Democratization and participation:
National education policy-making in Africa

Eric Fredua-Kwarteng
OISE, University of Toronto, Canada: *efredua_2000@yahoo.ca*

This is Ghanaian case study that focuses on widening participation in national education policy-making via a social justice panel. It analyses the narratives of two former members of the Ghana Education Reform Committee and focus-groups interviews of ordinary Ghanaians. While the narratives of commission members are in favour of maintaining the status-quo, those of the focus groups express a strong interest in having opportunities to relate issues about the schooling system in Ghana. The paper suggests the social justice model as the most appropriate model to address the exclusion of ordinary Ghanaians from the education policy-making table. The conclusion makes democratic, moral and implementation arguments for the participation of that segment of the population in national education policy-making.

Keywords: Citizenry engagement; democracy; education policy-making; participation; social justice

INTRODUCTION: NATURE, CHARACTERISTICS AND SCOPE OF NATIONAL EDUCATION COMMISSIONS

National education policy-making in all former British colonies in Africa (i.e. Gambia, Ghana, Kenya, Malawi, Namibia, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Tanzania, Uganda and Zambia) follows a British colonial model that favours the participation of and consultation with a tiny segment of the population who possess English language facility. In this model, the national education policy-making process involves the appointment of a national education commission or committee to review national goals, outcomes, philosophy and policies of education, and to make appropriate recommendations to the government. The National Education Review Commission is normally made up of representatives of various parts of the education system; representatives are drawn from different sectors of society. Normally, the government of the country is not officially represented on a commission but the ministry of education provides all the necessary technical support and other resources required for commissions to carry out its work successfully. As well, the government appoints the commission's chair, determines the terms of reference for commission, and the deadline by which it needs to submit its final report. The chair establishes the commission's agenda based on its terms of reference, monitors its activities and periodically informs the government and media about the progress of its work. The review commission carries out a national consultative process using a variety of methods, such as: submission of papers containing ideas, suggestions and insights; petitions and town hall meetings; press conferences; travelling around the country to solicit citizen views; and focus group discussions.

After gathering all the information it needs in accordance with its terms of reference and the established deadline, the commission writes its final report. In the report, it formulates a comprehensive set of recommendations on future education goals, issues, challenges and policy solutions for submission to the government. Upon receiving the commission's report, the government evaluates the recommendations and then issues a White Paper. The White Paper explains the government's position in relation to the recommendations and indicates which of the recommendations it will develop into policies, regulations, programs or plans and implement them. Finally, the government releases the White Paper for t public reaction (Evans, Sack, & Shaw, 1996).

Five characteristics distinguish educational commissions in Ghana and, for that matter, all former British colonies in Africa. First, the language of communication (LOC) that commissions use is English, which has been adopted as the official language and language of instruction in educational institutions in all former British colonies in Africa. Accordingly, participation in commission work, either as members or members of the public, requires a facility in English language. Second, members of a commission are not responsible for formulating strategies, methods or finding resources for implementing its policy recommendations (Itaaga, 1998). That responsibility lies with the government that appointed the commission. Third, education commissions play only advisory roles, in that their authority is limited by their terms of reference, which are determined by the governments that appoint them; commissions are neither part of the bureaucracy nor a branch of the government.

A government that appoints a commission is not obliged legally or morally to implement any policies or regulations based on the recommendations of the commission. Nevertheless, commissions exercise immense subtle influence on the initial development of education policy through the distillation of ideas, issues, problems and directions governments should take (Muricho & Chang'ach, 2013; Vidovich, 2001). In other words, commissions exercise considerable influence in framing educational issues and challenges in the country where they are appointed. Allied to this is that members of commissions are part of the educated elite – who are a distinctive group with technical, managerial and professional credentials (Bariledum & Serebe, 2013). Owing to the influence they wield, education commissions have historically shaped the form and nature of the education systems in all former British colonies in Africa.

Fourth, contrary to prevailing misconception, the scope of the work of Commissions goes far beyond reviewing existing education policies, programs, regulations or legislation. Commissions also examine implementation obstacles of existing education policies, identify current and future education development issues and propose solutions (Muricho & Chang'ach, 2013; Nudzor, 2014). Lastly, national education commissions are transitory and of limited life expectancy. They are quickly dissolved as soon as they submit their final report to the government. The standard norm is that commissions are invariably appointed in response to public or international pressures to solve specific education problems or crises in national education systems (Amutabi, 2003; Nudzor, 2014).

The purpose of this paper is to argue for the participation of ordinary Ghanaians (including women) in national education commissions' policy development activities through a social justice panel. The paper argues that the current participatory and consultative model of national education committees is undemocratic, elitist and top-

down. This paper discusses the questions: Whose voices are heard and whose are unheard in the current model of national education policy-making in Ghana? Whose problems or needs are addressed or unaddressed? Whose interests and aspirations garner news headlines and are ultimately served? To provide a context for the discussion of these questions, the following section of this paper provides a brief history of national education commissions in Ghana and then a critique of the traditional mode of operation of education commissions to illustrate how they exclude the voices of ordinary Ghanaians. The fourth and fifth sections of the paper describe the research method used for responding to the above research questions and the theoretical perspective of the research. These sections are followed by a discussion of results and of the social justice panel as a model for allowing marginalized women and ordinary Ghanaians to participate in education policy-making activities of education commissions. The paper concludes that education policy-making requires participation of and consultation with wide segments of the population to ensure acceptance, cooperation and implementation at the grass-roots and national levels. The conclusion also advances strong moral imperative arguments of democracy and anchors those arguments with reference to other Ghanaian studies that have found the current traditional policy participatory strategies inadequate.

GHANA'S NATIONAL EDUCATION POLICY COMMISSIONS/COMMITTEES

Ghana is a small West African country that shares a common border with the Ivory Coast to the west, Burkina Faso to the north, Togoland to the east, and the Gulf of Guinea and Atlantic Ocean to the south. It has a land mass of about 238,535 km^2 and an estimated population of 27 million. Ghana is one of the world's largest producers of gold, diamonds and cocoa. In 2005, Ghana had 12,200 primary schools, 5450 junior secondary schools, 510 senior secondary schools, 8 publicly-funded universities and a fast growing number of private universities. The Ghana Ministry of Education (MOE) is the main national education policy and regulation body, and the Ghana Education Services (GES) is the policy, legislative and regulation implementation arm. The GES is also the designer and evaluator of publicly-funded education programs in the country.

Since attaining political independence from Great Britain on 6 March 1956, the national education policy development process in Ghana has consistently followed the British colonial model described above: starting with the Educationists Committee in 1920; and subsequently Mills-Odoi Commission in 1966; Kwapong Review Committee in 1970; the Dzobo Commission in 1974; the Education Commission on Basic and secondary Education in 1987; the University Rationalization Committee in 1988; and the Education Reform Review Committee in 2002. The Educationists Committee or 1920 recommended the expansion of basic education in Ghana, which then had only Castle Schools and a few mission schools. It also recommended moral education consisting of character building, thrift, and temperance as part of the official school curriculum (Antwi, 1992). All the committees or commissions were formed to assist in reforming Ghana's education system by way of ideas, strategies and suggestions.

One of the Mills-Odoi Commission (1966) recommendations was that management of secondary schools should be centralized and private schools be subject to regular inspection in the same manner as public schools. Furthermore, the Dzobo Commission (1974) recommended six years of primary schooling, three years of junior secondary schooling, and three years of senior secondary schooling. These recommendations were

partially implemented on an experimental basis during Busia's regime in 1969-1972. The 1987 Educational Commission was concerned with examining the possibilities of implementing the junior and secondary school concepts recommended in the Dzobo Commission's report (Fobi, Koomson, & Godwyl. 1995).

This brief history indicates the level of influence the various commissions have exercised in shaping the present education system in Ghana. In fact, it is almost impossible to write a realistic education history of any of these former British colonies without making references to education commissions and the roles they have played in framing issues and in shaping the education systems in those countries. The Committee on Review of Education Reforms in Ghana, the latest commission to be appointed, was inaugurated on 17 January 2002 under the leadership of Professor Jophus Anamuah-Mensah (Government of Ghana, n.d). The terms of reference for this 30-member commission required the examination of the goals and philosophy of the then education system with a view to: ensuring the system's relevance to the development of human resources for the country; determining strategies for the introduction of information technology in all schools and colleges; re-examining the basic school system; determining how best to mainstream pre-school education into the formal education system; and considering strategies for the professional development of all educators (Ghana Ministry of Education, 2002).

As part of its strategy for data collection, the Committee conducted press briefings, reviewed existing education documents, received memoranda, visited selected education institutions, undertook regional visits and formed special task forces. The Committee completed its work in October 2002 and, in December2003, the government issued a White Paper on the report of the Committee. The White Paper adopted the Committee's recommendations with, among other things, universal free, compulsory education consisting of two years of kindergarten, six years of primary education, three years of junior high schooling and four years of senior secondary schooling. The government also accepted the Committee's recommendation to set up a national apprenticeship program for youth interested in the trades and those unable to obtain admission into senior secondary school.

CRITIQUE OF EDUCATION COMMISSION METHODS OF OPERATION

Traditionally, education commissions in Ghana use methods of operation that form a barrier to the participation of women and ordinary Ghanaians. As an illustration, the Ghana government's White Paper on the report of the Education Reform Review Committee (n.d) states:

> The committee received a large number of memoranda from the public, and invited many people to make presentations at its sittings. The readiness of the public to offer information and ideas to enhance the work of the committee indicates a high level of participation and interest of the public in the national task assigned to it (para. 4).

There are conceptual problems with certain words and phrases in the above quote. First, the term public is not a homogenous entity or mass without differentiation to ethnicity, gender, occupation, or social-economic class. Those who submitted "the large number of memoranda" to the Committee, and those who made "presentations" to the Committee in English (the official language of communication of Ghana) were members of the minority

educated elite; and not the majority of the population consisting of market women, farmers, miners, farm workers, factory workers, construction workers, bus drivers, cleaners, and office clerks (Holland & Blackburn, 1998). These segments of the population have limited or no English proficiency skills and are unlikely to submit any memoranda, information or make presentations to the Committee.

Similarly, the Committee did not invite any persons from those population groups to make presentations in their indigenous languages. In fact, the use of English as the exclusive means of communication for the Committee's work suggests that a vast majority of the Ghanaian population were excluded from the process of participation in the Committee's work. Mantilla (1999) notes that participation has two distinct meanings: one conjures the notion of participation as a joint endeavour, and the other the notion of participation for a specific purpose. Participation, as stated in the White paper, implies participation for the express purpose of supplying information. This is what ordinary Ghanaians would be capable of doing if the language of communication were the indigenous language, the forum not intimidating and the participants treated with respect and dignity. The White Paper also states:

> The Committee adopted a variety of strategies towards the conduct of its work. These included press briefings, review of existing documents, receipt of memoranda, visits to selected institutions and organizations, regional visits and the formation of special task force (para. 4).

Who are the authors of the documents the Committee reviewed? Which institutions and organizations were visited and where are they located? The Committee visited the ten regions and, undoubtedly, these were regional capitals, not the rural districts in the regions. Why? The Committee's press briefings were published in the national dailies and broadcast on the national television in English. These participatory strategies, such as press briefings, and the special task forces that were established and certain people invited to make presentations to, did not create any opportunities for ordinary folks to participate. Only the members of the minority educated elite had access to those English newspapers and television programs.

Lamenting this sad situation of exclusion, Bodomo (1996) identifies two critical issues with regards to the use of foreign rather than indigenous language in Africa. First, it prevents the possibility of generating local initiatives since only a tiny fraction of the population can participate productively in local conversations on development issues. Second, mass participation in development discourses at the national level is plainly impossible to attain. Socio-linguistically, people are more comfortable and capable of expressing their thoughts and sentiments in a language they use in their everyday social interactions. The use of the English language as the only official language in Ghana has condemned an enormous portion of the population to, so to speak, "social ostracism", disqualifying them from participating in education public policy-making in Ghana.

RESEARCH METHOD, DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

The research was designed as a qualitative study with an interest in meanings, perspectives and understandings gained from human narratives. Two major sources were used to collect data. The first source was semi-structured interviews of two former members of the latest 30-member education commission that was inaugurated on 17

January 2002 and completed its work in October 2002. A professional colleague of mine in Ghana contacted two members of the Committee on 18 July 2006 who agreed to share their perspectives on the issue with me in a telephone interview on 2 August 2005. Each of the individuals signed a written consent form to indicate their willingness to participate. The form noted their rights to withdraw from participation at any time during the interview and to refuse to disclose information deemed confidential. The form also assured them of their personal anonymity in future discussion of results. Each telephone interview lasted an average of one hour and was audio-taped. The recordings were later transcribed then analysed to determine themes (Ryan & Bernard, 2003). The interviews were based on the following major question: What benefits or costs would accrue with the participation of and consultation with ordinary Ghanaians (including women) in policy-making activities of national education commissions?

The second source of data for the study were interviews with focus groups. The primary purpose of these interviews was to determine if ordinary Ghanaians have issues with the current schooling system and to assess their willingness to participate in national education policy-making activities of commissions. Two focus groups were recruited through a Pentecostal church with branches in Kumasi and Accra. Announcements were made at each of the branches asking ordinary Ghanaians who were interested in participating in a group discussion about schooling issues in Ghana to join a focus group. Each member of the group signed a consent form that assured them of anonymity and confidentiality of their names and other social demographic details in published works.

Ordinary Ghanaians were defined as follows:

- Any Ghanaian without a post-secondary education;
- At least 18 years old;
- Engaged in one of the following occupation categories: retailing, wholesaling, hawking/peddling, farming, dress-making/tailoring, painting, carpentry, brick-laying, barbering, bus/taxi driving, driver-assisting, hair-dressing, cleaning, baking, cooked-food sellers/restaurateurs, mechanics, and trade apprentices.

A total of 63 people in the two branches of the church expressed an interest in participating in the focus-group meetings. However, the final focus-group members were intentionally limited to allow the researcher to moderate effectively. The focus-group session in the Kumasi branch of the church took place on 14 February 2016 and lasted approximately 45 minutes. The group comprised 17 people, ten of whom were women. The session was audio-taped with permission of the group. The Accra focus-group session occurred on 24 February 2016 and comprised 14 people, none of whom were women. The session took 60 minutes and was also audio-taped. Both groups discussed two major questions in the Akan indigenous language: What issues bother you most about schooling in Ghana? How willing are you to participate in a government organized forum to discuss education issues in Ghana?

A focus-group is an organized and controlled discussion with a chosen group of individuals for the purpose of obtaining information about their perspectives on issues specified by the researcher (Hughes & Du Mont, 1993). Focus-groups were used in that they assisted the researcher to elicit multiple views on the issues of schooling in Ghana and provided a greater amount of data in a short period compared to individual interviews. The recruitment of the focus-group members through a Pentecostal church is justified on

the grounds that Pentecostal churches are now a magnet that attracts Ghanaians from all walks of life, especially the youth and women. The phenomenal growth of Pentecostal churches in Ghana and other African countries may be attributed to their exceptional pastoral care; preaching of material prosperity and wealth creation strategies; providing a high probability of meeting suitors for marriage; and offering comprehensive spiritual healing (Diara & Onah, 2014).

THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVE

The theoretical perspective underpinning this research is that proposed by Joshee and Goldberg's (2005) theory of social justice in policy-making. The theory advocates the participation of traditionally excluded groups in public policy development processes. In sum, Joshee and Goldberg's (2005) theory proposes empowerment of marginalized segments of society through participation in public policy-making. Though the theory was originally proposed to create spaces for the participation of underrepresented groups in policy-making processes in Canada, it has universal application in the policy development field with regards to participation in education policy formulation in Ghana and the rest of the African continent.

Four fundamental concepts underlying Joshee and Goldberg's (2005) theoretical perspective are pertinent to this research. The theory conceptualizes democracy as the process of communication in which citizens, regardless of socio-economic background, ethnicity, race, gender, physical ability or educational attainment, participate collectively in making decisions affecting their lives. Thus, it is against the principle of fairness and equity that people should be made to deal with the effects of policies on their lives without having any say in the development of those policies. This principle suggests that democracy is more than representation, a situation in which some people are elected or appointed to represent others. The participatory principle focuses on total inclusion and gives greater attention to the participation of those who, historically, have been excluded from the process of policy development and implementation. The second concept of Joshee and Goldberg's theory is that allowing people from all walks of life to participate in policy-making does not diminish social differences. Joshee and Goldberg emphasize that social differences must be acknowledged and efforts made to understand others' perspectives with respect and humility. The third concept of Joshee and Goldberg's theory concerns removing oppressive structures and barriers that prevent the participation of marginalized people in the policy development and implementation process. In the Ghanaian case, the use of the English language in the activities of the education commission has made it impossible to generate mass interest and participation in education discourses.

The final component of Joshee and Goldberg's theory is the development of a social justice panel model that can be used to change the structure of exclusionism in policy participation. This is how Joshee and Goldberg describe the social justice panel:

> The social panel would be selective drawing from groups that are traditionally underrepresented in decision-making . . . It would include activists, scholars, and government officials and would be established for an extended period of time. It would be national in scope and would allow for communication through writing, electronic mail, and face-to-face encounters. Participants would be invited into the panel on the basis of their knowledge, commitment, and engagement . . . The panel

would be moderated by an individual who would act as a facilitator for the dialogue. The moderator would also initially be responsible for providing participants with background information on the policy process and the issue (pp. 7-8).

Two approaches dominate the policy reform field in Africa: reform for efficiency and reform for empowerment (Swartzendruber & Njovens, 1993). The core of Joshee and Goldberg's (2005) policy participation theory supports the empowerment of the excluded segments of the population rather than policy reform for efficiency. It is also a bottom-up approach as opposed to a top-down approach to policy-making, which focuses on national elites, professionals, experts and government bureaucrats (Mantilla, 1999). This theoretical model is pro-lower class, in that it advocates recognition, inclusion and fair treatment of ordinary citizens from the perspective of social justice. It is additionally proactive by courting the interest of ordinary segments of population rather than waiting for these segments to demand participation through violent or non-violent social activism. Policy reform for efficiency, on the other hand, relates to the adoption of the tenets of instrumental rationality which uses lifeless mathematical instruments such as cost-benefit analysis, linear programming, risk management and econometric models to improve policy analysis, development and implementation in Africa.

DISCUSSION OF INTERVIEW AND FOCUS-GROUPS' NARRATIVES

Over the decades, several justifications have been put forward to explain why the wider public might be excluded from participating in policy-making. As applied to national education policy-making in Ghana, one respondent stated that "all over the world education policies and regulations are made by experts, not ordinary folks". He wondered how ordinary people could make any useful contributions to education policy development for the country when they do not possess expertise or have not achieved higher education credentials. Another respondent similarly stated: "apparently the issues involved in making education policies would be overwhelming and over the intellectual capacity of those ordinary folks. It is unthinkable that market women who could hardly read a small portion of English text with comprehension or write their names could participate in education commission's activities either as presenters or submitters of information." These assertions justify the need for presenters or submitters of information or petitions to national education commissions to be made up of people with varying degrees of post-secondary education attainments, arguing that such people would make more useful contributions compared to ordinary folks. It also implies that, in terms of cost-benefit analysis, preference should be given to the participation of the elite class as opposed to the marginalized, non-educated class. The assertions are at odds with my belief that, while the non-educated class is incapable of writing a long English prose about the education system, they certainly have a story to tell in their indigenous languages about the education system either as parents/guardians, elders or community members.

Green (1994) contends that a policy question or issue does not belong to the domain of theoretical or technical expertise. On the contrary, it is a moral and practical question. Green's thesis is that experts or professionals do not necessarily make better policy decisions than their non-expert counterparts. As an illustration, one of the terms of reference of the Education Reform Review Committee was to re-examine the philosophy of education of the Ghanaian school system. This is a value-laden issue which ordinary Ghanaian folks could help to develop. Perhaps their oral presentations to the Education Reform Review Committee would take the form of statements, stories, metaphors,

proverbs or wise sayings. Whatever the forms, they are still valuable for developing a philosophy of education.

The interview respondents also contended that mass participation of ordinary folks in public education policy-making will not lead to effective or quality policy decisions. This perspective implies that public decision-making is a technical issue exclusively for the technocrats, not a practical democratic issue whose solution requires moral choice making. The respondents strongly shared this perspective because they believed that some level of technical knowledge about education is needed for effective participation in commission work. Nonetheless, commissions normally make recommendations based on discussions and reflections of what they have heard or what has been submitted to them. This is philosophical in nature rather than technical, calling into question the view that Ghanaian professionals and elites, who dominate the policy-making landscape, are better able to make effective recommendations than non-elites.

Further, the interview respondents drew a demarcation line between rational policy decision-making and democratic decision-making. The respondents claim that, while democracy involves mass participation in making broad organic future choices for a society, rational public education policy-making belongs to those who have been specifically elected or appointed to formulate and execute it. The respondents held a narrow view of democracy believing that it is merely a representational system rather than a communication process in which citizens participate to discuss issues affecting their lives, those of their families, their communities and future generations. The respondents' conception of democracy conforms to the traditional, pre-colonial mode of democracy in which sub-chiefs represented the people in *Ahenfie* forums without direct participation of the people in those forums. Although, it should be noted, that sometimes even *Ahenfie* forums were open to participation by ordinary people. As well, an entrenched belief of the respondents was that greater citizen engagement in the public education policy-making process would imply redefining the roles of education commission members. One might, then, ask this question: What would be the roles and functions of the individual members of education commissions if ordinary Ghanaians were also engaged? As one of the respondents honestly admitted, "It would not change the roles and functions of the members in any practical way, except that it would generate extensive amount of data which the members may not have the capacity or training to deal with."

Walters, Aydelotte, and Miller (2000) state that the purpose of public involvement and the stage of the policy development that requires public involvement should be clearly spelt out. For example, if the stage of the policy development is generating alternatives, public participation may involve helping policy developers to search for alternatives and educating the public about the issue. Therefore, allowing ordinary Ghanaians to participate in education policy-making does not mean that commission members would become redundant or their roles would be usurped by those folks. Indeed, the participation of ordinary Ghanaians in commission policy activities would not change the social status of these people, nor does it mean social differences would be eliminated. Furthermore, to what extent are the commission members' values and norms congruent with those of the majority public? The respondents believed that commission members are selected so that they represent all views, concerns and aspirations concerning education in Ghana. This narrative suggests that commission members are so altruistic that their recommendations to government are similar or approximate the views of the majority of the population.

However, as part of the elite group, commission members have their own values and ethos cultivated through their long association with the Westernized education they received in post-secondary institutions, particularly university. For this reason, it is fair to say that they will formulate arguments and recommendations that essentially promote their own values and interests rather than those of the majority ordinary Ghanaians. The history of education commissions in Ghana provides significant evidence that education-specific issues concerning Ghanaian women (including girls), rural communities, under-resourcing of public schools and demoralization of teachers, corporal punishment and irrelevant curriculum and pedagogy are yet to receive any national attention at the policy-making table. These problems were highlighted in the discussions in the focus-groups.

Additionally, the interview respondents argued that allowing ordinary Ghanaians to participate in education commission activities would be time-consuming, financially expensive and complicated. The respondents admitted that commission members may lack training in effective public engagement, especially if the presentations of participating segments of the public are non-traditional, such as narrating personal stories or experiences, using proverbs and metaphors to convey meanings, and otherwise sayings. They agreed that, "this is where excessive time of the commission would be consumed." They noted that such participation would cost too much in terms of time and logistics to complete the commission's work. As one of the respondents said, "The amount of logistics required such as translation into English, or the services of interpreters, you name it, would be too much for the commission's limited budget to accommodate. I mean the financial costs would be out of the roof!"

Consequently, the issue is how national education committees construct the target audiences of national education policies (Schneider & Ingram, 1997). If ordinary Ghanaian folks, such as market women, housewives, construction workers, miners, subsistence farmers, fishers, and farm and factory workers are construed as "illiterates" or without intellectual capacity to reason, for example, they would be excluded. That implies they are intellectually immature to engage in any stages of the education policy development process without incurring astronomical financial and time costs to the government; hence, their exclusion from the education policy-making process may be justified.

The financial cost of allowing ordinary Ghanaians to participate in national education policy formulation is minimal compared to the ultimate costs the government would have to bear in an event of policy failure. The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD, 2001) indicates that, "Strengthening relations with citizens is a sound investment in better policy-making and a core element of good governance. It allows governments to tap into new sources of policy-relevant ideas, information and resources when making decisions" (p. 1). While I am not universalizing the benefits of direct public engagement in education policy-making, the participation of ordinary Ghanaians in the education policy process would minimize, if not eliminate, the social distance that characterizes the relationship between policy-makers and ordinary Ghanaians. This impaired relationship invariably results in the formulation of wrong policies in relation to policy problems confronting the majority of the population (Amukowa, 1997).

How does one find out if ordinary Ghanaians are willing to participate in the national education policy process? Both interview respondents agreed that surveys, opinion polls

and policy research would help to unravel whether ordinary Ghanaians want to participate in public education policy development and the forms they want that participation to take. But the respondents believed that a vast majority of the people would pass it over to the educated folks because the latter possess fluent English oral and written communication skills. This view, however, does not support the case of the overwhelming number of ordinary Ghanaians who expressed a strong interest and enthusiasm to participate in the focus-group discussions about educational issues in Ghana. The focus-group members were unanimous in their willingness to participate in discussions if they are scheduled after 7:00 pm Monday to Saturday, and 3:00 pm on Sunday. They also stated that they have a strong preference for their Akan language as a medium of discussion in such forums. Below is a summary of the educational issues that arose during the focus-groups' discussions:

- Sexual harassment of girl students by male teachers and head-teachers;
- Teaching students skills and knowledge they could apply in their lives, families and communities, such as morals and values (respect for the elderly, hard-work, honesty, truthfulness, humility, responsibility, etc,);
- Proper maintenance of school buildings and facilities; provision of adequate desks/tables and chairs;
- Reasonable supply of resources for teaching and learning, including textbooks;
- Non-caring attitudes of teachers toward students; teachers' refusal to teach and report on time at school;
- Trade or vocational apprenticeship training for students who fail to qualify for senior secondary school(SSS) admission;
- Provision of incentives to attract teachers to teach in rural communities such as remote allowance and rent subsidy;
- Regular payment of teachers' salaries and allowances on time;
- Private elementary and junior secondary schools charge exorbitant tuition fees;
- Less use of corporal punishment in school and search for alternative forms of punishment with greater deterrence;
- A bilingual schooling system that allows students to attain literacy proficiency in both English language and indigenous Ghanaian languages; and
- Get the communities to participate in decision-making, implementation of decisions, and identifying alternative sources of funds for school projects.

The above issues are fundamental to the school system in Ghana and members of the focus-groups articulated them with passion, though most of the articulations were in the form of personal, family and community stories, For instance, the groups recognized that sexual harassment of girl students by teachers and, in some cases, head teachers, negatively impacts on their academic success. They also observed that the Ghanaian public school system is chronically under-resourced and the morale of the teachers is at a low ebb, preventing them from teaching effectively and demonstrating caring attitude towards students. The unfortunate result is that the public-funded primary and junior secondary school system has practically collapsed in major Ghanaian cities and, in its place, private schools have emerged. These private schools have fancy names like "international school", "preparatory school" and "experimental school." In these schools, English is the exclusive language of both teaching and learning and corporal punishment is hardly meted out to t students. Poor families who want quality education for their children are compelled to enrol their children at private schools which have a tuition fees

structure hardly within the financial means of those families. Hence, the focus-groups demanded regulation of private school tuition fees.

The focus group members also highlighted that the physical conditions of most public-funded primary and junior secondary school buildings are in shambles, with most of classrooms lacking basic furniture. These schools normally require parents/guardians to purchase tables and chairs for their children to bring to school. The children whose parents/guardians are unable to make such purchases sit on the bare floors in their classrooms. Children sitting on the bare floors cannot comfortably learn let alone produce any positively significant learning outcomes. In close-knit communities, the focus group members suggested, community members could pool their resources to purchase furniture for the schools located in their communities. While the lack of basic resources is an important issue hindering the smooth functioning of the school system, corruption at the central office and weak administrative infrastructures are equally important factors producing a dysfunctional public-funded school system. As the groups highlighted, the government should urgently address this issue. The focus-group members also pointed to the issue of relevant education for character development and economic survival. During the focus-group sessions, the members unanimously placed greater emphasis on better character development than economic survival skills. This does not imply that the groups consider economic survival skills unimportant. On the contrary, the groups regarded school as an extension of parenting of which character development features prominently. They defined character development as instilling in the youth and modelling values such as peace, respect for parents and elders, patience, honesty, law-abiding, hard work, and community bonding.

A bilingual school system is also one of the issues the groups discussed Language of teaching and learning has been a contentious national issues since the dawn of political independence from the Great Britain. A majority of the Ghanaian educated elite are strongly in favour of exclusive English schooling in that English is regarded a language of power in terms of its international economic, political and educational dominance Avast number of international negotiations and marketing schemes are conducted in English. As well, a large proportion of academic publications is written in English (needle, 2012). Besides, more than 80% of international organisations conduct their business transactions in English (Crystal, 2003). Despite the veracity of these empirical assertions, they do not diminish the primacy of the local. While the Ghanaian educated elite focus on the international, they appear to have lost sense of the local or domestic where many of the vital activities related to societal development take place. It is in the local or domestic sphere that development or underdevelopment occur, signifying that development is fundamentally a local affair. In fact domestically, Ghanaians need a common indigenous language that they could use comfortably to communicate with one another in literary and oral forms in the economic, political and educational spheres.

Additionally, the trend in the news media is towards bilingualism; this is especially the case for many FM radio stations that have sprung up in the country in the last twenty years. These FM stations offer news services, movies and other programming in both English and major Ghanaian languages, with the latter dominating the space. This is different from the printed news dailies and weeklies which are still predominantly written in English. Further, in the churches, people use both English and Akan Bibles. Consequently, the focus-group members believed that this is how the school curriculum should be structured to allow students to develop literacy skills in their own languages as

well as in English as an international language. Nonetheless, the groups' overwhelming support for bilingual medium of teaching and learning is a direct challenge to monolingual English schooling that has dominated the Ghanaian education landscape for decades.

Next, the groups suggested a minimal corporal punishment in school and the need to search for alternative forms of discipline with effective deterrence. Historically, European missionary educators introduced corporal punishment in elementary schools they established in the colonial era. At that time corporal punishment involved hitting or stroking with soft canes were used sparingly and invariably in conjunction with counselling. Its purpose was to reinforce positive behaviour from students and to deter them from flouting school rules and regulations. After political independence, caning has been used not only for implementing school rules and regulations but also for improving student academic performance. The prevailing belief among some Ghanaian teachers is that if a student is performing badly academically a few strokes of a cane will motivate the student to invest more efforts in learning and improve their performance. With this belief student poor academic performance is correlated with lack of effort. Without any empirical justification, student poor academic achievement is attributed solely to the student's lack of effort rather than effective teaching approaches, different learning styles, uncaring attitudes of teachers, unsupported home environment or lack of proper meals for physical and mental nourishment. It is not surprising that the focus-groups did not advocate a total ban on corporal punishment in schools and suggest humane forms of discipline. Instead, they were against its excessive use particularly as an instrument for motivating students to learn and improve their academic performance.

Culturally in most Ghanaian homes caning is accepted as a basic instrument for discipline. Therefore, caning per se in schools was not considered problematic or physical abuse on the part of teachers who administer it. It is only when a student is severely hurt as a result of caning that caning as a penal punishment becomes a community issue. Owing to its systemic use for discipline, caning should be included as part of national issues for education policy conversation. The groups' mention of rural education also deserves some comments. According to the 2010 census, the population of Ghana is estimated at approximately 26,640,000 of which 50.9% is urban and 49.1% is rural (Ghana Statistical Services, 2010).This suggests that the population of Ghana is almost evenly split between rural and urban. Yet the quality of rural schooling conditions are more poor compared to urban schooling. This is partly due to substandard housing, inaccessible road network during rainy seasons and lack of basic social amenities in rural communities. Consequently, it is an immense challenge to attract and retain certified teachers in rural schools. Most newly certified teachers will not accept relocation to rural communities, leaving rural schools to rely heavily on uncertified teachers. It is in the context of this problem that the focus-group members advocated financial incentives like rent subsidy and remote allowance to attract and retain certified teachers in rural schools. Thus, overall, the education-related issues raised by the focus-groups challenge the conventional assumption that only experts or highly educated Ghanaians and the professional bureaucrats are knowledgeable of issues affecting the development and delivery of public education services in Ghana.

POLICY PARTICIPATORY MODELS FOR ORDINARY GHANAIANS

Bourdieu (1997) and Parker (2003) contend that certain segments of the population are systematically excluded from policy-making because they do not possess the "cultural capital" needed to find a seat at the metaphorical policy-making table. To develop the democratic capacity of ordinary citizens and bring transparency to governance in Ghana, artificially created "cultural capital", particularly English language written and oral facility, should not be allowed to disenfranchise segments of the population from participating in national education policy making. Such disenfranchisement is what Joshee and Goldberg (2005) refer to as an oppressive structure or barrier that prevents participation of ordinary people in education policy-making in Ghana. The undeniable fact is that masses of the ordinary population of Ghana use their indigenous languages for daily communicative and interactive activities (Morris, 1998).

Many models can be used to ensure participatory policy-making (Averill, 2001 Curtain, 2003b; Goldman &Torres, 2002; Johnson & Mutchler, 1999; Joshee & Goldberg, 2005). Four of these models: citizen panels, citizen jury, citizen forum, and deliberative polling, will now be discussed briefly. This will be followed by an outline of the social justice model, which is considered the most suitable for the purpose of the paper. Citizen panels are generally used at the local level. Such panels are put together by government officials and consist of a statistically representative sample of citizens whose views are sought over a period of time (Joshee & Goldberg, 2005; Curtain, 2003b). Joshee and Goldberg (2005) note that their primary function is to offer advice to government officials who are, nevertheless, not obliged to act on the advice offered by the panel. Joshee and Goldberg (2005) note that the traditional power structure that privileges certain voices remains intact in citizen panels. Therefore, the citizen panel model is not suitable for adoption when intending to enable Ghanaian women and ordinary folks to participate in national education policy-making.

The citizen jury uses a representative sample, which could be regional or national. The government puts together citizen juries to deliberate contested issues or problems and to advice public officials accordingly (Joshee & Goldberg, 2005). However, unlike citizen panels, the membership of citizen juries is small and less permanent and they receive presentations from experts and cross-question the experts (Curtain, 2004). However, citizen juries suffer from the same defects as the citizen panels. Citizen forums have been used extensively in Britain to resolve many social problems (Curtain, 2004). The forum is structured and involves local dialogues on critical national policy issues (Goldman & Torres, 2002). Forum members, according to Curtain (2003a), work in groups of ten, each with a trained facilitator, and the results are shared with national and local leaders. Again, the national leaders are not obliged to accept the decisions of the forum members. Thus, the model suffers from the same defects as the two models already discussed, and is unsuitable for the purpose of gaining better representation by women and ordinary Ghanaians in education policy.

