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JISTE is an official, refereed publication of ISTE. The goal of ISTE is to publish six to eight articles in each issue. Using the Seminar theme, articles in the first issue of each volume are based on papers presented at the previous seminar. Articles in the second issue are non-thematic. Points of view and opinions are those of the individual authors and are not necessarily those of ISTE. Published manuscripts are the property of JISTE. Permission to reproduce must be requested from the editor.

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Teacher Education in a New Millennium: Linking Local Action with Global Perspectives

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From the Secretary General

Education and Freedom

We have been hearing a great deal since the terrible events of September 11 about the "war against terrorism". Teachers all over the world will have had to help their students to come to terms with this appalling outrage and to try to make sense of the suffering of the victims, their families and friends. Teachers also know that "being against" something, no matter how justified, will not fill the void which accompanies the shock and terror felt by everyone and especially the young people in our care. They need to know what we stand for.

Paul McGeough, a Sydney Morning Herald (October 3, 2001) writer working in New York, wrote that freedom and democracy are principles upon which those who oppose the actions of the terrorists responsible for the crimes of September 11 are based. He further asserts that the four freedoms underpinning democracy are education, political, economic and media. You may like to add to this list but I think it is a powerful initial vision of genuinely free societies. As McGeough says:

"If people have the right to a good education, if they can participate in the political process, be fully informed on what is happening in their society and run or work for a properly managed business there is a good chance their freedom and democracy will be satisfied."

Education is presented as the foundation upon which a free and democratic society is built, for economic, political and media life all rest on the participation of a knowing population. Unfortunately, the great majority of the world's people live in societies that do not enjoy these freedoms and exist under "democracies" which make a mockery of the word. There is a compelling case for a far greater effort by teacher educators around the world to clearly enunciate the vital role of education in achieving such freedoms and the responsibility which teachers have in this task.

New Editor of JISTE

Dr Catherine Sinclair, a senior academic at the University of Western Sydney, Australia has been appointed as the Editor Elect of JISTE. Cathy will assume the editorship of the Journal at the Annual Seminar in Denmark in May 2002. Congratulations to Cathy who is well known by ISTE members and is eminently well qualified to fill this important role. She will work closely with George Churukian during the transition period. I wish to thank George for the great contribution he has made since the publication of the first edition of JISTE in January 1997 for his wise and inspiring services as the Foundation Editor of JISTE.

From the Editor

The content of this issue captures some of the most interesting and provocative ideas that were presented at the 21st ISTE Seminar held in Kuwait last February. The articles presented in this issue are a sample of the wide range of research and conceptual interests of ISTE members. As is the custom for the past few years, the lead article in Issue #1 of each volume concerns education/teacher education in the country of the forthcoming seminar. This year the 22nd Seminar is held in Denmark. The conveners, Lotte Schou and Johan Borup, describe *The Danish Educational System: An Introduction.* The remainder of the issue presents articles by Nu'man Al Al-Musawi from Bahrain, Majda Cenci from Slovenia, Jenny Chung from Hong Kong, Shahid Mahmood from Pakistan, and Leke Tambo from Cameroon. These articles give us much to think about and reflect on as teacher educators.

Putting out a journal takes time and patience. It is hard work that takes enormous energies and resources. Without the assistance of Joyce Castle, the Associate Editor; Cathy Sinclair, Editor-elect; and the many Consulting Editors this issue would not exist.

I encourage you to support your journal by submitting articles for possible publication, becoming a consulting editor, and asking your colleagues to attend a seminar and become an ISTE member.

George A. Churukian

The Danish Educational System: An Introduction

Lotte Rahbek Schou
Johan Rosenstrom Borup

This article briefly describes Danish Education and the principles embedded in the tradition: progressivism, the unified teacher, and academic freedom.

THE DANISH FOLKESKOLE

Nine Years of Education are a Must

In Denmark Education is compulsory for everyone between the ages of 7 and 16. Whether education is received in the publicly provided municipal school, in a private school, or at home, is a matter of choice, as long as certain standards are met and an adequate range of subjects provided. It is education itself that is compulsory, not school.

Eighty eight percent of Danish children attend the public education system for their basic nine-year learning span, with an optional 10th year period. We call this the Folkeskole, with one form level each year progressing automatically from one form to the next regardless of academic achievement.

A comprehensive concept enables children to remain in the same pupil group with the same classmates from the first to the ninth or tenth form, sharing the same experiences in all subjects with peers of all types of backgrounds and abilities.

The Aims of the Folkeskole

The Folkeskole was founded in 1814, and all children were given the right to seven years of education. The subjects then were religion, reading, writing and arithmetic. Since that time, only five major changes have been made in the Education Act, in 1903, 1937, 1958, and 1975 and in 1993.

The aim of the school is more than just to ensure children and young people to acquire certain knowledge. It is also to convey to them the central values of our outlook on life and society and to see to it that they become able citizens in society.

Specific Aims of the Folkeskole are as follows:

- The Folkeskole shall, in cooperation with the parents, further the pupils' acquisition of knowledge, skills, working methods and ways of expressing themselves and thus contribute to the all-round personal development of the individual pupil.

- The Folkeskole shall endeavour to create such opportunities for experience, industry and absorption that the pupils develop awareness, imagination and an urge to learn, so that they acquire confidence in their own potential and a background for forming independent judgements and for taking personal action.

- The Folkeskole shall familiarize pupils with Danish culture and contribute to their understanding of other cultures and of man's interaction with nature. The school shall prepare the pupils for active participation, joint responsibility, rights and duties in a society based on freedom and democracy. The teaching of the school and its daily life must therefore build on intellectual freedom, equality and democracy. (The Danish Ministry of Education, 1995).

As is apparent in Denmark's Education Act, democracy plays a role both in the form and in the contents of the school. Pupils are taking part in the decision-making process through their participation in a number of decision-making fora at school. As far as teaching actually is concerned, it is the teacher who is responsible for the establishment of targets for learning and for the choice of working methods and subjects in co-operation with pupils. The education for active participation in democracy starts by involving pupils during their time at school and making them

responsible for many decisions. Those steps ensure the credibility of education in democracy.

The Danish school system has always been a decentralised system, with decisions on curriculum content made at local levels. This autonomy has been highlighted during the last decade by the redoubling of political efforts to delegate the administration from the Ministry of Education to local authorities and from local authorities to individual schools; along with efforts to strengthen parents and pupils influence in the day-to-day running of their schools.

Each school has its own school board: normally five to seven parents elected by and from among the parents of pupils attending the school, two teachers, two pupils, and the head teacher.

Along with the social advantages of attending a comprehensive school with practically no grouping of children by skill or intelligence level, children in the Danish Folkeskole can look forward to the additional support of the class teacher system, whereby each class can have the same teacher throughout the whole or greater part of the nine or 10 years. Each group of pupils can therefore develop its own profile under the guidance of its own class teacher, most often the Danish teacher, who comes to know and not infrequently also to cherish every aspect of each individual pupil's abilities, skills, character and aspirations. The class teacher will also be well acquainted with the pupil's parents and home background, functioning as counselor and encouraging maximum contact between the family and the school.

The Curriculum

The central administration of the Folkeskole is in the hands of a Department in the Ministry of Education. The Danish Parliament makes decisions governing the overall aims of education, and the Minister of Education sets the targets for each subject. But local authorities and schools decide how to reach those targets.

The Ministry of Education publishes curriculum guidelines for individual subjects, but these are seen purely as recommendations and as such are not mandatory for local school administrators. Schools are permitted to draw up their own curricula as long as they are in accordance with the aims and proficiency areas laid down by the Minister of Education. However, nearly all schools choose to conform to the centrally prepared guidelines in establishing their curricula.

School-Leaving Examinations

Examinations are offered at two levels - the Leaving Examination (after the ninth or 10th form) and the Advanced Leaving Examination (after the 10th form only).

Standard rules for examinations have been developed to ensure uniformity throughout the country. For the same reason, the questions in written examinations are set and marked centrally.

Examinations are not compulsory. The pupil is free to decide whether or not to sit for them, after consulting with his or her teachers and parents. Each examination subject is assessed on its own; results cannot be summed up to give an average mark.

New Forms of Assessment

The Education Act of 1993 introduced new methods of assessing pupils' benefits from instruction: regular internal assessments throughout the span of school life, and statements written by teachers giving a broad and detailed picture of the pupils' levels of attainment.

As another innovation, mandatory project assignments at the ninth and 10th form levels give pupils the opportunity to complete and present an interdisciplinary project. The project assignment is assessed in a written statement evaluating its content, working process and presentation. The evaluation provides a broad and detailed assessment of the pupil's ability. If the pupil wishes, a

mark can also be given. The assessment of the project assignment can also be indicated in the leaving certificate.

Private Schools

An important feature of the Danish educational system's democratic and decentralized structure is access to a school of the parents' own choice. The tradition mainly originates in the ideas and initiatives of the clergyman, poet and politician, N. F. S. Grundtvig (1783 - 1872), and the teacher, Christen Kold (1816 - 1870). The ideas of Grundtvig and Kold had such an impact on the political thinking of their time that they were written into the democratic Constitution adopted by Denmark in 1849. It stipulates the above-mentioned general compulsory education.

If the schools offered by the public education system are not to your liking, you can attend a private school, of which there are about 430 throughout the country. The Danish State covers eighty to eighty-five percent of the expense and the parents pay the last fifteen to twenty percent approximately 600 kroner or 75 dollars per month.

The initiators of private schools are, in the main, prompted by one of three factors: denominational preferences, pedagogical theories or political and social preferences. In Denmark, attendance at a private school is not generally considered "elitist". Private school pupils have no added status or advantages to afford them a smoother passage through upper secondary and tertiary education and beyond.

About twelve percent of all pupils attend private schools - the trend has been increasing since the beginning of the '80s but has now apparently stabilized, while the debate on private versus public education has gone on with undiminished fervour.

