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Editorial

Changing Contexts in Comparative and International Education: Geopolitical Shifts and Research in Australia

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The collection of articles in this Special Issue makes a substantial contribution to existing comparative and international education (CIE) research through the range of methodologies, topics, and sub-sectors of CIE work in Australian higher education institutions. Bringing these aspects together, it contributes to the shifts in thinking and work in CIE that have come to be globally debated and documented in recent years (Phillips and Sweisfurth 2014; McCowan and Unterhalter 2015). This Special Issue presents the research of authors who have, together, been based within Australian institutions, even as they each have conducted their work from diverse locations, perspectives and situations. While these authors have shared a common experience in space and time, they bring significantly different engagement and relationships within and beyond the nation-state of Australia, as it is currently called and known to the world. At this point, I acknowledge the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders who are the traditional ancestors, custodians, and owners of the land on which this Editor and the Authors have undertaken our work and contribute this knowledge. In doing so, we recognise the necessarily partial coverage of this Special Issue. It is a regret that, due to unforeseeable constraints, we have not been able to include, as planned, contributions to education research work being done in areas of Aboriginal, Indigenous research, or in the near Pacific. Needless to say, much (if, arguably, not yet sufficient) important work is being conducted in, and outside of, Australian institutions with and by Indigenous and Pacific peoples on shared sub-regional issues in education (too many to recognise here, but see McLaughlin and Whatman 2007; McCormick 2015; McLaughlin and Ma Rhea 2013). Research in these areas has been the focus of recent Special Issues of this journal (see Coxon and Cassity 2011; McLaughlin and Ma Rhea 2013). Work in Oceania and the Pacific will also be the more extensive focus of a Special Issue to be published later this year (Coxon, forthcoming), and which will also mark the official renaming of our regional CIE society to the Oceania Comparative and International Education Society (OCIES).

This Special Issue emerged from an inaugural seminar that marked the founding of the Comparative and International Education Research network (CoInEd) at the University of Sydney's Faculty of Education and Social Work in October 2014. The seminar was the first in a series that have since expanded in participation and increased in frequency, with the aim of drawing together educators, 'practitioners' and scholars at all stages from the many reaches of CIE activities (Phillips and Schweisfurth 2014). Nested within our regional CIE society, a collective aim of the CoInEd research network is:

> *… to advance research and collaborations addressing contemporary education issues within Australia that are influenced by a range of external drivers. In times of shifting domestic politics, how are the principles of equity and social justice in education shaped within Australian social policy? CoInEd scholars are committed to understanding issues of diversity and disadvantage that focus on ethnicity, gender, geographic isolation, poverty and Aboriginality (CoInEd Webpage 2014).*

The geopolitical reach of our network members' combined research experience and publications represent national and sub-national contexts across East Asia, South East Asia, South Asia and the Pacific, Africa and South America. These include: Cambodia, China, Ethiopia, Indonesia, Laos, Vietnam, Thailand, Myanmar, Malaysia, Papua New Guinea, the Philippines and Vanuatu, as well as Afghanistan, Brazil, Canada, England, Ethiopia, France, Germany, India, Kenya, Sri Lanka, Switzerland, Uganda and Zimbabwe. In addition to cultivating institutionally-supported collegial discussion between higher degree research students, early career, advanced and senior researchers, a central aim in forming the network was to extend conversations between institutions around the nation and, ultimately, to link with work being done regionally and globally in CIE.

In what is, therefore, a fitting opening article for this Special Issue, Anthony Welch weighs the potential for strengthened regional knowledge collaboration against the panoramic backdrop of a generation of evolving Australian-ASEAN (Association of South East Asian Nations) relations. Based on this informative analytical survey of three key areas of activity, Welch makes compelling arguments for a new stage in geo-political relations for education in proposing the formation of a regional knowledge network. According to this conception, such a network could see bridges between Australia, ASEAN and China in terms of multi-sectoral academic, business and government collaborations. In our 'era of network science', Welch laments that the current tendency for Australian entrepreneurial approaches is to focus on South East Asia as a source of international students is 'at best myopic, and at worst a vestige of colonialism'. Even in acknowledging regional complexity and periods of political escalation, Welch invites us to explore the rich terrain for deeper and extended Australian–ASEAN relations that have the potential to extend to a wider conception of the region that includes China, as Australia's leading knowledge partner.

M. Obaidul Hamid and Hoa Thi Mai Nguyen remain with the ASEAN nations in the second article in our Special Issue, and consider aspects of globalization and language form the perspectives of policy and pedagogy. Hamid and Nguyen explore these phenomena in relation to education policies vis-à-vis their implementation, and ways that they relate, on the one hand, to an idea of 'policy dumping' and, on the other hand, to expectations and manifestations of teacher agency. The authors examine examples of such agency, framing their own work in Bangladesh and Vietnam through lenses of globalization of English and its still-growing use in Asia. In so doing, they sketch implications for teachers' professional development and practice, and also draw on work done in India, Pakistan, Indonesia, Malaysia and Japan.

Returning in the realm of higher education, Rose Amazan and colleagues offer particular insights from their research into tertiary scholarships as a form of Australian official development aid in two African nations. Drawing on detailed, qualitative interviews undertaken in Uganda and Mozambique, Amazan and colleagues identify some of the important experiences and perspectives of scholarship recipients on their return to life and work after undertaking studies in Australia. The research poses a number of difficult and important questions for aid and education in changing and decolonizing times, and considers the implications for future relations that are not limited to those in Africa and the Australian scholarship program.

In the fourth article, Virandi Wettewa's article on research conducted in Sri Lanka contributes to elucidating the problematic place of international schools in the island nation. It is based on mixed-methods research that was carried out in case study schools in four districts. Wettewa canvassed the views of administrators, parents, teachers and students, and situates them within a range of historical and social consequences and perceptions - some unanticipated and unintended. Wettewa's analysis of the 'post-colonial emotionalism' that underlies tensions identifies them as being locally and globally provoked and situated. Among such tensions, Wettewa cautions, is a concern as to whether cross cultural, and 'truly international', education is deployed as more of a 'business tactic' than a deeper possibility for education in a context where schooling has been affected by histories of colonization, conflict and neoliberal globalisation.

Based on comparative interviews and document analysis that contrast Australian and Indian national contexts, Archana Voola's article discusses research in which she explored relationships between education, gendered poverty and lifelong-learning through interviews with participants in two microfinance programs. Voola employs a 'capabilities' approach to argue for a move from conceptualizing education and microfinance in terms of 'access' for women, to realizing its potential for expanding freedoms for men *and* women. To that end, Voola critiques the economically orientated approaches that have tended to support neoliberal and patriarchal social structures and understandings of education, microfinance and poverty.

In our concluding article, Steve Georgakis and Jess Graham address and, appropriately, begin to redress recent critiques of CIE in offering a strong argument for an extension of the field to embrace comparative pedagogies and physical education, both of which they show to have had extremely limited, or no, consideration to date. Georgakis and Graham demonstrate one of many possibilities through their comparison of two case studies and methods of teaching physical education in Australian contexts. In doing so, the authors offer a 'roadmap' for future initiatives and thinking in CIE.

The contributions in this Special Issue offer compelling examples of just a few of the conversations in research that are occurring in Australian institutions at a time when there is clear need, and strong potential, for those working in CIE to help shape conceptions of the place and purpose of education in societies as we negotiate changes at multiple levels, different paces and in distinctive ways. While this volume does not, and could not, claim to be close to an exhaustive representation of the work being done in Australian institutions, what it does offer is a range of insights into a breadth of approaches, situations

and topics. These articles offer examples of research that address issues of equitable provision, that continue to contribute to a long process of decolonizing and shaping more inclusive Australian relations within our borders and in the region, and that challenge the roles of education in addressing – or sustaining - poverty and broader social justice principles in our lives and work. We look forward to extending and supporting these diverse and important conversations through the work of the CoInEd with other research networks, in OCIES work in the region, and with other national and regional societies in the wider World Congress for Comparative and International Education Societies (WCCES).

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Evolving ASEAN-Australia relations in Higher Education. Towards a Regional Knowledge Network?

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Australia's attitude towards ASEAN has waxed and waned over recent decades, including in higher education. In part a reflection of tensions between its geography and history, it highlighted the question of the extent to which Australia saw itself as an Asian country (an uncertainty shared by number of its ASEAN neighbours). Reviewing changes in several key indices (Asian languages strategy, International student policy, Education as Aid), the prospects for a regional knowledge network comprising Australia, ASEAN and China are assessed, with the conclusion that the whole would be greater than the sum of the parts, but that for the prospect to be realised, greater consistency in Australian government policy towards the region is needed.

Key words: Australia, ASEAN, higher education relations, Asian languages, international students, education aid, regional knowledge network.

> *Your economic ties have increased, your political ties have increased, but to be part of the family, you must develop the social side, the people to people side and that's been limited* ***(****Lee, Kuan Yew)*

The complex relations between ASEAN and Australia have evolved substantially over the 40 years since Australian became an ASEAN dialogue partner in 1974. No less so in higher education, which has been the most dynamic sub-sector within ASEAN-Australia relations in education, accounting for both the bulk of educational mobility, as well as most educational cooperation (Fraser, Simkin and Wright 1994). Drawing on the author's longstanding involvement with higher education in the ASEAN region, the analytic lens focuses on higher education relations, as one window on the evolution of Australia's relations with ASEAN, over the period 1974-2014. Given that the 10 ASEAN systems present too wide a window, the article's gaze is largely restricted to 5 key ASEAN member states (Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Thailand and Viet Nam), encompassing both the world's largest majority-Muslim nation, as well as a range of levels of development, and political ideologies. For comparative purposes, Singapore, something of an outlier within ASEAN, is treated in notes to the some of the tables, and some reference is also made to China, for reasons that become clearer towards the latter part of the argument.

Overall, the argument is made that, while progress has indeed been made on ASEAN-Australia relations over the period, notably in higher education, the rise of China, and its higher education and research system has changed the equation for both, opening up opportunities for greater regional academic relations, in which the whole would form more than the sum of the parts. While as Jayasuriya and others have pointed out, regional architecture is as yet less well defined within the Asia-Pacific, and specifically ASEAN,

relative to the more mature and well-developed regional programmes and relations in the European Union, it is argued that there is considerable, if as yet somewhat under-explored, potential to extend and deepen regional relations in higher education, both between ASEAN and Australia. If one accepts Dent's distinction between inter-regionalism and trans-regionalism (Dent 2003), and the implications of Jules, and Jayasuria's work on open regionalism it would be true to say that signs of the latter, indicated by common spaces and associated ASEAN-Australia networks between individuals, and organisations, are still maturing in higher education and research (Jayasuriya 2003, 2004, Jules 2014) – but have nonetheless grown significantly in density and significance.

A genuine, deeply rooted trans-regional network of higher education and research relations between Australia and ASEAN, while important, is still at a more embryonic stage, and, while both ASEAN's and Australia's achievements on regionalism tend to be outweighed by their rhetoric, China's dramatic rise presents new opportunities to extend regional knowledge networks (Welch 2010b, 2011, 2012c, 2012d). Given this importance of China to each, the latter part of the analysis thus also explores the potential for a wider regionalism that embraces China's dynamic higher education and research system. The prospects offered by a tripartite regionalism (ASEAN, Australia, China) are considered in the final sections of the analysis.

CONTINUITY AND CHANGE: ASEAN-AUSTRALIA RELATIONS SINCE 1974

The past 40 years, since Australia became ASEAN's first dialogue partner in 1974, has been witness to an evolving set of relations, notably including education (AusAID 2004, Chin and Richardson 2004). In turn, this needs to be set against the rich and multi-faceted intra-ASEAN diversity, including religious, cultural and linguistic diversity, both within and between ASEAN member states, and levels of development, from wealthy, technologically highly-developed nations such as Singapore, to very poor developing nations such as Laos and Myanmar.

Table 1. *Development Indicators, Selected SE Asian states.*

COUNTRY	HDI 1990	HDI 2011	HDI Rank 2011	Net Primary Enrolment 2001-2009 M and F	GDP per capita (PPP$) 2010	Public Expenditure on Ed'n (% of GDP)	Adult Literacy Rates 2001-2009 M and F
Indonesia	0.481	0.543	124	94 97	3,880	2.8 (2010)	89 95
Malaysia	0.720	0.793	61	95 95	13,186	5.1 (2010)	90 95
Philippines	0.571	0.644	112	89 88	3,560	2.7 (2009)	96 95
Thailand	0.707	0.768	103	89 90	7,672	5.8 (2011)	92 96
Viet Nam	0.610	0.691	128	.. ..	2,875	6.6 (2010)	91 95

UNDP 2012: 217-226, World Bank (n.d.)

Note: Singapore's HDI in 2010 was 26; Australia's was 2, China's was 101.

The extent to which Australia has come to see itself as an Asian country (FitzGerald 1997), - albeit a quite distinctive one – marks a further arena of change, as well as how much that view is shared by its ASEAN neighbours. The decades from the mid-1970s arguably revealed Australia moving on from its past self-understanding as an outpost of British empire, together with a sense of regional insecurity (Beeson 2001, Welch 2013), towards a more systematic engagement with the region. Most recently, the major *Australia*

in the Asian Century White Paper, launched in 2012 by then Prime Minister Gillard, identified Indonesia as one of a handful of priority countries, (and four languages), for which a country strategy paper was then devised (DFAT Indonesia Profile, DFAT 2013). The White Paper, including its educational dimensions, was announced as a major initiative, although experienced regional analysts argued that Australia had been here before – repeatedly – and that the paper was best seen as yet one more chapter in Australia's waxing and waning relations with ASEAN, and engagement with Asia more generally.

What follows represents much more than a simple expansion of ASEAN-Australia relations in education. The initial stage, characterised by the Colombo Plan, occurred in an era of post-colonial development for much of developing South East Asia. At the time, a hierarchy of development between 'core' and 'periphery' nations was commonly assumed by Western theorists (although the specific terms and the theoretical implications were by no means universally employed), the Cold War set limits to cultural ties, including student and staff mobility, and functionalist assumptions of a uni-linear model of development based on modernisation theory were only gradually being superseded by more complex frameworks (Welch 1985). Higher education in the region was generally under-developed, with local factors such as Viet Nam's longstanding war (which, although Australia had established diplomatic relations with Ha Noi in 1973, only finally ending in 1975). Malaysia's ethnic discrimination against non-Bumiputras[1], and Myanmar's decades-long isolation and neglect of higher education were further examples that limited access and opportunity. (Welch 2011a, ADB 2012, ADB 2013).

Forty years later, much had changed. Although, in education, three issues - Asian Languages, Overseas Students, and Educational Aid – show striking continuity over the period, by the 21st. century the context had altered considerably. Perhaps the most dramatic change was the global shift to Asia, including in higher education - an acknowledgement that the region had evolved into the most dynamic in the world, with some stellar levels of development present, including among ASEAN member states (SCMP 2013, DFAT 2012a, Bhandari and Lefebure 2015, RIE 2015).

> *The changes … mark a significant shift in the global economy towards Asia … pinpointing it as the centre of gravity of the world's economic mass (OECD 2010: 26).*

While three giant economies, China, India and Japan, would lead Asia's resurgence, other large countries like Indonesia and Vietnam would also have significant economic mass. Even Thailand and Malaysia could have economies larger than France has today (OECD 2010: 23).

Singapore had taken its place among the wealthiest league of nations, while the dragon in the room, China, had thrust its way on to the world stage so emphatically, that both ASEAN and Australia each paid more attention to China than each other. Such changes had barely been dreamed of, four decades earlier (Lee 2015).

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[1] *Bumiputras* refers to ethnic Malays, who are comprise around 60 per cent of the total population, and in practice still gain preference in education and employment, despite quotas in education being formally abandoned in 2003.

Values constituted a second change element. International education had traditionally been based on the twin pillars of goodwill and development, as the authors of a contemporary review of Australia's international education highlighted: "Australia's educational assistance to overseas students aims to export both goodwill and people who can solve problems" (Cleverley and Jones, 1976: 31, Megarrity 2005, 2008). In theory this benefitted both sides, if not always equally in practice. The developing nations of Southeast Asia benefitted from capacity development, in the form of scholarships from wealthy Australia, although some concerns were already being expressed about whether the content of such programmes was always appropriate (Cleverley and Jones 1976, Toh and Farrelly 1982). Awardees, who as a condition of their scholarship needed to return to their homeland upon completion (and mostly did), brought back much-needed skills, and often went on to gain leadership positions, not just in education. Australia benefitted from the regional goodwill that such schemes engendered. The last three decades or so, however, marked the growth of a much more commercial imperative in international education, notably in Australia, but more recently also evident in ASEAN member states such as Singapore and Malaysia. (Altbach and Welch 2010, Welch 2011a and b, 2012, MoE Malaysia 2015). International education is now commonly conceived of as an 'industry', with an estimated total value globally of more than US$2 trillion. The Asia-Pacific region is the most dynamic growth centre of this industry, as is seen below, and Australia is only one competitor for students from the region.