Deliberative polling is often used in the US and Canada. In deliberative polling, a representative sample is polled on specific issues and those polled are invited to discuss those issues together. Materials with balanced views on the issues are sent out to participants before the meeting. With the help of a trained facilitator, the participants prepare a set of questions during focus group meeting and the questions are used in dialogue with experts on the issue and political leaders. After two days, the participants

are asked the initial baseline questions again in a survey. The changes in opinion are taken as indicative of the opinion of the public if they were involved in the deliberations. This model is not suitable for the purpose of this paper because it demands a high-level of literacy which most Ghanaian women and ordinary folk do not possess.

The social justice model proposed by Joshee and Goldberg (2005) seems to me to be the most suitable for allowing ordinary Ghanaians to participate in national education policy development in Ghana. The model draws heavily on the strengths of the other models – discussed above – and features of deliberative dialogue proposed by Johnson and Mutchler (1999). Participation would occur at a local rather than national level, and discussions would be a face-to-face among between 20-30 participants; the discussion would be moderated by a trained facilitator. The facilitator would be fluent in the language spoken in the region where the dialogue takes place. Presentations by the participants would be oral rather than written. A representative sample of interested, committed and affected ordinary Ghanaians would be selected from the 201 districts in Ghana to participate in the policy development activities of education commissions. Sufficient time would be allocated to the panel to deliberate the issues, and members' opinions, perspectives, and suggestions must be treated with acceptance, respect and dignity. As ordinary Ghanaians have low-incomes, it is very important that considerations are given to their work and family priorities in scheduling the panel meetings.

The issues involved and the basic rules of engagement in the social justice panel would be explained to and agreed to by the participants. The government should sponsor the social justice panels and it should craft a series of radio advertisements in the four major Ghanaian languages to cultivate the interest of ordinary Ghanaians in education policy development. The National Commission on Democracy in Ghana, along with other community and national activists, scholars and policy-makers should be consulted in developing other basic rules for the operation of the social justice panel. But I stress that the social justice panel should only be one of the strategies for participation and inclusion of marginalized groups and communities in national education policy making. The use of strategies such as press briefings, special task forces, visitations to educational institutions, town hall meetings, soliciting submissions (through electronic postings) and presentations should be continued as well.

CONCLUSION

The development of national education policies in Ghana without the active participation of ordinary Ghanaians has been a consistent pattern throughout the history of education commissions in Ghana. Yet the two past commissioners interviewed for this study held that this is not a major problem of the policy development process in Ghana. As a matter of fact, they did not acknowledge that education policy failures in the past had anything to do with a lack of understanding of the human conditions of the vast majority of ordinary folks; the absence of their voices in policies affecting their lives; and poor identification of their needs and aspirations. Education policy impacts individuals, groups and communities across Ghana and this is why it is the collective business of the entire nation rather than the sole responsibility of elected or appointed representatives of the people. Thus, it is a highly contentious issue (Curtain, 2003a) that requires the participation of ordinary folk, many of whom are unilingual speakers of a Ghanaian language.

The participation of women and ordinary Ghanaians in the national education policy-making process is needed more urgently than at any other juncture in the history of the country. This is a period in which Ghanaians have enjoyed a relatively stable change of governments through the ballot box and there are unprecedented growing roots of democratization. Widening participation in the education policy development process to include ordinary Ghanaians is a viable means of strengthening and deepening those democratization roots. That is, it would fertilise democratization across the country. That way, ordinary and marginalized Ghanaians are more likely to identify with and own the policies than when the policies are imposed on them from without (Bromell, 2012; Caddy 2001; Curtain 2003a; Nyagga, 2014).

In writing about education policy formation in Africa, Evans (1994) asks the following critical questions: "How the process could be improved to better enhance its openness and access; to ensure that diverse groups' needs are effectively heard; to generate credibility and legitimacy; and to build support and consensus for proposed education policies?"(p. 6). The formation of a social justice panel might provide the means to respond to those questions and allow ordinary Ghanaians to participate in policy decision-making instead of having policies imposed upon them. As Amartya (1999) rightly points out, development requires the democratic participation of people in deciding matters that affect their lives and in which they are interested. By this means, Amartya (1999) continues, citizens can harness the resulting freedoms to make positive transformation of their lives, families and communities.

Apart from the moral imperative arguments of democracy, education policy implementation at the local/district level would be enhanced if ordinary folk become co-producers of those policies. Co-production and co-ownership of education policies are twin prongs to fertilize democratization and reduce citizen cynicism toward government (Agostino, Schwester, & Holzer, 2006; Callahan, 2002; Somach, 2002). Implementation of policies that would be further developed based on the recommendations of the national education commissions is critically important. Educational policy-making, contrary to the beliefs of the interview respondents, is a social and political process and not a technical issue belonging exclusively to elected or appointed officials. This does not in any way suggest trivialization of the application of sound technical expertise or technology in national education policy-making as a public issue.

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Country image and ideal destination choice in study abroad:

Evidence from the Republic of Korea

Peter Gregory Ghazarian
Keimyung University, Korea: *pg@kmu.ac.kr*
Daniel Ryan Keller
Northern Arizona University, US: *drk9@nau.edu*

In a time of growing competition for tertiary education, international students represent an important resource. However, more work is required to detail the factors that influence destination choice in study abroad. Drawing from a representative sample (n = 620) of the adult population over 19 in the Republic of Korea, the present study examined the ideal choice of study abroad destinations for Koreans. The analysis tested for differences in their perceived country image of China, Japan and US and the demographic variables (age, educational attainment and monthly income) of those who selected the European Union, US, or other locations as their ideal primary study choice. ANCOVAs found that only US competence image (p < .05) and age (p < .01) were significant indicators of destination choice. These results suggest that country image and demographic background are not accurate predictors for destination choice. In fact, individual perceptions may be less important than country-level variables in the initial stages of study abroad destination choice.

Keywords: study abroad; destination choice; country image; higher education; Korea

INTRODUCTION

The global market for tertiary education now offers more choice of destination, more competition among education providers, and more alternatives to the traditional study abroad model than ever before. Between 1960 and 2010, the number of transnational students worldwide increased from 238,000 (McMahon, 1992) to 4.1 million (OECD, 2013). As student numbers have grown, their choices of destination have diversified. Regional destinations, such as the Republic of Korea, have begun to attract international students as part of a larger goal of building up internationally recognized research universities (UNESCO, 2013). Increasing transnational education has driven a multi-billion dollar industry (Institute for International Education, 2014a) that has left some higher education institutions (HEIs) in traditional markets, such as North America, Western Europe, and Oceania, dependent upon full fee paying international students as public funding declines (Altbach, Reisberg, & Rumbley, 2009). Meanwhile, HEIs in Asia are attempting to increase their market share (UNESCO, 2013).

Among source countries, the Republic of Korea (hereafter Korea) is a particularly interesting case. In 2013/2014, it was the third largest source of international students for

HEIs in the US behind only the People's Republic of China and India (Institute for International Education, 2014b). Considering the size of the population, Koreans are over-represented among international students. Korean international students contributed more than $2.3 billion to the US economy in 2014, yet the number of Korean students studying in the US has fallen, on balance, since 2010 (Institute for International Education, 2014b). Understanding the Korean case may provide insight into the future of other source countries in the region.

Previous research into destination choice has focused largely on the factors that 'push' students to seek education outside of their home country and the factors that 'pull' students toward a destination. Push/pull models, such as the six-factor model proposed by Mazzarol and Soutar (2002), provide general frameworks for conceptualizing cross-border student movement. Work continues on more fine-grained analysis of particular transnational student populations (e.g., Bamber, 2014; Foster, 2014; Lee, 2014; Lesjak, Juvan, Ineson, Yap, & Axelsson, 2015; Perna, Orosz, Jumakulov, Kishkentayeva, & Ashirbekov, 2015). Further research along these lines will resolve inconsistencies among the models while detailing how different individual and cultural contexts influence the study abroad decision-making process. Focusing on the case of Korea, the present study investigated the role of country image and demographic variables on ideal destination choice.

FROM COLONIAL TIES TO COUNTRY IMAGE

Though HEIs have always tended toward internationalism, freedom to choose a destination for study abroad is a new phenomenon. The global political structures of the past emphasized a single colonizer or superpower in most countries of the world, depriving international students of much choice in destination. In the colonial period from the 16th to mid-20th Centuries, education became a critical tie between European powers and their colonies across the world (Varghese, 2008). Migrants travelled to imperial capitals in order to be trained in the language, values and administrative structures of their colonizers, and secure the skills and networks of contacts that would grant them increased opportunities in their home countries. Following the dismantling of those empires in the aftermath of the World Wars, a similar structure emerged. Through the cold war period from 1947 to 1991, super-powers attracted international students from countries within their spheres of influence (Varghese, 2008).

Recent trends indicate that the global market for post-secondary education is steadily diversifying. Globalization affords transnational students opportunities to travel to a wider array of destinations and for more intraregional exchange (Varghese, 2008). In the US alone, the Institute for International Education (2014a) estimates 800,000 international students contributed more than $26 billion to national and regional economies and supported 340,000 jobs in 2014.

Summarizing nearly 80 years of demographic research on migration, Lee (1966) identified four groups of factors contributing to the migration of peoples: (a) factors associated with the area of origin, (b) factors associated with the destination, (c) intervening obstacles, and (d) personal factors. McMahon (1992) applied this model to education-seeking migrants and found distinct influences, mostly economic, which both pushed students to study abroad and pulled students to destination countries. McMahon's work, spanning the period of rapid expansion of international education from the 1960s

to the 1980s, found that push factors and economic ties between sending and host countries were important predictors for destination choice.

With the opening of diverse options to 'pushed' students, pull factors have gained salience. Building on McMahon's (1992) framework, Mazzarol and Soutar (2002) proposed a six factor model: (a) knowledge and awareness of the destination country, (b) personal recommendations, (c) cost issues, (d) environment, (e) geographic proximity, and (f) social links. Alternatively, Cubillo, Sánchez, and Cerviño (2006) analyzed the effects of five factors on the intention to purchase higher education services from a foreign provider: (a) personal reasons, (b) country image, (c) city effect, (d) institution image, and (e) program evaluation. In the effort to adapt internationally-developed models to regional cultural concerns, Bodycott and Lai (2012) expand upon Bodycott (2009) to highlight the need to take into account the influence of family members (particularly parents) in the decision-making process of transnational students from Confucian heritage countries.

Among pull factors, country image has emerged as a key concept across disciplines. In tourism, country image serves as an important variable in the selection of a travel destination (Baloglu & McCleary, 1999; Sirakaya, Sonmez, & Choi, 2001; Woodside & King, 2001). In marketing, studies have tied country image, referred to in the discipline as country branding, to consumer choices (Erickson, Johansson, & Chao, 1984; Jaffe & Nebenzahl, 1993; Knight & Calantone, 2000; Manrai, Lascu, & Manrai, 1998; Olsen & Olsson, 2002). In political science, country image has drawn attention to the concept of soft power, or the ability of a country to sway international relations through cultural and economic influence (Nye, 2008; Rothman, 2011; Wang, 2008). Prior studies have found that a strong country image can improve exports, tourism, foreign direct investment, and make a destination attractive for immigrants (Fetscherin, 2010; Jaffe & Nebenzahl, 2001; Kleppe & Mossberg, 2006; Laroche, Papadopoulos, Heslop, & Mourali, 2005). These findings revealed a clear benefit for fostering and maintaining a positive country image. In study abroad destination choice, previous research has also emphasized the importance of country image over HEI branding (Chen, 2008; Llewellyn-Smith & McCabe, 2008). This study focused exclusively on the influence of country image in destination choice.

Nadeau, Heslop, O'Reilly and Luk (2008) draw on Heslop, Papadopoulos, Dowdles, Wall and Compeau (2004) to propose a two-factor country image model: country character image and country competency image. Country character image consists of features commonly associated with the country and its people (Knight & Calantone, 2000; Lee & Ganesh, 1999), including quality of life, standard of living, commitment to the protection of the environment (Orbaiz & Papadopoulos, 2003; Parameswaran & Pisharodi, 2001), individual rights and freedoms, and political stability (Heslop et al., 2004). Country competency image consists of the perceived quality of design, industrial production, and military power. This includes perceived level of technical advancement, economic development, economic stability and wealth. This model provides a useful lens for examining the influence of different aspects of country image.

Focusing on the case of Korea, the present study investigated the role of country image and demographic variables in ideal destination choice. In doing so, the study determined whether assumptions drawn from the push-pull model for destination choice can also be generalized to other contexts. To these ends, the study tested three hypotheses:

Hypothesis I - Based on the global trend towards the diversification of destinations for study abroad, respondents will report a wide range of destinations for their ideal first choice for study abroad, with many participants choosing destinations within the region of East Asia & the Pacific.

Hypothesis II - Based on the assumptions of the push/pull model, respondents who choose a destination as their ideal first choice for study abroad will have a significantly more favourable view of that destination's country image than their compatriots who select other destinations as their ideal first choice.

Hypothesis III - Based on the assumptions of the push/pull model, respondents' selection of a destination as their ideal first choice for study abroad will vary significantly relative to their age, monthly household income, and educational attainment.

METHOD

This study examined the ideal first choice destinations for study abroad among Koreans over the age of 19. The analysis tested for differences in perceived country image and in demographic background among the groups of individuals with different ideal first choice destinations. The study used data from the Chicago Council on Global Affairs' (2008) *Soft Power in Asia* study. The set included information for each respondents' ideal first choice study abroad destination (coded as the European Union (EU)[1], US, and other countries) and perception of country character and competency image for China, Japan and the US.

Sample

Korean nationals (*n*=620) over the age of 19 took part in the study, of whom 49.5% were male (*n*=307) and 50.5% female (*n*=313). Table 1 provides details of the ages of respondents, Table 2 their province or metropolitan area, and Table 3 their educational attainment. Data collection took place between 22 January and 5 February 2008 as face-to-face interviews in Korean by the HanKook Research Company. The sample was drawn from all administrative regions except for Jeju, which was excluded based on its remote location, high costs and low percentage of the population (1.1%).

Table 1: Age

	Freq.	**%**	**%**
19-29	118	19.0	19.0
30-39	147	23.7	42.7
40-49	127	20.5	63.2
50-59	114	18.4	81.6
over 60	114	18.4	100.0
Total	620	100.0	

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[1] These data were collected before the Brexit decision and, as a result, the UK was included. All countries that were members of the EU at the time of data collection (2008) are included in this grouping.

Table 2: Province or metropolitan area

	Freq.	%	Cumulative %
Seoul	137	22.1	22.1
Busan	50	8.1	30.2
Daegu	28	4.5	34.7
Incheon	27	4.4	39.0
Gwangju	17	2.7	41.8
Daejeon	18	2.9	44.7
Ulsan	13	2.1	46.8
Gyeonggi Province	147	23.7	70.5
Gangwon Province	16	2.6	73.1
N. Chungcheong Province	20	3.2	76.3
S. Chungcheong Province	26	4.2	80.5
N. Jeolla Province	25	4.0	84.5
S. Jeolla Province	21	3.4	87.9
N. Gyeongsang Province	33	5.3	93.2
S. Gyeongsang Province	42	6.8	100.0
Total	620	100.0	

Table 3: Educational attainment

Attainment	Frequency	%	Cumulative %
Middle school graduate, or below	86	13.9	13.9
High school graduate	194	31.3	45.2
College student	61	9.8	55.0
2-year college graduate	66	10.6	65.6
4-year university graduate	166	26.8	92.4
Postgraduate student, or above	46	7.4	99.8
DK/NA	1	.2	100.0
Total	620	100.0	

Variables

A categorical variable representing ideal first choice of destination and seven sub-variables for different aspects of country image were used. A country character image variable was calculated based on three country image sub-variables. A country competency variable was calculated from the other four of the country image sub-variables. All seven sub-variables comprise the overall country image variable. Country image variables include respondents' perceptions of China, Japan, and the US.

Ideal first choice destination was determined by the question: 'If you were to send your children to receive their higher education in another country, which country would be your first choice?' to which responses were coded: China, Japan, one of the countries of the EU, the US, Other, and don't know/no answer. A growing body of evidence indicates the importance of parents in cross-border higher education destination choice in the region (Bodycott, 2009; Bodycott & Lai, 2012; Lee & Morrish, 2012; Pham, 2013;

Pimpa, 2005), making this question an appropriate measure for a country in East Asia, such as Korea.

Country image sub-variables were measured based on closed interview responses. Respondents gave numerical values as their responses, or could reply 'I don't know.' Higher values reflected a more positive and lower values a more negative view. The interview questions are included in the appendix. The responses produced country image sub-variables for: (a) sense of personal connection, (b) diplomatic importance, (c) political system, (d) culture, (e) economy, (f) military prowess, (g) education and technology. Country character image consisted of the first four sub-variables, while country competency image consisted of the latter three. As different interview items used different scales (5-point Likert, 1 to 100, or 1 to 10), participants' responses were converted to z-scores in order to combine them into the sub-variables.

Analysis

Each step of the analysis addressed one of the three hypotheses. The test for hypothesis I was a report of the frequency of respondents' stated ideal first choice destinations for study abroad, based on the coding of the original data as China, Japan, one of the countries of the EU, the US, other and don't know/no answer.

The analysis for Hypothesis II tested for differences in perceived country image (character, competency and overall) of China, the US, and Japan among Koreans with different first choice destinations. Respondents were split into an EU first choice group ($n=250$), a 'US' first choice group ($n=274$), and an 'Other' first choice group ($n=92$). Don't know/no answer respondents were excluded from analysis because of their small group size ($n=8$). ANCOVAs were employed to examine for differences among first choice groups' perceptions of overall country image, country character image, and country competency image of China, Japan, and the US, controlling for age, monthly income, and educational attainment. Significant differences were further analyzed via Bonferroni pairwise comparisons.

The third step focused on hypothesis III and used ANCOVAs to test for differences in age, educational attainment, and monthly income between first choice groups, controlling for perceived country image. Significant differences were further analyzed via Bonferroni pairwise comparisons.

RESULTS

Hypothesis I - Respondents will report a wide range of destinations for their ideal first choice for study abroad, with a strong showing for destinations within the region of East Asia & the Pacific.

Table 4 illustrates the distribution of responses for ideal first choice destination. The results reject Hypothesis I, indicating a strong concentration of interest in the EU and US as destinations for study abroad.

Table 4: Frequency of first choice destination by origin

China	EU	Japan	US	Other	DK/NA
34	250	30	274	28	4

Hypothesis II - Respondents who choose a destination as their ideal first choice for study abroad will have a significantly more favourable view of that destination's country image (in terms of overall country image, country character image, and country competency image) than their compatriots who select other destinations as their ideal first choice.

The country image ANCOVAs revealed one statistically significant difference between first choice groups' perceptions of country image, but no other differences in any of the other country image variables. A summary of the findings from the US country competency image ANCOVA are presented in Table 5.

Table 5: ANCOVA Results for US Country Competency Image

Source	SS	df	MS	F
Age	0.00	1	0.00	.00
Ed. Attainment	2.00	1	527.20	3.66
Monthly Income	0.37	1	0.37	0.67
Destination Choice	4.01	2	2.00	3.66*
Error	275.47	504	.547	

*$p < 0.05$

The results indicated there was a significant effect for perceived US country competency image on destination choice after controlling for age, monthly household income, and educational attainment. However, the omega squared effect size value ($\omega^2 = .01$) suggested low practical significance. The results of a Bonferroni pairwise comparison are provided in Table 6.

Table 6: Bonferroni Comparison for US Country Competency Image

Comparisons	Mean difference	SE	95% CI Lower bound	Upper bound
US vs. EU	0.13	0.08	-0.05	0.31
US vs. Other	0.25*	0.1	0.02	0.48
EU vs. Other	0.12	0.1	-0.12	0.35

*$p < 0.005$

The Bonferroni pairwise comparison revealed that the 'US' first choice group had a significantly more positive perception of 'US' competency than the 'Other' first choice group. There was no significant difference in this perception between any of the other first choice groups. These findings partially rejected Hypothesis II, suggesting no consistent, direct relationship between perceived country image and ideal first choice destination.

Hypothesis III - Respondents' selection of a destination as their ideal first choice for study abroad will vary significantly relative to their age, monthly household income, and educational attainment.

The demographic ANCOVAs also revealed one statistically significant difference in demographic characteristics among first choice groups. As presented in Table 7, the results indicated a significant difference in age among first choice groups after controlling for monthly household income, educational attainment. The omega squared effect size value ($\omega^2 = .04$) suggested low practical significance. A pairwise Bonferroni comparison was conducted to determine the nature of this difference, see Table 8.

Table 7: ANCOVA results for age

Source	SS	df	MS	F
Ed. Attainment	1298.66	1	1298.66	8.533*
Monthly Income	254.18	1	254.18	1.67
Destination Choice	2130.35	2	1065.18	7.00**
Error	39721.12	261	152.19	

$*p < .05, **p < .01$

Table 8. Bonferroni Comparison for Age

Comparisons	Mean age difference	SE	95% CI Lower bound	95% CI Upper bound
US vs. EU	6.22***	1.68	2.17	10.26
US vs. Other	2.32	2.23	-3.05	7.69
EU vs. Other	-3.9	2.17	-9.12	1.33

$***p < 0.005$

Bonferroni pairwise comparison revealed that older individuals are significantly more likely to select the US, while younger people are more likely to select a destination within the EU. No other significant differences existed between the groups. These findings partially refuted Hypothesis III.

DISCUSSION

Overall, the findings either reject or partially reject each of the three hypotheses. Regarding Hypothesis I, the distribution of ideal first choice destinations strongly skewed in favour of the US (44.2%) and member countries of the EU (40.3%). Very few first choices were for China (5.5%), Japan (4.8%) or other destinations (4.5%), with even fewer 'don't know/no answer' (0.6%) responses. The results revealed little diversity among ideal first choice destinations for study abroad among Koreans. In refuting Hypothesis I, the results have shown very little interest among Koreans in East Asian destinations as an ideal first choice for study abroad. The results also reveal a strong preference for 'the West', a common term in Korean referred to as *seoyang* that consists the countries of the Anglosphere and Europe. This preference can be seen in the 84.5% of respondents that gave either the US or a member country of the EU as their first choice destination. This overwhelming focus on the US and EU as ideal first choice destinations comes in spite of growing numbers of mobile students from Asia-Pacific remaining within the region and the growing numbers of Korean international students studying in China (UNESCO, 2013).

The rejection of Hypothesis I could be due to culture. The answer to the question of an ideal study abroad destination may simply default to the US as a result of a cultural norm in Korea. In this case, rather than responding 'I don't know' or not giving an answer, respondents may naturally give the US as their ideal first choice. This explanation would also account for the fact that only a total of four respondents out of 620 replied that they did not know or did not give an answer. Findings from testing Hypotheses II and III also supported this notion that cultural norms, rather than individual perception, may play more predominantly into destination choice in Korea.

The results partially rejected Hypothesis II. Most Koreans who gave a destination as their ideal first choice were not more likely to have a more positive perception of that destination's country image. In one exception, the US first choice group did perceive 'US' competency image significantly more positively than those in the 'Other' group. Yet the effect size for perceived 'US' competency image was very low. Overall, the country image ANCOVA results indicated that perceived country image does not play a large part in ideal destination choice. This result suggests that other factors are more important for destination choice.

Partial rejection of Hypothesis II has a number of possible explanations. Positive perceptions of a monolithic 'West' might account for the large number of respondents providing the US or EU as their ideal first choice destination. Thus, there was no difference in perceived US country competence between the US and EU groups, but there was between the 'US' and 'Other' groups. It may be that those with the most positive view of 'the West' are more likely to select the US, those with negative views of 'the West' choose an Other country, and those with moderate views give an EU member country as their ideal first choice destination. Ultimately, however, the partial rejection of hypothesis II supports the notion that country image does not meaningfully sway the selection of an ideal first choice destination. Rather than individuals' perceptions of destination country image, other variables may hold more meaningful sway over destination choice.

Hypothesis III was also partially refuted by the findings. Factors such as monthly household income and educational attainment of respondents were not found to differ meaningfully between groups. Only age differed meaningfully between the US first choice group and EU first choice group. The effect size of age, though relatively larger than that of perceived US competency image, was still low. The results indicate younger people were more likely to give a member country of the EU as their ideal first choice, while their elders favoured the US.

The refutation of Hypothesis I and partial refutation of Hypotheses II and III reinforced the notion of a highly homogenous Korean society despite growing socioeconomic inequality (Byun & Kim, 2010). While monthly income and educational attainment do not impact ideal first choice destination, age does play a factor. This finding may be attributed to the rapid rate of development in Korea and the vastly different social realities of each generation. From the Korean War period, to the years of dictatorship, and most recently democracy, each generation has lived within a country with a very different international relationships. Younger people are more likely to have a more nuanced view of 'the West,' possibly explaining their increased likelihood to give an EU member country as a first choice destination. Varghese's (2008) model for phases of student mobility in higher education also provides a possible explanation for these findings.

Given the frozen state of the conflict of the Korean War and the continued presence of US military on the Korean peninsula, attitudes towards study abroad, particularly among the older generation, may still linger within a Cold War mindset, favouring the US as an ideal destination.

Overall, the findings discount the importance of individual perception of country image as an important determinant for ideal destination choice in study abroad, although this result may be limited to Korea. The findings support those of McMahon (1992), Zheng (2014), and Barnett, Lee, Jiang, & Park (2015) that point to the relationships between sending and receiving countries as a more important determinant in destination choice. Factors such as the state of country-level political, communicative and trade relations between host and destination countries may be more influential than push-pull factors in market for international students.

LIMITATIONS

The Chicago Council on Global Affairs (2008) data offers valuable information but presents some limitations. Comparisons between first choice groups as sub-samples are limited to the EU, the US, and Other, due to the low number of respondents who gave China or Japan as an ideal first choice destination. Furthermore, the narrow scope of country image data on just China, Japan and the US may obscure differences among first choice groups. Ideally, first choice groups would be limited to individual countries (rather than having been coded into supranational groupings such as the EU) and the country image data would include more than three countries.

In addition, the scope of this study is limited to Korea. On the one hand, Korea offers an interesting case for demand in study abroad, with its relatively high rate of tertiary student mobility; on the other hand, the findings from this study may be difficult to generalize to other contexts, particularly in other regions of the world or countries with lower degrees of interest in study abroad. Further work would be needed to examine the relationship between individual perception of country image and destination choice to provide more generalizable findings.

CONCLUSION

Attempts to influence country image are no small endeavours and, with regards to international mobility in higher education, may even be misguided. Rather than attempting to improve individual perceptions of country image or targeting particular demographic groups, policymakers and marketers may benefit from targeting source countries with whom their country already has a strong economic or political relationship. Particularly when recruiting students from Korea, a focus on building a positive country image may not be an efficient strategy. Further work is needed in other contexts to support the generalizability of the findings of this study and to further examine the role of international country level variables on destination choice. Such work would help to better anticipate global flows of international students and provide more insight into effective methods of marketing and recruitment of international students in the global market for higher education.

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APPENDIX

Character Factors

(1) Sense of personal connection (Co)

> a. "To what extent do you think [respondent's country] shares similar values and a way of life with the following countries?"

> b. "Please rate your feelings toward the following, with one hundred meaning a very warm, favorable feeling, zero meaning a very cold, unfavorable feeling, and fifty meaning not particularly warm or cold."

 (2) Diplomatic importance (D)

> a. "Please tell me if you think each of the following are having a mainly positive or mainly negative influence in Asia"

> b. "[country] uses diplomacy to resolve key problems in Asia."

> c. "[country] respects the sovereignty of other Asian countries."

> d. "[country] builds trust and cooperation among Asian countries."

> e. "[country] exercises leadership in international institutions like the UN and the World Trade Organization."

(3) Political system (P)

> a. "[country] respects human rights and the rule of law."

> b. "The country has a political system that serves the needs of its people."

 (4) Culture (Cu)

> a. "Now, for each of the following countries, tell me whether you think the spreading of their cultural influence in Asia is mainly a good thing or mainly a bad thing."

    b. "I would like you to think about how much influence the popular culture of [country] has had on [respondent's country's] popular culture."

    c. "Please tell me how important, if at all, it is for children to learn the following languages in order to succeed in the future."

    d. "How often do you watch movies and television, or listen to music from [country]?"

    e. "The country has an appealing popular culture."

    f. "The country has a rich cultural heritage."

    g. "The country is an attractive destination for international tourism."

    f. "The country has developed religious traditions that have been influential in other parts of the world."

Competency factors

(5) Economy (Ec)

    a. "Please indicate how important you think economic relations such as trade and investment with each of the following countries are to [respondent's country's] economy?"

    b. "Please indicate how important you think economic relations such as trade and investment with each of the following countries are to [respondent's country's] economy?

    c. "[country] helps other Asian countries develop their economies."

    d. "The country has an internationally competitive economy."

    e. "The country provides many economic opportunities for its workforce."

    f. "The country has a great entrepreneurial spirit."

    g. "The country has leading multinational companies."

(6) Military prowess (M)

    a. "Please rate the following countries according to their military strength in Asia on a scale of 0 to 10?"

(7) Education and technology (Ed)

    a. "The country has a highly educated population."

    b. "The country possesses advanced science and technology."

Decentralized school governance policy: A comparative study of general public schools and community-managed schools in Nepal

Mukunda Mani Khanal
Ministry of Education and Kathmandu University, Nepal
mukundamkhanal@hotmail.com

The literature reviewed for this study revealed that the movement toward decentralizing responsibility of school governance to communities has become a global policy in the contemporary world. With the aim of enhancing greater community participation and retaining students in public schools, the Government of Nepal introduced two different policies: the General Public School (GPS)Policy and the Community-Managed School (CMS) Policy; both guided by the Decentralized School Governance Policy. Since then, there has been a debate about whether centrally controlled but locally managed GPSs or community owned-locally governed CMSs are better. Policy documents in Nepal repeatedly claim that the CMS Policy achieves better results than the GPS Policy. The research reported on in this paper gathered evidence for examining claims concerning the performance of the policies. The research used mixed methods. Results indicate that there is no significant difference in the respective policy implementation performance between the two types of schools.

Keywords: School governance policy; community-managed schools; general public schools

INTRODUCTION

Historically, public schools in Nepal were established and managed by local communities (Ministry of Education, 1997). However, these schools were few in number and only catered to communities from the highest socio-economic groups. With the introduction of the *New Education System Plan* in Nepal in 1971, the government made a strong commitment towards expansion of public schools for mass education (Ministry of Education, 1999). The government took over the management and governance of schools by providing more direct support (financial as well as regulatory support) to all public schools. Sharma (1986) argues that such nationalization lowered community contributions to schools, which resulted in the gradual disconnect of the community with public school functions (Ministry of Education, 1997). In most cases, public schools became completely dependent on government resources (see, e.g., Ministry of Education, 2009).

With the aim of regaining community engagement in the functioning of schools, empowering communities and retaining students in public schools, the government instituted two policies [see, e.g., the report of the National Education Commission, 1992 (National Education Commission, 1992); the Ninth Five-year Plan, 1997-2002

(National Planning Commission, 1997) and Education for All: Core Document (Ministry of Education and Sports, 2003)] that explicitly emphasized the need for promoting community ownership (Ministry of Education, 1999): General Public School (GPS) Policy and Community-Managed School (CMS) Policy in 2002. Both policies are guided by the Decentralized School Governance Policy introduced in 2002 (Ministry of Education, 2009). This policy provides options for schools to remain as a GPS, which entitles the school to receive full government support for operation and management functions, or be transferred to a CMS, which provides for more control by the local community of the school. CMSs are entitled to receive a one-time motivational grant from the government but the Government of Nepal is committed to maintaining present budgetary allocations to both types of schools on an equal footing.

The main objective of decentralization in education is to enable local communities to participate in decision making concerning their schools (Ministry of Education and Sports, 2003). This has been institutionalized through the adoption of an additional directive for the enforcement of the CMS policy. The directive provides School Management Committees (SMCs) of CMSs with extended authority to appoint Head Teachers (HTs) and review HTs' administrative performance based on the school improvement plan (Ministry of Education, 2009). SMCs have also been made responsible for the recruitment of teachers, using school resources, and reviewing the performance of teachers.

Notwithstanding the policy intention, decision-making power has virtually remained at the central government level (Ministry of Education and Sports, 2003), apparently caused by low preparedness and inadequate capacity at local levels (as discussed below). As highlighted by a number of researchers, the intention of the government to foster decentralization is not sufficient to actually cause implementation of decentralization (see, e.g., Anderson, 1994; Dye, 1995).Changes can only be expected to take place when the intended policy is practiced as envisioned (Fullan, 2001).

In 2009, the Government of Nepal initiated the School Sector Reform Plan (SSRP) to strengthen community support and ownership of school governance through the decentralization process. This reform program envisioned that the CMS Policy would continue (Ministry of Education, 2009, p. 13). However, the Policy continues to be difficult to implement. As the Ministry of Education notes: "management of education continues to be highly centralized although efforts have been made towards decentralization" (Ministry of Education and Sports, 2003, p. 16).

Professional teachers' organizations have strong reservations concerning the CMS policy and see it as a threat to their professional career and job security because the policy permits SMCs to hire and fire teachers (Carney, Bista, & Agergaard, 2007). To a large extent, schools operating under the GPS policy also are losing their credibility because of fewer control mechanism.

In the 15 years since the initiation of the decentralization policy, only about 23 percent of public schools have been transferred to communities (Department of Education, 2016). This means that, if the rollout was to be continued at the current pace, the government would need another 20 years to complete the policy intention to transfer all the GPSs to CMSs, calling into question the viability of the CMS Policy.

In essence, the introduction of the CMS Policy has created two types of public schools in Nepal. Now the justification for operating such a dual system of government public schools has become a focus of policy debate. Several studies (e.g., Centre for Policy Research and Consultancy, 2008; Full Bright Consultancy Private Limited, 2011) have concluded that CMSs are, overall, the better performing schools in Nepal. The main question in this study is to what extent CMSs are better off than their GPS counterparts and how this responds to the question of the viability of the CMS Policy.

The main objective of this study is to reveal the initial implementation outputs of CMSs and GPSs. Relevant literature was, therefore, reviewed to find the intentions behind the formulation of the Policies, and policy experts were interviewed. To ensure the study included implementation level perspectives, HTs and Chair Persons of SMCs were questioned concerning implementation performance and the reasons why they accept or reject the CMS Policy. A core issue in the research is to find whether there has been a departure in policy implementation (Bardach, 1977). Smith and Larimer (2009) emphasize that understanding why intended outcomes have or have not been achieved is critical "if policy success is to be replicated or policy failure to be avoided" (p. 157).

The following three research questions, therefore, underpin this research:

1. To what extent have the CMSs been successful in increasing community participation for school improvement and school effectiveness in terms of student attraction compared to their GPS counterparts?

2. What are the factors associated with the implementation performance of the decentralized school governance policy?

3. Does the CMS Policy function and perform as a viable instrument in the decentralization process of the school governance systems in Nepal?