The Folkeskole and their Critics

For quite a long time the Danish Folkeskole has been under heavy fire. Criticism raised in the press and in professional journals has been biting and quite merciless, and has not even spared the

official aims of the school. Critics are of the opinion that its aims are not in tune with the present set of dominant values, nor with the “mood” of society as a whole. According to them, the Danish school - in the light of the challenges facing the Danish society - should tone down all the “playing at democracy” and shared responsibility. Not because, in their opinions, democracy should not be taught in school, but because an exaggerated cultivation of “democratism” is a threat against knowledge and skills, the transmission of which, after all, must be the main task of the school.

Proponents of this exaggerated interpretation of the statement of aims have not found it hard to identify culprits. They believe the culprits are teachers with ideas from the tradition of progressive education and researchers who - safely ensconced in their ivory tower - have insinuated these ideas into teacher education at all levels with the result that the level of competence of Danish teachers has been dramatically reduced. According to the critics the situation in the Danish Folkeskole is now so critical that drastic restorative measures are called for.

The new Danish government expresses arguments for an "academic rearmament" of the Danish School, similar to those heard in the business world. In late November 2001 a new administration of neoliberal and conservative political views came into office. Its first official program offers a list of suggestions for more stringent legislation regarding schools and education. An attempt among the different parties in the Danish Parliament will be made to bring about a compromise on new goals for improving academic standards in school. The government’s proposal for improving academic standards would result in an extra weekly lesson in Danish and mathematics from the first to the third grade; national values strengthened by more emphasis on history; foreign language courses starting in the first grade; academic standards intensified by centrally prepared and more binding curricula.

As emphasized in Borup (2001) and Schou (1997, 1998) the call for greater discipline and control of academic content

immediately comes into conflict with the commitment to placing the child in the foreground, and letting instruction develop on the basis of the individual child's interests and experience. Folkeskole supporters fear that the attack now being made on progressive educational principles will, in fact, be the first nail in the coffin of progressive education as such

TEACHER EDUCATION

Schou (1998) shows that drastic measures have already been taken in the field of teacher education. In 1997 Parliament passed a new act designed to equip teachers with academic competencies they allegedly have been lacking. The reform requires fewer subjects and more in depth studies for all students in Danish and three other subjects. A ministerial order regulates the scope of the subjects, the principal lines of the content of the subjects, and general rules for the assessment of students. The more detailed regulations are laid down in local curricula drawn by the institutions.

At present, teacher education is offered at 18 colleges of education in Denmark. Those colleges are the only institutions authorised to provide the required to qualify for teaching posts in the Danish Folkeskole.

The four-year teacher-training program includes practice teaching at a school for a total of 24 weeks, the organization of which is decided by the individual training institution.

The teacher education program includes the following subjects:

Common core subjects: All students study the theory of education, psychology, general didactics, school and society, religious studies and philosophy, practice teaching and write a thesis.

Main subjects: the student must choose Danish or mathematics and three further main subjects. Among the four main subjects at least two of the following three areas

must be represented: humanities, natural sciences and practical-aesthetic subjects.

The colleges train teachers according to the concurrent model (rather than the consecutive model) for the entire Folkeskole, which means that Denmark has a unified teacher training system for the whole period of compulsory schooling. A number of features are particularly characteristic of the Danish system, the most salient of these being the broadness of the curriculum, the in-depth study of four school subjects and the integration of theory and practice that exists between school subjects and teaching practice. In other words, students study the teaching of English, Danish, history, and other subjects - not primarily the English language, Danish language, history, and so on.

Qualifications of the Teachers at the Colleges of Education

The teachers at the colleges of education may earn three different kinds of qualifications:

- A university degree (Master's level) in humanities or in natural sciences

- An academic degree (Master's level) from the Danish University of Education

- A Folkeskole teacher qualification supplemented with in-service training

Rethinking Institutional Frameworks

If educational and research institutions are to be ~~a~~ significant factors in supporting a dynamic development of schooling in all regions in Denmark, it seems likely that the interaction between the educational and the corporate sectors could - and should - be significantly increased.

The Ministry of Education is, accordingly, presently rethinking the institutional structure of higher education. Its challenge is, beginning January first, 2002, to create larger educational environments, and at the same time to promote the broad vitality of higher education throughout the country in order to assure the supply of qualified labor for the regional labor market. (Danish Ministry of Education, Swedish Ministry of Education and Science, Centre for Educational Research and Innovation (CERI), Territorial Development Service (TDS), and OECD (1999).

Earlier this year the Ministry of Education prepared a report on this subject that later became a law. The central element of that law is the creation of Centres for Higher Education (CVU). Part of the object of these new centers is to encourage and develop a close interaction with the corporate sector. They will be focusing on vocation- and profession-oriented training of young people as well as further education and continuing training of the regional work force. These new institutions (CVU) must encourage further development of active study environments outside the university cities. There must be coordination among the institutions involved, but at the same time, the individual institutions must keep their own identities, profiles and locations. The new centers (CVU) will be responsible for teacher education, nurse education, the educator-training program, and in-service training. The Centres for Higher Education will not conduct research themselves, but will facilitate strong and close co-operation among the universities and research centers and thus be developmental centers for practice-related knowledge and learning.

THE DANISH UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION

Denmark wishes to take a proactive role in developing educational research and learning in cross-sector collaboration among business, education and research institutions. (Danish Ministry of Education, Swedish Ministry of Education and Science, Centre for Educational Research and Innovation (CERI), Territorial Development Service (TDS), and OECD,1999) More than 200 higher education institutions offer study programs of differing lengths and levels.

Endeavours to strengthen and promote Danish educational research have been a tentative process within the last years. Results

of this are among other things new centres of education at Aalborg University and Southern Danish University. The last up to now is The Danish University of Education (DUE). It was established on the first of July 2000 by amalgamation of three institutions: The Royal Danish School of Educational Studies, The Danish National Institute for Educational Research, and The Danish School of Advanced Pedagogy.

The objective of DUE is to promote research and postgraduate education at the highest scholarly level across the full range of educational disciplines. As part of this objective, the University is especially concerned to support and enhance Danish educational research. The University has an ambition to become a leading international centre for educational research and higher education in professional education.

As far as teaching actually is concerned the university conducts teaching programmes at the following three levels: Masters programmes, Candidates Programmes (Extended masters programmes), and Ph.D. The in-service training that up to now have been handled by the former institutions is now a part of The Centres for Higher Education.

Academic freedom is the constitutional principle of Danish universities in general. The freedom includes responsibility for immediate and long-term strategic decisions. It is based on the special character of the universities, their identity and values. It is worth noticing that the new government is planning to mould universities into a new model of administrative leadership with external Governing Boards. Critics within the academic world fear that this will endanger the academic freedom and that especially the humanities and social sciences are given a lower priority in the future.

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Schou, L. R. (1997). Skolefag og laereruddannelse. In: Christer Brusling (ed.) *Teacher Education and Social Change*. HiO-notat nr. 39. Hoegskolen i Oslo.

Schou, L. R. (1998). School Subjects and Teacher Education: Outline of an Non-Discipline-Centered Teacher Education. Paper presented at the 18th Annual International Seminar for Teacher Education in South Africa.

For more details on Danish education, see the following web sites of Danish Ministry of Education:

THE EDUCATION SYSTEM IN GENERAL: *HTTP://WWW.UVM.DK/ENG/PUBLICATIONS/1PRIN/HEL.HTM*

Act on the Folkeskole: The Danish Primary and Lower Secondary School:
http://www.uvm.dk/eng/publications/laws/actonthe.htm

The Folkeskole:
http://www.uvm.dk/eng/publications/factsheets/fact2.htm

The Training of Teachers for the Folkeskole:
http://www.uvm.dk/eng/publications/factsheets/fact1.htm

Private Schools in Denmark:
http://www.uvm.dk/eng/publications/factsheets/facts9.htm

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The Impact of Student Teaching Programs on Students' Beliefs about Teaching and Learning[1]

Nu'man Al-Musawi

The aim of this paper is to examine the influence of Student Teaching Programs accredited in the College of Education at the University of Bahrain on the prior beliefs of prospective teachers.

Based on Dilemmas of teaching and learning, a 24- item questionnaire to examine the beliefs of 120 student teachers before and after entering the teaching practice was constructed by the author.

Results indicate little positive shift in the preservice teachers' entering preconceptions about teaching and learning. Suggestions to increase the influence of Student Teaching Programs on student teachers' views of teaching and learning are forwarded.

Background

The role of field experiences in general, and student teaching in particular, in changing the firmly held beliefs of student teachers has been analyzed in several studies (Bird, Anderson, Sullivan, & Swidler, 1993; Fosnot, 1996; Shapiro, 1991; Stoddart, Stofflett, & Gomez, 1992; Tabachnick & Zeichner, 1985). The conflicting results from these studies illustrate the difficulty in finding commonalties across the works that comprise this body of research.

[1] This research was supported by a Grant from the Scientific Research Council of the University of Bahrain. The valuable assistance of the Teaching Practice Office at the College of Education is highly appreciated.

Previous research shows, however, that the impact of field experiences on student teachers' preconceptions about teaching depends on the duration of intervention. In short- term intervention, little shift in beliefs was found (Lawrence, 1992; Shapiro, 1991). In long-term intervention (e.g., yearlong programs), it was much more common for the researchers to report positive effects (Fosnot, 1996; Levin & Ammon, 1992; Stoddart, et al., 1992; Sumara & Luce- Kapler, 1996). Longer-term programs were effective when the student teachers maintained some consistent focus and message while working in a close relationship with small numbers of students (Wideen, Mayer-Smith, & Moon, 1998).

We suggest that the lack of consensus among different authors about the effects of student teaching lie in the choice of the conceptual framework that can clearly elaborate the expected change in student teachers' beliefs.

In our opinion, the underlying conceptual assumptions should be based on the dilemmas of teaching and learning (Smylie, Bay, & Tozer, 1999; Tabachnick & Zeichner, 1984). Cuban (1992) defines dilemma as conflict-filled situations that have no clear resolutions. They involve trade-offs and pit highly valued alternatives against each other. As assumptions, which were once taken for granted are challenged in the postmodern society, the dilemmas surrounding the teaching-learning processes become more complex and ambiguous.