A third change element was the character of Australian immigration which, at the onset of the period, had barely seen the end of discriminatory migration policies that limited settlement prospects for ASEAN-origin students. But by the 21st century, a strong policy shift towards skilled migration led to the fact that around half of Australia's applicants for permanent residence were being drawn from its own international students, many of whom still stemmed from the ASEAN region (Welch 2013, p. 120). (More recent policy changes made it more difficult for international students to remain in Australia, after graduation). Indeed, migration from ASEAN member states rose from 10 per cent of the total intake in 1982-3, to 20 per cent in 2002-3 (APH 2005). This, too, however was not entirely new: the Goldring report of 1984 had confirmed that some 75 per cent of private international students gained permanent residence in the 1970s (Meadows 2011, p. 61).

Australia's shift to Asia had marked effects. By 2011, ASEAN-Australia two-way trade had reached US$88 billion (DFAT 2012a), with an imbalance towards ASEAN evident with respect to both goods, and services. Of Australian service sector exports, education was now the most significant, and within education, higher education formed the major component. Underpinning this development was the rise of the Asian middle class, including in ASEAN. Across the Asia-Pacific, the middle class totalled 525 million in 2009, representing 28 per cent of the global total. Projections were that by 2020 this would have increased more than threefold, to 1.74 billion individuals and 54 per cent of the world total. By 2030, the same projection indicated almost 3.3 billion, or 66 per cent of the global total middle class (OECD 2010: 28). Although China and India will form a big part of that growth, the growing middle class in ASEAN member states such as Thailand, Indonesia, Malaysia and Viet Nam will be also be important.

Three features form the basis for further growth in academic relations between ASEAN and Australia. First is the common aim by ASEAN member states to develop at least a top tier of 'world class' universities, within a wider context of subscribing to the discourse of knowledge based economy as the means towards development. Second is the South

East Asian middle class's propensity to save and invest in education, seeking out desirable destinations and higher education institutions (HEIs) for their children. Third is the growth of ASEAN migrant communities in Australia, among which many individuals are well educated and interested to form and strengthen knowledge bridges with their countries of origin. The combination of these three offer considerable potential to expand two-way flows of both students and academics between Australia and ASEAN. The desire to build top-tier research universities has already issued in substantial initiatives across the region and has been an important element in the development of a more multi-polar world of knowledge (Royal Society 2011, Welch 2011a, 2011b, 2012b, 2013b). It is argued that the extension of this trend in the region will underpin more extensive and intensive academic relations between ASEAN and Australia in the decades to come, based on a richer, denser, more egalitarian mode of regional relations.

KEY THEMES AND THEIR EVOLUTION.

As indicated above, a striking continuity of themes that underpin Australia's regional relations with ASEAN in the education field is evident over the period 1974-2014, notably in the trinity of Asian languages, Education as Aid, and International students. By the end of the era, a fourth theme of academic collaboration was becoming much more prominent, as the data below indicate. The following section outlines the evolution of these themes.

Asian languages

As early as the mid-1970s, Asian languages were already listed as a growth area (Cleverley and Jones 1976: 13-15). The Auchmuty Report of 1970 gave a major stimulus (pushed in part by Australian business who were concerned, then as now, at inadequacies in Asia literacy among young Australians), and the growth of economic and cultural ties to Asia and ASEAN (Auchmuty 1970). The report stimulated something of a move towards Asian languages, including Indonesian. The Asian Studies Coordinating Committee, for example, established by the Australian Education Council in 1972, made grants available for the development of new curricula. As a result, the Intercultural Studies Project of the University of Sydney developed Social Studies materials for Indonesia and Malaysia, while Flinders University supplemented its existing specialist Indonesian staff (Cleverley and Jones 1976:15).

Asian languages were a striking omission from Jones' later coverage of Australia's international relations (Jones 1986). The relative growth and decline of Asian languages, however, shines an interesting light on Australia's regional relations, including with ASEAN. The most recent iteration, enshrined in the *Australia in the Asian Century* document, designated 4 languages as priorities: Chinese, Hindi, Indonesian, and Japanese (DFAT 2012b). Enrolments in Indonesian studies and Indonesian language, and the fate of departments of Indonesian in Australian universities are perhaps the most apposite example. Despite various versions of an Asian language strategy (Welch 2013: 102), some less well-financed than others, and the longstanding Australia-Indonesia Institute founded in 1989, one of whose aims is "the encouragement of the study of the Indonesian language and culture in Australia and the English language and Australian culture in Indonesia", (DFAT Australia-Indonesia), a longstanding pattern of advance and retreat is evident, at both national and institutional levels, rather than substantial policy continuity. The *Building Relationships through Intercultural Dialogue and Engagement* (BRIDGE) program (Indonesia), designed to foster Asia literacy and inter-cultural understanding

between the two nations, is one initiative, that supported Indonesian language programs in Australian schools, for example, but the Myer Foundation funds on which it in part depends, lapsed at the end of 2012.

Cuts to tertiary education funding, inadequate weighting of languages in tertiary entrance scales, and the well-known resistance of the Anglosphere to learn other languages, have all played their role. But policy discontinuity has also helped contribute to an outcome whereby enrolments in Indonesian at tertiary level actually declined in recent years, despite the rising importance of Indonesia in world terms, and growing ties with Australia in particular (DFAT Indonesia Profile). Even the existence of the Australia Indonesia Youth Exchange, founded 30 years ago, which offers young Australians the chance to live in Indonesia, failed to halt the decline. Nor did a tenfold increase in the working holiday visa scheme (from 100 to 1000), announced in 2012, that was designed to encourage people from each country to experience the other's cultures. The number of students enrolled in Indonesian at Australian education institutions actually declined by 40 per cent over the last decade (DFAT Indonesia Profile, Jakarta Post 2013, Asia Education Foundation 2013, Henderson, 2011). Despite Indonesian again being listed as a priority language within the *Australia in the Asian Century* White Paper, the decline is unlikely to be reversed, unless systematic, long-term priority is attached to the issues listed above. 6 universities closed their Indonesian language programmes between 2004 and 2013, leaving only 15 that retained the language; the programme at La Trobe was only saved after concerted action in both countries (Jakarta Post, 2013). Nor is it likely that, without significant institutional and governmental incentives, the numbers of Australian students studying the language in Indonesia will rise much, despite efforts by organisations such as the Asia Education Foundation, and relevant university departments around the country (AITSL 2013).

The incoming coalition Federal government's much-touted *Colombo Plan*, announced in 2012, was a tangible recognition of the global 'Shift to the East'. While a welcome initiative, predicated on a more two-way approach to mobility, it was acknowledged as limited - only supporting perhaps 300 students to study in the region (Liberal Party 2013). Of these, only a minority would study within ASEAN universities. Further information released in late 2013 indicated that, in a pilot programme beginning in 2014, 10 students would be selected on merit from each of four priority nations (Indonesia, Singapore, Hong Kong [China] and Japan) to study for two semesters at an Australian university. $4 million was also devoted to support 700 Australian students to study for one or two semesters in the selected countries, and additional students for short-term placements (Australian 2013f and g). Overall funding for the *New Colombo Plan* was set at $100 million over 5 years (Australian 2013g). Emphases were gaining work experience while studying; boosting Australian productivity and innovation; and enhancing regional integration. The Foreign Minister's stated overall goal, a mix of cultural and economic rationales, largely focused on the benefits to Australia:

> *My goal is to see study in the Indo-Pacific region become a rite of passage. Through living in the region, learning languages, forging friendships and exchanging ideas, young Australians will return home with the skills and perspectives to support our growth in a changing world (Australian, 2013g).*

Educational Aid

Aid in education has been another enduring element (AusAID 2004). The announcement in 1972 of a review of Australia's aid, the Joint Committee on Foreign Affairs' *Report on Australia's Foreign Aid*, was the first such review since the establishment of the Colombo Plan in 1950. It marked a significant change from the preceding Cold War mentality, which had viewed Australian aid in large part as a bulwark against Communism. In a year that saw Australia establish diplomatic relations with the People's Republic of China, and withdraw its troops from Viet Nam, the charter for the later review was set by an incoming, reformist Prime Minister: "to ensure that (Australian aid) has a more direct bearing on improving the quality of life of …fellow human beings" (Cleverley and Jones 1976, p. 22). In practice, despite changing federal governments, aid, including in education, continued to be seen as an extension of foreign affairs policy.

Isolating specific education components among the overall Australian aid envelope has never been simple, particularly when programmes previously deemed education are, as a result of shifting government priorities, sometimes simply re-badged as good governance or transparency training. Nonetheless, it was estimated that education comprised around 17 per cent of bi-lateral aid in the mid-1970s (Cleverley and Jones 1976, p. 26).

Indonesia again presents a good case study of evolving relations. Australian aid to Indonesia, which began in the 1950s, totalled $574 million in 2012-13. Currently the largest recipient of Australian aid, the sectoral breakdown of total ODA to Indonesia in 2005-6 revealed that 47 per cent of the ongoing Indonesia program (thus excluding the *Australia Indonesia Partnership for Reconstruction and Development (AIPRD*) was devoted to education, largely comprising support for Madrasahs (the *Learning Assistance Program for Islamic Schools* [LAPIS]), and Australian Development Scholarships [ADS] (Australian Government 2005-6, ABC 2008, Jakarta Post 2013). Of Indonesia's 68,000 Madrasahs, Australia has supported 1,500, to the tune of $47 million (Australian 2013a). Selecting only those that teach the agreed national curriculum, four AusAID programmes enhanced the capacity of Madrasahs to meet national accreditation standards: enhanced teacher training, increased learning and teaching mechanisms, meeting the national curriculum standard, and improved infrastructure and facilities.

The aftermath of the 2004 Tsunami, saw Australia initiate a $1 billion aid package, comprising $500 million in grant assistance and a further $500 million under a highly concessional loan programme. The AIPRD programme contained significant educational components, including 600 scholarships, a doubling of the previous number.

> *…AusAID funding provided for … Indonesian students, as well as other scholarships and education assistance, such as for postgraduates studying in Australia. This includes … international students studying in Australia (Jakarta Post 2013).*

It also included a component, the *Indonesia–Australia Specialised Training Program*, to deliver over 325 short courses over the years 2004 to 2008. The programme focussed on capacity building for mid-career professionals in areas such as economic management, governance, and improving delivery of basic services in health and education. (Australian Government 2005-6). The subsequent re-integration of AusAID into the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) in September 2013, was paralleled by a cut of some 12 per cent to Australia's aid budget (from $5.66 billion to $5.004 billion), and a 'more

Jakarta, less Geneva' affirmation of regionalism, which was likely to see Australia's regional aid to its neighbours preserved, over existing programmes in places further afield, such as Afghanistan and Africa (Australian, 2013b, c, and d).

International Student Mobility

International student policy is the arena that has attracted the greatest media and popular attention, both nationally and internationally. By the mid-1970s, international students already comprised a mix of private and sponsored students, although a degree of policy uncertainty attended the former, a decade or so before the twin official reviews of international education eventuated in a major policy re-orientation (ACE 1989, Megarrity 2005, 2008). In 1974-5, of 2780 awardees under the Colombo Plan, Indonesia was awarded 428 Australian scholarships, Malaysia 455, Singapore 224, Thailand 331, and South Viet Nam 422 – a sub-total of 1,860, or 67 per cent of the scheme's total. This pattern paralleled the changing mix of Australian migration, at a time just after the final abandonment of its historically discriminatory, 'White Australia' policy. The reasons advanced to account for this trend underlined the growth of Australia's regional relations in education:

> *First, more attention is being focused on Asian and South Pacific countries. Of … importance has been Australia's admittance to the South East Asia Ministers of Education Organization (SEAMEO) in 1973, and to the Asian Regional Group of UNESCO in 1974…, accompanied by significant increases in regional activity (Cleverley and Jones 1976: 27, see also UNSW n.d.)*

A singular exception to regionalism, at least temporarily, stemmed from the ending of the Vietnam War, which abruptly halted sponsorship of students from that country. But overall, this trend of a disproportionate number of international students in the Australian system stemming from the region, was early evidence of what would prove to be an enduring pattern, although in the last decade or more, China has grown to be by far the largest source country, while most recently numbers from India have risen rapidly.

The number of private students also grew, encouraged *inter alia*, by the federal government's recent abolition of fees for university study (1974), although a cap of 10,000 private overseas students had been introduced in 1973 (Meadows 2011, p. 61, UNSW n.d.). In addition, the federal government's decision to allow 'successful' private students who wished to remain in Australia, and who met normal migration criteria, to remain, induced some students to stay. The decision was not without controversy however: Singapore protested that it promoted brain drain, and attempted to restrict its students to the sponsored category (Cleverley and Jones 1976: 29, see also Meadows 2011, p. 61). The cap was later removed, and an overseas student charge (OSC) introduced, with the level depending on the course. International student policy continued to frame Australia's foreign policy objectives that were stated by the architect of one of the two reviews to be:

> *… the advancement of Australia's interests in countries of particular importance to Australia (especially ASEAN…) by improving communication, understanding of and sympathy for Australia's policies, and to promote cultural exchange (Goldring 1984, p. 29).*

Table 2. *ASEAN Private Overseas Students, Post-Secondary & Higher Education, 1976-1984.*

Country	1976	1977	1978	1979	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984
Indonesia	490	538	514	488	423	365	371	593	943
Malaysia	3,139	3,094	3,123	3,580	4,001	4,619	5,353	6,016	7,341
Philippines	28	28	27	23	17	18	17	26	30
Thailand	258	270	257	241	214	191	170	151	152
Viet Nam	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Other Asia	396	361	345	394	366	419	428	449	559
TOTAL	5,486	5,852	6,004	6,745	7,383	8,103	9,125	10,656	13,047

Adapted from Jones 1986, Pp. 75-6.

Note: 'Post-Secondary' includes TAFE qualifications.

The transition to international (higher) education becoming an industry was precipitated by the outcomes of the dual Goldring, and Jackson, reports of 1984 (Goldring 1984, Jackson 1984, Meadows 2011). The two reports came to opposite conclusions. Goldring recommended maintaining the cap on international students (due to the limited capacity of the Australian education system) and subsidies - a public affirmation of Australia's contribution to international education development (Goldring 1984, p. 55). At the time, this cap proposed at 5 to 10 per cent of undergraduate enrolments, with no more than 25 per cent in any single course. By contrast, Jackson argued that Australian international education was both cumbersome and staid, and called for the existing Overseas Student Charge (OSC) to be steadily increased, so that by the mid-1990s, overseas students would be levied the full costs of their education (Jackson 1984, p. 95).

The subsequent inter-departmental committee, established to reconcile the two divergent sets of recommendations, supported a modified version of the Goldring report. Policy developments, however, veered very much in the other direction - towards crafting international education into an industry, that is now Australia's largest single service sector export, and one of the country's most substantial industries overall (Meadows 2011, Welch 2012a). Throughout the 1990s and beyond, international student numbers continued to mushroom, with totals rising from 84,000 in 1993, to almost 160,000 in 1999. Of this total, higher education occupied 53.4 per cent, including a growing proportion of offshore enrolments. By 1999, offshore enrolments comprised 16.9 per cent of overall enrolments (onshore added a further 36.5 per cent) (AEI 1999). The rise of online education and the establishment of branch campuses, including Monash Malaysia and RMIT Viet Nam, accelerated the growing proportion of offshore enrolments (Welch 2007, 2011a, 2012b). By 2011, enrolments in higher education totalled 242,351 (AEI 2011), of which China accounted for over a quarter. Australian outbound students totalled a mere 11,000 in 2009, among which no ASEAN member state was among the top five destinations, while Malaysia was the only ASEAN member state among the top 5 source countries, by visa application granted (ABS 2011). 2013 data revealed that, of the 228, 263 international students enrolled in Australian higher education, China accounted for 40.2 per cent of the total, although Viet Nam and Malaysia were among the top 5 source countries overall (Austrade 2013). ASEAN member states formed a significant share of total higher education student visas granted in 2013, as the following table indicates.