The first research question examines the status of community participation and students' inflow between GPSs and CMSs by comparing their policy implementation performances. The second question identifies critical factors associated with the performance of policy implementation. This question further explains how well these factors have contributed to predicting policy implementation performance. The third question searches the extent to which the CMS Policy is a viable instrument for achieving desired results. It also helps to identify factors that contribute to widening gaps between intended and attained policy goals, which would determine the validity of the Policy.

SCHOOL GOVERNANCE POLICY

As already noted, public schools in Nepal were "originally created and governed" and also financed by the community (Ministry of Education, 1997, p. 147). The current movement for decentralized school governance policy in Nepal is an attempt to regain that past community ownership of education (National Planning Commission, 2002, Ministry of Education, 2009). The *Seventh Amendment of Education Act, 2001,* brought a new provision for the formation of the SMCs and required the SMC chair to be either elected or selected from among the students' parents (Law Book Management Committee, 2001). The policy underpinning the change in the law has been a milestone along the way towards encouraging stakeholders to take responsibility for governing

schools (Research Centre for Educational Innovation and Development, 2009; Ministry of Education and Sports, 2004, p. 26, 28). The *Seventh Amendment of the Education Act* further ensured stakeholders' right to participate in school affairs in line with the provisions of the *Local Self Governance Act*, 1999, (*LSGA*) (Ministry of Education and Sports, 2003).

The Government of Nepal has recently amended the *Education Act* to further engage and accommodate stakeholders from various fields in school governance and management. As opposed to the previous provision of direct election of the chair of the SMC from parents/guardians of students that are enrolled in the school, the 8th amendment of the *Education Act* has introduced the provision that four members, being two males and two females, will be elected from candidates who are students' parents/guardians, along with two members that do not have to be parents/guardians of students and have been presented as SMC candidate based on their contribution to the schools' development (Law Book Management Committee, 2016). The locally elected member for the school location ward of the local village development committee or municipality also qualifies as an officiating member of the SMC. These seven members will then either elect or select the SMC chair (Law Book Management Committee, 2016). In addition, the committee will have a teacher representative member and the HT, the latter serving as the member-secretary of the SMC. The HT and teacher representative are not allowed to participate in the process of selecting or electing the SMC chair.

Although the Government of Nepal has made the necessary legal arrangements for enabling CMSs to operate, several obstacles have been encountered in the implementation of the decentralized schools governance policy, especially the CMS Policy (Carney, Bista, & Agergaard, 2007; Research Centre for Educational Innovation and Development, 2008; Ministry of Education, 2009). For example, professional teacher organizations believe this policy threatens their professional careers and job security because the policy gives SMCs the right to hire and fire teachers (Carney et al., 2007, p. 618; Research Centre for Educational Innovation and Development, 2008, p. 94). Similarly, communities have indicated concern with regard to the financial sustainability of the schools at the local level (Research Centre for Educational Innovation & Development, 2009, p. 29-30). As a result, some public schools which had already become CMSs have asked for their status to be removed. The reasons, as Edwards (2011, p. 67) notes, could be that the CMS Policy did not sufficiently clarify on the role of community and engage the real stakeholders in school governance.

At a global level, school governance policies have been changing rapidly. A reason may be the increasing level of dependency of developing countries, such as Nepal, on foreign aid and the requirement of donors for increased decentralization. Thus, Rappleye (2011) questions the extent to which the focus on the CMS Policy in the *Seventh Amendment of Education Act* in Nepal is a donor-driven one. Anderson (1994) notes that interest groups play a major role in policy formulation and the increased interdependence on external support and, thereby, development partners' (donors') contributions to the education sectors, has influenced the focus of school governance policies, particularly in developing countries (Gunnarsson, Orazem, Sanchez, & Verdisco, 2004; Mok, 2005).

The trend towards decentralized school governance models began in the 1990s (Frederickson &Smith, 2003). The basic argument of the decentralization model follows the ideas of the Westminster Model, which is based on the concept of minimal state control and clearly demarcates the roles and responsibilities of the government (Osborne & Gaebler, 1992). The concept also promotes the role of government as facilitator and empowerer of other stakeholders (Ansell, 2000), and the concept assumes that such a relationship between government and community can create better synergies within a society than can be achieved through centralized government control (see, e.g., Zhao, 2007). Nevertheless, it is widely recognized that centralized school governance systems, such as those in France and Japan, and decentralized school governance systems, such as those in The Netherlands and New Zealand, have both delivered good results in terms of school education quality and performance (Eskeland & Filmer, 2007). However, the decentralized school governance policy model, following the positive endorsement of Osborne and Gaebler's (1992) with regards to the concept of decentralized governments, has become more popular worldwide (Egal & Sobel, 2009). It is in line with this global trend, that the Government of Nepal introduced, with significant involvement of education sector development partners, including UN agencies and the World Bank, the plans for managing public schools: the Basic and Primary Education Project (1992-1997) and Basic and Primary Education Program (1999-2004) (Bhatta, 2011).

The government of Nepal has continued to scale up the transfer of public schools to communities in line with the CMS Policy. Some studies have found that the performance of CMSs, compared to GPS, is better (Centre for Policy Research and Consultancy, 2008; Full Bright Consultancy Private Limited, 2011). Despite such noticeable achievements, teachers and their unions continue to protest against the roll-out of the CMS Policy (Carney et al., 2007; Edwards, 2011).Van Meter and Van Horn's (1975, p. 482) warn that implementation may not produce expected outcomes if there are conflicts between policy makers and implementers. The question of interest in this research, therefore, is whether the level of teacher commitment has influenced the performance of the GPS and the CMS Policy in Nepal. Research into the effectiveness of education decentralization policies provide possible answers to this question.

Positive results from GPS/CMS implementation in other countries have encouraged the government in Nepal to continue with the policies. For example, Ho (2006) reports success of the policy in Hong Kong, Japan and South Korea, where school-based management had become well established within school governance. Barankay and Lockwood (2007) report similar experiences in Switzerland. However, not all reports on the policies have been positive. For example, Zhao (2007) states that education in the US is moving toward centralization of school education governance in order to produce more competent students, and Ainley and McKenzie (2000) found that academic achievements of students in locally-managed schools in the US, the UK and Australia are not exemplary. Zhao (2007), and Mukundan and Bray (2004) claim that the Asian region has continued to move towards decentralized governance systems and increasing the level of autonomy to schools in terms of governance despite there being no significant benefits achieved from this decentralization.

Decentralization of the education sector (Steiner-Khamsi & Stolpe, 2004) demands a high level of accountability and obligation from schools to demonstrate good performance, but it also creates unwanted side effects and issues, such as an increase in

disparities and inequalities in education (Mok, 2005). Experiences in Taiwan and South Korea show that, at a micro level, decentralization policies emphasize the fitness of the local settings (Fullan, 2001; Lo & Gu, 2008) to foster effective implementation of so-called "change in practice" (Lo & Gu, 2008, p. 25). For example, school-based management in Hong Kong has been gaining momentum simply because school principals and teachers are convinced of the soundness of this policy (Cheng, 2009). Consistent with Cheng's (2009) finding, Brever and Deleon (1983) developed a model proposing that effective policy action depends on the implementer's clear understanding of policy intention.

Policy implementation is particularly concerned with the process of interactions between intentions or goals of the policy and the actions taken to achieving them (see, e.g., Pressman & Wildavsky, 1979; Smith & Larimer, 2009; Birkland, 2011). Thus, research on implementation should consider the different stages of implementation (Mazmanian & Sabatier, 1983). This study, therefore, considers the initial outputs of the implementation of the decentralized school governance policy, specifically focusing on community participation and attracting students to public schools.

Younis and Davidson (1990) identify three common approaches with regards to policy implementation; "the top-down approach", "the bottom-up approach" and "the policy–action continuum" (p. 5-12). The theory of policy implementation identifies six different variables, leading to either the success or failure of the implementation of the policy and its perceived performance (Van Meter &Van Horn, 1975). For example, a gap between the policy and its proper implementation can emerge if the policy objectives are not clear enough and the resources are not made available to the implementers.

Advocates of the bottom-up approach (e.g., Younis & Davidson, 1990) view local bureaucrats as the main actors in policy delivery. The top-down approach seeks to provide prescriptive models on why a certain policy is adopted and how it is going to be implemented (Mazmanian & Sabatier, 1983). Mazmanian and Sabatier (1983) propose a model where policies and programs are guided by state control but recognise the crucial roles of the implementers. One of the strengths of this model is that it attempts to marry the "top-down" and "bottom-up" perspectives on implementation by incorporating some "bottom-up" concerns into a "top-down" model (Ryan, 1996, p. 35). This study uses the model developed by Mazmanian and Sabatier (1983) and includes the wider range of variables the model identifies as involved in the policy implementation process. The inclusion of these variables in this study is supported by the work of other researchers and documents, as explained further below.

Cheng and Cheung (1995) claim that availability of the "human resources and monetary resources" is the prime factor for successful implementation of a policy (p. 17). Edwards (2011, p. 74) supports this claim, stating that monetary resource is a principal factor. Availability of a budget is, therefore, included as an independent variable in this study.

Of the total schools transferred to communities under the CMS Policy, the vast majority (85%) are primary schools (Department of Education, 2012, 2015; Research Centre for Educational Innovation and Development, 2008). The reason for such an uptake among primary schools could be their smaller size, which enables them to make faster
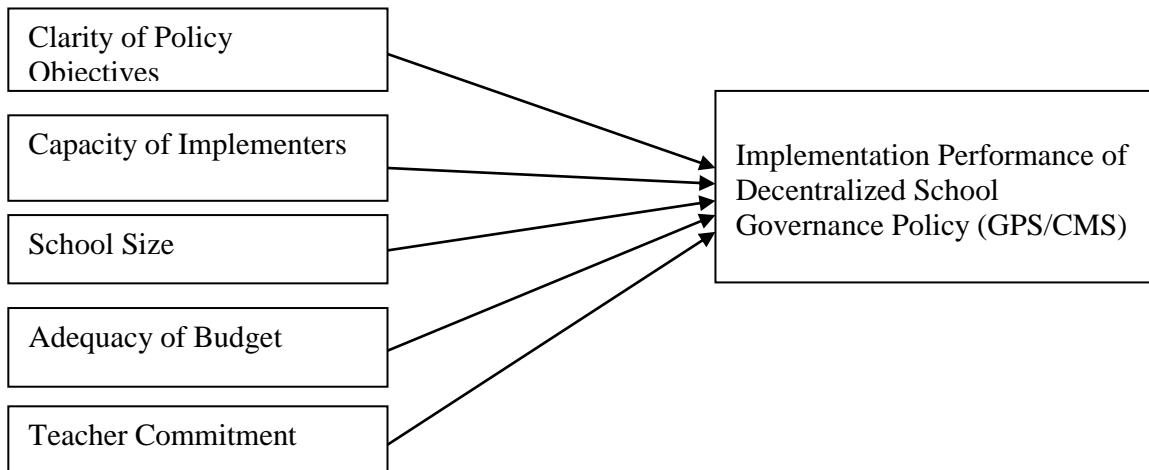
decisions (Blau, 1962) compared to larger secondary schools. School size, therefore, appears to be another critical variable to include in this study to assess strength of policy implementation.

The research of Van Meter and Van Horn (1975, p. 464), Brever and Deleon (1983, p. 66) and Pick, Xocolotzin and Ruesga (2007, p. 158) show that there is a positive relationship between policy clarity and its implementation success; thus policy clarity is included as a variable in this study. Gropello and Marshall (2011) found that failure of policy implementation may also be due to the limited capacity of implementers (p. 164). Capacity of implementers is, thus, also included as an independent variable in this study.

Following Mazmanian and Sabatier's (1983, p. 22) model, policy output of the implementing agency is taken as the dependent variable for this study. The term policy output refers to "the extent to which programmatic goals have been satisfied" (Gossin, Bowman, Lester, & O'Toole, 1990, p. 34).The use of output as the dependent variable enables the results of this study to be compared with those of the Centre for Policy Research and Consultancy (2008) and the Full Bright Consultancy Private Limited (2011), which found that community participation and students' attraction have increased in CMSs.

In summary, the proposition of this study is that clarity on policy objectives, capacity of implementers, school size, adequacy of budget, and commitment of teachers has a significant impact on policy implementation performance, as illustrated in Figure 1, and summarised in the Model 1 and Model 2 equations.

Figure 1 Research model developed for this study

Model 1: $IPDGPS = \beta_0 + \beta_1 CLAOPO + \beta_2 CAPAOI + \beta_3 SCHOLS + \beta_4 ADEBUG + \beta_5 TCOMIT + e_0$

Model 2: $IPDCMS = \beta_6 + \beta_7 CLAOPO + \beta_8 CAPAOI + \beta_9 SCHOLS + \beta_{10} ADEBUG + \beta_{11} TCOMIT + e_1$

Where,

IPDGPS=Implementation Performance of Decentralized School Governance Policy through GPS Policy (Model 1)

        IPDCMS=Implementation Performance of Decentralized School Governance
               Policy through CMS Policy (Model 2)
        CLAOPO=Clarity on Policy Objectives
        CAPAOI=Capacity of Implementers
        SCHOLS=School Size
        ADEBUG=Adequacy of Budget
        TCOMIT=Teachers' Commitment

METHODOLOGY

The study adopted a mixed methods research design, based on the mounting popularity of such designs in social science research (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009). Babbie (2013) makes a compelling case for the use of mixed methods in research design, explaining that there is strength in using both qualitative and quantitative methods in a study: qualitative methods are useful to explain causal relations, and quantitative methods helps confirm or disconfirm the predicted relationships (Bacharach, 1989; Bergman, 2011, p. 274).

A case study approach was selected as the main qualitative method for this study. In addition, and based on recommendations made by Peek and Fothergill (2009, p. 33) and Denzin and Lincoln (1994), this study used a combination of case studies (four schools, with equal representation of GPSs and CMSs), literature review, individual interviews, focus group discussions, and observations. Results from these qualitative methods were triangulated and findings further validated using quantitative methods. This study was largely based on primary data; however secondary information was also reviewed as supplementary information. Extensive data was collected at the organizational level for analysis with the purpose of comparing outputs between the two school policies (Yin, 2003; Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2007).

Sample

The target population of this study comprised all HTs, and SMC chairs of GPSs and CMSs in Nepal. A purposive sampling approach was adopted to ensure optimal capture of information (Patton, 1990; Best & Kahn, 1999) with seven districts selected, representing the three ecological regions of the country.

The quantitative data was collected following Tabachnick and Fidell's (2007, p. 123) technique with regards to calculating sample size, that is, $N \geq 50 + 8m$ (where m is the number of independent variables). Since this study has five independent variables, the sample size needed, if the Tabachnic and Fidell formula is followed, is n=90. Bartlett, Kotrlik, and Higgins (2001), however, recommend a sample size of n=cases to achieve an alpha level of .05. This study, therefore, obtained n=123 for CMSs and n=132 for GPSs. The combined data set contained 255 cases. The schools and informants were selected using a stratified random sampling technique: all schools in the sample districts were divided into two strata, these are: (1) GPSs, and (2) CMSs. The needed numbers of schools were selected randomly from each stratum to ensure a proportional representation of schools.

Instruments

For gathering qualitative information, this study focused on case studies describing real life contexts (Yin, 2003) and explaining the present status (Best & Kahn, 1999). However, case studies were substantially supplemented by a literature review, individual interviews, observations and focus group discussions. Documents, such as education commission reports, periodic plans of the Government of Nepal, the *School Sector Reform Plan—Core Document*, and research documents were analysed to determine the intentions of the GPS and CMS Policies. A semi-structured, open-ended interview technique was adopted to assess the perspectives of the policy makers and perceptions of the implementers from practical perspectives. Similarly, observation checklists and focus group discussion guidelines were developed to record the information in a sequential order.

Construct validity was established by convergent and discriminative techniques (Cohen et al., 2007). For example, convergent validity was ensured by using different data sources and checking the correlation of responses from each source (Patton, 1990), and discriminant validity was confirmed when noting a low inter-correlation of responses (Cohen et al., 2007). In addition, the researcher actively observed participants in discussions and incorporated observation data in the analysis, thus increasing the degree of overall validity (Miles & Huberman, 1994); and the researcher consulted experts to confirm content validity (Patton, 1990). Following Cohen et al.'s (2007) suggestion, an audiotape recorder was used during interviews and focus group discussions, and the recorded discussions transcribed to ensure descriptive validity. Interpretations of discussions were fed back to the research participants to check for correctness, thus guaranteeing interpretive validity. Finally, theoretical validity was confirmed by triangulating data to help establish facts (Maxwell, 2011). The research attempted to ensure "thick description" full of richness and holism of data (Rudestam & Newton, 2001, p. 98; Holliday, 2002, p. 78-79) to ensure a deep understanding of information provided by the participants, thereby ensuring the reliability of the qualitative data.

To ensure a comprehensive method and to provide the possibility for in-depth analysis (Love, 2004), a quantitative approach was employed to support the qualitative approach, not only to confirm or otherwise research predictions (Bacharach, 1989; Newman & Hitchcock, 2011) but also to strengthen the legitimacy of the research (Best & Kahn, 1999). A questionnaire (survey instrument) was administered to HTs, teachers' in-charge of schools, and SMC chairs of the sampled schools. The survey instrument consisted of three sections. The first section captured general demographic information of the informants, such as gender, position, experience, school location and school type. The second section contained instructions and the statements of latent variables developed for this study and used a seven-point Likert-type scale: "Strongly Agree" (7), "Agree" (6), "Somewhat Agree" (5), "Neither Agree nor Disagree" (4), "Somewhat Disagree" (3), "Disagree" (2) and "Strongly Disagree" (1), to examine how strongly subjects agreed or disagreed with statements developed to measure the implementation performance of the respective policies.

Pallant (2011) recommended the use of a number of tests to test data adequacy. The basic assumption of normality (skewness and kurtosis) was confirmed, yielding values of less than ±1 (i.e., tending to 0). Coefficients indicating inter-correlations among items ranged from .303 to .625; the multicollinearity problem was settled by confirming

the values of tolerance (.752 – .950) and VIF (1.052-1.446), which satisfied the assumptions of Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) (Pallant, 2011). Bartlett's test of sphericity (p<.000) and the values of the KMO measuring sample adequacy (.742 - .911) were greater than the recommended value of ≥ .6 for ensuring goodness of data to fit for the use of the bivariate and multiple regression analyses.

Cronbach's Alpha was used for checking the reliability of items. The Alpha values (.700 – .886) of the scales of this study showed highly acceptable values against the cut-off score of ≥ .7 and thus confirmed and established the internal consistency of the scales. Following Pallant's (2002) and Tabachnick and Fidell's (2007) recommendations, construct validity was ensured through an analysis of factor loadings. Factor loadings values (see Table 1) ranged from .503 to .827, showing acceptable values against the cut-off value of ≥ 0.5, and also helped reduce the number of factors. After conducting the factor analysis, only one component of the scale was produced in which all ten questions were retained with due consideration to the acceptable cut-off value for factor loadings, that is, ≥ 0.5 (Pallant, 2002).

Table 1: Factor analyses of the dependent variable

Observed Variables	GPS		CMS	
	Factor Loadings	Cronbach Alpha	Factor Loadings	Cronbach Alpha
There are wide discussions among stakeholders while taking the decisions on school affairs.	.553	.860	.743	.862
Implementers have sufficient room to manage the school in line with our own plan.	.555	.865	.671	.867
Both interest and participation of community into school affairs have increased.	.526	.867	.649	.868
School-community relationships have strengthened.	.503	.863	.717	.863
Community people frequently visit the school.	.547	.866	.689	.866
The parent-teacher association is active in our school.	.603	.885	.767	.860
The school is successfully moving forward to achieve the intended goals.	.539	.873	.569	.876
The students' attraction has increased.	.504	.872	.563	.874
Competition among schools has increased.	.608	.856	.786	.857
Students' flow from private schools to community has increased.	.589	.858	.767	.860

For GPS: KMO =.909, Variance explained =48.15%, p<0.000; Correlation matrices among variables range from .312 to .629

For CMS: KMO =.911, Variance explained =48.49%, p<0.000; Correlation matrices among variables range from .303 to .609

As noted above, the implementation performance of decentralized school governance policy was set as the dependent variable for this study. This policy was measured by two-sets of indicators for both types of schools: (1) a six-item scale in which HTs, teachers, and the SMC chairs of both schools reported their perceptions on community participation in school development; and (2) a four-item scale in which HTs, teachers, and the SMC chairs of both schools reported their perceptions on students' attraction to

the school. In order to measure the dependent variable, both perceptions were combined and added.

Data analysis procedures

Policies promoting centralization or decentralization in education appears, disappears, and reappears in many countries with change of governments and governance systems (Kuiper, van den Akker, Hooghoff, & Letschert, 2006). To capture qualitative information, a summary of policy intentions found in policy and plan documents since 1950 was listed then summarized in a descriptive form. The summary helped to formulate the potential variables related to policy implementation.

Information collected through interviews with policy makers, policy experts, HTs and SMC chairs, and the focus group discussions conducted with HTs and SMC chairs were analysed separately. Perceptions noted from individual interviews and the same perceptions noted in focus groups were combined for analysis purposes. A cross-case analysis was then carried out which compared and contrasted the information gained from four different schools, interviews, focus group discussions and the researchers' own observations. In other words, three interrelated parts: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing and verification techniques were used for analysis of the qualitative data, as recommended by Miles and Huberman (1994).

The quantitative data was analysed using SPSS Version-20 to administer univariate, bivariate and multiple regression analyses. Bivariate analysis was run to assess the degree of relationship between the dependent variable and one independent variable, and standard multiple regressions were run to observe the association between the dependent variable and several independent variables (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007). This process enabled an assessment of implementation. Sample t-statistics were used to determine the implementation performance scores for the GPS and CMS Policies.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The analysis of documents showed that the fundamental aim of the CMS policy is to promote community participation in and ownership of school development, and to increase the attractiveness of public schools to students through increased efficiency and accountability of schools (also see National Council for Economic and Development Research, 2008).Empirical results of this study provide evidence that HTs are in favour of the GPS policy (revealed in case studies and interviews) and there is no significant difference between the implementation performance of the GPS and CMS Policies (t-statistics showed no difference). Interviews and case studies showed that HTs, especially, prefer the GPS policy because it gave them better job security and no control by the local community. This result is consistent with the findings of Mukundan &Bray (2004) in India and cases in the US, the UK and Australia (Ainley & McKenzie, 2000).

Some schools purposefully transferred to CMS policy merely to receive motivational grants and retain the power of appointing teachers locally. Edwards (2011, p. 74) notes that block grants and scholarship schemes have motivated schools to become CMSs. The cross-case findings of this study clearly show that the resource dependence problem has increased in both types of schools because of poor community participation. Failure to clarify the policy intentions to the real implementers, particularly professional teacher

organizations, and to develop proper implementation guidelines significantly contributed to varied implementation performance between the two types of schools. This study's results also highlighted that social distance between policy makers and end users contributes to the gap between intended and perceived policy. The informants from CMSs emphasized that the teacher community needs to be taken into account when introducing innovations because the intended policy can only be translated into action upon the acceptance of end users (Pressman & Wildavsky, 1979).

Past studies (see, e.g., Centre for Policy Research and Consultancy, 2008; Full Bright Consultancy Private Limited, 2011) found that CMS schools had increased community participation and were more attractive to students. However, this finding is not supported by the results of this study; as noted, the insignificance of the t-statistic [t (253) =-.285; p>.776>.05] showed that there is no statistically significant difference between implementation performance of the GPS Policy and CMS Policy. Information derived from the qualitative component of this study provides two possible reasons for the lack of difference. One, the government cannot differentiate between the two types of schools and consider both to be public schools and entitled to the same rights for receiving grants from the government. Two, there was no real intention for schools that transferred to a CMS status to abide by the CMS Policy; the motivation for the transfer was merely to receive the motivational grants worth NRs. 300,000 (Approximately 3,700 USD) from the government. This finding is similar to that of Burde (2004). The cross-case findings of this study also highlighted the importance of leadership, clarity on policy objectives, adequacy of budget, school culture (institutionalized school culture, such as: supportiveness of teaching and non-teaching staff, operationalization of the school's code of conduct and time-on-task), and classes running in English medium. These factors were found to be important in both the well-performing GPSs and CMSs.

In this study, Type I and Type III (see Table 2) schools were found to be better-run schools, even though they had adopted two different policies. Type II and Type IV schools also adopted different policies but were found to be equally weak in terms of materializing policy outputs when compared to Type I and Type II schools. Policy experts consulted in this study pointed out that previous research showing that a difference exists between GPS and CMS schools arrived at false conclusions because of bias sampling. The results of this study, therefore, questions whether the dual policies should be continued.

Table 2: Matrix for categorizing the implementation performance of policy outputs

School Type	Community Participation and School Effectiveness	
	High	Low
GPS	Type I School	Type II School
CMS	Type III School	Type IV School

In summary, the results from the qualitative study point to three main reasons that explain low policy implementation performance in either type of school (the reasons are similar to those found by Cheng (2009)). First, a leadership crisis in schools has caused a number of quality issues in both types of schools. Second, the poor commitment of teachers is an acute problem in attempts to translate intended policy into actual action. Third, ambiguous policy objectives, inadequate budgets, poor school culture (for example, irregular meeting with staff members, poor team work), and inadequate

capacity at the school level (for example, poor skills for developing school improvement plans) have largely resulted in an poor implementation performance in schools regardless of type of school.

The quantitative results of this study support the results of qualitative analysis. The results of this study, therefore, show that the CMS Policy has not been more effective than its GPS Policy in terms of producing better intended implementation performance. The findings for Model 1, representing the GPS policy are:

$$IPDGPS = \beta_0 + \beta_1 CLAOPO + \beta_2 CAPAOI + \beta_3 SCHOLS + \beta_4 ADEBUG + \beta_5 TCOMIT + e_0$$
$$= 1.710 + .280 \ CLAOPO + .253 \ CAPAOI + (-.041) \ SCHOLS + .187 \ ADEBUG + .023 \ TCOMIT + .700$$

The model result shows that, of the five anticipated predictors of implementation performance, only three are statistically positively significant at $F_{(5,126)} = 11.394$, $p < .000$, $R^2 = .311$. Clarity on policy objectives (Beta=.280) had the highest significant impact on implementation performance of decentralized school governance policy, followed by capacity of implementers (Beta=.253), and adequacy of budget (Beta=.187).

Model 2 also included five predictors of positive impact on implementation performance of decentralized school governance policy in the CMS policy. The statistical results captured from the standard regression analysis for the CMS policy are:

$$IPDCMS = \beta_6 + \beta_7 CLAOPO + \beta_8 CAPAOI + \beta_9 SCHOLS + \beta_{10} ADEBUG + \beta_{11} TCOMIT + e_1$$
$$= -.726 + .327 \ CLAOPO + .172 \ CAPAOI + .116 \ SCHOLS + .457 \ ADEBUG + .152 \ TCOMIT + .390$$

Thus, Model 2 shows that all the predictors are statistically positively significant with $F_{(5,117)} = 49.217$, $p < .000$, $R^2 = .678$. Adequacy of budget (Beta=.457) has the highest impact on implementation performance of the decentralized school governance policy, followed by clarity of policy objectives (Beta=.327), capacity of implementers (Beta=.172), then teacher commitment (Beta=.152).Size of schools had the lowest measured significance (Beta= .116).

The results of the standard multiple regression analysis reinforced results captured by the Pearson correlation coefficient in both the cases of this study. Thus, the results of this study support Van Meter and Van Horn's (1975), and Mazmanian and Sabatier's (1983) models.

As already noted, an independent samples t-test confirms that there is no statistically significant difference between the scores of implementation performance of GPSs and CMSs when equal variance is assumed at a 95% confidence level [t (253) =-.285; p>.776>.05].When equal variances are not assumed, the result again show that there is no significant difference between the means. Thus, this study concludes that the mean difference of implementation performance of the GPS policy (Mean=4.5114, S.D. =1.07885, N=132) is not significantly different from that of the CMS policy (Mean=4.4724, S.D. =1.10382, N = 123) at a 95% confidence level [t (253) =-.285; p>.776].

Factors associated with implementation performance

The results from an analysis of the qualitative data identified that the factor with the most influence associated with an increase in community participation and student numbers is leadership. This factor was found to persist in both the well-run GPSs and CMSs (see Table 2). The results of the cross-case analysis are similar and reveal that a number of variables are responsible for creating the four types of schools identified in Table 2. These factors are: leadership of the HT, clarity of policy objectives, availability of school budget, school culture, capacity of implementers, and school environment. After leadership, informants from the GPSs placed more emphasis on the availability of budget and the capacity of implementers, whereas informants from the CMSs emphasized policy clarity and commitment of teachers.

The results obtained from the analysis of the qualitative data were largely supported by results from an analysis of the quantitative data. For example, clarity of policy objectives, adequacy of budget and capacity of implementers remained the most influencing predictors of implementation performance in both types of schools. This means that these three factors are good predictors of the dependent variable, implementation performance of decentralized school governance policy. But the impact of the factors differed between types of schools: clarity on policy objectives was the strongest predictor followed by the capacity of implementers and adequacy of budget in the case of the GPS policy; whereas adequacy of budget was the most influential factor followed by clarity on policy objectives and capacity of implementers for the CMS policy case.

Viability of CMS policy

The empirical results, particularly from the qualitative analysis in this study, show that leadership of the HT is the most significant factor for enhancing community participation, increasing student enrolments, mobilizing local resources and better utilizing resources. Due to the limitation of this study, leadership of HT was not included as a variable in the models developed for comparing the two policies. The results from analysis of the qualitative and quantitative data reveals that there is no notable evidence to show that CMSs have better implementation results that GPSs. Leadership and English medium classes running in schools were found as new factors associated with implementation performance. This evidence is sufficient to claim that better leaders always pay more than a better policy. Several good practices, for example: regularity of attendance by students and teachers, regular meetings of SMC and parents' visits, and interactions with teachers to schools, was observed to have a significant influence in both types of schools.

CONCLUSIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

A number of scholars state that adopting a good policy is a necessary but not sufficient condition for the implementation of policy (Balzarova, Bamber, McCambridge, & Sharp, 2004) and policy needs to be examined by the so-called "need and fit" (Fullan, 2001, p. 25) dimension. With this in mind, the intention of this study was to compare the implementation performance of the two types of public schools in Nepal: CMSs and GPSs. Empirical results derived from the use of qualitative and quantitative methods did not find significant differences between the two types of schools. This study,

therefore, concludes that there is no significant difference between the performance of centrally controlled-locally managed GPSs and community owned-locally governed CMSs. The results of this study are contrary to findings from research at both the international and domestic levels (e.g., Research Centre for Educational Innovation and Development, 2004; National Council for Economic and Development Research, 2008; Research Centre for Educational Innovation and Development, 2009).

Although this study identified a number of predictors as critical determinants of implementation performance of decentralized school governance policy, leadership in the school exhibited primacy in determining implementation performance. The results of this study, therefore, helped derive a causal model comprising a strong set of predictors for producing better implementation performance of the decentralized school governance policy (see Figure 2). However, this model should be further tested.

Future research should also empirically examine the six predictors hypothesized in Figure 2 for the conformity of predicting implementation performance of decentralized school governance policy. Mixed methods might be an effective approach for conducting this research, as was carried out for this study. Field interviews with parents and surveys of teachers, which are often not included in contemporary research, need to be incorporated for assessing actual implementation performance of decentralized school governance policies.

As for the theoretical considerations, the findings of this study infer that there are some contextual limitations of the policy implementation models developed by various theorists (e.g., see Van Meter & Van Horn, 1975; and Mazmanian & Sabatier, 1983). The new causal model derived inductively in this study would help to bridge the gaps that persist in the implementation of the decentralized school governance policy, particularly in the case of Nepal.

This study evaluated the initial outputs of ongoing decentralization initiatives in Nepal and compared the centrally-controlled GPSs with locally-managed CMSs using mixed methods. Results of the study provide additional inputs into the educational research field at the macro level. The causal determinants inductively identified by this study deserve consideration when implementing policies at the micro or school level. For example, the results of this study clearly spell out that a single policy option does not fit all school contexts because each school is unique. In conclusion, the results of this study demonstrate that providing more discretion and authority to HTs to run SMCs would increase implementation performance.
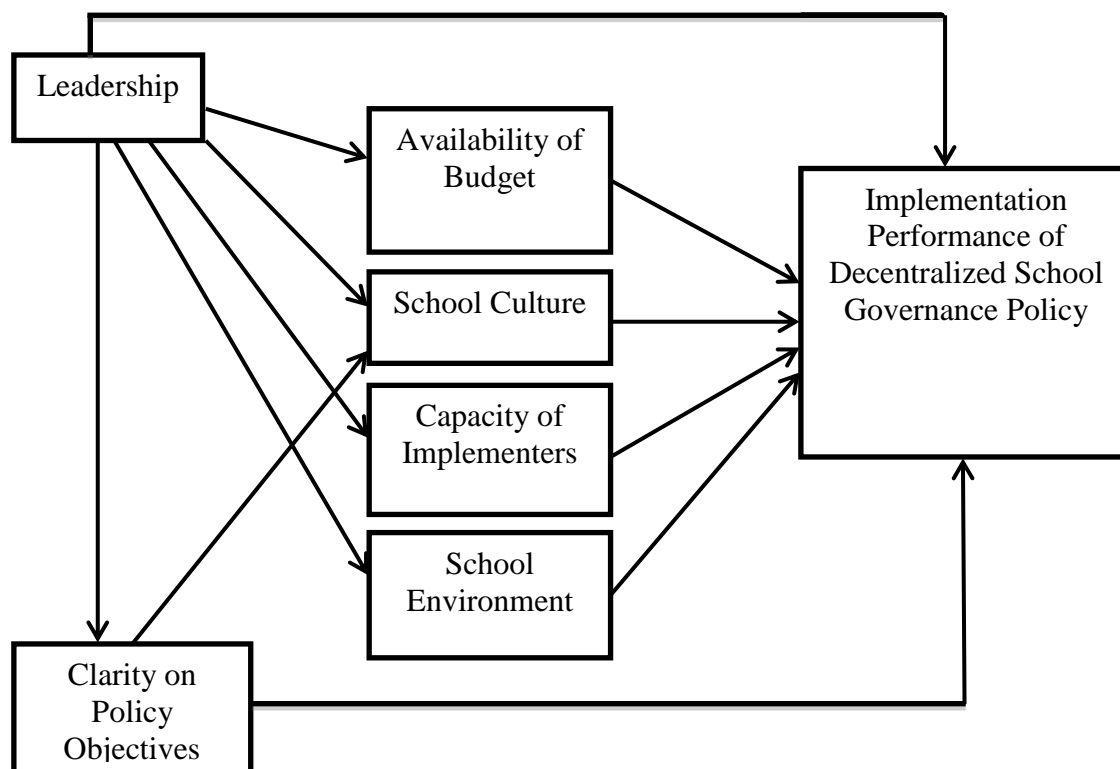
Figure 2 A causal model derived from the results of this study

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Influence of perceived parenting styles: Goal orientations and career aspirations of high school science students in Thailand

Ravinder Koul
The Pennsylvania State University, US: *rxk141@psu.edu*
Thanita Lerdpornkulrat
Srinakharinwirot University, Thailand: *thanital@g.swu.ac.th*
Chanut Poondej
Srinakharinwirot University, Thailand: *chanutp@g.swu.ac.th*

There has been considerable research interest into the relationship between the parenting styles of Asians, and student motivation and achievement. The investigation presented in this paper contributes to the literature in this area by examining the influence of perceived parenting style on goal orientations and career aspirations of a sample of high school science students in Thailand (N = 2638). Results from a multiple regression analysis show several significant findings: students who perceived their parents as empathic were more likely to have adopted mastery goals and empathic parenting had a particularly positive influence on females' career aspirations. Students who perceived that their parents have domineering views were more likely to have adopted performance avoidance goals. Students who perceived that their parents are "the regulators of family rules" were more likely to adopt both mastery and performance goals. These findings are discussed in light of social dimensions of achievement goals and gender roles.