The College of Education at the University of Bahrain, which was founded in 1986, continuously strives to enhance the Teacher Education Programs intended to prepare teachers for pre-school, elementary, and secondary education in Bahrain. In 1998, a new office, the "Teaching Practice Office", was inaugurated to develop and coordinate all student teaching activities, and to locate areas of strengths and weaknesses in supervision efforts offered by faculty members and school principals (University of Bahrain, 2000).

Within this context, the purpose of this paper is to determine the prior beliefs of preservice teachers enrolled in teacher education programs about teaching and learning. The second purpose is to investigate the extent to which the Student Teaching Programs can influence or alter these beliefs.

Conceptual Framework

In order to identify different beliefs that preservice teachers hold with regard to teaching and learning processes, we turned to the concept of Dilemma as developed by Berlak and Berlak (1981) as a way of describing student teachers' perspectives toward teaching and learning.

We identified 12 dilemmas of teaching and learning (Table 1) related to the following three categories of teacher beliefs:

1. Knowledge and Curriculum.

2. The Teacher's Role.

2. The Teacher-Student Relationships.

These appeared to be genuine dilemmas for most teachers who were pulled in contradictory directions by conflicting appeals within each dilemma (Aguirre, Gurney, Haggerty, & Howel, 1990; Katz & Raths, 1992; Tabachnick & Zeichner, 1985).

Table 1: Dilemmas of teaching and learning

1. Knowledge and Curriculum	
1. Knowledge is public	Knowledge is personal
2. Knowledge is certain	Knowledge is problematic
3. Knowledge is product	Knowledge is process
4. Learning is fragmented	Learning is public

5. Learning is collective	Learning is individual
6. Patterns of effective teaching are identifiable	Patterns of effective teaching are not identifiable
7. Teaching is the process of knowledge transmission	Teaching is the process of meaning construction
2. The Teacher's Role:	
8. The Teacher's role in determining What to teach is Bureaucratic – Functional	
9. The Teacher's role in determining How to teach is: Bureaucratic – Functional	
3. The Teacher-Student Relationships:	
10. The teacher-student relationship is: Distant – Personal	
11. The teacher's control over student learning is High – Low.	
12. The teacher's control over student behavior is: High – Low.	

Method of the study

For the purpose of the study, a questionnaire was used. Based on the twelve dilemmas of teaching and learning, we prepared 24 Likert-type items. Each dilemma was represented in the questionnaire by two contrasting items (Table 2).

The questionnaire was administered to 120 individuals (80% female) randomly selected from undergraduate students enrolled in Student Teaching Programs offered in the College of Education at the University of Bahrain. Students were homogenous with respect to academic, cultural, and ethnic backgrounds. The questionnaire

was administered to the student sample twice: before and after taking the teaching practice in Bahrain secondary schools.

In addition to the questionnaire, 40 student teachers were selected from the whole sample and subjected to semi-structured interviews. The main focus of the interviews was to explore student teachers' beliefs about different aspects of teaching and learning before and after the teaching practice Preservice teachers were also asked to highlight the role of the University supervisor and the cooperating teacher in influencing these beliefs, and to judge the influence of the Student Teaching Programs on their initial views.

Table 2: Items of the questionnaire

1. Teachers guide the students' activities toward acquisition of knowledge

2. Knowledge is relative facts from which the student chooses what suits one's convictions.

3. Learning is the student's understanding of the information transmitted by the teacher

4. Knowledge is useful and important for the student whether it is applicable in real life or not

5. It is important for the teacher to gear the content of teaching to the expected test questions.

6. Teachers should choose a teaching method adequate to the concrete educational setting.

7. Teaching is the students' construction of concepts based on one's learning experiences.

8. Learning is the students' construction of concepts from one's own acquired experiences.

9. The expected questions in the test should not determine the content of teaching.

10. Teaching is the transmission of information from the teacher to the student.

11. It is difficult to define patterns of effective teaching as teaching is an individual activity

12. The relationship between the teacher and the student in the classroom should be as the one that exists between the chief and his or her servants

13. Learning is an individual activity that best occurs when the student mobilizes his abilities and aptitudes toward the acquisition of knowledge.

14. Knowledge is useful only if it assists the student in making use of one's experiences.

15. Teachers should state explicit rules that determine the students' behavior in the classroom.

16. Patterns of effective teaching may be accurately defined and may serve as a guide for teachers.

17. Learning occurs when the student masters an organized body of scientific concepts, facts, and theories thus acquiring the whole knowledge

18. The relationship between the teacher and the student in the classroom should resemble the relationship between the brothers.

19. Knowledge is absolute certain facts the student should accept without discussion.

20. Learning occurs when the student masters thinking skills and processes thus acquiring the whole knowledge.

21. Teachers should use the teaching method that proved its effectiveness.

22. The teacher is a primary source of the knowledge acquired by the student.

23. Learning is a collective activity that best occurs when the student examines his or her ideas and concepts in comparison to the ideas of others.

24. The student should be personally responsible for his or her behavior in the classroom.

Findings

Responses to questionnaire items and to the subsequent interviews showed that preservice teacher's root dispositions range from progressive to a mixture of traditional and progressive orientations. Student teachers do not embrace a coherent view regarding the nature of knowledge, the teacher's role, and the teacher-student relationships. The only exception is the dominant traditional view about the existence of some patterns of effecting teaching that can be utilized to ensure maximum student learning in the classroom.

The prevailing concept of teaching perceived by student teachers before entering the teaching practice was that teaching is a mere linear transmission of information and knowledge from the teacher to the student. Only a slight shift toward the progressive orientation was observed in preservice teachers' beliefs about the patterns of effective teaching, and also about the concept of teaching after they finished the teaching practice.

As to the concept of teaching, 73.7% of student teachers became aware of teaching as a teacher-pupil interaction in which the teacher helps the pupils and guides them in building concepts, and acquiring not only knowledge, but experiences and skills as well.

The majority of preservice teachers (88.3%) did not change their position in relation to the teacher after they were confronted with practical teaching in schools. They continued viewing the teacher as a guide, an advisor and an example for the student. Very few students (2.7%) considered the teacher as the cornerstone of the teaching process, as a friend, and as a transmitter of knowledge.

Most students (76.5%) maintained that teaching methods and techniques should be geared to the new instructional setting. In their opinion, no universal method of teaching does exist; instead, there are many different teaching methods. Preservice teachers suggested that traditional teaching methods that concentrate on rote memorization should be abandoned.

Most of preservice teachers (78.2%) mentioned that the University supervisor played an active role in changing their dispositions and preconceptions about teaching and learning. They appreciated the efforts on the part of the cooperating teacher to bring out an effective instructional setting in the classroom.

The role that the Student Teaching Programs play in guiding teacher education, and in shaping the personality of prospective teachers was also highly appreciated by preservice teachers, who clearly mentioned that these Programs helped them to gain self-confidence, encouraged their scientific curiosity, and, to some degree, influenced their prior beliefs about teaching and learning in the desired direction.

Discussion

The findings of this study clearly indicate that student teaching did not result in a homogenization of teacher perspectives toward teaching and learning processes. This finding is consistent with the findings of Tabachnick and Zeichner (1984), and Ghooni (1994) who concluded that the student teaching had not significantly altered the substance of teaching perspectives that the students brought to the experience.

On the contrary, with the exception of few students who obviously shifted to the progressive orientations, the mixed nature of student teachers' prior beliefs solidified and did not change fundamentally over the course of the 16-week semester. For the most part, students became more articulate in expressing and more skillful in implementing the perspectives that they possessed in primitive forms at the beginning of the experience.

We suggest that there are several contextual factors that contributed to these findings. Persevere teachers entered the field experience with a traditional-progressive orientations. They interacted with University supervisors and cooperative teachers who embrace diverse and contradictory orientations toward teaching and learning. It became, then, increasingly clear that the dominant trend was for teaching perspectives to develop and grow in a direction consistent with the prevailing culture that student teachers brought to the experience.

This line of argument confirms Nespor's (1987) conclusion that "prospective teachers' perceptions of and orientations to the knowledge they are presented with may be shaped by belief systems beyond the immediate influence of teacher educators" (p. 326).

Furthermore, when student teachers are confronted with their University supervisor and cooperating teacher's beliefs and expectations over a short time span, there is little opportunity for reflection and discussion. New ideas, as Onslow, et al. (1992) argue, "can be accepted quickly and with enthusiasm. Yet these new ideas will probably be dismissed with similar speed if they do not produce the expected results" (p. 314). Student teachers need time and support to understand the intricacies of new ideas given their relatively weak understanding of the theoretical foundations of teaching and learning.

As the current methods of instruction practiced at the University are overwhelmingly traditional and inadequate to the student's needs and interests, the student teacher can hardly find

sufficient time to inquire, and to reflect upon what he is being taught. This might explain why the preservice teachers revealed mixed orientations to most problematic issues raised in this study. These mixed orientations are solidified in the teaching practice because prospective teachers are not confronted to opposite ideas on the part of the University supervisor. Consequently, conceivable changes in the preservice teachers' root beliefs and dispositions can be hardly anticipated.

Conclusions and Recommendations

This study aimed at investigating the influence of the Student teaching programs adopted at the University of Bahrain on the root beliefs and preconceptions of prospective teachers. Despite the lack of significant shifts in the substance of student teacher perspectives, there were several kinds of changes that did occur for most students.

The fact that most teachers accepted problematic views of teaching described in this article helps explain why procedural norms predominate in classroom teaching, at least at the elementary and secondary levels. Most student teachers put emphasis on these factors, as they perceived University supervisors in an assessment rather than assistance role. This is why preservice teachers in this study appeared to be influenced more by cooperating teachers than University supervisors.

Students come into teacher education programs with fairly consistent, vague views of schooling and pupils. Typically, faculty knows little about the views students hold and thus have little if any knowledge of how these characteristics will interact with the dominant concepts incorporated within respective Student Teaching Programs.

Part of the failure of some students to acquire effective teaching skills may be a result of the clash between views within themselves and those contained in the student teaching programs. One way to reduce the resultant negative consequences is to provide entering students feedback on their held beliefs, surfaced

through techniques like that used in this study. Faculty in the Student Teaching Programs must better incorporate the fundamental views of students into professional programs of study.