Table 3. *Higher Education (573) Visas Granted, Australia 2013, by Country*

Country	*Visas Granted*	*%*

Indonesia	3,793	3.0
Malaysia	6,027	4.7
Philippines	1,500 (?)	1.2
Thailand	3,416	2.7
Viet Nam	7,849	6.2
China	44,809	35.2

Source: *Dept. of Immigration 2013*

Note: Numbers comprise both onshore and offshore. Singapore visas granted numbered 3,148.

The data in Table 3 show that the 5 ASEAN member states together total about half of the Chinese total (17.8 per cent of the total international enrolment, compared to China's 35.2 per cent).

A REGIONAL KNOWLEDGE NETWORK?

By 2011, the longstanding disparities of Australia-ASEAN student flows were painfully apparent. Indonesia again forms a useful example. Almost 18,000 Indonesian students were enrolled in Australia, mostly in higher education. The reverse flow was barely a fraction of that total, estimated at no more than 200, most of whom were undertaking short language courses, rather than degree programmes. Australian students enrolled in degree programmes at Indonesian universities totalled no more than 50, and although the incoming federal government's announcement of the *New Colombo Plan* promised to boost this number (see above), it would do little to reduce the gap (Politifact 2013).

But the ongoing development of universities and R&D in ASEAN countries, motivated by a ubiquitous regional desire to boost knowledge and innovation, together with the thousands of well-trained graduates from Australian universities, who have returned home and now occupy senior posts within universities, business and government, have created a platform for building a regional knowledge network, which remains as yet, underdeveloped. Singapore's major investment in research and development (R & D), and forging leading universities, has led to both its National University of Singapore (NUS) and the Nanyang Technological University (NTU) being ranked strongly in the reputable and robust Shanghai Jiaotong Academic Ranking of World Universities (ARWU) list. Malaysia's University of Malaya, which has benefited from being one of 5 Malaysian university to be designated a research university, and the only university to be selected for the High Impact Research initiative, is also listed. Both systems have made major progress in becoming Eduhubs, attracting talent from throughout the region, and beyond.[2]

But for this regional knowledge network to operate effectively, two things would be needed. The first is Australia's long-term, bi-partisan national policy commitment to the goal of building such a regional network, which would survive being overturned by the next change of government. The second is a much more serious commitment by Australian universities to the long-term cultivation of their graduates who return to ASEAN countries, but who are often interested in maintaining and deepening knowledge partnerships with Australia, and who are often in senior posts, in government, universities or industry. Currently, Australian universities seem more interested in the potential of

[2] Malaysia in particular, has set out, with considerable success, to recruit students from other Muslim countries and cultures, both from the Middle East, Central Asia and Africa.

alumni for fund raising, than making a long-term commitment to maintaining close contacts, and sustaining trans-national knowledge communities.

Prospects for fostering a regional knowledge network also bear on the quality and research output of regional higher education systems. What contribution does higher education make to research and development in ASEAN member states, and how does this compare with the developed world in general, and Australia in particular? What are the outputs in terms of publications, citations, and patents? And what evidence is there of existing bi-lateral research collaboration between Australia and ASEAN members? The following tables provide much of the data that enables answers to these questions.

Table 4. *Contribution to R&D Performance by Sector*

Country / Region	Business	Government	Higher Education
SE Asia	51.3	22.1	15.7
Indonesia	14.3	81.1	4.6.
Malaysia	65.3	20.3	14.4
Philippines	--	--	--
Thailand	43.9	22.5	31.0
Viet Nam	--	--	--
China	62.4	27.1	10.5
Developed Country Average	62.9	13.3	27.0

Sources: ADB 2008:122, ADB 2012; India estimates from UNESCO 2010b: 488.

Note: Singapore data: Business 63.8, Government 10.9, Higher Education 25.4

Table 4 reveals that for South East Asia in general and for the 5 ASEAN member states in particular, higher education contributes no more than about half of the developed world average, to total research and development (R&D) performance. A significant outlier, Singapore, treated in the note to Table 4, reveals a profile much more like the developed world average.

Table 5. *R&D Expenditure Levels and as Percentage of GDP, 2002 and 2009*

	R & D spending, 2002		R&D as percent of GDP	
Country	$ Billions (PPP)	Percent of World	1992	2009
Indonesia	0.3	0.0	0.1	0.05
Malaysia	1.5	0.2	0.4	0.64
Philippines	0.4	0.0	0.2	0.12
Thailand	1.1	0.1	0.2	0.25
Viet Nam	Na	Na	Na	0.19
China	72.0	8.7	0.8	1.2
Australia	--	--	--	2.06

UNESCO 2010: 438. World Bank 2006

– = data unavailable, GDP = gross domestic product, PPP = purchasing power parity, PRC = People's Republic of China, R&D = research and development.
Singapore's rate of R&D as % of GDP in 2002 was 2.2, and in 2009 2.52.

Table 5 reveals that none of the 5 ASEAN member states either spend more than 0.64 of a percent of GDP on research and development, compared to Australia's 2.06, itself no more than average in OECD terms. Again, Singapore is the ASEAN outlier, as the notes to Table 5 reveal, while China's rapidly rising investment now outstrips that of all 5 ASEAN states, but not Singapore.

Table 6. *Knowledge Economy Index, and related indices, 2012, Selected Countries, 2012*

Country	*Overall World Rank*	*Knowledge Economy*	*Knowledge Index*	*Innovation*	*Education*
Australia	9	8.88	8.98	8.92	9.71
Indonesia	108	3.11	2.99	3.24	3.20
Malaysia	48	6.1	6.25	6.91	5.22
Philippines	92	3.94	3.81	3.77	4.64
Thailand	66	5.21	5.25	5.95	4.23
Viet Nam	104	3.40	3.60	2.75	2.99
China	84	4.37	4.57	5.99	3.93

Source: World Bank KEI and KI index, 2012

Note: Singapore's overall world rank is 23, with a KEI rating of 8.26

The knowledge economy profile of the 5 ASEAN states in Tables 4, 5 and 6 above reveal significant, albeit differential disparities between Australia and the five selected ASEAN member states, on current knowledge indices. But the gaps are narrowing. Over the decade 1998-2008, for example, the number of articles published by Australian researchers rose from 16,432, to 28,313, a growth rate of 72.3 per cent. By contrast, Indonesia's rate of growth over the same period, (off a much lower base, to be sure) was 113 per cent, Malaysia's was 312 per cent, Philippines' 137 per cent, Thailand's 383 and Viet Nam's 341, although the same is not true for numbers of USPTO registered patents (UNESCO 2010: 441 and 444, see also Welch 2010b and c). Data on China, whose recent dramatic scientific rise is transforming the global knowledge network, is included for reasons outlined below (Royal Society 2011, UNESCO 2010, OECD 2008, Yang and Welch 2012). A long-term view, therefore would suggest that extending regional collaboration networks is worthwhile.

And there is already a base to build on. Table 7 below, reveals significant existing academic collaboration between Australia and the 5 ASEAN member states, when measured over the first decade of the 21st century. China, too, is now a major knowledge partner for Australia (Chief Scientist 2013). In an era of Network Science, where the proportion of publications by authors from more than one country rose from 25 per cent to 35 per cent over the past two decades, it further underlines the tangible benefits beyond the actual research produced. The data in Table 7 reveal that several bi-literal collaborations (Thailand, Philippines, Viet Nam and China) produce a moderate lift in citation rates, something pointed to by other studies of international collaboration (Royal Society 2011, Australian 2012). While Singapore, something of an ASEAN outlier on many levels, is not included in the table, the data reveals that extending existing research collaboration between Australia and Singapore would tend to produce similar effects.

Table 7. *Australia's Collaborative Publications and Citations 2000-2011, by Country*

Country	Total Publications 2000-2011	Total Citations 2000-2011	Citations per publication
Australia	512,042	5,801,020	11.4
- with China	18,465	256,584	13.9
- with Indonesia	1,356	14,287	10.5
- with Malaysia	1,560	16,399	10.5
- with Philippines	670	12,613	18.8
- with Thailand	2,387	36,354	15.2
- with Viet Nam	684	8,249	12.1

Source: Thomson, InCites 2012

Note: Singapore data 2000-2011 is 4,718 publications, and 73,414 citations (15.6 citations per publication). Citation rates for Indonesia are 7.67, Malaysia 4.40, Philippines 8.25, Thailand 7.02, Viet Nam 6.98. [Singapore's citation rate is 8.49.] (UNESCO 2010: 444).

For ASEAN, too, China is an important knowledge partner. Substantial student flows between China, Malaysia and Singapore are paralleled by significant Chinese diasporas in both (Welch 2011a and b). China's southern borderland provinces and autonomous regions have long-established relations with neighbouring ASEAN member states such as Viet Nam and Myanmar, including developed knowledge relations (Welch 2012b, c and d, 2015). China is Malaysia's largest international collaborator, while for the Philippines, China is the third-largest knowledge partner (UNESCO 2010: 443). For both Indonesia and Singapore, Australia is their third-largest international collaborator. Clearly, there is more potential here to develop these existing collaborations into a more fully-fledged regional knowledge network[3].

CONCLUSION

Regrettably, when the Australian gaze is directed at SE Asian higher education systems, it is still largely as a source of international students. An index of Australia's overly entrepreneurial approach to international higher education, especially compared to western Europe, for example, such an approach is at best myopic, and at worst a vestige of colonialism (Altbach and Welch 2010, Welch 2012a).

This is all the more so in an era of network science, when, for example, as a recent Royal Society investigation underlined, "today, less than 26% of papers are the product of one institution alone, and over a third have multiple nationalities sharing authorship", and when over the period 1986-2008, the proportion of the world's published papers with more than one international author rose from just over 25 per cent to over 35 per cent (Royal Society 2011: 46). Other benefits reveal that " For each international author on an article, there is a corresponding increase in the impact of that paper, up to a tipping point of around 10" (Royal Society 2011: 59, including figure 2.7). Moreover, growing regionalism is cementing research relations between states within ASEAN (Royal Society 2011: 54-55),

[3] The term knowledge network is preferred throughout, to the more common knowledge economy, for reasons indicated in the initial quote from Lee, Kuan Yew.

and enhancing prospects for greater collaboration with neighbours such as China and Australia (Welch 2012c, Royal Society 2011: 55). As well, initiatives such as the International Science, Technology and Innovation Centre for South–South Co-operation (ISTIC) established in 2008 with support from UNESCO and the Malaysian Government, and based in Kuala Lumpur, have a significant regional dimension (Royal Society 2011: 54).

Despite this, the potential to deepen and extend ASEAN-Australia relations in (higher) education, while great, remains largely unexplored, as a recent article by a well-known analyst of ASEAN regionalism highlighted (Jayasuriya 2013). The narrow Australian focus on promotion of ASEAN/Asia literacy, while important, fails to embrace a wider range of options. In particular, given the common ASEAN member-state strategy of developing at least a top tier of world-class universities, it is now increasingly possible to envisage much more comprehensive regional research collaboration, with ASEAN and Australia researchers combining to produce a result greater than the sum of the parts. The data above show both that significant collaboration already exists, and that significant potential exists to extend this. Singapore already has world-class research teams, while other ASEAN states have, to varying degrees, centres of excellence and valuable local knowledge. Such trans-national collaboration would produce substantial public-good results, with challenges such as climate change, non-communicable disease, and migration, being common challenges. With some effort, academic mobility could be enhanced (beyond the existing modest *University Mobility in Asia and the Pacific* [UMAP] scheme), to promote greater regional researcher mobility. Expanding parity of treatment by leading regional researchers in relation to Australian Research Council (ARC) and National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) Grants, could also help build capacity in selected ASEAN universities. Lastly, Jayasuriya proposes '…a more comprehensive and region-wide framework for research cooperation and funding' something which again could help address common research programme needs, while at the same time building 'regional public goods' (Jayasuriya 2013).

The question of just what is encompassed by region is significant here; all the more so, since China is now Australia's leading knowledge partner, especially in fields such as Engineering, Mathematics and Chemistry. Of some 885 agreements between Australian and Chinese universities, 89 per cent included academic or research collaboration (DSIIRTE 2011, Yang 2008**,** Chief Scientist 2013), while ASEAN, too, has well-developed academic links with China (Welch 2007, 2011b, 2012c). Indeed the understanding of ASEAN as a region has been problematised recently, with recent work raising the prospect of an ASEAN-China academic region (Jayasuriya 2004, Welch 2012d). The prospect of even greater research synergies between ASEAN, Australia and China, could confer even greater rewards, particularly given the substantial number of Australian alumni now in key posts throughout the region.

This is not to underestimate, nor ignore, the impact on international relations of complex, ongoing international tensions between ASEAN and China, including maritime disputes over the South China Sea (Sutter 2012, Welch 2012c, Lee 2015, Dewar n.d.). Nor the sharp deterioration in relations between Australia and Indonesia in late 2013, precipitated by revelations that that agents of the former had spied on senior government officials of the latter. Nor Australia's delicate task of navigating between China and the USA, and the impact of this on its deepening relations with China (Australian 2013c and d, White 2010).

At the same time, however, international relations are not uni-dimensional, and there is no reason that cultural and academic relations should not mature, despite such obstacles (Australian 2013e). Harvesting such results remains unlikely, however, until Australia develops and sustains a mature and sophisticated, long-term, bi-partisan regional integration strategy. The increasingly negative, partisan, and short-term horizon of Australian politics and policy-making militates against the development and implementation of long-term regional integration policy, underpinned by sustained programme resources. The waxing and waning of related programmes and policies, including the recent politicisation of migration and refugee policy, only inhibits the development of effective long term strategies, in collaboration with ASEAN and possibly other neighbours, to fully exploit the potential of education and research cooperation.

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Globalization, English language policy, and teacher agency: Focus on Asia

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This paper focuses on English teachers in Asia in the context of globalization, the global spread of English and the emergence of English as an "Asian language". It highlights the dilemmas facing these teachers in meeting the growing social demands of English proficiency in a technology-influenced, managerial and neoliberal education environment with limited expertise, skills and policy support. We locate the paper in language policy and planning (LPP) within which the concept of micro-level agency provides a critical lens. We draw on insights from several Asian countries including Bangladesh, India, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, Pakistan and Vietnam. We argue that while English teachers are found to exercise their agency to meet changing demands of English proficiency, this agency can be seen as the result of what we call "policy dumping" at the macro-level—i.e. education policymakers not paying due attention to the requirements of policy implementation but dumping down policies to educational institutions and English teachers for their implementation. We conclude the paper by suggesting implications for English language policies in Asian countries that respond to globalization and the dominant discourses of English in a globalized world.

Keywords: English and globalization, English in Asia, Teachers of English as a second language, Teacher agency, policy dumping, Language-in-education planning

INTRODUCTION

English over the past few decades has emerged as a lingua franca for Asia. If it is the *official* language of the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN), it is the *de facto* language of communication for the whole of Asia (Kirkpatrick, 2007, 2011a, 2011b, 2012a, 2012b). Regardless of whether Asia can claim the ownership of English (Bolton, 2008, Kachru, 1998, McArthur, 2003), it is a fact that when an Indian communicates with a Malaysian, or a Korean, or a Chinese for whatever purposes, the default means of the communication is English.

Against this dominance of English for communication across the region and the world at large, Asian nations' English language policy responses to globalization and to the discourses of English as a global language have resulted in two major education reforms: 1) introducing English earlier in the curriculum; and 2) adopting English as a medium of

higher education (Hamid, Nguyen & Baldauf, 2013, Hu & McKay, 2012, Kirkpatrick, 2011a, Tollefson & Tsui, 2004, Tsui & Tollefson, 2007). Both reforms have brought English teachers into the spotlight, particularly those from the public sector education, requiring them to perform, often beyond their means, to deliver social and policy expectations and account for how well they do what they do.

Traditionally, teachers in Asia have been viewed as authorities of knowledge and role models, commanding social respect (e.g., Nguyen, 2009; Sullivan, 2000). In return, teachers are expected to contribute to building the future of their students with sincerity, devotion and some degree of selflessness (Alhamdan et al, 2014). While these traditional social expectations of teachers and teacher roles are still relevant in many Asian contexts (Nguyen, 2009), educational and socio-political realities of the contemporary world have brought a new set of expectations of teachers, particularly in regards to teaching English as an additional language. For instance, while English teachers in the past prepared students mainly for examination, they are now expected to equip them with communicative resources needed for their functioning as global citizens. In particular, education policymakers expect that English teachers work towards transforming schoolchildren into active agents who will effectively participate in a globalized economy and contribute to national economic development. For this, English teachers are supposed to possess advanced levels of English proficiency and pedagogical knowledge, particularly in the principles and practices of communicative language teaching (CLT), which has attained the status of a global pedagogy, and to keep up-to-date with educational technologies to be able to work with children who are increasingly becoming digital natives. Education authorities believe that teacher ability to perform these roles requires monitoring through government mechanisms and media surveillance in a corporatized system of education (Cohen, 2010). Furthermore, teacher accountability needs to be ensured by examining student performance on designated tests of local and global standards and comparing school performance both intra-nationally (e.g. Australia's National Assessment Program for Literacy and Numeracy, NAPLAN) and inter-nationally (e.g. Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development's Program for International Student Assessment, PISA). Student performance can also be linked to teacher remuneration. In Bangladesh, for example, the Government is considering linking non-government school teachers' monthly payment order (MPO) to quality of education and pass rates of institutions on national school-leaving examinations (Byron, 2015).