Keywords: Parenting style; achievement goal theory; personal epistemology; career aspirations; Thailand

INTRODUCTION

Widely accepted theories of attachment (Bartholomew, 1990) and symbolic interactionism (Mead, 1934) posit that people develop a sense of self on the basis of how other people treat them. Eccles (1994) introduced a cognitive model which includes a component on socialization and academic choice that focuses on the role of parents and teachers in shaping the achievement-related beliefs and career choices of young adults. More recently, there has been research in social psychology using cognitive theories of motivation to explain the influence of parenting behaviour on student judgments of self-competency, value beliefs and goals (Chao & Tseng, 2002; Meece, Glienke, & Burg, 2006; Spera, 2005).

Much of the research on the influence of parenting styles on children's outcomes has been based on Baumrind's (1971) conceptualizations of authoritative, authoritarian and permissive styles of parenting, and their impact on the physical, cognitive and social development of children (see also Eccles, 1994; Meece et al., 2006; Spera, 2005). For example, studies carried out in the US have found that support of child autonomy with

authoritative parenting is related to intrinsic motivation while repression of child autonomy with authoritarian parenting is related to extrinsic motivation (Dornbusch, Ritter, Leiderman, Roberts, & Fraleigh, 1987; Ginsburg & Bronstein, 1993; Gonzalez, Doan Holbein, & Quilter, 2002; Leung, Lau, & Lam, 1998). There has also been research in East Asia (i.e. China, Japan, South Korea, etc.) using Baumrind's typology (see Murayama & Elliot, 2009), but some researchers have questioned the direct application of Baumrind's typology within the Asian context (Chao, 1994; Chao & Tseng, 2002). Chao and Tseng (2002) suggest that, because societies differ in terms of family environment and socialization process, the social understandings and meanings of such terms as *parental control* and *warmth* may not be universal (Leung et al., 1998; Steinberg, Lamborn, Dornbusch, & Darling, 1992). It would, therefore, make sense for research to take culturally specific perceptions and descriptions of parenting style into account.

Survey studies on the relationship between parenting style and student motivation have used either a two-dimensional motivational model of *mastery* and *performance* achievement goal orientations or a three-dimensional motivational model of *mastery*, *performance approach* and *performance avoidance* achievement goal orientations (Church, Elliot, & Gable, 2001; Gonzalez, Doan Holbein, & Quilter, 2002; Gonzalez, Greenwood, & Hsu, 2001). Generally speaking, *mastery* goals focus inwardly on mastering a task and personal improvement while *performance* goals focus outwardly on normative outcomes, grades and other external evaluations and comparisons (Hyde & Durik, 2005). A student who endorses a *performance approach* goal wants to demonstrate ability that is superior to others, and a student who endorses a *performance avoidance* goal wants to not appear stupid compared to others (Church et al., 2001). As Gonzalez et al. (2002) note, the three-dimensional motivational model may lead to a more precise depiction and understanding of the nature of the relationship between parenting style and student motivation (p. 466).

The study presented in this paper was carried out in Thailand. A child's perception of parental behaviour is considered to be as important an influence on the child's development as actual parental behaviour (Steinberg et al., 1992), so we assessed Thai students' perceptions of parental behaviours to form the basis of our typology of parenting style. Using a three-dimensional model of motivational achievement goal orientation, we then investigated the influence of the two most commonly perceived parenting styles on students' motivational goals and aspirations for high earning science, math, engineering or related professions.

METHOD

Participants

The educational system in Thailand consists of six years of primary education (called *Prathom*) followed by three years of lower secondary education (called *Mathayom* 1, 2 and 3) and three years of upper secondary education (called *Mathayom* 4, 5, and 6). At the end of lower secondary education, students are tracked into an academic or vocational stream. We collected survey data from every student enrolled in the academic stream in the upper secondary level academic science-math stream in five different schools located in central and north-eastern Thailand. More than 94 percent of responses to our survey were completed (n =2638, male = 46%; female = 54%). The proportion of females in our sample and the socio-economic status of all our participants was representative of the

population nationwide. A majority (87.5%) of respondents had parents in a marital relationship. More than two-thirds of the students (72.9%) were brought up by both mother and father, 12.5 percent by mother only, 2.7 percent by father only, and 11.9 percent by family relative(s).

Instruments

The *first* section of the survey asked for general information (e.g., mother's education, father's education and career aspiration). The *second* section of the survey assessed motivational goal orientation toward science (17 items, e.g., "I like to perform tasks in my science class because this makes me learn new things") (Koul, Roy, Kaewkuekool, & Ploisawaschai, 2009). The *third* section of the survey assessed the two most common parenting styles as described by participants in the study: *Pa-dej-garn* or *jao-ra-biab* parenting, and *aou-jai-sai* or *aou-jai-sai-doo-lae* parenting. *Pa-dej-garn* parents are perceived to make all decisions on behalf of their children, put too many demands and restrictions on children, force children to accept what they think is right, and never entertain questions from children. *Aou-jai-sai* parents are perceived to show empathy for their children, encourage verbal give-and-take, and allow children to form their own point of view. Based on informal interviews with a group of students and previous literature, we created a survey to assess participants' perceptions of these parenting styles in relation to their own upbringing. Because past research has found that children may perceive their parents to have different styles of parenting (e.g., Chao & Tseng, 2002), we assessed the parental roles separately. We used a 5-point Likert scale from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5). Data for the main study was collected over a three-month period during September to November 2014 with a survey questionnaire.

Analysis

We analysed data collected in this investigation using exploratory factor analysis with principal components on the correlation matrix of associations and the factor extraction rule based on eigenvalues greater than "1". We chose the principal component method because it obtained a larger proportion of variance compared to principal axis factoring. We conducted both orthogonal (Varimax) and oblique rotations. Both rotation approaches grouped the survey items into the same number of factors. Although the oblique rotation sum of squares loadings was a little better than those for the orthogonal, we report here only the orthogonal solution because it is adequate and more summary information is provided for it by the SPSS statistical software that we used (Henson & Roberts, 2006). Since the significance of a loading gives little indication of the substantive importance of a variable to a factor, we interpreted only factor loadings with an absolute value greater than ".4", which explains around 16 percent of the variance in the variable (Stevens, 1992). In order for data to be of value and of use, the validity and reliability were measured. We calculated Cronbach's alpha, the most common measure of scale reliability, separately for each subscale. Factor loadings ranged from .689 to .770. Alpha values for each sub-scale ranged from .79 to .85. We used the Anderson-Rubin method to calculate scores on each factor for each survey participant. We used each factor score for the subsequent statistical analysis.

We conducted three simultaneous multiple regression analyses (Table 1) with mastery, performance approach, or performance avoidance goal orientation as the criterion variables. The predictor variables in each regression analysis were based on previous

research examining the influence of family variables on student motivation (Turner & Johnson, 2003). We chose simultaneous regression (or *Enter*, as it is known in SPSS) because we had no prior idea which variables would create the best prediction equation.

Table 1: Multiple regressions: Influence of perceived parenting style, education, and gender on achievement goal orientations (n =2638)

Achievement goal orientation	Influence variable	Parameter estimates		
		beta	*t*	*p*
Mastery				
	Empathic father	.235	10.861	.000[**]
	Empathic mother	.199	9.196	.000[**]
	Regulators of family rules	.121	5.600	.000[**]
	Domineering views	.048	2.228	.026[*]
	Father's education	-.008	-.246	.806
	Mother's education	.003	.095	.924
	Gender	-.004	-.170	.865
Performance approach				
	Empathic father	-.008	-.350	.726
	Empathic mother	.068	3.028	.002[**]
	Regulators of family rules	.076	3.378	.001[**]
	Domineering views	.151	6.694	.000[**]
	Father's education	.034	1.035	.301
	Mother's education	-.004	-.119	.905
	Gender	-.028	-1.226	.220
Performance avoidance				
	Empathic father	-.049	-2.253	.024[*]
	Empathic mother	-.039	-1.783	.075
	Regulators of family rules	.110	4.994	.000[**]
	Domineering views	.238	10.849	.000[**]
	Mother's education	-.054	-1.663	.096
	Father's education	-.020	-.616	.538
	Gender	-.059	-2.673	.008[**]

[*]$p < .01$, [**]$p < .05$ Mastery goal orientation adjusted $R^2 = .111$, Performance approach goal orientation adjusted $R^2 = .034$, Performance avoidance goal orientation adjusted $R^2 = .082$

Prior researchers have concluded that aspirations for high earning science, math and engineering professions provide focus for the influence of home environment on the career decisions of students (Correll, 2001). We used mean monthly salary to code each of the professions aspired to in our survey data as HESME (high earning science, math, engineering or related professions) or Non-HESME (non-high earning science, math, engineering or related professions) ("Thailand average salary income - job comparison," 2007). For example, general physician (US$1218), dentist (US$925), engineer (US$962), and pharmacist (US$700) were coded as HESME; and low-earning science-related professions, such as nursing (US$200) and all other professions, were coded as non-HESME. In order to find the influence of family variables that discriminate the student choice between a HESME and Non-HESME profession, we conducted discriminant function analysis (Tables 2 and 3).

Table 2: Univariate F ratios and Wilks's lambda for predictor variables for female group (the model was not significant for the male group)

GROUP	VARIABLE TYPE	Wilks's lambda	F ratio	df	Sig.
FEMALE *(n=1132)*					
	Empathic father	.995	5.316	1130	.021[*]
	Empathic mother	.995	5.686	1130	.017[*]
	Regulators of family rules	.999	1.066	1130	.302
	Domineering views	1.000	.166	1130	.684
	Father's education	.974	30.678	1130	.000[**]
	Mother's education	.964	42.228	1130	.000[**]

[**]$p<.01$, [*]$p<.05$

Table 3: Standardized canonical discriminant function coefficients and structure coefficients for predictor variables in female group (the model was not significant for male group)

GROUP	Predictor variable	Standardized coefficient	Structure coefficient
FEMALE *(n = 1132)*			
	Empathic father	.308	.304
	Empathic mother	.329	.315
	Father's education	.196	.732
	Mother's education	.726	.858

For females, Group centroids were .225 for students aspiring for HESME professions and -.225 for non-HESME professions

RESULTS

The Goal Orientation Scale (58% variance) had three factors: mastery goal orientation (6 items, e.g., "I feel satisfied when I learn new things in my science class"), performance goal approach orientation (5 items, e.g., "I feel good when I perform better than other students in science"), and performance avoidance goal orientation (6 items, e.g., "My main goal in science class is to avoid looking stupid in science"). The Parenting Style Scale (59.4% variance) had four factors: *empathic father* (6 items, e.g., "My father was always willing to listen to children's concerns), *empathic mother* (6 items, e.g., "My mother was always willing to listen to children's concerns), *parents are the regulators of family rules* (4 items, e.g., "my father always felt that parents should force their children to behave appropriately") and *parents have domineering views* (4 items, e.g., "My mother always felt that children must accept what she thought was right"). The "empathic mother" and "empathic father" sub-scales measured the perceived degree of parental respect for child's thoughts, feelings and expression. The empathic father and empathic mother sub-scales were found to be conceptually equivalent (Behling & Law, 2000) because the same number of conceptually equivalent factors extracted from the two scales and the same items loaded on each factor, and approximately the same proportion of total variance was accounted by each factor. "The regulators of family rules" sub-scale assessed parental insistence upon complete obedience to parentally established family

rules and regulations. The "domineering views" sub-scale measured the degree to which parents were perceived to force their ideas on the child.

Both males and females in our study perceived their mother to be more empathic than their father. Compared to males, females perceived both their father and mother to be significantly more empathic, F = 7.86, partial eta squared = .003, and F = 29.32, partial eta squared = .012, respectively, p < .01. Compared to females, males perceived their parents to be significantly more "regulators of family rules" and to have "domineering views", F = 13.02, partial eta squared = .005 and F = 9.04, partial eta squared = .004, respectively, p < .01. Split-file analysis of variance of each parenting style survey item with gender found that both males and females perceived their mother to be significantly more *the regulator of family rules* and to have significantly more *domineering views* than their father.

Results of regression analysis show the influence of parenting styles on motivational goal orientations. Table 1 presents *b*-values and their level of significance. The largest predictor of performance avoidance orientation was the perception of domineering views (*b* = .273). The perception that father and mother are empathic made the greatest contribution to mastery orientation (*b* =.235 and .199). The perception that the parents are the regulators of family rules contributed positively to both mastery goals (*b* = .121) and performance avoidance goals (*b* =. 110). Generally speaking, we found that the males in our study were more oriented towards performance approach and performance avoidance goals than the females and the difference was statistically significant, F = 3.87, p < .05, partial eta squared = .002, and F = 18.62, partial eta squared = .007, p < .01.

Students who aspired for high earning science, math and engineering professions perceived their fathers to be significantly more empathic than the students who aspired for Non-HESME (F = 6.16, partial eta squared = .002, p < .05). This difference was true both for males (F = 3.0, partial eta squared = .003, p < .05) and females (F = 3.6, partial eta squared = .003, p < .05).

Discriminant function analyses found that Boxes' test was insignificant and all log determinants were very similar, which means that the homogeneity of variance assumption was met (Stevens, 1992). The statistical model of family influences was not significant for males, Chi-square = 11.67, p = .07, which means that the family variables did not significantly discriminate the HESME group from non-HESME group. However, the model was significant for females, Wilks' Lambda = .952, Chi-square = 55.776, p <.01. Discriminant analysis yielded a canonical correlation of .22, explaining about 5.1 percent of variance in the female aspiration for a HESME profession or non-HESME profession. Table 2 shows univariate F ratios and Wilks' Lambda for each of the six influence variables. A high level of education for both parents and the perception of both parents as "empathic" contributed positively to females' aspirations for high earning science, math, engineering and related professions. These four variables showed statistically significant differences in mean values for females' career aspirations, and the classification results showed that 60 percent of the cases were correctly classified. Table 3 shows the standardized coefficients and structure coefficients for each of these four predictors.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The American philosopher Dewey (1916) said that the *individual* and the *social* are nested. Dewey's insight describes the nature of what our investigation found in Thailand, and our findings offer cross-cultural validity for his perception. We found that students' beliefs about their parents are associated with their achievement goals for themselves (see also Poortvliet & Darnon, 2010). According to Lau and Yeung (1996), and Chao and Tseng (2002), Asian children may perceive parental regulation of family rules as *domination* or as an *organizational type of control* to promote family harmony. Our investigation found that the endorsement of either mastery or performance goals was associated with the interpretation of parental regulation of the child's behaviour (Chao & Tseng, 2002; Gonzalez et al., 2002; Spera, 2005). We found that the perception of parental control as *domineering* associated with performance avoidance goals, which are *negatively* related to students' self-esteem (Herz & Gullone, 1999) and life satisfaction (Stewart et al., 1998), while the perception of parental control as *caring* associated with mastery goals, which are *positively* associated with self-control, persistence (Zhengyuan et al., 1991) and life satisfaction (Stewart et al., 1998). These findings (the results as summarized in Tables 1, 2 and 3) corroborate widespread evidence from research conducted in the US on the association between students' perception of others and their beliefs about themselves and academic tasks; namely, that positive evaluation of others is linked to mastery goals (Kaplan, 2004) and positive representation of self, including high levels of self-efficacy and self-esteem (Arbona & Power, 2003; Laible, Carlo, & Roesch, 2004).

The significant positive association that we found between females' perceptions of both their father and mother as empathic, and their aspirations for HESME professions was notable since family factors (parental education and parenting style) have no significance in relation to the career aspirations of males in our study. In another investigation with a similar population of high school students in Thailand, we found gender differences in career aspirations that may result from stereotype effect and social preferences (Correll, 2001; Koul, Lerdpornkulrat, & Chantara, 2010). Koul et al. (2010) found that males aspired for HESME professions at a higher rate than females not because they valued science more than females or because they had higher grade-point-averages than females. They did so, partly, because they perceived they were simply more suited for HESME professions. Koul et al. (2010) also found that higher levels of biology and physics classroom anxiety negatively impacted the aspirations of females but not males for HESME professions. Findings from these investigations suggest that females use their emotional states and emotional support as a source of information about their competency to aspire for HESME professions. Therefore, family role models and persuaders are especially critical sources of self-efficacy beliefs for females. The results draw attention to the nested nature of motivation and social environment and, particularly for females, the influence of affective elements on student motivation and career aspirations.

IMPLICATIONS

The results of this study have important implications for parents and education counsellors. Because students' perceptions of parenting styles have an effect on their achievement goal orientations, the *empathic* parenting style would be emphasised and *domineering views* should be avoid within the family context in Asian countries.

LIMITATIONS AND DIRECTIONS FOR FUTURE STUDY

There are limitations related to the collection of our data. One potential limitation is related to the survey data collection techniques: students may not feel encouraged to provide accurate, honest answers. For a better understanding of the different aspects of student views and experiences, a mixed methods design should be considered as a methodology for the future study. A second potential limitation is related to the measurement of students' perceptions of parenting styles which were assessed in relation to their own upbringing, but the true parenting styles of their parents may not be the same as that perception. Future research should consider overcoming these limitation to provide more robust results.

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Curriculum renewal in a Small Island State: Stabilization and early recovery phases of reconstruction

Michael James Longhurst[1]
University of the Sunshine Coast: *Michael.longhurst@gmail.com*

In countries recovering from disaster or conflict, school curriculum renewal is submerged in a plethora of more immediate concerns of a nascent government. Yet, curriculum is the cornerstone of any education system. Using a case study for context, this paper describes a methodology to maximise the quality of the emergent national curriculum. In the first section of the paper, a theoretical curriculum planning and implementation framework is established and, in the second section, the experiences of implementing the framework in the case study context are examined. The paper concludes with a discussion of lessons learnt. This methodology of synthesising, packaging and implementing theories of curriculum, development, change management and leadership in the context of an independent emerging nation is of value to education ministers, project planners, first responders and implementation consultants.

Keywords: assessment; curriculum renewal; education aid; pedagogy; small island state; systems thinking

INTRODUCTION

Curriculum issues in aid recipient countries are a contested field, and claims as to what works needs to be evaluated carefully (Agigo, 2010; D. Evans, 2012; Guthrie, 2011) and is not at all clear (Barrett, Sayed, Schweisfurth, & Tikly, 2015). The underlying caveat is that curriculum artefacts that have currency in Western liberal cultures are not automatic choices for emerging nations (McLaughlin, 2011; Phillips & Schweisfurth, 2014; Pritchett & Beatty, 2012; Tabulawa, 2003). In saying that, Cassity (2008) finds that changes in aid policy are sincere efforts to address curriculum issues. Recent examples of education aid projects indicate that aid donors are seeking improved learning outcomes in students and will support initiatives that are grounded in evidence that achieves this goal (DFAT, 2014a; USAID, 2015).

The audience for this paper includes those who are engaged in renewing an education system in the stabilization and early recovery phase after a disaster or conflict. This paper is especially valuable to anyone involved in curriculum projects in developing countries.

The paper aims to provide a knowledge base of major curriculum issues and to provide guidance on peripheral issues that could impact on the implementation of sustainable curricula. Those engaged in renewing an education system may not be experts in education, (Kothari, 2005; Riddell, 2014, p. 35) but are often the initial aid personnel on the scene in the post disaster and stabilization phases of development; they establish the foundation for a national curriculum.

No two nations are the same, but the nations that are considered in this paper are relatively small low lying Islands with limited, disjointed economic activity and inadequate capacity to provide a full range of government services from their own resources and rely on donor assistance (Crossley & Sprague, 2014). In one way or another, these nations are emerging from a disaster related to conflict, natural causes, climate change or economic collapse with education being only one of a list of priorities competing for limited funding and government attention. In terms of education, donor assistance includes: host country education budget support; provision of physical assets, such as school buildings; supply of expertise, such as short-term consultants; and in-line expatriates employed in public service positions, such as directors or school principals. The term 'host country' is used in this paper rather than other descriptors in the literature which have hegemonic connotations, such as aid recipient, beneficiary, developing, fragile state or partner country. The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) recognises 146 host countries (OECD, 2016) of which 39 are classified as Small Island Developing States (United Nations, 2013) – more commonly referred to as Small Island States (SIS). These low-lying coastal countries tend to share similar sustainable development challenges, including small but growing populations, limited resources, remoteness, susceptibility to natural disasters, vulnerability to external shocks, excessive dependence on international trade, and fragile environments. Their growth and development is also constrained by high communication, energy and transportation costs; irregular international transport volumes; disproportionately expensive public administration and infrastructure due to their small size; and little to no opportunity to create economies of scale (United Nations, 2013).

By their nature, SIS do not have the resources or professional capacity to conduct their own research to inform their education system in matters of curriculum, pedagogy, assessment, certification, teacher professional development, school planning, or monitoring and evaluation programs. In place of such research, SIS rely on the literature, foreign aid and expatriate expertise to develop their education systems (Crossley, Bray, & Packer, 2011; Williams, Brown, & Kwan, 2015).

This paper is a case study of curriculum renewal in a SIS in the early stages of recovery after the equivalent of an economic tsunami had devastated its economy. The government had been unable to pay teachers regularly for over two years, schools were in dangerous disrepair, attendance was below 30%, fuel and electricity were severely rationed, the Education Department was the subject of overseas litigation for non-payment of boarders' fees, no school or national exams had been held for over 12 months and education data required to prepare a situational analysis was either non-existent or stored on a computer which had a corrupted hard drive. It was in this situation that a donor funded project to renew the national school curriculum, including Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET), was launched.

This paper is a study of implementing curriculum reform and, thus, focuses on the theoretical principles of curriculum; however, the focus is through the lens of the principles of development. These principles (OECD, 2012b) will not be discussed in this short paper but they include: do no harm; local stakeholder ownership; scope and time for local leadership to develop; and institutional capacity building. In that respect, this paper differs from curriculum textbooks that focus on curriculum principles from a theoretical perspective alone.

The first section of this paper defines the concept of a curriculum before examining the three phases of a model of curriculum design and implementation. A case study of the application of that model to a SIS is then discussed. Importantly for practitioners in the field, the discussion includes consideration of leadership and change management as factors that influence successful implementation and sustainability. After examining each of the curriculum elements of content, pedagogy, assessment, and certification and embedding the curriculum in the education system, the paper concludes with lessons learnt and advice for host country stakeholders in evaluating curriculum aid packages offered to them.

CURRICULUM DEFINED

A curriculum is defined in this paper as the system framework that aligns four elements of an education system: the content to be taught and learnt in schools; the pedagogy that is employed by teachers to achieve and promote learning of the curriculum content; the assessment principles and systems employed to evaluate learning; and the certification system used to authenticate the judgements made in the assessment process. The literature provides other definitions of curriculum (Acedo & Hughes, 2014; Marsh, 2009, pp. 3-8; Westbrook et al., 2013, pp. 12-15), many of which omit the concepts of pedagogy, assessment and certification (Pinar, 2003) and consider only the content that is to be taught and how to organise that content. Young (2014) provides a succinct, wider exploration of the concept that focuses on a curriculum as a device to select, organise and transmit knowledge, but this paper applies Bernstein's (1990) message system concept of education and describes a curriculum as a system of aligned education elements that ensures that the message is consistent from the curriculum planners' desk to the classroom. This definition of curriculum will inform the curriculum development and implementation methodology that will be examined in this case study.

THEORETICAL CURRICULUM MODELS

Marsh (2009, p. 25) identified eight curriculum models, but provided the caveat that curriculum models can provide useful, detailed perspectives on some particulars of the curriculum in action but not the total picture. Scott (2008) identified eight curriculum ideologies or justifications for the focus and content of a curriculum. These reflect the theorists' view of what constitutes knowledge, which knowledge is worth most and the role of education institutions as either emancipating or insulating the learner. Scott distinguished between theoretical knowledge and practical knowledge, and between economism, conservative restorationists, humanist and critical theorist's justifications for the content of a curriculum.

In the context of this case study, the curriculum development model found to be suitable for most SIS contexts was that provided by Print (1993) with some modifications as shown in Figure 1. Print's model has three phases, the first of which is the presage or a determination of the profile and theoretical perspectives of the people who will be involved in the curriculum development process. This is important because the eventual curriculum framework will reflect the ideology that is espoused by individual stakeholders, especially in relation to pedagogy. Although Print includes a situational analysis in phase two of his model, in this case study it was included in phase one.
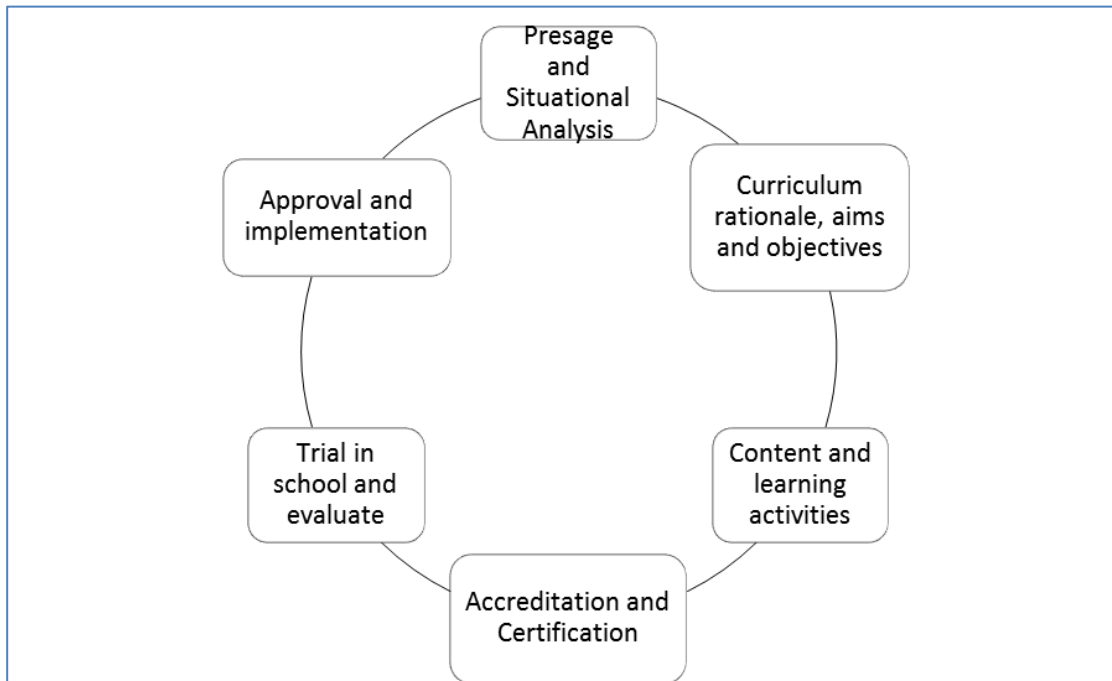

Figure 1: Stages in case study curriculum renewal

Phase two of Print's model is where the technical and professional work of operationalizing the theory is done. After reviewing the situational analysis, the next task is to obtain agreement among stakeholders on the curriculum rationale, aims, goals and objectives before moving onto the approval of the content and learning activities. Finally, the modes of assessment of students' learning, labelled as 'instructional evaluation' in Print's model, are determined. By this stage in the process, the various elements of the curriculum are in place. However, this process usually occurs over a lengthy period of some years, with changes in personnel, government policy, impact of technology and emergence of latent forces all exerting an influence on what were previously agreed curriculum elements. Consequently, an evaluation of the process to date will be required to ensure that the original rationale, goals and aims permeate the completed framework and, importantly, that the various elements are aligned. Although not described in Print's model – but included in this paper's definition of a curriculum – is the requirement to develop an accreditation and certification system of student learning to authenticate student learning and provide the student with evidence or certification of their achievement.

In the third phase, the curriculum is introduced into the classroom where, inevitably, modifications will be required following the emergence of various peripheral issues such as the existing textbooks, science laboratory design, or school-imposed timetable

structures not being aligned with the proposed curriculum learning objectives or learning experiences. Depending of the severity of these issues, as revealed by a continuous monitoring and evaluation process, the curriculum may need to be reviewed. Assuming that there are no major impediments, the time taken from conception to implementation in the classroom for a system wide curriculum is at least six years.

With that model as a framework, the implementation of the curriculum renewal project in SIS will now be described.

APPLYING THE MODEL

One of the first tasks in implementing the model in the SIS was to conduct an evaluation of the current curriculum. There are various curriculum evaluation tools available and the choice of which one is applied will depend on the outcome sought and reliability of available data. Schmidt and Houang (2003) use the results of Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) as an evaluation criteria, but this data may not be available or suitable for all SIS. In such a situation, a self-administered tool, such as the curriculum module of UNESCO's General Education Quality Analysis/Diagnosis Framework (Marope, 2012) or Stufflebeam's (2003) context, input, process and product (CIPP) evaluation model will be more useful. The CIPP package provides samples of evaluation checklists which can be adapted to suit the SIS context. Assuming that the data is available, a technical evaluation process grounded in statistical analysis of system data and detailing the types of research designs that are suitable is provided by the US Agency for International Development (USAID) (Bureau for Policy Planning and Learning, 2013). Specific subject evaluation tools for SIS and aid recipient countries are available for curriculum effectiveness in mathematics (USAID, 2014a) and reading (USAID, 2014b).

In general, the evaluation process involves three stages. The first is identification of the purpose for the evaluation and its audience. The second is an evaluation design strategy and the collection of data. After analysis of this data, the third stage is analysing and synthesising the data into a report and presenting it to the audience. The nature and extent of the data collected and the subsequent report will be determined by the audience; for example, it will be different for a science faculty evaluating the curriculum on the criteria of its science components compared to an aid donor evaluating the same curriculum on the criteria of the effectiveness of their funding in achieving improved student learning.

However, the use of Western curriculum evaluation tools in SIS needs to be judicious. As Courtney (2008) points out in her evaluation of a teaching and learning project in Cambodia, the 'monitoring tools that introduce easily measurable and observable criteria may identify the desired outcome for a project, but can fail to identify unintended consequences and may mask aspects of critical importance and overall project impact' (pp. 558-559). This was demonstrated in an impact evaluation of the Curriculum Reform Implementation Project in Papua New Guinea (Evans et al., 2007) conducted by international consultants who declared the curriculum project a success. However a subsequent re-evaluation of the project (Agigo, 2010) found serious problems in its implementation and questioned its national impact and sustainability, finding it made a negligible contribution to improved student learning.

The evaluation of the case study SIS' existing curriculum found varying degrees of compliance with the criteria being evaluated. The early childhood sector had a well-organised work program but the primary sector had an uncoordinated collection of syllabi from three different sources. The lower secondary years taught a collection of subject syllabi from another country, and the upper secondary had a mix of two matriculation courses while the vocational education courses had ceased due to a fire destroying the TVET centre and its resources. There was no evidence of a curriculum policy, that the curriculum content was localised or that there was a rationale provided for studying any of the subjects. When these findings were put in the context of the other difficulties that had befallen the education system, the report to the donor and the SIS Education Minister concluded that a major program of curriculum renewal was required.

To ensure that the curriculum program proceeded in a systematic way and was aligned with other elements of the education system's reform package, the curriculum program was incorporated into a series of sector wide strategic plans. The first strategic plan, Footpath I, was designed to stabilise the education system over a period of two years and the second, Footpath II, was for three years (DFAT, 2014b). In the event, Footpath I took three years and Footpath II, predicated on the success of Footpath I, took five years to be fully implemented. Although the additional time taken for the strategic plans delayed the curriculum timetable, considering that education is a system and the curriculum segment of the education system needs to keep in lock step with other segments of the system, it was realised that it was a waste of resources to attempt to implement a curriculum if it could not be fully integrated into the system.

To ensure consistency with the definition of a curriculum being the cornerstone of an education system, the conceptual pivot for the strategic plans was the curriculum renewal program that was grounded in an expanded and modified Print model. The first phase of planning the curriculum program consisted of three steps: situational analysis, awareness raising of the need for reform, and consultation with stakeholders. The three steps in the second phase of developing the curriculum consisted of: achieving consensus on a curriculum framework, developing courses of study around the curriculum content organisers, and trialling the curriculum in schools. The third phase involved: preparation for full implementation and consisted of a major review; responding to the review; establishing an assessment and certification regime; and submitting the curriculum to the Minister for Education for legislative endorsement.

Driving any curriculum program requires sustained leadership which involves considerable consultation and negotiations with stakeholders, such as donors, Cabinet budget committees and the parliamentary drafting office. Also required is experience in resourcing projects and ability to manage consultants. The overarching requirement is a theoretical knowledge of curriculum, especially the elements of content, pedagogy, assessment and certification, and the application of change management principles. It is this aspect of the curriculum implementation program that this paper now will turn to by describing the process of implementing each of the three phases.

Phase one: Planning

Having established the existing situation with the evaluation exercise, and in the absence of other compelling factors, the rationale comes next in planning a curriculum (Posner & Rudnitsky, 2006). In this case, the rationale, approved by a process of consultation, for

the curriculum was to deliver a 'sustainable economy and environment achieved through national human and social capital capacity development' (DFAT, 2014b). The goals of the curriculum were:

1. Students enter employment, further education, or society and life with confidence.
2. Students leave school as literate and numerate citizens who can participate in, and contribute to, a complex, networked national and international community and economy.
3. The curriculum documents show what every child is learning at every level of education and training system.
4. The curriculum delivers the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values expressed in the Constitution and National Sustainable Development Strategy (pp. 4-5)

A national curriculum requires a legislative head of power to legitimise and enforce its provisions; an *Education Bill* that contained a section on curriculum was, therefore, prepared. At the same time Fullan's work on introducing change in education (Fullan, 2003) and Senge's work on leadership (Senge, 2006) – in particular his advice to develop a shared vision in all stakeholders of the education community – was considered. Consequently, as one strategy to build this vision, a 'Frequently Asked Questions' pamphlet about the proposed *Education Bill* was published. That document essentially was a vehicle to outline the rationale for many of the proposed curriculum changes and to provide a practical manifestation of the abstract vision for education.