In the light of the main findings of this study, Colleges of Education are urged to develop various instruments to unveil students' beliefs and dispositions about teaching and learning processes before they enter the teaching practice courses. Restructuring the content and the organizational structure of the Student Teaching Programs in accordance with these beliefs is highly recommended.

University teachers should help the student teachers to acquire progressive orientations toward teaching and learning that would enable them to critically analyze what and why they are teaching, and to reconstruct their own knowledge about teaching and learning.

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Educational Research for Future Teachers*

Majda Cenci

At the Faculty of Education, University of Ljubljana, Educational Research is a compulsory course for all teacher education students. This course, however, is unpopular as observed from students' feedback. Within this context, this article begins by exploring the need for future teachers to have basic knowledge and skills in research methods. An outline of the research methods course and how it is conducted is also given. Finally, the challenge to assist students to see research in a more positive light and to realise that research is an essential part of professional development is accepted by the Faculty of Education. Through reflective thought creative and pertinent strategies have been suggested.

Introduction

At the Faculty of Education, University of Ljubljana, student teachers attend different courses. Some of these are obligatory while others are not. Among the obligatory courses is Educational Research. This course is included in a group of courses called Basic Pedagogical Studies.

As a teacher of Educational Research, many concerns have arisen that need to be addressed if meaningful outcomes are to be achieved. This paper, however, begins with the rationale for including educational research in teacher training. Course information follows that include objectives, contents, teaching strategies and faculty views. Finally, students' feedback is given before means to improve the course is discussed.

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Rationale for Education Research

Ever since the first person said there must be a better way, human beings have been asking questions about the universe and trying to improve the quality of life. The invention of the wheel, the electric light and the automobile all resulted from painstaking though trial and errors, problem solving and research to find that better way. The same holds true for our future teachers. Research is an important key to unlocking and finding that better way to teaching and learning.

Children constantly ask, “Why is the grass green? What makes the sun go down? Why does my dog have fur?” Their questions are a continual reminder that finding the answer is the heart of research. Teachers equipped with the knowledge and skills of research will be able to introduce ‘ways of knowing’ into their classroom activities. They will teach pupils to engage in causal reasoning and to become more fluent and precise in asking questions, practicing building concepts and hypotheses, and testing them. An example is the Inquiry – Training Model (Joyce and Weil, 1986), which was developed by Richard Suchman (1962). The Model was originally used with natural sciences, but it has also been applied in social sciences that offer numerous possibilities for inquiry training. Both elementary and secondary students are curious and eager to grow, and inquiry training capitalises on their natural energetic explorations. It helps pupils to develop the intellectual discipline and skills necessary to raise questions and search answers stemming from their curiosity (Joyce and Weil, 1986, 57). The model consists of the following phases: the student’s confrontation with a puzzling situation or with a problem, data gathering operations of verification and experimentation, organizing obtained information, and the analysis of the problem solving strategies. Although its emphasis is on the process, inquiry training results in the learning of contents in any curriculum area from which problems have been selected. Besides the strategies of inquiry, the model promotes also those values and attitudes that are essential to an inquiring mind, for example: active and autonomous learning, verbal expressiveness, tolerance of

ambiguity, persistence, logical thinking, attitude that all knowledge is tentative (Joyce and Weil, 1986, 67).

Other reasons for introducing research methods in training are to:

- monitor and influence the direction of new developments, including more active teaching methods, different materials, assessment procedures etc.

- find out what is actually going on and recognising that what actually occurs is not the same as what is thought to occur, for example: teachers might think that their teaching in classrooms is clear enough but they have to gain information from pupils to find out whether their impression is true or not and

- evaluate what has already taken place.

(Lewis and Munn, 1977, 6)

Edwards and Talbot (1994, 3-4) also state that teachers require research as changes in practice need to be justified, monitored and often adjusted. Research based work can lead to on deeper understanding of an initiative or situation at work. It might solve problems in the workplace. On the basis of research outcomes teachers can make decisions in practice and better understand the situation. They are increasingly accountable to parents and to the wider community for their action and so they must be able to justify their work with children. With the help of research work teachers demonstrate the effectiveness of the work they do and the extent of the learning outcomes achieved by students in their care. Employers also see that research work might have an impact on employees' professional lives and on the organisations they work in. According to these authors, "modifications consequently have to be based on evidence. By taking a research perspective, we can at least feel that we have tackled the issues in a rigorous way."

A wider argument for the inclusion of research in teacher education is based on transformations in economic life, social structures, and production and information technologies. This gives a strong impression that the typical phenomena of our times is one of continuous change, cultural dispersion and increasing diversity in all areas of life (Niemi, 1999). Besides these changes, political transitions have occurred in many countries. These according to Niemi (1999) require societies to build new educational structures and develop a new administrative culture. Transformation, however, is not an easy or smooth process. It is stressful and filled with tension. In this context, educational research is imperative to help create new knowledge for people regarding perplexing questions in a changing word. Bassey (1995) shares this trend of thought. In his book entitled ‘Creating education through research'; he affirms the need for new knowledge through research by democratic societies in a free democratic world.

The notion of teacher researcher is not new. Hopkins (1990) traces the genesis of the idea to the humanities curriculum project of the 1970s. This was followed by John Elliott and Clem Adelman's work in the Ford Teaching Project (1973) that initiated many research strategies for teachers (Elliott, 1985; Adelman, 1985). Thus, the teacher researcher had come of age. Hopkins (1990) sums up the movement as one way in which teachers can take and increase responsibility for their actions and create a more energetic and dynamic environment in which teaching and learning can occur. Based on this worldviews of the teacher as researcher, the University of Ljubljana included in its teacher education program a component of research methods.

Course Information

The course in named ‘Research Methodology’ and it focuses on the research process (Fraenkel and Wallen, 1990). This course is thought at the Faculty of Education and is compulsory for all teacher education students. The main objectives of the course are to:

- develop a knowledge on research methodology,
- prepare students to conduct a simple research project, and
- motivate students to participate in team research or in an interdisciplinary group project.

The content of the course consists of the following:

- the two research approaches, qualitative and quantitative,
- types of research utilised in education e.g. surveys, experimental, historical, action research, etc.,
- the main phases of the research process e.g. developing the research question, stating an hypothesis, reviewing literature, selecting participants, data collection and analysis, and reporting the findings, and
- writing research proposals and reports.

Among these objectives we could not find an objective and content that would relate to students developing and understanding or developing appreciation for educational research. But into our every day work we try to incorporate the importance of positive attitude and values regarding research work (Fullan, 1991).

The strategies of teaching mainly conform to information sharing seminars in the classroom together with exercises. These are adaptations of the course for the various teacher education options, for example, special teachers, art teachers, etc.

The course does not have the same extent for all programmes. The length of the course is adapted with regard to different groups of students. This difference is based on the common opinion among faculty members that all teachers do not need the same research knowledge. The courses have different names, which reflect their content and objectives. Different faculty members also teach all versions of the course.

In my opinion, this disproportion needs some uniformity at the faculty level.

Students Views on the Course

Every year, when students finish lectures they are asked to write their opinions about the course. They fill in a questionnaire about the course or they write an unstructured text about strengths, weaknesses and suggest improvements. The answer of the questionnaire shows that the research methodology course is not popular amongst the students. The following comments gained from students' free writing reflect their attitudes and feelings about the course:

- it is not close to my hart,
- it is not important for teachers, so let us ignore it,
- statistics is a difficult subject,
- the subject is too complicated, and
- maths has always been difficult for me.

To sum up student opinion the course can be described as boring, not interesting, without transfer to practice, of not use in the future job, and too much calculating. Further students' views on the course were seen from one of the exercises undertaken. On completing of the statistics course presented a paradigm of research with a free drawing. The objects that were most frequently represented were a book, people and a computer. One student depicted the research process with four icons portraying the weather e.g. cloudy, less cloudy, less sunshine and sunshine. Another used three symbols for the research process; a question mark, an arrow, and a symbol of the sun. The overall comments was exciting and interesting work, but also difficult, full of obstacles and time consuming. This was encouraging and made me as a teacher of research more determined to find a better way to maximise research learning outcomes.

Finding a Way Forward

Based on the mentioned literature (also Beckers, 2000; Pajares, 1992), on students' feedback on research methods, and on my own assessment of the teaching of the course, the following suggestions are made:

Presentations by teachers engaged in research: Teacher researchers are at an important juncture in creating new knowledge on teaching and learning. These practicing teachers and researchers should be invited to present their research questions and answer them with research methodologies which foster multiple ways of finding solutions to every day teaching/learning problems. To maximize the gains from this strategy, students should have foundation of the various research methodologies prior to invited guest presentations (Pajare, 1992).

More active participation in research: Some students have the opportunity to partially engage in research, mainly in the process of data collection. One of the ways to make the teaching/learning of research methods is to actively engage all students in research. This could be accomplished by group work in a small research project. Students who are actively engaged in doing so may not find learning boring or they may not argue that it is not their role as aspiring teachers to develop knowledge. Students need to see how everyday practice problems can be managed when they use their own professional knowledge (Aubery, David, Godfrey and Thompson, 2000).

Reflective learning (Schön,1983; Court, 1988; Richards and Lockhart, 1994; Pollard, 1998): It is usually helpful to talk over purpose of research and to ensure that the process is not carried out in a vacuum (Lewis and Munn, 107). Students should engage in reflective thinking by maintaining 'reflective' journals that can be discussed with the teacher. This will not only help students in their learning but also will allow insights into learning difficulties for the teachers (Whitaker, 1995).

Suggestions for improvement also have to be complemented at the faculty level. We have to make strategies for demonstrating to students the rationale for study a course on educational research. The course could be systematically evaluated (Sallis, 1997). In the process of evaluation we would have to include not only students and the lecturers, but also teachers in schools.

