthened by new initiatives, whose values and approaches to research will be prioritized, whose modalities will be applied – and do these meet local needs, priorities and agendas? Do, for example, the expensive 'big science' approaches to social research increasingly favoured in the UK have the best potential to foster the strengthening of research capacity within low-income countries? And are the large-scale quantitative surveys increasingly promoted by international development agencies, and the currently fashionable international studies of student achievement, generating data that is context-sensitive enough to assist

in the improvement of the quality of education in low-income countries with diverse cultural heritages and traditions? Indeed, on a broader level, we should ask how we might best learn from comparative studies of education without falling prey to the dangers of uncritical international policy transfer.

With reference to my own research in Kenya and Tanzania there is much evidence to suggest that locally-grounded research, carried out by African researchers, perhaps in partnership with international colleagues, has much to offer if a greater proportion of educational reform initiatives are to be translated into successful practice. Studies of the implementation of the Primary School Management Project (PRISM) in Kenya (Crossley et al., 2005), for example, demonstrate how in-depth, qualitative field research played a central role in the shaping of this successful national in-service training programme for primary school head-teachers; and how research partnerships between specialist researchers and practitioners, insiders and outsiders, and local and international personnel were essential for generating crucial insights into grass-roots perspectives, problems and realities.

More recent research in Tanzania also demonstrates how research capacity building was supported by the development of long-standing international collaborative research partnerships. This work also highlighted the importance of such partnerships avoiding modalities that perpetuate the hegemony of the North (Barrett et al., 2011). In recognizing these issues and dilemmas, work like this is beginning to address the implications of uncritical international transfer in the research arena, but more work needs to be done. International research partnerships, for example, are increasingly encouraged by development agencies as a way of strengthening local engagement (Stephens, 2009; Rizvi, 2012). However, if such partnerships perpetuate imbalances in collaboration that prioritise Northern expertise and control, the simplistic transfer of fashionable or currently dominant approaches and modalities from the North to the South could help to reinforce what Tikly characterizes as the 'New Imperialism' (Tikly, 2004). For these reasons it is also important to support the publication of research findings in national and local journals and books if the power of prestigious international publishing houses is not to eclipse national academic publishing initiatives. More also needs to be done to support research from diverse cultural perspectives, as demonstrated by a recent Special Issue of the Journal *Comparative Education* on 'Educational Research in Confucian Heritage Cultures' (Evers, Katyal & King, 2011). Learning from international experience is, as the comparative literature has long maintained, a more nuanced and subtle process if it is to prove successful.

With regard to the latter point, and to the impact of international studies of educational achievement, it is interesting to turn to an analysis of how PISA research findings are currently being used to shape the formulation of educational policy and practice in the UK. In a recent presentation to the Education World Forum held in London during 2011, Michael Gove, the current Secretary of State for Education, identified the head of the OECD's PISA studies as 'the most important man in the British education system' (2011). Here is clear evidence that one key policy-maker is looking directly to comparative research for policy guidance, arguing that to 'ignore' the PISA studies 'would be foolish' (ibid, see also Baird et al., 2011). While it is good for comparative studies to receive this attention, a close reading of the 2011 speech reveals that the Secretary of State's declared intention is to 'identify the best so we can emulate it', in the spirit of Jullien's positivistic approach to comparative data and to the transferability of 'best practice'. This type of selective borrowing and transplantation pays scant regard to more context-sensitive approaches to comparative research. Nor does it learn from Sadler's argument about the importance of 'the things outside the school' – the historical, political economic and cultural contexts within which education is conducted. Thus the UK Secretary of State's attention is drawn to emulating educational policy and practice in the 'top' performing systems according to PISA. In the European region this means Finland, and in South-east Asia his attention is drawn to Hong Kong and Singapore. While this is not the place to develop a detailed critique of these education systems and the related arguments, there is a rapidly growing body of comparative research that demonstrates how the high student achievement scores attained in the latter two systems are closely connected to the all-pervasive amount of extra, out-of-school, private coaching that is provided by the 'Shadow Education System' (Bray, 2009), and that this is backed up by the societal influence of Confucian heritage cultures. In Michael Sadler's terms it is 'the things outside the schools' that may make the difference. From this perspective, the lessons for the UK to learn from school experience in Hong Kong and Singapore may be very different from those that are now being actively promoted in educational policy debates by the present UK government. While this interpretation may be contested, what this example does demonstrate is the importance of acknowledging the value and importance of different approaches to educational, social and comparative research – and above all, the importance of context sensitivity at multiple levels of education and society. Context does, indeed, matter...more than many policy-makers and educational researchers realise (Crossley, 2010).

This is not to suggest that context is all-important, nor is it to disregard the very real contributions to educational and comparative research that are being made by the theoretical, statistical or 'big science' approaches and modalities (see, for example, Bray et al., 2007). Rather, the case being made here is for the potential of different approaches to be realistically acknowledged where they are appropriate, and for initiatives designed so support research capacity building to promote respect for, training in and funding for that 'rich and diverse range of approaches' called for by authors such as Furlong. In Malaysia, for example, doctoral research recently carried out

by Mohd Asri (2012) on the development and implementation of the nationwide Clusters of Excellence innovation, applied many of the comparative principles articulated above in carrying out detailed, qualitative case studies of participating schools. This documents differences encountered in their experiences as they worked towards successful implementation. Findings from this qualitative, context-sensitive research complement statistical data generated by the Ministry of Education, and helps to identify problems encountered and potential ways forward. This very new study could also be used to contribute to the future evaluation of this important innovation. Of particular note in Mohd Asri's findings is the way in which the different environmental and cultural contexts of the case study schools have influenced their interpretation of and success with the Clusters of Excellence initiative. On a broader level, this insightful comparative study examines the nature and origins of the Clusters of Excellence policy. This considers the extent to which external models and national plans were combined in the development of an initiative designed to enhance the quality of education in Malaysia. From a theoretical perspective, the study draws upon and applies Phillips and Ochs's (2004) comparative model of policy borrowing in education. This is, therefore, an example of locally initiated and led research that bridges the worlds of theory, policy and practice (Crossley, 2008) in ways that are inspired by the principles of modern, context sensitive, comparative research in education. In doing so, the author also makes a personal contribution to the strengthening of this form of educational research capacity in his own education system.

Conclusions

It is in the above spirit that the case is made for increased attention to be given to research capacity building in educational research, comparative studies and the broader processes of international development co-operation. Comparative and international research in education is especially well placed to contribute to this process given its context sensitivity and direct, and critical, engagement with the dilemmas generated by the international transfer of educational policy and practice. In the current international climate, it is argued that powerful global forces and agendas are, once again, increasingly prioritising, and internationalising, modalities of educational and social research that are underpinned by positivistic assumptions and orientations. Within the field of comparative education this is both a familiar and a revealing story. The global impact of large-scale international surveys of student achievement helps to legitimize such developments – and there is rapidly increasing evidence of the dramatic impact of such survey and related league table findings upon educational policy and practice worldwide.

While there are advances to be gained from these initiatives, much theoretical and methodological literature in the field of comparative and international education has long pointed to the limitations of the search for 'best practice', especially in cross-cultural contexts. Comparative research can certainly inspire and inform developments elsewhere, but we should not expect it to provide a fixed blueprint for further implementation. As Stenhouse (1979, pp.5–6) maintains, comparative research in education should deal 'in insight rather than law as a basis for understanding', and insights derived in this way can then help to 'tutor our judgment' with regard to the possible adaptation or modification of policy for application elsewhere.

If educational research capacity is to be strengthened in any system, then one key lesson from the comparative experience is that a diversity of approaches to research deserve attention and support – and that efforts to use research to inform and guide educational innovation respond especially well to locally grounded, context sensitive approaches, strategies and paradigms. Lewin and Akeampong's (2009) large-scale statistically informed and longitudinal research on access to basic education in sub-Saharan Africa thus acknowledges that 'the real problems of continuing to improve meaningful access to education...are becoming highly differentiated and reflect diverse contexts' (Lewin, 2007, p.597). Demonstrating how different approaches to educational research can be mutually supportive, Lewin thus also suggests that globally agreed:

...Goals and targets can help but only if they are adapted to circumstances, more varied in kind, more linked to concerns for equity, quality and valued outcomes, and owned more by those who are presumed to benefit (Lewin, 2007, p.597).

This points to the importance of both comparative research and to the need for greater local capacity, engagement and control. In the light of this analysis I am especially pleased to support the inauguration of a new Centre for Research in International and Comparative Education (CRICE) at the University of Malaya. This has the potential to make a major contribution to the development of Malaysian educational policy and practice in future years; to play a central role in strengthening national educational research capacity; to foster the development of locally grounded academic publishing; and to make a distinctively Malaysian contribution to the field of comparative and international research in education, and to international educational scholarship in general.

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PERSPECTIVES ON THE CONTRIBUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION TO EDUCATION AS A HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE

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"The future depends on what we do in the present."

~Mahatma Gandhi

ABSTRACT: *The context assumed in this argument is that of a potential catastrophe for humanity and the global environment within a century or two. The contention is that education in a radical form, centrally involving universities and other higher education institutions (HEIs), is the most likely weapon available to mankind that can avert such a disastrous scenario. The discussion focuses on the crucial issue of scale and the need to move from national and even provincial level policy and practice to that of local communities. This involves radical reform of the content and delivery of schooling through the involvement of universities with local institutions of delivery. Recourse is made to important recent sources promoted by UNESCO focusing on these crucial partnerships between universities, schools and communities, linking the global with the local through information and communications technology (ICT) in the interests of education as a humanitarian response.*

Introduction

It is first necessary, for the purposes of this paper, to present definitions of 'higher education' and 'education as a humanitarian response' as I perceive them. Otherwise the interpretation of the discourse will depend on the many definitions of both that are held by the collective readership. In colloquial terminology the aim is to enable the reader to be clear from the outset as to where the narrative is 'coming from'.

Higher education is often conventionally equated with the tertiary sector, and especially universities. If words are to be taken on their face value then tertiary must mean everything that is post-secondary. That is the simple logical definition to be adopted here, but as it stands it resides only in the realm of formal education. This is unrealistic, since a range of organised educational provision resides in the non-formal realm that is certainly post-secondary in nature, not to mention informal education. In the modern era millions of people, in all kinds of locations from affluent western suburbia to subsistence communities in Africa, learn informally from global media ranging from radio to mobile phones. People of all ages are susceptible to the acquisition of knowledge and skills through informal learning. Some elements of this will be of the order of tertiary level learning, but may be acquired by involuntary means. Such a perspective may suggest that the contribution of higher education to any community is both actually and potentially much greater than it is conventionally assumed to be.

Education as a humanitarian response is conventionally seen in terms of 'education for emergencies' and 'education for special needs'. As with higher education, the reality can be much more extensive; even universal. Clearly it is humane to provide elements of educational support to those suffering from disasters, be they natural, man-made or a combination of both. A humanitarian response to educational need requires it to be appropriate to that need in respect of every individual at any particular time and place. In terms of both an individual and a community - whether it be local, national or global - the need is to assist stability allied to sustainable development (Brock, 2011). That is to say, the notion of an education appropriate to need is universal but the form it may take may vary considerably from one individual to another as well as from community to community.

In addition to the need for sustainability at all levels from the individual to the global is the issue of survival on a finite space, planet Earth. We are now all living at a time when credible science indicates clearly that the human species has created an impending environmental catastrophe. This is expressed in the closing paragraph of Piers Brizony's *Science: The Definitive Guide* (2011):

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Whatever the possible outcomes, for the planet or for the universe, none of these grand-scale events can conceivably matter to us, our descendants, or even the creatures we might become some thousands or even tens of millions of years into the future. What will count are the decisions that we make during the current, extraordinarily brief spark of time during which technological ingenuity has become balanced almost exactly against the environmental stresses caused by the same ingenuity. The balance will tip, one way or another, in decades or centuries, not eons. A new kind of science might well be advised to take into account the vast stretch of opportunity that exists between today and when our sun shines its last. If we think like sentient beings of an infinite cosmos instead of like nervous beasts scuttling on the surface of a tiny, overcrowded, sphere of rock – if we aspire to live as long as our own star continues to shine – we might have a chance at least, of making it through the next century (p.203).

So-called ‘climate change deniers’ would dispute this of course, claiming it to be mere scare-mongering by academics hell bent on disrupting the comfortable lives of the affluent. But as Robin McKie (2011) has rightly pointed out in *The Observer*, science itself is based on skepticism. It challenges the conventional wisdom. Brizony’s own challenge in the final lines of his book, quoted above, is a challenge to education, as predicted by the novelist H.G. Wells succinctly over a century ago: ‘Human history becomes more and more a race between education and catastrophe’. Any educational action that attempts to meet this challenge will necessarily be ‘education as a humanitarian response’, for if it succeeds, humanity will have been preserved. If not, then humanity will have been shattered. The eminent historian Richard Aldrich (2010) sees history as a continuum involving not just the past but the present and the future as well. Not surprisingly he is exercised about what is happening:

We live on an overpopulated spaceship whose life support systems are running out. Our major concern is no longer the origin, but rather the death of species – especially our own (p.1).

It is the contention of this discourse that a successful response, on the part of education, to the doomsday challenges of Wells, Brizony and others has to be led by tertiary education, with universities in the vanguard. Only they have the means to meet the challenges of education and of scale that are already upon us. As Aldrich has it:

Existing aims such as education for salvation, education for the state and education for progress must be modified, replaced even, by the goal of education for survival (ibid).

The Challenge of Scale

The challenge of scale has, in the literature of educational studies, been largely to do with the problems and prospects of small countries and territories from Brock (1974) to Crossley, Bray and Packer (2011). This is still a significant issue for about 40 per cent of the countries in the world. But it has also made a small contribution to the wider literature of comparative and international education (Bray & Murray Thomas, 1995) and Brock (2011). The realisation is beginning to dawn that the fixation of much in this field with the national scale of reference has not served us well. What we need is to perceive, analyse and understand the geography of educational reality. That is to say, what actually happens on the ground in every locality. There is considerable disparity in the application of national policies on education at the local level. This is clearly seen in respect of the influence of market-oriented policies on school choice, see Griffin (2001) and Hamnett and Butler (2011). Neo-liberal policies of quasi-disengagement from the state inevitably lead to increased disparity in terms of a range of indicators relating to education. Yet the majority of governments remain obsessed with comparisons of academic achievement at the national scale of reference, such as TIMMS, PISA and university rankings.

All that is to do with geographical or spatial scale, but even more neglected in the literature is the issue of historical or temporal scale. There are exceptions but none of the order to inform Brizony’s challenge, and that of Martin, (2011) for much more intensive and intelligent action by all societies in the interest of global human survival and sustainable development beyond the twenty-first century. Martin begins:

Like the tension building in a suspense novel, the dangers from future climate change are racking up year after year. The world's media have become increasingly full of images of collapsing ice-shelves, stranded polar bears, raging hurricanes, lands stricken by drought, fires sweeping across southern Australia and deserts spreading. The ice-caps are melting in both the Arctic and the Antarctic. But all this is only an overture to trouble on a much grander scale. The runaway transformation of the Earth's climate may become the worst crisis of human history (p.28).

The work of Akin Mabogunje (1980) is a good starting point from which to appreciate the significance of spatial scale in development. His book *The Development Process: A Spatial Perspective* is a seminal contribution to the literature. One of the outstanding geographers of his generation, Mabogunje recognises the dynamic nature of spatial structures and spatial organisations. The former, he argues, tend to show a high degree of constancy and consistency over time. He goes on to indicate that to have a coherent spatial structure members of a society must know what to expect so: 'spatial structure thus tends to reflect ideal patterns of behaviour which are socially set and which may in fact be formally determined by rules, regulations and legislation' (p. 55). This will include formal education regulations, which on paper require the participation of all citizens of a country in a compulsory phase of schooling. This brings us to the issue of formal education systems, how they have developed and what they are for. It also brings us back to universities and their formative influence.

Universities and the Nature of Systems of Schooling

In the modern era of nation states, generally recognised as emerging in Europe from the seventeenth century onwards to the nineteenth, schools developed in the image of existing universities. They formed part of Dodgshon's (1987) transition in Europe from political control over groups of people to control also over regulated territory. Knowledge has always meant power and even every small emerging polity, more than 300 alone in proto-Germany, experienced a power battle between the merchants, the church and the government to control universities (Brock, 2010). Why is this of significance for people and their education all over the world in the twenty-first century? It is because the knowledge economy is now of massive global influence, and the universities and other higher education institutions have unparalleled expertise to operate spatially in increasingly sophisticated ways. They have the potential to make a fundamental and unrivalled contribution to popular education in the interest of survival and sustained development on planet Earth within the time-frame of Brizony's challenge, the twenty-first century.

Yet universities, as has been mentioned, even those that are privately operated, are themselves under pressure from the spatial parameters of politicians. They can only be as good as the school systems that feed them, and these systems are generally subject to some kind of national curriculum. Governments can be disingenuous with regard to their degree of commitment to the efforts of international bodies they purport to support in their efforts to engender the critical and creative thinking that is urgently needed. For example, the UK Government is reported thus in the UNESCO 2010 publication *Education for Sustainable Development*:

Sustainable development is a way of thinking about how we organize our lives and work – including our education system – so that we don't destroy our most precious resource, the planet...It must be much more than recycling bottles or giving money to charity. It is about thinking and working in a profoundly different way (p.42).

Yet, as alluded to above, like most governments in the more developed countries, such as full members of the OECD, the UK government does quite the opposite in respect of the school curriculum where so-called 'core' subjects are afforded higher status at the expense of others. In practice it means affording a higher status to instrumentality over creativity, part of which is 'thinking and working in a profoundly different way'. It is this curricular inertia, based on an outdated conventional wisdom that attracted the ire of Sir Ken Robinson in his celebrated TED presentation in Los Angeles in 2006. Robinson rightly extended his criticism to the tertiary sector in that universities operate a formulaic admissions system based on success in certain areas of the curriculum in their own image. Or, in other words as he put it, 'the ultimate aim of school systems is to produce university professors who are in fact 'simply another form of life', nothing more, nothing less.

This view is close to that of David Orr (1994) who castigates the schools and universities, and therefore governments, for supporting and rewarding what he calls 'mere intellectual cleverness' at the expense of intelligence. This is exactly what Brizony has in mind in the quotation above when he refers to our 'technological ingenuity becoming balanced almost exactly against the environmental stresses caused by the same ingenuity'. Real technological ingenuity at the highest level is of course the preserve of the really outstanding, but with regard to the bulk of the output of the universities, Orr describes them as 'minds ignorant of their own ignorance', and goes on to say:

As a result, an increasing percentage of human intelligence must attempt to undo a large part of what mere intellectual cleverness has done carelessly and greedily (p.17).

By 'human intelligence' in the context of this quotation, Orr means the formal education system from its entry point to whatever exit point any particular individual may experience. It means the curriculum and the aforementioned UK government's not 'thinking and working in a profoundly different way'.

What does this mean in terms of temporal scale and in terms of the work of schools and colleges? The duration of schooling in most countries with universal primary and secondary provision is about ten years (that is approximately 5-15 in the age range). At the time of writing (January 2012) there is little sign of that changing. This means that those entering primary school now will not leave university, if they go there, until about 2022. Their children will do so around 2045. This likely means a whole generation before significant curricular change, but as Aldrich rightly points out: 'While the young should certainly be educated as to the importance of survival, the danger is too immediate to be postponed to another generation' (Aldrich, 2010, p. 12). Do governments realise this? It would appear not. Despite the UK government's statement above, it is, in reality, stuck in a reactionary time warp dominated by a competitive nationalism exacerbated by flawed cross-national comparisons of student achievement. This is a point highlighted by Lynne Davies (2005) in her article 'Education in the Twenty-First Century: Conflict, Reconciliation and Reconstruction. She goes on to warn:

We have a crisis: not of globalisation, not of the economy but of something that transcends those. It is a crisis of the refusal to see what is happening to learning in our societies (p. 358).

It would seem that the necessary radical reform will not be coming from governments tied to nationalism, many of whom control the research and curricula of their universities as well as their schools. However, in some parts of the world universities have managed to maintain a degree of independence and are therefore the main hope for radical reform of the compulsory sector, and a return to the internationalism of their origins.

Universities: The Last Chance Solution for Radical Reform

In a sense universities have created the problem for which they now appear to be the main hope of a solution. This was not planned of course, but simply a consequence of universities pre-dating the emergence of formal school systems whose nature, content and sequence were necessarily appropriate for the onward transfer of pupils to be students in universities. In fact, the earliest formal schools in modern Europe predated national systems and were to do with the Christian churches, Catholic and Orthodox. Such early schools were initially for boys only, for educating and training choristers and then selecting for the priesthood. The curriculum was dominated by classics, philosophy and theology. Sciences and modern languages were treated with suspicion until the influence of the industrial revolution and international trading. However a recent study (Elliot & Daniels, 2010) have revealed that curricular diversification in English grammar schools began to occur much earlier than was thought. In particular: 'Dissenting schools have often been associated with the introduction of "modern" subjects including mathematics, geography, natural philosophy and modern languages' (p. 16). It was from the early to middle nineteenth century that universities in Europe and North America began to require new students to be proficient in certain new subjects as well as old on leaving school. With massification of secondary schooling in the west the so-called 'European idea of education' (Mallinson, 1980) became the template and spread through colonial conquest and neo-colonial appropriation by the turn of the twentieth-century. Such massification was also associated with credentialism, which in turn required examinations, qualifications and selection (Hopper, 1968). The ultimate selection is that for entry to university. To different degrees from country to country specialisation emerged in respect of qualification gained at school. Oxenham (1984) was sufficiently alarmed to title his key work '*Education versus Qualifications*', following his colleague Ronald Dore's radical analysis of this dangerous trend '*The Diploma Disease*'. Such seminal warnings have gone largely unheeded, leading Lynn Davies (2005) to question: '...the myth that universal formal education automatically creates universal harmony' (p. 358). For the urgent task of assuring human survival, relative peace and considerable co-operation will be required.

Clearly the majority of the world's population has not received formal education appropriate to its needs at particular times and in particular places. According to the definition outlined at the beginning of this paper this is clearly inhumane. The twentieth century, during which the bacillus of mass formal education has spread, has been the most violent in human history and the most destructive of the environment. If the repositories of maximum human talent, the universities, are our best bet in the last chance solution, what evidence is there that they have the wit and wisdom to reverse David Orr's (1994) concern that 'intellectual cleverness' has blunted 'human intelligence'? We need first to see where the universities are at, and where they seem to be going.

One may begin with a key document from the most recent World Congress on Higher Education held at UNESCO in Paris in

2009. It is titled *Trends in Global Higher Education: Tracking an Academic Revolution* (Altbach, Reisburg & Rumbley), and covers the period since the first such Congress in 1998. This turns out to have been a decade of dramatic change; the authors claim it to be the most significant since the impact of the German model of the modern university some two hundred years before. This has to do, it seems, with highly disparate massification of higher education, mostly in the more developed regions. Where it is on the way elsewhere is largely to do with the rapid development of private universities. Over 70 per cent of university students are in private institutions in Indonesia, The Philippines and The Republic of Korea, while countries with between 35 and 60 per cent include Malaysia, India and Brazil. How will the private sector respond to the vital role for universities argued here in respect of the survival of humanity? The authors conclude that:

The sector is run mostly on a business model, with power and authority concentrated in boards and chief executives, faculty hold little authority or influence and students are seen as consumers (p. xii).

Globally, the private sector now accounts for over 30 per cent of the total higher education facility and is growing. In association with this trend is a decline in the average qualification of faculty. About 50 per cent of university faculty world-wide have only a bachelor's degree. Along with this, and also affecting higher level public universities in developed countries, is the growth of managerialism which has claimed the time and talent of many previously innovative senior academics. All this is a serious constraint on the likelihood of universities being key players in the survival of humanity, that is to say being the agents of education as a humanitarian response. However, this may have a greater negative effect on one of the three prime functions of the university, teaching, than on the other two: research, and contributing to the well-being of the local community.