In this paper we discuss teacher responses to and strategies for dealing with these growing social pressures, drawing on evidence from a number of Asian countries. We argue that although exercising agency appears to be an important aspect of this response, the self-exertion can be seen as a default choice for teachers given that macro-level policy actors have transferred the onus of policy implementation to schools and teachers without providing for on-going teacher learning and professional support.

We organize the paper in the following ways. First, we discuss English language policies in a number of Asian countries, which have arguably responded to globalization. We then examine the extent to which various Asian polities have developed qualified English teachers to enact these policies. This examination creates the space for introducing teacher agency in the context of language policy implementation and providing examples of teachers' agentive actions from classroom practices in the next two sections. We engage in a critical reflection of teacher agency before suggesting implications of our analysis at the end.

GLOBALIZATION, ENGLISH, AND ASIA

If globalization is understood as the interconnectedness of peoples, societies and nations on a global scale, the role of English as a global language can hardly be overemphasized in this process of global interdependence. Just as globalization has influenced all aspects of contemporary life (Appadurai, 1996), English has influenced many aspects of life, directly or indirectly, in many parts of the world. English is the dominant language of communication, technology, academia, capitalism and entertainment (Crystal, 1997). Whether English is the driver of globalization or vice versa may be unclear, but it is clear that the relationship between them is symbiotic and mutually beneficial: if English provides the linguistic and communicative infrastructure to globalization, the latter promotes the cause of English by making the language imperative for participation in globalized networks, markets and resources. It is the marriage of English and globalization, whether arranged (see Phillipson, 1992) or co-incidental (Crystal, 1997), and the merger of the underlying discourses of the two (see Coleman, 2011, Crystal, 1997, Graddol, 1997, 2006, Hamid, 2010, Kachru, 1982, Pennycook, 2000, 2011) that drive individuals, groups and societies towards more English. These discourses of English and globalization can be seen as the driver of English-in-education policies in Asia.

For instance, Malaysia's national ambition for English, as stipulated in its national blueprint called Vision 2020 which aims to prepare the nation to become an industrialized nation by 2020 (Malakolunthu & Rengasamy, 2012), is noteworhty. Like its more successful neighbour, Singapore, internationalization of higher education is seen as a crucial means for Malaysia's success in a globalized world. It is expected that internationalization will benefit the nation in two ways. First, this will enable Malaysia to become an international hub of education which will attract international students and foreign currency. Second, internationalization will widen the scope of employability of local Malaysian graduates in a globalized job market. Based on this perceived role of English, Malaysia has already switched to English from Malay as the medium instruction for higher education. Malaysia had also experimented with English medium instruction policy at the primary and secondary school level for science and mathematics subjects. However, this was repealed in 2011 due to inefficient implementation, poor learning outcomes and, more crucially, political ramifications (Gill, 2012; Lee, 2014).

Although the valuation of English by Japanese authorities can be hard to gauge, the nation's engagement with English as a global language for internationalization purposes cannot be underestimated (Hashimoto, 2013). In a recent policy move, Prime Minister Abe indicated that TOEFL testing will be used "to raise the standard of English of his fellow countrymen" (Kin, 2013). It is suggested that the Japanese students will be required to take the test as a requirement for admission in tertiary institutions and graduation. The TOEFL strategy is part of a set of educational reforms for which the Mr Abe is prepared to put aside one trillion yen, although it is not clear how much of the amount will go into the TOEFL initiative.

In Vietnam, there was a growing realization by the 1990s that competence in foreign languages was a key factor in facilitating the open door policy (*Doi Moi*) and enhancing Vietnam's economic and political competitiveness in the age of globalization and internationalization. In a political move in September 2008, the Vietnamese Ministry of Education and Training (MOET) issued the "National Foreign Language 2020 Project" which emphasized foreign language education as a key driver in national development.

The project outlined goals, tasks and plans for implementing the teaching and learning of foreign languages within the education system. As part of this initiative, MOET aimed to ensure that by 2020 most Vietnamese youth who graduate from vocational schools, colleges and universities could use a foreign language (English, in practical terms) independently. This language planning goal has led to a number of changes in English language education, including increasing the teaching time devoted to English, changing textbooks, offering English as a medium of instruction programs, and training and retraining English language teachers.

The role of English in national development can be illustrated more clearly with reference to India. It is interesting that the Indian Vision 2020 documents—neither the general (Gupta, 2002) nor the educational one (Rajput, 2002) — explicitly discuss language questions in their emphasis on the "Indianization" of knowledge or on building a knowledge society in a globalizing world. This does not mean de-emphasizing the role of English in India, a key player in the Asian century. What this probably means is that policy makers do not intend to make the language the centre of ethno-political controversies like those experienced at the dawn of independence from British rule. Or, perhaps more plausibly, English is taken for granted as an Indian language, thereby foreclosing the need for further discussion. Indeed, it can be argued that India (and to some extent the Philippines) has already been reaping the benefits of English in a globalized world by establishing itself as the preferred destination of outsourcing and call centres (Bolton, 2008). Therefore, India's commitment to English can be seen as more pragmatic and outcome-oriented, which appears to be more discourse-driven for some other developing nations including Bangladesh (see Hamid, 2010).

Bangladesh is faced with the struggle of addressing the basic needs of a massive population, including food, health, sanitation and basic literacy. However, Bangladesh's commitment to English appears astounding, regardless of the practicality of investment in English (Bruthiaux, 2002). Fortunately for Bangladesh, the major language education reforms in the country have been facilitated by the regular flow of ELT aid (see Hamid, 2010). There have been a lot of English teaching and learning activities in recent years, some focusing exclusively on English whilst others being part of general education projects. Typically, the justification of these projects refers to the discourses of English and globalization and how English proficiency development can accelerate economic development of the nation. For instance, a 9-year English language project currently in operation is very explicit about Bangladesh's necessity of English in a globalized world:

> *English in Action will provide the communicative English to transform the lives of people in Bangladesh and make a major contribution to the economic development of the country [...] It will look to change the lives of up to 25 million people using new approaches to teaching and learning (Hamid, 2010, pp. 289-290).*

Similar discourses of English and national investment in English can be drawn from other Asian nations. There is a wider social perception across Asia that English is a must, the more and the earlier English is taught the better.

ENACTING MACRO-LEVEL POLICIES: ENGLISH TEACHERS IN FOCUS

The national policy discourses of English, as previously discussed, have called for policy development in a number of areas to translate the policies into action by educational institutions, teachers and students as well as parents and communities. Kaplan and Baldauf (1997, 2003, and 2005) have proposed a comprehensive framework that points out the areas where policy development as a first step to policy translation is required, including access policy, curriculum policy, materials and methods policy, resources policy, personnel policy, community policy and evaluation policy. Language teachers constitute a crucial segment of the personnel policy whose role is fundamental to the implementation of the policy for effecting language learning and language change in the expected direction.

The language planning literature has shown that teacher factors are often seen as responsible for student underachievement in English in many Asian countries (Kaplan, Baldauf & Kamwangamalu, 2011). Nunan's (2003) investigation of English teaching and learning in East Asia highlighted the issues of teacher supply and the inadequacy of teacher proficiency, skills and expertise. Inadequacy of teacher proficiency and professional capacity has affected English teaching and learning in Bangladesh (Hamid, 2010). Classroom observation, as reported and analyzed by Hamid and Honan (2012), shows that the dominant activities taking place in the primary classroom may not have a significant impact on students' proficiency development. More recent classroom research points to the co-existence of traditional and communicative teaching and learning practices arguably as a consequence of project intervention (Shresta, 2013). Nevertheless, it may not be asserted that the reported classroom practices would help achieve the project goals of English proficiency development in a significant way. In Malaysia, survey results show that two-thirds of the 70,000 Malaysian school English teachers (as well as students) are not proficient in English (*Straits Times*, 2012). Teacher English proficiency issues have affected medium of instruction policies at the university level as well, as evidenced by Ali (2013; Ali, Hamid & Moni, 2011). Similarly, Indonesia has struggled to equip English teachers with adequate levels of English proficiency and pedagogical skills (Dardjowidjojo, 2000, Kirkpatrick, 2007). The fact that there are still many English teachers who are not proficient enough to teach English subjects has been identified as one of the factors leading to students with poor English comprehension (Sunggingwati, 2009). Studies have suggested that the teachers in this context need further training in effective teaching methodologies (e.g., Lie, 2007, Renandya, 2004, Sunggingwati & Nguyen, 2013) and classroom language competence (Freeman, Katz, Garcia & Burns, 2015).

In Vietnam, there are increasing concerns about the quality of English language education. Studies indicate that the teaching of the language is fraught with many problems. For instance, after years of learning English, secondary school students do not acquire sufficient competence in English. Students seem to be structurally competent but communicatively incompetent (Le, 2007, Le & Barnard, 2009). In a study into how Vietnamese learners learn English, To (2007) found that Vietnamese learners tend to "learn by heart" (p.11). These findings support those from previous studies (Le, 2001; Pham, 2000, 2005) which claimed that Vietnamese learners of English do not seem to be provided with opportunities to communicate in English or to use English in meaningful contexts. Nguyen (2011), in her investigation of the implementation of a new language policy at a primary school in Vietnam, identified major challenges in enacting English promotion policy including teacher supply, training and professional development,

resourcing, teaching methods and materials. Several researchers (e.g., Duong, 2003, Nguyen, 2011, Nunan, 2003, Pham, 2001) have asserted that the poor quality of English language teaching is partly attributable to a lack of effective teacher training and teacher professional development.

POLICY METAMORPHOSIS: FROM PUBLIC TEXTS TO PERFORMATIVE ACTION AND THE ROLE OF AGENCY

The gap between English language policy ambitions (i.e., developing communicative competence) and the requirements of policy implementation (e.g., supporting teacher professional development) has called for the exercise of teacher agency at the local/micro level. Traditionally, language policy and planning (LPP) has been located in the macro context, recognizing the agency of political actors (Kaplan, 2011, Kaplan & Baldauf, 1997) in policy formulation. However, the past couple of decades have seen a diversification of LPP contexts, which are now located in transnational as well as sub-national spaces (Chua & Baldauf, 2011, Hamid & Baldauf, 2014). Therefore, although macro-level agency still remains crucial, the agency of actors at both narrower and wider contexts has started receiving important attention. In terms of LPP framing, we now have micro and meso together with macro contexts (Kaplan & Baldauf, 1997, 2003). Accordingly, individual agency, particularly at the micro-level— and the agency of teachers in particular—has started to receive important consideration (Baldauf, 2005, Menken & Garcia, 2010, Zhao, 2011, Zhao & Baldauf, 2012, Nguyen & Bui, 2016).

The recognition of agency at the local context is critical for the implementation of macro-level policies and policy goals. First, macro-level policy is, by definition, abstract and decontextualized which needs to be appropriated in a local context. Often the success of the policy depends on how it is interpreted, particularly by those who are involved in its implementation, and whether there are similarities between the different interpretations of policy intentions across sites and stakeholders. The dissemination of the policy may not ensure the adoption of its intended meanings and interpretations, as studies indicate that different actors assign different meanings and interpretations to the same policy (Ali, 2013, Zacharias, 2013). Second, even when there is a convergence of policy interpretations (Hamid et al, 2013), it cannot be taken as a given that teachers will embrace the policy whole-heartedly and work towards policy goals. They may resist the policy in a covert manner if policy intentions do not reflect their interests, beliefs and realities. For instance, Martin's (2005a, 2005b) ethnographic work in peripheral classrooms in Malaysia and Brunei shows that instead of taking the textbook knowledge for granted, teachers appropriate this knowledge to make it accessible to local students. This teacher mediation between policy represented by textbooks and students' realities on the ground may be characterized by accommodation, acceptance or resistance (Walford, 2001). Teachers may also work against policy intentions in circumstances where acting on the policy may not be easy due to various constraints. One familiar example can be drawn from CLT. Although national policies have adopted CLT widely, classroom research shows that what happens in the CLT classroom is different from common expectations (see Hamid & Honan, 2012).

The metamorphosis of policy from the macro to the micro context is aptly captured in Lo Bianco's (2010) conceptualizations of policy in different sites (e.g. macro, meso and micro) as "public texts", "public discourses" (or debates) and "performative action". In his

understanding, macro policies are textual artifacts which are statements of goals or intentions (Kaplan, 2011, Kaplan & Baldauf, 1997). These texts are often subjected to public scrutiny in different forums (e.g., print and electronic media) and thus become public discourses. Language policies as public texts, regardless of whether these are exposed to public debates, are not deployed as is by teachers at the local context; rather, these texts have to be transformed into performative action. As Lo Bianco (2010) explains:

> *Public texts are therefore decided instances of LP [language policy], public discourses are ongoing debates about language problems, and performances are the ongoing modeling of language forms desired and valued by speakers or writers. Performative action can reinforce or violate LP distilled in public texts or LP as suggested in prevailing discourses (p. 162).*

Lo Bianco (2010) recognizes the "relative autonomy" of the site of performative action which can either reinforce or violate macro policy intentions:

> *…language teaching becomes more than simply teachers enacting or implementing in a functional way decisions taken by curriculum authorities or education ministries. Classroom language use becomes a site, not completely autonomous and divorced from ministry or official requirements, but sufficiently separated and distinctive to count as a factor in shaping how language develops and changes (p. 156).*

Thus, teacher agency is directly linked to the policy process, which can "perform" policy in agentic ways to produce or hinder policy outcomes.

TEACHER AGENCY AND ENGLISH TEACHERS' AGENTIVE ACTIONS

The concept of agency—particularly the agency of individual actors—is increasingly becoming important in LPP (Menken & Garcia, 2010, Zhao, 2011, Zhao & Baldauf, 2012). However, the field has not adequately defined agency (see Johnson & Johnson, 2015) or embraced its complexity as understood from its various conceptualizations in social and behavioural sciences (e.g. Ahearn, 2001; Emirbayer & Mische, 1998). Agency in the sense of contextually mediated capacity to act freely (Ahearn, 2001) seems to have been given preference in empirical work, although often without providing an explicit definition.

Lin's (1999) classroom research in Hong Kong in different socio-economic contexts is a case in point. The ethnographic work illustrates how teacher agency and effort can make a difference in learning experiences and outcomes of those students whose social realities and dispositions put them at a disadvantage at school.

> *The students in Classroom D came from a disadvantaged socioeconomic background, as their counterparts in Classrooms B and C did. Like their counterparts' habitus, their habitus did not equip them with the right kind of attitudes and interest or skills and confidence in learning English. However, there were signs of their habitus being transformed through the creative, discursive agency and efforts of their teacher (Lin, 1999, p. 409).*

The author highlighted the incompatibility of cultural resources and habitus of students from disadvantaged backgrounds with the curricular expectations. She pointed that it is through the teacher's mediational work that the students' engagement in learning was ensured. The study illustrates how social expectations of English can be met by teacher agency in transforming public texts (English curriculum) into performative action (agency work) in the micro context.

Similarly, Martin's (2005a, 2005b) ethnographic research in rural classrooms in Malaysia and Brunei demonstrates the critical role of teachers and their agency. The curriculum for English and English-medium content subjects produced by central education authorities is brought to the local classroom in the form of textbooks (public texts). However, the world of the textbook is different from the students' realities on the ground, making it difficult for them to engage with the textbook knowledge. Teacher agency is called for which mediates between the textbook knowledge and the local givens. Through "safe" practices, teachers appropriate textbook knowledge in the interest of their students.