Conclusion

The rational for the teaching of research to student teachers can be justified. The problem, however, remains on how to find a better way of teaching research in order to make it more meaningful to students. Their feelings and attitudes came out loud and clear that remedial action is needed. At a faculty level, we must accept the challenge to help students see research in a more positive light and to accept that research is an essential part of their professional development. Some suggestions are made. This, however, needs to be further discussed and transcribed in to action. At the faculty level, we are in the process of changing some of the programmes so as to adapt to changes in the system of our elementary school. We have to do follow-up of the course with the students, collect faculty views and learn about to the needs of practice. Our task is also to review whether there are any other published evaluation studies of courses, including educational research courses that would be relevant to compare and contrast with the findings of this study.

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Developing Teaching Strategies through Quality Feedback from Field Experience

Jenny S. L. Chung

The paper outlines field experience issues with particular reference to the provision of quality feedback. Meaningful feedback is intended to result in the improvement of teaching and a greater engagement in the study of problems related to teaching. Questions and dialogue may facilitate the attainment of these intentions. However, the establishment of trust between the supervisor and the teacher (or student teacher), both at personal and professional levels is of fundamental importance. Pre-service and in-service teachers need to treat field experience as a kind of authentic learning that involves the sharing of experiences to construct personal and professional knowledge. Feedback and peer discussion is most important for the enhancement of critical thinking.

Teaching is a "complex activity", requiring "an extensive understanding of educational theory interrelated, in practice, with a wide range of classroom management skills" (Levine, 1992, p. 197). Expert feedback helps to develop the capacity of students and fellow professionals to evaluate and improve their own practice. Feedback can make a teacher aware of what he/she is doing and why, and assists him/her "to find ways of making the teaching and learning process more effective" (Lubelska, et al., 2000, p. 15).

Feedback can be considered as consisting of two components: the knowledge-based component and the process component. The knowledge-based component is taken to be "declarative knowledge" and the process component to be "procedural knowledge" (Hamilton and Ghatala, 1994, p. 376). The former

component consists of subject knowledge and knowledge of Education. In the case of English as a Second Language, such a component includes *inter alia* knowledge of the teaching of the four skills: reading, writing, speaking and listening, the English language system, teaching approaches and methodology, language acquisition, discourse analysis, lesson planning and so on. Procedural knowledge includes planning, teaching, managing the class, evaluating, fostering critical thinking and the qualities of a good learners as well as the intellectual and affective development of the learners. Thus, "declarative knowledge" is associated with theory and "procedural knowledge" with practice. Although one may argue that teacher education is essentially a practical task, theory plays an important part in the preparation of professional teachers. Every appropriate, defensible and effective strategy involves the interplay of theory and practice (Watkins and Whalley, 1993). As Wells (1999, p. 158) puts, "theoretical knowledge is of value to the extent that it has implications for action. And there is much to be said for the argument that knowledge should be for effective action." The interplay can be understood well through dialogue. Thus, quality feedback involves the engagement of student teachers or teachers in the theory-practice interplay through dialogic reflection and inquiry.

The behaviour of a student teacher in the classroom can be analyzed objectively, even quantitatively and mechanically, as if the behaviours of a machine or laboratory animal. Yet, this approach misrepresents the profession. Teaching must take account of the peculiar characteristics of each context or classroom and the personality and intentions of the teacher or student teacher. Teaching is, at least, an inter-subjective activity and the provision of helpful feedback requires dialogue between the supervisor and the teacher or student teacher. Cunningham (2000) maintains that "engaging in a dialogue with beginning teachers about what they are learning and how they are learning from their contact with real classroom situations is a vitally important part of the day-to-day activity of the committed teacher trainer" (Cunningham, 2000, p.245).

A review of the epistemology of two types of student- teachers or teachers in the Institute in which I work demonstrates the need for critical dialogue. The first type (Type I) comprises those who have superficial subject knowledge and a very limited understanding of professional areas. These people cannot describe independently their teaching approaches, method(s) or techniques nor provide a rationale for such actions in teaching. The second type (Type II) comprises those who have some subject knowledge and are working at the limits of their professional knowledge. They can describe their approaches to teaching but cannot provide a rationale for such actions in teaching. They cannot apply knowledge across different contexts. With quality feedback and dialogue, the latter appear to improve in:

- depth of knowledge of their subject area.
- dealing with complexity and contradictions in the knowledge base.
- justifying and evaluating the approached(es), method(s), or technique(s) they use.
- the capacity to develop new approach(es), method(s), or technique(s) in new situations.

The purpose of engaging students in dialogue is to enable them to experience the nature of knowledge and the process of creating knowledge. " The nature of knowing includes certainty of knowledge and simplicity of knowledge, source of knowledge" (White, 2000, p.279). The certainty of knowledge and the process of knowing lie on a continuum (Perry, 1968; Dewey, 1933; King and Kitcherner, 1994; White, 2000). "Knowledge building" involves participants in offering what they consider to be relevant information, proposing formulations, raising objections, and so on. "The process …involves disagreement as well as agreement" (Wells, 1999, p.110). "Creativity and originality are as much the object of education as is the reproduction of existing order" (Wells, 1999, p.158). "Change is the focal object of knowledge building;

the goal is to improve and advance what is known" (Wells, 1999, p.111).

To commence dialogue is not always easy, especially if the supervisor has not previously interacted with the teacher or student teacher. A common way to begin is to may ask one or more general questions. The following questions usually generate responses:

- What do you think of the students that you are teaching in this school?
- What are the joys of teaching for you?
- What are some of the problems that you have encountered? Have you tried to overcome these problems? How?
- Do you like the school in which you are teaching?
- Do you enjoy preparing for lessons?

Listen to the student even if he/she does not focus on the knowledge component or the process component. Listen to their emotions and experiences. Listen to how they perceive teachers' work and the tasks such as lesson preparation, planning and assessment. Do not be surprised to find student teachers who are ashamed of themselves for needing eight hours' sleep a night, for having to work over the weekend, and for feeling nervous the night before a supervised session. Listen carefully to those student teachers who face the dilemma of deciding whose advice is best; the advice of the supervisor or tutor or the advice of the regular classroom teacher in the school.

Listen to their stories of success, especially stories involving their use of a different or new teaching technique. Listen to their stories about how they improved interactions in the classroom, their evaluations of teaching, the 'highs' they experienced in teaching, the sense of achievement at the end of the day when they have learned how to handle a 'disruptive student'. Listen to the

stories about how they comforted a student experiencing a family crisis. Listen to their stories of moral and emotional engagement with students. Listen to stories about the affection shown by their students and the expressed preferences of students for them rather than for their regular teachers. Listen to how they integrated with the rest of the teachers in the school

Listening is necessary but is not enough. Start a dialogue at an appropriate time and give your own viewpoints. Ask questions to engage the student teachers in critical reflection. Help them to extract principles of professional ethics and action from their experiences.

The questions that may move to a focus on the events and outcomes of the lesson observed. Questions may include the following:

- Which episodes or parts of the lesson do you think went well?
- Did you think beforehand that you would teach an effective and interesting lesson?
- Which part(s) of the lesson involved genuine communication and the authentic use of language?
- Did the lesson proceed in the way you expected? If not, why not? What is your evaluation of what actually happened?
- What is the nature of pupil/teacher and pupil/pupil interaction? Who was dominant?
- How would you describe the classroom language used?
- To what extent do you think the lesson objectives have been achieved?

- What do you think of the lesson that you have just taught?

- If you were to teach the lesson again, would have teach it in a different way? How would you improve your lesson?

Instead of merely telling the student teachers what we think, supervisors should encourage student teachers to think through their teaching process. Pring maintains that "teacher education in universities is notable for its lack of thinking about how teachers, especially new teachers, learn – even in some institutions most famous for educational research and for being most prolific in the production of teachers" (Pring, 1996, p.21). We don't have to generate unthinking automatons as teachers. We should ensure that we are not accused of being animal trainers. We should make sure that we help students to understand and transform their current knowledge through dialogic inquiry in a collaborative manner. Following Hayes (1990), teaching and learning involve being sensitive to the need to attend to global structures and dynamics, and to local circumstances. Quality feedback involves helping student teachers or teachers to think globally of the theory and to act locally in the specific classroom situations. "What pedagogy addresses is the process of production and exchange in [the cycle of 'theory' and 'practice'] (Green, 1998, p.182-183). The transformation of consciousness takes place in the interaction of three agencies – the teacher, the learner, and the knowledge they together produce."

Experienced supervisors generally do not delay critical feedback unnecessarily nor do they give such feedback abruptly. Supervisors may need to assist the student- teacher to talk about areas of strength. Whatever the approach, the intention of the feedback session must be one of assisting the student teacher or teacher to build on their strengths. An initial question such as "What did you like about your lesson?" is certainly better than " What did you not like about your lesson?" Any such question may be better than stern, abrupt impersonal feedback. Student teachers or teachers

need to feel that the training environment is "safe" and trusting, as Loughran (1997) states. He believes that

> …trust involves knowing and believing that individual ideas, thoughts and views can be offered and explored in challenging ways such that the challenge is professional not personal. Loughran, 1997, p.60.

Student teachers or teachers "needed to be supported in overcoming their own insecurities and made to feel more confident in themselves (Fowle, 2000, p. 8).

In giving feedback, the tone of voice should be natural, gentle and nurturing. The attitude of the supervisor should be positive even if the lesson has been taught poorly. The supervisors' comments need to be honest and the criticism frank but not predictive. For example, "Having seen your first lesson, it is quite obvious to me that you will never be a good teacher!" Rather, find some aspects of the lesson to praise. Endorse, as appropriate, the aspects of the lesson that the student teacher perceived to be good. Highlight the aspects of the lesson that were strong relative to the rest of the lesson. Comments should be specific rather than generalized, e.g. instead of stating that 'the lesson was too teacher-centered', point out which specific episodes during the lesson were 'teacher-centered'. Cite the specific evidence, including the words used by the student teacher during the lesson or point out, for example, that "the (student-teacher) talked for more than nine minutes during the ten-minute presentation."

Schön's (1991) concept of reflective practice is relevant in guiding the feedback given by teacher educators. "Incompleteness of description is no impediment to reflection" (Schön, 1991, p.277). However, supervisors may need to assist some student teachers to identify and to describe the reality of the classroom in which they were teaching. Furthermore, student teachers should be encouraged to reflect, to take a detached yet critical view of their teaching, and to distinguish elements that are not productive from

those that are essential in good teaching. It is important to discuss collaboratively how the student teacher can improve and how the supervisor can support them. It is not sufficient to point out what went wrong. Sometimes, relevant reading material may be recommended to the student. It is important that student teachers leave with a healthy self-esteem and a belief that they have the power to improve.