The cybernetic revolution has, potentially at any rate, brought together the global and local scales of human operation. The research community constitutes a global knowledge network with a rapidly growing capacity to address local problems, be they political, economic or environmental. At present the potential value is severely constrained by deep disparity of ICT capacity that is widening the global digital divide. A telling prediction in the 2009 UNESCO report is that: 'The academic profession will become more internationally oriented and mobile but will still be structured in accordance with national circumstances' (p. xvii). As global economics also undergoes something of a revolution, new groups of nations are becoming significant players. The so-called BRIC nations (Brazil, Russia, India and China) are being closely followed by the CIVETS (Colombia, Indonesia, Vietnam, Egypt, Turkey and South Africa). It is puzzling why others, such as Malaysia and Venezuela are not included. In all of these, expansion of their higher education sectors and of the middle classes go hand in hand, and their universities are seen primarily as national assets rather than agencies contributing to the resolution of urgent global problems, especially environmental and human survival. Will the global knowledge business with its information hubs impede the imperative of universities serving local communities in the interest of survival?

Clearly the communities most at risk are in the least developed regions where the poorest countries are mostly located. Here, higher education can play a crucial role, as promoted by 'The Task Force on Higher Education and Society' led by The World Bank. Its report in 2000 was titled *Higher Education in Developing Countries: Peril and, Promise* the basic conclusion being:

Without more and better higher education, developing countries will find it increasingly difficult to benefit from the global knowledge-based economy (2000, p.9).

The report goes on to emphasise the need for autonomy of universities and other higher education institutions, pointing out that market forces will not provide the kind of innovation required due to dependence on the profit motive. Autonomy will also enable more focus on in-country and especially local research that can enhance the quality of university contribution to the local community. As universities and colleges in less developed countries (LDCs) are enabled to connect with global ICT networks they will be able to elicit support from greater expertise elsewhere. The Task Force recommended the formation of a global volunteer force of scientists, including retirees who would likely be less constrained.

It is important, amid talk of the importance of embracing modern technologies of knowledge acquisition and application, to remember that this requires an underpinning of a sound liberal education. Sheer technical expertise is not enough. It has no intrinsic qualities to make sure that it is applied to the enhancement of humanity in any regard. As the Task Force reminds us, the futurologist Alvin Toffler warned even in 1928 that: 'The illiterate of the 21st century will not be those who cannot read and write, but those who cannot learn, unlearn and relearn'.

Universities, ICTs and Cross-National Co-operation

In view of the urgent need for what the Task Force termed '...a repositioning of higher education in LDCs' (p. 97), what evidence is there of cross-national co-operation to bring about a global/local response to educational need in respect of sustainable survival? Two organisations seeking to address this issue are The Commonwealth of Learning and the UK Open University. The former made a valuable contribution to the 2009 World Conference on Higher Education in the form of a report: *ICTs for Higher Education*. Given that the formative 1998 UNESCO Conference took place before the global interactive technology of the web really took hold, the potential for global/local initiatives has been massively advanced over the following decade or so. But the report begins with an important user warning:

ICTs are a driver of change, but without good policy and careful planning, can have unintended consequences (p.1).

It is salutary to note that the Commonwealth of Learning (C of L, 2009), based in Vancouver but serving all members of the Commonwealth and indeed beyond, has the stated aim of reaching an audience of new ministers, civil servants and advisers in LDCs. These, unlike most academics are policy-makers and can influence higher education institutions to use ICT in engagement with the community, teaching and administration, as well as in research. The potential of mobile devices is encouraged, and advice is given as to the techno-cultural divide between older academics who have acquired a modest degree of facility and less formally educated new students and community members. C of L says:

Today's students (digital natives) have a different way of approaching and using technologies like cell phones and computers that their teachers (digital immigrants) still need to come to terms with. Educators need to gain an understanding of the virtual worlds that their learners move in so that they can better understand how to interest them in ways that make sense to digital natives (p.3).

In other words, university and other teachers need to connect the global with the local, by adopting the necessary first step by getting to know where their students, who may just be community members, 'are at'. This lies at the heart of one of the UK Open University's projects in Africa, TESSA (Teacher Education in Sub-Saharan Africa). The Commonwealth of Learning is one of the members of a consortium led by the Open University, but also involving the African Virtual University, the BBC World trust and the Open University of Tanzania. It is not sufficient to get only technologically attuned, but also to accommodate the informal knowledge of the trainees of their local community. The quality of schooling anywhere is a direct influence on the quality of higher education. This makes the effectiveness of teachers a crucial component of progress towards meeting the challenges of human and environmental survival. Curricular relevance and community context need to come together. This is achieved in the TESSA project by accommodating the informal knowledge of trainee teachers, including their 'digital native' status. Many are experienced untrained teachers who know how to use their local human and physical environment rather than rely on imported out of context material. Enabling further and higher education to be reachable without necessarily leaving home and creating a brain gain is fundamental to a humanitarian response to educational need. Through appropriate use of ICTs universities and colleges can play a crucial role in averting the kinds of catastrophes predicted by Brizony and Martin, or at least adjusting to them. This is what the Commonwealth of Learning refers to as 'community engagement' (p.8).

At the heart of this ICT enabled enhanced experience is 'Bioinformatics' offered by 153 universities in North America but only 8 in Africa. Top-level developing countries have begun to offer distance learning programmes in this and related fields in Brazil, India and South Africa. According to the C of L, the Sunspace Project based at Stellenbosch University, with the help of NASA: '...has the potential to provide a GIS (Geographical Information System) for strengthening the development of Africa' (p.12). Such higher-level informatics is of little use if the pedagogy of its introduction at community level is of poor quality, or even worse, inappropriate – as much of colonially-derived education has already been. According to the C of L, four key reasons for failure to connect poor communities with aspects of ICT that would assist their development for survival are: the failure to review student needs before installing; imposing systems 'top down' without consultation; using inappropriate content from other regions or cultures; and low quality content (p.24).

Universities and Partnerships

The 1998 UNESCO World Conference on Higher Education came to the main conclusion that universities and other HEIs should form partnerships with other components of the formal systems such as primary and secondary schools, and the non- informal

elements such as NGOs. This was nearly a decade after the 1990 UNESCO-sponsored Conference at Jomtien, largely concerned with promoting Universal Primary Education (UPE), had called for new partnerships at local level across all forms of education operating in communities. But, during the 1990s, international donor policy had swung sharply behind the support of UPE to the relative neglect of external funding for secondary schooling, universities and other HEIs in less developed countries. The seemingly crucial and overlooked imperative in this otherwise laudable initiative was the fundamental need to work upward from local initiative, rather than have poorly funded top down reforms and projects operated at a national level. Nonetheless, latent local potential began to be realised, and was the subject of an international workshop held at Langkawi, Malaysia in March 1997 which was convened by the Commonwealth Secretariat to consider the outcome of its commissioning in 1995 of a number of country studies to highlight initiatives that had emerged in ten locations within Botswana, Ghana, India, Malaysia, New Zealand, The South Pacific, Sri Lanka, Tanzania, Trinidad and Tobago, and Zambia. This led in turn to the publication of *Partnerships in Education for All: The Role of Higher Education in Basic Education* (Leach, 2003). Meantime in 1996, an EFA meeting in Amman had in effect alluded to the need for the support of universities in four areas fundamental to the realisation of EFA: more local content in the curriculum; more non-formal education; more local information to be gathered in data bases; better inter-sector links between education, health and environment.

One year prior to the publication of the Commonwealth Secretariat Report in 2003, Pyle and Farrant had published their book: *Globalisation, Universities and Issues of Sustainable Human Development* in which they discuss constraints faced by universities in promoting sustainable development. One, they suggest, is the so-called 'triple helix' of Etzkowitz (2000), which places universities in relationships with government and industry. There may be possibilities for social entrepreneurship within what he calls 'entrepreneurial pathways of university development' (Pyle & Farrant, p. 17). Such arrangements can impede the independence and integrity of universities. In developing countries they also suggest constraints on relationships with society, especially rural, that arise from universities being based on colonially derived models. The shift in aid funding from higher education to primary education following 'Jomtien' in 1990 hadn't helped either, though that has since become more balanced. Nonetheless Pyle and Farrant conclude, in the political and economic climate of the time:

...the university's ability to provide broad-based education and increase the quality of social, intellectual and economic life for communities and nations becomes hostage to liberalisation, privatisation and the chase for the research dollar (p.24).

Nonetheless, they proceed to include a number of case studies and themes where universities have attempted to play their part in local or regional partnerships, including one in Malaysia.

In this case study M. Sirat (2002) discusses: 'Managing the Interface with the Region: The Case of Universiti Sains Malaysia, Pulau Pinang, Malaysia'. It is claimed that 'the university is managing its interface with the geographic region, particularly as it applies to purposeful community service' (p.194). It was decided to establish two branch campuses, one for medical sciences in 1979 on the east coast and another in 1986 for engineering in the north of the country. In defining the community to which any university seeks to relate it is suggested that at least four things be taken into account:

...first, the relationship between the university and its physical surroundings as influenced by the historical and institutional context; second, the different scales at which attributes or impacts of the university should be measured and assessed; third, the different geographic scale of territory over which the university provides services; and fourth, the perceptions held by the institutions and its management of the local community which is identified in institutional plans and through related activities (p.203).

In examining these issues the author concentrates on the 'Transkrian Engineering Campus' which 'straddles the three contiguous states – Kedah, Pulau Pinang and Perak – that comprise Malaysia's northern region'. In addition to increasing access to academic and technical training, service to the local community has been developed in the form of sports facilities, information technology and other facilities.

In Leach (2003) there is another example from Malaysia, this time focusing on basic education. In this case the University of Science Malaysia in the state of Penang (Piew, Kassim, Kim and Abdullah, pp. 84-103). The Basic Education Research Unit (BERU) had its origins in this university in 'Project InSPIRE' leading to an initiative arising from Jomtien and EFA in 1990. Part of this was the Centre for Extension and Continuing Education which developed the following: a 'Village Adoption Programme', veterinary and plant clinic services, 'Farmers Days', a 'Small Business Development Scheme', and a 'Young Entrepreneurs Programme'. In addition to these formal innovations, a range of non-formal initiatives has been carried out in association with local NGOs. All this is in the interests of

empowerment and sustainable development.

Such responses were recognised to different degrees in the other nine case-studies of the Commonwealth Secretariat, as were constraints to their being met. These constraints were listed as: lack of appropriate structures; limited impact on basic education policy and delivery; lack of links with those involved in the delivery of basic education, especially primary education; lack of collaboration between HEIs on initiatives in basic education; inadequate information about on-going higher education activity in the field of basic education; lack of empirical work in the field of basic education (Leach, 2003, pp. 14-15). Not surprisingly, following descriptions of the ten cases the report makes a number of recommendations to address the constraints listed above, namely: greater flexibility between HEIs, communities and their schools; more interaction and co-operation between HEIs with regard to local partnerships and other relevant initiatives; the creation of local databases to inform initiatives; more appropriate capacity-building with regard to effecting local partnerships; and more dynamic policies and management structures for HEIs to enable them to act in this radical way. In other words this means universities and HEIs becoming a lead agent in education as a humanitarian response.

Conclusion

It is clear from the discussion above that for universities and other HEIs to play their optimum role as partners in meeting the challenges of human survival and sustainable development, there needs to be radical and rapid reform. Post-secondary sector institutions are vital to the rapid creation and operation of partnerships with other sectors and forms of education to enable what the UK government recognised as ‘thinking and learning in a profoundly different way’. To date that government has shown no signs of doing so, and it is highly likely that other governments will be equally reactionary. They are fixated on cross-national and even intra-national competition rather than imaginative reform both curricular and administrative in the interests of saving the species and the planet.

Nonetheless, it behooves the higher education sector with its relative independence and sophisticated ICT capabilities to make a move before it is too late. In any case, grandiose national scale initiatives will not work. It is at the local level that partnerships, with post-secondary, preferably university, institutions at the hub, need to be established. In the conclusion of my book *Education as a Global Concern* (Brock, 2010), have put it thus:

National and local political authority over education, the ‘authority’ that determines the extent to which the vital contribution of education can be realized, is not going to go away. Instead that authority must itself be educated to the fact that the kind of reform required at every locality within its territory is in its own best interest. Figure 6.1 [see Figure 1] illustrates the way in which partnerships across the sectors of formal education, as well as with the non-formal and informal dimensions of learning could be made (p.145).

Figure 6.1 in the above quotation is reproduced as Figure 1 below. With respect to the circle marked ‘SCHOOLS’, the ‘EHR’ Curriculum refers to a section earlier in the text whereby it is suggested that: a) core subjects such as mathematics, language and science should be conducted in such a way as to engage technical skills and be exemplified as far as possible through the local context; b) the remaining liberal education subjects such as geography, history and literature should also, at least in part, be conducted in such a way as to accommodate some of the technical skills as well as the local context.

It is at this geographical scale that the seeds of sustainable development need to be sown. That is to say, in a community context in which to grow. The more developed the society the more likely the situation of a university within or near the community is likely to be. In less developed, and/or remote locations, the university or other form of HEI may be far away but it can play its part through appropriate ICT input both administrative and curricular. This would include the vital element of locally generated research and data enabled by the secondment of a small number of appropriate staff and/or through a sufficiently equipped NGO such as ‘ActionAid’ or ‘Practical Action’. Such local input should ensure the degree of appropriateness that characterizes a humane response, something akin to the Freirean concern for intellectual as well as practical ownership of the educational process. As Richard Schaul put it in his foreword to Paulo Freire’s *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (1972), education then becomes ‘the means by which men and women deal critically and creatively with reality and discover how to participate in the transformation of their world’ (pp. 13-14).

Realisation of the urgency of this liberation has increased greatly since the days of Freire’s pioneering work, at least by radical and well-informed thinkers such as Brizony, Martin and Orr, quoted above. But it has not yet

reached the majorities in developed and developing countries alike in their local communities due to the perverse priorities of governments and multi-national agencies that depend on them for funding. Universities can, and must, use their greater understanding and ICT capacities to take the lead in enabling communities to have a chance to save themselves and their environment.

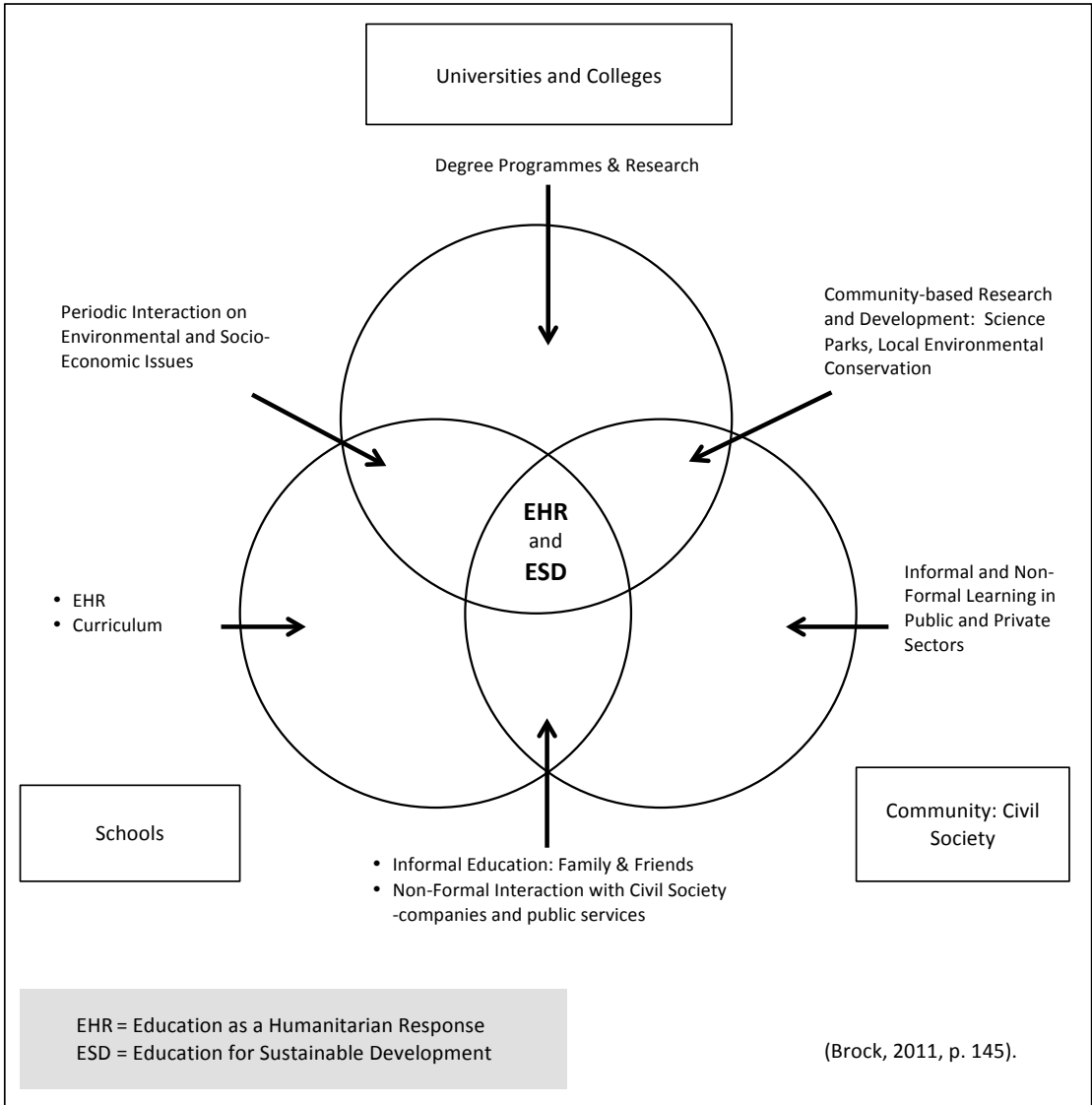


Figure 1: Integrated Education with Locale Specific and Global Humanitarian and Environmental Sustainable Perspectives, (Brock, 2011, p. 145).

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IMPORTANCE OF PHILOSOPHY IN THE CONDUCT OF EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH

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ABSTRACT: *Educational questions, whether in policy or in practice and thus in educational research, make assumptions which are philosophical in nature – in values, theory of knowledge, philosophy of mind, social philosophy and so on. The paper illustrates this through several examples of educational research, showing how, in the absence of philosophical questioning, the intelligence is often bewitched by the misuse of language, thereby invalidating so-called educational research.*

Introduction

What is educational research? There are three sorts of answers to this question.

The first answer points to the sort of research evidence which helps policy makers and practitioners to make justified decisions in the many different choices and activities which are covered by the title 'education'. For example, should we select the brighter students at age 11 to a more academic school? Well, that depends on the empirical evidence as to whether or not separate schooling helps the brighter students to achieve more academically. It also depends (something often forgotten) on the effect such a decision has upon the welfare and attainments of those not selected. These kinds of research would include the concepts, theories and facts from such disciplines as sociology, psychology, history, anthropology, and comparative studies. And there are many kinds of study which would offer evidence – it all depends on the questions being asked.

The second sort of answer is one that arises from puzzlement about the meaning of the words which are being used – often without any awareness of the grounds for puzzlement. Here one might ask what it *means* to say someone is intelligent. Are there different ways in which one might conceptualise intelligence so that someone might be intelligent at some things and not at others? If that is the case, then it makes little sense to divide human beings into 'intelligent' and 'not intelligent'.

The third sort of answer depends on what you mean by *educational* research. Why *educationally* should we find the psychological research on intelligence interesting? There is a lot of disagreement about what counts as an *educated* person, and some interesting sociological research might seem educationally relevant to some educational researchers, and irrelevant to others.

The second and third questions are essentially philosophical. They are rarely asked in courses and in the conduct of educational research. That is a pity, because it explains why so much so-called educational research is not educational at all. Therefore this paper concentrates on questions 2 and 3, but with an extension in the final part into different areas which have traditionally been explored by philosophers.

It All Depends on What You Mean.

The philosopher Wittgenstein declared his main intention in *Philosophical Investigations* 'to teach you to pass from a piece of disguised nonsense to something that is patent nonsense' (Wittgenstein, 1953). And there is a lot of 'disguised nonsense' which bewitches the intelligence by the misuse of language. In pursuing this particular meaning of 'philosophical investigation', and its relevance to educational studies and research, I shall give three examples:

Skills

Let us take the example of the perceived need in most countries to increase the number of skilled workforce. A lot of research is undertaken to find out what skills are needed, how many people have them and what we need to do to train more people to obtain them. In Britain there was the Leitch Report (2006) which stated that only 600,000 jobs in 2020 would require no skills, as opposed to the seven million today. Other research contradicts this;

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there will remain the seven million jobs requiring workers without skills. Who is right? What sort of research would show how many skilled workers there are and how many more are needed for training?

The question is posed as though it is open to empirical research. But it is in part, if not mainly, a conceptual issue. What is a 'skill'? And, given there are many different kinds and complexities of skill, how can they be added up to get the number 600,000? Is 'street cleaning' a skill (some streets are cleaned more effectively than others). If so, is it one or several skills (for example, using a brush nimbly and quickly, and picking up the dirt without spilling it), and how quickly can each component skill be learnt? Are street cleaners included in the overall number of skilled jobs to be trained for?

The fuzziness of the word 'skill' is not acknowledged in the research which profoundly affects policy and investment. One needs constantly to ask the question: 'What do you mean?'

Standards

Or take for example, the need to raise *standards*, rendered even more sharply by international comparisons of the OECD's PISA evaluations (Programme of International Student Assessment) – a most extensive and thorough piece of research which sparks soul-searching in many countries (including Britain) which find themselves further down the league table than they feel they ought to be.

But what do we mean by 'standards' - and what could be meant by such standards going up or down? First, there is something confusing about standards themselves going up or down. Standards are the benchmarks against which performance is judged to be good or bad, elegant or crude, intelligent or stupid. It is not the standard which goes up or down, but the performance which is assessed according to the standard. It is a further question as to whether the selected standards are appropriate ones. And one might ask, too, whether the adopted standards relate in content or difficulty to previous standards with which they are being compared. But for standards themselves to go up or down there would be required some reference to higher standards against which the lower standards are reckoned to be inadequate – and so on *ad infinitum*

This confusion over the meaning of 'standard' messes up a lot of policy – and thereby practice. One decides whether or not a learner's performance (and by extension the performance of the school) 'comes up to standard' by the 'performances', and hence the need for 'performance indicators'. These are increasingly spelled out in great detail such that standards can be measured – and a lot of research is dedicated to this. But then the 'performances' become the 'standards'. They are equated. Therefore it is wise for the teacher, in demonstrating improving standards, to 'teach to the standards' – to teach how to perform in particular circumstances. More relevant words, reflecting the practical reality, would be 'coaching' or 'training'. But are the learners demonstrating a higher standard in the *educational* context?

First, one needs to ask why this is *educational* – and thus why the PISA investigations, for instance, constitute *educational* research (but this will be postponed to the next section).

Second, however, is there not a logical confusion in equating aims (educational or otherwise) with indicators? A philosophical move is to work through concrete examples. Let us, therefore, take the example of 'happiness' as an educational aim. We are increasingly being told that an educational aim is to make young people happy – having a sense of fulfillment. A miserable child is likely to be discouraged from learning. One performance indicator of happiness is the amount of smiling and laughing which is shown. Therefore, in advance of the visit by the Inspector of Happiness, the teacher trains the children to smile when indicated to do so. The Inspector of Happiness arrives. Every time he tells a joke, all the children laugh or smile. He is impressed, and gives the school a top grade for 'happiness education'. The school goes to the top of the 'happiness league'. The only trouble is that the children are thoroughly miserable. There has been a logical confusion between 'performance indicators', on the one hand, and, on the other, that which they are supposed to be indicating.