Likewise, in the context of Vietnam, teachers' agency is argued to be imperative for pedagogical transformations. Within the context of Vietnam where educational reforms were implemented without adequate preparation, it is critically important to foreground teachers as policy actors with agency (Bui, 2013, Phyak & Bui, 2014, Nguyen & Bui, 2016). Teachers in these studies are reported to be engaged in exploring multilingualism as cultural and linguistic resources for students' learning. They are motivated and guided to incorporate minority languages in class to maximize students' linguistic repertoires. Through working collaboratively with teachers, the scholars (Bui, 2013, Phyak & Bui, 2014) acknowledge that they simultaneously support and respond to "students' voices through applying more linguistically and culturally responsive pedagogical approaches" (Phyak & Bui, 2014, p.14) which are based on students' English abilities and needs. It can be seen that appreciating teacher agency crucially helps them interrogate and negotiate their beliefs, roles, and agencies based on their teaching experiences. It affirms that teachers could teach differently when responding to students' needs while reinterpreting and appropriating education policies. This example emphasizes the importance of teacher agency in responding to language policies that are unresponsive to linguistic and cultural diversity.

Teacher agency emerges in English-medium classrooms in Indonesia, as reported by Zacharias (2013). In order to create an elite cohort of Indonesian citizens who would navigate successfully in a globalized economy, the government introduced the so-called International Standard Schools (ISS) where English as a medium of instruction gradually replaces Bahasa Indonesia. However, being educated in Bahasa Indonesia and not having the opportunity to develop high levels of proficiency in English, the content teachers were placed in a situation where they struggled to teach in the foreign language. Pressed by the policy dictates and having limited choices, the teachers in the research site exerted themselves in innovative ways to manage English-medium teaching. For instance, Zacharias (2013) quoted a computer science teacher who bought a Samsung X2 phone and "made a personal technology leap":

> *When I teach, I open google translate in my desktop. So whatever I want to say to the students, I type it into the google translate. I like google translate because it also includes the pronunciation. So, it helps me. Especially when the electricity is down and I cannot use my desktop.*

> *That's why I buy this phone. Too expensive for me, actually. So I can just type the phrase/word I wanna say in Indonesian and then, I can see and listen how to say it. For example 'pindah ke atas'[let's move upstairs]. But the problem is when there is a connection problem, then I use Indonesian (Mr Eko, 2 April 2012) (p. 101)*

Zacharias (2013) interpreted the use of technology by this teacher in the following way:

> *Here, I found Mr E's buying Samsung X2, a phone that is way above his pay grade, as an act in activating his agency in surviving the EMI policy. It helps him to navigate his teaching around the expectation to use English as well as local constraints (occasional power blackouts) (p. 101).*

As the researcher interprets, the teacher illustrates his agency by taking an agentic action (i.e., buying an expensive device for educational use). While the action is inspired, ironically, by an unsupportive policy (EMI), the teacher is also driven by the interests of his students to ensure their learning in the EMI class.

Ali's (2013) research illustrates teacher agency in higher education in Malaysia where the introduction of English-medium instruction in response to globalization has created challenges for teachers and students due to low levels of English proficiency (Ali, Hamid & Moni, 2011). Although the policy itself was interpreted in different ways by different teachers, there was a general consensus that content teachers were not responsible for explicit teaching of English, for which they had neither the time nor the expertise. Nevertheless, some teachers made extra efforts and covered language in their content teaching in the interests of students. The agentive engagement of one teacher was particularly remarkable who perceived the struggles of the students in learning content through English, in which they had limited proficiency, from the experience of one of his own children who also had had limited English but had been set to study medicine. Viewing the students as his own children, he provided English language support so that learning became meaningful to them.

Teacher agency can also be observed in the context of teacher learning and professional development. As previously discussed, the introduction of early English or English as a medium of instruction in Asian countries has not seen commensurate policy initiatives for teacher professional development (Hamid, 2010, Nunan, 2003). The inadequacy of teacher learning and skill enhancement has left English teachers in a precarious situation in dealing with the mounting pressures from stakeholders including policymakers, employers, students, parents and the media. For instance, it is argued that Vietnamese university graduates' poor performance in an Intel recruitment in 2008, in which only seven per cent of the 2000 information technology students met the required standards of the English language, might have triggered a massive overhaul of the English language teaching and learning in the country by launching the 2020 project, as previously discussed. While the government initiative taken in response to globalization to create opportunities for Vietnam in a globalized economy is laudable, it is unclear whether the policy will succeed in creating an army of qualified English teachers to cater for the English learning population country (Le, 2012, Le & Do, 2012, Nguyen, 2011). Under these circumstances,

English teachers in some countries are found to exercise their agency in enhancing their professional skills on their own, not relying on government-provided teacher learning opportunities. For instance, Shahab (2013) explores, through a narrative inquiry, a group of English teachers' self-initiated learning activities in Pakistan where government provisions for teacher skill enhancement are minimal, if not non-existent. She interviewed 15 secondary level teachers—five from each of the three streams of education including public-sector general education, religious (madrasa) education and privately funded English-medium education—to understand their self-initiated activities for improving English proficiency, content knowledge and pedagogical skills. Although the study shows that teacher engagement with learning activities was mediated by institutional support (for instance, the private sector English-medium institutions provided more encouragement to their teachers than the two other sectors), teacher initiation of the learning itself is noteworthy.

Similarly, Nguyen (2008) explored "self-directed learning" of a group of English teachers teaching at the tertiary level in Vietnam. The motivation behind such learning was the inadequacy of pre-service and in-service training opportunities for English teachers in the country. Although the study does not divide the kinds of professional development activities (e.g., workshops and action research) that the teachers were engaged in into government-provided and self-initiated categories, the teacher interview data showed that self-direction, which underlies teacher agency, was an important characteristic of teacher activities for professional development.

AGENCY OR POLICY DUMPING?

In the examples of English teachers' agency work discussed above, we can see the inadequacy of macro-level policies and the lack of support for teachers that would equip them linguistically and pedagogically for developing students' proficiency in English. The absence of teacher support and learning means that teachers are required to exercise their agency for the benefit of their students. While it is rightly argued that macro-level policies need to recognize the agency of teachers in the micro context (Ali, 2013, Menken & Garcia, 2010, Zacharias, 2013), the background of teacher agency as described in this paper raises the question of whether teacher agency involves free choice for teachers or whether it is the predictable consequence of the avoidance of responsibility by policy actors at the macro level. This is not suggesting that teachers do not have a choice. Indeed, teachers who are found to be exercising their agency could also have given lip service to the policy (see Zacharias, 2013, for example) as "passive technicians" (Kumaravadivelu, 2003), without reflecting on policy outcomes for their students. However, the teachers, as referred to in this paper, probably considered themselves "transformative intellectuals" and acted in the interests of their students, even while dealing with policies that apparently did not make sense, or for which they had not been fully equipped from a pedagogical or resource point of view (Kaplan & Baldauf, 2003). In other words, although ambitious English language policies have been initiated at the macro level in the wake of globalization, the pre-requisites of policy implementation (as described in Kaplan & Baldauf's 2003 policy development framework) are not fully addressed for reasons related to resource constraints or a lack of political will. This creates a case of policy (goals) without planning (action) (Kaplan & Baldauf, 1997), as described by Pearson (2014) with regard to language-in-education policy implementation in Rwanda. Under these circumstances, the onus of policy implementation is transferred to the meso and micro

contexts. It is through their agency that English teachers "deliver themselves up to policy" (Ball, 2009, p. 87).

Teacher agency resulting from the absence of planning at the macro-level policy has been substantiated by Hamid (2010) with reference to Bangladesh. English language teaching programs and educational reforms in this country have been significantly influenced by donor-funded English language projects. In the late 1990s one such project called English Language Teaching Improvement Project (ELTIP) was jointly funded by Government of Bangladesh and the British Department for International Development (DfID) which introduced CLT in the country (Hamid, 2010, Hamid & Baldauf, 2008, Hunter, 2009). When the first phase of the project came to an end in 2002 and the DFID did not want to fund the project in the second phase, the Government of Bangladesh was in a dilemma: It did not want to discontinue the good work that the project had done but, at the same time, it was unable to manage external funding. Ultimately, the government decided to finance the project from internal resources. The seven education boards and the National Curriculum and Textbook Board (NCTB) were dictated to pump money into the project, even though these institutions did not have a revenue-generating capacity. Despite the uncertainty of funding, project staff, including teacher trainers, continued their work without receiving salaries for months. This policy transfer from the macro level to meso and micro levels can be called "policy dumping" in which traditional policy actors take credit for policy initiation, but the onus of implementation is left with those at the lower strata of the policy hierarchy. We would argue that the examples of teacher agency that we have discussed in this paper reflect the role of teachers as transformative intellectuals who are committed to policy action despite the contextual constraints and the inadequacy of professional and social support. However, what we call agency can also be seen as a result of policy dumping—the macro-level actors not taking full responsibility for policy implementation and inviting teacher agency to fill the gap by self-exertion.

CONCLUSIONS

This paper has examined the implications of the globalization of English and the growing use of English in Asian societies for English teachers' professional development and practice. We have examined how globalization has led education policymakers in Asian countries to subscribe to the dominant discourses of English for internationalization of higher education, participation in a globalized economy and national economic development. Consequently, Asian educational policy response to globalization has resulted in introducing more English either at an earlier stage of the curriculum or making it a medium of instruction or both. As we have argued in the paper, the policy reforms have exerted tremendous pressure on English language teachers who are expected to live up to social and policy expectations often with little or limited pedagogical training and support. While English teachers in many Asian classrooms are found to exercise their agency to meet policy demands, their agency can also be seen as a case of self-exertion in the absence adequate professional and pedagogical support. We would argue that this emerging agency is the result of policy dumping at the macro-level—i.e., educational policymakers not paying due attention to the requirements of policy implementation but dumping policies to educational institutions and teachers for their implementation. Thus, the teacher agency that we have reported in the article drawing on works from a number of education contexts in Asia is interesting because agency is not exactly an exercise of

freewill; rather, teachers are, in a way, forced to exert themselves if they wanted to help students to meet policy goals.

While it is encouraging to see innovative teaching practices as a result of teachers exercising their agency, it also needs to be emphasized that the implementation of policies should not be contingent on teacher agency in the sense of self-exertion. Although some teachers may be willing to follow this path to meet the needs of students viewing themselves as transformative intellectuals, not all teachers will necessarily take this direction in their teaching practice. In fact, it is also common to see teachers either resisting policies or subverting policy intentions, as reported by Ali (2013) and Zacharias (2013). Therefore, policymakers need to pay attention to the requirements of policy implementation, particularly with reference to personnel policy including teacher training and ongoing professional development in the light of changing expectations of English teachers and teacher roles. As we have highlighted in the article, if English language policies have produced only modest outcomes in many of the Asian societies, it is largely due to teachers and teacher education and professional development issues. Therefore, English language policies should be informed not just by what societies needed, from the linguistic point of view, to meet the challenges of globalization but also whether policies can be translated into action taking into account various requirements including teachers, teacher skill development and expertise.

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From extraction to knowledge reproduction: The impact of Australia's development awards on Uganda and Mozambique

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With the renewed emphasis on higher education as an agent for development and economic growth, Australia has joined other Western countries in contributing to increasing the intellectual workforce of Africa[1]. While Australia has provided scholarships to Africans for more than three decades, since 2005, the Australian Government has dramatically increased its commitment to invest in Africa's future by providing a series of development awards scholarships for Africans to advance their learning in priority areas including agriculture, food security, water and sanitation, public health, energy and resource management. These scholarships are the largest component of Australia's total aid to Africa. However, very little empirical research has been done to determine the impact of Australia Africa Long Term scholarship awards (AALT). This paper examines this new African intellectual workforce by presenting qualitative data from alumni engaging in this new flow of knowledge mobility. Experiences of public health graduates of Australia scholarship awards from Uganda and Mozambique will be discussed. Overall, we argue that that the Australia Africa scholarships program has a positive impact on alumni and is viewed favourably by alumni's employers and their families. However, there are many challenges and struggles which can impede alumni's success in bringing forth the change they might envisage. Some of these factors include: finding a job at a suitable level, implementing their new knowledge, using their new skills and, generally, reintegrating into their home country (both socially and professionally).

Keywords: Australia Africa scholarships; alumni network; development aid; reintegration

[1] It is important to note here that 'Africa' is itself a construction; a geo-political entity that comprises of 54 countries and even more cultural groups. However, African perspectives may be a useful term albeit one that involves a certain amount of strategic generalization.

INTRODUCTION

Since the 1960s Australia has given government scholarships for African students to study postgraduate degrees in Australia. Australia is not alone in providing scholarships as part of development assistance (i.e. development aid). According to Varghese (2008) many governments fund international scholarship programs as a form of development assistance. One of the important premises behind the awards has been to equip Africans with the skills and knowledge to promote economic growth. Additionally, proving scholarships as aid could be regarded as addressing presumed shortages of highly skilled workers. However, an alternative goal of the Australian scholarship program is to shape collective impressions and perceptions of Australia. In this framework, one might see the schemes in postcolonial terms as part of 'soft power'.

We note that Australia itself had a colonial (British) heritage and, in some ways, it could be considered part of the global South (see Connell, 2007). However, in relation to countries in the Asia Pacific there are vestiges of a colonial assumption that it can impose its will on its neighbours. Whilst Australia does not have a direct colonial relationship to Africa, it is a 'western' country and in common with the West it has a history of exploitation of Africa's natural resources. Australia's presence in Africa relates to extractive industries (see Negin and Denning, 2011) – China too. However, arguably it is seen by Africans as a 'nice' neutral country, as opposed to France and the United Kingdom (to name a few), who are often regarded as having used and misused the continent for a long time. As a result Australia is given more leeway. There have been critics of course. The connection with removal of raw resources from Africa has been criticized by environmentalist and human rights activist groups (see Negin and Denning, 2011). Moreover, it is important to acknowledge that there is a stable inequality that is being continually reproduced in these relations and because of this poor countries are negatively impacted. In a way, Australia is trying to build a different image of itself on the African continent through such things as their scholarship programs. It is changing the discussion that people have about Australia by providing real experiences for people to talk about for generations to come. This is quite powerful, as it not only contributes to the human capital resource but, more importantly, it influences the course of national development and the nature of human resources in recipient countries.

In relation to Australian scholarships to Africa, there is still a need to round out the picture. For example, Harman (2005) states that, "comparatively little is available in the way of longer-term follow up studies of international student's education in Australian universities" (p.132). In the context of African scholarships even less has been done and most area of Australian Aid to Africa has equally been under-researched (see Cuthbert et al., 2008 and Negin & Denning, 2011). This lack of attempt to investigate the outcomes of Australia Africa scholarship graduates could be due to the fact that "AusAID does not have performance indicators to measure the outcomes of Australian Development Scholarships (ADS) in terms of students contributing to their country's development. The Australian National Audit Office (ANAO) recognizes that the measurement of ADS outcomes is difficult because of time lags in returning students making contributions to their country's development, and the difficulty of relating individual efforts to broader economic and other developmental outcomes" (ANAO, 1999, p.16). It is understandable that research in this area is methodologically challenging. For example, there is a cost involved in tracking graduates, especially international ones. There are also other factors relating to access, which might make research more difficult to execute. There is no simple

stable measurement of scholarship benefits. Generally, measuring the effectiveness of aid is complex. As others have shown, many donor countries struggle with finding a satisfactory way to really measure its impacts (see Hollway, Farmer, Reid, Denton, and Howes, 2011).

Studies that are currently done in this area tend to focus on career progression outcomes: salary, employment rank/position in organizations and so-called "multiplier" effects, such as the number of people being trained by graduates (see Cuthbert et al, 2008). Although, these forms of data could be useful they may not provide a true indicator of the extent in which alumni affect their society. Furthermore, African scholarship students are a heterogeneous group. Differences in social background are a big indicator and this can have a great impact on issues such as access to the scholarships overseas. This article adds weight to the idea that it is important to use first hand data about the impact of Australia Africa scholarship awards. It is especially important to consider recipients' accounts of their experiences of scholarships not only during the scholarship but also after their return from overseas.

Gaining a deeper understanding of how Australia Africa scholarship alumni reintegrate back into their workplace and lifeworld upon return could help the Australia government to be more effective in allocating resources. Further, stakeholders and alumni can be clearer about their expectations of scholarships as aid. Providing this multilayered view of the complex processes of transformation of alumni returnees is at the core of our study. Australian African alumni have a story to tell which is different and unique to what is currently in the literature. This will presumably affect Australia and the recipient countries. For scholarship recipients gaining a degree overseas is life-changing. The level of expectation they receive can be extremely high and the pressure to succeed (i.e. bring forth change) is concomitantly greater. This could be due to the nature of the scholarships and what the scholarships mean. Some recipients talked in terms of getting a second chance at a 'better' life, or even of being given carte blanche to start things over and to 'get things right'.