As well as promoting the clauses of the *Bill* to build a vision, a poster of the proposed curriculum structure was developed. In the earlier curriculum consultative meetings, participants emphasised the centrality of literacy and numeracy and these elements feature prominently in the poster. Also included in the poster was a reference to the innovative curriculum content organiser and assessment device of rich tasks. Earlier consultation meetings had noted that there was some resistance to the use of rich tasks by the community, who were concerned that they were an experimental replacement for traditional subject areas. Thus, in the poster, although the rich tasks were present, they were not dominant. Additionally, the use of rich tasks such as 'Grow for Me', 'Identify Crisis', or 'Environment' as content organisers instead of the traditional subjects, such as English, Maths and Science, required extensive professional development for teachers. The engagement of teachers in these professional development activities was facilitated by invoking the ownership principle of development and the curriculum workshops focused on teachers themselves devising and authoring the rich tasks rather than presenting them with a finished product for their approval. Over 25 quality rich tasks for years one to ten were eventually approved and implemented.

Phase two: Curriculum framework

Referring to the curriculum renewal program, the first three steps of the phase of preparation for curriculum reform have been covered, and the next phase is the development of the curriculum. Unlike phase one, which was more the preserve of change experts, phase two is the preserve of curriculum specialists. Consistent with the definition that a curriculum is a system framework whose purpose is to provide consistency and alignment of the system elements, the curriculum's four specialist's areas of content, pedagogy, assessment and certification will now be considered.

Curriculum content

Some curricula do not refer to curriculum content as what a student needs to learn but describe content as 'what teachers are expected to teach' (Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority, 2013, p. 18). This view indicates the impact of competing pedagogical philosophies, but in a SIS, as in most classrooms, the semantics will escape classroom teachers and they will interpret the content in a curriculum document as what the student needs to learn.

The selection of content in a curriculum is a contested area. The past practice in the case study SIS was to implement a syllabus from another country and purchase the textbooks that most closely matched the content of the syllabus. However, there are structured approaches, grounded in curriculum and learning theory, that provide guidelines for the selection of content and for the scaffolding, or division of that content, into year and juncture levels.

In this respect, Print (1993) describes the seminal work of Tyler, who structured curriculum around four question: what is the purpose of education (the objectives); what learning experiences (content and pedagogy) will achieve these objectives; how would these be organised; and how would a student be assessed. Stenhouse (1975) regarded objectives as being too content specific and restricted teachers in what they taught while Apple (1993) questioned the choice of content, asking 'whose content?'. Others, such as Delors (1998), questioned the emphasis on knowledge, suggesting development of a futures orientated process model, while Luke et al. (2013) saw a more critical role for curriculum content. In addition to questioning what is included as content, Scott (2008) suggests that reasons should be given also for excluding some content and consideration be given as to how items are arranged, what bodies of knowledge are to be taught, what arrangements in schools are suitable for delivery of the curriculum, what is the degree of insulation or separation between the teachers and students, and which epistemological view of knowledge is endorsed.

Luke et al. (2000), in considering the question of content, suggested that most curricula are driven by managerial and system imperatives and not from a student perspective. They suggested that:

> Instead of trying to describe everything that students need to know, it begins from three key knowledge questions:
> 1. What are the characteristics of students who are ideally prepared for future economies, cultures and society?
> 2. What are the everyday life worlds that they will have to live in, interact with and transform?
> 3. What are the valuable practices that they will have to 'do' in the worlds of work, civic participation, leisure, and mass media? (p. 37)

In the curriculum renewal consultations, the view was expressed often that SIS students needed to be prepared for a globalised, networked, technological world; therefore, the search for an appropriate curriculum initially led to the futurist four pillars curriculum framework of Delors (1998) and the New Basics approach of Luke et al. (2000). Luke et al. rejected the Tylerian learning objective curriculum model preferring the reconceptualist model arguing that:

> Curriculum can be built by envisioning the kinds of life worlds and human subjects that the education system wants to contribute to and build. In this way, a reconceptualist approach to curriculum is better suited to addressing a futures orientation than the Tylerian approach, which by definition tends to reproduce existing categories, knowledges and skills rather than build new ones. (p. 30)

Content can describe not only knowledge and the students' ability to recall it, but also the students' ability to manipulate that knowledge or demonstrate some skill – usually in the terms of Bloom's taxonomy. As an example, one curriculum system for senior students describes its content in terms of 'elements' and the system has 49 'common curriculum elements' (CCE) across 95 syllabi (Queensland Curriculum & Assessment Authority, 2016). The CCEs include calculating, compiling lists, empathising, comparing and justifying. A SIS is not expected to have such an extensive range of syllabi, although the Education Quality Assessment Program (EQAP) of the South Pacific Community has 13 prescriptions (syllabi) available for their Year 13 courses (Education Quality Assurance Program, 2016). While the 49 CCEs are worth considering across all year levels in any curriculum, Pritchett and Beatty (2012) found that less is more and that, paradoxically, learning improved when the amount of content in a curriculum is reduced. The authors also found that the failure of some curriculum reforms in aid programs is due to overambitious targets.

Curricula content is not taught as an amorphous collection of facts, principles and theories, but is grouped around an 'organiser'. Common organiser terms used are Subjects, Disciplines, Key Learning Areas (KLAs), Learning Areas, Prescriptions, Syllabi, Pillars, Rich Tasks or just 'organisers'. In those that use subjects or KLAs as an organiser, a general grouping of some subjects into 'strands' such as The Arts, Humanities, Sciences, Maths, Health and Physical education or others can be found. The SIS decided to use rich tasks as organisers after the evaluation process showed that Luke et al.'s New Basics concepts, as argued in a technical paper (Luke et al., 2000), best suited the SIS' contemporary needs. In terms of Lovat and Smith's (2003) curriculum discussion, the rich tasks provide a 'critical curriculum' (p. 133) with the added benefit of providing the futures focus of Delors (1998).

The situational analysis conducted earlier in the renewal process had detected a sense of change fatigue in the teachers and it was acknowledged that attempts to introduce rich tasks through a lecture based in-service program would produce only surface acceptance by the teachers. To plan for a fundamental acceptance of the change to rich tasks, a twelve-month detailed work program in which teachers, rather than content, were the focus, was prepared. Although the reason for selecting rich tasks was grounded in curriculum theory, the choice of something novel, such as rich tasks as an organiser, provided a device to engage teachers, develop their ownership of the curriculum and overcome the sense of change fatigue. The decision to focus on teachers was not universal, with a strong case made for a focus setting out content in a more traditional organizational form, such as English, Mathematics and Science. The approach adopted in the work program was to select content on the basis of 'just in time', in terms of fulfilling the requirements of the particular rich task being prepared, rather than the 'just in case' nature of content in traditional subjects.

After the selection of the content, the next dimension in curriculum development was to consider how to scaffold or build and connect the level of the knowledge to be learnt

across the various year levels. Some curricula achieve this by providing the percentage of class time or number of hours to be devoted to the subject at each year level as a guide to school administrators and teachers in preparing their program (Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority, 2013). Another device is to group school based curricula into Early Childhood, Basic or Primary, and Secondary. Secondary curricula can introduce Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET) as an additional strand. Some curricula achieve scaffolding by applying the principle of backward mapping where, for example, in planning Primary curricula the initial step is to examine the Secondary curricula and work backwards ensuring that a student exiting Primary is fully prepared with the necessary prior knowledge to study the first year of Secondary. In some education systems, the Secondary curricula is backward mapped from first year university courses (Education Quality Assurance Program, 2016) and some Secondary TVET certificate training programs provide exemption for graduates in higher TVET courses after leaving school.

Curriculum pedagogy

Although pedagogy may not be specified in curriculum documentation (Scott, 2014), the curriculum outcomes or learning experiences and the forms of assessment of curriculum learning outcomes will indicate if it is student or teacher centred or a combination of both. Pedagogy in developing countries is another contested area (Schweisfurth, 2015) with research favouring the traditional teacher-centred model over the child-centred model (Guthrie, 2011; Tabulawa, 2003; Westbrook et al., 2013). In evaluating a teacher certification program in Indonesia that espoused the child-centred pedagogy, Chang et al. (2014) found that 'compared with 2007, Indonesian teachers in 2011 tended to use much more exposition' (p. 133) in their teaching practices, despite the aim of the certification being to reduce the pedagogy. The terminology used to describe the pedagogy that is inherent in a curriculum varies with the project and donor, but common terms in SIS projects include: student centred, discovery learning, active learning, project based, didactic or teacher directed, and, in the case of TVET courses, competency based. In the SIS, the rich tasks were student centred, while the formal secondary courses that were assessed by external exams were teacher centred that closely followed a set text book or subject prescription.

Curriculum assessment

Assessment is a specialist area where there must be an alignment between the assessment regime and the curriculum rationale, aims and objectives. Assessment terminology includes continuous, formative, summative, criteria referenced, standards based, normative, competency, high stakes, school based and external assessment. Assessment feedback to students is an important element of the assessment process as is the reverse case of student feedback to teacher via their assessment results (Nicol & Macfarlane-Dick, 2006). The rich task assessment regime that was employed in the SIS is an example of authentic assessment as described by Newmann, Marks and Gamoran (1996) and Sambell, McDowell and Montgomery (2013). In the Pacific, SIS have access to assessment professionals at the Education Quality Assurance Program in Suva and the Pacific Regional Education Laboratory in Hawaii. On a global scale, the World Bank provides focused student learning assessment services (Liberman & Clarke, 2011).

In the SIS the moderation process for assessment of rich tasks in the primary years was introduced. In this process, students' work is awarded a grade by the classroom teacher

based on how well the student met a standard in each of a number of criteria provided in the rubric for that rich task. Representative samples of each of the grades awarded in one school are then sent to a moderation committee for validation and alignment of grades awarded by other schools for the same rich task. Being a novel assessment strategy, moderation engaged teachers in relevant professional development and encouraged their ownership of a curriculum element.

High stakes assessment is that which has a major influence on a student's future with regard to further study or graduating from a course of study. This issue of high stakes assessment driving what is taught in schools is seen by some as distracting teachers from covering all the content of the curriculum and concentrating only on what will be in the summative assessment (Harlen & Crick, 2003) or imposing a neoliberal agenda on schools' curricula (Lingard, 2014; Thompson, 2014). However, this aspect of assessment can be managed by a process of school-based continuous assessment which does not require students to sit for a set of mandated end of year summative external exams and thus avoids the need to teach to a test. Mir, Hai Wei, Daly, & Boland (2014) can find no difference between external exams and school based assessment in predicting the likely success of students from either system in their first year university studies while Chang et al (2014) ask if teaching to the test could 'lead to better learning' (p. 140).

However, this debate on teaching to the test masks a fundamental purpose of assessment. Indeed, the literature refers to assessment not just 'of' learning, but also 'for' learning (Earl, 2013; Wiliam, 2011) and 'as' learning (Torrance, 2007) and is seen as a pedagogical tool as well as a certification process. The issue of assessment underlines the importance of the systems thinking approach in defining curriculum. As Biggs (2012) points out, an assessment program is one component of an education system and it needs to be constructively aligned with the learning objectives of the course being assessed – a view endorsed by Westbrook et al. (2013, p. 28).

Phase three: Curriculum program review and approval

The third phase of curriculum implementation occurs after the curriculum has been endorsed and trial results are available. In the SIS, the trial included production of teaching and learning materials, teacher training, resource purchases, redesigning learning environments to support the espoused pedagogy and budget support. In the third phase, the curriculum trial is formally evaluated; an assessment and certification authority established; a decision reached to proceed to either full implementation, continue the trial or abandons the project; and, if approved, the Minister is requested to introduce curriculum legislation.

Early in the curriculum renewal program in the SIS, a critical friend was engaged to monitor the curriculum development program. Three years after commencing the program a major review chaired by the critical friend was conducted. The review involved international curriculum experts who provided keynote addresses at a conference attended by the donor and ministers. The review allowed teachers to showcase their rich tasks, perform model lessons, engage in peer assessment of their work and extend their knowledge of teaching and learning. The review also provided the opportunity to reinforce the curriculum vision and for the donors to see the outcomes of their support. The review identified some areas for improvement, but overall the curriculum trajectory

was endorsed and development extended to address the needs of secondary and tertiary students.

In pragmatic political terms, any education and training curriculum, apart from any other consideration, needs to prepare a graduate for a globalised, networked, complex society and economy. On this basis, the signature of an endorsed curriculum is the acceptance of the graduates' certificate by higher education institutions or business, if not internationally, at least regionally. Instead of establishing a national certification authority to achieve this, the SIS negotiated partnerships with regional accreditation bodies. This decision was not taken lightly because a possible interpretation of such a partnership is that it is a surrender of sovereignty rather than a pragmatic recognition of globalisation. This tension of either surrendering sovereignty or retaining sovereignty and investing in a national curriculum accreditation system needs to be resolved by individual SIS; sustained funding for either alternative will be a major consideration.

LESSONS LEARNT

Despite the best efforts of curriculum designers to mandate what happens in a classroom, as Westbrook et al. (2013) found, what is in the curriculum may not be what occurs in the classroom. One response is to legislate in an attempt to ensure that the endorsed curriculum is delivered in the classroom. However, in an emerging SIS, the legislative agenda is usually very heavy and the work load of the Cabinet and parliament drafting office is dominated by urgent issues of reconstruction, conflict resolution, governance or development planning and budgeting. In the SIS' case, although the Minister accepted the draft *Bill*, it was two years later that the *Bill* was enacted.

If a national curriculum program is delivered through an aid facility, the four principles of aid effectiveness contained in the *Busan Declaration of Aid Effectiveness* should govern the program. The principles are a focus on results, partnerships, transparency and shared responsibility (OECD, 2012a). However the literature provides examples of education aid projects introducing education paradigms without regard to their goodness of fit and suitability to the culture and context (Guthrie, 2011; Nguyen, Pilot, Elliott, & Terlouw, 2009; Tabulawa, 2003; Webster, 2013, pp. 20-21) resulting, in what Pritchett and Beatty describe as, 'isomorphic mimicry' (2012, p. 48). In light of these findings, and given that the function of project planning tools, such as log frame analysis or theory of change, is to test and approve the assumptions used to justify funding links between a project activity and improved student learning (Vogel, 2012), more research is needed to improve the validity and reliability of project planning strategies (Office of Development Effectiveness, 2014; Zia, 2013). Such emerging research to determine the attribution of an activity to any learning or education improvement by a project is available (Befani, 2016; Davies, 2004; Mayne, 2008) and of relevance to SIS researchers to measure the attribution of cause and effects in small samples sizes (White & Phillips, 2012). Data on the theoretical impact of various education interventions is also available from the World Bank (Rogers & Demas, 2013) and in donor funded reports (Krishnaratne, White, & Carpenter, 2013; Westbrook et al., 2013). There is some evidence that the lessons of goodness of fit are being incorporated into education project planning (DFAT, 2014a).

In the context of foreign aid, the implications for curriculum initiatives are that some of the steps described earlier in the implementation framework are either avoided, given a minimal examination or imported from other systems. The advice of this paper is that

education is a system of which curriculum is a sub system and, as Senge (2006) emphasises, ignoring one element of a system can have a dramatic and unexpected leveraged effect on another element of the system. The lesson learnt is that, for developing education systems, each element of the system needs to be constantly evaluated so that one element does not become out of alignment with the others.

Curriculum theorists attempt to teacher-proof their prescriptions. This was attempted in this case study by adopting the development principle of ownership, crowding the curriculum with local content, providing extensive professional development and resources, providing autonomy to school principals and supporting the curriculum by legislation. However, advisors who were appointed after the curriculum program was completed, reverted to the importation of a foreign curriculum package and minimised the use of rich tasks. In 2013, UNESCO prepared an assessment report on aspects of sustainable development in SIS, finding that, in the case study SIS, in the area of education, there was a need to strengthen cultural education, including the local language, and there was a lack of environmental and health awareness programs in the schools (Deiye, Limen, Jacob, & Campbell, 2014). This is despite these topics being heavily embedded in the discarded rich tasks prepared by SIS teachers, and their writing and publishing of 20 local language readers for students in years one to three.

In concluding this case study review, the pragmatic management regime applied by the donor to the program needs to be recognised. Education aid projects are 'wicked problems' (Batie, 2008; Jordan, Kleinsasser, & Roe, 2014; Krause, 2012) where there are multiple possible responses to a problem that has multiple unrelated and unpredictable causes. Mandating performance indicators and milestones in such an environment is unlikely to be effective. Flexible management performance indicators in the monitoring and evaluation schedule of the project, with improved student learning being the dominant indicator of the effectiveness of the program, will be more effective.

LIMITATIONS

One of the limitations that a study of education in host countries has is access to reliable data (Befani, 2016; Winthrop, Anderson, & Cruzalegui, 2015). In particular, the literature is missing the voices of SIS in discussions on education with much of the direction and issues being set by larger countries (Coxon & Cassidy, 2011; McGrath, 2012; Schweisfurth, 2011; Verger, 2012). This paper aimed to provide some balance to the literature in this regard and supports the works of authors, such as Di Biase (2015a, 2015b) and Crossley and Sprague (2014), who write on education in SIS. More generally, a review of the literature of 'what works' to achieve improved learning outcomes in school students in all host countries is not at all clear (Barrett et al., 2015). This limitation in providing SIS with access to knowledge on curriculum reform or renewal in their country is confirmed by a number of systematic studies which find difficulty in generalising the results reported in the literature to other contexts (Evans & Popova, 2015; Glewwe, Hanushek, Humpage, & Ravina, 2011; Krishnaratne et al., 2013; Westbrook et al., 2013).

CONCLUSION

The curriculum is the control program for an education system that aligns the elements of content, pedagogy, assessment and certification. This paper has attempted to provide workers and officials, including Ministers, in Small Island State (SIS) host countries with a primer of curriculum theory and implementation in their context. The primer has given these stakeholders, who are the ones that will be in-situ long after the curriculum project is completed, some guidance in evaluating curriculum packages and proposals put to them. It has advised SIS governments that curriculum renewal or reform is a complex project that requires expertise not only in the four elements of a curriculum but also in systematically evaluating curriculum proposals to ensure alignment with all other elements of an education system. SIS stakeholders are faced with a further consideration in that the literature on curriculum reform and renewal in SIS is not at all clear. Ambiguities remain in regards to curriculum content, objectives, outcomes-based systems of assessment and student-centred curricula grounded in a constructivist theory of learning. The advice to education officers in SIS or aid recipient countries when negotiating a curriculum aid package is to ask this question: What is the evidence that this activity will result in improved student learning in my country?

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Whose history and who is denied? Politics and the History Curriculum in Lebanon and Australia

Nina Maadad
University of Adelaide, Australia: *nina.maadad@adelaide.edu.au*
Grant Rodwell
University of Tasmania, Australia: *grant.rodwell@utas.edu.au*

This paper seeks to explain and develop a better understanding of the relationship between the History curriculum and the consequences of political motive. It compares the History curricula of Australia and Lebanon, and is relevant to understanding the purpose of the History curricula in the two countries as well as, more generally, other countries. In Lebanon, the teaching of that nation's experience of the 1975-90 Civil War has been withdrawn from schools. In Australia, meanwhile, it now appears that the national curriculum that took shape in 2010 under the Rudd Labor Government has been replaced by what the new Federal Coalition Government wants. Important changes have been made to the nations' History curricula with different political groups urging the inclusions of different topics.

This paper considers the question of the effect of wholesale deletions from the curriculum of a nation's history, as in the case of Lebanon. Will such changes affect the development of students' higher-order historical understanding, historical consciousness and historical literacy? And will such changes influence students' appreciation of historiography? Advanced in this paper is an argument that, generally, History curricula are so politicised that there should be a historiographical component that requires students to understand that history is about many different points of view. Furthermore, students should be taught that it is the understanding of the development of evidence for the various perspectives that matters.

Keywords: History curriculum; national History curriculum; contested History curriculum; comparative education; comparative curriculum; development of historical literacy; historiography

INTRODUCTION

The advent of Australian Federal Governments' national History curriculum emerged during the Howard Coalition Government of 1996-2007, and the Rudd-Gillard-Rudd Government of 2007-2013. It was spearheaded by the establishment of the Australian Curriculum and Reporting Authority (ACARA) in 2008. Much public discourse and questions regarding political motive surrounded the nature of the national History curriculum authorised by ACARA. This wrangling over the contents of Australia's History curriculum can be compared to the discussions in Lebanon, where the politics are such that no decisions regarding a national History curriculum can be made. The Lebanese case described here has been informed by research by Bahous, Nabhani and

Rabo (2013). These authors used curriculum theory as the tool to analyse their data; the same approach is adopted for this current paper. Bahous et al.(2013) were concerned with questions that draw "attention to the tensions between different decision-making levels (international, national, individual schools, local conditions, specific classroom contexts) and different actors (politicians, professionals, citizens in society) and their importance for curriculum issues" (p. 58). In this paper, the Lebanese case is informed by interviews conducted by Maadad in 2013 with Lebanese school principals. The research by Bahous et al. (2013) substantiates Maadad's (2013) findings. Since the demise of the Rudd-Gillard-Rudd Governments following the 2013 election, the veracity of Bahous et al.'s (2013) statement becomes manifest, illustrating the stark contrasts between the issues included in the History curricula of Australian and Lebanese schools.

This paper will proceed with an analysis of the political difficulties and compromises associated with the History curriculum of the two countries and then offer a possible alternative for curriculum policy-makers as well as improved development of historical literacy.

A TALE OF TWO COUNTRIES: NATIONAL TIPPING POINTS

There is symmetry between Lebanon and Australia in respect to national events—national tipping points—which brings issues associated with national History curricula into focus.

For many Lebanese, 13 April 1975 marks one of the darkest dates in the country's history. An attack on a busload of Palestinians in Beirut sparked a civil war that raged for 15 years, leaving some 150,000 people dead, the capital divided along sectarian lines and sections of the country ruined. Maadad (2016) remembers vividly these terrible years and struggles to forget the suffering, confusion and depression that people faced during the brutal war. Maadad adds that 13 April 1975 not only sparked a civil war in Lebanon but completely changed the country's dynamics as a whole, affecting its politics, economy, education, schooling, communities, people and values. Her memories are of being a young child, trapped with her family in their apartment in Beirut, not knowing if they will survive, and later being in their small village amongst family and neighbours living under constant attacks from land, sea and air. She still dreams of sounds of gunshots and bombs exploding around her, mixed with the sounds of people crying, whispering and praying. Even now, Maadad (2016) still experiences fear and anxiety when watching fireworks or fighter jets performing sky shows, and refers to them as moments of embarrassment triggered by the past.

Prior to the civil war, Lebanon enjoyed one of the highest rates of literacy in the Arab world (97%) and, in the late 1980s, the number of students in schools was over 80% (Library of Congress, 2012). Regrettably, the civil war catastrophically affected educational standards and literacy rates. An important reason for the decline in academic standards was the destruction of homes and schools during Israeli raids on Lebanon. Some *350 out of 1,508* schools were destroyed, forcing a great many teachers, professors and educators to migrate overseas (*Agence France Press*, 2006). The destruction of educational infrastructure and the effective end of schooling for Lebanese students made it difficult for many to continue their education, despite being allowed to return to school to achieve a designated educational level during the conflict because some schools were pressured by militias to enrol unqualified students; some were used as distribution centres for humanitarian aid (Mikdadi, 1983); and some were used as centres for the

dissemination of propaganda and recruitment of young soldiers to various militias (Brett & McCallin, 1996). By contrast, the background to Australia's tipping point may seem less profound: the 9/11 terrorist attacks on New York and Washington. In addition, Prime Minister Howard was motivated to want more teaching of history in schools after the 2002 Bali Bombings and the 2005 "Skips and Lebs" Cronulla riots in Sydney's southern suburbs between young Australians of Anglo-Celtic and those of Lebanese origin (Curthoys, 2006).

THE AUSTRALIAN CASE: POLITICIANS AND POLICY BUREAUCRATS RESPOND

Howard's approach to the problem of social tensions was to initiate a national History curriculum wherein students would learn about Australian history and the perceived benefits of living in Australia. This was not an approach lost on the incoming Rudd Labor Government; however, the critical issue was whose perspective should the History curriculum include (Guyver, 2011, n.p.). What occurred was that a change in the Australian government from Howard to Rudd brought about a change in emphasis in the Australian History curriculum. Apple's (2004) account of "patriotism, the flag and control of schools" (pp. 164-68) is a revealing account of how politicians seek to control the curriculum of schools in the US. The Howard Government's "functioning flag pole" promotion (discussed further below) is an example of such a desire to influence. Late in 2009 the Rudd Labor Government published its national History curriculum on the back of the initiative begun by the Howard Government, which had determined that History would be a "core" subject alongside English, Mathematics and Science.

In many ways, the Australian History curriculum reflects a triumph of the Centre after a bitter quarrel between Left and Right over the interpretation of Australia's past. Broadly speaking, the two camps were named by each other as "Whitewash" and "Black Armband", with one celebrating the triumph of Western democracy and civilisation, and the other emphasising its drawbacks, especially the History of First Nations Australian-European relations. This was a classic "History wars" scenario, a conflict over school History involving neo-conservative and liberal interpretations of the past, or of approaches to teaching, or both. The public debate has continued from the 1990s to the time of the writing of this paper. At various times, the Australian media weighed in, taking sides on the issue. For example, heading her article "Uncovering history in black and whitewash", Coslovich (2008), in *The Age* [Melbourne], took a "pro-black armband" (pro-First Nations Australian) point of view. *The Australian* (2008), a pro-Conservative Coalition national newspaper responded with an opposing view in an opinion piece labelled "Who's whitewashing the black armband view of history?". Brantlinger (2004) reviewed academic literary works through to 2004 on this issue in Australian historiography and Taylor (2011) describes the impact of the History Wars on the Australian curriculum.

CONTROLLING THE TEACHING OF HISTORY IN LEBANESE SCHOOLS

Over a decade ago, Wettig wrote, in the Beirut *Daily Star*, that "few issues in Lebanon are as contested as its national history. Every sect has its own version of the civil wars. But the civil wars is not the only points of contention". Indeed, according to Wettig (2004), there is common disagreement about much of Lebanese history:

"Some call the Phoenicians our ancestors. Others call them the people who were previously in Lebanon. Some say the French were a mandatory power who were here at the request of the Lebanese. Others say they were colonizers," said the CRDP's [Center for Research and Educational Development] former president, Nemer Frayha. "Each textbook interprets the events in 1860 differently," he added, referring to the first civil war between Druze and Christians [1860]. (n.p.)

Wettig (2004) notes: "Masoud Daher, a History professor at the Lebanese University and a member of the committee commissioned to work out the new curriculum, explained further: 'Actually, all historical periods are controversial, even those before Phoenician times'". The black armband versus whitewash controversy in Australian historiography confirms this point. Students in Beirut today give mixed responses about the significance of Lebanon's civil war. For example, Noor El-Hoss, a student in West Beirut's Al Iman School said: "I think it was a very important occasion for Lebanon. But I don't know what happened". A fellow student, Zeina Naous, explained, "We are studying about … World War Two. We are not studying about the civil war, or what happened to Lebanon" (Maktabi, 2012, n.p.).

The teaching of History in Lebanon is compromised by the fact that more than two decades after the end of the country's civil war, generations of young Lebanese are growing up with little formal education about the conflict. Lebanese society contains many deep divisions, and the country's recent past is widely considered too contentious to examine in depth. In fact, to avoid inflaming old and still deeply felt hostilities, Lebanese History textbooks stop in 1943, the year the country gained independence (Maktabi, 2012). In 2012 the country's Minister of Education, Hassan Diab, blamed this situation on politics: "After more than 20 years . . . the teaching of History in Lebanon remains, as it has always been, subject to the interests of various political groups" (Maktabi, 2012).

The civil war officially ended with the Taif Agreement, also known as the National Reconciliation Accord or "Document of National Accord" signed on 22 October 1989 and ratified by the Lebanese Parliament on 5 November 1989. With reference to education, the most important aspect was the revision of school curricula to emphasize national unity, with a specific focus on Civics and History: 'Revision and development of curricula in such a manner as to strengthen national identity and social integration encourage spiritual and cultural openness.' Unification of textbooks in the two subject matter areas of history and national education (is a must)" (Bashshur, 2005, p. 6.). This same statement marked one of the goals in the *Plan for Educational Revival* approved on 17 August 1994 by the Cabinet of Ministers as a working document. One month later, the Center for Educational Research and Development (CERD), which is responsible for all school curricula, began revising the History curriculum, assembling a team of nearly 350 persons to serve on various committees.

The education system was targeted first, and a new "ladder", focusing on a new framework for education in Lebanon was produced and approved by the Cabinet on 25 October 1995 (see Bashshur, 2005). Soon after, a plan with specific curriculum targets for various school levels was completed. Subject matter committees began working on revisions and writing new material; committees for all subjects were appointed and approved. However, the subject matter of History was singled out and delegated to a special committee, composed of people representing various religious/political groups. Rumours leaked out concerning arguments and conflicts among its members, and about

reshuffling of memberships and resignations, and, when a copy of the new national curriculum was submitted for government approval (8 May 1997), with a new package of material covering all subjects, the subject matter of History was missing (Bahous et al., 2013). According to Bahous et al. (2013), three years later, the cabinet received and approved, on 10 May 2000, a brief document titled, *General Principles and Specific Goals for the Teaching of History*. When made public, it became clear that it was a very compromised and bland document, having been put together by a committee of six people who convened 50 meetings. When finally presented to the press on 10 May 2000, only one member out of the original six had survived the duration of the committee's work; other members had either resigned or been replaced.

Unfortunately, there is no way of knowing what viewpoints or arguments were exchanged during the long period of the work of the History Committee (three years), and what caused changes in membership and, more significantly, what reasons prevented the original committee from adopting modifications as requested in the 10 May document. The most important point to make is that, despite what the curriculum guidelines state, it remained difficult to translate these guidelines into teaching tools—that is, textbooks. Meanwhile, textbooks in all other subject-matter areas had already been issued and distributed to schools by the start of the 1997/98 academic year. Textbooks in History had to wait until 2001, when the first batch was produced. Even then, contentious issues existed; Wettig (2004, n.p.) writes that "although the Lebanese Curriculum and its Objectives (1997) were finally agreed upon, the concrete writing of textbooks proved impossible". Wettig (2004, n.p.) explains that "in 2001 new history books were issued for elementary grades 2 and 3 and soon objections were voiced against including 'Arabs' among other 'foreign conquerors' who 'occupied' and then eventually left Lebanon as they had done in previous times".

Bahous et al. (2013) describe how, in 2000, "the General Principles and Specific Goals of the Teaching of History, i.e. the overarching aim of the school subject, was finally produced and approved by the government" (p. 66). Yet, there was a lack of consensus by the CERD on what constituted the social reality of Lebanon. Should schools teach that Lebanon is a homeland for all of its people and as being "Arab in identity"? CERD insisted that this be changed to become "Lebanese identity" and "Arab affiliation". For Bahous et al. (2013, p. 66), "this modification shows that the Taif Agreement had failed to solve the historical tension in Lebanon between those claiming that the country is part of the Arab world and those denying it. Terms such as 'committed to Arab culture' were removed from other paragraphs as well". Consequently, for Bahous et al. (2013) "these debates and the changes made by CERD hence underline the fact that Lebanon's politicians still did not agree about the basic identity, history or destiny of the country" p.66).

The Lebanese History Committee attempted to overcome differences of historical interpretation by an appeal to historical processes, presenting the primary documents to students without any interpretation. Wettig (2004, n.p.) reported that, according to Masoud Daher, a History professor at the Lebanese University and a member of the committee commissioned to work out the new curriculum, controversies about the true course of history were overcome by allowing the "documents to speak for themselves in many parts of the new books". However, as Wettig (2004) observed, "what the controversies within the committee are, however, he [Daher] can't say" (n.p.).

Wettig (2004, n.p.) reported Daher as stating, in typical bureaucratese: "I don't speak about difficulties". Instead, Daher preferred "to talk about achievements". It appears that Daher and his fellow History Committee moved much of the Lebanese History curriculum content offshore where there was much less controversy. Wettig (2004) reported him as stating:

> We included American, European, Asian and African history … I am sure it will be one of the best books in the Arab world.

> We studied books from France, the United States, Germany, Japan to see how they teach … We didn't modernize the traditional material, but wrote a completely new book. In fact, maybe this book will be a shock for traditional historians. (n.p.)

But, even then, there was controversy—at least for 1999, with some blatant omissions in content. Dick (1999) reported, in the Beirut *Daily Star*, how the advocated inclusion of "the Armenian genocide of 1915 commemorated around the world every April 24 and often referred to by Lebanese politicians from a range of political affiliations, and is the subject of a 1997 parliamentary resolution", struggled to be incorporated in either the History or Civics curricula. Dick (1999) anticipated this content would be included in the Civics curricula. The curriculum was one hurdle but a general agreement on textbooks was another and more severe hurdle.

Munir Bashshur, professor of education at the American University of Beirut, is a prolific and articulate researcher of issues in Lebanese education. He describes, in his chapter: "The deepening cleavage in the Lebanese educational system", published in 2003, how the first curriculum review committee, established in 1995, did not only work much longer than expected on its task but how, then, when finally the first batch of textbooks was produced, a campaign broke out against the new textbooks. (Bashshur, as cited in Bahous et al., 2013, p. 67). Bashshur (2003) explained: "the work of this committee and its deliberations were handled almost like a state secret". National distrust only increased. According to Bashshur (2003), history as a subject under the new curriculum was inadvertently left out, while all the other subjects were packaged appropriately.

Using Bashshur's (2003) research, Bahous et al. (2013) go on to describe how "CERD had to issue a statement that those particular pages were to be removed from all existing and future copies of the textbooks" (pp. 69-70). Consequently, Bashshur concluded (2003, p. 167) that more than a decade after the Lebanese civil war ended and after the Taif Agreement, the various Lebanese groups still could not agree on how to write about their history (Bahous et al., 2013, p. 70). It was, however, all to no avail because, for Lebanese students, there was no history after the Lebanese civil war.

In respect to developing higher-order thinking, historical consciousness and historical literacy, do these restrictions on historical content really matter? In other words, can teachers achieve such goals for their students when large sections of historical content are excluded from the curriculum? In 2011, after the Lebanese Association for Educational Studies (LAES) third conference on "Education learning and teaching history: Lessons from and for Lebanon", a teachers' guide booklet titled: *Teaching history in Lebanon by creating learning spaces*, was developed. This booklet was created to provide support for teachers of History in Lebanon, providing new practices designed to enhance their classroom learning and engage their students. The booklet also aimed to promote and consolidate relationships between stakeholders in schools, government, communities and universities.

Maadad (2013a, 9 September) reports that, according to a school principal who wishes to remain anonymous and was interviewed privately at a private Maronite school located in the mountains, "this booklet did not travel far". Concerning the consequence of a variety of textbooks representing various points of view, Maadad (2013) noted: "It brought to surface sensitive topics to the classroom. Teachers also found it hard to apply in their classroom, as it was deeply focused on higher-order of thinking and the learning process model which often requires access to past events in order to think critically". In an interview with another school principal in south Lebanon in a low socio-economic school, Maadad (2013b, 10 September) quoted the principal as stating: "bringing History back to the classroom created a division between the students especially the year 8 and 9 groups that came from different religious backgrounds and have been informed of the truth of the Lebanese war differently. Letting go of the past is the only way to move forward."