Once again, so-called educational research is confounded by a failure to ask the question: 'What do you mean?'

Disciplines

Yet a further example arises from the recent book on the 'disciplines' of education by Furlong and Lawn (2011) – a reflection back to the 1960s when, to give educational studies greater academic respectability, there was the establishment in university education departments of the 'foundation disciplines'. These were the Philosophy, the Sociology, the Psychology and the History of Education. What made them 'disciplines' were the *distinctive concepts* which they brought to bear upon educational problems, the *distinctive ways of testing the truth* of what was claimed, and the *distinctive modes of enquiry*. Educational studies was not itself a discipline, but rather a collection of these other disciplines. The result of such a way of conceiving things was a downgrading of the teachers' own professional thinking and judgment – a deferring of professional judgment to those from the heights of the 'isms'.

However, if we were not quite so liberal with nouns, perhaps we would not 'people the world with so many objects' which such nouns seem to pick out and name. If instead of the 'disciplines of education', we spoke of

‘disciplined thinking’ about education, then we make room for the centrality of teachers’ thinking about education. In so doing, the teachers will draw upon the ‘bodies of knowledge’ under the title of sociology or psychology (distinguished by their own distinctive theoretical perspectives), but these will be sociology or psychology of *education* only in so far as they are seen to be relevant to educational questions raised by teachers or policy makers. There would be no such thing as *the discipline* of sociology of education’ or of ‘psychology of education’.

It is partly because of this more philosophical questioning that there has emerged within the teaching profession the powerful tradition of ‘action research’ – research which cannot divorce the disciplined thinking about education from professional insights and ethical deliberations, though inevitably drawing upon, where relevant, the knowledge and understanding afforded by sociology or psychology.

Interim Conclusion

So far, I have argued for and illustrated the humble but enabling role of philosophical thinking in asking ‘what do you mean?’ where, though often unrecognised, language is not as clear as it needs to be in order to embark on empirical research. Moreover, such lack of clarity is not easily cleared up, because beneath it lie deeper questions with which philosophers have traditionally been concerned – about the nature of knowledge, the relation of mind to matter, the relation of society to the individual, and above all the ethical concern about what is worth while learning. To that last concern we shall now turn, bearing in mind that philosophy is in great part a quest for clarity and meaning where so often language holds us captive. Again, to quote Wittgenstein ‘a picture held us captive. And we could not get outside it, for it lay in our language and language seemed to repeat it to us inexorably’.

What Makes Educational Research *Educational*?

Again, let me work through an example. I was invited to lead a review, funded by the Nuffield Foundation to the tune of £1 million, into every aspect of education and training of 14 to 19 year olds in England and Wales (Pring, *et al.*, 2009). This was the largest such review for 50 years. Is a review a piece of research? In one important sense it is, for it requires the careful selection of research which is seen to be relevant to the questions being asked. It requires a critical review of such research – the thoroughness with which it is carried out, the verification of the conclusions reached, the validity in relation to other research which reaches opposite conclusions. But most important for the purposes of this paper is the overall question which determines the relevance of all these different pieces of research. As in the writing of one’s Ph.D., one needs to ask: what is your thesis?

What stimulated the funding of this review were *educational* questions about the quality and the relevance of the learning which was experienced by all young people, whether high flying academics or those with special educational needs. Such quality and relevance must necessarily include the content or subject-matter of what was taught, the assessment of that quality, the qualifications which marked the success of the learning, the approaches to teaching, the opportunities afforded for progression, the provision of learning in schools, colleges and training centres. But the resolution of these concerns required a deeper analysis of the aims of education. What gave unity to the review – and relevance (or not) to the many kinds and items of evidence - was the question: *What counts as an educated 19 year-old in this day and age?*

The preliminary answer to that question requires both an analysis of the meaning of ‘educated’ and an evaluation of those qualities which someone, who is called ‘educated’, should possess. Hence, we are into the realms of philosophy – namely, ‘what do you mean?’ and ‘how do you decide what is worth learning?’ Let me explain

To educate in its *descriptive* sense entails bringing about learning in one way or another. One speaks of a person’s education as the formal arrangements through which that learning is brought about. Hence, for example, one might ask a person where he or she was educated whilst simply wanting to know where he or she had gone to school.

But it is open to someone to say that such an experience was not really educational – indeed, as Dewey argued, much so-called education is mis-educational. It leads to boredom, it closes the mind to further learning, it narrows one’s vision of what is possible, it undermines the learner’s confidence. In so arguing the critic is using the word ‘educated’ in an *evaluative* sense. He or she is saying that what is described as education is not education at all. The evaluative sense is logically prior to the descriptive sense.

Here then we are into the realm of ethics – namely, that form of discourse, central to philosophy, which examines and deliberates about what is worthwhile and why certain actions or states of being are more worthwhile than others.

Many answers are put forward in answer to this question for the simple reason that ‘educated’ implies the acquisition of qualities, understandings and aspirations which are judged to be of value and worth pursuing. They are tied to what one sees, implicitly or explicitly, to be the sort of person and the sort of society, which, through learning, one would wish to see developed.

Values are embodied in all that we do in seeking to educate. One can see how implicit and unexamined values shape the educational programme of young people - for example, the division between the more prestigious academic pathways for some and the vocational studies for others, the significance given to the sciences rather than to the arts (or vice versa), the focus on economically relevant skills and on the qualities of entrepreneurship, the concentration upon examination grades, the absence of practical and experiential engagement. Practices and policies, too often unquestioned, become problematic against a deeper ethical critique.

In addressing such an ethical question one needs to attend to what it means to be a person because we attribute 'education' and 'educated' to persons, not to horses or cows. What, then, is the sort of learning which we believe to be worth while for persons, as such, to undergo and achieve in? The answer to that requires some analysis of what is distinctive of being and growing as a person. And so research, if it is to be educational, must shed light on the pursuit of that sort of learning – both content and process – which enable the learners to live distinctively human lives. Perhaps the 'educational research' into standards misses the point if what is measured has little relation to the qualities associated with being educated

Capacity to Think

What first distinguishes human beings (the biological species) as persons is the capacity to think about and to make sense of the physical, social, economic and moral worlds we inhabit. That 'making sense' draws upon the concepts, modes of enquiry, explanations which we have inherited through the different traditions and disciplines of thinking. Inevitably, different young people acquire such modes of thinking at different levels of sophistication. Such traditions of thinking are what we acquire initially through family and community, but the advancement of civilisation has led to the increasing powers of such thinking and its differentiation into different forms of knowledge and experiencing. That is what the philosopher Michael Oakeshott (1972) referred to as the 'conversation between the generations of mankind' into which we initiate the next generation so that they too can appreciate and internalise 'the voices' of science, of history, of poetry, of religion. These different 'voices' are characterised by their own distinctive concepts and modes of enquiry, identified and extended by philosophical argument and analysis within the separate disciplines. One might refer to such philosophical work as part of epistemology or theory of knowledge. Of course, such 'conversations between the generations' can be conducted at a very deep level – what, presumably, goes on in university departments, and many young people will not have the ability, opportunity or motivation to go into much depth. But the capacity to think systematically about the physical, social, economic and moral worlds we inhabit is possible for all young people up to a certain level, and an aim of education (in that such differentiated thinking is part of what it means to function as a person) must be to help the learners at least to start on the rung of the ladder and to make as much progress as possible and practically necessary in order, as Dewey argued, to 'manage life intelligently'. Such progress requires identifying the key ideas that structure our thinking in its different modes and the way in which such ideas can be put across in an ever more sophisticated way (what Jerome Bruner, 1960, referred to as 'the spiral curriculum').

Practical Capacities

Secondly, however, failure in educational research to reflect upon the aims of education and what it means to be and to develop as a person has resulted in a very narrow research programme into learning and curriculum. The philosopher John Macmurray (1957) argued that western philosophy had been misled by Descartes' *Cogito, ergo sum* – 'I think, therefore I am'. Here is the assumption of the thinking person as a spectator of a world separate from the spectator herself, and the educated person therefore as the disinterested examiner of the physical and social worlds. But, argued Macmurray, it would be more correct to say 'I do, therefore I am' – far from being the disinterested spectator, I am practically involved in the world and my understanding of it grows through being engaged, pursuing goals at first only vaguely identified, meeting problems. It is through practical experience that we come to make sense of the material world and the personal relations which are the context of our personal development. The American philosopher turned motor mechanic, Matthew Crawford (2009), shows the problems arising from the separation of thinking from doing.

The disappearance of tools from our common education is the first step towards a wider ignorance of the world of artifacts we inhabit (Crawford, 2009, p.3).

It is here where the philosopher John Dewey argues for a very different understanding of education from what prevailed in his native America. The often declared aims of education, by failing to grasp the importance of experience and of practical capability, do not produce 'the educated person' – rather a narrowly conceived human being. Hence, 'practical capabilities' are much neglected in educational theory, practice and research – and certainly unrecognised in the research into standards.

Moral Seriousness

Third, however, what is distinctive of being a person is the capacity to take responsibility for the direction of one's life and for making moral choices. Personal development results in a degree of 'moral seriousness' – being aware of and sensitive to the big issues which confront society – those of environmental sustainability, of racism, of unnecessary poverty and disadvantage. Such awareness and sensitivity are embodied in the dispositions to behave in particular ways in particular circumstances. Is not an aim of education to nurture the virtuous person, not just the knowledgeable person? The academically successful person, without human sensibility or appropriate dispositions, and thereby using his academic success to pursue bad ends, is 'less of a person'. Such sensibilities can be learnt through an educational process (for example, the engagement with literature) and ethos which helps shape the personality and goals thought worth pursuing. Lawrence Kohlberg, known for his research into moral development, argued that it is no good teaching how to act justly unless the school itself became a just community (Kohlberg, 1982).

Sense of Community

Finally, to be a person is to be related to other persons. No one is an island. Our capacity to talk and to think arises from our relation to others both existent and in the past. We participate in a culture and in that conversation between the generations of which Oakeshott spoke. We are members of communities and human welfare depends on the health of these communities. Again, referring to Dewey, whose book *Democracy and Education* put the creation of thinking and supportive communities (citizenship, if you like) as the central aim of education,

Men live in a community in virtue of the things which they have in common. What they must have in common in order to form a community or society are aims, beliefs, aspirations, knowledge – a common understanding. (Dewey, 1916, p.4)

Not to foster community and the interpersonal respect central to community was to cut individuals off from the chief means of personal growth – that experiential learning through which one comes to understand and benefit from the different cultural standpoint of others different from oneself

Interim Conclusion

The educated person therefore is one who has developed these distinctive qualities and capacities of 'becoming a person more fully', namely, the initiation into the different forms of knowledge and understanding, into moral traditions which can so easily come to be neglected, into practices of doing and making, and into civic and public traditions of service.

Of course within such generalities there will be areas of disagreement, reflecting different values placed upon different content within forms of knowledge, reflecting too different understandings of society and how it might prosper. But the virtues to be fostered through the conduct of educational research – the intellectual virtues of openness to argument, of honesty in presenting evidence, of humility in the face contradiction, and the moral virtues of respect for other people and of due consideration to others' views howsoever mistaken – should enable each to be enriched by such differences.

Where one stands on these essentially ethical issues embodied within the aims of education affects profoundly what the shape and provision education should be. And yet policies and practices are pursued, and research conducted, as though the whole matter is ethically neutral.

Research Based Teaching

The separation of theory from practice (the Cartesian spectator view of thinking, referred to above) has led to a research tradition in education dominated by the theoretical work of sociologists, psychologists and philosophers, disconnected from the practice of education as that is carried out by teachers. It is the teachers, by and large, who educate – who need to think therefore what counts as an educated person and how the knowledge which is produced by the theoreticians might be integrated into their (the teachers') practical and experiential knowledge in the pursuit of their educational aims. In that respect, the teachers have to be the researchers – not the deliverers of other people's research.

Such a tradition of what is referred to as 'action research' puts the teacher at the centre. But there are two aspects of this which are of philosophical importance.

The Concept of Teaching

First, we need to ask what it means to teach. What seems to be a straightforward question turns out not to be so. 'To teach' has both a direct and an indirect object. One teaches something to somebody. Teaching is the attempt to bring about the *learning of something* (for example, the concept of osmosis in biology or of simultaneous equations in mathematics) in someone else. But such an attempt logically requires two things: first, the logically correct exposition of the concept (or formula or event) which one wishes the learner to understand, and, second, the connection between that concept (e.g. osmosis) and the present understandings and level of ability of the learner. The university lecturer who delivers his notes to an audience of undergraduates without any consideration of their current state of knowledge or their motivation is lecturing but not teaching

Teacher as Educator

This is a purely conceptual point about the linguistic use of the word 'teaching'. But in different cultural contexts 'teaching' takes on an added meaning. Allan Bloom, in *The Closing of the American Mind*, concerned about the impoverishment of education in the American high school and higher education, seeks to re-instate the teacher as the custodian of that cultural tradition whereby our very humanity is enhanced. The teacher

...is, willy-nilly, guided by the awareness, or the divination, that there is a human nature, and that assisting its fulfilment is his task (Bloom, 1987).

And for Dewey (1897, p.32) similarly education is the fundamental method of social progress and reform', and in one extravagant moment he described the teacher as 'the true prophet and usherer in of the kingdom of God'.

Such a concept of teaching goes beyond the basic linguistic usage and sees 'the teacher' in a cultural role within society – the maintainer of a cultural tradition within which the distinctive human capabilities are preserved, passed on and enhanced.

To meet such a responsibility school teachers need to have, not only a deep understanding of those different traditions ('the different voices between the generations of mankind') but also the pedagogical skills to relate them to the modes of understanding, experiences and concerns of the learners themselves. To that end, it was seen to be necessary to

consider the role of the teacher in relation to the actual conduct of research ... problem solving research, shading into development work. (Morrell, 1967, p.22)

Morrell's vision required of the teachers an active role in curriculum development. This in turn required knowledge of the subject or practice to be taught, respect for the experiences and concerns of the learners, exploration with other teachers of pedagogy, and shared systematic enquiry into problems faced.

That 'exploration' and that 'shared systematic enquiry' constitutes the action research which enhances the professional role of the teachers. It requires, in the light of the teachers' interpretation of the aims of education, knowledge of the learner and understanding of the subject matter, the constant deliberation and testing out in the classroom of the tentative solutions to problems met. The word 'deliberation' is important, because the 'ends to be reached', broadly conceived, have to be translated into specific goals for this or that learner in this or that circumstance. The research-based teacher is formulating hypotheses and testing them out in practice. Such hypothesis formulation and testing qualifies for genuine research where it is pursued systematically, most probably in co-operation with other teachers. 'Teacher research' is extensively analysed by John Elliott (1991) in his book on action research. The important point for the sake of the present argument is that such research is essential for the intelligent and practical pursuit of learning and that, far from being an application of the findings of research in sociology, psychology and so on, it is a distinctive kind of research in which ethical questions about aims are integrated with practical proposals and empirical testing of hypotheses.

Relevance of Different Kinds of Philosophical Questions

Philosophy, as I have pointed out, puzzles away at what one means – seeing difficulties which otherwise go unrecognised – 'bewitchment of the intelligence by the use of language'. But the difficulties often lie in the failure to see how what we say and what we claim to be true introduce the problems which have always been the province of philosophers. Philosophical theses in ethics, epistemology, philosophy of mind and political philosophy permeate almost every aspect of research into educational policy, practice and research, though this is seldom recognised. It is the job of the philosopher to make explicit what is implicit in such educational thinking.

Ethics

This has already been illustrated by showing how claims for research to be *educational* takes us into the realm of ethics – into deliberations about what is worth while in the development of persons. So much ‘educational’ research is conducted as though education is not a disputed concept – disputed either because it is used purely descriptively and ignoring the evaluative criticism of it, or because different people have a different ideas about what counts as an educated person. Such disputes have profound effect upon research into learning, both the subject-matter that should be learnt and the process through which it is learnt. If one emphasises one aspect of being a person, namely, the capacity to think systematically and deeply about the arts and the sciences, then one will associate ‘educated’ with the sort of academic elite and the inhabitants of a distinctive culture, and exclude the rest as uneducated and even ineducable. But if one recognises the achievements of practical learning, the rigorous standards whereby practical people engage with the physical and social environments, then one widens the notion of an educated person – and indeed questions the education standards by which academic success is so elevated.

Epistemology or Theory of Knowledge

Research into educational practice and policy instantly raises questions about the nature of knowledge in general and its different forms in particular. Becoming more knowledgeable is clearly important for personal development. But what is this ‘knowledge’ to be acquired? A traditional analysis is that it is a (a) a belief, (b) which is true, and (c) whose claim to truth can be justified. One might have true beliefs, for example, without any good grounds for believing that they are true – and yet pass for ‘knowledge’ in examinations by which learners and their schools are judged. But here lies the problem, for different sorts of belief have different sorts of justification. A true belief in science is thereby logically different from a true belief in history. And many people would question whether it makes sense to speak of ‘true beliefs’ in morals, politics and religion.

If that is the case, can we be justified in teaching these beliefs as if they counted as knowledge? Furthermore, in teaching scientific or historical knowledge as such one would need to teach the underlying justification as to why this is knowledge – the basis of the knowledge claims. To teach science is to enable young people to think and to practise scientifically, to have a grasp of scientific method, and to realise that scientific conclusions are always tentative and open to refinement in the light of further discoveries. One learns through criticism and correction. In teaching, there needs to be room as much for doubt as for certainty.

This applies equally to educational research. Governments talk of evidence-based policy. But too often evidence is confused with proof, and proof is too often seen as leading to certainty. But research can produce no certainty, and evidence can range from the strong to the weak. Decisions have to be made after the weighing of evidence, knowing that there may well be further evidence to show that one got it wrong. Conclusions have to be tentative, drawing on the best evidence which is available at the time.

Philosophy of Mind

Philosophy has traditionally pursued the difficulties which arise in relating the physical world to the mental world. Is a person two substances – that of the mind (where ‘intelligence’ resides) and that of the body (the observable behaviour of which is guided by the intelligence) – or one substance? If two (mind and body), how does the one relate to or affect the other? Research into intelligence (see works by Cyril Burt, for instance), affected profoundly the lives and fortunes of countless children – whether or not ‘intelligence’ was innate, thereby supporting a segregation of intelligent from unintelligent children on entry to secondary education. But let us shift from using nouns to using adverbs. Can a person be enabled to think and to act more intelligently? When you examine this question more closely, you might want to know in what context one is asking about intelligent thinking and actions. The philosopher may be unable to act intelligently when mending his electrics, whereas the electrician could not intelligently dispute the philosopher’s analysis of ‘intelligence’. One can see why, in recognising the diverse ways and contexts in which one might be considered to be acting intelligently, the notion of an innate ‘intelligence’, basically unaffected by nurture and learning (and the object of much ‘educational’ research), becomes increasingly unintelligible as a reason for segregating learners.

Social and Political Philosophy

Central to much educational research is the understanding of other societies, starkly so when researchers from the World Bank, UNESCO or other international agencies (for example, McKinsey’s) conduct research into different countries, make comparisons, conclude what is wrong and make proposals for improvement. But how can the researcher understand a society or culture very different from his or her own - inhabiting a very different cultural and moral understanding of society, relationships and personal development? But the problems here are not

confined to comparative research into different countries. Research into social groups within the 'same society' equally raise these difficulties – for instance, the middle-class and educated male researcher researching the cultural context of the working-class, illiterate, female members of a gangland culture. The 'idea of a social science' (see Winch, 1958) cuts deeply into the nature and validity of educational research.

Conclusion

Educational research is seen in essence to be empirical and thus located in such theoretical disciplines as sociology, psychology, politics, philosophy. Education departments in universities, therefore, contain researchers in these areas who apply their knowledge to educational policy and practice. The argument of this paper, however, is that much of that research, though to be drawn upon where relevant by policy makers and practitioners, is to be criticised for its lack of philosophical thinking in two important respects.

The first is that what often seem to be straightforward empirical matters are, upon investigation, not so. It all depends on what you mean.

The second is that 'what you mean' in education is inseparable from wider ethical issues about what counts as an educated person. Following from this is the need to reconsider what we mean by 'educational thinking' and thus what is distinctively educational research, something engaged in not by disinterested spectators but by the teachers who are striving to educate the next generation.

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SOUTH-EAST ASIA AND COMPARATIVE STUDIES

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ABSTRACT: *This paper shows how important is context in undertaking comparative and international educational research. It begins by showing how early UNESCO Plans for Asia largely ignored this crucial aspect. It then goes on to trace the development of the twin fields of comparative and international education, their purposes and different approaches and areas of inquiry before turning to South-East Asia. By looking at the context of South-east Asia as a region in its own right, with its diversity and complexities, and by highlighting the region's uniqueness, the paper suggests that there has been too little comparative research across the region as a whole. Too much has been concentrated on individual countries or on a couple of countries at a time. The paper ends by making some recommendations for future comparative educational research.*

Introduction

When UNESCO produced the first of its regional plans, the Karachi Plan, in 1960 concerned with the goal of achieving Universal Primary Education (UPE) by 1980, it treated the whole of Asia as one region. There was no attempt to break it down into smaller sub-regions such as the Indian sub-continent or South-East Asia. Targets were set for each individual country to achieve levels of UPE but there was scant regard for the region's diversity, that ranged from poverty-stricken and medieval, Afghanistan, through the very populous countries of India, Indonesia and Pakistan, to the tiny states of Brunei Darussalam and Singapore. Although there was a recognition 'that educational expansion must differ from country to country within the region because of the different stages of overall socio-economic development of individual member states and because of the different levels and capacity of secondary education from whence most of the teachers would come,' (Watson 1981, p.36) the region was nevertheless divided into three groups of countries that were not coterminous. The Asian region, like Africa, Latin America and the Middle East, was largely treated as an entity (see IJED 1981) and the task of achieving UPE was predominantly seen as a matter of setting targets and measuring success or failure through the gathering of statistics for individual countries (Fredericksen, 1981).

Although UPE has been superseded by 'Education for All' (EFA), and more recently by 'Learning for All' (LFA) (World Bank, 2011), and the targets have been enshrined in the Millennium Development Goals, there is still a tendency to see progress in terms of statistics and numbers and to lump large regions together (see, for example, UNESCO 2003/04, 2005, 2006, etc; King & Rose 2005). The individual contexts of each society and education system were, and often still are, largely ignored. As this author observed with regard to the Karachi Plan:

The major drawback of the Karachi Plan, as a plan, lies in the very nature of its being regional. To be effective and realistic planning needs not only to be national, taking into account national aspirations and characteristics, but also regional within a country making allowances for ethnic, religious and linguistic differences. This a regional plan cannot do (Watson, op.cit, p. 48).

There is a danger that large international target setting for educational development still ignores the uniqueness of each and every country. Yet it is the very different contexts that shape the development and rationale behind individual education systems. This was recognised long ago by one of the early pioneers of comparative and international education (Higginson, 1979; 1995; Sadler, 1900; Sislian, 2003). The importance of context for comparative education research has been pointed out even more so in recent times (Crossley & Jarvis, 2001; Crossley & Watson, 2003, pp. 6-7; Crossley, Braodfoot & Schweisfurth, 2007). It is the very diversity – ethnically, culturally, religiously and linguistically- yet with similarities and differences, together with the economic and political differences of the individual countries, that makes South-East Asia such a rich region for comparative studies, as will be shown in a later section of this paper. Before doing so, however, it might be useful to recap briefly on the purpose and importance of comparative and international educational (CIE) studies.