PROBLEMATIZING SCHOLARSHIPS AS AID

With vague and broad objectives comes a lack of ability to know for sure what to measure, especially as policies tends to deal in 'ambit claims'/grand abstractions. Identifying the exact objectives of the Australia Awards in Africa is not so easy to do. According to the AusAID Annual Report 2012-2013, the "fundamental purpose of the Australian aid program is to help people overcome poverty. This also serves Australia's national interests by promoting stability and prosperity both in our region and beyond" (p. ix). The Outcomes Evaluation of the In-Africa Australian Development Scholarships Management Program (IAAMP, 2012) states that the goal of the Australia Awards in Africa is "contributing to achievement of MDGs in Africa while promoting Australia as an active partner in African development" (p.9). The ANAO (2011) report claims the objective of providing scholarships to study in Australia is to (1) "promote sustainable development and excellence in education, by providing educational, research and professional development opportunities to support the growth of the region; and (2) build enduring links at the individual, institutional and country levels" (p.56). As demonstrated above, over time the objectives of the Australian scholarship have varied from poverty alleviation,

sustainable development, individual empowerment, and links to Australia to development impact. All of the above have not been properly measured. Thus, it is very difficult to determine the 'real' effectiveness of the scholarship program, and/or have a baseline in which to assess the outcomes/impact of the scholarship awards. What complicates things even more is the fact that Australia gives scholarships to African students directly and not via a mediating source such as national governments – this could be good or bad. Perhaps our attention should be more on how "effectiveness" is defined, including who determines what is effective and how it is known to be so – a discussion for another time. As noted, the existing research paradigm around Australia scholarship programs focuses on outcomes rather than process (see AusAID, 2010, Cuthbert et al., 2008). This could perhaps explain the lack of research on Australian scholarships to Africa. It could also be that the Australia government does not want to know the outcomes of their massive investments in scholarships. It is believed that the vast majority of the money ends up in elite universities and local/foreign-based private contractors who are appointed to manage the awards (see Hilton, 2013).

In spite of the lack of research into feedback and consequences, aid for higher education has been a major component of the Australian aid program. According to Negin and Denning (2011) the Australia Africa scholarships are the largest component of aid to Africa reaching approximately $99 million in 2014-15. In 2012, Australia invested $334.2m in scholarships, supporting 4,900 recipients from more than 145 countries (Negin, 2014). Between 2005 and 2012 the scale up of the Africa scholarship program has increased from ten countries to more than 30, from 80 candidates to 350 (Negin, 2014). It is estimated that the 168 Masters level awards in 2011 will increase to 400 in three years (Negin & Denning, 2011). There are many critiques of this approach, mainly because "the program has struggled to prove its effectiveness, with little evidence of its impact beyond anecdotal evidence of individual success stories and self-serving indicators (such as completion of a degree as an indicator of success)" (Hilton, 2013, para 4). In addition, links between scholarships and poverty reduction has been questioned noting that scholarships do not generally target the poor and directly impact a relatively small number of people (Negin, 2014).

The transformative powers (rather the claims of such) of higher education for the individual as well as for their society are a driving force behind the hype, but one not borne out by empirical evidence. Higher education has become a crucial ingredient in the economic development game. Although, the recognition of the relationship between education and economic growth (e.g. human capital theory) has been accepted, there is really not much empirical evidence to support this link (Cuthbert et al, 2008). The theoretical and methodological fuzziness around this as well as the demonstrable connections between higher education/scholarships to study overseas is often asserted and benefits to the individual and community is rarely established (Cuthbert et al, 2008). Additionally, some of the literature presents scholarships as 'neutral' in the sense of empowering individuals and/or being an investment (in human capital terms) in the recipient country. However, we know that 'aid' is not a neutral process (see Alger, 2014; Anderson, 1996). Historical imbalances and the flows of knowledge and capital between developed and underdeveloped countries play a role in maintain the status quo.

Still, there is a massive promotion/sell out of the higher education dream. As the World Bank (2002) put it, "tertiary education can offer better opportunities and life chances for low-income and minority students, thereby increasing their employability, income

prospects, and social mobility and decreasing income inequality. The norms, values, attitudes, ethics, and knowledge that tertiary institutions can impart to students contribute to the social capital necessary for constructing healthy civil societies and socially cohesive cultures, achieving good governance, and building democratic political systems" (p.5). This could be the driving force behind Australia's investment in scholarships. Based on our study there is some evidence for the hype but also there are reasons for the lack of well-established links between education overseas and better opportunities.

The above authors are in their right to point to these downfalls of higher education and the scholarship programs, reinforcing even more the need to better understand alumni experiences and stories in order to help reshape the discourse around scholarship as development aid.

METHODOLOGY

This qualitative study makes an important contribution because it tells us more about the values, experiences and cultural factors that play out in concrete situations, in this case Ugandan and Mozambican alumni. This study explores the perspectives of Australian-funded masters level alumni from Uganda and Mozambique on the outcomes of their scholarships. This study is part of a larger research project on the impact of scholarships on strengthening the health system in Africa. The research study employed both in-depth qualitative and quantitative research methods; however, the data presented here is based on the qualitative component of the study. This paper examines the experiences of thirty-one Ugandan and Mozambican returned scholars who studied in the health sector from seven Australian universities (2000-2013). The reason for the year restrictions is to provide enough time for proper conceptualization and measures of outcomes as many studies done in Australia "deal with the graduates' immediate post-graduation reflections on the study experience itself and the transition back" (Cuthbert et al, 2008, p.13).

Purposive sampling (Patton, 2002) was used to select information-rich cases so in-depth and rich analysis of main concepts of the study could take place. The face-to-face semi-structured interviews took place in-country and were based on the individual's accessibility, the time that they would like to be interviewed, the responses and the findings of the questionnaire. It was important to aim for an equal amount of men and women represented in the interview stage to ensure a gender balance in the responses (n=31). There were sixteen females and fifteen males[2] ages 32-41 with majority being in their mid-thirties. Each participant was given a fictitious name to maintain anonymity, and is identified by a pseudonym (or a code/number) rather than their real name.

A thematic qualitative analysis was used to construct meaning and create conceptual patterns across participants' responses. The reoccurring ideas, thematic commonalities and contradictions which have surfaced from the various narratives are presented here. An inductive approach to the data analysis was taken whereby findings emerged from data through the discovery of patterns, themes and categories (Patton, 2002). Further the findings are presented in a syncretic fashion (not treated sequentially by country). The

[2] A gender-orientated analysis will not be the focus of this paper as a subsequent account is planned focussing upon this aspect.

focus is upon giving voice and space to the alumni narratives (i.e. their experiences and stories).

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

Some of the recurring themes derived from the participants' narratives are presented below. The following section highlights alumni's experiences with the Australian scholarship awards and discusses the effect on their livelihood, families, friends and their community upon return. The theme and sub-themes were chosen to categorize the big issues and to help shape the discussion.

Scholarships as aid – Individuals' ambivalences around lack of support

When asked, all of our participants agreed that scholarships were a good form of giving. Various reasons were given by participants, ranging from scholarships having multiplier effects to scholarships are good at exposing people to other systems (which benefits not only the individual, but also their country). Others think that it is a way to ensure sustainability. However, respondent UPKM's comment captures the sentiment of many participants. He states:

> *…Aid through scholarships leads to change in people's thinking and attitude, which is more important than bringing money to a village… So, while resources are a big problem in Africa, it is not as big a problem as their mindset, and the attitude that people have. So aid that ends up leading to change of mindset and understanding, in my opinion… achieves more than the aid that comes that's simply changing infrastructure (UPKM).*

Interestingly, some think a scholarship to study overseas is a good form of aid because it decreases corruption, as they believe their government would not have utilized the money effectively or in a better way. As one participant put it, "…it's [scholarships to study overseas] expensive. But I know even if you gave it to my country as money, probably it's not better utilized" (UJOM). In a way these scholarships divert resources, funds, tension and energy away from corrupt governments who would have frittering it away and ties it up with the 'good education process' instead. Similarly, all participants like the fact that their government was not in charge (but involved in the process) of selecting candidates. Many think if their government was in charge of selecting participants it would have been difficult for them to apply, to have access to the appropriate information to apply, hence not transparent, nor fair. As UIAF puts it "I think the government not being involved in the selection process is good. …if for instance it's the government involved in selection, you can never be certain that the selection is actually free and fair". The question of whether African governance is part of the problem, and that it is okay to by-pass it, is an interesting one to ponder.

Remarkably, nearly all of our participants would like the government to be involved upon return in supporting them during the period of reintegration. We found that too often returnees struggle to find a suitable job upon return even whilst there are shortages in their area of speciality. Participants reported a lack of understanding from their own government about the purpose of the Australian scholarships and the potential of returnees. Alumni advocated for better understanding and support from their government both with adjusting

back and building human capacity in the country. On the one hand, participants have doubts about the efficiency and their government's ability to use aid effectively, and on the other hand they still believe their government should become more involved. We have labelled this phenomenon "popular rational ambivalence". We acknowledge that it is a theory-in-formation, and its development will depend upon other investigators deepening our empirical knowledge in this area. It is important not to reinstate a 'West is superior' view by default here. Western nations also struggle to hold the confidence of their populations. One could argue that complaints about underinvestment or lack of government infrastructure bedevil most nations.

There has been some support in the literature for Australia to provide in-country scholarships in Africa for students to do undergraduate and postgraduate degrees and some in our study support this view (see Negin & Denning, 2011). The Australian government is currently funding short-term training programs in country and they have been successful. However, many would not support the Australian government giving scholarships to study degrees in their country. One reason for this apparent contradiction is that they felt that the level of access to up-to-date books and journal articles, fast internet, and to a computer and printer available to students in Australia is not available to students in their country and that "everyone who is doing their Master's should be able to experience that" (UNCF). They cited examples of students who were unable to finish a two-year Master's degree because the lecturers were not available to give lectures, and the course books were not ready. All the above indicated a failing bureaucracy which delayed completions. There have been stories of students sometimes taking four years or more to finish a two-year Master's degree. Some scholars and alumni may advocate for more government involvement. However, this would presume that the governments were not actually able to deliver on their intentions.

We can understand why alumni feel the way they do about scholarships. The ambivalence about poor organizational aspects and the lack of resources have to be given some weight as experience-based criticisms. Especially so when we might expect a more sanguine view as part of a positive bias resulting from the participants' gratitude at being granted opportunities to study abroad.

The pace at which donors want development and change to occur is another issue that came up. The pace at which one wants to instil development is quite different from the pace of the system in which 'messengers' of change (i.e. alumni) have to work in. Not surprisingly, the national context changes more slowly. It is not an easy task to instil change, especially at an institutional level. It is hard enough for alumni trying to maintain a balance between what they are willing to compromise over and what is needed in order for them to fit in a system which seems unable to accommodate their new way of thinking and doing things (see Amazan, 2011). There is a balancing act in trying to maintain a workable space where they can be happy and function well without losing focus. There is some personal 'wear and tear' that comes with the continuous presence of forced compromise.

Importantly we found, there is a discourse in 'scholarships as aid' which places the individual at the core of change, with the all the burdening of individuals that this implies. This 'self-driven' change is a major problem of the paradigm of scholarships as aid. It places the heavy weight of change and economic growth on the individual, knowing very

well that the individual needs a conducive environment and well-resourced support to bring forth any expected changes. When they are granted scholarships recipients are often made to be/feel solely responsible for change. This was quite evident in our data. The predominant view was that change is primarily an individual process. However, there were compounding factors. Many felt they faced challenges such as resistance to them in their workplace. This solo approach to change can be inspiring in some environments, but, given the lack of social and organizational support, it is also often too much of an individual burden.

As one participant put it, "applying new knowledge and skills… was just a self-driven thing" (UBAF). Alumni felt as if they had to make the running. The point here is that just giving them the skills is never going to be enough, and it is not going to necessarily secure the final outcome. It is what they *do* with these skills that is decisive in the last instance.

Impact

The level of impact varies from one participant to the next – from individual accomplishments to national or community-wide accomplishments. Some of the participants were able to put their skills and what they have learned to use, however that was dependent on where they work, when they returned home, and also the time when jobs are advertised. Some of the participants contributed to major developmental health changes in their country. They participated in major development strategies and interventions in the area of TB and HIV. These were vital in reducing opportunistic infections. Some recipients were also part of initiating International Classification of Diseases (ICD-10), training doctors, contributing to building the human and research capacity within the health sector and other health service improvements. For instance**,** at the time when TB was declared a national emergency in Mozambique (around 2005), one alumnus spearheaded some very effective interventions in trying to reduce the volume of patients and increasing the possibility of patients being cured.

Upon return, another female participant (MACF) led a team of people from various areas and ministries to help combat a strain of avian influenza. She was appointed to lead a team to come up with a contingency plan for Mozambique to fight avian influenza, and ran a Joint Contingency Plan for Avian Influenza. Also, under her leadership, a strategy for water and sanitation including food safety was put in place.

Alumni are also involved in the change around the way people with HIV and AIDS are perceived in their society. For instance one female Ugandan participant (UJWF) was part of a team who created a reproductive health program for HIV positive women. The new approach of these clinics was to look at HIV positive women as human beings with children, husbands and family who care for them, not just HIV positive patients. She also did some research on HIV positive women and their babies to support this approach of looking at the HIV positive women, "...as a whole person, not just what they have."

A few of the participants felt unable to identify their most significant accomplishments. However, this did not mean that they did not have an impact upon their return. Some said, perhaps too modestly, that they found it difficult to know whether they have made any impact at all. This could be due to various reasons, for instance, it could be due to the, in some cases, constant change of jobs amongst this group. This led to not having enough time in one place to really consolidate changes. However, one female participant (MACF)

found this question difficult to answer because, "I don't have a habit of quantifying my achievement." This is a very important statement because many times donors are too busy trying to quantify their impact that they overlook the individual struggles. This is near to the crux of the problem. Some of the outputs of individuals, and the outcomes for communities, are not to be reduced to one or two simple measures. Thus this paper joins with other work in the area in believing that it is difficult to quantify impact of the Australian scholarship Awards. Despite the diffuse nature of the effects we feel, along with the majority of our respondents, that these scholarship programmes *do* make a difference not only at the individual family level, but at the level of their community.

Even those who found some post-scholarship aspects frustrating retained a general belief in education and the link to national development in the broadest sense. All participants acknowledged the difference the scholarship made to their career.

It is often hard to see oneself (and one's trajectory) from 'the outside', as it were. The balance between stressing individual agency, versus the credit being owed to the schemes, is a more complex topic. Many respondents thought about this and it remained an unresolved area for them. For example, some had mixed feelings about whether the scholarship got them to where they are or whether they could have progressed anyway without the scholarship. This could be partly due to the types of candidates selected (i.e. ambitious, driven), and/or due to a combination of their personality and work experience. As one male participants put it:

> *…somehow I believe I could have progressed, yeah, but I think the scholarship gives that small hint of quality that might miss … For me I think I could have reached but maybe I could have struggled much more, but maybe 80% I think I could have reached. With the scholarship definitely it's 100% (MRNM).*

One way of putting this is that the scholarship provided the potential for both personal and local change, but it did not provide guarantees. In one sense, the scholarship smoothed the way rather than producing complete achievements. According to one female participant, "if I didn't have this degree I wouldn't be able to cope at work–might get the job, but wouldn't be able to cope with the work" (MNCF).

Perhaps the difference, then, is not that without the scholarship alumni would not have gotten where they are (especially for the people who had senior level positions prior to the scholarship), but that the scholarships created a different pathway (possibly better, easier) to success, or what participants regarded as success. This alternative pathway could be said to make more of a difference in the quality of life of alumni.

Resistance and persistence

As suggested above, many participants have encountered difficulties and challenges in implementing their skills and knowledge. Many of them did not implement their skills in a direct way, but indirectly (e.g. ways of thinking, management skills, and etcetera). Participants talked about finding ways to apply their technical skills and knowledge. This was not always easy. Part of the difficulty lay in dealing with the internal relations of the system. This is what MSPF has to say:

> *…in every level of the system you will not always be able or be allowed to do what you think is right. So I've been struggling because I have my technical knowledge well organized and I know how I am supposed to do things. But the way the system wants things to be done sometimes does not allow for me to apply my technical knowledge. So I do apply it most of the time, but not the way I want to… I have to conform with the system, even though I keep trying.*

As expressed by the above participant, the will is there, but there are certain limitations that are out of alumni's control which put restrictions on what they are able to achieve.