There are "real benefits" for the teachers of "simply finding that the challenges and difficulties they have encountered are not, typically, unique ones" (Cunningham, 2000, p.245). Some research studies (Roberts, 1998) indicate that providing teachers with an opportunity to talk about their problems and their learning with their peers, fellow teachers or supervisors is a very good way to learn. This kind of dialogue is important as it helps those involved to clarify their own beliefs and practices especially when others have confronted or overcome the same problems. Dialogue similar to Davydov's (1995) concept of "social interaction", helps to build the social relationships that support the changing views of the participants as teachers. Task-focused talk is a kind of authentic learning and opportunities for such talk can be arranged in class after the Field Experience.

The kinds of questions that may be included are of three types: views on language [content], their teaching experiences, and alternative ways to teach. Examples of the first task are:

Discuss the following statements about language

- "Language is a set of habits."
- "Language is a means of constructing meaning."
- "Language is a means of expressing what the human organism can do in interaction with other human organisms."

The second task involves sharing and evaluating the teaching methods or strategies used by the participants. Students can be

asked about the teaching methods or strategies used and their justification for such approaches. In addition, students should be encouraged to bring videotape of their lesson and to show a selected segment of it. Usually a ten-minute segment generates much valuable discussion. Examples of some of the tasks are:

- Comment on the effectiveness of the classroom language used.

- Comment on the appropriateness of teaching approaches or methods used.

- Comment on the extent to which students have been "learning to mean".

The third task involves suggesting alternatives teaching strategies or strategies for the situations encountered during Field Experience :

- If you were the teacher, what changes would you make to the teaching and how would you make such changes?

- After you have listened to the comments of your peers, what insights have you gained? Would you teach in the same way next time? Why?

- What were some of the theories that you would support (or challenge) with reference to the particular lesson that you have taught?

Dialogue facilitates knowledge building. Knowledge is developed in the discourse between people doing things together including the dialogue between the supervisor and the student teacher or teacher. Dialogue encourages collaborative reflection on individual teaching practice. While critical reflection is difficult for an isolated, individual teacher, two individuals (an expert and a novice) can collaborate effectively in dialogue to improve the understanding of teaching. Through dialogue, the supervisor can

assist the student teacher to identify and evaluate the context of the problem or deficiency and establish developmental goals or standards. If viewed in the light of a problem-solving approach, dialogue serves to identify the personal strengths and resources of the student teacher that may be used to improve plans for teaching. By a focus on a problem, the supervisor and student teacher may also clarify what actually happened during a class and discuss ways to improve teaching and classroom management. Finally, dialogue helps to reveal to the student-teacher different perspectives and possible explanations of outcomes, all to facilitate planning for more effective teaching. Much depends, of course, on a trusting relationship between the student teacher and the supervisor.

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Exploratory Study of Service Quality: Education Retrospection

Shahid Mahmood

This paper resents an exploratory study, which examines the concept of service quality in educational setting with data collected from 223 students of graduate degree programs. Identifies five dimensions, which influence students' perception about quality service. Indicates that service quality is derived mainly from image of the institute. Faculty and administrative staff through their personal attention to students, also influence quality. Moreover, awareness about scheme of study, physical layout of the institute and availability of facilities to the students are also important contributing factors of quality service. Explains measures for managing quality and achieving students' satisfaction. Suggests management in the formulation of strategies to achieve excellence in education.

Introduction

Evaluation of Education is today a matter of great public concern. Public concern is based upon a new sense of the relationship between the quality of education and the future of any country. The debate on quality in education is not new. But the issue of quality in education implies never-ending adaptation and improvement. Berry and Rehman (1998) suggested that there is emerging evidence that schools could also benefit from the development of quality systems through their impact on a school's capacity to provide services, which support both individual and organizational learning.

Assessment of discourse of quality in educational enterprise is complex. The performance of an education system must be studied not only in the light of what it is at any given time, but also in

terms of what it is becoming. And what an educational system does must be considered not only in relation to what it should be under ideal circumstances, but also in relation to what is possible in the actual circumstances.

There is no single test of quality education, and this study proposes none. This exploratory research pertinent to the existing situation describes some of the characteristics of quality in education and to indicate certain essentials without which quality cannot be achieved. Hence, a better understanding of how customers from impressions of quality can provide valuable information to management for designing service delivery systems that enhance customer satisfaction (Seymour, 1992) and for adapting the university environment to the students' needs (Hampton, 1993).

The Problem of the Study

The identification of the dimensions which signal quality and the achievement of excellence in education have emerged this decade as key issues confronting the academia. In fact, like many other organizations, educational institutes must be concerned now with return on investment, market share, productivity and the quality of services offered to the customers -- students and their parents.

Virtually, there is an increasing interest in the development of quality systems in all kinds of organizations by improving of key elements of the organizations. In education sector, the concept of quality service can lead to improvement and excellence in education and resultantly can have lasting effects on the institute and the students it serves. The best education, according to National Education Policy Commission (1998), is that which does most to enable each student to develop his abilities and to serve society. Education must therefore be appropriate to the needs of each pupil and to the needs of society. Glasser (1992) purports quality education is the only answer to our school problems. It is apparent, through this study, that students have thought about

quality service and have a good idea of what, in their institute, is considered quality service in educational setting.

The problem of the study is, therefore, to gain information about the dimensions used by the students of graduate degree programs evaluating service quality and to identify which characteristics of the service delivering process are most significant in students' perception.

Review of the Related Literature

Referring to work by Creemers, Peters and Reynolds (1989) and by Raudenbush and Willims (1991) state that recent research on the effect of schools on learning provides clear evidence that variations the characteristics of schools are associated with variations in student outcomes. Hawes and Stephens (1990) believe that quality is characterized by three inter-related and inter-dependent strands: (i) efficiency in meeting its goals, (ii) relevance to human and environmental conditions and needs, (iii) "something more", that is the exploration of new ideas, the pursuit of excellence and encouragement of creativity.

Rust and Oliver (1994) maintain that all organizations (business, government, and education) are both product-and service-oriented, which makes the assessment of customer satisfaction difficult at best. Each of these organizational types has three measurable components. Firstly, the physical product itself, secondly, the service environment, and lastly, the service delivery system. Because education is both product and service producing, a demonstration of rating will have to focus on each of the three categories (Weller, 1996).

Babakus and Boller (1992) describe that the difficulties of defining and delimiting quality as it applies to intangibles, the measurement of service quality in specific service industries still remains a challenge. Parasuraman and his colleagues (1993) have undertaken the work to measure service quality across a broad spectrum of services. The service quality therefore is an elusive variable of education quality measurement mainly because of the

unique features that differentiate services from goods. The authors (Parasuraman et al) conceptualize service quality to be a five dimensional construct consisting of tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy.

From a review of the services marketing literature, the service quality variables are identified. Gronross (1984) and Siraj (1999) point out corporate image as an important quality indicator for customers. Reputation is described as the consistency of an organization's actions over time (Herbig et al, 1994). Hart (1988) explains that the reputation of a service firm is built, through the credible actions of management. Therefore, reputation is closely tied to image in that it affects customer expectations with regard to the quality of the service offering.

Bitner et al (1990) report that the human interaction component has an important effect on the customer's evaluation process with regard to the service offering by any organization. The performance of contact personnel the personnel-customer interactions which take place during service delivery are important indicators of quality (Heskett, 1987). In this context, Cannon and Sheth (1994) and Shah (1996) stress the importance of building and maintaining relationship quality with the various stakeholder groups, which interact with the organization.

Ward et al (1989) explain that in the studies of faculty office designs, for example, students' belief about the person occupy the office and their personality traits were found to be influenced by such cues as degrees or certificates on the wall, tidiness of office and desk placement. Physical layout has, therefore, a strong influence by such on employee motivations and the quality of the service encounter.

Shetty (1988) proposes management should convince faculty that concern for quality is part of their job and all contact personnel should be involved when setting goals and quality standards for the institution. Berry (1998) emphasizes that teamwork is considered the primary element of the quality management approach to quality

organizations and represents the organizational structure on which the quality improvement process is based. Coate (1990) suggests for administrative personnel, management should start by setting quality standards for process-related variables such as course registration, students' records keeping, and academic rules and regulations, which are easier to manage than the academic delivery of service.

The related literature on quality service also addresses the role of leadership in the development of quality culture, which ensure that the services provided by the organization meet or exceed the requirements of the customers of the organization. The importance of developing a shared vision in the implementation of quality management is very important and a primary responsibility of organization leaders (Quiqley, 1996; Hamid, 1999). Similarly, there is emerging evidence that leadership is a significant factor in the development of quality organizations (Blanton, 1991; Eddy et al, 1998). Meanwhile, taking interest by head of the educational institutes make sense in quality service not only in managing institutes and the classrooms but equally importantly to find out ways to facilitate learning -- core concern of any academia.

The review of the available literature provided the basis for an exploratory study of service quality in a education setting. Its purpose was to identify the significant dimensions used by students in their evaluation of the quality of education they received and to determine the importance of these dimensions in students' evaluation process.

Survey Methodology

The review of literature pertinent to quality service of educational setting and interviews with seven focus groups were held with a total 42 students, provided the basis for developing the questionnaire used in this exploratory research. Students from graduate degree programs are the source for generating items of research instrument on how academic institutes can bring and improve the quality of their services they impart to their students.

Moreover, the students as respondents of both sexes were selected through convenience sampling to survey.

The questionnaire contained 34 items corresponded different dimensions of service offering by the educational institutes. The items included in the research instrument were identified by the students. The items were measured on a 5-point, Likert-type scale that varied from 1 = much worse than expected to 5 = much better than expected. Each item of the questionnaire was assigned unit value of 1 through 5.

The students, 248 in number, from fourteen educational institutes who offer graduate and postgraduate degree programs were asked to respond the questionnaire. Students were asked to what degree the quality of the service offered by the institute corresponded to their expectations on the 34 variables concerning to service. The sampling, however, yielded 223 usable questionnaire forms.