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The Purposes and Growth of Comparative and International Education Studies

This is a well-trodden field and need not, therefore, take up an inordinately large part of this paper. However it is as well to be reminded of why CIE became, and has become, so important, especially since the end of the Second World War. The reader is encouraged to read several recent accounts that have provided good overviews of the development of CIE, albeit from different perspectives and from particular points of view (Crossley & Watson, 2003; Phillips & Schweisfurth, 2006; Manzon, 2011).

Although it is recognised that some form of comparative education took place several centuries ago, what writers have called 'travellers' tales' and the pre-history of comparative education (Brickman, 1960; Kazamias & Massialas, 1965; Trethewey, 1976) it is now generally acknowledged that the study of comparative education as an academic field, as well as the origins of international education, really began in the early part of the nineteenth century.

International education can be traced back to a Frenchman, Cesar Auguste Besset, who, in 1808, called for scholars who were free from national preconceptions to make a study of education systems outside France and to make recommendations for the reform of the French education system. This coincided with the establishment of the Napoleonic Code and the Universite de France, a unified education system spreading from the kindergarten to university level. As we shall see reform of an education system, as a result of looking elsewhere, has always been one of the main justifications for both comparative and international education.

Comparative education, on the other hand, originated with another Frenchman, Marc-Antoine Jullien. In 1817 he proposed that governments should gather statistics on different aspects of their education systems for comparative purposes (Jullien, 1817). Such information would include data on student enrolments at different levels of their education systems, educational finance and expenditures, numbers of teachers and their qualifications, and so on, in order 'to deduce true principles and determined routes so that education would be transformed into an almost positive science' (cited in Fraser, 1964, p.20).

Comparative and international education not only had different roots but, for the best part of a couple of centuries, they led to different approaches to gathering information as well as to the use of their findings and knowledge. Students, and others, have often been confused by the semantics and terminology used in these two branches of education. In order to help clarify the position Epstein (1992, 1994) and Wilson (1994, 2003) tried to unravel both the roots and the different uses of these twin educational 'fields,' and more recently McGrath (2009) has added his observations about the ambiguities and overlaps between the two. Essentially, until relatively recently, comparative education was seen as an academic, theoretical and interdisciplinary activity concerned with examining problems and issues in education from an international perspective, mainly in industrialised and 'advanced' societies. It sought to answer the questions of *why* education systems and processes differed, *what* were the causes that had led to education systems to develop as they had done, and *how* wider social, economic, cultural and political forces impinged upon, shaped and influenced the underpinning philosophy of education as well as the curriculum and practicalities in the classroom. A series of books entitled *Education, Culture and Politics in...* appeared in the 1970s to highlight this approach (e.g. Halls, 1976; Hearnden, 1976; King, 1976).

International education, on the other hand, was much more concerned with policy, planning and practical ways to improve the education systems of the 'developing countries.' During the 1960s and 1970s, as the European powers gradually relinquished control over their colonies in Africa, Asia and the Pacific region and as the focus of attention went towards neo colonialism and educational dependency (Altbach & Kelly, 1978; Carnoy, 1974; Hayter, 1971; Watson, 1984/2012) the two 'disciplines' became blurred and there was a gradual merging of the two into one overarching 'field,' comparative and international education (CIE). This was shown most clearly in Britain and the USA with the creation of the North American Comparative and International Education Society (CIES) in the 1960s and the moves away from a Comparative Education Society in Europe (British Section) through the British Comparative and International Education Society (BCIES) to the British Association of International and Comparative Education (BAICE) (Crossley, Watson & Sutherland, 2007; Crossley & Watson, 2011; Watson & King, 1991). Within the historical context of South-East Asia where all the countries, with the exception of Thailand, were under some form of European colonial rule, and where they have been moving from economically underdeveloped, (Low Income Countries), to developing, (Middle Income Countries), to advanced, (High Income Countries) it is an ideal region for researchers to use the methodologies of both 'fields.'

As has been pointed out by several scholars there can be no general theory or hypothesis without some form of comparison nor can there be any sound intellectual activity without comparison. To give but three examples: Farrell (1979, p.1) argued that,

...there can be no generalising scientific study of education which is not the comparative study of education.

Raivola (1985, p.261) went even further by arguing that no hypothesis can be developed from one study alone.

'All research that seeks to offer general explanations must be comparative.' Finally Phillips (1999, p.15) makes the point that

It is, after all, the very nature of intellectual activity to make comparisons. Indeed it can be argued that only by making comparisons can we properly defend our position on most questions of importance which require the making of judgment.

It is not the intention here to enter the minefield of the different methodologies and approaches that have so bedevilled CIE for decades. However it is worth pointing out that there is no single agreed method used for studies in CIE. Some early writers (Kandel, 1933; Sadler, 1900) were concerned with historical antecedents; others such as Hans (1964) and Mallinson (1975) were concerned with culture and national characteristics as shaping education, a theme developed by Bereday (1964) and King (1979). Holmes (1965, 1981) became obsessed with solving problems in education and was an early pioneer of the positivistic approach of collecting as much data as possible, a theme followed by Noah and Eckstein (1969) who sought to develop a scientific approach to CIE. As the 1960s developed and saw the acceleration of de-colonisation the economic aspects of education attracted considerable attention and they have tended to dominate the thinking behind the World Bank's reports on education and development. One of the best analyses of the qualitative/quantitative debate came as a result of Crossley and Vulliamy's (1997) work on the Pacific region. The justifications for undertaking CIE, however, have remained constant. Apart from satisfying intellectual curiosity the reform of an education system as a result of studying another, together with trying to improve policy and practice, have always been seen as key purposes of CIE. In other words CIE should always seek to understand and explain situations and it should aim to inform policy makers.

What should researchers be comparing? The nation state, the administrative structure, different levels of the formal system, the curriculum, teacher training, universities, non- formal aspects of education (e.g. Brock, 2011), classrooms and the interaction between teachers and students, examinations and student achievement, the economic benefits of different types of education, the impact of political ideology, policies on such things as the language of instruction, teacher recruitment or private schooling have all been subject to CIE scrutiny and could all be usefully explored within the context of South East Asia. Should what we are comparing be in one historical timeframe or is it possible to use comparisons across different historic periods as Phillips (1994) has argued? Should the unit of analysis be the nation state, as has traditionally been the case, or should it be a smaller unit, such as regions or areas within a given country? Or should it increasingly be seeking to identify trends in larger regions such as the Asia Pacific region or South- East Asia, especially the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN) group of countries? There are no definite parameters for CIE research. As Thomas (1998, p.1) observed some years ago:

In its most inclusive sense, comparative education refers to inspecting two or more educational entities or events in order to discover how and why they are alike and different. An educational entity in this context means any person, group or organisation associated with learning and teaching. An event is an activity concerned with promoting learning.

This idea that CIE can embrace any educational activity was developed further by Bray and Thomas (1995) when, in a seminal paper in the *Harvard Educational Review*, they portrayed such thinking in a multilevel diagram and analysis. Their framework takes seven Geographic/Locational levels; seven Non-locational Demographic groups; and seven Aspects of Education and Society. The first group moved downwards from World Regions/Continents, through Countries, States/Provinces, to Districts, Schools, Classrooms and finally to Individual Pupils. In other words, CIE has a role to look at anything from the global through to the local, from school systems through to individual classrooms and to the individuals within them. The danger is that it can become too all-embracing. The Nonlocational Demographic Groups range from ethnic, age related, gender, religious and other groups to entire populations. These demographic entities should resonate with anyone who has any knowledge or understanding of South-East Asia. Certainly all the above distinctions and areas of inquiry can usefully be applied to South-East Asia. It is a distinct sub-region within a larger Asian region. It is made up of a variety of political entities, most with distinct ethnic and linguistic groups. There are differing levels of development both within and between the countries of the region. One common feature is that, with the exception of Thailand, they were all colonised. These aspects will be expanded in the following section. The Education and Society aspects covered by Bray and Thomas – curriculum, teaching methods, educational finance, management structures, political change and the labour market- can apply to any country or region. Surprisingly two very obvious omissions from their lists are the urban-rural divide and the growth of private schooling, both of which are important in the context of South-East Asia.

The South-East Asian Context

One further common feature that unites all the countries of the region is their very diversity. *Geographically* there are great variations. While most of the countries are on the Asian landmass somewhere between a quarter

and a third of the region is covered by water. The two largest countries in terms of size and populations, Indonesia and the Philippines, are large archipelagos which in turn create their own problems, especially in terms of administration and providing educational equality. Because they are also mountainous, including several volcanoes, it means access to schools can prove somewhat difficult. In all the countries, except for the city-state of Singapore and Timor Leste, there are considerable disparities between a few major cities, such as Bangkok, Rangoon, Ho Chi Minh City, Jakarta and Jogjakarta, Kuala Lumpur and Manila, and the rural hinterlands. These can vary from rice growing paddy field areas to sizeable teak forests and rubber and other plantations to areas where subsistence farming and slash and burn agriculture are the norm. It is in the latter areas that can be found many of the indigenous tribal peoples. The disparities alluded to can be in terms of income, employment opportunities, housing and educational provision. Even within apparently affluent and Westernised cities there are appalling slums sitting side by side with the offices of international organisations.

Economically, also, there is considerable diversity. This in turn implies differing standards of educational provision. At one extreme Singapore and Brunei Darussalam are classified as High Income Countries. At the other, Cambodia, Laos and Myanmar [Burma] are classified as Low Income Countries. In between are Malaysia, a High Middle Income Country with the aspiration to become a High Income Country by 2020, and Indonesia, the Philippines, Thailand and Vietnam, all of which are classified as Lower Middle Income Countries (World Bank, 2010). Malaysia's ranking is slightly distorted by the fact that Peninsular Malaysia has a much higher standard of living than do Sabah and Sarawak.

Undoubtedly modern South-East Asia has been shaped by its interaction with the European colonial powers. While the colonial legacy is not as marked as it has been in Africa and Latin America it has nevertheless had a profound impact in several aspects. For one thing it led to clearly demarcated national boundaries. The Indo-China countries of Cambodia and Laos owe their very existence to French involvement, though Osborne (1987, pp.67-8) has suggested that Vietnam was shaped more by geography than the French. French cultural and gastronomic influence is still strongly felt. It was Spanish, and later American, control of the Philippines that led to the creation of a country out of a disparate archipelago and led to the dominant place of Roman Catholicism though the cultural influence of the USA is probably just as strong. Thailand managed to maintain its independence, and secure its borders, by the astuteness of the Thai kings, especially king Chukalongkorn, in playing off the French and British colonial authorities (Wyatt, 1984). Nevertheless British influence on the early development of the Thai education system in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries was considerable (Watson, 1980). Since the Second World War, however, American cultural influence has profoundly touched Thai society, especially in metropolitan Bangkok.

The rivalry of the Portuguese, Dutch and British was to shape not only Malaysia and Singapore but also Brunei Darussalam and Indonesia. European penetration first began when Portugal seized Malacca in 1511 and gained a foothold on the Malayan Peninsular. Their influence was soon surpassed by the rivalry between the Dutch and English East India Companies battling for control of the valuable spice trade in the East Indies, which became known as Indonesia from the seventeenth century onwards (Milton, 1999). Only by the late nineteenth century was Dutch supremacy assured, but by then the British had established themselves as dominant in Burma, Malaya, Singapore and Brunei Darussalam, while the Portuguese had moved on to Timor and Macau. Although their primary interest was economic the establishment of protectorates enabled the British not only to trade but also to shape the economic, political and ethnic make up of those countries. Their legacy was very much the school system, the bureaucracy, ethnic pluralism, and the English language. One other lasting legacy was that by encouraging the work of mission organisations, especially in schools, all the colonial powers helped Christianity gain a foothold in South-East Asia. While the role of Christian mission schools has had a positive effect in most countries of the region (e.g. Watson, 1982, 1983.) there has been a backlash against Christianity in Laos and Vietnam, Myanmar, and in parts of Indonesia where many Christians find themselves facing persecution and local hostility. On the other hand, in the Philippines, with the exception of the predominantly Muslim Mindanao where a secessionist insurgency has been simmering for many years in Timor-Leste and Singapore, Christianity has a key role to play in society.

In nearly all the South-East Asian countries *religious diversity* is clear to see and predates any Western involvement in the region so that the Christianity brought in by the West was often added on to existing religious beliefs. For example animism and spirit worship are common in rural and mountainous regions, though even in urban Bangkok it is not uncommon to see spirit houses in the gardens of many houses, even those of the affluent and well educated. Confucianism, and to a lesser extent Taoism, were brought in by Chinese migrating from southern China; Hinduism and Buddhism spread across from India, Nepal and Sri Lanka [formerly Ceylon]; while Islam spread as a result of trade from East Africa and the Middle East. Today Indonesia, Malaysia and Brunei Darussalam are predominantly Muslim, Myanmar, Thailand, Cambodia, Laos and Vietnam are predominantly Buddhist, though of differing schools, while Hinduism can be found in parts of Malaysia and Singapore.

Because western involvement was to some extent relatively superficial and hardly penetrated the hinterlands of the various colonies, and because it largely interacted with urban educated elites, and because local languages

were still widely spoken, an indigenous society and culture, with roots in the countryside, as opposed to the cities, was allowed to continue alongside the colonial society. The result was that, at the end of the Second World War, wars of independence and anti-colonial revolutions were able to generate so much support so quickly and the re-establishment of the old colonial order proved to be so difficult (Jeffrey, 1981).

In the light of the above observations it is worth quoting Osborne's (1987, p.63) summarisation of the European impact on the region, especially on Vietnam:

In some aspects of history the European role was vital in determining developments of far-reaching importance. The establishment of international boundaries in the Southeast Asian region was one such case. But in other aspects of life the part played by the Europeans was much less important than it was once thought to have been. French officials in Vietnam, for instance, were often depicted in histories of that country, written before the Second World War and by their countrymen, as presiding over the implantation of French culture among the Vietnamese population. The error of such a view was most clearly revealed in the extent to which Vietnamese revolutionaries were able to strengthen their capacities to challenge the French through the promotion of literacy in the Vietnamese language. French language and culture, all French claims to the contrary, never supplanted the indigenous values and the indigenous language.

This latter point still holds despite Kelly's (2000) claim that the French colonial authorities tried to enforce French dominance through language, the courts of law and the school curriculum more ruthlessly than any other colonial power.

Although in recent years there have been moves towards democratic forms of government in most of the South-East Asian countries, including most recently in Myanmar, *politically* there has been great variation in styles of government. Brunei Darussalam, Malaysia and Thailand are constitutional monarchies though Thailand has had several periods of military rule. Indonesia and Timor-Leste have moved from dictatorship to republican forms of government, ostensibly democratic. Myanmar is still under military rule, albeit with a semblance of democratic elections. Cambodia, Laos and North Vietnam were all under communist rule following the end of colonialism. Only Laos, officially the Lao People's Democratic Republic, remains under a communist government; the other two have embraced both capitalism and democracy. The Philippines and Singapore are democratic republics.

Perhaps the most striking feature about South-East Asia, however, is the *ethnic and linguistic pluralism* of the region. It is possibly one of the most ethnically complex regions in the world. This came about as a result of a mixture of trade, migration, colonialism and, more recently, globalisation. Many different ethnic groups migrated from southern China and the Himalayan region over the centuries and even now, where the borders are porous, as between Myanmar and Thailand and Thailand and China various tribal ethnic groups criss-cross the borders. The Thais originated in Yunnan in southern China and migrated south into what are now Thailand, Laos and Cambodia. Some form of the Thai language can be found in all these countries. Some Chinese also migrated this way but their presence in nearly all countries of the region came about as a result of trade and the stability provided by the European colonialists. The result, even now, is that

Despite living in the region for more than a hundred years, ethnic Chinese are still regarded with fear and suspicion by most Southeast Asian governments, partly because of their entrepreneurial success (MRG, 1997, p.593).

Some research has been done to show how different governments have used their education and language policies to discriminate against their Chinese minorities (Watson, 1976a, 1976b) but more needs to be undertaken in the light of renewed Chinese economic and political assertiveness since the beginning of the twenty-first century.

The presence of sizeable Indian communities, mostly of Tamil origin, in the plantations of Malaysia and in Singapore, for example, is largely because they were brought across as indentured labour by the British colonial authorities (Santhiram, 1999). Based on the work of the British Minority Rights Group and the American Summer Institute of Linguistics it would appear that there are at least 875 ethnic groups within the South-East Asian region with 975 known languages (Grimes, 2000; MRG, 1997; Watson, 2011, pp. 291-292).

From all of the above points the very least that can be said about South-East Asia is that it is a region full of complexity, diversity, difference, economic and political variation, and educational opportunity. It is a kaleidoscope of cultures, religions and languages. It is a region full of potential for CIE and it is this to which we shall now turn.

Areas for Comparative Educational Research

This paper has so far discussed the importance of context and the dangers of cultural-and educational-borrowing. It has looked at the growth and distinctiveness of both comparative and international education and the growing merger of the twin fields into one- CIE. It has explored the different ways in which CIE can be undertaken and the potential areas for research and study. Above all it has looked at the diversity and complexity of the region

known as South-East Asia. In this concluding section it will identify a few of what the author considers are key areas for more intense CIE research in the future.

Although the nation state has always been seen as an essential starting point for CIE it is surprising how little work has been done on comparing and contrasting the countries of South-East Asia. There have been numerous case studies, such as individual government's educational reports, and articles in Pergamon Press's International Encyclopaedia of Education, but there have been remarkably few works that have examined the region as a whole. Postlethwaite and Thomas (1980) was one of the few books that looked systematically at the education systems across the whole of South-East Asia, while Wong and Gwee (1972) did the same for Malaysia and Singapore. A more recent work by Brock and Symaco (2011) has brought together an eclectic mix of chapters on the different countries of the region but without a coherent overarching narrative pulling them all together. It would be exciting if a truly CIE piece could be done comparing and contrasting the education systems, policies and practices throughout the region in a more standardised format.

A recent work (Ho, 2009) explored the contrasting philosophies of the East with those of the West to show what lessons can be learnt. This approach could provide a useful springboard for examining and contrasting the assumptions behind the curricula in the ASEAN countries, behind the teacher-student relationship and behind the teacher-parent relationship. Since at least three of the region's countries have a specific underlying philosophy that underpins their education the origins and purposes of these philosophies, together with how they are worked out in practice, could also prove an interesting and informative area for research. Indonesia has its *Pancasila*, dating back to 1928; Malaysia has its *Rukunegara*, dating back to the late 1970s; and Brunei Darussalam has its *Malayu Islam Beraja (MJB)* (Saxena, 2007). It is an interesting fact that all three countries are Islamic. Is there some reason for this? How do these 'philosophies' compare and contrast? How successful are they? Have they bred cynicism or are they largely accepted?

Inevitably educational policies that embrace linguistic and ethnic pluralism in a region as diverse as South-East Asia provide rich pickings and are fertile ground for CIE. Unfortunately most of the research in this area has tended to be concentrated on individual countries and has been undertaken by linguists rather than by comparative educationists (e.g. Tsui & Tollefson 2007). An interesting, and perhaps vitally important area for research regarding language policy, is that of comparing students' academic achievements where they have been educated in their mother tongue with students who have been taught through a language that is not their mother tongue. Brock-Utne (2010, 2011) has been a long time advocate for mother tongue teaching, arguing, rightly in my view, that students who are forced to learn through a foreign, or unfamiliar, language under perform academically simply because they cannot grasp concepts in a foreign language, let alone express themselves. This in turn acts as a drain both on individual development as well as economic development. While much of Brock-Utne's work has been in Africa, and while the use of colonial languages are not so acute in South-East Asia, her underlying argument applies just as much to many of the ethnic groups in South-East Asia.

In an age of global uncertainty and shifting economic power from East to West (Ferguson, 2010), especially notable with the rise of China and the decline of the USA and Europe, there are at least three further areas for fertile research. These are the impact of education on employment; the place of, and attitudes towards, the local Chinese communities; and the place of private schooling in an increasingly competitive world. Work has been done on the former with regard to the Philippines and Malaysia (Symaco, 2009, 2011), and there have been numerous studies of the impact of education on overall development in different parts of the world, but more critical analyses of education's role in the development of South-East Asia as a whole could prove invaluable. There have also been historical studies made of the place of the Chinese communities in certain countries (e.g. Watson, 1976b) but with the anxiety concerning the impact of a resurgent China on the region more up to date work in this area can only be beneficial. As for the place of private schooling in the region Bray (1999, 2006, 2009) and Bray and Bunly (2005) have begun to lift the lid on what is happening but again there is scope for many more similar studies.

The above are by no means intended to be definitive. Other areas for comparative research that spring to mind for South-East Asia are the comparison of academic results along both ethnic and gender lines; the rural-urban divide; the place of non-formal education in society; educational provision in the conflict zones of Myanmar, southern Philippines (Mindanao), parts of Indonesia and southern Thailand. Finally what are the effects of religious schooling? How do these schools fit into modern society? Again there are differing examples- monastic schools, temple schools and madrasahs all offer some form of basic education outside the state system. Some of these studies could be across different historical periods; most need to be contemporary with an intention of informing policy makers in government.

Conclusion

This paper has sought to show that a region like South-East Asia provides ample scope for CIE researchers to break new ground or to update older research. It has stressed the need to recognise the national and local contexts of any research. It has looked at the growth of CIE and the potential areas for undertaking comparative educational

research and in looking at the specifics of South-East Asia it has tried to make suggestions for new work to be undertaken. Above all it has tried to show that CIE is not only about EFA or education for economic development; it is as much concerned with philosophy, history, culture and language and all that makes any society unique.

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HIGHER EDUCATION IN THE PHILIPPINES AND MALAYSIA: THE LEARNING REGION IN THE AGE OF KNOWLEDGE-BASED SOCIETIES

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ABSTRACT: *In the context of the developing world, the notion of the knowledge society has elicited a response especially among higher education institutions (HEIs) and the role of this sector in developing human resources that are able to adapt and compete in such a society has led to the recognition of the government. In the case of the Philippines and Malaysia, for the country to be 'knowledge-economy ready', its HEIs must embrace and facilitate a technology-based orientation. This paper will look at the role of higher education in both the Philippines and Malaysia in relation to the requirements of the 'knowledge-based' driven economy and how this sector responds and adapts to the challenging call to 'modernise' in order to perform and maximise its contribution to such objectives. Issues relating to this trend are also examined.*

Introduction

The idea of the 'knowledge society' is increasingly becoming widespread in the move towards globalisation and internationalisation. The function played by the university is vitally important in moving towards - i.e., creating - the core of what this modern society ought to be. The systematic move towards the knowledge-based society is dependent on the quality of education systems, higher education specifically (Enders, 1999, Tilak, 2002). One of the main functions of the university is to produce a labour force that is receptive to the ever-changing functions in which it is immersed. At the same time the university is presumed to maintain its function to provide, create and disseminate theoretical knowledge needed for the scientific support of modernising changes in these situations. In short, the increasing formation and production of both theoretical and practical knowledge through creative research, technological diffusion and innovation are integral in the knowledge-based society. The ability to create such ideas and knowledge fuels development, and it has been argued that a country's productivity and growth are mirrored now, more than ever, through its human resources rather than its natural resources. The ability to "create new knowledge and ideas and to incorporate them into equipment and people" is what is significant now (David & Foray, 2002, p.9).