CONTROLLING THE TEACHING OF HISTORY IN AUSTRALIAN SCHOOLS

In Australia, the divisions caused by the History curriculum controversy were largely a result of disputes between politicians and policy bureaucrats. Liberal Prime Minister John Howard's 2006 Australia Day address to the National Press Club decried the "black armband" approach to teaching Australian History and the accompanying downplaying of the importance of the Australian national identity (Howard, 2006). Indeed, Barry Cassidy (2006), on the ABC national *Insiders* television program, asked rhetorically: "John Howard and his handpicked bureaucracy will decide what is taught in our schools? Is that what will happen in our classrooms?' (n.p.). The outcome dictated by those in political authority was to use History to produce national stories that do not challenge the status quo. Speaking to the National Press Club in Canberra on the subject of the national curriculum on 24 February 2010, Julia Gillard, then Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Education in the Rudd Labor Government, announced that the teaching of History would be mandatory from 2012 (for a comprehensive press coverage of the speech, see Ferrari, 2010). However, the seeds for the making of the national History curriculum were in train long before Gillard's speech.

Prior to introducing the national History curriculum, the Howard Coalition sought to impress on schools a sense of definite values in the form of a National Values Framework. According to Clark (2006), in June 2004, John Howard and his Minister for Education, Dr Brendan Nelson, announced a $31 million education package in which funding would be tied to the Framework. Increased Commonwealth support—commonly labelled "piggy-back" grants—was contingent upon the states implementing several policy initiatives underpinning the Australian government's national priorities, and shaping the nation's schools over the next decade. Contingencies included: a compulsory two hours of exercise for students every week; adoption of a national safe schools framework; and installation of a "functioning flag pole". The initiative was designed to support "greater national consistency in schooling", such as a standard school starting age and the promotion of educational standards, better reporting to parents, transparency of school performance and making values a core part of schooling framed the policy (Clark, 2006, pp. 162-3)—the critical question is: whose values? Clark (2006) argues that the intended values to be implemented in the nation's schools were those of the ruling political elite, which, at the time, was the Howard Coalition Government.

In the lead-up to the 21 August 2010 federal election, South Australian Liberal MP Christopher Pyne, the Federal Opposition's education spokesman, declared: "the new national school curriculum over-emphasises indigenous [sic] culture and history and is a 'disaster'". For Pyne it "has been skewed to a black armband view of Australian History . . . The national curriculum appears quite unbalanced as it stands at the moment". He added: "We have a seemingly over-emphasis on indigenous [sic] culture and history and almost an entire blotting out of our British traditions and British heritage" (Hudson & Larkin, 2010). Over three years later, but now in sight of a Coalition victory in the forthcoming election on 14 September 2013, Pyne restated his claims, in *The Australian,* that the ACARA National History Curriculum "was being rolled out in a 'patchwork' manner". Moreover, "he wanted to see Anzac day treated with more prominence" (AAP, 2013). For Pyne, "Anzac Day was currently listed alongside many other days, such as Harmony Day and Reconciliation Day, in the school curriculum". Indeed, "Anzac Day is very central to our understanding of our Australian character and our Australian history". Moreover, Pyne was reported as stating: "A Coalition government would also review elements of the curriculum that presented a 'black armband view' of Australian history … We think that of course we should recognise the mistakes that have been made in the past" (AAP, 2013). Thus, within a year of the introduction of the mandatory teaching of History in Australian schools, political squabbles began to emerge concerning the content of the Australian History curriculum. It appears, now, that every change of government at a national level may be accompanied with a rewriting of the Australian History curriculum.

What do these political changes to the Australian History curriculum add to our understanding of History curriculum theory? To what extent is this change in content and values of the curriculum actually reflected in classroom practice? While there is no empirical research to answer these questions, from our anecdotal evidence there seems to be a general acceptance by students, parents and teachers that this is the way it must be with regard to political influences on the curriculum. Perhaps, with such a massive swing by Australian voters to the Coalition at the 2013 federal election, it is not surprising that so many Australians might support changes to what is taught in history classes in schools. However, only empirical research will show how this translates into classroom practice. Only time and relevant empirical research will show whether or not Australians are prepared to accept this state of affairs with every change in government, and whether or not teachers, accordingly, alter their practices. How does the case of the History curriculum in Lebanon compare with the school History curriculum controversies in Australia?

DOES THE EXCLUSION OF A NATIONAL HISTORY FROM A HISTORY CURRICULUM REALLY MATTER, AND WHAT ABOUT HISTORIOGRAPHY?

This paper has detailed developments in the Australian national History curriculum which occurred as different political parties won office at the Federal level. Inter alia, a conservative Coalition will tend to have the History curriculum downplay a black armband view of Australia's Indigenous history, and will seek to place greater emphasis on Australia's European history, particularly through an emphasis on what ANZAC Day really means; that is, memory of the fallen, sacrifice and comradeship. There is, however, no suggestion, for example, that Australia's Indigenous history should be deleted

altogether, which is significantly different from the Lebanese case in which the Lebanese post-civil war history now does not exist at all in the History curriculum.

Some researchers have considered the national consequences of omissions of significant events in history. According to Braslavsky et al. (2006): "Education has historically played an important role in the promotion of principles and values that contributed to social cohesion through the construction of 'imagined communities'" (p. 91). Indeed, Braslavsky et al. suggest that, in the 19th Century, many of these imagined communities were erected on the notion of the "nation-state worth dying for" (p. 91). As generations of Australian History students will attest, in respect to the dominance of British values in the curriculum and knowledge of the British Empire, "in such a context, the purpose of education was mainly "to transmit the culture of adult generations to younger generations" and promote social cohesion through the promotion of cultural homogeneity and the embedding of socio-economic and political stratification" (Braslavsky et al., 2006, p. 91).

For politicians, the teaching of History has a special place in this process. Their concern, however, is with content. There are other important objectives—perhaps not so politically disputed. Braslavsky et al. (2006) explain the special role that a study of history has in the development of students' higher-order historical consciousness, or literacy. They state that by thinking in a "rigorous, conscious, constructive and critical manner … taking historical processes as a reference for their present acts, the holders of these competences are provided with more tools to stand for their rights and to respond to their duties" (p. 97). In a separate study for UNESCO, Braslavsky (2003) insists that a unified multi-cultural society depends on an open and nationally agreed-upon curriculum promoting open discussion and understanding of all cultures and religions with a country's national boundaries. In this respect, what is taught in schools is vitally important. It is the discourse in schools between teachers and students justifying what is included or what is excluded that is vital to a dynamic curriculum. Of course, this applies to any discipline and not simply History. In the History curriculum, this discourse develops a teacher's substantive historical knowledge and historical literacy generally.

TOWARDS HISTORICAL LITERACY AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF HISTORIOGRAPHY IN A HISTORY CURRICULUM

In explaining how teachers move in a cognitive and affective manner through substantive content knowledge, we can refer to research by Lee and Ashby (2001), who explain this process:

> Substantive history is the content of history, what history [is] 'about' . . . procedural ideas about history . . . concepts like historical evidence, explanation, change are ideas that provide our understanding of history as a discipline or form of knowledge. They are not what history is "about" but they shape the way we go about doing history. (p. 215)

Any History teachers' knowledge of his/her subject and, indeed, the content of most curricula is constantly in the process of change and continual development as social and cultural factors impact on and change current understandings and, consequently, on how we interpret the past. Rodwell (2013) argues that writing history is what people do to persuade others that events are knowable and that life and civilization has some direction and purpose. That is why events are being reinterpreted continually, as society's values

and knowledge constantly change, allowing for an expression of new prejudices (see Rodwell, 2013, chap. 11).

Consequently, substantive history content knowledge is dynamic, constantly undergoing change as historians re-examine the past and respond to how social and cultural groups are increasingly given a voice in history or have it taken away from them in subsequent power struggles. For example, arguably, Indigenous Australians have only, since the 1960s and, in particular, as a result of the 1967 referendum, progressed to attaining their rightful place in Australian history. This, arguably, has occurred because of social, cultural and political changes (see Hirst, 2005), such as Indigenous activism—that really got underway in the early 1970s, and the writing of more sympathetic histories (e.g., Attwood, 2005; Reynolds, 1981/1982/2006; Reynolds, 2012). This, in turn, influences, and is influenced by, our procedural concepts of, for example: change, evidence and continuity. We come to understand these are transient and problematic terms. The relevance to the teaching of History is contextualised by a particular socio-political and cultural setting. Currently in Australia, with the implementation of the ACARA History Curriculum, considerable emphasis is being placed on these procedural concepts. For example, Taylor (n.d.), from the Australian National Centre for History Education, addressed the issue of developing "historical literacy" in our school students, and proceeded to outline a list of necessary components of historical literacy; these included: research skills, language of history, historical explanation, making judgements in history, and connecting the past with the self and the world today (Taylor, n.d., n.p.).

If a country's national History curriculum deletes or downplays large sections of its recent history, as does Lebanon, it is difficult to understand how teachers can develop historical literacy and an appreciation of historiography in their students. Maadad's (2013a, 2013b) research endorses this point of view. The situation in Lebanon contrasts sharply with that in the "black armband" versus "whitewash" issues prevalent in the discourse of the Australian History curriculum. Australian students and teachers are not being denied historical content; it remains highly accessible. The content in question is simply a matter of emphasis, accompanying a downplaying of the importance of ANZAC Day in the Australian national identity. However, from this patchwork of emphases comes an opportunity to develop, in students, the components of historical literacy as well as providing an opportunity to develop, in students, an appreciation of historiography—why some content is excluded (Parkes, 2011; Parkes, & Donnelly, 2014; Rodwell, 2013).

Can a higher-level historical consciousness and historical literacy be created in students in the absence of relevant historical content, such as content that is missing in Lebanon's national History curriculum? Braslavsky et al. (2006) suggests that, for Lebanon, "carrier" subjects, such as Geography and Social Studies, can provide this level of thinking and conscientiousness for students. Alternatively, subjects such as Civics and Citizenship Education, or Democracy Studies can achieve these ends. Moreover, "themes linked to collective memory, cultural diversity, discrimination, and so on could be introduced in literature (historical novels) or language classes" (p. 100). Either through incidental classroom discussion or through dedicated units of work in carrier subjects, students can engage in discussions which highlight some of the following topics:

- Who should write Lebanon's history?
- What topics should be included and excluded?
- Why do we study Lebanon's history?

- Why do people disagree about what should be taught in Lebanese history?
- How can the study of a country's history heal social divisions?

Of course, there are many more such questions which can be raised with students and they may encourage higher-order historical thinking and an understanding and appreciation of historiography. The same applies to issues of what should be included in the national Australian History curriculum. By focusing on topics excluded from the curriculum, opportunities can be provided to raise similar historiographical thinking and questions promoting high-order historical thinking. Perhaps this point can only be answered through further empirical research in Lebanese and Australian schools.

CONCLUSIONS

Politicians express considerable concern about their nation's History curriculum. There is no doubting they want to control what their nation's students learn about the past. Clearly, there is much at stake. Political reality, presumptions and prejudice can override the needs of students and a nation's collective understanding.

Following the commencement of a national History curriculum in Australia in 2012, prior to the following year's Federal election and flushed with the likelihood of attaining power, the Coalition signalled it would make changes when it came to office. Most likely, these changes would mirror those expressed by Prime Minister John Howard in his 2006 Australia Day address to the National Press Club. These were contested views concerning the place of Indigenous Australian history in the country's history. There were also contested views concerning the place of ANZAC Day and what it means in Australia's history. Yet, compared to the state of Lebanon's national History curriculum, the changes proposed by the contested views seem quite mild.

When considering Lebanon's post-civil war History curriculum, the questions are whether the curriculum denies the birthright of Lebanese? or have generations of students been liberated from sectarian conflict? Removing mention of a large section of Lebanon's recent history is analogous to Australian politicians removing Australia's post-European settlement history of Indigenous Australian from the curriculum or removing the explanation for Australia's ANZAC tradition from the Australian curriculum. Apart from the obvious dire socio-cultural outcome—a nation's collective understanding—this paper argues that classroom discourse concerning these issues, based on open access to varying historical points of view, is essential if students are to develop higher-level historical literacy, historical consciousness and, importantly, general historical and historiographical understanding.

Does it really matter if Lebanese students miss out on the teaching of post-civil war history in their nation's history? Does this compromise the development in students of higher-order historical understanding, historical consciousness and historical literacy? Clearly, there is more at stake than Lebanon's collective national understanding and sense of being; that is, students' substantive historical understanding and appreciation of historiography. The so-called carrier school subjects, referred to by Braslavsky et al. (2006), may assist in the development of certain national ideals, such as democracy and citizenship, but further research is needed to determine if they can contribute to the essential aims of a History curriculum—those higher-level historical and historiographical understandings, and attitudes referred to above.

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Cuban voices: A case study of English language teacher education

Steven John Smith
ssmundo06@yahoo.com.au

This case study uses qualitative research methods and a postcolonial paradigm to listen to the voices of Cuban teacher educators describing how they educate and prepare English language teachers in Cuba.

English language teacher education in Cuba includes features that are considered innovative, contemporary and good practice in the Western world. It is contextualised to respect Cuba´s sociocultural environment and it makes use of Cuban themes, history, culture and geography. Teacher educators, born and educated in Cuba by Cubans, use a 'pedagogy of tenderness' to build on caring relationships and emphasise institutionalised values of solidarity, collectivism and collaboration.

A communicative approach is used to develop the communicative competence of pre-service teachers. Development of pedagogical competence is facilitated through collaboration, peer observation, mentoring, modelling and ongoing professional development. Teacher educators prepare pre-service teachers to undertake extensive field experience and support them in schools as they teach and develop educational research skills.

Keywords: Cuba; case study; teacher education; English language teaching; postcolonial; pedagogy

INTRODUCTION AND AIM

Several international studies have highlighted Cuba´s outstanding record of educational success, which is, in part, attributable to strong teacher education and in-service teacher training programs (Carnoy & Marshall, 2005; Malott, 2007). Gasperini (2000), a specialist in Latin American and Caribbean education, reported to the World Bank:

> Cuba is a poor country . . . yet the success of its schools flaunts conventional wisdom. Education in Cuba is entirely public, centrally planned, and free, in a global reform environment of privatization, downscaling of the state role, and cost recovery (p. 14).

Independently of the educational reform policies of the World Bank and International Monetary Fund, and excluded from such funding sources, Cuba has developed an alternative education system that accords with Cuban values and socialist principles (MacDonald, 2009). With the rapid global expansion of English as an international language, English language teaching has become a lucrative, multi-national industry. Discrimination in favour of language teachers from English-speaking countries is widespread. This is despite research evidence that, all else being equal, "non-native" speakers of English, that is, those who learnt it as a foreign language, may have a broader range of skills for teaching English (Ellis, 2006, p. 10). An exception to such

discrimination is found in Cuba, where, since the early 1960s, all English language teachers have been locals who learnt English as a foreign language.

Educators in North America and Europe have called for more research into Cuba´s teacher training system to explore the reasons for its educational success (Breidlid, 2007; Gomez Castanedo & Giachicchino-Baker, 2010). This article responds to that call, at a time when international research is increasingly focused on the pedagogy and identity of teacher educators (Dinkelman, 2011, p. 322; Murray & Kosnik, 2011, p. 243). The aim of this article is, to focus on the particularity of a group of teacher educators at a pedagogical university in Havana and, through their voices, experiences and skills, describe how they prepare English language teachers using a pedagogy that is contemporary and appropriate to the Cuban context. This study reveals how they educate pre-service teachers to be both communicatively and pedagogically competent English language teachers.

BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

The place of English language in Cuba has changed over time. Cubans have been speaking Spanish since colonisation began in 1510. However, after the defeat of Spain by US forces in 1898, the importance of the English language increased in Cuban society. All Cuban institutions, including schools, were rapidly reorganised to conform to US practices. The school law of the state of Ohio provided the model for Cuba's education system and a US curriculum formed the basis of the new Cuban curriculum (Pérez, 1982, p. 44). All educational reforms during the next decades included English as a compulsory requirement, a period when promotion of the language "had all the characteristics of linguistic imperialism" (Corona & Garcia, 1996, p. 91), whereby widespread discrimination favoured the language of the colonisers at the expense of the colonised (Phillipson, 1997, p. 239). English was used to promote US business and political interests and to maintain "the social stratification that favoured the Cuban elite" who spoke English (Corona & Garcia, 1996, p. 91).

Since the revolution in 1959, English is no longer widely used in everyday Cuban life, (Irizar, 2001). The study of the Russian language increased between 1959 and 1991, however English was always and remains the most studied foreign language in Cuba (Martin, 2007). The need for English language increased following the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991. Since that time, the language has become increasingly important for tourism, international relationships, business, medical and scientific research, and technological development, and to support Cuba's international aid missions to developing Anglophone countries in the Caribbean (such as Jamaica and Grenada), in Asia and Oceania (such as Australia and New Guinea) and in Africa (such as Namibia).

During the 1960s, 70s and 80s, the pedagogy of English language teaching in Cuba underwent successive transformations from structural approaches which emphasised grammatical skills to the communicative approach (CA) which emphasises communication skills (Hunter, 1988). CA "involves students in real or realistic communication, where the successful achievement of the communicative task they are performing is at least as important as the accuracy of their language use" (Harmer, 2007, p. 69). There was significant input into these changes from North Americans, such as Marjorie Moore, Neil Naimann and Adrienne Hunter (Hunter, 1988; Irizar Valdes & Chiappy Jhones, 1991; Maclean, Betancourt, & Hunter, 2000).

Cuban voices

The sixteen pedagogical universities in Cuba follow a national curriculum for foreign language teacher education which determines the approach used and all major components of the curriculum while allowing for some regional flexibility to respond to local needs (Diaz-Canel Bermúdez, 2011). While the communicative approach remains influential globally, there is also increasing acceptance that it needs to be adapted to the local context, as has happened in Cuba, using principled pragmatism, (Kumaravadivelu, 2006). Cuban pedagogy values people working and learning together in a relationship of mutual respect, enhancing community and building "collective social capital" (Carnoy & Marshall, 2005, p. 261). Collaboration and collectivism, in contrast to competition and individualism, were noted as features of Cuban pedagogy during a visit by US educators (Schultz, Tiner, Sewell, & Hirata, 2011) and their observations concurred with an earlier comparative study of secondary students in Melbourne and Havana (Williams, 2006). The emphasis on the affective domain, evident in Cuban pedagogy, has been termed a "pedagogy of tenderness" ("*la pedagogía de la ternura*") by Turner Martí and Pita Cespedes (2001). The pedagogy of tenderness arose from the educational philosophy implemented in 1961 during the Cuban National Literacy Campaign, and the subsequent Cuban "*Yo, Si Puedo*" and "Yes, I Can" adult literacy programs in many countries. Taken up and developed further in Freire's pedagogy of the oppressed (Freire, 2000), it considers that significant learning requires significant relationships and emphasises the role of the family and community in each student´s education. Teachers are expected to know each student, "their needs, and the material and social conditions of their home lives" and work with them as partners (Lutjens, 2007, p. 185).

A collaborative environment for teacher education, in which peer observation, reflection, action research and professional development are encouraged, leads to improvements in teaching practices (Loughran, 2006). Through collaboration and peer observation, teacher educators may reflect on their own practices, and are more likely to be able to narrow the gap between their teaching intentions and actions (Loughran, 2011). Mentors can help less experienced teacher educators and pre-service teachers by modelling appropriate practices, providing a range of assistance including emotional support, and by encouraging development of professional identity (Loughran, 2006, p. 170-1; Tryggvason, 2009). In Western education systems, "English language teaching (ELT) practicum has come to be recognized as one of the most important aspects of a learner teacher's education during their language teacher training program" (Farrell, 2008, p. 226). Educational research also strongly supports the benefits for pre-service teachers of learning research skills, and the contribution they make to teaching practices through reflection and professional development (Rust, 2009). The national curriculum in Cuba requires pre-service teachers to spend increasing periods as classroom teachers from the second to the fifth and final year of their university course, as well as undertake educational research into pedagogical issues that they have identified during their practicum.

After teaching English as a foreign language to adults in Australia and having visited Cuba several times since 2002, I volunteered, in 2009, to facilitate collaborative practical teaching workshops with English language teacher educators at a university in Havana. The Cubans participated with warmth and generosity and were passionate about their teaching. I soon realized that the Western educational material I had prepared lacked relevance in the unique Cuban context, whereas the pedagogy of these teacher educators appeared to be contemporary and contextual. It became clear that I ought to listen to their voices and learn from them.

METHODOLOGY

The qualitative data presented and discussed here are drawn from a descriptive, intrinsic case study of the pedagogy of a group of six English language teacher educators at a large university of pedagogical sciences in Cuba in 2011 (Smith, 2012). I adopted a constructivist epistemology because the participants´ views, their context and personal experiences are the essential concerns of the study. For this reason, it is appropriate to use qualitative research methodology and naturalistic enquiry to explore the particularity and complexity of this case, and focus on its intrinsic value rather than testing any specific theory or hypothesis. Given Cuba´s history of colonial and neo-colonial oppression, I chose a postcolonial paradigm to give a voice to Cubans to speak for themselves in describing how Cuba uses the English language to meet its own needs and to support Cuban independence. The data consist of records of interviews, collaborative teaching workshops and a focus group. I use pseudonyms for the six case members: Rolando, Juan, Julia, Alfredo, Mercedes and Ofelia.

I used qualitative purposeful sampling by inviting English language teacher educators in the Faculty of Foreign Languages to participate in this case study. I selected the six case members to reflect the diversity among the broader group in terms of age, gender, ethnicity, and years and type of teaching experience. Other teacher educators who volunteered, joined the case members in a series of nine practical teaching workshops where they all presented and discussed a variety of activities for teaching English speaking skills. The methods are discussed in greater detail in a Masters thesis (Smith, 2012, Chapter 3).

I used a naturalistic approach (Stake, 1995) so as to pay attention to all raw data. The aim of data analysis was to recognise and preserve the multiple views within the case. I used NVivo 9 (Bazeley, 2007) for data storage and coding. The research design does not permit statistically valid generalisations from this case to the broader population; however it does reveal insights into the pedagogy of one group of teacher educators, and may be a starting point for future research. Stake (1995, p. 85) states that it is possible to "learn much that is general from single cases".

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

I iteratively analysed raw data from audio records of interviews with case members, before and after they participated in nine collaborative teaching workshops and a follow-up focus group to identify and explore emergent patterns and themes. Themes, which emerged strongly from the data are:

Communicative competence

Communication skills

As Rolando states "We are not teaching our students to talk, we are teaching our students to communicate" (Rolando, Focus Group, 260511). He emphasises the central place of communication in language teacher training in Cuba: "language is communication; learn it by communicating and teach it by communicating" (Rolando, Interview 2, 270511). He distinguishes between speaking and communicating, because the latter involves a broad

range of other grammatical, sociolinguistic, pragmatic, discourse and strategic skills – as well as speaking (Bagaric & Mihaljevic Djigunovic, 2007, p. 97-99).

Rolando, the oldest of the case members, who studied before the CA was established in Cuba, considers that CA, with its emphasis on communication and the context of learning, is superior to structural approaches used when he learnt English 40 years ago (Rolando, Interview 1, 270411). He states that students no longer spend a lot of time being taught grammar and language structures, but focus instead on realistic communicative situations, useful chunks of language and on socio-cultural factors, such as register (e.g. the level of formality and appropriate lexis or vocabulary). While grammatical accuracy, form and pronunciation are still important, Rolando says they are studied in a realistic social and cultural context in which emphasis is first and foremost on being understood by the target audience.

Juan emphasises the importance of teaching basic conversation skills, such as taking turns to talk and active listening. He also believes that pre-service teachers need to learn different strategies, like circumlocution, to call on when conversing in English: "If you do not know how to say a word in this way, try to do it another . . . find a strategy to say what you want to say" (Juan, Interview 1, 250411).

Teacher educators use classroom activities that are typical of CA around the world, being student-centred and often involving small-group work. Julia describes how she begins her 1st Year "Integrated English Practice" (IEP) classes with an "ice-breaker" activity to warm up the pre-service teachers, then elicits information from their knowledge about a particular theme for the lesson which relates to a Unit in the Cuban course book, then "pre-teaching" new vocabulary using photos and other realia. She also involves her students in a range of interactive tasks, including singing, discussions, role-plays and simulations (Julia, Interview 1, 270411).

Juan and other teacher educators describe how pre-service teachers practice speaking by working together in pairs and small groups, and using role plays, dialogues and a range of games.

> That's the way we practise … questions and answers, games … I am used to playing games with my students. Lots of them. They like that … and it is unbelievable how they talk and how they interact (Juan, Interview 1, 250411).

So, an English language classroom is a site of activity, fun, interaction and talking—frequently in small groups. In general, pre-service teachers use only English; however, the fact that they share the same first language (L1) with each other and the teacher educator means that Spanish translation can be used occasionally where it helps language learning.

Cuban context

Topical themes and issues, preferably suggested by pre-service teachers, are most effective for stimulating discussions in English classes (Ofelia, Interview 1, 260411). Daily challenges faced by Cubans are among the topics pre-service teachers want to discuss, including the vagaries of public transport; teenage pregnancy and safe sex; over-crowded, multi-generational, living conditions; intermittent interruptions to water and power; and employment.

> We have talked about transportation – which was very good for them to discuss. We also talk about jobs, discussing jobs and what their parents do and how they do it. How is the employment situation in our country these days? How is it different in other countries? Also the housing situation—it's something they like to talk about (Julia, Interview 1, 270411).

In this quote, Julia explains that pre-service teachers engage in discussions when topics are relevant to them. Pre-service teachers are also interested in debating broader international issues, such as global warming, threatened species and international relationships. Mercedes and Juan emphasise the primacy of Cuban culture in ELTE "because mostly we teach English on the basis of Cuban culture and the history of Cuba" (Juan, Interview 1, 250411). Alfredo explains that in previous years, when US course books were used, "everything was related to the US environment" and pre-service teachers were unable to identify readily with texts and themes from cultures so different from their own (Alfredo, Interview 1, 260411).

> For the last 3 years, it's been a constant issue, that point of working on a syllabus which includes the Cuban context. I mean to design a method basing the context on the national environment, so it makes the teaching more interesting for the students. So the students feel reflected in what they're learning (Alfredo, Interview 1, 260411).

Alfredo explains how introduction of a Cuban ELTE course book, *Integrated English Practice 1* by Enriquez O'Farrill et al. (2010) in the last few years has allowed teacher educators to provide a communicative English course based on Cuban history, geography and culture where pre-service teachers can identify more closely with the scenarios presented to them (Alfredo, Interview 1, 260411). For example, overseas travel is not a familiar experience for most Cubans who have never travelled outside the country, nor even travelled far within the country. It is, therefore, more appropriate, as Mercedes suggests, to use examples that reflect the reality of life for Cubans.

> Instead of using role-plays like "you are going abroad" or "you are an exchange student", I use other things, like you are going to Villa Clara, OK. Or you're a student from Santiago de Cuba and you are visiting a friend in Havana (Mercedes, Interview 1, 250411).

Notwithstanding the use of *Integrated English Practice 1* (Enriquez O'Farrill et al., 2010), teacher educators and pre-service teachers still value exposure to other cultures and draw from international sources. "We use other materials like *Headway* (UK), *Enterprise* (UK), *Spectrum* (US) etc." (Mercedes, Interview 1, 250411). These materials represent a rich source of communicative exercises and activities that vary the classroom experience of pre-service teachers and introduce different ideas from the cultures of other countries, particularly the UK and US.

Language and culture

Many Cubans, particularly youth, are attracted to Western popular culture, including music, videos (and DVDs), sport, dress and the slang of different subcultures, particularly from the US. With reference to pre-service teachers, Alfredo commented: "I think that they are pretty influenced by the American way of life in general" (Alfredo, Interview 1, 260411).

Pre-service teachers enjoy cross-cultural comparisons and the basic ELTE curriculum includes a course on "History of the Culture of English-speaking Peoples" and another on "Literature of the Anglophone Caribbean". Case members believe that comparative studies help pre-service teachers to develop pragmatic competence and enhance their understanding of the relationship between culture and language.

> They love that, they love culture and cultural issues are important for them (Ofelia, Focus Group, 260511).

Juan commented that while English is taught mainly on the basis of Cuban culture and history, pre-service teachers are introduced to the cultures and history of Great Britain, the US, the Caribbean countries and Canada (Juan, Interview 1, 250411). Language represents and reflects the values and ethics of the associated culture and Alfredo believes that "every time you teach a language you are teaching part of the culture of the place of origin of such a language". (Alfredo, Interview 1, 260411). Ofelia and Alfredo believe that pre-service teachers need to gain not just linguistic competence but also a sound socio-cultural understanding of English language use. Ofelia and other case members are concerned that, in general, Cubans tend to express their feelings and thoughts with less tact or regard for social status than other English speakers and consider it is important for pre-service teachers to appreciate these cultural differences and enhance their pragmatic skills (Ofelia, Focus Group, 260511). One way of achieving this is for teacher educators to model culturally appropriate behaviour; for example, Mercedes wants to be more diplomatic in the ways that she corrects her students.

> So, it's like social behaviour in the language is very important. It's like psychologically-speaking you are going to be a different person because maybe in Spanish you can say "You're wrong. That's not the way it is." But in English you can't. So you have to be more of a diplomat. OK, you have to be more polite (Mercedes, Focus Group, 260511).

The case members reveal how the communicative approach to English Language Teaching has been contextualised to make it more relevant and engaging for pre-service teachers. They also note that their students enjoy cross-cultural comparisons and learning the pragmatic skills needed to communicate effectively in intercultural and transnational contexts. Pre-service teachers are also educated to develop their *pedagogical competence.* Some salient features of ELTE pedagogy emerged from the data and are highlighted here.

Pedagogical competence

The "pedagogy of tenderness" suffuses all ELTE pedagogy, whereby teacher educators act as partners with pre-service teachers, trusting, empowering and stimulating them. The relationship between educators and students is affectionate and, in typical Cuban manner, overtly physical, with frequent touches and embraces, from the Dean of the Faculty to first-year pre-service teachers. Ofelia explains that her role is to establish, in her classroom, a culture of trust and mutual respect in which students are not afraid to make mistakes, and in which educator and student work collaboratively as "partners in the classroom" (Ofelia, Focus Group, 260511).

Collaboration

Collaboration occurs between teacher educators, between pre-service teachers, and between teacher educators and pre-service teachers. Teacher educators participated collaboratively in practical workshops organised as part of this study.

> Everybody had the chance to work in teams and to collaborate and work in cooperation with all the participants, which is really nice. If you know something and you feel like that something is going to help others, so the best thing to do is to share that information with other people (Juan, Interview 2, 260511).

Juan commented on the importance in ELTE of teaching values that are integral to Cuban culture, particularly "of solidarity, of friendship, of cooperation and the like" (Juan, Interview 2, 260511).

> The values that we have decided to foster in the students, from different levels from Primary School, Junior High, so they are institutionalised, and they are the ones that are belonging to our system (Juan, Interview 1, 250411).

Juan clarifies that while these "institutionalised" values of solidarity, friendship and cooperation are not exclusive to Cuba, they are fundamental to Cuban society and Cuban pedagogy.

Peer observation

Peer observation is the norm for case members. They expect to observe other teacher educators, and be observed, and to discuss (or "debate") their observations and provide feedback (Juan, Interview 1, 250411). Feedback helps teacher educators to critically examine their own teaching and compare their beliefs about teaching and learning to their actual classroom practices. Several case members commented on the benefit gained from observing other teacher educators and of being observed.

> We learn from everybody … I think that is the way it works … (Juan, Interview 1, 250411).

Juan, the Principal Teacher for 2nd Year Integrated English Practice (IEP), who coordinates the other five 2nd Year IEP lecturers, enjoys having younger teacher educators observe his lessons, and finds that both they and he learn from the discussions which follow: "Because always, after these lessons, observations, we have a debate, a methodological debate" (Juan, Interview 1, 250411). Julia feels that peer observation contributes to a sense of unity among her colleagues (Julia, Interview 1, 270411). The case members consider that peer observation helps them to reflect on and modify their practices and hence contributes to their ongoing professional development.

Mentoring and professional development

Mentoring by more experienced teacher educators is regarded as an integral part of professional development.

> We have one day, Tuesdays, to attend meetings, but within the meetings we have preparations, we prepare lessons, and do many other activities to prepare to face the week. And we are guided or led most of the time by experienced teachers (Ofelia, Interview 1, 260411).

One day per week is allocated for professional development, planning and coordination, and it provides opportunities for younger, less experienced teacher educators to be mentored by more experienced teacher educators. All case members feel that they were well supported in the early years of their careers by experienced mentors and role models. Alfredo, one of the younger teacher educators values his relationship with a mentor whom he has known for many years.

> I think it is a very positive attitude – the one that the institution assumes towards young professors (teacher educators) or professors in general. Usually when you teach a subject, you are always close to a professor that has more experience in such a field (Alfredo, Interview 1, 260411).

Ofelia also values the opportunity to learn from more experienced teacher educators and takes every opportunity to observe their classes (Ofelia, Interview 1, 260411).

Experiential learning: Practicum

Experiential learning within ELTE, which occurs within primary and secondary schools, includes practicum and research, and occupies just over 50 percent of time allocated in the curriculum over the five-year university degree. As pre-service teachers, case members began teaching their own English language class in schools in the second year of their University studies, with an increasing teaching load until they were teaching four days per week in their fifth and final year. They were not relieving a regular teacher but were the responsible class teachers, each having an experienced teacher in the school to serve as their mentor, available to give advice and support.

Experiential learning: Research

Cuban pre-service teachers are expected to complete two research projects during their university training. They choose projects that focus on pedagogical issues, which they have identified while undertaking teaching practicum in schools. The issue is expressed as a scientific problem and a hypothesis is stated which can be tested systematically by gathering observable, empirical, measurable evidence. Conclusions from the research projects lead to recommendations to improve educational outcomes. Teacher educators prepare pre-service teachers to undertake their research projects by providing lectures and discussions on educational research methods, and providing mentoring support during research design, data collection, analysis and reporting.

> If a student during their whole course, is unable to get over 4 points as a grade (out of 7), he has to sit for a government exam or test. But if you get 4 or more, you have the possibility to present your diploma paper (Rolando, Interview 1, 270411).

If their progress is satisfactory in the first years of the course, the opportunity is given to pre-service teachers to submit a formal "diploma paper" on their final major educational research project – which is valued by them. The case members describe how they maintain caring and respectful relationships with pre-service teachers and work as partners with them in the classroom where they model effective teaching practices and serve as mentor, emotional support and ethical role model. Cuban teacher educators include, in their teaching practices, a range of features which are consistent with institutionalised Cuban values and which also accord with recent studies on effective teacher education in Western contexts (Loughran, 2011).