The reliability checks of the items of questionnaire were tried out with a group of twenty-one students in a pilot run. To estimate the reliability of items by split-half procedure based on the full-length responses, first Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient (r) between the odd and even values of each item of the pilot run was computed, which correlated .91. A reliability on full test was .95 through Spearman-Brown formula. The variables therefore, retained for each dimension and calculated coefficient were considered acceptable.

Results, Discussion and Implications

Since the problem of the study was to identify the important dimensions used by students in their perception of the quality of education they received and to determine the importance of these dimensions in students' evaluation process. Therefore, the results were generated through percentage analysis and presented in descending order.

Dimension 1 (D1), image and reputation of the institute, consists of innovation, institutional culture and institute's contribution to the community. The image dimension gained maximum percentage value (86%). This factor relates to the institute's capacity to position itself in the minds of its students and is closely associated with the image projected by the institute.

Reputation is related closely to the institute's corporate image, and image is described as an significant determinant of perceived service quality by Gronroos (1984), Lethinen and Lethinen (1982) and Herbig et al (1994). The results of this study suggest a significant relationship between perceived quality and reputation, as being innovative, up to date, involved with the society and institute considers students' needs seriously. Since image is built through the credible actions of the institute, management should therefore set quality standards for all components of the service delivery system of education to ensure that students' expectations are met.

Creating a positive image of the institute on students, management of the institute should foster liaisons with the prospective employers, research agencies, government bodies, alumni, and dignitaries. This study recommends, since a strong image of the institute has been built, every employee of the institute should ensure that every step is taken to promote and maintain institutional standing in the community the institute serves.

Second dimension of the service quality was about the faculty. This dimension (D2) consists of items, which are related to the outlook of a professor, performance of the faculty members and their relationship with the students. In fact, contact with the faculty is perceived by the students, second most important factor to measure quality service of an academia. This dimension was valued as 83 percent. The contact of faculty with the students is proposed as an important quality indicator by Surprenant and Solomon (1985) and Crosby et al (1990).

It is evident, personal contact of the faculty members and able faculty seems important to inspire trust and confidence to students. The classroom needs to be stimulating place for children and that depends on quality teachers (Sawyerr, 1997). Moreover, caring attitude of the faculty towards their students may also influence quality service provided by the institute. Results of the study, therefore, reveal that faculty has a direct impact on perceptions of quality.

This study suggests that faculty members should feel the responsibility that concern for quality is part of their jobs. Faculty members should therefore enhance their professional qualifications, attend training courses, and learn effective teaching methodologies. Moreover, management should prepare teaching manuals, which outline quality standards to be adhered to in delivery of service to the students.

Third important factor of service quality perceived by the respondents was attitude of the administration towards the students. This dimension gained the value of 81 percent, is concerned with management's ability to provide personal attention to students in a professional, good listening and caring manner. Parasuraman and his colleagues (1991), reported similar results to this evidence.

For administrative personnel, management should start by setting quality standards for service sector, related to processes and procedures. Students must be known to the academic rules and regulations through participants' handbook, notifications and orientation programs. Treating students with dignity by the administrative staff gives a positive signal that students are valued. This study agrees with the research conducted by Madden (1997) that concludes students deserve to be managed through the use of strength rather than toughness. Employing not caring attitude brings out hardness in students.

Dimension 4, Curriculum, involves variables related to faculty's capability to design scheme of study, which meet student

needs. The awareness about breadth and depth of the curriculum has a direct bearing on institute's quality service. The finding of this study support the research (Pennycuick, 1998) in the area of school effectiveness, specially, the impact of awareness about the course to be studied and student's achievement.

The fifth dimension (D5), physical layout and access to facilities, identified as a potential determinant of service quality in a education setting. This research finds support from the research (Mwamwenda & Mwamwenda, 1987) that argues school facilities are integral to academic achievement. Dimension 5 (D5) represents with variables, which explain the tangible factors associated with the institute's service delivery system and access to its facilities available for the students.

In addition, since students experience the services available to them at the campus and in the classroom, students therefore, can suggest improvement in the facilities. Management should realize that institutional climate has a direct influence on students' satisfaction level. Hence, attention must be paid to appearance of the institute to ensure that students feel comfortable in the physical environments made available to them. In fact, physical environment and access to facilities speak about the institute's intention and capacity to offer service in professional and organized manner.

Given the findings in this study, indicate that service quality is derived mainly from image, a dimension that is closely related to management's capacity to enhance institutional climate directed at serving the needs of its students and to the reputation of the educational institute. Faculty and administrative staff, through their personal attention to students in a professional and caring manner, also influence quality. Other factors such as curriculum, physical layout and access to facilities are also significant quality factors. Accordingly, analyzing quality service perceptions for different segments can help management in the formulation of strategies, which promise to meet the specific expectations of the students of the academia.

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Preparing Better Teachers: Concepts and Program Orientation

Leke Tambo

This paper argues that the meaning of better teacher differs with time and space, since the quality of teacher training and practice also differs with respect to these variables. It maintains that a better teacher may be thought of as one who is more suitable in terms of some criteria than just a " good" teacher. It acknowledges different criteria for defining a better teacher and uses two of these — the stages of teacher professional development and selected standards for professional practice — as a basis for its definition of the concept.

Concerning the preparation of better teachers, the paper identifies selection of candidates; program design and certification as key factors to be addressed in that process. Selection needs to be based on clearly defined criteria. Non-formal learning experiences should be integrated with the formal learning ones and the certification process should be based on a career-ladder system.

Introduction

Educating for better teachers is a goal of teacher education programs in many countries around the world. The need for better teachers is used as a rationale for various demands on the teacher training system and its managers as well as for the implementation of certain practices in program delivery. Demands for budget hikes, improved facilities, contracts and practices such as school-based teacher education, professional schools and teacher effectiveness training are often predicated on the need to prepare better teachers. For the purpose of producing better teachers, the status of teacher education institutions in many countries has been raised over the last one hundred years. Many of them are now either full-fledged universities, schools of education or faculties of education where

some impressive research on teaching and education has continued to be carried out. As well, teacher unions and organizations continue to promulgate or maintain codes of ethics as a way to ensure better professional conduct and practice among their members.

However, the concept of better teacher is not often clear. Also, what is considered better in one society may be seen as below average in another. Besides encountering varied views about what constitutes better in professional practice, one may find different recommendations for preparing better teachers. This paper explores these concerns.

Concept of Better Teacher

Better is a comparative word. English Language grammarians say it is the comparative of good and means more suitable or more desirable than good. In this context, better teachers would be teachers that are more suitable or more desirable in terms of some criteria or value than just "good" teachers. Following this logic, one may ask what the criteria that constitute good practice and associated performance are. In responding to this question, I examine two criteria: (1) stages of professional development and (2) teaching standards.

Stages of professional development

Using stage or linear theories to explain the development of phenomena, be it economic, social or human development, is often criticized as simplistic. These theories, however, provide useful models of analysis in their respective fields. This is why I do find the line of thought that teacher professional development can be described in terms of stages useful as I reflect on the concept of better teacher.

Based on the work of Katz (as cited in Sadker & Sadker, 2000), teachers in their professional development pass through four stages: (1) *survival*, (2) consolidation, (3) renewal and, (4)

maturity. Following are the indicators of each stage as summarized by Sadker and Sadker (2000, p.493).

Teachers at the survival stage are preoccupied with concerns about classroom management, evaluation by supervisors, mastering teaching skills, acceptance by colleagues and whether teaching is really the right job for them. At the consolidation stage, the skills acquired during the survival stage are consolidated and synthesized into usable teaching strategies. Teachers' focus moves from issues of survival to those of students' learning and they become more sensitive to students' individual differences and needs in the classroom. When they are functioning at the level of renewal, teachers are concerned about new approaches to teaching. They interact more with other teachers as a way of developing new ideas and strategies. At the maturity stage, teachers move beyond classroom concerns and seek greater professional perspectives. They reflect on educational philosophy, programs that would benefit more students, ways to strengthen the teaching profession and educational reform within the school and beyond.

If one uses the above conceptualization, then better teachers would be those who are operating at some level beyond the survival stage. The stage that one considers as better teaching would depend on the general level of practice in the system concerned. While in some systems it would be located at the maturity stage, in others it may be located at the renewal stage; in others, still, better teaching may refer to practices characteristic of the consolidation stage.

Teaching standards

Standards of good teaching or professional practice as defined by teacher professional organizations or even the general public are an important base for evaluating teaching in terms of low to high performance. If one examines teaching standards that have been developed in different school systems, one would find in them a common characteristic, which is a hierarchy of teaching functions. In this paper, I examine two reports on teaching standards. One of

these is an aspect of the 1997 Public Agenda Survey in the United States of America (Sadker & Sadker, 2000, p.23). The report shows the percentage of respondents who rated ten selected standards of good practice as " absolutely essential". The data are reproduced below:

Table 1: Percentage of Respondents Rating Standard as "Absolutely Essential"

Standard of Practice	% Rating
Teachers who are life-long learners and are constantly updating their skills	84
Teachers committed to teaching kids to be active learners who know how to learn	82
Teachers who have high expectations of their students	72
Teachers who are deeply knowledgeable about the content of the specific subjects they will be teaching	57
Teachers who are well versed in the theories of child development and learning	46
Teachers prepared to teach in schools with limited resources and where many kids come to class not ready to learn	45
Teachers trained in pragmatic issues of running a classroom, such as managing time and preparing lesson plans	41
Teachers who maintain discipline and order in the classroom	37
Teachers who stress correct spelling, grammar and punctuation	19
Teachers who expect students to be neat, on time, and polite	12

Source: Sadker, M.P. & Sadker, D.M (2000). *Teachers schools and society* (5th Ed.). New York: McGraw-Hill.

The above data show that the respondents considered teachers who are life-long learners and are constantly updating their skills as most preferable. One would say, in terms of our discussion, that such teachers are considered to be better than the ones who are simply knowledgeable in subject matter, professional skills, and can maintain discipline in the classroom.