In the context of the developing world, the notion of the knowledge society has elicited a response especially among higher education institutions (HEIs), and the role of this sector in developing human resources that are able to adapt and compete in such a society has led to the recognition by the government, in the case of the Philippines and Malaysia, that for the country to be "knowledge-economy ready," its HEIs must embrace and facilitate a technology-based orientation. The rise in promoting courses in the sciences and in engineering, which are deemed to be crucial in that kind of economy, and decreasing the "digital divide" by creating greater access to the Internet among the populace are stressed in both countries' government development plans. Similarly in literature, the university creates a learning region where knowledge repositories and increased knowledge spill-over highlight the contribution of such a region to socio-economic development, and certainly stresses the increasingly important role of the university in attaining a country's economic advancement. The economic agglomeration as defined by the New Economic Geography and New Growth theories in regional convergence reveals the function of universities in this regard through the generation of such learning regions. The function of higher education institutions in *responding* to the needs of the knowledge economy (through generation of highly skilled human resource) and at the same time producing knowledge repositories that at a basic level advances the *creation* of the knowledge economy gives the universities a unique creative role in the knowledge society. As the growing trend to modernise and adapt to the needs of increasing globalisation and internationalisation of services may compel developing

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countries to gear towards this call for modernisation, issues such as proper financial allocation, inequity and, problems to access to such services as pertinent to peripheral areas are present. This paper will look at the role of higher education in both the Philippines and Malaysia in relation to the requirements of the 'knowledge-based' driven economy and how this sector responds and adapts to the challenging call to 'modernise' in order to perform and maximise its contribution to such objectives. Issues relating to this trend are also examined. This study involves both documentary (primary and secondary) and empirical research, as well as contextual studies necessary to situate the Philippines and Malaysia accurately in their regional and global setting. Documentary sources include policy-planning sources from the Philippine and Malaysian authorities and local agencies. Empirical research, from interviews in institutions and from central authorities, maintains relevance of the issues mentioned.

Regional Convergence: New Economic Geography and New Growth Theory

The theory of the New Economic Geography centres on a variant of one fundamental question, namely, the question of what factors have influenced or continue to influence the geographical distribution of economic activities (Schmutzler, 1999). As Schmutzler goes on to clarify, this concept considers economic agglomeration to be unrelated to the natural reserve of an area. The ascendancy of particular areas is in fact dependent on other factors, most often through 'self-reinforcing' activities, including the generally balanced play of dynamics between an industry and its suppliers and customers, and interactions between different markets. The basic underlying directive of the New Economic Geography according to Schmutzler, is that economic agglomeration tends to occur in areas where there are increasing returns to scale, with transport costs playing an important role; locations that are closer to both the market and to suppliers are considered more desirable, other things being equal. This concentration of economic activities tends to attract factors of production, and a condensed production profile in an area leads to a more stable base for workers. In effect, the focus of the labour market in one particular area results in higher consumption of goods, which in turn leads to a rise in profits for producers. The dominance of production in a certain region therefore signifies regional dominance, which in turn attracts firms to relocate there, thus revealing a positive interplay between production and consumption, which results in what is known as 'clustering' in the terminology of economic geography.

However, the importance of locational proximity is countered by the concept of 'relational proximity', which focuses on agglomeration or "communities" of practices and asserts that if the organisational or 'virtual community' (Gertler, 2003) is formidable enough, then the transfer of knowledge across all geographical dimensions is possible. Despite this contention, there is an increasing focus in the 'New Economic Geography' and the relation it bears to higher educational institutions, regional development and the development of knowledge creation and diffusion (Clark, et al., 2000; Krugman, 1998). The production, acquisition and transfer of knowledge are considered crucial in order that industries remain competitive in the era of the global market. This model of the economy's 'internal structure' related to the external takes into account the issue created by "distributed organisations" (Gertler, 2003), and the heavy concentration of organisations in one area, with fewer in another, that is to say, spatial disparities.

The significance of technological change and human capital is on the one hand emphasised by 'New Growth' theories, which veer away from neoclassical models by considering such factors (technological change and human capital) as endogenous to the production function. 'New Growth' theories emphasise the significance of human resource (i.e., manpower) and modernisation as exemplified through technological change in development. Applying this notion to the university's contribution in terms of development can be connected to the concept of knowledge-based economies. The term 'knowledge capitalism', which emerges from the idea of knowledge-based economies, are characterised by: (a) economics of abundance; (b) the annihilation of distance; (c) de-territorialisation of the state; and (d) investment in human capital (Olssen & Peters, 2005). The further shift from traditional economies to more dynamic relationships between the government, university and industry is vital in order to sustain the needs and demands of the knowledge society (Burton-Jones, 1999; OECD, 1996).

In addition to the basic underlying presumption of higher education's role in developing human capital and new knowledge is shown by the New Growth theory, which also looks at the possibilities of other education-externalities related to economic growth. The increasing importance of science and technology in policies points to the rising agreement on macroeconomics of 'new growth' (Olssen & Peters, 2005). As explained by Lucas (1988) and Romer (1994), the influence of technological change in economic advancement is significant. The role of the university in generating this technological change and advancement as seen through R & D (Research and Development) activities and patent generation, among others, is also highlighted through higher education's contribution to development.

Despite the considerable contribution of the knowledge-based society, the problem of access to such 'knowledge' and 'information' is a major point to consider. The implication of sustaining different levels of knowledge transfers means the delivering of differential developmental patterns in different levels of society. Knowledge gaps can therefore block/stultifies growth and advancement in poorer societies. As typified by the 'digital divide', this disparity between core and peripheral societies and countries is seen to worsen due to the

inability of poorer communities to access technological knowledge, skills and information. Growth areas are often characterised by the position of industries relevant to this theme of modernisation that exclude people who are not equipped with the proper training to adapt according to the demands of the market. Jobs are available to individuals who are already in that 'growth area' and those who already have relevant education qualifications. In the perception of neo-exclusions in government policies, the threat of discriminating between groups of people such as the included (those who are 'properly' trained) and excluded (those with less qualifications for 'getting into' the 'growth area') is present. Obviously, in peripheral societies where exclusion from certain aspects of modern development is expected, it is all the more presumed that recognised 'information and technology' together with contemporary 'communication networks' do not counteract this state of segregation (Hayrinen-Alestalo, 2001), and may even intensify it.

As drawn above in rough, empirics on regional convergence offer various theoretical accounts in explaining regional growth and development, and New Growth or Endogenous Growth theorists contribute substantially in this endeavor:

...key factors stressed by endogenous growth theory--increasing returns, human capital and technology--develop unevenly across the space economy and are locally and regionally differentiated. Endogenous growth theory undoubtedly offers some possible explanations of global-local interactions and the dynamics of regional growth, most of which revolve around these key factors (Martin & Sunley, 1998, p. 220).

Nonetheless, limitations to this theory point to its failure to take into consideration "socio-institutional contexts" of regional development. Moreover, it has failed to regard geography and place as considerably significant in regional convergence (Martin, 1999; Martin & Sunley, 1998).

The University and the Learning Region

The creation of knowledge and human capital formation are highlighted by Goldstein et al., (1995) as among the outputs of the university that contribute to socio-economic advancement. The university's function in the creation of knowledge has been its *raison d'être* since its foundation during the Middle Ages, and even before. This is further highlighted in the university's relationship with 'industry' as the national undertaking embracing all human production that designates the university as the head of the supply chain --in 'industry' as above defined-- committed to the provision of knowledge needed by such 'industry' (Goddard, 1997, p.9). Successful regions are said to be characterised by "institutional thickness" (Amin & Thrift, 1994) that exhibit the sharing of information and expertise among institutions leading to collaborative progress. On the basis of this idea, the university's substantial role in such regions is recognised. Learning regions may be defined as areas where universities play a major function in socio-economic development. These academic institutions, based in the community, serve as knowledge repositories and generators, often indirectly through their graduates and retired professors, and these people's projects and involvement in various institutions and business companies. Of course, there in the immediate scene the university generates jobs by giving people the skills needed in industry. The university as a learning environment imparts skills that allow all kinds of industries in the spectrum of the modern world to remain competitive in their fields. The transfer of existing knowledge and 'know-how' through the professional development of individuals including those who could provide tactical analysis and leadership within the local community is among a university's functions (Goddard, 1997).

Boucher et al. (2003, p. 889) further list the contributions of universities to their locale. The first role of a university as an economic contributor is played by it as an employer, payer of wages and salaries, buyer of products and services from local firms, and attractor of students who spend money in the regional economy. 'Conscription' of students has been 'internationalised' by universities who try to attract foreign students with the promise of providing quality education. The second role, and to which this article centres on, includes using the knowledge generated in and belonging to the university to obtain patents, set up spin-off companies, or market the knowledge as 'technology transfer' to existing companies, to individuals, or to countries. The rise in modernisation coupled by the trend of 'knowledge economies' highlights the significance of regional convergence in development as can be provided for by universities. The social development function role of the university, on the other hand, which is of course fundamental, is its role as an educator and its 'custodianship' of students. It imparts to them not only the aptitudes required by industries in the region, but possibly the qualifications that would enable them to be accepted by national institutions of learning that would give them further competence for intellectual, artistic, or technological achievements that would benefit the whole nation or perhaps all of mankind. This role of the university, as will be discussed further, also includes its participation as an institutional 'player' with other 'players' in the region (e.g., research firms and industries) in networks of learning, innovation and governance. In a broader local sense, universities and others HEIs have a very significant 'multiplier effect' in terms of a wide range of

employment from technicians through secretaries to cleaners and food suppliers. This is akin to the clustering of suppliers of components for a large manufacturing facility.

The common propositions of the learning region are further highlighted by MacKinnon et al. (2002). Since learning regions through the universities in them are believed to be repositories of knowledge for tacit, specialised skills which drive a region to substantial advantages, this onus on the university is unavoidable. It requires it to infuse in its development an “evolutionary ethic” to enable it to perform its role as “centre of knowledge and of progress in learning” in its region, since its relationship with industries in the region must be a symbiotic one—it provides industries with competent human resources, and industries come to that region, with its offering of jobs and possibly national recognition as a good place for branches, research, or total resettlement. There is a tacit understanding that the knowledge and intellectual resources of the region will keep pace with the wider world in respect of progress in science, technology, and human knowledge in general, for present-day reliance on computer resources are still no substitute for direct human contacts with people in the knowledge and technology fields.

MacKinnon et al. (2002) further claims that geographical proximity to the source of knowledge and the importance of transmitting tacit knowledge through interpersonal relations tend to bring together groups of specialists and people in regional industries, this ‘clustering’ exemplifies in application the theory of New Economic Geography in relation to higher education institutions. Through their employment they have specialised knowledge, expertise, or interests in particular areas of knowledge and technology, bringing them together in the learning region. This in turn provides facilities and an atmosphere where embedded learning and the pursuit of special scientific knowledge, innovation, and experimentation are in the culture and accessible. Social relations are fostered between the said industries and academe. As a natural consequence this, in turn, indirectly brings about socio-economic development in the community through the provision of jobs to the populace traceable to the coordination between industry and academe to respect and attend to, within their respective roles and responsibilities, the needs of the other. Obviously, a collective learning process is advanced through the situation described. This learning process has been defined as “a cumulative learning process that takes place over time among a community of firms in a locality” (MacKinnon et al. 2002, p.301).

This definition well describes the situation above drawn in rough, provided that ‘firms’ is understood to include the ‘centres of learning’ in the locality—the university and other relevant bodies. Collective learning in the process becomes a public good such that the knowledge generated is not limited to the direct producers who benefit from the knowledge and the insights gained, the ‘feedback’ from students and academic researchers, the inspiration and motivation attendant to success. The knowledge transmitted directly or indirectly by the university disseminated to the public formally and informally through publication, teaching, networking and other forms of communication. Advancement is thus seen when less developed regions divide themselves into learning regions.

Commercialisation of University Findings with Technology Relevance

The link between higher education and instrumentality did not originate in modern times. However, interest in this link has necessarily increased at the turn of the millennium because of rapid revolutionary progress in technology related to university courses in the ‘pure sciences’ (theoretical mathematics and physics) and ‘applied sciences’ (engineering, medicine, computer science, among others) as exemplified by the New Growth theories as aforementioned. Nelson and Phelps (1966) suggested long ago in a model that in a progressive economy, education has a positive recompense only if through technology it continuously improves. They suggested that the causal relation between higher education and technological advances and the diffusion of such advances is shown by the fact that investment in human capital, through investment in education, equips workers and managers with skills and knowledge necessary for innovation. External expectations for universities to generate development in the sciences and related fields and for them to obtain income through their own activities have made the universities necessary ‘players’ and therefore stakeholders in technology transfers, mainly through the take-up of university research results in the production of industrial or commercial facilities of goods or the improvement of such. There is increasing recognition of the university’s role in the production of such facilities or goods needed in industry. That is to say, transferring ‘university research based’ findings to industry (Parker & Zilberman, 1993; Powers & McDougall, 2003). Hence in recent times there has arisen the phenomenon of universities that make use of entrepreneurial ventures or projects on the side, sometimes setting up ‘spin offs’ through university-owned companies and getting involved in patents, manufacture of things patented directly or indirectly, and licensing of patents to companies. In that way, the university goes into venture capitalism. As Powers and McDougall (2003) pointed out, the ‘framing –out’ of licenses possibly accompanied with a stake equity contribution, have in many cases resulted in considerable positive returns even if only a few firms in the university’s portfolio go public through distribution outlets of trade (or ‘market’) exchanges.

The said university-industry link is characteristic of the learning regions in a country. Marshall (1920) gave three grounds for the geographical preference of industries for localisation, and these are: (1) the aggregate demand for specialised labour; (2) the development of specialised intermediate goods industries, and (3) knowledge spill overs

among firms in an industry where they are physically proximate to each other. Economic geography plays a major role in the concept: knowledge spill overs which are said to be geographically bounded and often confined within a spatial range to the knowledge source (Audretsch & Lehmann 2005). Knowledge spill-overs from universities, however, do not result in costless transfers across geographical regions. It is implied that proximity to the knowledge source, in this case the university, plays a significant role in the ease of access to such (Audretsch & Lehmann, 2005), as well as its application. As a consequence, industries are attracted to localities where an active knowledge-producing university is based, such as is maintained by the learning region premise. Examples of this are the science industry parks that are now found on or near the campuses of many universities. Spill overs of academic research and human resources in terms of highly trained, educated students and professors, and knowledge left non-viable but showing promise for further development or revision, contribute to technological advancement.

The acquisition of patents by universities also serves as a means to safeguard future potential by signaling to the industry the intention of such institutions to venture into further research possibly leading to commercialisation. This in effect may attract more established firms to provide material assistance for managing the development and refinement of the technology. From the perspective of venture capitalists, a company with a particular management expertise may be interested to invest, and thus have greater assurance in obtaining, possibly at a premium price, a license to such patented technology (Powers & McDougall 2003). In such an arrangement, the university would not only retain the right to develop or refine the knowledge related to the technological innovation, but also investment from the rest of the industry and the commercialisation of the innovation. If its worth to industry and commerce is validated, it would result in job formation, for the demand for skilled workers for start-up companies would of course increase.

The following sections will look at the national contexts of the tertiary sectors of the Philippines and Malaysia in response to the increasing call to 'modernise' in the knowledge society. Similarly, the knowledge environment as parallel to the learning region as defined above as contributed and 'aimed for' by higher education institutions in attaining regional convergence is also discussed. However, issues surrounding toward such moves in both countries are also apparent.

Labour Force and the Knowledge- Based Society in the Philippines and Malaysia

Malaysia's goal of becoming a developed nation by 2020 is characterised by the existence of the "k-economy", or the knowledge-based economy in its development plans. Parallel to this is the emphasis on science and technology (S&T) and, research development. The Ninth Malaysian Plan (development plan for years 2006- 2010) by the government underlines this by acknowledging the importance of leverage in these areas in order to attain greater national development. Towards this end, the government intended to increase national expenditure in research and development (R&D) to 1.5 per cent of GDP by 2010. Additionally, a target of 50 research scientists and engineers (RSEs) per 10,000 labour-force is also envisaged¹ (EPU 2006). Technology coupled with research and development is considered the crucial focus for achieving the status of a developed nation. As echoed by a university Vice-Chancellor in Malaysia: "Technology will be the fundamental pushing factor for the development of the country." Similarly for the Philippines, the long-term higher education development plan for 2001-2010 also emphasised the need to equip its human resource with the know-how of Information Communication Technology (ICT). This is seen as "paving the way towards regional and global integration and the emergence of a borderless world or global village" (CHED, 2001, p.1). The Philippines has prioritised the mobilisation of knowledge and ICT for development and job creation. Current efforts in promoting the sciences and ICT are among the matters at the forefront of the national agenda in the country. There is a conscious effort to make science and technology consistent with national development goals.

On the one hand, the shift of focus to a knowledge-based economy has influenced Malaysia's priority to steer the demand for higher education in this direction. The desired structural evolution of the Malaysian economy from agricultural to industrial and technological creates a flexible higher education sector attuned to the needs of the modern economy. But this assertion does not go undisputed as exemplified by a university professor. "Malaysia has not said what a developed nation is. If you do not know where you're going, any road will take you."

While acknowledging the manifestations of the knowledge-based economy, the Philippines does not place as much emphasis as Malaysia on gearing its manpower to respond effectively to the challenges posed by the global market, as shown for instance by the sharp contrast in terms of the massive investment made by the Malaysian government in this field. Interestingly, some stakeholders have supported the further strengthening of the emphasis on agriculture in the Philippines, due to the country's vast wealth in relevant natural resources. Central planning in Malaysia has focused heavily on predicted outcomes and requirements, considered necessary for functioning efficiently in the knowledge-based economy, but Malaysia's reliance on this has been criticised.

I wish we had higher education more in agriculture, you know, higher education more on utilising our natural resources more than graduates in MBAs [Masters in Business Administration] per bank.

(Business executive of a local company in the Philippines)

I'm sure they [Malaysia] made a lot of mistakes, that's characteristic of centrally planned economies; you put resources in areas which don't turn out to be right. They bet on the wrong horse in effect, so there are advantages and disadvantages. If you bet right then ok.

(Professor of a university in the Philippines)

The construction of the Multimedia Super Corridor (MSC) in Malaysia in 1997 was the primary expression of the country's intention to embrace the knowledge-based economy. The practicability of this project, backed by huge investment from the government, a project which has advocated the emergence of technology as a necessary prerequisite for development, has however been open to question.

Multimedia Super Corridor: Development Catalyst?

The initial setting-up of the Multimedia Super Corridor by the government in 1997 was aimed at making Malaysia the technological hub of the region (Abbott 2004). The government's view was that achieving this technological capacity would pave the way to realising the goals of *Vision 2020*, that envisions Malaysia to be a developed nation by year 2020. The MSC is one among many mega-projects which symbolise Malaysia's repositioning towards progress. The MSC is composed of two cities, Putrajaya, the electronic administrative centre for federal government, and Cyberjaya, an "intelligent city" (Bunnell, 2002), and the MSC also contains a university that aims to produce graduates who are adept at responding to the needs of the k-economy. The government is also keen to attract multinational ICT companies to invest in locating their home bases in the MSC, and incentive schemes and tax concessions aimed at attracting foreign investors have been set up by the Malaysian government. But over and above these incentives, the MSC is considered by the government as an advanced technological milieu that by its very nature would attract entrepreneurs and investments that will promote techno-scientific knowledge.

This project has not, as above-mentioned, passed without criticism. Some consider it to be excessively costly, with an estimated budget of 20 billion US Dollars (Abbott, 2004), and claim that it is merely a white elephant and one of the extravagant "legacies" of the premiership of the then prime minister Mahathir. A number of multinational companies have taken advantage of tax concessions offered by the government, but none of the major international ICT companies has made MSC its home base in the region (Abbott, 2004).

My perception is very simple. At this rate it will go nowhere. Vision 2020 will be a success, a real estate success. Not in a technological sense. A real estate success because multinational companies come here, all those finished buildings, you see the big ones; they have been standing there empty.

(Professor of a university)

The competition provided by other countries newly entering the manufacturing industry sector has also led Malaysia to concentrate on the technology industry. Inexpensive labour provided by neighbouring countries, and the reaching of a ceiling of the labour-intensive phase (Rasiah, 1995) has obliged Malaysia to reposition itself towards a focus on advanced technology. By the end of 2005, MSC status was granted to 1, 421 companies, most of which focused on software development, data warehousing and e-commerce. Despite exceeding the first-phase target of 500 MSC companies for the period 1996-2003, the level of content development and innovation products and services has yet to be accomplished (EPU, 2006).

The Digital Divide

The problem posed by the digital divide, or the segregation between the core and periphery of societies in developing countries as well as in the world as a whole, is an issue which has been created by the advance of ICT. To reduce the effects of this divide, the Malaysian government has introduced programmes to increase the awareness of the use of ICT among rural households (EPU 2006), and similarly, in the Philippines, the introduction of ICT in schools in rural areas has been advocated (NEDA 2006), though no rigorous planning has taken place. In Malaysia,

the requirement to bridge the 'digital divide' among the country's communities and the need to augment the accessibility to ICT services and structures was acknowledged through the creation of the Universal Service Provision (USP) fund by industry alongside government funding. This joint effort by the government and industry saw an increase in penetration rates from 2000 to 2005 in terms of basic ICT services such as personal computer (PC) installation, (from 9.4 per cent to 21.8 per cent) and Internet dial-up service subscriptions (from 7.1 per cent to 13.9 per cent). This refers to the penetration rate per 100 population. The penetration rate for this matter would refer to the number of active basic ICT service (personal computer use, internet connection) within a specific population (EPU, 2006). Malaysia's broadband penetration reached 31 per cent of households in 2009 and the government aims to raise this to 75 per cent by 2015 (EPU, 2010). The government also promotes a greater awareness of ICT usage in rural communities through ensuring empowerment programmes and the use of the national language Bahasa Melayu and other local languages in line with ICT and e-services updating promotions. The initiative to push ICT skills during the Eighth Malaysia Plan period (2001-2005) resulted in the emergence of more than 31,000 ICT graduates during that phase. These were computer systems designers and analysts, computer programmers and computer support technicians (EPU 2006). Notwithstanding the efforts by the government to promote ICT, the MSC Impact Survey 2005 showed a shortage of the skills needed by the industry and a skills mismatch in the market. This is confirmed thus by a stakeholder from the industry:

I think one of the reasons also is we do not have the right graduates ... and when we produce IT graduates, they're more [of] the lower end of IT graduates, not in terms of capability, but in terms of the subjects they study. That is I think also one of the complaints I hear.

(Business executive in Malaysia)

Beyond the common notion that this exemplifies, namely the impression lack of access to everyday use of the Internet, the thinking of scientists and academicians about the digital divide goes further, extending to access sources such as electronic journals, databases and other resources which are essential to advance research. This lack of access among scientists in developing countries does further harm serves as an obstacle to agricultural, social and economic development, which can be facilitated by knowledge accessible via ICT media (Cullen, 2001). But despite the effort of both governments to connect their citizens with the global age, the problem of supplying enough qualified manpower to deliver the new knowledge, the lack of resources in more remote areas and the misallocation of budget funds are enduring problems. The market's power to dictate its needs in the higher education sector can sometimes also lead a country to switch its priorities to favour professions that are seen as more viable in the international community.