> *…when you come back you always think that you do have lots of knowledge to give, but sometimes people think that it's someone that is going to take my job or, she knows more than me, and all these things. … Some people they don't want to have someone that has got more knowledge than you. And…sometimes you need to deal with lots of frustration because you think that you can give a lot, but people, they are not happy to receive a lot, so it takes me time to adapt… (MPSF).*

Many have expressed the same sentiment. There is a form of resistance that is embedded in insecurities of others. In one sense we could understand how they felt (partially) threatened by a better-qualified returnee. In discussing the attitudes of those who had not gone overseas, some of our respondents reported that they experienced a veiled hostility from others. They expressed frustration that it was often difficult to convince co-workers that they wanted to share the knowledge and skills they had obtained overseas. This was exacerbated in cases where the supervisor was less qualified then the alumni and/or not qualified enough to understand suggestions and new ideas offer by returnees.

Some participants believe the resistance from their colleagues could come from the fact that many did not have to compete to get their job once returning from study abroad. The lack of competition or transparent process to get a job could be contributing to these sentiments from their colleagues. As one participant, who got her job directly from the Minister of Health, put it, "…when it is the Minister that indicates you for the position, there is a group of people that will not believe that you are there because you deserve to be" (MPGF). This is an important point worth paying attention to; if the selection process (or lack thereof) for a job or a senior position does not seem to be fair and transparent, then it is understandable that their colleagues feel the way they do, especially if they are unable to get the same or similar opportunities to study abroad or upgrade their skills.

Similarly, MYMF got her job as the head of the Health Department immediately after returning (as did MNCF). MYMF basically presented her new qualification and they assigned her to be the Head of the Public Health Department. Although getting the job was easy, she, like others in our sample, struggled afterwards in her work place.

> *…the work was good, but the environment in my office was not that good, as you can imagine, because I was coming from Australia after one and a half years, and there were people there working and aiming to be the head of the Health Department (MYMF).*

Again, the process by which MYMF got her position created a hostile and difficult environment for her to work in. This pattern seems to be common with those receiving senior level positions upon their return (e.g. MYMF, MPGF) and amongst the earlier cohorts. For some it was not as easy to get jobs on return anymore which was perhaps counterintuitive.

Professional jealousy was also mentioned. However, those who worked with colleagues who had also received some sort of degree overseas experienced much less of this. Colleagues of alumni mainly wanted to learn and for alumni to teach them. Professional jealousy is not uncommon in other situations, and increasingly the competitive elements of the labour market can be intensified under neo-liberalism. Many African economies are following global trends in moving (or lurching) towards neoliberalism (see Connell, 2013).

This trend intersects with the scholarships as aid programmes in both restructuring inter-country relations and in remaking their labour markets. One obvious effect of this in interpersonal terms could be increased competitive individualism even expressed as professional jealousy. This in itself is a barrier to the snowball effect that is sometimes envisioned and/or expected by donors. This is a problem to ponder. Although alumni had an orientation to prepare them for some of the challenges before returning home, it is still very difficult to manage the aforementioned issues in daily life with all the complexities of personalities and personal histories.

Settling back into the system at home was more challenging for some than others. Some found it challenging to not have other co-workers who they now regarded as not having the same holistic level of understanding of issues as themselves. Here is a quote from a female participant from Mozambique explaining why it was a challenge for her to settle back into the system in her home country, and how she coped:

> *I must confess, it was really hard. It took me about I think only end of last year [returned in August 2012] I really started to ease… into the system. I was working within…private and multinational...things flow in a different speed. Whereas within the government, even if ...you do all you are supposed to do then you have to depend on mechanisms, not only people because ...but the mechanisms are so difficult. So I had a lot of trouble... when I got into that system ...I got frustrated for a while and then I realized that I had to go with the flow and understand what happens and then try to change wherever I could and that's how I'm surviving (MSPF).*

This pattern of experiencing difficulties upon return is common throughout the interviews. This could be explained by the bureaucratic and/or inflexible nature of the system in which alumni have to operate in. It could also be due to individuals in institutions who fear for their jobs and are insecure that someone who is educated overseas could take their job. It could also be explained by the fact that returnees/alumni desired more of themselves, their colleagues and the system. As one participant put it, "...seeing how things are done there and seeing how things are done here and then you begin to desire a certain standard of performance and accountability..." (UAAF).

From extraction to knowledge reproduction

It is challenging for participants to go overseas to gain new knowledge, new ways of doing things – a change in perspectives and to return back working in/for a system which has remain the same, which has not changed, and which can sometimes feel even more rigid for the returnees.

Some of the participants struggled to break through in their workplace with new ideas and new ways of approaching things. After trying multiple times to get others to appreciate, accept or understand their new ideas and perspectives, eventually, one or a combination of the following happens:

(1) After trying many times for years in one place they gave up and just do things the way everyone is happy with.
(2) Leave the job all together and go work somewhere (e.g. private, bilateral/multilateral organizations) were their ideas and new perspective will more likely be appreciated or a paid more for the similar service
(3) Stay in their job (for whatever reason) and little by little try to sneak in their ideas.
(4) A rare group was able to get support from colleagues after proving themselves.
(5) An even rarer group was able to get support right away mainly because there were others in their team that were educated overseas.
(6)

The above typology was created based on the findings and is supported by Amazan's (2011) research on diaspora mobility. The spectrum of this resistance/persistence scale does vary a bit from government agencies, to international organizations to NGOs. Those who work for the latter two tend to have more success with implementing their ideas. Those who are in government agencies tend to have success with implementing their skills if they are at senior level positions. Those who are being managed by supervisors that did not have an international experience tend to have more of a difficult time transitioning new ideas in or bringing them forward. This supports the training of multiple members, if not all, members of a particular group/team at a time in order to maximize the institutional impact/effect, which was suggested by multiple participants.

Those in category five explained their luck by the fact that they work in non-profit organization that tend to attract graduates from overseas. This is quite an interesting perspective as there is a pattern amongst those who are supported in the workplace by their supervisors who have studied overseas. There tended to be an unspoken understanding amongst them and alumni found it easier to implement new ideas and new ways of doing things–building more acceptances of their knowledge and skills. This also minimizes the professional jealousy amongst returnees and other colleagues. For instance MRNF works in a research institute with five people, where all of them have studied abroad and/or currently studying abroad, thus the level of expectation is quite similar amongst all her colleagues.

Participants who work with people who have similar experiences and qualifications overseas–more than one person with overseas skills, they reported their work being better and more productive. For instance UHAF is working with another alumnus and they found support in each other instead of seeing each other as threats. They work collaboratively and complement each other's skills at the same level in order to bring about change. UHAF and UAAF together have put in a proposal for a grant to initiate family support groups/psychosocial support for pregnant and/or breastfeeding mothers who are HIV positive.

Returnees do struggle with implementing what they have learned overseas; they face many challenges with institutional change mainly due to a rigid and inflexible system. It is not uncommon for returnees to "lose steam" and or revert to their "old ways" (see Amazan, 2011, 2014), whereby some of the effects of studying abroad in Australia are potentially eroded and/or lost. This could be a coping mechanism and/or survival strategy in order to avoid frustration or to simply maintain a level of sanity and self-preservation. Perseverance and persistence is the name of the game for returnees. There are many baby steps along the way (not necessarily forward) where alumni seek opportunities to sneak something new in – convincing one colleague here and there to buy into a new or different idea.

To be successful at implementing the skills and knowledge that alumni have learned, a conducive and supporting environment is critical. As one participant put it:

> *…to apply the knowledge and skills you have, you have to have a conducive environment. You have to be in a place where they are open to receiving your skills. So if you're in a place where they're a bit rigid, it's often hard to apply your knowledge and skills. But if you're in a place where they are flexible and you're dynamic and they are all about making change, then it's easy to apply your knowledge and skills. And you need a place where you can grow; where you can get exposed to different professionals. So it's about the organization where you're working that gives you those opportunities (UPBF).*

This sentiment was echoed throughout the interviews. Not having proper support could feel isolating and this could lead to frustration. A few of the participants were lucky to have a supportive environment to share their ideas with their colleagues. They felt more appreciated as they could see their colleagues listened to them and implemented their ideas.

Patience and time have also been cited as being important to navigating the system when trying to implement skills. Some participants' advice is to not be "*too pushy*" but also to not give up and keep trying to find ways to make things work. Sometimes leaving a current job and going to a new one was a good circuit breaker. Having a supervisor who have been overseas and/or have undertaken postgraduate training in Public Health also helped things along because s/he would have similar experiences and would be able to understand alumni's ideas and thought processes.

REINTEGRATION

Based on our study we have identified three possible reintegration processes. In a shorthand form these can be labelled: (1) adjust to the current situation, (2) readapt to the new reality, (3) do not readapt – constantly compare with overseas experience, and look for a way out.

It was suggested by some in our study that reintegration is different and is dependent on ones' previous workplace experience. Those who have returned to their previous workplace (mainly public servants), experience reintegration differently because they get a chance to test the waters so to speak with their new-found knowledge and skills. This brought them some time for testing and experimenting with what they really would like to

do without being out of work. Their previous job provides a laboratory space, a stage, if you will, to establish a new working identity, gaining confidence in their newly found knowledge and skills so when they are ready to venture off to bigger and better things they will be effective. Of course, it does not always work that way. It is evident from the data that participants had to move at least twice upon return to really find a place they really see themselves working for a long time, and even then some are not happy and continue to search for something better. Their expectations of what the degree would give them could have something to do with the constant move/search and perhaps even the urge to do something more significant, something greater for their country, building a legacy could also be driving that.

This platform could also work against them, because some participants in that situation find their previous workplace limiting. Also, they could find that their reputation and image (good or bad) before leaving could still be following them around, even though at times they want to break away from the old mould and construct new ones. Sometimes colleagues' perception of them is very hard to change. Participants who go back to their previous employer before their Master's degree found it harder, more challenging to implement change or even suggest new ideas and/or way of doing things. They found it challenging for people to accept them as having more to offer because they have changed, but their workplace have not. Breaking away from who they were prior to going overseas and establishing their new image is quite challenging. As one participant put it they,

> *…probably foresee you as just you've been away for a year and you think you can come and change this place around. But when I went to a neutral place, they were more open to ideas and more open to solutions. I guess that's why I thrived more there because… I was new to them, and they were open to ideas (UPBF).*

UPBF was struggling in her old job to bring change, but find her colleagues in her new job were willing to listen to her because they do not have a preconceived notion of her.

Competition & Saturation of qualified people

The hardest thing about coming back is not having a job, which was mainly the case for non-public servants. Alumni who left public service positions were often able to return to the same position they held prior to leaving. Overall, it took some time for participants to find a job where they can use their newly acquired skills and knowledge. Interestingly, the majority of participants quit their job without having any assurance of returning to their old job, but had confidence that they would find another job, possibly a better job, upon return. It varies from four months, three months, six months and as long as eight months. However, the early cohorts (2006, possibly prior) reported having a range of options to choose from – sometimes they had trouble picking what they want to do, which was not so with the later cohorts.

Participants who stayed in touch with their former employer cited having an easier, smooth time transitioning back into the system. They were able to keep up to date with new projects and needs of their former employer and, as a result, were invited to start up or lead new projects in different areas. Those who kept in touch were offered a position before going back which put them at ease. This is an important determining factor in reintegrating and transiting into the workforce.

There are various factors contributing to not finding a job right away. One is timing as jobs tend to be advertised at the beginning of the year. Another might be lack of access to information about job vacancies being widely available and/or advertised only internally. In the case of clinical doctors who pursuit a public health degree–lack of experience in public health was cited as a factor for not finding a job. Previous employers could not afford to employ alumni sometimes due to reduction in funding. However, several participants had difficulty finding a job because the employer thought they were overqualified–so they did not hire them. In MMQF's case, she was willing to take anything because she was looking for nearly four months and found nothing. In the other cases like UCKF she omitted her Master's degree from her CV and did not mention it during her interview. Her current employer still does not know about her Master's degree. She said, "I would be over-qualified for the job I'm doing right now and I mean I would rather be working some place as I look for opportunity instead of just sitting at home."

As stated before, the earlier cohorts had no difficulties finding a job; there were plenty of opportunities and options for them. When they returned back with a Master's degree they were recognized highly for their achievements and were rewarded with senior level jobs. The level of competition was low because there were not many professionals with Master's degrees at administrative health and those with a Master's were offered/appointed to high paying positions. Thus, it is understandable that the same level of expectation is still in existence. Many have witnessed this and hope a Master's degree overseas would give them the same level of success, however, things have changed. There are more qualified people with postgraduate degrees in Public Health from overseas and Masters in this area are more accessible in country. As a result more people are qualified at a higher level, increasing competition for senior level positions.

Some participants commented on how their field was saturated with the qualification they have obtained making it difficult to get a job in the area or use their skills and knowledge they have obtained. As one participant put it, "...the job market here is very competitive. People here are well studied and one thing I've noticed that when you're applying for a job, you're not the only one with Masters of Public Health. We have universities here that are teaching public health. It's hard to get a job" (UPBF). As a result, some alumni are finding themselves enrolling in another degree in order to compete in a job market with qualification inflation. As expressed by one participant, "…competition gets tougher and gets tougher, so people then decide to do a second master's degree" (UMKF).

Now, you need more than an international qualification to secure a job. An overseas qualification might get you through the doors, but it will not necessarily guarantee you the job like it used to. The earlier cohort reminisce about the good old days when they returned back how there were so many opportunities opened up to them, organizations would seek them out not the other way around. So, in essence, the earlier cohorts did have it easier in terms of finding a well-paying job, which met their increased expectations. Thus, the later cohorts are absolutely right in their assessment that the saturation of qualified people makes it harder for them to find a job upon return and as a result it is harder for them to meet their expectations. It is important to acknowledge here the complex issues to do with the managing of supply and demand of labour. We also recognized that some of the mechanism employed to manage that issue are ineffective.

However, to the competitive nature of the market, and also the increased number of qualified Public Health workers, it is believed by some that 'who you know' can make that difference. It is used to be that an overseas degree, an Australian degree would give you an edge, a lead when applying for a job; however, some believe that is no longer the case:

> *…it's more about who do you know; who can recommend you" (UPBF). "…I've applied to quite many [jobs] and it's really been competitive. Even getting the one [job] where I am right now was recommendation. Like someone who had gone to Australia was there and she's actually recommending me. But if it wasn't for that, I don't think would haven't a job. 'Cause I've been trying other jobs and wasn't successful (UPBF).*

This participant applied for 60 jobs and she was shortlisted for only 12 and finally got the job she is in now due to a recommendation. She is convinced that was the reason she got the job. It is important for alumni to position themselves for opportunities. Widening one's network is an important aspect of getting a top job. This finding has some implications for the Australian government's approach to alumni networks and chosen focus areas.

Alumni network

Most alumni, if not all, have maintained contact with people who were in the same cohort as them or who went to the same university. This link or bond that is formed before and/or during their candidature in Australia is maintained, and so is very strong, even after returning back home. Some have regular meetings and events outside the network to catch up and share experiences. Others would like to be more involved, but distance and time of the meetings are an issue. These regular cohort meetings have been used as a way to cope with the situation of finding a job, fitting back in the system again, giving each other support and ideas about where and what to look for and at times used to alleviate anxiety about the unknown. Many have used their cohort support network to find jobs and deal with the everyday difficulties with reintegration. As one participant put it, "…it [cohort group] helped us, really get our feet back on the ground" (UMKF).

However, the majority of the participants are not active in the Australia Alumni Network. In both Uganda and Mozambique network activities seem to have fizzled out. The reasons for this are complex and beyond the scope of this paper. Partly, it could be due to the fact that the network themselves are not being actively maintained. Organizers found that there is not that much participation in events. It is understood by the alumni that the purpose of the network is to promote the scholarship, help potential applicants by guiding them and by sharing their experiences. However that may be missing the mark. The focus of the alumni network is perhaps part of the problem. As one participant put it:

> *…the Australian government is really focused on the application process and not so much in the re-integration process. … people come back with a Master's or a PhD and what they do with their PhD is not their (Australia's) business anymore. [There] is a critical mass and most of the time it's not well… used especially by the Australian government and the Mozambican government… (MSPM).*

Thus, there is more work to be done on the follow up and re-embedding processes.

Several participants mentioned the possibility of research and small seed grants which could be a way to motivate members to participate in the network. It was also suggested that perhaps the Alumni Networks, if run properly, could be used to link up recent returnees with those who have been back for some time to help them figure out what to do, which step to take next. They could play a mentoring role. It was also suggested that the Australian government engage the alumni fresh out, as when you are fresh out you may be more willing to contribute and participate in network activities.