Another report, the *Standards of Practice for the Teaching Profession,* produced by the Ontario (Canada) College of Teachers (1999), focuses on five main areas of professional practice. These are (1) commitment to students and student learning, (2) professional knowledge, (3) teaching practice, (4) leadership and community, and (5) ongoing professional learning. Comparing these standards with the data shown in the above table, we would find that three out of the five standards (i.e. numbers 1, 4 and 5) fall within the first two areas emphasized by the respondents to the Public Agenda Survey.

Discussing the goals of teacher education programs around the world, Doyle (1990) identified five major themes that underlie these goals. These are:

1. Effective teacher education prepares candidates in the prevailing norms and practices of classrooms and schools (p. 5).

2. Effective teaching is knowledge in the core disciplines (p.5).

3. Teacher education is best when it facilitates personal development… coming to terms with one's self, maximizing a sense of self efficacy, clarifying one's values and discovering one's own personal meaning and style in teaching (p.5)

4. Teachers should encourage renewal and innovation in school rather than adapt to the so-called realities of schooling (p.6).

5. Teacher preparation should foster reflective capacities of observation, analysis, interpretation and decision-making (p.5).

Again, it would be seen that the dominant concerns in teacher quality are not subject or even professional knowledge competence, but higher-level performance, such as capacity for personal development, innovation and reflective thinking.

The conclusion I draw from the above observations is that better teachers are teachers who have gone beyond concerns for acquisition of subject matter and professional knowledge to a commitment for life-long learning, self and professional improvement, student learning, school innovation and social change in general.

In many countries of the South, however, the need to provide teachers to handle the enrollment explosions, over the years, has led to the production of "crashed trained teachers" whose competence in terms of the above-mentioned standards leaves much to be desired. In this circumstance, better teachers may not necessarily be defined by the above-mentioned criteria, but by mastery of subject matter and professional skills. Therefore better in terms of teacher quality is relative because it varies with time and space.

Preparing Better Teachers

There are three key considerations that I perceive as critical in the preparation of teachers that are better than average. These are (1) selection of candidates, (2) program design and, (3) certification. These three factors are discussed below.

Selection of candidates

As Gardner (1983) argues, no topic is of more importance in teacher education than selection. When candidates are not well selected, the teacher training system often finds it difficult to produce competent teachers. When practicing teachers lose confidence in the selection criteria or process used to recruit entrants to the profession, the effect is demoralizing on the entire teaching force. Lockheed and Verspoor (1991) point out that the

social costs of teacher training are high when students are poorly selected.

Although the literature stresses the need for educational systems to consider selection as the most crucial aspect of teacher education, little systematic attention is often given to the development of effective selection criteria for candidates in teacher education programs (Howey, 1983) Ghani (1990) identified a number of criteria or approaches that are frequently combined in different forms to select candidates for initial education. These are:

- The successful completion of a required period of schooling associated with some type of certification, for example, a primary school certificate, secondary school certificate, a university degree or equivalent.

- Success in some form of entrance examination, usually testing scholastic achievement and general knowledge.

- Personal interviews, judging verbal fluency and the personality of the candidate.

- Letter of reference from candidates' former institution to assess their personal and character attributes.

- Some form of health certification from a physician.

- An aptitude test

To ensure an education process that would produce better teachers, teacher education systems need to develop an effective and efficient pattern of selection by combining selection criteria such as the above-mentioned ones in terms of their specific context, reality and experience. Thus, one pattern may combine a given certificate, diploma or degree obtained by the candidate with an interview or an entrance examination; another an entrance examination with an interview and a letter of reference; or a certificate/ diploma already obtained with some recommendation.

Program design

The definition of better teacher adopted in this paper implies that training programs should emphasize two broad sets of objectives: (a) competence in subject matter, professional knowledge and practice (b) a commitment to life-long learning, self and professional improvement, student learning, school innovation and social change. As I see it, the first consideration requires a formal program of training and the second a non-formal one. These two programs need to be combined at the pre-service level in efforts to prepare better teachers.

Typically, the formal education of teachers emphasizes three broad concerns: subject matter acquisition, professional knowledge and competence in teaching. Depending on the selection criteria that are used, a program may emphasize one of these concerns more than the other. Thus, where a first degree is a prerequisite qualification, the program may emphasize professional knowledge and teaching competence; if only a secondary school certificate is required, the program may emphasize all the three concerns, and so on. The program orientation that one adopts to ensure the preparation of better teachers should therefore depend on the pattern used to select candidates for training.

Non-formal education, as a strategy for achieving relevant education and social development, has received more popularity in the countries of the South than in those of the North. Paulo Freire's *Pedagogy of the oppressed* (1970) Combs and Ahmed's *Attacking rural poverty* (1974) are among the writings that, in the 1970's, disseminated these concept widely in developing countries.

As defined by Coombs and Ahmed (1974), non-formal education is any organized, systematic, educational activity carried on outside the framework of the formal system to provide selected types of learning to particular subgroups in the population (p.8). Since non-formal education activities emphasize continuing learning outside the framework of the school, they are linked to lifelong learning: the process of providing individuals with a

flexible and diversified range of learning options through out their lives. With respect to the subject of this paper, lifelong learning means that teachers should continue to be involved in a variety of professional development activities after their initial training and certification.

The kinds of activities that can be described as non-formal in teacher education include the ones that are often cited in the literature as teacher continuing learning or development activities (Loucks-Horsely et al, 1987, Darling-Hammond, 2000). These include workshops and seminars, partnerships, resource development, research, networking, distance learning, portfolio building, mentoring, community service projects and professional travel. The position taken in this paper is that just as these professional development activities help teachers in service to improve their job-related knowledge, attitudes and kills and thereby become better practitioners, so too can they help pre-service teachers become better trainees. In other words, the pre-service training system should be designed in a way that the non-formal activities are integrated with the formal learning activities. When teachers are introduced to these activities during their initial training, they would be more likely to continue pursuing the activities at the in-service stage.

Certification

Generally, initial or pre-service teacher education systems, in terms of certification, fall into two categories: (1) systems that award permanent certification and (2) those that award only probationary certification or recognition at the end of pre-service education. Those which award only probationary certification at the end of pre-service training and permanent certification at a later stage may be said to favor a career-ladder approach, whereby teachers receive higher forms of recognition as they grow professionally. For the purpose of preparing better teachers, the career-ladder system would seem preferable to the one that awards trainees permanent certification upon graduation. A career–ladder system is more motivating to teachers in that it establishes different

levels of professional aspirations by creating a “ ladder” that teachers can climb to receive increased pay and recognition through increased work responsibility and status (Southern Regional Educational Board, 1988).

Conclusion

Educating better teachers is a generally accepted goal of teacher education in different parts of the world. However, the meaning of better teacher differs with place and time since the quality of teacher training and practices also differs with respect to these variables. Generally, a better teacher may be thought of as one who is more suitable or more desirable in terms of some established criteria or values than just a “ good” teacher. Different criteria for defining a better teacher can be found in the literature. This paper uses two of these criteria: the stages of teacher professional development and selected standards for good teaching or professional practice.

The specific recommendations of the paper are on the preparation of better teachers. Key factors that need to be addressed in that process include selection of candidates, program design and certification. Selection needs to be based on clearly defined criteria, since the quality of training depends to a large extent on the quality of candidates. Non-formal learning experiences should be integrated with the formal learning ones to enhance the quality of programs and the certification process should be based on the career-ladder approach so as to promote career development and life-long learning following the conclusion of pre-service training.

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Book Reviews and Recent Publications by ISTE Members

Adeyemi, M. B. (ed.) (2000). Social Studies in African Education. Gaborone, Botswana: Pyramid Publishing.

Social Studies in African Education is a comprehensive text written by experienced educators and researchers from many African countries. The aim of the book is to provide information about social studies, which is relevant to African environments. It is organised in two sections. Section 1 deals with general issues in Social Studies while Section 2 examines the specifics of social studies education in nine African countries.

Section 1 consists of fifteen chapters, all of which make interesting and informative reading. Each chapter is concluded by a set of "reflection questions" for the reader, based on issues raised and concepts introduced within the chapter. This suggests the book could be considered as a text for tertiary education students. Through the chapters included in Section 1, the complexity of teaching social studies in African nations becomes clear. The multi-ethnic and multicultural characteristics of each country comprising Africa makes almost an impossible task to write a text that is applicable to all of Africa's education systems. However, each chapter shows that there are common cross-cultural issues in the teaching of social studies in most African countries.

The book demonstrates the centrality of social studies in the African school curriculum. The various authors argue that social studies education has a major responsibility in contributing to the future of post-colonial Africa. For example, there are interesting chapters on the role of social studies in the areas of moral education, religious education, HIV and AIDS education, as well as in the development of understandings of nationalism and citizenship. The place of sport also is included as an essential element in the socialisation and promotion of cohesiveness in the diverse societies that make up the African nation. It is the desire for cohesion and peace that is a common theme in Section 1.

In Section 2 the authors present the characteristics of nine nations and their social studies programs—history, strengths, and

opportunities. In this section, the political influence on curriculum development is presented and discussed.

Social Studies in African Education is an important book for a number of reasons. Most significant is the documentation of the efforts of African educators to develop a curriculum for a future of peace and social cohesion. It provides for African education students a text that is their own—something that has been lacking in most nations in Africa in post-colonial years. Yet for those of us involved in social studies research and teaching elsewhere in the world, the issues raised are familiar and important in further understanding of our own recent national developments. For this reason *Social Studies in African Education* would be a valuable reference for all intending teacher o social studies.

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Correction

Please note that in the May 2001 issue of this journal an inadvertent error occurred. In the first two sentences of the last paragraph on page 33, the word (dialectic) should appear rather than (dialect). The purpose of the paragraph in question was to point out that Vygotsky supported the notion that changes in the material conditions under which a person functions determines the way he/she thinks and behaviors.

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- Paragraphs should be indented five spaces and separated by a space.

- Tables, Figures, and Charts should be kept to a minimum, sized to fit on a page 8.5 x 5.5 inches (20 x 14 cm).

- Abstract should be limited to 100 - 150 words.

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