The role of ICT in development is also acknowledged by the Philippine government. Hence, measures to implement training in HEIs for programmes in ICT are envisioned by the Philippine government as part of its strategy for better economic performance. Addressing the need to improve the ICT services of the country, the government plans to create more competitive incentive packages for investors, and to improve its ICT human resource. It is, however, not clear how the government would specifically address the former proposal as figures and targets are not given. To achieve the latter objective, it is foreseen that: (a) basic courses, such as science and mathematics, should be improved at all levels of schooling; and (b) tertiary institutions should be encouraged to offer a curriculum with ICT specialisations. To further realise the ICT capability of the country, the Commission on Information and Communications Technology (CICT) was created in 2004. Its main duty is the streamlining of ICT services and programmes (EO 269, 2004). The CICT also envisions building the Philippines Cyberservices Corridor (PCC), aiming to model it on Malaysia's MSC. The country also endeavours, as recognised by the government in the medium-term plan, to provide knowledge and software developments that will push it towards the position as the e-services hub of Asia. The PCC is part of the five 'super regions' identified by the government in its push towards the country's development. The five regions include: northern Luzon for agribusiness capacity, Luzon urban gateway for industry and service centre, central Philippines for tourism, Mindanao for agribusiness, and the cyber corridor for ICT (EO 561, 2006). The interface between the CICT, the Commission on Higher Education and the industry is mainly there to make the existing curricula more relevant to the needs of the ICT industry sector. Additionally, it addresses the skills mismatch, a problem widely recognised in the field. The government also emphasises the reverse of a 'brain drain' through improving employment in the ICT sector, which generated 278,769 additional jobs in the second quarter of 2006 (NEDA, 2007). The Philippines focuses on customer contact centres (call centres), medical transcription, and animation amongst its ICT services. Despite the contention by the government that the provision of jobs within the ICT sector leads to a reversal in the 'brain drain', it does not take into consideration the downward vertical mobility of some professionals who are absorbed by this industry due to the inability of the government to provide the market with alternative high- level job orientations in some, if not most, fields of specialisation.

Research and Development and Faculty Consultancy

The contribution of faculty research and consultancy to industry and government is one of the many outputs of higher education. In both the Philippines and Malaysia there is widespread recognition of the role in development played by the expert advice given to the community by members of the university, and consultancy is also said to benefit universities themselves as well as the individuals concerned and their contractors. As well as its importance for professional development, consultancy also serves as a considerable draw to attract and retain qualified faculty members, who can easily earn larger salaries outside the university work (Teague, 1982). The knowledge transfer produced by university faculty members' research work also plays a role in the regional, local and national development of the country. Faculty members' participation goes beyond the lecture room, as faculty resources also enable universities to be contracted, among other roles, to assist in developing national governmental programmes, training government officers and public administration and governance staff, and supporting regional and local activities through outreach programmes, medical missions and the like. The importance of strengthening the interface between the three sectors of university, business and government is also acknowledged.

The government usually taps the faculty members of the universities. In a developing country, there is really a limited number of people with the knowledge and skills that the government requires of in order to assist and define its plans, so they draw from the university often.

(President of a university in the Philippines)

We are getting more and more invitations, not just to do consultancy works but to work with the government agencies on research and all that to provide policy input. The government is also encouraging the private sector to also work within the universities on research on science and technology so I think there is more collaboration between universities and private sectors too.

(Professor of a university in Malaysia)

But despite the policy undertaking to promote and take advantage of faculty expertise in Malaysia, among some members of academia in public higher education institutions there is still discontent regarding the strict and rigid government control over all aspects of higher education, including curriculum development, faculty hiring and other activities and concerns.

The principle now is that we get allocation from the government. So once we get the allocation from the government, we have to follow government procedure in everything. I think the reason why we can't move that fast upward is because of the constraint level.

(Vice Chancellor of university in Malaysia)

The Philippines, on the other hand, illustrates some of the immense responsibilities granted to specific higher education institutions to act as an 'extension' of government services to the community. Despite the obvious contribution to the community, this wide-ranging role is still seen by many academicians as an impediment to other functions of the university including other research activities and more diverse output. The maximisation of knowledge transfer in these extension services has been deemed ineffective due to the lack of 'multiplier' effects observed to date.

The relationship between the university and industry is fundamental for the promotion of knowledge in industry, since the focus on technological innovation, among others, demands a link between the two sectors through discussions involving experts from business and industry and from higher education. The role that faculty members have played in the development of techno-scientific know-how in both countries may not be as significant as in developed countries (Mansfield and Lee 1996), but in recent years this topic has been constantly on the agenda in the development of the programmes of both countries. The research centres devoted to scientific advancement in leading universities in Malaysia and the Philippines also acquire support from the private sector, and professorial chairs are often financed by sectors of industry, showing their interest in further collaboration in and involving universities in their fields of work.

But in spite of the important public service provided by faculty consultancy, some argue that such an 'extended role' might in turn result in "neglect of students and other university activities, abuse academic freedom, conflicts of interest and illegitimate use of institutional resources" (Boyer & Lewis, 1984, p.637). Nevertheless, Boyer and Lewis (1984) propose that in the face of these criticisms leveled against faculty consultancy, a reasonable assessment of it should involve analysis of trade-offs between the costs and benefits of such practice. Definitive directives to

educational institutions may be tolerated and followed as long as such directives are not too restrictive (Boyer & Lewis, 1984).

Knowledge Environment

The creation of a 'knowledge environment' by the higher education sector in the Philippines and Malaysia, involves universities serving as knowledge repositories for the community by, among other roles, engaging in collaborative ventures with industry to develop and discover new information, and providing access to knowledge through resources such as faculty members, academic libraries and research institutions. This wider knowledge environment implies the use, transfer and creation of ideas as a two-way process involving the university and its milieu (Rowley, 2000). The Philippines and Malaysia have both recognised the significant contribution of their universities in producing and disseminating knowledge which is crucial for the progress of the country. The university is supposed to provide new ideas and perceptions and a social awareness which are constructive for their interface with industry and the government.

The existence of a knowledge environment, made tangible through the presence of a university, is essential for the development of any autonomous region. As previously mentioned, the establishment of a university in the Multimedia Super Corridor in Malaysia is designed to build around it the technological support necessary to disseminate techno-scientific information and other vital knowledge and attitudes. This highlights the important role of the university in gearing itself to the demands of the global market. The MSC is not exclusive to industry's ICT firms; it is also greatly relevant to the university, which plays an important role in the facilitation of knowledge transfer and the training of manpower able to respond to the demands of a modern community. Additionally, under the Ninth Malaysia Plan, emphasis has been given to linking industry and government with the universities through the 'Technopreneur Development Programme' that aims to increase the development of R&D. Assistance, and links between the groups, goes beyond matching funds; rather there should also be provision of a range of mentoring and technology risk assessment. An increase in the commercialisation of R&D results and in the number of spin-off companies is also expected. The intensification of the biotechnology industry was given priority by the government through the launching of the National Biotechnology Policy in 2005, which aims to improve the rate of R&D commercialisation, increase access to funding, increase the number of skilled workers in R&D, and attract foreign partners in line with the country's vision. Malaysia is said to focus on its areas of competitive advantage such as "its rich biodiversity, leveraging on its multi-ethnic traditional and complementary medicine, and becoming a world leader in resource-based industries such as biofuel and biodiesel" (EPU, 2006, p.27). The presence of the Petronas oil and gas company in Malaysia also plays to the country's aims. The company interestingly, owns a private university, which trains individuals in engineering and technology courses. Specialisations in gas and petrochemical engineering, and petroleum engineering, are available through the courses offered by the university. The university receives financial support from Petronas, and this places Malaysia in relative advantage in terms of training and employment in these technological areas compared to the Philippines and other South East Asian countries.

In the Philippines, the construction of a techno-park in the vicinity of a leading public higher education institution is proof of the desire to connect industry with the academe. However, in comparison with Malaysia, despite the seeming moves of some universities in the Philippines to link-up with industry in terms of research and development, the challenges facing the country in providing greater access and equity in its educational institutions pose a bigger challenge. To improve or provide equal access to higher education, the government encourages computer literacy and has inserted this in the learning experience via "electronic campuses", which are available to people unable to participate in traditional forms of schooling (CHED, 2004). In addition, Open Learning and Distance Learning (including traditional correspondence courses) are among other alternatives on offer in order to promote access and equity in higher education. However, the benefits of ICT in terms of expanding access and equity may not be fully optimised for two reasons, the first being that poor and disadvantaged households may not be able to afford the necessary computing equipment. Secondly, students and their families who are used to traditional forms of teaching may experience what may seem to be undesirable 'switching costs', which may have greater significance for those who come from isolated rural communities.

Closing Remarks: Addressing Competitiveness

In the case of both the Philippines and Malaysia, despite the intent of each to cement its universities as part of the modernisation process integral in knowledge societies, issues of access and viability exist. As evident especially in developing countries, the tendency of the higher education sector to transform its institutions into knowledge repositories and adopt a research-based orientation is challenged. For instance, as reflective of Malaysia's stance in creating a learning region through the Multimedia Super Corridor (MSC), despite the intent to strengthen regional progress through attracting international companies to locate in the MSC, while providing such companies with human resources through the setting up of a university in its vicinity, the MSC has fallen short of expectations. The ability of neighbouring territories such as Singapore and Hong Kong to attract similar companies as desired by

Malaysia makes it difficult for the latter to compete in this matter in the region. Despite the tax incentives given by the Malaysian government to companies wishing to settle in the MSC, companies that locate in the MSC more often than not, are employers of lower skills labour (e.g., mass manufacturing). The preparation however of Malaysia in this regard surpasses that of the Philippines in many ways. In terms of technological readiness and innovation, the Philippines ranks way behind Malaysia in country spending in research and development and availability of the latest technologies (Global Innovation Index, 2007, 2011). "Digital divide" which illustrates the lack of access to technology, among others, is also typical of poorer areas in the countries. More specifically for the Philippines, its 'geography of social exclusion' highlights the failure of socially excluded individuals to access basic social services such as education (Bryne, 1995; Warrington, 2005) much more so with regards to accessing 'modernisations' as brought forth by technological advancements. Pacione (1997, p.172), in general, also underlines the inadequacy of the "market model" of education as "...geographically naïve and therefore socially regressive. It does not and cannot address adequately the difficulties of those people and places disadvantaged by the operation of the market."

Faculty consultations and research which can produce knowledge spill over through the commercialisation of technological findings, among others, is also limited. The proportion of student/teacher ratios in developing countries make it difficult for academics to engage in extensive research as opposed to their counterparts in developed countries. The advanced research culture found in the latter also serves to devalue the level of engagement found in developing country institutions. The recognition however of higher education institutions in developing countries of the need to modernise and adapt its tertiary education sector to the increasing role of globalisation and internationalisation is apparent. For instance, Malaysia, in this regard, focuses on the role of its tertiary sector in attracting international students and trans-national campuses (i.e., foreign branch campuses) to its shores. The active role played by its private tertiary sector in linking with foreign bodies through programme accreditations is also worth noting.

Pierre's (2000) theory of 'new governance' proposes that governments should be more receptive to the needs of their environments and adopt strategies that will benefit society at large. This also points to the requirement to maximise provisions and resources that will bring advances to a society. Educational restructuring in several countries resulted from the pressure of a global competitive market that required the ability of states to respond efficiently and effectively to new demands. In the case of the Philippines and Malaysia, attuning to the needs of contemporary society has become apparent (e.g., focusing on research and development, training manpower in highly technical fields) in the desire to adapt its higher education sector not only to local but also to regional and global contexts. Despite the slow but recognised progress in both countries, the need of improving, modernising, and fine-tuning the role of universities in development has been much highlighted by the accelerated move in advanced countries towards a knowledge-based society, which emphasises the urgency to reorganise the formation of human capital in line with the modern global development, particularly in science, technology and research innovations. The development plans of both countries illustrate the valuable role of the university in creating a nation that will exemplify the characteristics required of developing states in order to attempt to at least catch up with the significant development in the advanced countries. The Philippines' long-term higher education plan establishes the need to create and proliferate knowledge that will prepare its people with "competencies, values and skills vital in a dynamically-changing domestic and international environment" (CHED, 2001, p.25). Similarly, for Malaysia the creation of an environment that will keep workers competitive, dynamic and adaptable is regarded as crucial (EPU 2006). It is assured, at least, that the important function of higher education in both countries in local, regional and national development is recognised by both governments, and considered essential for policy reform reorganisation.

Note

¹ The mid term review of the 9th Malaysia Plan notes that the ratio of RSEs was 17.9 in 2006, additionally an increase in private sector expenditure in R&D is recorded.

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INCLUSIVE EDUCATION FOR CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS: A CRITIQUE OF POLICY AND PRACTICE IN NEW ZEALAND

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ABSTRACT: This article considers the issue of inclusive education for children with disabilities and special educational needs, in particular with regard to policies and practices in developed countries, such as New Zealand. The article reviews the debate about inclusive education and outlines several confusions about inclusion that have emerged from this debate. It then provides a critique of policies and practices regarding inclusive education in New Zealand, in comparison to those in other developed countries, such as the USA and England. Finally, implications of the issues discussed for developing countries, such as those in the Asia-Pacific region, are outlined.

Introduction

The most important and controversial issue currently regarding the education of children with disabilities and special educational needs (SEN) internationally is that of 'inclusive education'. Just what is meant by inclusive education has important implications for special education policies and practices in developed and developing countries alike. This article will consider this issue with regard to policies and practices for SEN in developed countries, such as New Zealand, the USA and England, and then go on to discuss the implications for developing countries, including those in the Asia-Pacific region. The article begins by reviewing the debate about inclusive education and outlining several confusions about inclusion that have emerged from this debate. It then considers policies and practices regarding inclusive education in New Zealand, in comparison to those in other developed countries. Finally, implications of the issues discussed for developing countries, such as those in the Asia-Pacific region, are outlined.

Debate about Inclusive Education

The debate about inclusive education was re-ignited in 2005 when Mary Warnock published a pamphlet entitled, *Special Educational Needs: A New Look*. More recently, in an edited book by Terzi (2010) with the same title, the original Warnock publication is reprinted as the first chapter. In this Warnock discusses the history of the development of provision for children with SEN in the UK and critically evaluates the issue of inclusion. She concludes that inclusive education should be rethought and redefined in order to allow children with SEN to be included in the "...common educational enterprise of learning, wherever they can learn best" (p.14). In the following chapter Norwich presents a detailed analysis of the issues raised by Warnock, and on the issue of inclusive education he suggests a continuum of provision for children with SEN but with special schools being based on the same site as mainstream schools. Warnock then responds by pointing out that her current views do not represent a u-turn on her part, as she had published her, "...misgivings about the more hard-line inclusionists as long ago as 1993" (Terzi, 2010, p. 117). She goes on to address the continued need for special schools for some children with SEN and states, "...the dogmatic special school closure lobby must recognize that for some children special schools are the best or indeed the only option" (Terzi, 2010, p. 129).

This book is important because there are currently a plethora of books promoting the inclusion of children with SEN in mainstream schools, but a much smaller number that attempt to evaluate the theory and practice of inclusive education. The need for such an evaluation was highlighted by the publication of Warnock's (2005) original pamphlet, which presented a critical review of the effects of inclusion on children with SEN. This had a substantial impact because it was she who, 30 years earlier, chaired the committee that produced the Warnock Report (DES, 1978) that was a major milestone in the development of education for children with SEN in England and other countries, including New Zealand.

In her 2005 publication Warnock referred to inclusion as, "...possibly the most disastrous legacy of the 1978 Report... (p. 20)", since, as she goes on to say, "There is increasing evidence that the ideal of inclusion, if this means that all but those with the most severe disabilities will be in mainstream schools, is not working (p.32)". This

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comment is particularly important since it was the Warnock Report that led to the accelerated implementation of inclusive education in England and other parts of the world.

However, Warnock's (2005) publication was not the first major publication to question the appropriateness of the move towards inclusive education for children with SEN. The first book on this topic was that edited by leading scholars in the field of special education in the USA, Kauffman and Hallahan (1995). Their book was highly critical of the theory of full inclusion, through which it was proposed that all children be educated in mainstream classrooms without the need for special classes, units or special schools of any kind. The book clearly communicated the view that pursuing full inclusion would be damaging, not only to the education of children with SEN, but also to the entire special education community. It provided alternative views of how special education should develop which were authored by many of the most respected academics in the field of special education in the USA.

Two years later an Australian scholar, Jenkinson (1997), published a book, the stated aim of which was to stimulate debate about the inclusion issue. She provided a critique of the education of children with SEN in both mainstream and special school settings that drew on research and practice in the field of special education in Australia, Canada and the UK. Interestingly, Jenkinson reported that, during the 1990s in some parts of Australia, plans to phase out special schools had been abandoned and there was a swing back to retaining a range of options for meeting the needs of children with SEN. The book provides a balanced and soundly argued debate on the topic of inclusive education.

A few years later a group of academics in the field of special education in England, concerned that there appeared to be an increasing trend toward inclusive education for children with SEN, despite minimal debate about its merits from experts in the field of special education, decided to produce an edited book with the aim of stimulating such a debate (O'Brien, 2001). The first chapter (Hornby, 2001) identified several confusions about inclusion and proposed the adoption of 'responsible inclusion', following the work of Vaughn and Schumm (1995) in the USA, which describes a more measured approach to inclusion for children with SEN.

The next book to be published on this topic was that edited by Cigman (2007), which was produced in response to Warnock's (2005) negative comments about inclusion. The book comprised chapters by many senior academics in the field of special education in the UK, including proponents of full inclusion, so provides a range of views. Cigman, who like Warnock, is a philosopher rather than a special educator, highlights some of the confusions about inclusion that were identified previously (Hornby, 2001). She concludes that supporters of full inclusion have distorted the arguments for inclusive education found in influential documents such as the Salamanca Statement on Special Needs Education (UNESCO, 1994). This talks of a *majority* of children with SEN being educated in mainstream schools, whereas full inclusionists refer to it as supporting the idea that this applies to *all* children with SEN. Cigman favours what she calls 'moderate inclusion' which encompasses the concept of a continuum of placement options being available, from special schools, through units for children with SEN in mainstream schools, to placement in mainstream classrooms, which is currently the reality in most countries.

Recently, Farrell (2010) published a book that is focused on evaluating criticisms of special education as well as considering the rationale for inclusive education. The criticisms of special education that he addresses include: limitations of the special education knowledge base; the unhelpfulness of classifications such as autism; problematic use of types of assessment such as intelligence testing; negative effects of labeling on children with SEN; and a lack of distinctive pedagogy and curriculum in special education. He marshals considerable evidence and concludes that these criticisms are based on misunderstandings or a lack of knowledge of current theory, evidence and practice in the field of special education. Issues regarding the rationale for inclusive education that are addressed include the social construction of disability and SEN, rights-based justification for inclusion, and reliance on post-modern perspectives of education. He concludes that the rationale for inclusive education is seriously flawed, and that there is a lack of empirical evidence to support its effectiveness. Finally, he cites comments from several government sources in the UK in support of his perception that the influence of inclusive education is declining.

Confusions about Inclusive Education

The literature referred to above has highlighted the fact that there are some confusions about inclusive education. The major confusions about inclusive education are discussed below with a focus on implications for both developed and developing countries. The confusions are about definitions, rights, labeling, peers, etiology, intervention models, goals, curricula, reality, finance, means and ends, and research evidence.

Definitions

First and foremost there is confusion about what is meant by inclusion, as noted by Norwich when he states, "...its definition and use are seriously problematic" (Terzi, 2010, p. 100). The term is used in various ways, for example, to refer to inclusive schools or an inclusive society. Many sources (e.g. DfEE, 1997) refer to advancing

'inclusive education' as meaning increasing the numbers of children with SEN in mainstream schools, while maintaining special schools for those who need them. In contrast, other sources (e.g. CSIE, 1989) use the term inclusion to describe a state of affairs in which all children are educated in mainstream classes within mainstream schools with only temporary withdrawal from this situation envisaged.

Perhaps the most serious confusion is that caused by the conflation of social inclusion with inclusive education for children with SEN. The term social inclusion is typically used to refer to the goal of bringing about an inclusive society, one in which all individuals are valued and have important roles to play. Social inclusion in education refers to the inclusion in mainstream schools of children with a wide diversity of differences, difficulties and needs. This has a much broader focus than inclusive education for children with SEN, but is often used by proponents of inclusion as if it meant the same.

In addition, many inclusionists speak of inclusion as a process. This process involves whole school re-organisation in order to develop inclusive schools. Implicit in this process, however, is the eventual goal of full inclusion. Therefore, since the word inclusion is used in so many different ways, it is important in order to avoid confusion, to be clear about what is meant by each specific use of the term. For example, while the majority of people involved in education are in favour of inclusive schools which include most children with SEN, many have reservations about full inclusion which envisages all children with SEN being educated in mainstream classes.

Rights

A critical confusion concerns the rights of children with SEN. A typical argument put forward in favour of full inclusion is that it is a basic human right of all children to be educated along with their mainstream peers. To segregate children for any reason is considered by many inclusionists to be a denial of their human rights. However, there are two main confusions here. First of all there is confusion between human rights and moral rights. Just because someone has a human right to a certain option doesn't necessarily mean that it is morally the right thing for them to do (Thomson, 1990). Thus, although their human rights allow children with SEN to be educated alongside their mainstream peers, for some of them this may not, morally, be the right or best option. As Warnock puts it, "What is a manifest good in society, and what it is my right to have... may not be what is best for me as a schoolchild" (Terzi, 2010, p. 36).

A second aspect of the rights confusion concerns priorities. As well as their right to be included, children also have a right to an appropriate education suited to their needs. "It is their right to *learn* that we must defend, not their right to learn in the same environment as everyone else" (Warnock, in Terzi, 2010, p. 36). That is, the right to an appropriate education which meets children's specific needs is more important than the right to be educated alongside their mainstream peers. Therefore, it cannot be morally right to include all children in mainstream schools if this means that some of them will not be able to receive the education most appropriate for their needs.

Labeling

Inclusive education is regarded, by its proponents, as preferable because it enables avoidance of some practices that are central to special education, such as the identification of SEN and the setting up of Individual Education Plans. According to inclusionists, this is because such practices can result in labeling children with SEN. Being labeled as having SEN is seen as stigmatizing them and therefore, according to inclusionists, should be avoided. There is then a dilemma, since if children are identified as having SEN, there is a risk of negative labeling and stigma, while if they are not identified there is a risk that they will not get the teaching they require and their special needs will not be met. This confusion is referred to as the "dilemma of difference" by Norwich (in Terzi, 2010, p.91). However, this concern is the product of confused thinking as it is clear that children with SEN attract labels from other children and teachers even when they are not formally identified as having SEN. So being stigmatized is not necessarily a result of the identification but related to the fact that their SEN mark them out as different in some way. Therefore, avoiding identifying SEN will not prevent children with SEN from being stigmatized. But it may prevent them from getting the education that they need.

Peers

Another confusion is related to the use of the term 'peers'. One of the proposed hallmarks of inclusion is that children with SEN are educated along with their peers in mainstream classrooms. However, as Warnock points out, "Inclusion is not a matter of where you are geographically, but where you feel you belong" (Terzi, 2010, p.34). Many children with SEN are more comfortable with peers who have similar disabilities and interests to themselves, rather than peers of the same chronological age. So for these children a sense of belonging, and therefore being included

in a learning community, is more likely to result from placement in a special class or special school than a mainstream classroom.

Etiology

An important confusion related to inclusion concerns theories about the etiology of SEN. Until around four decades ago it was assumed that SEN resulted entirely from physiological or psychological difficulties inherent in children themselves. Since this time awareness has grown concerning just how much social and environmental factors can influence children's development and functioning. However, some inclusionists have taken this social perspective to its extreme and suggest that SEN are entirely socially constructed. Both Warnock and Norwich (Terzi, 2010) consider this to be going too far in denying the impact that impairments can have on children's learning. They consider it important to acknowledge the role of physiological and psychological factors as well as social factors in the etiology of SEN.

Intervention Models

Inclusion is also regarded, by its proponents, as being preferable to special education because it is suggested that the latter is based on a medical or deficit model of intervention, as opposed to focusing on students' needs and strengths. This is a confused and inaccurate view, for several reasons. Special education interventions have been influenced by medical, psychological and several other treatment models, as discussed by Farrell (2010) who concludes, "The knowledge base of special education includes a wide range of disciplines and contributions supplemented by related research and methods informing evidence-based practice" (p.50).