CONCLUSIONS

This case study focuses on the particularities of a group of six Cuban teacher educators at a large teacher education university in Havana and brings to light some salient aspects of English Language Teacher Education (ELTE) in Cuba. The results are of interest internationally because Cuba is, perhaps, the only country where English is taught only by non-native speakers, that is, Cubans who learnt English as a foreign language, and because the education system in Cuba is at odds with neoliberal reform policies of the World Bank and International Monetary Fund and thus provides an alternative model to that found in other Latin American and Caribbean countries.

In this study, Cuban teacher educators speak for themselves to explain how Cuban English language teacher education uses a communicative approach and is contextualised to ensure relevance to the lives of pre-service teachers, and to respect Cuban values, culture, history and geography. Cuban teacher education values people learning about teaching and teaching about learning in a relationship of affection and mutual respect. This "pedagogy of tenderness" emphasises a caring culture in which the family and community are seen as significant partners with the university and school; and teacher educators and pre-service teachers are partners in the classroom.

Notwithstanding that the pedagogy of ELTE in Cuba has developed relatively independently of many Western influences, it includes features which are generally regarded as contemporary, innovative and good practice in language teacher education. They include an emphasis on the affective as well as the cognitive domain, collaboration, continuous professional development, peer observation and mentoring, modelling of good practices, and a high percentage of time allocated to experiential learning by pre-service teachers, including both practical teaching and educational research.

Further research is needed to clarify the extent to which these results represent Cuban ELTE more widely; and the effectiveness of the system in preparing English language teachers with high levels of pedagogical and communicative competence. As ELTE is only one part of English Language Teaching in Cuba, further study is warranted of other components, such as the English Language television classes in *Universidad Para Todos* that are broadcast nationally each week, and the popular, widespread evening classes for working adults.

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Taking the sage off the stage: Identifying obstacles to student-centred instruction on the Thai-Myanmar border

Gregory Tyrosvoutis
The College of Saint Rose, US and World Education, Thailand:
greg_tyrosvoutis@th.worlded.org

After the 1962 coup d'etat, *Myanmar's education system plunged into a downward spiral of insolvency and isolation from internationally recognized education standards. In the years that followed, alternative education providers, including ethnic education service providers in Myanmar, and the refugee and migrant education systems in neighbouring Thailand, emerged to provide emergency education. Now Myanmar is in a time of great educational transition and reform, with a new teacher training curriculum and competency framework being developed. Insight into the instructional practices implemented is necessary to ensure effective reform that represents all educational stakeholders. Participants (n = 19) from Myanmar who were studying Education as a major at a Thai university responded to a mixed methods survey which asked them to explain common instructional practices in their high school education. The study identified that the pressure on teachers to adhere to the recall-intensive nature of the national university entrance test and teacher-student authoritative power-distance were the main barriers to practicing student-centered instructional methods. This study recommends a reconciliation of traditional direct instructional methods with an increased focus on interactive whole-class teaching.*

Keywords: migrant education; refugee education; Myanmar education; student-centered instruction; Thai-Myanmar border; Southeast Asian

INTRODUCTION

In the years following the 1962 *coup d'etat*, Myanmar's[1] schools became nationalized and Burmese replaced English as the language of instruction at universities throughout the country (Thein, 2004). This controversial change was unpopular and highly contested by many of Myanmar's ethnic minorities. Annual government spending on education decreased to 0.8% of the country's GDP, leaving Myanmar 172nd out of the 173 countries surveyed in the Central Intelligence Agency's educational expenditure rankings (CIA, 2011). In areas under the control of non-state actors (NSAs) the national education system was subsequently rejected, substituted or supplemented by independent education systems established by ethnic education departments who viewed the centralized system as unrepresentative. Amidst decades of conflict and geographical fragmentation, these

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[1] This paper uses the name, Myanmar, to denote the country. It should be noted than many people, including local political reformists, continue to use the name 'Burma' to demonstrate opposition to the current government, its policies and practices.

marginalized social systems continue to provide education which is largely unrecognized by the state (Jolliffe, 2015). Currently, in areas under government control, the Ministry of Education (MOE) is the main supplier of educational services. In areas controlled by NSAs or areas of mixed administration, educational services are provided and given a mixture of state and non-state oversight (Zobrist & McCormick, 2013). Prominent NSAs in Southeastern Myanmar include the Karenni Education Department (KnED), the Karen Education Department (KED), and the Mon National Education Committee (MNEC). In recent years, bridges between ethnic and the national education system have been built that allow students of some ethnic education systems to sit the Myanmar national university entrance exam.

Because of much instability and unrest in Myanmar over the past half-century, many citizens fled to refugee camps in neighbouring Thailand. There are currently nine authorized refugee camps along the Thai-Myanmar border[2] with an estimated 30,000 students attending primary or secondary school, and over 1,500 teachers in more than 80 schools (Proctor, Sanee, & Taffesse, 2009). This diverse population, classified as either forced migrants or refugees, consists mostly of the Karen, Kachin, Pa-O, Burman, Mon, Shan and Karenni ethnic groups, but there are others as well. Since 1994, the Royal Thai Government has officially allowed the educational support (encompassing school administration, curriculum support and teacher training) provided by the Karen Refugee Committee Education Entity (KRC-EE) and the Karenni Education Department (KnED) (Sawade, 2007). Migrant communities have established locally operated schools commonly referred to as "Learning Centers (LCs)" or "Migrant Learning Centers (MLCs)"[3] across Thailand in response to the barriers to accessing the education system operated by the Royal Thai Government (RTG). These marginalized children have been excluded based on nationality, ethnicity, language, culture and economic status (Proctor, Sanee, & Taffesse, 2009). Many community-based organizations (CBOs) with corresponding schools have been established over the past 20 years to serve the growing ethnic populations that have been displaced by Myanmar's civil war. The first MLC on the Thai/Myanmar border was established in 1991 with an enrolment of 56 students. This number steadily increased until the 2000s when enrolment dramatically increased. In 2010 there were 11,008 students enrolled amongst 61 unique MLCs (MECC, 2010). As this model of migrant institution-building expanded, the Thai Ministry of Education has become increasingly engaged in migrant education (Lee, 2014). This partnership, although challenging at times due to the number of participants and the non-standardized nature of MLCs, has acted as a platform for all stakeholders in migrant education to interact. Each migrant learning centre has a distinct set of core values, curriculum, metrics for success and, ultimately, vision.

Without one centralized governing body, many schools remain isolated. To address this problem, CBOs, such as the Burmese Migrant Workers Education Committee (BMWEC) and the Burmese Migrant Teacher's Association (BMTA), work in partnership with Non-

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[2] During the course of this paper, the term, border, will be used to refer to the areas occupied by ethnic military groups and internally displaced persons (IDPs) in Myanmar, as well as refugee camps and migrant communities in Thailand.

[3] For the purpose of this paper, the term, migrant learning centres (MLCs), is used to refer to community-established education centres for grades K-12 that operate using a mixed curriculum that includes elements of the Thai and Myanmar course of study. These schools are independently funded and have diverse educational goals and outcomes.

Government Organizations (NGOs), such as World Education Thailand, to unify MLCs and strengthen educational quality, access and recognition. Faced with high student attrition, minimal resources and no governing body to recognize their training and experience, migrant teachers face monumental challenges not experienced by teachers in developed nations. As the political situation improves, stakeholders in the refugee, ethnic and migrant education systems are working increasingly working more closely with the Myanmar MOE to provide pathways of recognized education for both teachers and students.

Despite major criticism from multiple student groups represented by the Action Committee for Democratic Education (ACDE), on 30 September 2014, the *National Education Law* – a legally binding document designed to modernize Myanmar's education system – was approved in Myanmar. In response, the ACDE published an outline of 11 issues to be discussed at the quadripartite meeting involving the ACDE, National Network for Education Reform (NNER), MOE and the Parliament. Among these issues, the student groups called for the allocation of 20% of the national budget to education, a reform of instructional methods to ensure freedom of thought, and the extension of free compulsory education to the middle school level (Burma Partnership, 2015). Constructive dialogue between student groups and the government represents a ground-breaking shift in education reform – one that could lead to increased opportunities for the educators in the three settings this paper focuses on. Stakeholders from ethnic, refugee and migrant education systems are working to engage with national education policymakers to ensure their perspectives and the contexts in which they teach are taken into account. The Myanmar MOE established the Comprehensive Education Sector Review (CESR) in February 2012 to develop recommendations for the reform of the education system in order to bring Myanmar's education system up to both the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and international standards. Through three phases of reporting, the CESR analysed the current educational environment in Myanmar. It was found that memorization-based instructional methods were pervasive throughout the entire educational system. Specifically, the CESR Phase 2 report found that pre-service teacher trainers in Myanmar relied heavily on learning by rote and had difficulty with problem solving and conditional thinking (MOE, 2014). Additionally, teachers at educational colleges and universities struggled to use learner-centred instructional approaches. In a study across 21 education centres in Myanmar, the British Council (2015) found that both teacher educators and teachers exhibited limited diversity in their instructional methods due to the rigid curriculum and assessments in the current system. Teacher educators and teachers also cited a lack of resources and large class sizes as reasons that they didn't employ more interactive instructional methods (British Council, 2015). The CESR Phase 2 report on secondary education also identified pressure from parents, students and colleagues to teach in more traditional ways as reasons that new teachers fail to employ new pedagogical methods (MOE, 2014). The CESR, while informative, only focused on Myanmar's national schools. Further research into the instructional practices occurring in migrant, refugee and ethnic education systems is required to fully represent Myanmar's diverse ethnic populations.

A child's success in school is shaped by many factors, but the largest influence on students' learning outcomes is the quality and expertise of the teacher (Hattie, 2009; Westbrook et al., 2014). All high performing education systems invest in their teachers because they play a critical role in improving student performance (OECD, 2011). The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) performed a

comprehensive review of teacher education in 65 countries from around the world and concluded that, in all high-performing education systems, not only are teachers the most influential component in improving education outcomes, teachers were often involved in the improvement process. Therefore, in order to focus on the factors that have the largest impact on educational outcomes, this descriptive study will examine the common practices of teachers and the conditions in which they work. This study will analyse the experiences and perspectives of classroom practice from successful high school students who studied in refugee camps located on the Thai-Myanmar border, migrant learning centres in Thailand or in government and ethnic schools in Myanmar. Although these settings each have their own set of challenges, they share the goal of providing non-traditional education to ethnic minorities in the context of development. Extensive research and support is currently focused on teachers in Myanmar's national schools. This paper aims to add the perspectives of non-state education systems in order to paint a more holistic picture of classroom practices in this development context.

BACKGROUND LITERATURE

The Myanmar MOE has committed to achieving a transformational shift in the education system by 2021, including a goal that "teachers support, develop, and apply interactive classroom teaching and learning benefiting all students" (Department of Teacher Education and Training, 2015). This literature review will first consider both sides of the teacher- vs. student-centred instruction debate in order to broadly understand the advantages and constraints of each approach. Until now, recommendations on which approach is most appropriate remain divided in the context of development. This will be followed by a review of specific obstacles to student-centred instruction in development contexts. Lastly, an analysis of traditional classroom practices of teachers from Myanmar will be presented in order to give an overview of the culture and context that influences education in migrant, ethnic and refugee camp-based schools. This review aims to highlight the diverse approaches needed for effective and sustainable educational reform.

The debate: Student-centred vs teacher-centred

There are many interpretations of what classroom practices should be classified as student-centred,[4] as discussed by Westbrook et al. (2013) when contrasting the practiced understanding of "child-centred learning" versus "active learning." Learner-centred education allows and therefore requires students to manage how and what they learn. Learning becomes inherently shaped by pupil's interests and capabilities, for better or worse. Learner-centred education has been endorsed by many international education organizations, such as the International Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE), and represents one of INEE's minimum standards for education in emergencies (INEE, 2004). Minimal instruction from the teacher is a central component of many definitions; however this is a shared theme when also comparing student-centred approaches to the terms "problem-based learning", "discovery learning" or "experiential learning" (Kirschner, Sweller, & Clark, 2006). Learner-centred education has been described by

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[4] In line with current literature surrounding pedagogical practice and development, this paper will use the terms "child-centred", "student-centred", and "learner-centred", interchangeably because the distinction lies in the educational context and age of the learners with little differentiation in terms of classroom practice.

Ozga and Jones (2006) as a "traveling policy" – widely validated by international NGOs who are working in education and by national governments alike.

The teacher being the dominant figure and source of new information in the classroom represents the defining distinction between teacher-centred and learner-centred instructional methods in much of the literature. Teacher-centred instruction is often branded as an authoritarian and hierarchical model in which learning is achieved through repetition, memorization and the transition of knowledge, quantified through testing and recitation (Barrett, 2007). To this Hattie (2009) clarifies that direct instruction is not to be confused with "didactic, teacher-led, talking from the front" teaching. Instead, he notes that direct instruction refers to who has power to direct learning outcomes and communicate standards in the classroom. In fact, there is significant evidence that direct instructional or teacher-centred methods improve student achievement. Hattie found an effect size of 0.59 associated with direct instruction – providing evidence that, when executed correctly, it is effective at achieving strong learning outcomes. Because of the widespread misinterpretation that direct instruction or teacher-centred education is merely rote learning without understanding, literature regarding educational reform in the developing world is quite polarized when comparing learner-centred approaches and teacher-centred approaches. Frequently, the concept of "critical thinking" is inappropriately used to differentiate between the methodologies. Critical thinking, as defined by Michael Scriven and Richard Paul during a presentation at the 8th Annual International Conference on Critical Thinking and Education Reform in 1987, is an active process that involves applying, synthesizing and evaluating information gathered through multimodal observations, resources and interactions:

> [Critical thinking] is thus to be contrasted with: 1) the mere acquisition and retention of information alone, because it involves a particular way in which information is sought and treated; 2) the mere possession of skills, because it involves the continual use of them; and 3) the mere use of those skills ("as an exercise") without acceptance of their results (Foundation for Critical Thinking, 2015).

Thus, it is essential to recognize that critical thinking can be fostered with both teacher- and student-centred approaches, so long as the teacher promotes the continual elevation and application of skills acquired in class. A review of the literature reveals that teachers who actively engage the whole class through direct instruction achieve improved results on standardized tests (Galton & Croll, 1980; Muijs & Reynolds, 2002; Rosenshine, 1979). A student-centred model allows students to access knowledge independently, thus bringing the teacher's knowledge into question. It has been found that student-centred, team-based learning can foster stronger information retention, skill development and accountability for learning among students (Simonson, 2014). Schweisfurth (2013) states that learner-centred education "gives learners, and demands from them, a relatively high level of active control over the contents and processes of learning. What is learnt, and how, are therefore shaped by learners' needs, capacities and interests" (p. 20). To create lasting change, the degree of comfort teachers feel about relinquishing control needs to be addressed.

Westbrooke et al. (2013) conducted a systematic review of 489 published international studies (including an in-depth analysis of 54 empirical studies) based in low and middle income countries in order to determine the constituents of effective pedagogical models in these difficult contexts. The main finding was that interactive classroom pedagogy was

the most effective instructional method. Specifically, three teaching strategies surfaced that promote strong interactive classroom pedagogy:

1. Providing individualized feedback and instructions,
2. Fostering a safe and inclusive classroom environment, and
3. Contextualizing teaching to incorporate students' backgrounds, abilities, interests and culture.

These strategies are not exclusive to student-centred or teacher-centred instructional methods, rather they represent many of the characteristics of "active teaching" or "whole class interactive teaching" (Muijs & Reynolds, 2011; Petty, 2014). This represents an instructional method that brings the content of the lesson to the whole class, engaging learners individually and encouraging participation (Muijs & Reynolds, 2011). In his seminal work, *Visible Learning*, John Hattie (2009) reviewed over 50,000 studies though 500 meta-analyses covering more than 80 million learners in order to determine the best educational practices that influence student achievement. This review found that interactive classroom teaching, whether teacher- or student-centred, was most likely to heighten understanding and student learning (Hattie, 2009).

Obstacles to implementing student-centered instruction in development contexts

There are many environmental and culturally-imposed barriers that hinder pedagogical reform in developing countries. The failure to sustainably implement foreign (and often decontextualized) pedagogical policies in middle and low income countries has been described as "tissue rejection" in the development literature (Harley et al., 2000). Because many child-centred approaches require extensive resources and training, implementing learner-centred approaches in the context of development poses many challenges to policymakers (Lall, 2011). Sriprakash (2010) actually found that employing child-centred approaches resulted in negative outcomes, including increased student attrition and decreased student achievement in rural Indian primary schools. Teacher training is often an integral part of educational strengthening implemented by NGOs in developing countries. This focus can be attributed to the large body of research revealing that an untrained teacher often has a negative impact on student learning. There is a significant relationship between the quality of the teacher and student learning (Chetty, Friedman, & Rockoff, 2013; Darling-Hammond, 2000; Hattie, 2003). However, training teachers is often not enough for sustainable improvement. If the training is not in alignment with existing educational policies, then educators will experience a form of cognitive dissonance, resulting in a reversion to previous instructional approaches. Schweisfurth (2013, p. 4) refers to this disconnect as a "classic and recurrent policy contradiction."

Schweisfurth (2011) conducted a review of 72 studies of attempts to implement student-centred methodologies in the context of development. The conclusion was overwhelmingly that the execution of learner-centred teaching practices was fraught with failure because of the following four categorical oversights:

1. Unrealistic expectations in terms of speed and ease of implementation. Many cases were cited which demonstrated disregard for wider systemic implications.
2. Resource constraints that include large student/teacher ratios, limited teaching resources, teacher capacity and motivation, and poor school infrastructure.
3. Disregard for local culture, in particular, teachers not being able to effectively shift from the group interests of the class to the specific needs of individual

4. Lack of cohesion with larger framework and curriculum. Many studies concluded that due to the pressure of impending high-stakes exams, teachers were unable to adopt new teaching methods; the curriculum also needs to be reformed as part of the process.

Schweisfurth (2011) concludes: "the history of the implementation of learner-centered education is riddled with stories of failure grand and small" (p. 425). Implementing student-centred approaches in the context of development, therefore, requires improved teacher/student ratios, extensive training, adequate teaching resources, and a reform of high-stakes exams in order to be sustainable.

Obstacles to implementing student-centred instruction in Myanmar

In the frequently shifting political, social and economic climate on both sides of the Thai-Myanmar border, educators face a unique set of challenges very different from those faced by teachers working within a recognized and established system. High school teachers working in the migrant schools face hardships because of limited resources, financial instability, inconsistent training, lack of centralized oversight, limited documentation and negligible accountability to established standards (Dowding, 2014). When Dare (2014) collected data on professional profiles of the teachers in the refugee camps, she found that only 50% of the teachers had completed high school, with the majority doing so in the camps. The demands placed on camp-based teachers are compounded by large class sizes, a high teacher turnover rate, restrictive classroom resources and limited access to electricity. Metro (2006) notes: "the fact that the vast majority of young people have the opportunity to learn is significant" (p. 1). However, the opportunity to merely learn is not enough. Quality and recognized education that is accessible to all learners needs to be promoted in these low resource contexts.

Cited instructional methods common to Southeast Asian classrooms, such as Myanmar, include: general acceptance of the rote model, teacher-centred instruction, high student-teacher power-distance, adherence to a strict curriculum, and knowledge-focused evaluation (Lwin, 2007; Park & Nuntrakune, 2013; Thanh, 2011). Exposure to these passive methodologies inhibits critical thinking and obstructs the students from taking ownership for their learning. This creates an atmosphere where individual and creative thought are suppressed and compliance to a valued norm is fostered (Kantar, 2013). Many Asian cultures, including that of Myanmar, praise conformity to a valued norm, which makes implementing student-centred approaches difficult (Richmond, 2007). Within this setting, it is commonly viewed as disrespectful to the teacher to state an idea or opinion not in line with the teacher's view. On this topic, Thanh (2011) reasons that there is opposition to student-centred teaching methods because they "put teachers on a par with their students and detract from teacher authority" (p. 522).

High power-distance stresses a hierarchical relationship between student and teacher and reinforces teachers' adherence to authoritarian instructional methods (Hofstede, 2003). As Gilhooley (2015) outlines, the Myanmar word *annade*, which refers to a powerful cultural concept that can be described as "I feel bad that you have to go out of the way to do something for me", is commonly used to describe a student's feelings in relation to a teacher or elder. Behaviours such as obedience and conformity are promoted and reinforced in educational settings. Rather than asking a difficult question, which could be

interpreted as challenging an authority figure, students often remain silent and submissive. Implementing new teaching methods would undermine the teacher-as-knowledge-giver framework and cause them to lose face if tested or challenged by a student. This reverence for esteemed elders combined with the high value placed on education creates a large professional distance between students and teachers (Baron et al., 2007; Thawnghmung, 2012). Students view the teacher as the ultimate source of knowledge and become passive observers rather than evaluating or generating their own knowledge. This impediment is compounded when teachers lack sufficient training, which results in students receiving incorrect or incomplete information from a source they deem infallible. In a resource-poor setting, such as Myanmar, a student of a weak or unskilled teacher has few other avenues to acquire new information. Students believe that they cannot themselves find truth but must source it from its owners: the teachers (Kennedy, 2002). A student's role becomes mastering (often memorizing) the content without challenging its validity or relevance (Thanh, 2011).

In September 2015, the UK government's Department for International Development (DFID) in conjunction with the British Council launched the English for Education College Trainers (EfECT) project in Myanmar designed to improve Myanmar state school teachers' English and teaching skills. Forty-eight International trainers with backgrounds in English language teaching were brought to Myanmar to work with 1,600 teacher educators over a two-year period. A comprehensive needs analysis undertaken by the EfECT trainers before the training found that 84% of the Myanmar teacher educators stated they were familiar with child-centred approaches. The teacher educators cited that implementing child-centred approaches often failed because of large class sizes, time constraints, national test pressure, lack of motivation, insufficient training, classroom layout and furniture, and, interestingly, a fear of being perceived as lazy by their colleagues (British Council, 2015). The EfECT trainers observed these same teacher educators and found that much of their class was comprised of drilling, choral responses, chanting, reading aloud and rote memorization. The teacher educators exhibited a dependence on traditional methods and lacked confidence in using diverse instructional practices.

METHODOLOGY

The study described in this paper is based on a survey of undergraduate students from Myanmar studying education at an international university in Thailand. The web-based survey was designed to stimulate participants to reflect on the teaching practices they experienced as high school students in either the refugee camps located on the Thai-Myanmar border, MLCs in Thailand, or government and ethnic schools in Myanmar. A mixed-methods questionnaire, drawing from the author's experience and a literature review of educational research, was employed to confirm previous findings about instructional practices common to the local development context and to identify new information on this topic. Student perceptions about classroom context and educational methods are critically important to those who determine curriculum, practice and pedagogy (Harris et al., 2014). By gaining further insight into the high school experiences of these Myanmar youth from conflict-affected areas, who now have a strong understanding of modern and diverse pedagogical methods from their undergraduate study, one can begin to break down and identify obstacles to implementing student-centred, holistic and engaging teaching methods within this diverse context.

Author's positionality

The research for this paper was inspired by teaching at an educational bridging program for migrant and refugee students from Myanmar at a donor-funded boarding school located on the Thai-Myanmar border for three years from 2011-2014. The school enrols academically gifted and ethnically diverse students from all over Myanmar. Previous to studying at this program, students completed their high school education in one of three places: a government or ethnic high school in Myanmar, a MLC in Thailand, or a high school located in one of nine refugee camps located along the Thai-Myanmar border. The author taught using both student-centred and interactive approaches and observed that, at first, students were hesitant to engage in class activities or ask clarification questions. Students initially believed that asking questions was disrespectful to the teacher, perceiving that their questioning implied the teacher had not taught satisfactorily. The author desired to promote critical thinking and creative thought in the classroom in a way that respected students' culture and prior learning. This research aims to delve into the underlying issues surrounding implementing student-centred instruction, building on the author's experience working to educate displaced students from Myanmar within a development context.

Sample and data collection

In order to gain insight into current educational practices for ethnic minorities occurring in high schools located in Myanmar, the refugee camps along the Thai-Myanmar border and migrant high schools in Thailand, a purposive sample (Deming, 1990) consisting of undergraduate students studying education who have successfully completed their high school in these locations was selected. Students who are studying education as a major were surveyed specifically because they have been exposed to different instructional styles and have a comprehensive understanding of different pedagogical methods, including learner-centred instruction. This sample also possesses a thorough understanding of the local setting, culture, context and traditions. Childs' Dream, a non-profit organization dedicated to empowering marginalized children and youth in the Mekong Sub-Region, was contacted by the author because they provide university scholarships to many young adults from Myanmar. After consultation with the management team at Child's Dream, it was agreed that an anonymous, voluntary survey could be shared with Myanmar students on scholarship currently enrolled as undergraduate education majors. The 19 participants (n=19), aged 19 to 27, have overcome many obstacles during their unique educational pathways. These students possess the critical and credible insight necessary for effective and realistic educational reform in the context of development. In order to collect data, a survey that included six quantitative and four qualitative questions were shared with the sample group via the Child's Dream scholarship recipient webpage. The sample had the opportunity to anonymously respond to survey questions over the course of three weeks.

Data analysis

The qualitative data was analysed thematically to categorize and study trends. Open coding was employed to identify thematic patterns using key words and phrases in the text. Responses falling under different themes were grouped together for analysis. Participants gave specific insight based on the setting of their high school. These settings were grouped into three main categories (refugee, migrant and ethnic/government high

school) before being analysed. Responses centred on four main themes: the perceived contrast between Myanmar and Thailand-based schools, the teacher-centred foundation of instruction, cultural influences on teacher authority, and resource and training constraints. From this analysis, two major obstacles to implementing student-centred instruction emerged: the pressure on teachers to adhere to the recall-intensive nature of the national university entrance test and teacher-student authoritative power-distance. Quantitative responses were analysed using median and range.

FINDINGS

Analysis of the survey responses confirmed most of the previously cited obstacles to student-centred instruction. Additional themes and perspectives arose that shed light on nuanced cultural norms, various educational stakeholders' involvement, and barriers to sustainable reform. These perspectives have been categorized by theme and are presented below. Note that although the respondents were anonymous each has been assigned a corresponding ID code represented as (R1) through (R19) in the discussion below.

The sample population had diverse educational backgrounds with 10 respondents having attended high school in Myanmar, five in one of the refugee camps along the Thai-Myanmar border and four at a migrant learning centre in Thailand. The findings reveal that there is a stark contrast between the perceptions of education in Myanmar versus Thailand; respondents that have experienced both believe that Myanmar schools are comparatively far worse off. This was especially highlighted when the sample was asked to share insights into the conditions of their high school classrooms. Besides structural impediments, such as lack of textbooks, rare access to computers, inadequate desks, and low classroom resources, the unquestioning adherence to traditional customs was perceived by the participants on both sides of the border as hindering reform efforts. Nearly all respondents stated that reform was necessary, although few could give concrete suggestions to combat culturally-accepted educational norms. It was previously assumed that teachers had not been exposed to student-centred or interactive instructional methods and, therefore, could not employ them in their classrooms; however, respondents believed that teachers had been, in fact, received training in these areas but, because there was little practical application or follow-up, many educators reverted back to the traditional methods they were more comfortable using.

Perceived contrast between Myanmar and Thailand-based schools

Many of the respondents had strong opinions concerning the quality of education they received while attending high school in Myanmar versus a high school in a refugee camp or a MLC in Thailand. As many of the respondents had previously studied in Myanmar before coming to Thailand, comments concerning the contrasts between the systems arose. Overall, the majority of respondents that attended high school in Myanmar had a strikingly negative view of their experience and the wider educational system. For example, one respondent stated that Myanmar's education system "is totally destroyed by military dictatorship but you must have certificate to survive in this country although it is not worthy anymore" (R3). One feature that was unique to the educational experience of students who attended high school in Myanmar was the reality of bribery occurring within the schools. Two central motives for bribery surfaced. The first is that high school in Myanmar culminates with a high stakes national standardized test that some teachers are more equipped to prepare students for than others. Schools often segregate students

into classes based on academic performance and, it was cited, some parents give money to school administrators and teachers to get their child into the preferred class with the best teachers: "education is depend[ent] on amount of money you have" (R2). The second reason for bribery that arose was to avoid punishment or discrimination from the teacher:

> Some of the teachers favor to some students who give presents or bribe. Some of the students who do not give favor to them. As a result, the students are dare not to ask question if they do not understand because they are afraid that the teacher will beat them. That is what they do it in the class. These situation is only for Burma high school situation (R8).

Interestingly, this same respondent suggested that, in some cases, teachers accepting bribes might be the result of the larger, systemic problem of teachers not receiving a living wage through their profession. This circumstance results in teachers accepting bribes out of necessity as they "need to take it" (R8). One cited distinction between Thailand-based high schools and Myanmar-based high schools was the level of support they received from outside sources, such as NGOs. Overall, there was a stronger positive perception of the educational experiences of students who attended high school in a refugee camp-based school or a MLC; however, many respondents made reference to areas of improvement even within well-funded schools. One respondent, (R9), began by stating: "Mostly, classrooms in migrant school are not so convenience for the children to study, but only few school can afford to build a good classroom depending on their connection with individual donors or NGOs", then continued to describe one migrant high school that had abundant infrastructure including:

> Very good and quiet fine environment . . . individual desk for each students, separated room (not hall), and enough classroom materials such as whiteboard, stationary, as well as electricity, fans. They even have a computer lab for student (R9).

R9 was describing an exceptional outlier among migrant learning centres and concluded: "This kind of school is so rare in the migrant school areas." Another cited distinction between Myanmar and Thailand-based high schools was that there were more interactive teaching methods being employed among Thailand-based schools. For example: "When I was in Migrant school, I was really enjoying studying. I love new teaching method such as playing games during studying which I have never seen in Myanmar" (R16). This merit, however, was not shared by all respondents. Many of the traditional, teacher-centred pedagogies common to instructional practice in Myanmar were also observed as being perpetuated in migrant schools: "In Migrant high school … the lessons are mostly lecture. When I studied science, there was no experiment … no group work" (R19).

Teacher-centred foundation of instruction

Regardless of location, it was evident that teacher-centred instruction dominated as the most frequently cited instructional practice. Respondents were asked to reflect on how often different pedagogical methods were employed during their high school education using a Likert scale with corresponding responses: (1) never, (2) once a month, (3) once a week, (4) multiple times a week, and (5) everyday. There was a significant contrast between the reported frequency of teacher-centred versus student-centred instructional methods (see reported frequencies in Table 1). The most common response for how often teacher-centred instruction occurred was "everyday", whereas the most common response for the frequency of student-centred was "once a month."

Table 1: Frequency of teacher vs student-centred pedagogical methods during high school

	Median	Range
Teacher-centred – Direct instruction	5	2-5
Student-centred – Inquiry based learning	2	1-5
Student-centred – Cooperative learning	2	1-5

When respondents were asked to rank nine skills that were absent from their high school education but they, now that they are attending university, perceive as necessary, a similar trend emerged when comparing what the respondents chose as their first choice to the overall weighted averages. "Critical thinking" was selected as the most necessary by 37% of the respondents followed by "how to question and debate", "questioning skills", "critical reading" and "forming opinions." This same sequence also emerged when comparing the weighted averages of all scores. Respondents were also asked to reflect on the frequency of different pedagogical methods that occurred during their high school education (see Table 2 for the list of methods). The most frequent method was "lecture", followed by "memorization-based activities" and "individual classwork." All three of these methods require the students to remain passive and work independently. Similar to the reported frequency of assessment, memorization is a routine feature of classroom practice. Memorization-based activities could include choral responses, asking students lower-order thinking questions, and copying vast amounts of text.

Table 2: Frequency of activities during high school

	Median	Range
Lecture	5	1 – 5
Memorization-based activities	4	2 – 5
Individual classwork	4	1 – 4
Class discussion	2	1 – 4
Group work/projects	2	1 – 3
Practicals/labs	2	1 – 4
Debates	1	1 – 3
Student presentations	1	1 – 4

The strong influence of a hierarchical culture cited in the literature review was confirmed throughout the survey within a variety of contexts and among various relationships. Three main contexts were found where hierarchy played a prominent role: 1. between teachers and students; 2. between parents and students; and 3. between school management and teachers. The teacher, perceived by students as possessing similar or greater authority than even their own parents, was viewed by many respondents as infallible within the cultural context to the degree that:

> Students are feeling uncomfortable to ask teachers if he or she is not clear about lessons. Most of the times students are thinking they might interrupt the teaching. So students often stay silent in class (R11).

When asked to identify the major obstacles to improving the quality of high school education, 72% of the sample selected: "Students are not comfortable questioning the teacher." Respect for the teacher was also embodied as fear, with students expected to

remain passive: "Mostly, students have to be afraid of teacher and remain silent the whole lecture time while teacher is talking. There is no fun at all." Whether out of respect or fear, students believed their role in the classroom was to be passive. This resulted in: "The classroom of high school atmosphere is quiet because the teachers do not like asking question. There is only one thing to do that is listening what the teachers say" (R8). The respondents were, however, quite aware that, even though it was culturally expected to show respect to the teacher, teachers are not without limitations: "Most teacher doesn't have much of knowledge on the subject they are teaching" (R19).

Resource and training constraints

When asked to identify the major obstacles to improving the quality of high school education "Low resources in the classroom" was selected by 83% of the respondents. Two structural needs were acknowledged: classroom materials and school infrastructure. Examples of deficient classroom materials included notebooks, textbooks, stationary, teaching aids, posters and maps. Classroom materials were mostly reported to be absent. When materials, such as textbooks, were available, they were described as being shared amongst up to three students for one book. School infrastructure, such as desks, tables, blackboards, bathroom facilities, playground and internet access, were all stated to be in a state of disrepair. The classroom environments were described as "small", "dark", "dusty" (R13), "so close to each other" (R5), "crowded", "noisy" (R4), "over 30 students" (R7), "40 students in one classroom" (R17), and "over 60 students" (R3).

The need for individualized teacher training with corresponding follow-up was a major theme that was identified when respondents were asked what support local teachers needed to help them adopt new teaching methods. Topics suggested for teacher training included "group discussion" (R19), "active teaching methods" (R16), "critical thinking skills" (R12), "creative teaching" (R10), "student-centred based learning" (R9), "child psychology" (R5), and "classroom management" (R1). Opinions were varied when describing the main reason why new pedagogical methods were lacking in high school classrooms. Two explanations surfaced through the survey: either teacher training was not available, or training was available but consisted mainly of theory without application to classroom practice. For this reason, three respondents suggested that teachers required exposure to other schools outside their own to observe different teaching methods in practice.

DISCUSSION

In order to implement sustainable educational reform, two major factors that underpin the current educational model need to be addressed. The first is the rote memorization-based university entrance test. Assessment drives instructional practice and if the two are not aligned no change will occur. The educational system needs to reform holistically for lasting improvement. The second factor is the cultural hierarchy that was cited to be prevalent in all three of the studied high school contexts: the migrant, the refugee and the ethnic education systems. If reform does not consider the wider culture that permeates the classroom, little instructional practice will actually change.