This focus on evidence-based practice is an important aspect of special education because of the regular intrusion of controversial interventions such as Facilitated Communication and the Doman-Delecatto programme which are not only ineffective but are also potentially harmful (Hornby, Atkinson and Howard, 1997). These two examples of interventions highlight another reason why the movement toward full inclusion needs to be carefully evaluated before it is universally adopted. It is similar to these interventions in that its proponents have not yet established a sound theoretical base nor do they encourage research to be conducted into its effectiveness.

Goals

An important confusion that impacts on the issue of inclusion concerns the goals of education, as noted by Terzi (2010). This confusion applies to all children but is particularly important for children with SEN. In recent years there has been increasing emphasis on academic achievement as the primary goal of education in many countries. Governments have focused their attention on the improvement of academic standards by various means including the establishment of national curricula and national assessment regimes. This has deflected attention away from the broader goals of education, such as those concerned with the development of life and social skills.

Including children with SEN in mainstream schools that are driven by the need to achieve high academic standards results in the goals of education for many of these children being inappropriate. The major goal of education for many children with SEN must be to produce happy, well-adjusted and productive citizens. As stated in the Salamanca Statement on Special Needs Education (UNESCO, 1994, p.10), "Schools should assist them to become economically active and provide them with the skills needed in everyday life, offering training in skills which respond to the social and communication demands and expectations of adult life."

Curricula

Another problem has been the confusion surrounding entitlement and the appropriateness of curricula for children with SEN. From when a national curriculum was first proposed in the U.K., influential people and organizations in the SEN field supported the government's intention to include children with SEN in this curriculum to the greatest extent possible. That all children with SEN should be entitled to have access to the same curriculum as other children was seen as being a step forward. This was in fact the case for many children with SEN, for example, those with severe visual impairment who, in the past, may have been denied opportunities such as taking science subjects. However, for the majority of children with SEN, who have learning or behavioral difficulties, it has been a backward step, as noted by Warnock (Terzi, 2010). National curricula, with their associated national assessments and their consequences, such as league tables of schools, have emphasized academic achievement much more than other aspects of the curriculum such as personal, social and vocational education. Therefore, having a national curriculum as the whole curriculum is not appropriate for children with moderate to severe learning or behavioural difficulties and leads to many of them becoming disaffected.

Inclusion in an unsuitable curriculum directly contributes to the development of emotional or behavioral difficulties for many children, which leads them to be disruptive and eventually results in the exclusion of some of

them from schools. As argued by Farrell (2010), the priority for children with SEN must be that they have access to curricula which are appropriate for them, not that they are fitted into a national curriculum which was designed for the mainstream population.

Reality

A common confusion occurs among educators influenced by the rhetoric of full inclusion, despite its contrast with the reality of the situation in schools. The rhetoric of full inclusion suggests that it is possible to effectively educate all children with SEN in mainstream classrooms. However, the reality of the situation in mainstream schools is that many teachers do not feel able or willing to implement this scenario (Croll & Moses, 2000; Scruggs & Mastropieri, 1996).

The reality is also that, in many countries, there is insufficient input on teaching children with SEN in initial teacher education courses and limited in-service training on SEN available to teachers. This means that many teachers do not have the knowledge and skills necessary for including children with a wide range of SEN in their classes and are also concerned that there will be insufficient material and financial resources, and in particular support staff, to effectively implement a policy of full inclusion.

Finance

A key confusion concerns the funding of children with SEN in general and those who are included in mainstream schools in particular. As discussed by both Warnock and Norwich in the book by Terzi (2010), a variety of solutions to the issue of funding have been proposed but there is still no agreement on what is the most satisfactory funding model.

There is also confusion about the relative cost of provision for SEN in mainstream or special facilities. At first sight special schools and units appear expensive, so inclusive education seems to be the cheaper option. But this is only true in the short term. If the education system does not provide young people with SEN with the knowledge, skills and attitudes they need to achieve independence and success after they leave school the cost to society will be far greater in the long-run in terms of unemployment benefits, welfare payments and the costs of the criminal justice system. Thus, special provision for a small number of children with SEN is costly but it is likely to be much less so than the later consequences of not making suitable provision.

Means and Ends

An important confusion with inclusive education that has been addressed by Warnock (Terzi, 2010) is whether inclusion is a means to an end or an end in itself. Proponents of full inclusion argue that segregated SEN placement is wrong because a key goal of education should be to fully include children in the community in which they live. Therefore, they ought to be included in their local mainstream schools. However, as suggested by Warnock, inclusion in the community after leaving school is actually the most important end that educators should be seeking. Inclusion in mainstream schools may be a means to that end but should not be an end in itself. For some children with SEN, segregated SEN placement may be the best means to the end of eventual inclusion in the community when they leave school. In contrast, inclusion in mainstream schools which does not fully meet children's SEN may be counterproductive in that it is likely to reduce their potential for full inclusion in the community as adults.

Research Evidence

There is confusion about the research base for inclusive education with many inclusionists appearing to believe that an adequate research base for inclusion is unnecessary or already exists. However, Lindsay's (2007) review concluded that reviews of the research evidence in support of inclusion to date have been inconclusive, suggesting that an adequate research base for inclusion has not been established. Farrell (2010) in his book cites a raft of relevant studies, many of which report negative findings regarding the impact of inclusive education. Norwich concludes that there needs to be more intensive research to provide evidence regarding the policy and practice of inclusive education (Terzi, 2010). Such research needs to take a long-term view of outcomes for children with SEN who experience either inclusive or segregated schooling. The findings of two long-term follow-up studies of children with SEN, who were 'included' in mainstream schools following periods of time attending special schools, suggests that children with SEN who experience inclusive education may often be disadvantaged in the long term (Hornby & Kidd, 2001; Hornby & Witte, 2008).

As Warnock has concluded, 'What we really need is evidence of where different children with different disabilities thrive best, and how the pitiful casualties of some inclusive comprehensive schools can be best avoided' (Terzi, 2010, p. 139).

Critique of Policy and Practice Regarding Inclusive Education for Children with SEN in New Zealand

New Zealand has one of most inclusive education systems in the world with less than 1% of children educated in special schools, classes or units in mainstream schools. The 1989 Education Act gave the legal right for all children to attend their local mainstream school from age 5-19 years. In 1996 the Ministry of Education (MoE) introduced a policy called 'Special Education 2000' which was intended to bring about mainstreaming for all children, that is the inclusion of all children with SEN in mainstream schools.

The 1989 Education Act also set up self-managing schools, so that New Zealand now has one of the most devolved education systems in the world, with individual schools governed by Boards of Trustees made up mainly of parents. The only requirement on schools from the MoE regarding children with special education needs (SEN) is a very general one, that schools identify students with special needs and develop and implement teaching and learning strategies to address these needs (MoE, 2009).

When policy and practice regarding inclusive education for children with disabilities and SEN in New Zealand is compared with that from other developed countries, such as the USA and England, two differences are clear. First, New Zealand policy for inclusive education has been more radical than that in most developed countries, with an espoused goal of educating all children with disabilities and SEN in mainstream schools. The impact of this policy is evidenced by the slightly smaller percentage of children with SEN in special schools and classes than is the case in England (around 1.35%), and the substantially smaller percentage than that in the USA (around 8%). The second difference is that when the actual practice of providing for children with disabilities and SEN in mainstream schools is compared with that in England and the USA, glaring deficiencies in the New Zealand system become apparent. These are outlined below in order to highlight the disparity between the rhetoric and reality of inclusive education in New Zealand.

No Legislation for SEN

There is no specific education legislation in New Zealand regarding children with SEN. This is in contrast with the 1996 Education Act in England and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) in the USA. These are both examples of legislation that set out statutory responsibilities for schools regarding provision for children with SEN. Since this is lacking in New Zealand and schools are self-governing, what schools provide for children with SEN varies widely between schools and is often inadequate.

No Statutory Guidelines for Schools about SEN

In New Zealand there are no statutory guidelines for schools regarding SEN that schools must follow. Guidelines on many SEN issues are provided by the MoE, but schools can choose whether to take heed of these or not. This is in stark contrast with the requirements specified in the IDEA in the USA, and the detailed statutory guidance for schools provided within the Code of Practice for SEN (DfES, 2001) in England. These set out detailed guidelines for the procedures that must be followed and the resources that must be provided for children with SEN and their families. Since statutory guidelines are absent in New Zealand provision for children with SEN in mainstream schools varies widely and in many cases is inadequate.

No Requirement to Have SENCOs or SEN Committees

Establishment of Special Educational Needs Coordinators (SENCOs) in all New Zealand Schools, with a time allocation of least 0.2 in primary schools and 0.4 in secondary schools, was recommended in the Wylie Report (2000) on special education but was never implemented by the MoE. As a result, schools may have staff assigned to this role but typically limited time allocation is made for them to do this job, and most do not have any training in the SEN field.

No Requirement for SENCO Training

For New Zealand schools that do have SENCOs there is no requirement for them to have qualifications on SEN or to undergo training once they are assigned this role. This is in contrast to England where training is compulsory for SENCOs. Relevant training is available at most NZ universities but this needs to be undertaken at the teachers' own expense and in their own time, so currently, few of them take up these opportunities.

No Requirement for Individual Education Plans

While comprehensive guidance on Individual Education Plans (IEPs) is provided to schools (MoE, 2011),

individual schools decide who will have IEPs, the format and content of IEPs, and the extent to which parents are involved. Therefore, whether students with SEN have IEPs or not varies widely between schools and IEP procedures are often inadequate.

No Statutory Training for Mainstream Teachers on SEN

Until 2011 there was no requirement on institutions offering teacher education to include training on teaching students with SEN. Recently the Tertiary Education Commission (TEC, 2011) specified the SEN content of teacher education by providing an appendix to the graduating teacher standards that sets out the knowledge and skills on SEN that teachers are to become competent in. This is a major step forward, but will take several years to implement. Meanwhile the vast majority of practicing mainstream school teachers have had minimal or no training on teaching students with SEN.

No Full-time Training for Special Education Teachers

In 2011 the MoE contracted Massey and Canterbury Universities to set up a national training programme for the teachers of children with various types of SEN. However, training is mainly part-time, by e-learning, with currently no training at all for teachers of children with intellectual and multiple disabilities.

No Statutory School/Educational Psychologist Involvement

In New Zealand, educational psychologists are based in MoE Special Education Services, with other staff such as speech/language therapists, and typically operate on a case allocation model. They are constrained to work with the 2% of children with the most severe learning and behavioural difficulties. They may be involved in IEPs if invited by schools or parents but have no mandated involvement. In contrast, in England and the USA psychologist input is mandated in assessment and programme planning for children identified as having severe levels of SEN.

No School Counsellors or Social Workers in Elementary and Middle Schools

New Zealand schools do not have counsellors in primary or middle schools, but there are guidance counsellors in high schools. Social workers are not based in schools, but schools have access to social workers who serve several schools. Thus, although the majority of SEN and mental health issues emerge during the primary and middle school years, children in New Zealand have limited access to professionals who can provide specialist help with these until they reach secondary schools.

No Coherent Policy about Inclusive Education

Although 99% of children are educated in mainstream schools, New Zealand still has eight residential special schools and 28 day/special schools. Many of the special schools have satellite classes in mainstream schools and some have several of these classes. A few mainstream schools still have special units or classes, including at least six special units in Auckland and three in Christchurch. However, many special classes have been shut down in the last twenty years, and special schools have also been under threat due to MoE policy on inclusion. Interestingly, in the recent national Review of Special Education (MoE, 2010) consultation was around four options for the future of special schools, one of which was closure of all special schools. Only 1% of submissions agreed with closing special schools. 99% were in favour of keeping special schools. However, this has not stopped a vocal minority calling for their closure. For example, a group calling themselves the 'Inclusive Education Action Group' has been lobbying the government to further the inclusion agenda and close special schools.

Recent government policy in New Zealand has focused on ensuring that all schools are 'fully inclusive' (MoE, 2010). It also notes that special schools will continue to exist but does not clarify what their role will be. It therefore appears to be supporting a continuum of provision for SEN but exactly what this involves is not made clear. In England the government appears to be backing off from the goal of full inclusion, as in the recent Green Paper on SEN (DfE, 2011, p.51) it sets out a change of policy, 'removing any bias towards inclusion that obstructs parent choice and preventing the unnecessary closure of special schools'.

Because New Zealand has no specific legislation on provision for children with SEN and therefore no statutory guidance for schools, the lack of a coherent policy on inclusive education for children with SEN leaves schools to develop practices based on their interpretation of the non-statutory guidance provided by the MoE. Thus, the wide variation in the type and quality of the procedures and practices employed by schools, to cater for students with SEN, is likely to be the case for some time to come.

Implications for Developing Countries

There are several important implications of the issues raised in this article for the design of inclusive education policies in developing countries, including those in the Asia-Pacific region. First, it is clear that there is uncertainty about what is meant by the term 'inclusive education' as used in developed countries, such as New Zealand. Therefore, policy makers in developing countries need to be very clear about how they define inclusive education. Analysis of the situation in New Zealand has highlighted the contrast between rhetoric and reality regarding the practice of inclusive education in schools. There has been an espoused policy of inclusive education for many years but, given the issues outlined above, it is not surprising that the actual practice of education for children with disabilities and SEN in mainstream schools varies widely between schools and in many schools it is doubtful that the special educational needs of all students are met.

Second, it is also clear from this article that there is wide variation between policy and practice, with regard to children with SEN in New Zealand and that in the USA and England. This is also the case for other developed countries, such as those in Europe, which all have widely differing policies and practices of inclusive and special education. So there are many differing models of inclusive education in developed countries that policy makers in developing countries need to be aware of. In addition, when considering inclusive education in other countries policy makers need to be aware of the possible disparities between the rhetoric of education policy and the reality of provisions for children with disabilities and SEN that are actually provided by schools.

Third, it is important for developing countries not to attempt to adopt models for inclusive education used in developed countries as these cannot be directly transferred because of political, social and economic differences between developed and developing countries. Instead, it is important for developing countries to consider what stage their education systems are at and also to consider what resources are available, both human and practical, to implement any model of inclusive education. In this way developing countries can design a plan for inclusive education that is suitable for implementation in their own education system.

Fourth, it is notable from the above discussion that some developed countries which were following a path towards full inclusion, including New Zealand and England, currently appear to be backing off from this goal and working towards a more balanced model for the education of children with SEN. The implication for developing countries is to avoid making the same mistakes and, from the start, to be aware of the need to develop a realistic vision for inclusive education, which is likely to be a more moderate one, rather than the goal of full inclusion that New Zealand and England are now moving away from.

Actually, it is considered that, what is needed in all countries, both developed and developing, is a policy of 'inclusive special education'. This involves a recognition that all children with disabilities and SEN will be provided for appropriately within the education system, with the majority of them in mainstream schools. Mainstream schools will be organized to provide effectively for a wide range of SEN and disabilities, with most children in mainstream classrooms and a small number in special classes or units within or attached to the school. Mainstream schools will work closely with special schools that will provide for children with the most severe SEN and disabilities. Wherever possible special schools will be on the same campus as special schools. Thus, inclusive special education requires: a commitment to providing the best possible education for all children with disabilities and SEN, in the most appropriate setting, through all stages of a child's education; a focus on effectively including as many children as possible in mainstream schools; a continuum of placement options from mainstream classes to special schools; and, close collaboration between mainstream and special schools.

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GLOBALISATION PLUS COMPARATIVE AND INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION: TOWARDS A THEORY OF THE CONFLUENCE

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ABSTRACT: *This paper attempts to contribute to ways by which confluence, referring to a meeting point for the different agents to cooperate and communicate on education policy processes, can be understood. Pertinent national education policies in countries receiving aid, in particular, are formed and implemented in a complex nexus. Cultural and context sensitivity can be stimulated through a thorough understanding of this confluence, which subsequently can enable the different policy agents, which function at this meeting point, collaborate to alleviate some of the educational challenges. Comparative and international education, in this respect, has a significant role to play.*

Rationale: Effects of Globalisation on Policy-Making in National Contexts

There is the need to understand what national policy-making means in aid recipient countries, and in the process, it is essential to understand the influence of globalisation on policy-making in these national contexts. Globalisation requires a reconsideration of

...how...policies are formed, shaped and directed...[and] the key problem then becomes understanding the nature of globalisation in ways that enable one to trace more precisely, how, and with what consequences, it affects national policies, what is the nature and extent of their influence (Dale, 1999, p.1).

In applying Bourdieu's "thinking tools", (i.e. habitus, practice, capitals and fields) to policy studies, Rawolle and Lingard (2008) argue that in this era of globalisation cross-field effects (the influence of practices in the policy field on actors in alternative fields) can be a means of categorising, researching and defining policy effects. Both argue in terms of "an emergent global education policy field" and attempt to examine some of the means by which such a field influences national education policy. While their work acknowledges the connection between the global and national policy fields, it does not examine this link empirically. They articulate the need for studies that will investigate this intersection when they argue that:

...research is required now to understand the nature of this emergent global education policy field, its agencies and relationships, associated cosmopolitan policy habitus and practices, and cross-field effects with national education policy field mediated by national capital (p.733).

The current paper is one attempt to contribute to ways by which this global and national education policy nexus referred to as the confluence could be understood. Part 1 introduces the argument, states its rationale and briefly mentions the research procedures. Part 2 briefly outlines the ideas and features that frame the confluence, while acknowledging the importance of its globalisation dimension. It then highlights and examines globalisation. Part 3 illustrates how globalisation frames the confluence by drawing on findings of a study into the shaping of Ghana's ESP. Part 4 then concludes by arguing the significance of the confluence in education policy processes.

Research Approach

My analysis is based on a study that utilised a qualitative research design, and adopted the interpretative approach of investigating actions and behaviour that emerged from the MoE-donor agencies' interactions and their shaping of the ESP in their natural setting. It employed the non-probability sampling (Merriam, 1988; Punch, 1998; Robson, 1993) because the nature of the research questions and the qualitative strategy required this sampling approach. In other words, sampling was done in a consciously purposeful manner. The MoE, the UK Department for International Development (DFID), the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), the World

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Bank and UNICEF were purposefully identified and selected through purposive, snowball and theoretical sampling methods (Punch 1998; Robson 1993; Strauss & Corbin, 1990).¹

The research participants included key actors from the MoE and donor agencies involved on the scene of educational aid delivery in Ghana in the past and present. Though the study's focus was on a current phenomenon, the ESP (2003-2004), it was necessary to situate it in a historical context. Its formulation began in 2002 and, in principle, ended in 2003, although plans for the process were laid down by late 2001. Therefore, the MoE officials in Ghana who interacted with these selected donor agencies, were identified and interviewed, as were individuals or groups who had worked or were working for them and were interested in the ESP in Ghana; and any other individuals who had been or were involved with the MoE-donor interactions with regards to the shaping of the ESP. The main settings within which participant observation occurred, which included events organised around the ESP such as MoE-donor meetings, Education Sector Annual Review (ESAR) sessions and workshops were also purposively sampled, as were documents that were connected to them. While analysis was largely data-led, existing theoretical notions and analytic frames of policy, globalisation among others in the literature were drawn upon and employed as lenses to interpret the primary findings.

Framing Ideologies: Factors that Shape National Policy Spaces & Texts

We now turn to the conceptual framework that defines this meeting point, the confluence. To reiterate the points made above: 'external' ideologies and 'internal' ideologies (they may not always be vastly different) meet in a conceptual space (the confluence of ideas, actions and agents) and it is here where educational policies are ultimately shaped. So, what are the ideologies or policy ideas, actions and agents that flow from the outside into the policy spaces of aid recipient or developing countries, and what and who are the carriers of these ideas? Educational ideologies are carried into the policy environment of developing countries conceptually through economic or cultural *globalisation*, and more physically through *foreign aid* by donors. They are not, for obvious reasons, referred to as ideologies, but the positions or stances adopted *viz a viz* educational development are embedded in the negotiation of aid agreements. Indeed, to mask any sense of an ideology, the notion of '*partnership*' is used to seek a consensus of ideas. This notion is contested and critics of the notion of partnership in aid often highlight the unequal status of the donor-recipient relationship and evoke the notion of unequal *power*. Indeed, the confluence at which national policy processes occur are framed by foreign aid, partnership, power and globalisation processes. Moreover, globalisation as a phenomenon is seen as instrumental in the other three processes. Understanding its processes and how it equally characterises and flows into and shapes the confluence will help to clarify a national policy context (UNESCO, 1999). I shall use the case of Ghana's ESP to exemplify.

Globalisation

Very pertinent to understanding the complexities that inhabit foreign aid donor-recipient interactions and their ramifications for education policy processes is coming to grips with the phenomenon of globalisation, which engenders power asymmetries that in turn shape education policies. Globalisation processes are among the influential factors that form the confluence, where donors, recipients and their ideas and actions meet and national policies are shaped. This section argues that current processes of globalisation maintain and engender economic and political inequalities between developed countries, often the foreign aid donors, and the developing countries, mostly the recipients. As a result, the former are able to significantly influence national education policy processes of the latter. The section examines the notion of globalisation while tracing its interconnectedness with education in developing countries such as Ghana.

According to a report published by the International Working Group on Education (IWGE), presently, globalisation and its processes are continually influencing the education agenda, "[shaping] the way in which aid is delivered to clients, and [guiding] the channels by which donors, governments and others in the development process interact" (IWGE/UNESCO, 1999, p.17). Therefore, in examining the nature and scope of the connection between international donor agencies and education policy development at the level of the recipient nation-state, a diligent probing of the growing scholarship on globalisation and education is necessary (Henry et al., 2001). For Stromquist (2002)² an analysis of how globalisation influences education demands a definition of the features of the former, an understanding of the powers that generate its processes and interconnected consequences, an evaluation of its results not only in terms of economic growth and affluence, but also its positive and negative social effects (the winners and losers), what Petras (1999) calls *distributive* outcomes.

Globalisation is a multifaceted phenomenon that defies simple definition because it lends itself to different perceptions depending on which of its distinct features are being examined and which disciplinary lens is applied. According to Stromquist (2002), some analysts stress its technological elements focusing on its capacity for spatial and temporal constitution as well as its ability to reorganise social links, while others are interested in how its dynamics trigger huge flows of persons and information, which in turn shape a cultural hybridity where the

national/local and the global intersect. She further observes that a number of analysts also examine its socio-political consequences, “primarily on developing countries, by and large the losers of globalization” (2) as well as challenge the political powers that originally and constantly sculpt it. Crucial is Stromquist’s (2002, p.16) assertion that in developing countries particularly, the effect of globalisation on education would be felt mainly:

...through the uncontested adoption of initiatives in developed countries along such lines as decentralization, privatization, the assessment of student performance, and the development of tighter connections between education and the business sector. In this process of adoption, the influence of international lending and development institutions, as carriers of globalizations, is clearly discernable.

Thus, education policy frameworks such as those by the World Bank supported by other donors mirror significantly the “economic globalisation agenda” (Jones & Coleman, 2005, p.38). Moreover, before foreign aid is delivered, donor states demand as a prerequisite that recipient states embrace World Bank policies and strategies (Elson & McGee, 1995; Stromquist, 2002).

Globalisation Framing the Confluence

To exemplify the above, this section outlines some of the findings of the study on which this paper is based. Using some of the evidence from 53 interviews, over 100 documents and observations recorded in field notes, this article provides some of the findings to address how the policy text (the ESP) is shaped when the national government (i.e., Ministry of Education [MoE]/Government of Ghana [GoG]) meet (selected) foreign donors. It also provides insights on how the interactions between the national government and the foreign donors might be characterised theoretically.

In an attempt to broadly address both at a more theoretical level, this paper discusses the main findings of the study in relation to the existing literature on globalisation. It considers the implications of external and internal ideologies generated by globalisation processes for education policy-making in the intersection between the global and national spheres. It weaves part of the account of the confluence, the meeting point of these ideologies, ideas, agents and actions of the MoE and selected donors where the ESP was shaped.

The paper argues that policy formulation in aid dependent developing countries is a process influenced by the dynamics of globalisation factors. Simultaneously, these factors drove and were embedded within the ESP shaping process. The development of the ESP 2003 in Ghana is a policy perceived in this study more as a process than a product. This paper essentially seeks to define if the process of the ESP and the MoE-donor interactions that shape it reflect elements of globalisation. And if so, do they shape the ESP and what are the implications?

The ESP Production & Globalisation

The section argues that the ESP formulation process was influenced by globalisation through donors who were often the carriers of its elements and the architects and leaders of its process. The ESP was an outcome of a policy formulation process conceptually perceived as a confluence of interactions of aid donors and the MoE and their rivers of ideas and actions. It may represent a product, but it can also be seen as a process. As a process, the ESP mapped the contexts of policy text production and influence as a meeting point of external and internal or global and national ideas, actors and actions (Ball, 1994). This confluence was national but became globalised in the process. The section demonstrates how elements of globalisation, such as the Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs), Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and Education for All (EFA) goals (which I call the non-negotiables) along with promptings and pressures from donors infiltrated the ESP process. It also shows how these elements led to the narrowing down of the educational policy priorities of Ghana and even their distortion to a certain degree. Findings suggest a policy imposition, illustrated through expressions of globalisation as imperial and colonial. However, it is worth noting that paradoxically, the MoE sometimes mitigated this imposition of the non-negotiables through the support of some donors. Findings suggested that Ghana’s education sector had experienced an encounter between external/global and internal/national ideologies in the form of ideas and actions of international donor/lender agencies and of the MoE/GoG in their interactions, which tended to shape Ghana’s education policies. The study of the development of the ESP has offered an opportunity to discuss this encounter and its implications for a national policy.

First, the findings indicated that the shaping of the ESP revealed national contexts of policy influence and production which integrated the global (Ball, 1994; Bowe et al., 1992; Lingard & Ozga, 2007). In other words, the process was located on the cusp of the global and national (Lingard, 1996; Taylor et al., 1997; Vidovich, 2001). This means it transcended a state-controlled perspective and reached into the international/global sphere, which in turn seemed to embed the elements of globalisation in the national (Apple, 1989; Ball, 1994; Bowe et al., 1992; Dale, 1989; Ozga, 1990). The global dimension of the ESP process was ensured and demonstrated by virtue of donor-

initiated global policy frameworks. For example, as findings suggested, donors occupying the driving seat ensured that the MoE prioritised policy areas that were emphasised in global policy documents of PRSPs, EFA goals and MDGs, such as girl-child education and universal primary education (UPE). For this reason, the ESP declared that “in view of the GPRS and EFA initiative, the basic education sector, particularly primary schooling is a priority of the Ministry of Education” (ESP I, 2003, p.4). Donor agencies such as UNICEF, DFID and USAID, for instance, would only agree to provide funding if an educational programme was MDG-related. Findings suggested that DFID and the World Bank were working closely together because both were committed to achieving the MDGs. Another example was the World Bank and USAID focusing their funding on HIV/AIDS and health education. Thus, global/transnational policies such as the EFA goals, MDGs, PRSPs were recalibrated to produce the ESP. The global policy frameworks which guided the ESP shaping process, in other words, the treasury of the non-negotiables, within which the MoE was obliged to interact with donors, consolidated the global. These were frameworks also defined by other studies as an “international requirement” (King, 2007, p.359) or as “requirements in the softer sense of ‘urgings’ or pressures linked with promises of funding” (Little, 2008, p.50). These urgings or pressures were exemplified in the promptings, conditionalities or undertakings (See Amoako, 2009), which the MoE received from donors to shape the ESP, a mechanism for the delivery of educational aid. They represented global requirements and also reflected the form of power, which donors exercised over the MoE (ibid.). Through their identity as agents of globalisation processes, enacted through financial and technical assistance, pressure on and policy dialogue with the MoE, donors appeared to have led the designing of the ESP and guaranteed its globalised character. Hence, it could be stated that education policy frameworks prescribed to aid dependent countries like Ghana mirrored significantly the “globalisation agenda” driven by donors (Jones & Coleman 2005, p.38).

Second, donors’ financial assistance/strength, the seemingly donor knowledge authority and the more or less weak nature of the financial and management capacity of the MoE/GoG secured donor dominance and led to the integration of the elements of globalisation in the ESP process. The study discovered that although the ESP represented a means by which the MoE could assume leadership in its future interactions with donors, its development was more donor-led than MoE-led because of the above global “pressures”, which the MoE had to yield to, due to its fragile financial base and technical capacity. For example, several interviews suggested that because the largest finances that ensured the delivery of education to the beneficiaries came from donors and not from the MoE/GoG, the former carried a lot more influence than the latter. It was acknowledged in interviews and documents that the greater portion of finances expended on the ESP formulation process was provided by DFID while UNICEF, the World Bank and USAID also offered technical assistance. MoE-officials maintained that due to the significant amount that donors provided because of the weak financial capacity of the MoE/GoG, the latter had to conform to the donor priorities. The following quote could be said to sum up their view:

Because of the amount of money they provide they are able to force us to move in a certain line even in terms of allocation of resources. There has been this fight...They remind us that we’ve signed up to the MDGs. Gender parity- we were forced to adopt.

(MoE-GES Official).

The next quote also could be considered a summary of the views of several donor and MoE officials about the influence that donors wielded in their interactions with the MoE/GoG:

So who is financing education? Our funding is. Because all the money that is generated by Ghana is spent on salaries and administration, our money comes in to help improve the quality of services. So we exert an influence because we are the people that make a difference and actually this puts us in a position of having some influence, having real influence.

(Donor Official).

Another example was the acknowledgement by some MoE officials that despite the MoE-donor partnership in principle, donors employed triggers and conditions tied to their funding to ensure that the MoE conformed to donor agendas.

Nevertheless, policy struggles characterised the shaping of the ESP through the MoE-donor interactions although the MoE eventually conformed to donor agendas. This implied that some national policy priorities contested with the donor-initiated global policy interests. For example, findings suggested that during an ESAR session, while some donors with sole interest in UPE cautioned the MoE/GoG against spending more on secondary and tertiary education, some MoE officials equally reminded the former that post-basic education also needed investment. This contestation was further demonstrated in a white paper published after the production of the ESP, which did not only emphasise UPE but also technical/vocational, secondary and tertiary education. Yet, funds

allocated to secondary and tertiary education were only made possible because the World Bank and the Spanish Government agreed to support the MoE/GoG. Another example of this contestation was shown in the MoE-donor interactions around the policy issue of girl-child education. While the MoE attempted to argue against prioritising it because, according to a number of MoE officials, a policy on access to education for the disadvantaged could cater for it, donors insisted on its prioritisation. Also, the views of some MoE officials conflicted with donor-initiated global policy priorities such as HIV/AIDS and health education of the World Bank and USAID. These views were about the importance of delegating the responsibility of this form of education to the appropriate institutions (e.g. Ministry of Health) and not making it the responsibility of the MoE because it burdened the MoE and diverted it from its core duty of providing good quality education. The MoE sometimes voiced its own national priorities, which were occasionally heeded by one or two donors, but on the whole donor-initiated global priorities dominated due to the significant financial dependence of the MoE on donors.

The implication of the above findings is that the financial capacity of the MoE/GoG or Ghana in relation to the global economy would determine the extent to which they would or would not yield to these global pressures that donors purveyed during the ESP formulation process. Lingard and others (2005, p.766) drawing on Bourdieu argued that, "the amount of 'national capital' possessed by a given nation within these global fields is a determining factor in the spaces of resistance and degree of autonomy for policy development within the nation". The autonomy of the various countries is influenced through diverse means. As Jayasuriya (2001, p.444, quoted in Lingard et al., 2005, p. 766) suggests, "the focus should not be on the content or degree of sovereignty that the state possesses but the form that it assumes in the global economy".

It could be argued that unlike nation-states like the UK and the USA in the developed world, a developing country such as Ghana does not occupy a privileged economic and dominant position in the intersection between the state and the world in order to secure the advantages of the globalisation processes. The former possess bilateral donor ability with the support of international financial institutions (IFIs), such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF), and so are in a position to dictate the rules of how other countries, particularly the aid dependent ones, are to interact with the global economy and global entities, such as international/transnational policies, institutions and contexts. These international/global policies might influence national policies in developed countries too, but donors' influence in shaping them is significant.

The nation state in the developing world seemed to have less influence on global/international policy processes (Moutsios, 2008, 2009; Stromquist, 2002). While this paper suggests that the analyses of national policy processes should incorporate an extension of the individual nation-state to the global milieu, it contends that some nation-states are more powerfully positioned than others (*ibid.*). The effect of globalisation is undermining the autonomy of all states, but some states and their institutions are potentially more powerfully positioned than others. The powerfully positioned states exercise more authority over their national education policies than those that are not (*ibid.*). In this case, since Ghana, an aid dependent country and, therefore, its MoE/GoG were not powerfully positioned politically and economically in the globalisation geography, they did not have any significant influence on the global policy processes and also did not often exercise full control over the shaping process of the ESP (*ibid.*). Ghana did not compare with powerful nation states such as those in the industrialised world and therefore, was made powerless before an overpowering force (Stromquist, 2002). The main issue about coming to grips with globalisation is to attempt to decipher the means by which it influences national policies (Dale, 2007). It is true that globalisation has not rendered the nation state archaic or non-existent but seems to have transformed the state's policy processes and disabled its capacity for independent policy-making (*ibid.*). It is, therefore, untenable to assert that some nation states, at least, "have not been rendered impotent in the face of an overwhelming challenge, much less replaced by it..." (*ibid.* 48). As Stromquist (2002, p.8) observed "...many of these international bodies faithfully reflect interests of the major industrialized countries". Dale (2007, p.51) brings to the notice of the reader that "the existence of this common ideology demonstrates clearly that though developed countries may have individually ceded some of their national political capacity to international organizations, they have done so voluntarily, in order to maintain their own privileged positions in the world economy..." Indeed, these were the privileged positions that aid recipient countries like Ghana did not occupy (Stromquist, 2002).

As a result of the above, this paper argues that since Ghana did not occupy such privileged positions, it had lost its independent policy making capacity. Moreover, through the shaping of the ESP, which expressed elements of globalisation, the MoE faced a challenging force that distorted its educational policy priorities through a narrowing down process. For example, as findings suggested, donors were more interested in funding UPE than secondary and tertiary education. While it is fair to state that though the global dimension of the ESP was not necessarily disadvantageous to Ghana's education policy development, it often restricted the country's priorities to its parochial interests such as UPE despite the need of the country for more comprehensive priorities regarding primary, secondary, technical/vocational and tertiary education. For instance, findings suggested that, as soon as the ESP was developed, the MoE/GoG published a white paper that highlighted secondary, tertiary and vocational

education as additional priorities while the ESP was more biased towards UPE.

This paper, therefore, challenges the assertion in Cornell's (2007, p.111) OECD study that "global programmes funding priorities correspond well with objectives set out in Ghana's national plans and strategies". Findings suggested how forms of power led donors to set the policy agenda and minimise certain national priorities such as secondary and tertiary education, a neglect that was met with indignation from a section of the MoE officials. A situation such as this is sometimes referred to as policy for and by a country (King, 2007). Thus, contrary to other perspectives (Cornell, 2007), the study's findings suggested that funds generated by the EFA/FTI, a global programme, may have led to a distortion of Ghana's education priorities. (See Takyi-Amoako, 2012 for a detailed examination of this point).

The distortion of the MoE priorities was put succinctly by a donor official:

"I think systems are being distorted by donors like ourselves, because we carry a lot more influence than the Government... I think...mostly what we say carries much greater weight and we can influence policies, strategies."

(Donor Official).

Through the culture of pulling examined in the study on which this paper stands, which occurred because of the donor practice of earmarking support and tying aid, the distortion of MoE priorities, which culminated in the fragmented approach to education management, was significantly exemplified. For example, as one donor official put it, "...It stops them [the MoE] from taking a more steady view and approach to development..." (Donor Official, 2003). Indeed, the incidence of tying aid absolutely to particular policies or policy interests represents a potent way in which donors make recipients conform with global or donor agendas (Kuder, 2005). The global policy frameworks (the non-negotiables, or "pressures") within which the MoE was obliged to interact with donors reproduced the donor-designed global policy priorities within the Ghana national context. It manipulated as well as predetermined the national priorities of the ESP. This situation could also be referred to as trade-offs between national agenda and international donor priorities (King, 2007).

The ESP shaping process was perhaps akin to policy imposition (Dale, 1999). It was a process that employed the global policy systems obliging Ghana or the MoE/GoG to accept prescribed policies such as the PRSP (GPRS), EFA goals, and MDGs from supra-national bodies and international aid organisations like the World Bank, DFID, USAID and UNICEF through the process of leverage. In this sense and in the words of Dale (1999) "the locus of viability", the body which determined the feasibility of the ESP was not national but international. For instance, this study discovered that the ESP and Ghana's Proposal for EFA/FTI had to be endorsed by the donor community before they could attract donor funding. Donors' apparent knowledge authority and their frequent complaints that the level of management and technical skills that the MoE possessed was too low also guaranteed the elements of globalisation in the ESP process and ensured this imposition. Further examples indicated that the development of the ESP and the writing of its terms of reference involved donors, donor-hired consultants, and technical assistants as the experts from whom the MoE officials received "expert knowledge", a knowledge which aligned more often than not with the donor-initiated global policies (Moutsios, 2008, 2009). Through global programmes and policies that attracted donor funding and technical support, policies were transferred to Ghana through 'agenda-setting' approaches in transnational and supra-national contexts like the EFA goals and MDGs set under the leadership of donors in Jomtien in 1990 and Dakar in 2000 respectively. Moutsios (2008, 2009) asserted that what was considered a national policy success was no longer decided within national boundaries but in transnational contexts populated by international organisations. In this case global policies such as the MDGs and EFA goals encapsulated and predetermined the national such as the ESP, but it was within the national context that the former expanded (Beck 2005). Beck (2005) argued that it was primarily within the contexts of international organisations and not in national contexts that the principles of the power game of global policy were determined, approved, and remoulded. Like other studies, this paper argues that these principles not only altered fundamentally Ghana's national political and social processes but were also entrenched within their body politic through the foreign aid system (Callaghy, 1990; Hutchful, 1996; Kraus, 1991, 2002; Toye 1991; Whitfield, 2006). Thus, the development of the ESP witnessed a policy imposition, and therefore would be located at the end of the education policy transfer continuum labeled as involuntary influence (Phillips & Ochs, 2004). Findings suggest that the contexts of the ESP influence and production reflected an obligatory imitation of policy and practice from foreign contexts (ibid.). In this case policy transfer occurred not through borrowing but imposition (ibid.).

This imposition has led to the view that the ESP shaping process in an aid recipient African country like Ghana illustrates globalisation as having colonial and imperial expressions. Similar to other studies, the findings of this study show that donor leverage was not only financial but also sometimes originating from imperial and colonial history (Abdi, 2006; Stromquist, 2002). The impact of globalisation on countries in sub-Saharan Africa has not often been beneficial (Petras, 1999; Stromquist, 2002). It is a complex phenomenon that has been made even more so by

the effects of imperialism, neo-colonisation and neoliberalism, all of which have contributed to the dismantling of sovereignty and cooperative machinery (Abdi, 2006; Harvey, 2005; Odora Hoppers, 1999). As a result, the market, along with other hegemonic powers such as imperialism and (neo-) colonialism (in the case of sub-Saharan African countries), usurps states' control of education policy processes and differentially transforms their economic and political authority (Stromquist, 2002). While developed countries seem to benefit immensely from this alteration, the developing ones emerge as the losers as they experience imperialistic tendencies in their relations with the former (ibid.; Petras, 1999).³ For example, in Ghana, the World Bank with the support of the IMF and other donors like DFID, USAID and UNICEF prescribed the neo-liberal macro-economic policy framework in the form of a poverty reduction strategy known formerly as the *Ghana Poverty Reduction Strategy (GPRS I)* and later as the *Growth and Poverty Reduction Strategy (GPRS II)*. These donor prescriptions included trade liberalisation measures that benefitted foreign-owned companies but weakened the economic freedom and growth of aid dependent countries (Stewart and Wang 2003; WDM 2005). In order for the MoE to qualify for donor funds it was imperative that the ESP, which was regarded by donors as a mechanism for the delivery of donor funds to the MoE, drew on *GPRS I*.

It is valid that the contestations that characterise the terrain of policy processes when nation states have autonomy do not differ dramatically from those that are occurring now with globalisation usurping states' control over national policies (Dale, 2007). However, the notion that a "difference between globalisation and imperialism/colonialism is that what once happened to only third world and colonized countries is now happening to the more powerful states, previously the initiators rather than the recipients of external pressures on their national policies" is debatable (Dale, 2007, p.54). This is because donor countries might equally be recipients of external pressures. Yet they remained not only the previous but also the present source of these pressures, and therefore, better placed to mitigate them for their own national benefit than most aid recipient African countries. According to Leach (1999), colonialism with its damaging repercussions is still very much alive. She states:

...It lives on in its new guise of multinational and global corporations; in northern hegemony over global political, economic, and technological developments; and in the international development agenda whereby aid agencies in the north hold a monopoly not only over accepted definitions of development, but also over the options and choices made available to resource-poor governments and individuals in the south. These agencies determine not only how development should be viewed but also how it should be shaped (Leach, 1999, p.372).

Although globalisation is a highly complex phenomenon that cannot be reduced to a single element, this study sees imperialism and colonisation as constitutive and lying at the core of globalisation. Although the findings of the present study did not explicitly draw direct links between imperial/colonial history and the leverage donors possessed over the MoE/GoG, they alluded to colonial or imperial history as the origin of a special relation between some donors and Ghana or the MoE/GoG. For example, to be able to influence the ESP shaping process significantly a donor had to occupy a special position in relation to the MoE/GoG or Ghana, and colonial history was one defining element of this "specialness". Findings suggest that an imperial historical link between a bilateral donor country and the recipient country was regarded as shaping the nature of interactions, which the donor regarded as special (Amoako, 2009).

Like Henry and colleagues this paper argues that "[at] the normative level...globalisation constitutes an emergent form of Western imperialism carried through cultural institutions such as education" (Henry et al. 2001, p.4). Although globalisation does not imply that the whole world has been 'Westernised', every arena of social existence ought to determine its stance with regards to the industrialised West. Unequivocally, the capitalist industrial West emerges as the measure for the policy choices of nations (Leach, 1999; Waters, 1995, p.3; ibid.). Since policy choices in countries like Ghana were made in a manner that should secure donor approval, the ESP process might seem to engender imperialistic tendencies.

In concluding this section, it is worth reiterating that the shaping of the ESP was influenced by globalisation through donors who were often its most powerful architects, drivers and agents. The production of the ESP indicated that the global policies or the non-negotiables such as the PRSPs, the EFA goals and the MDGs had to be adopted first by the MoE/GoG before it could qualify for donor support. The prompting that the MoE/GoG experienced from donors and the emphasis by the latter on the importance of the global dimension to the ESP were typical examples. These represented some of the interrelated effects generated by globalisation and revealed through the ESP formulation process. In attempting to analyse how globalisation has influenced education in the manner of scholars such as Stromquist (2002) and Dale (2007), this study has clarified some characteristics of globalisation and the power dynamics it generated in the shaping of the ESP. Global policies, the non-negotiables, which got embedded in the national policy, the ESP, exemplified the cultural hybridity that signified the effect of globalisation (Stromquist, 2002). Since globalisation processes are both ideological and material, its normative presumptions need to be confronted (ibid.). This essentially involves a political obligation to institute boundaries for

education policy processes for national benefit (ibid.). These parameters must determine the pressures of global transformation while questioning the ideology of the neo-liberal notion of globalisation as a given (Henry et al., 2001).

The findings contribute to our understanding of the means by which an emergent global education policy field influenced a national education policy field, what Rawolle and Lingard (2008, p.733) refer to as the “cross field effects with national education policy field mediated by national capital”. The shaping of the ESP was an illustration of these cross-field effects between the global policy field and a national policy field, which this paper referred to as the confluence. In other words, along with other factors globalisation shaped the environment within which the MoE-donor interactions and their formulation of the ESP occurred. The confluence guaranteed the global dimension of the ESP, which perhaps culminated in the shrinking, and misrepresentation, of the educational policy interests of the MoE/GoG. This was regarded as a process of policy imposition depicted through the expressions of globalisation as imperialistic. For this reason, there had been calls that it was imperative that such a confluence which shaped a national policy like the ESP, and accommodated the global-national policy interactions, should be underscored by the principles of country-led partnership.

Significance of the Confluence and Concluding Remarks

Education policy processes, particularly, in aid recipient countries have created a space for both external and internal agents to interact, which this paper calls the confluence, a point of connectedness where globalisation processes are rife. The confluence is where important national policies are shaped and implemented. It is hugely important and a significant opportunity for policy actors to explore this confluence with “a comparative-collaborative-reflective approach” (Tatto, 2011, p.510). Here, the role of comparative and international education is crucial. The realisation of its hegemonic dimension, hence calls to its agents to adopt democratic approaches, sensitises one to the sociology of absences, and the notion that silences do not just happen but are constructed (Santos 2005; Dale 2006). Thus, the confluence acknowledges the possible inequalities engendered by globalisation in policy processes. It encourages dialogue and mutual intelligibility between the multiple cultures and knowledges that both national and global policy agents bring to its space, which is similar to Santos’ (2005) notion of translation. This has the potential to create opportunities for reciprocal learning between different policy actors, even if some are from dominant cultures interacting with those from the margins (the other / subaltern).

Like Santos’ contact zones, understanding the confluence facilitates learning and reflection in education policy processes thereby creating less absences and silences. The aim is to eventually undermine marginalisation and voicelessness. The authority to determine the feasibility of knowledges, or the group that assigns recognition to them will not only be international/global but also national/local. In other words, this authority will not only be located within the dominant cultures but also at the peripheries. Hence the process of knowledge determination or recognition as legitimate or approved, what Bourdieu calls *reconnaissance* will assume much more democratic dimensions (Appadurai, 2001; Bourdieu, 1991; Dale, 2006; Robertson, 2006; Santos, 2005). In this way, agents of comparative and international education involved in policy or research processes will gain the opportunity to enrich, and not deplete their experiential coffers.

Acknowledging the policy process as a confluence promotes increased sensitivity to culture and context, and helps to stem the tide of uncritical transfers of globally dominant models to national policy spaces. Adopting this stance will incline both external and internal policy makers and implementers to acknowledge the complex processes of globalisation (including partnership, funding/foreign aid, policy and power), and attempt to devise ways to explore these processes to the advantage of the policy beneficiaries. Nevertheless, the notion of the confluence is still to be regarded a “situated knowledge” that is partial and therefore, must constantly lend itself to rigorous critical examination of and reflection on its processes (Haraway, 1988). Overall though, I argue that the confluence is an essential construct worth engaging with in education policy processes (and perhaps in research processes) within the context of comparative and international education.

Notes

¹ In employing snowballing, most of the respondents helped in identifying other relevant respondents, especially when it was difficult to identify relevant key people (Robson, 1993). In the case of theoretical sampling, sampling was done on the basis of ideas that had established theoretical significance to the developing theory of MoE-donor interactions and their shaping of the ESP (Strauss & Corbin, 1990: 177).

² See Stromquist (2002) for a more comprehensive definition of globalisation in relation to education.

³ There is no doubt that globalisation creates vulnerable populations in the developed world too. However, the potential to mitigate the social costs it incurs within this context is stronger than in aid dependent African countries. This is due to the fact that developed nations are powerfully positioned economically and politically.

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