Assessment anchor

When asked to identify the major obstacles to improving the quality of high school education, "Memorization is necessary to prepare students for standardized tests" was the most frequently chosen answer, selected by 89% of respondents. The Myanmar University Entrance Examination, also commonly referred to as the "matriculation test" is the capstone to a Myanmar student's education. The results of this exam determine students' eligibility to pursue higher education in Myanmar. The annual pass rate has been historically low with a pass rate of 30.67% in 2014 and 37.6% in 2015 (Eleven Myanmar, 2015). This evaluation is heavily memorization-based and requires students to recite vast amounts of text committed to memory. This test acts as an assessment anchor, reinforcing the traditional practice of rote memorization for which "students learn to memorize the answers in the exam without understanding" to the point that pedagogical reform would require implementers "to change the mind of both teachers and students that stick in traditional ways" (R5). This assessment guides not only instructional practice but also how students are assessed by teachers. One respondent cited that memorization was used in many subjects, stating "students will mostly have homework either to memorize and find the answers for history, geography, science subjects or solve mathematical problems" (R7). "Tests" were selected as a central method of evaluation used during high school by 95% of the respondents, followed by "homework completion" (84%) and "individual assignments" (37%). Evaluative methods requiring interaction or working with other students were scarcely selected: "participation" (16%), "presentations" (11%), "labs or practicals" (11%) and "group assignments" (5%). Being able to rehearse and recount information was valued to the degree that many respondents perceived it as the end goal rather than individual thought, for example: "teachers force us to memorize on the lesson instead of knowing the lesson critically" (R9).

For instructional methods that centre on the promotion of critical thinking and individual thought to be successful, the students need to be evaluated on these competencies and be convinced of their relevance and necessity. Part of this memorization fixation can be attributed to the fact that the matriculation exam, the national high school qualification test in Myanmar, is composed of questions mostly evaluating a student's ability to recite vast amounts of text. With a national high-stakes test as the major quantifier of high school academic achievement, pedagogical reforms will struggle to take root unless all stakeholders can see clear alignment between the new practices and the evaluation. This phenomenon could be thought of as the "assessment anchor" which grounds pedagogical practice in an education system. Even though a new course (pedagogy) is set, without raising the anchor (high-stakes test) the ship remains in the same place. In order for new, interactive teaching methods to be adopted, evaluative methods need to be based on the skills and competencies achieved through learning. For instance, a test where students need to show process work for which there is no sole "right answer" would promote diversity of thought similar to the model proposed by Bassett (2016) in which students are required to select a multiple-choice response and then write a justification for their answer beside their choice.

Cultural hierarchy

The cultural necessity of hierarchical relationships was also perceived to be present within the management structure of schools. This top-down configuration could, however, be used to implement new teaching methods in a sustainable manner. It was indicated that,

in some cases, teacher trainings focused on new methodologies were offered to teachers but with insufficient follow-up or monitoring. This results in new teaching methods being "left behind in the training classroom in most of the time" (R7). Instead, to instil continuous support, all stakeholders need to be involved in the implementation of new methods:

> As most people is used to top down management system, if higher position give a call, every teacher will follow it. It's mean lobbying must be done to all level; teacher and higher officer such as principal, education administrator and government level (R3).

A transition to student-centred instruction requires administration, policy-makers and educators to acknowledge a shift to enabling students and parents to obtain their own knowledge and be able to use it in dialogue with teachers. Myanmar teachers need to be willing to delegate authority to students and relinquish their historic tight control over the learning process. The idea that teachers are infallible and unapproachable needs to be deconstructed to allow the students to voice their opinions in class and develop their own leadership abilities. Many surveyed participants alluded to teachers not having adequate training, professional development or accountability. Together with the hierarchical culture, these factors shed some light on the reasons teachers maintain strict control over the learning process – to avoid losing face in public. If student needs are going to be considered a priority there needs to be a shift that allows them to challenge authority and obtain knowledge for themselves within the current cultural framework.

Limitations

Although this study was able to gather quantitative and qualitative data to holistically illustrate the issues described, more in-depth and rigorous research methods should be employed with a larger sample population in future studies of this multi-ethnic setting. This study could be considered a pilot study used to inform a comprehensive investigation of optimal pedagogical approaches for implementation in this development context. As described in this paper, participants are members of a culture with great respect for teachers and elders. As such, bias based on *annade* cannot be excluded from the study.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The results of this study have confirmed many of the previously cited obstacles to implementing student-centred instruction in the context of developing countries. Specifically, hurdles to reform in traditional Myanmar culture, such as teacher-student power-distance, rote memorization-based instruction, teacher-centred practices, and a lack of differentiated learning and evaluative methods, were all highlighted. These common classroom practices were found to be embedded in the larger cultural framework, requiring change models to incorporate many educational stakeholders and consider broader implications. In order to introduce pedagogies that enhance critical thinking and student engagement, teachers require support that addresses the low-resource environment, traditional student- teacher relationships, and power structures in Myanmar culture.

Educational policy at the national level needs to acknowledge the necessity to differentiate evaluative methods and empower individual thought among students.

Pedagogy is not merely instructional science but a reflection of the values and beliefs of a culture. To this end, Schweisfurth (2013, p. 5) argues "the only way through the impasse is to think of learner-centered education as a series of continua, rather than seeing it as a single absolute that has only one international configuration." Consideration of the local culture is paramount when deciding how and what to focus on when reforming pedagogical practice. In all three development contexts reported on in this paper, educators require a holistic policy that empowers them with the necessary tools, materials, training and support required to enable students to succeed at differentiated assessments.

In a study that examined learning reforms in Asia, Thanh (2012) found that Western-developed practices, like student-centred instruction, were not viewed as a better method of knowledge acquisition compared to traditional methods. Both the teachers and students continued to believe that academic success required the replication of content from lectures and textbooks. This belief was largely rooted in the fact that students were evaluated using techniques that focused on the replication of content. A change in pedagogical practice cannot be implemented at only one level. Furthermore, Thanh (2011, p. 521) states, "learning is not an independent variable that can simply be borrowed and implemented in all contexts." Many factors that affect learning need to be considered including culture, values, teaching methods, assessment focus and workload (Kember & Gow, 1994). In order to have lasting learning outcomes there needs to a marriage of cultural values and pedagogical practice. Furthermore, Hayes (2012) conducted a review of international research in order to identify factors to successfully reform educators' teaching methods. This review cited three factors critical to effective transition:

1. Alignment of teacher training to exam systems, curricula, and available teaching resources;
2. Supporting teachers with a mechanism to experiment, reflect and share their experiences; and
3. Engaged school leadership that is aware and strongly supports the pedagogical transition.

To summarize, Hayes's review stressed the significance of a systematic and integrated approach when attempting to fundamentally reform instructional methods. These conclusions lead to the question: what should future teacher training for Myanmar educators focus on in order to enable the deployment of engaging and interactive pedagogy that improves learning outcomes and fosters independent thought? This question should be carefully considered in light of the resource-poor context compounded by large class sizes and little available infrastructure for teacher support. The current derogatory view of "teacher-centred" or "direct instruction" often polarizes the conversation of how to most effectively encourage active learning in the classroom. This leads many teacher training programs in the developing world to focus on student-centred methodologies even though abundant literature exists outlining the various obstacles to implementing student-centred instruction in development contexts (Lall, 2011; Park & Nuntrakune, 2013; Schweisfurth, 2011; Sriprakash, 2010; Thanh, 2012; Westbrook et al., 2013). Supporters of direct instruction would advocate that effective teacher-centred instruction incorporates interactive whole-class teaching, not just teacher talk. This is described as "active teaching" or "structured learning" in the literature and represents more than the pure transmission of information. Direct instruction can still allow students to actively integrate new learning with their current beliefs and knowledge. Direct instruction which encompasses student engagement is in line with constructivist theories

of learning and, therefore, can have similar outcomes as student-centred approaches (Hattie, 2009; Kirschner, Sweller & Clark, 2006; Petty, 2014).

Due to the fact that effectively implementing student-centred instruction would require system-wide reform, extensive resources and training, and tailored strategies to mitigate cultural misunderstanding, one potential solution might be to focus efforts on recognizing and strengthening traditional direct instruction teaching methods. This would involve expanding, building on, and reinforcing the whole-class teaching methods already in use in this context. To this, Westbrook et al. (2013, p. 37) recommend using a combination of teacher-centred and student-centred practices, "integrating newer pedagogies with more traditional ones." This balanced suggestion takes into account the authoritative role typical of teachers in the context of Southeast Asian classrooms as well as the cultural value placed on teachers. A balanced approach was also endorsed by one of the survey respondents stating, "Teacher-centered is good for sometimes, but sometime, should be student-centered as well. Both have to use together to have effective learning" (R1). This reconciliation of traditional methods would allow for the benefits of learner-centred education to be operationalized in practical ways using methods local teachers already practice. Westbrook et al. (2013) add that this model should also include performance-based competency standards, strong framing of lessons, standardized learning outcomes, and individualized student support. To conclude, the following poem found in Park & Nuntrakune's 2013 research paper encapsulates the traditional practices present in many classrooms studied in this paper. It reveals the need for all stakeholders to be involved if sustainable educational reform is to occur in a culturally- and contextually-sensitive manner.

> *Young people are quiet in the presence of older people;*
> *Young people seldom disagree with older people;*
> *Teachers seldom encourage students to express their*
> *opinions in class;*
> *Quiet is a virtue;*
> *Parents discourage children's verbal communication; and,*
> *Children are not likely to participate in family discussion.*"

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Educational equity research in the mainland of China: A historical perspective

Hongzhi Zhang
Monash University, Australia: *hongzhi.zhang@monash.edu*

Since the establishment of the People's Republic of China in 1949, there have been various discussions concerning educational equity in the different stages of education development. This paper focuses on the history and current situation of educational equity research in China. It examines the changes in the discourse on Chinese educational equity research in the Mao and post Mao era. In effect, academic research on educational equity was almost not-existent in the Mao era. At that time, the practice of educational equity was government-led and deeply affected by political ideology. In the post-Mao era, especially since the 1990s, research into educational equity has rapidly developed. Western academic discourses were considered and adapted to the context of China. This paper argues that the dominant discourse of Chinese educational equity research has changed as China's historical, economic and political contexts changed.

Keywords: Educational equity; educational equality; Marxism; China

INTRODUCTION

Educational equity is becoming a social and political issue in many countries around the world, including rapidly developing China. In 2006, the Chinese Communist Party Central Committee issued the *Decision on a Number of Major Issues about Building a Socialist Harmonious Society (关于构建社会主义和谐社会若干重大问题的决定)*. The *Decision* sets, as a basic requirement of Chinese education, continued educational development and the promotion of educational equity. This *Decision* marks the first instance of a definition of educational equity by a central government document. Since then, the concept of educational equity has gradually entered the different levels of government documents, and the value of educational equity is being reflected in reforms of Chinese education.

In spite of the importance of educational equity in China, research into Chinese educational equity outside of China is limited. A search of key terms: "education(al) equity (equality)" and "China (Chinese)" in the ERIC and ProQuest Databases revealed only 22 English language, peer reviewed articles from 1989 to 2016. As shown in Table 1, the articles can be further divided into categories.

In this limited cache of 22 articles, 11 articles were written by Chinese scholars; 8 articles were co-authored by Chinese and Western scholars, and only 3 articles were solely authored by Western scholars. That means that more than 86 percent of English literature on Chinese educational equity research has been contributed by Chinese scholars. This limited literature provides some information for interested scholars but there is a need to provide more local (Chinese)-based literature to the international research community to

enable international scholars to understand the historical development and current situation of Chinese educational equity.

Table 1: International context of Chinese educational equity research

Themes	Author(s)	No. of Articles
Resource/finance issue	Ding & Lu, 2007; Dong & Wan, 2012; Sun & Barrientos, 2009; Tsang, 1994; Wang, 2013	5
Regional /rural issue	Fan & Peng, 2008; Jacob, 2006; Li, Zhou & Fan, 2014; Robinson, 2008; Wei, 2012	5
Minority/ethnic issue	Carjuzaa et al., 2008; Kwong & Hong, 1989; Sun & Qi, 2007; Wang, 2013	4
Policy study	Jia, 2013; Mu et al., 2013; Wang & Gao, 2013; Zhang, Huan & Li, 2007	4
Gender issue	Wang & Staver, 1995; Zhang, Kao, & Hannum, 2007	2
Subject teaching study	Zhao, Valcke, Desoete and Verhaeghe, 2012; Zhu, Gu, Collis and Moonen, 2011	2
Total		22

EDUCATIONAL EQUALITY THEORY AND PRACTICE IN THE MAO ERA

According to Ma Rhea (2014), the concepts of educational equality and educational equity align with the Aristotelian equality principle (the same for all) and fairness principle (different but appropriate). Brighouse (1995, p. 145) defined educational equality as "the same educational opportunities must be available to equally talented individuals with the same willingness to make an effort to acquire the necessary skills and qualifications". To Opheim (2004, p, 13), "educational equity refers to an educational and learning environment in which individuals can consider options and make choices throughout their lives based on their abilities and talents, not on the basis of stereotypes, biased expectations or discrimination". In this paper, the two terms are utilized to discuss the same issues in different Chinese historical contexts. The major purpose of using different terms in the different contexts is to highlight the impact of political ideology on the development of Chinese educational equity research.

Marxist educational equality theory

Marxist theory on educational equality has two main sources: Marxist discourse on equality, and Marxist theory of the comprehensive development of the individual. In fact, Marx and Engels did not explicitly and systematically offer a theory of equality, nor did they directly discuss issues of educational equality. Marxist discourse on equality is derived mainly from the essays of Engels. In his essay, *Anti-Dühring* (1877), Engels talks of equality as one of the fundamental human rights, which transcends national boundaries. "It was a matter of course that the demand for equality should assume a general character reaching out beyond the individual state, that freedom and equality should be proclaimed human rights" (Engels, 1959, p. 146). He further writes:

> The idea of equality, both in its bourgeois and in its proletarian form, is therefore itself a historical product, the creation of which required definite historical conditions that in turn themselves presuppose a long previous history. It is therefore anything but an eternal truth (p.148).

Based on the critique of equality beliefs in class society, Marx and Engels explained the proletariat's concept of equality as: "the real content of the proletarian demand for equality is the demand for the abolition of classes. Any demand for equality which goes beyond that, of necessity passes into absurdity (Engels, 1959, pp. 147-148).

In Marxist theory, people who are in power provide an authoritative interpretation of equality. That is, interpretations of equality were made by feudal lords in a feudal society, the bourgeois in a capitalist society and the proletariat in a socialist society. Therefore, in a Marxist discourse, "any social equality is not abstract, absolute and eternal; however, it is specific, relative and historical" (Zhang, 2006, p. 19, my translation). Engels (1959) points out that:

> [Social equality] has either justified the domination and the interests of the ruling class, or ever since the oppressed class became powerful enough, it has represented its indignation against this domination and the future interests of the oppressed (pp. 131-132).

In general, the Marxist discourse on equality includes two aspects: "(1) any social equality involves the performance of certain economic relations; (2) any social equality has a class nature" (Li, 2008, p. 267, my translation) From a Marxist perspective, then, the most decisive factors of social inequality are economic relations and the division of labour.

Marxist theory on the comprehensive development of individuals is explained by Marx, in *Grundrisse* (1857-58), by the three stages of the historical development of society:

> Relations of personal dependence (entirely spontaneous at the outset) are the first social forms, in which human productive capacity develops only to a slight extent and at isolated points. Personal independence founded on objective [sachlicher] dependence is the second great form, in which a system of general social metabolism, of universal relations, of all-round needs and universal capacities is formed for the first time. Free individuality, based on the universal development of individuals and on their subordination of their communal, social productivity as their social wealth, is the third stage. (p. 5)

For Marske (1991, p.45), the three stages of social development are characterized as "personal dependence," "personal dependence founded on material dependence," and "free individuality." The concept of absolute advancement of a person can be exemplified in the relationship between man and nature, man and society, and the individual itself. From a Marxist perspective, the complete development of individuals should include "comprehensive development of human capacity, human social relations and human personality" (Li, 2006, p. 32, my translation). To attain people's full growth, the abolition of private property is a prerequisite. According to Engels (1847):

> The rounded development of the capacities of all members of society through the elimination of the present division of labor, through industrial education, through engaging in varying activities, through the participation by all in the enjoyments produced by all, through the combination of city and country (p. 66).

Education is one of the important ways to realize the maximum potential of individuals. To Marx, it is in society's best interests to provide "an education that will, in the case of every child over a given age, combine productive labour with instruction and gymnastics, not only as one of the methods of adding to the efficiency of production, but as the only method of producing fully developed human beings" (Engels, 1959, p. 443). Engels (1847) also observes that:

> Education will enable young people quickly to familiarize themselves with the whole system of production and to pass from one branch of production to another in response to the needs of society or their own inclinations. It will, therefore, free them from the one-sided character, which the present-day division of labor impresses upon every individual (p. 66).

Marxist discourse has played a dominant role in the transformation and reconstruction of Chinese society in the wake of the establishment of the People's Republic of China. Marxist philosophy has also been the theoretical foundation of social science research in China, with research on Chinese educational equity no exception. Mao shared the theoretical terrain with Marx and Engels, and cleverly blended Marxist discourses on equality and comprehensive development of individuals into the practice of Chinese educational equality.

Maoist educational equality practice

Before the establishment of the Socialist system in 1956, China's education policy was the New Democracy. The pursuit of educational equality was the core value of education policy making in the early 1950s. It emphasized the provision of education for most of the people. For example, a variety of informal educational practices were established, such as Literacy Class, Workers' and Peasants' Fast Learning School, Amateur School, Political School, Cadres [1] Training School, providing cadres, workers and peasants with opportunities to access all kinds of education at different levels. After years of effort, the percentage of students from these groups was much higher than from other social groups. For example, in the field of higher education, the percentage of students from workers and peasants increased "from 20.5% in 1952 to 55.28% in 1958, and reached to 71.2% in 1976" (Ma & Gao, 1998, my translation). However, various policy analysts and policy makers argued that new China's education overemphasized the class attribute of Marxist discourse on equality, in which family background and political belief became the primary criterion for access to education. For instance:

> Influenced by the theory of class struggle, educational equality emphasized "equality within the class" and advocated the priority of worker-peasant children to access education by implementing a "class line" policy that discriminated against "non-working people's" children. It seriously infringed citizens' equal rights to access education (Yang 2006, p. 3, my translation).

In the early 1950s, new China, as a socialist nation recently born from a civil war, urgently needed many high-level, professional and technical personnel in various industries. To ensure that limited educational resources were used with the greatest efficiency in a short time, the Chinese government gathered human, material and financial resources to organize

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[1] Cadres – public officers in state organs, armed forces and people's organizations.

a number of *Key Schools (重点学校)*, into which they put the country's best teachers and students. However, *Key Schools* quickly became the privilege of the cadres' class. This was against Mao's ideals of educational equality, which targeted ordinary workers and peasants at the grassroots level. Mao was aware of the seriousness of the problem. In 1955, all the schools for children of cadres were cancelled.

It is possible to argue that the educational policy of the New Democracy was apt for the situation of China at that time. In order to speed up social and economic development, China drew lessons from the Soviet Union, within the context of the "Cold War". With the start of the Socialist Transformation[2] in 1953, the education system of New Democracy was replaced by a formal and institutionalized copy of the Soviet system of education, based on Kairov's pedagogy that used Marxist discourses to describe and interpret educational issues. Kairov claimed that "education is a tool of the ruling class[3] to consolidate its class domination for its own political purpose" (Pan, 2006, p. 20, my translation). In a historical context, Kairov's pedagogy played a positive role in the development of Chinese education. However, it overemphasized the class nature of education and learning of systematic knowledge, which "resulted in a rigid form of education, divorced from practical life" (Peterson, 2001, p. 173). Informal and universal education, directed towards workers and peasants, was eventually abandoned by the education system. None of this was conducive to providing all-encompassing education in the new China. Yang (2000) discussed the negative influence of the Soviet model on Chinese educational equality, arguing that the main problem was the serious imbalance in the allocation of educational resources which emphasized higher education and neglected elementary education. This led to substandard elementary education that weakened the development of education (especially in the rural areas) over the long term.

Mao was opposed to uncritically copying the experience of other nations, which were divorced from the context of China. He was particularly opposed to the rigid education model of the Soviet Union. With the completion of the Socialist Transformation in 1956, the question of how to form a socialist education policy was put on the agenda. Following the Marxist discourse on the comprehensive development of the individual, Mao Zedong outlined the socialist education policy in his article *Correct Handling of Contradictions among the People* in 1957. He said China's education policy should ensure educated people are morally, intellectually and physically developed, and become workers with a socialist consciousness and culture. Here, Mao, for the first time, utilized Marxist theory on the comprehensive development of individuals to interpret new China's education.

When relations between China and the Soviet Union deteriorated, China began to conduct a comprehensive critique of the Soviet model, which became known as the *Proletarian Dogmatism (无产阶级教条主义)*. In 1958, China's central government issued *On the Instructions of Education Work (关于教育工作的指示)*, which clarified the Party's education policy: education serves proletarian politics and combines with productive labour. In order to implement the policy, a nationwide "education revolution" was gradually launched, which affected many aspects of Chinese education. One of the

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[2] From 1953 to 1956, China completed the socialist transformation of agriculture, the handicraft industry and capitalist industry, finished shifting the means of production from private ownership to public ownership, and thus introduced the basic system of socialism.
[3] According to Marxism, the Proletariat is the ruling class in a Socialist society.

important foci of the education revolution was the push to emphasize educational equality. According to Mao, ensuring the educational rights of working people's children was the main task of education. At that time, rural, grassroots-oriented education was the primary focus of education policy. In order to change the workers and peasants' vulnerable position, Mao sought to break the constraints of formal education and to use a variety of channels, and a variety of ways to develop education.

Because of Mao's preference for the worker and peasant classes, education policies were particularly conducive to universal education in the vast rural areas of China. According to the research of Yang (2006), there was a big development of rural education between 1962 and 1976. For example, the percentage of students in junior high school in the countryside, 33.7% in 1965, increased to 75.2% in 1976. In contrast, the percentage of students in junior high school in the city decreased from 42.1% in 1965 to 15.6% in 1976. However, "it is very simple, brutal and devastating to promote the education ideal by completely negating intellectuals, launching a mass movement and levelling political criticism" (Yang, 2006, p. 4, my translation). Due to the overemphasis on the political function and class nature of education, development of education sacrificed quality of education and deprived the non-working classes of their educational rights. In the context of the Cultural Revolution (from 1966 to 1976), *Taking the Class Struggle as the Key Link (以阶级斗争为纲)*[4] became the dominant policy discourse related to educational equality. By limiting the educational rights of non-working class people, Chinese education only achieved "educational equality within specific social classes" (Yang, 2006, p. 4), which advocated the priority of workers and peasants' children to access education, and implemented a discriminatory education policy for non-working people's children. Yang (2006) further argued that, with the emergence of the privileged class of cadres, even educational equality within working and peasant classes became distorted; by emphasizing family background and political faith, children of the cadre class had inordinate opportunities to access education.

Discussions of the effect of education policy on the comprehensive development of individuals run through the whole Mao era. The first words on this can be found in the *First National Conference on Secondary Education (第一次全国中等教育会议)* in 1951. According to the speech of the first Minister of Education of new China, Ma Xulun, the purpose and educational objectives in general secondary schools must comply with the principles of thorough improvement to guarantee that young generations gain all-round maturity in intellectual, moral, physical and aesthetic arenas. In the same year, the *Journal of People's Education* published diverse discussion papers on comprehensive development. For example, Pan (1951) postulated that all people must be educated so that each gains the necessary knowledge to be full citizens of a nation. In a different vein, Zhang (1951) criticized misjudgements about implementation of egalitarian teaching methods, which emphasized general knowledge and neglected specialty knowledge; emphasized full advancement and disregarded focal development.

The Chinese socialist social system was established in 1956 with the completion of the Socialist Transformation. In order to meet the needs of the socialist education policy, many other scholars joined in the discussions on the idea of comprehensive development education. Looking at different understandings of "individuals", Chen (1956) pointed out that the comprehensive development of *individuals* is the comprehensive development of

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[4] Once a popular political slogan that exaggerates and exalts the class struggle in China.

human beings. The attention in discussions was, thereby, transferred from "personality" to "humans" per se. These discussions played an important role in constructing the Socialist education policy. In 1961, the policy officially stated:

> Education must serve proletarian politics and must combine with production to make certain educated people develop their moral, intellectual and physical aspects, to become workers with socialist consciousness and culture (Zhen & Zhu, 1991, pp. 136-137).

In general, these discussions enriched Marxist discourse on educational equality and the education policy of comprehensive development played a positive role in the recovery and advancement of new China's education. A great number of experts emerged in various fields in the Mao era. However, under the influence of Leftist philosophy, the education policy of comprehensive development was misunderstood in the Great Leap Forward.[5] Education combined with production was misunderstood as education plus physical work. Almost all the teachers and students in all types of schools did physical work in factories and rural areas, and also took part in all kinds of social activities. Some schools had their own factories and farms. Due to the overemphasis of physical work in the education system, the systematic learning of knowledge was neglected, which caused a decline in educational quality. The negative influences of these educational ideals extended to the "Cultural Revolution." In the early period of the Cultural Revolution, primary schools and universities suspended all classes and launched a revolution whereby all teachers and academic staff were forced to do physical work in the factories and farms. The Cultural Revolution seriously disrupted Chinese education.

EDUCATIONAL EQUITY RESEARCH IN THE POST-MAO ERA (SINCE 1978)

After the Cultural Revolution, *bringing order out of chaos (拨乱反正)* was one of the most important political missions for the whole nation. In 1978, the Third Plenary Session of the Eleventh Central Committee *(第十一届三中全会)* re-established the ideological, political and organizational lines of Marxism. The main task of China shifted from *taking class struggle as the key link* to the construction of socialist modernization: the Reform and Opening Up Policy was officially launched. Accordingly, the restoration of standardized, systematic and academic education was the primary task of Chinese education. The adage of *more knowledge more reactionary (知识越多越反动)* promulgated during the Cultural Revolution was changed and the power of knowledge and intellectuals' dignity were re-established. "We must create within the Party an atmosphere of respect for knowledge and respect for trained personnel" (Deng, 1984, p. 128). Meanwhile, notions of educational equality began to move from equality for the worker and peasant classes to the equality of educational opportunity for all citizens. However, concern about educational equality became subordinate to development of the economy and the realization of socialist modernization.

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[5] The Great Leap Forward is the term for Mao's 5 Year Plan (1958-1963) of agricultural and industrial reformation that was effected by land redistribution and social and labour reconstruction. The ideal was not realised, despite initial positive results and was abandoned in late 1960. The Plan was a precursor to the Cultural Revolution.

At that time, the Soviet model was abandoned but a new development model was not established: China stood at a crossroads. In this new historical context, China's education began to translate and compile Anglo-American pedagogy and educational theories. John Rawls' *"A Theory of Justice"* is one of the far-reaching influential theories on Chinese educational equality research. Rawls (1999) stated the principles of social justice as follows:

> First: each person is to have an equal right to the most extensive scheme of equal basic liberties compatible with a similar scheme of liberties for others. Second: social and economic inequalities are to be arranged so that: 1) they are to be of the greatest benefit to the least-advantaged members of society; 2) offices and positions must be open to everyone under conditions of fair equality of opportunity (p. 60).

Tracing the development of Western educational equality theories, Chinese scholars (Chen & Hu, 2008; Guo 2003; Qiu & Wang, 2007; Su, 2003; Wu & Zhu, 2006;) usually regard Rawls' theory of social justice as an important theoretical starting point of the redefinition of the conception of educational equality in the post Mao era. Rawls' theory of social justice is reinterpreted as three principles: "the principle of equality and freedom, the principle of fairness of opportunity and the principle of difference" (Zhong & Tsang, 2009, p. 10, my translation). Referring to these principles of social justice, Zhong and Tsang (2009) further indicate that the allocation of compulsory education resources follows the principle of equality and freedom, and the provision of opportunity for higher education abides by the principles of fairness of opportunity and of difference. Similarly, under the influence of Rawls' theory, Xie (2009) divided the meaning of educational equity into three elements: (1) to ensure everyone enjoys equal rights and obligations of education; (2) to provide equal opportunity and conditions of education; and (3) to ensure equal results of education. The first element has a legal base, and is the prerequisite and foundation for the other levels. The three levels can also be reframed as the starting-point for equity, process equity and outcome equity.

Another Western academic rationale that played a significant role in Chinese educational equity research is the *Coleman Repor*t: *Equality of Educational Opportunity* (Coleman, 1966). This is "the first large-scale attempt to elucidate, empirically, the extent to which equality has, or has not, been achieved in a particular national educational system" (Husén, 1972, p. 13). By reviewing the changing concept of equality of educational opportunity at different stages of development, Coleman (1968, p. 6) characterized this equality as follows:

1. Providing free education up to a given level, which constituted the principal entry point to the labor force.
2. Providing a common curriculum for all children, regardless of background.
3. Partly by design and partly because of low population density, providing that children from diverse background attend the same school.
4. Providing equality within a given locality, since local taxes provided the source of support for schools.

In discussions of the *Coleman Report*, Chinese scholars (Yi & Zheng, 2007; Zhu, 2003) indicate it was helpful for Chinese educational equality research. Ma (2006) pointed out that it is necessary to comprehensively investigate current issues associated with equality of educational opportunity in China. He proposed that Chinese educational equality research establish a quality-oriented idea of equality of educational opportunity. It should, he said, construct a new school performance evaluation system with the extent of students'

progress as a core, and provide institutional protection of equality of educational opportunity to disadvantaged children. Borrowing from the *Coleman Report*, Yi and Zheng (2009) suggested constructing an index system of Chinese educational equity monitoring that: defines a direction for the development of and an orientation for the pursuit of, educational equity; collects socio-economic information about students; and selects variables that can distinctly reflect the conditions of educational equity. Generally speaking, the *Coleman Report* is one of the most influential works on Chinese educational equity research. The concept of "equality of educational opportunity" has also been the authoritative discourse of this research. Ironically, to Coleman, the concept of equality of educational opportunity is a "mistaken and misleading" concept.

> It is mistaken because it locates the "equality of opportunity" within the educational institutions, and thus focuses attention on education as an end in itself rather than as it properly is, a means to ends achieved in adulthood. It is misleading because it suggests that equal educational opportunity, defined in something other than a purely formal (input) way, is achievable, while it is not (Coleman, 1975, p. 27).

Husén is another Western scholar whose works plays an important role in the research about educational equity in China. Following in the footsteps of Coleman, Husén (1972) traced the history of the concept of equality from the 18th Century and distinguishes three major stages in the development of the concept of equality of educational opportunity: the conservative stage, the liberal stage and, a new concept, the educational equality stage. To Husén, one of the conservative perceptions of equality of educational opportunity is to emphasize the "selection of talent" for commercial purposes. "It is important to search, for the benefit of the nation's economy and the fame of the individual who might be thus discovered" (Husén, 1972, p. 28). The liberal conception of equality of educational opportunity is that:

> Each individual is born with a certain, relatively constant, capacity or intelligence. The education system should be so designed as to remove external barriers of an economic and/or geographical nature that prevent able students from the lower classes taking advantage of their inborn intelligence which entitles them to due social promotion (Husén, 1972, p. 31).

According to the liberal conception of equality, "all individuals should be given the same opportunity to start their life career and not necessarily that it should ultimately bring about greater equality in terms of social and/or economic status" (Husén, 1972, p. 33). To Husén, then, equality of educational opportunity is not necessarily equivalent to social equality. Sometimes, in order to provide equality of opportunity in education, unequal treatment of different social groups is needed; "one should provide equal opportunity for unequal treatment so far as socially relevant differences are concerned" (Husén, 1972, p. 39). After reviewing conceptual changes in different historical stages, Husén finally identified "the modern, more radical" concept of equality of educational opportunity. That is, "in order to achieve the long-range objective of more equality in occupational career and standard of living, remedial action must be taken in the wider context within which the schools are operating—that is, society at large" (Husén, 1972, p. 39). Here, equality of educational opportunity is no longer confined to the education system. The achievement of educational equality should be linked to the context of social reform.

In general, from the point of view of the individual, Husén interprets the concept of equality in three ways: "(1) as a starting point; (2) as a treatment; and (3) as a final goal – or as a

combination of these three" (p. 14). Referring to Husén's interpretation, Yang (2000) indicated that educational equity is the same as equity in other social fields, which can be divided into three types: equity of starting point, equity of process and equity of outcome. Zhu and Qu (2008), inspired by Husén's theory, divided equity into two types, which they called interest-distribution equity and operation-procedure equity. Interest–distribution equity calls for a uniform spread of the benefits of education amongst all. Because the government usually allocates educational resources through education policy, operation-procedure equity concerns proportionate allocation of means during the operational process.

If we say Husén's discussion on equality of educational opportunity ensues from Coleman's theory, we must acknowledge McMahon's theory of equity has its own character. Considering equity demands of different social groups, McMahon and Geske (1982) indicated three types of equity: horizontal equity, intergenerational equity and vertical equity. Horizontal equity requires identical treatment amongst peers, measured by actual spend per pupil. Intergenerational equity recognizes the need to rectify disparate learning opportunities due to students' homes and environment. Vertical equity requires favourable treatment of disadvantaged students. Bao and Liu (2009) utilized McMahon's theory to measure the application of an equity principle in the expenditure of public education resources. They indicated that there are three imbalances in the allocation of higher education resources in China: imbalance between different regions; imbalance between different institutions of higher education; and, imbalance between different levels of higher education (such as national key universities and local universities).

The above-mentioned theories all play an important role in Chinese educational equity research. Although Marxism has been the dominant discourse of the academic research in China, the introduction of these Anglo-American theories greatly broadened the academic views of Chinese scholars. The discussion of equality is currently no longer limited to Marxist discourse which mainly emphasizes the relationship between production and class struggle. The release of *Decision on a Number of Major Issues about Building a Socialist Harmonious Society (2006)* by the Chinese Communist Party Central Committee was another milestone for Chinese educational equity research. Since 2006, the research of Chinese educational equity has entered into a "New Era".

CONCLUSION

Through offering a historical perspective on educational equity research, this paper argues that the dominant discourse of Chinese educational equity research has changed with the different historical, economic and political contexts of China. I found that academic research on educational equity almost did not exist in the Mao era. At that time, most Chinese education policy research was government-led and deeply affected by political ideology. Marxist theory of educational equality played a dominant role in the research and practice of Chinese educational equity in Mao's era. Due to an overemphasis of the political function and class nature of education, the non-working classes were deprived of their educational rights in the Mao era. The people from the lower strata of society gained more opportunity for education. However, with the emergence of the privileged class of cadres, even educational equality within working and peasant classes became distorted. By emphasizing family background and political faith, children of the cadre class had inordinate opportunities to access education.

In the post-Mao era, especially since the 1990s, research on educational equity has rapidly developed. Chinese educational equity research introduced Western academic discourses and adapted them to the context of China. The notions of educational equality began to move from equality for the worker and peasant classes to the equality of educational opportunity for all citizens. However, due to an overemphasis on the economic function of education, educational equality became subordinate to the development of the economy and the realization of socialist modernization.

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