The Alumni Networks can definitely play a bigger role in easing the hardships and difficulties that alumni face upon return. Interactions and contacts amongst alumni can really help countries to really get the most out of their alumni as well as helping alumni themselves to build a network of support by sharing experiences and discussing challenges (work, personal, etcetera). By sharing upcoming job opportunities alumni are in better position to persist and resist whilst trying to implement their skills. This in itself could be the beginning of maintaining sustainability in the knowledge sharing/production process. As one participant put it, "I don't want to lean on Australia and lean on Australia and lean on Australia. ...You have given us a fishing rod and it's time for us to use the fishing rod" (UAAF). As noted, this evolution is complexly related to the re-calibration of the quasi-colonial relationship between Australia and its recipient countries.

The bottom line is more support is needed to strengthen the alumni networks. This could also be a way for Australia to strengthen its involvement with the countries. There needs to be more investment in building a stronger network as it is instrumental in continuing to build new way of thinking and encouraging different processes. As respondent NROM argued, proper structures need to be put in place in order to "allow more stabilization of knowledge exchange, knowledge building process" (NROM).

However, it is not only about the Australian government, it is also about the alumni. Some of the participants think the Australian government can help to support alumni initiatives and activities. However, presumably, alumni also need to be proactive and take the necessary initiative to make things happen. One could argue that they need to take the lead. Against that, work and family commitments (more so for women than men) may make this very difficult, even at times nearly impossible.

Overall, a functional network is very important to successful communication between the stakeholders; governments, alumni, current students and potential students. However, networks that wax and wane bring compounding problems. The irregularities of meetings and under-resourcing do not help with keeping everyone in the loop. The importance of building the Alumni networks in the country is critical, especially when it is coupled with the alumni's drive and focus toward change on the ground.

CONCLUSION

In general terms, we re-state that Australian scholarship awards had a positive impact on African alumni's livelihood. On the whole, they were also viewed favourably by employers, family, friends and community. Many respondents experienced promotions

and pay rises due to their overseas degree. Almost all respondents stated that their experience in Australia had changed their practice and their views.

There is strong evidence to suggest the Australian scholarship awards contribute to changes in the way alumni think about things both in their professional and social life. There are many obstacles and challenges that the alumni deal with on a regular basis whereby a support network is needed for them to know that they are not alone, and that there are others fighting the same fight. The will and drive of Alumni may fade away if they get isolated from each other and/or if they feel they are alone in bringing change. The Alumni Network can be used as a space to empower and build up alumni's resilience to continue 'fighting the good fight'. Again, this is a two-way street and the full benefits depend partly upon personal agency. The alumni need to take the lead, and to be proactive in changing their circumstances.

The main challenges encountered by returnees were concerned with implementation of skills and difficulties in finding a job where they can use their knowledge and skills acquired. There was a level of frustration because the majority are in jobs where their training is not related to their current position or role. Thus, there is a mismatch between their knowledge and skills acquired and the local realities. Thus, there are unintended blockages at the implementation stage when people return to their home country and meet resistance or even disguised hostility. They struggle to get back into the local way and sometimes feel that they have to be careful to not alienate others. It was also found that the national and departmental policies and bureaucratic control were big indicators in alumni success. Clearly, individual qualifications and expertise are not enough on their own to bring about wider change. Further we should remind ourselves of the previously mentioned complexities around the supply and demand of labour, and the limits of individual's effectiveness in relation to national economy.

Overall, participants in our study strongly believe the Australia Africa scholarships contributed substantially to the improvement and quality of their life. However, the extent to which the Australia Africa scholarship increased access to those who would have otherwise not had the opportunity to study in Australia and/or overseas is questionable. Without a doubt, there are many benefits (e.g. lasting bonds) of providing scholarships for students to study overseas. However, the credentialist inflation in qualifications in Public Health, and the fact that many alumni struggle to find a job in their area of speciality, is a set of problems that still needs addressing.

It is difficult to say for sure the degree to which participants attribute their accomplishments/ or successes directly to receiving an Australian Award. As noted, it is made more complex by the fact that some of them, prior to studying in Australia, already had senior level positions. Even if the scholarship increased the alumni's employability and made them more dynamic in their field we still cannot know what the person would have achieved without the scholarship. This does not invalidate the idea of scholarships per se.

All in all, we have tried to take stock of the positives and the negatives of this complex phenomenon. In the end we feel our qualitative findings made an important empirical contribution to knowledge. We argue that with complex social phenomena such as this we need a relational analysis which understands the larger structures, (such as policy, national and social development) as well as the situated/lived realities of individual lives.

Therefore, any conversation about whether scholarships are good or bad has to distinguish between societal benefits and individual ones, remembering of course that these are not automatically the same thing. For example, a scholarship might be very good for the individual, whilst still not benefitting the country in the way it should. Further, the individual may only see this on an occasional basis, if at all. On the whole, though, we found most alumni were reflective about this national agenda and aware that it was complexly related to their own progress.

Finally, we are aware of potential limitations of this small study of qualitative data and of the problem of theorizing from this base. However, we have found some important glimpses in this empirical work. Such 'texture' is theoretically essential. The firsthand accounts unearthed processes without which any informed discussion of Australia Africa Scholarships cannot proceed.

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Postcolonial emotionalism in shaping education: An analysis of international school choice in Sri Lanka

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This research explores the proliferation of a newer kind of independent 'international' schools that has grown in popularity in an otherwise proscribed private education system. These schools provide both foreign and local curriculums in the English medium for a majority of local students. By welcoming students from all ethnic and religious backgrounds, international schools facilitate an agency for multiculturalism. However, the double-edged sword of business and education means that these schools are restricted to a minority that can afford the high fees.

In this paper, it is argued that English continues to be perceived as a reminder of colonial rule, a driver of social stratification and a destroyer of tradition contrary to a global language that is omnipresent in contemporary society. The study attempts to outline the reasons behind international school popularity and unpack some of the anxieties that this education system has given rise to in recent times. It looks at the government concerns as well as various stakeholder consternations of providing a 'global education for local students' via a mixed method research conducted in four contrasting case studies.

This paper contributes to the debates on private school choice and cultural capital; the verdict being that English proficiency and foreign credentials allow for a competitive edge in neo-liberal times yet grounding oneself in the local culture is of paramount importance if education is to be truly international.

Keywords: Sri Lanka, International Schools, Private English Education, Postcolonial emotionalism, School Choice

INTRODUCTION

Sri Lanka is an independent island state off the southern coast of India, home to a population of 21 million. There are four major ethnic groups (Sinhalese, Tamils, Muslims and Burghers) following four main religions (Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam and Christianity) and speaking three official languages (Sinhalese, Tamil and English). The 'Mahavamsa' (an ancient text) portrays a special bond between Buddhism, the Sinhalese people and Sri Lanka. This connection between religion, language and national identity established in the ancient scripture depicts a portrayal of Sri Lanka as the exclusive homeland of the Sinhalese emphasizing an anxiety to 'revive, preserve and strengthen' this alleged ownership by the Sinhalese 'Lion' race. The Tamils on the other hand are characterized as a threat with historical antecedents that generate and sustain hostility

(Sharma 1976).

This strong culture of identifying oneself with ethnicity makes Sri Lanka a robust case for this research as contemporary education policies following the implementation of the 1956 'Swabasha Policy' requires all students to be educated in their mother tongue perpetuating ethnic segregation along linguistic divides with an intention to breed purity. Moreover, past negative experiences of private, English education leading to social stratification and the tainting of traditional values has meant that postcolonial education policies have focused on providing universal access to education at the expense of quality. A reform implemented in 1961 that is unique to Sri Lanka is the banning of any new private schools in the island.

Since then, there has been a profusion of independent primary and secondary education institutions claiming to be 'International Schools'. These schools exist within a loophole in the legal framework, established under the 'Company's Act' and are domains that strive to break ethnic, linguistic and religious divides by welcoming students from all backgrounds so long as they can afford the fees. However, in the process of creating a pluralistic generation with a global outlook, international schools also foster alternate identities that may not resonate with the Sri Lankan way of life.

This paper will examine the historical legacies that have led to the current public education dilemma and ultimately the emergence of international schools that at first glance seem to be a knee-jerk response to the increasing demand for private English education with a global focus. It will also outline some of the stakeholder rationales for selecting an international school education as well as their concerns regarding the provision of a global education in a highly commercialized setting for a local clientele. Finally, the paper will explore whether or not the altruistic goals these schools claim to aspire towards are actually met by incorporating intercultural education into their pedagogies.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Colonial rule

During British rule following 1815, the education system of Sri Lanka underwent some major changes. The British commenced mass education and at the same time promoted a dual system of education. During British rule, vernacular primary schools continued to function and were, as Warnasuriya (1969: 814) denotes, 'meant for the poor and humble sections of the community and provided a narrow literacy program just sufficient to serve the needs of the class concerned'. However, more attention was placed on fee levying high status schools that operated in the English medium. These schools patronized by the elites provided high quality education for those who could afford to pay the fees and provided education up to secondary level. They were limited to a few urban areas and those who attended these schools gained most of the white-collar jobs during the colonial period. As Fernando (1977) observed, English was a 'passport' for better education, jobs and money and the elite who were educated in English were 'economically and culturally divorced from the vast majority of Sri Lankans'. As Punchi (2001:367) noted, this divide between those educated in English and vernacular languages meant that the 'English educated Sri Lankans began to look down upon their own people who did not speak English'.

Independence and the Rise of Nationalism

Following independence, most of the political leaders that came into power were those educated in private missionary schools in the English medium. However, affiliations with the English language were seen as unpatriotic and at odds with the emerging sense of nationalism. Thus, English was subdued and the shift to education in the national languages took place. From the mid 1940s, free education was made available to all in the Sinhalese and Tamil languages. In addition, central colleges with a full range of facilities were established in each electoral division to ensure greater access to education for all (Punchi 2001).

One of the immediate effects of this was a rapid rise in educational participation. Urban, rural and gender discrepancies declined, unlike any other country in South Asia, and figures such as a 90% literacy rate were possible due to this freely available education in the native language (Jayaweera 1989). Wickramasuriya (2005: 172) contests this by claiming that despite the high human development indicators, Sri Lanka also has the highest suicide rate in South Asia signifying 'frustration, demoralization, loss of opportunity, inequality and poverty' within this highly literate community.

Language

'Language in education systems has long been recognized not only as a very significant indicator of power relations in society but also as a very important instrument for continuity or change' (Bray and Kao 2004:215). In 1956, under Prime Minister SWRD Bandaranayake's government, the Sinhalese language was made the official language giving it prominence over Tamil and English (Richardson 2005). Bourdieu and Thompson (1991) highlight the significance of education in the creation and reproduction of socio-linguistic hierarchies when they state that, via agents of regulation and imposition, 'legitimate languages' are produced and thereby social inequalities are generated. This was the case in Sri Lanka as schools were segregated along linguistic lines. The 'Swabhasha' policy of 1956 required students to be educated in their 'mother-tongue'. Sinhalese and Tamil medium schools were thus set up. Sri Lankan Muslims were able to claim Arabic as their mother tongue and therefore choose to be either educated in Sinhalese or Tamil schools. However, for the others, educational segregation based on language indirectly reinforced ethnic partition. As Davies (2004) notes, this segregation promoted inter-ethnic enmity and mistrust.

Even though the national schools have made many reforms in recent years to appreciate the multiplicity of ethnic diversity, Levinson and Stevick (2007) observe that there was little mixing between students who study in different mediums within the same schools. Wijewardena (1999) in his study of international school choice points out that a primary reason for opting for an international education was the provision of equal opportunity to any race or religion. This 'ethnic sensitivity' is further complemented via the gender-neutral co-educational system that international schools in the island offer, as opposed to many of the national single sex institutions in Colombo.

According to Gunasekara, Samarasinghe and Dharmadasa (1996), the possession of an international language in a post colonial era is regarded as advantageous and worthy of being preserved regardless of the circumstances under which it was acquired. English language however has contradictory effects. It can contribute to Western hegemony but at the same time can act counter hegemonically where access to English language means the access to global networks for a wider array of populations (Pennycook 1995). The issue

of language has always been surrounded by controversy in Sri Lanka. The long history of colonization has strengthened nationalistic sentiments to the point where private schools and English language today are symbolic of the injustices that prevailed in an education system that benefited an elite minority. Hence, political commitment to social welfare and providing equality of access to education has taken precedence over any reforms that attempt to improve quality. When regional disparities in facilities and resources showed up within the public education system, instead of ameliorating standards, curriculum standards were continually lowered so that well-resourced students would not dominate.

Politicians even today are afraid to make amendments to the language and private schooling acts. The masses, almost brainwashed by the works of socialist and left wing political groups, believe that allowing private schooling and private universities to operate in Sri Lanka would violate the fundamental rights of the Sri Lankan students by recreating the social divide that existed in British colonial times. When it came to the issue of language, once again the socialist parties equated language to class. This is what gave rise to the *Anti-Kaduwa* campaign where English, colloquially referred to as the *kaduwa* (sword) was seen as an instrument for cutting off opportunity and therefore something that needed to be destroyed.

The Private Education Debate

The private schools started by Christian missionaries during British times were seen to evoke colonial pro-elitist sentiments. Thus, for those that grew up within the free national education system, private schools continued to be a reminder of colonial power and a driving force for social stratification. In 1961 therefore, the government decided to ban the establishment of any new private schools. Existing private schools were given the option of abolishing fees and receiving state grants to become semi-government assisted schools or continue to remain as unaided fee levying schools.

This form of resistance extended beyond schools to include tertiary educational institutions as well. Despite the national universities being able to accommodate only 3% of the age group entering each year, there are heavy restrictions on private universities. Again, socialist groups have almost brainwashed the minds of the students into believing that 'any non-governmental involvement in tertiary education will result in the creation of an elitist culture which they will not be part of' (Wikramanayake 2009:114).

Castles (1988:4) notes that the state is 'at one and the same time the guardian angel of the capitalist economic process and the chosen instrument for protecting society from the corrosive impact of that process'. This is evident in the Sri Lankan government's stance on establishing private educational institutions. Sri Lanka actively promotes private tertiary education from establishments that are linked to foreign universities as well as local private institutions by reframing the issues to avoid confrontations. Thus private tertiary education establishments are encouraged as long as they do not carry the connotation of 'university'. Likewise, it is permitted to establish 'International Schools' (private fee levying secondary schools that teach in the English medium) under the Company Act with no government affiliations.

The fact that such higher education institutes as well as international schools are allowed to operate in Sri Lanka despite them creating the very same inequalities through the production of an English fluent elite minority is ironic. Hence, the reluctance to reinstate private education appears to have more to do with historical legacies associated with the

wording 'private education' and symbolic prejudices that have built around these definitions over the years.

Sri Lankan International Schools

In recent times, a new set of co-educational, fee-levying private schools that teach foreign curriculums in the English Language have emerged, known as 'International Schools'. They have diverse modes of instruction, fee structures, curriculums and standards. However one thing that all Sri Lankan International Schools share in common is English medium instruction. Sri Lankan International Schools hence are primarily a language driven response to education. This is because English, despite being replaced by the vernacular languages still withholds a strong element of value in society. It is a prerequisite for private sector jobs and a valuable tool even when working in the public sector. Moreover, by welcoming students from all ethno-religious backgrounds, these schools also inadvertently contribute to breaking any racial barriers.

While the establishment of private schools has been officially banned in Sri Lanka since 1961, international schools operate under a loophole in the legal system, set up under the Companies Act and operate as private businesses. This has meant that International Schools are not regulated by the Ministry of Education and therefore show vast diversity in quality. However, the popularity of International Schools in Sri Lanka reflects the demand that is present for English education. In countries with limited financial resources, the quality of state run schools is debatable. The welfare state is no longer adequate or efficient enough. Hence we witness a shift towards private education. As Sen (1982:99) summarizes, 'the political consensus has shifted in many parts of the world to the point where the so called 'big government' of the welfare state has become the enemy of efficient and free markets, where citizens are portrayed as 'clients' of the state or consumers of government products and individuals are accepted on the basis of community. As part of the emergent neo-liberal logic, the expansion of consumer choice has trumped equity as a major political goal''. Thus there is ''no choice but to choose'' a private system of education.

International Schools with their modern curriculum are said to 'narrow the gap between the curriculum and the needs of the current employment atmosphere in Sri Lanka' (Jenkins, Berman and Jenkins 2005: 119). This re-introduction of English increases employment and educational opportunities only for a minority that can afford the high school fees. Hence, International Schools are criticized for widening the gap between the rich and the poor and are depicted as a threat to the national system of education (Wickramasuriya 2005). Another function of these international schools is to downplay ethnic differences by welcoming students from all religious and ethnic backgrounds. These schools encourage tolerance and promote multiculturalism. By celebrating festivals from all communities, international schools promote a more heterogeneous society. The stakeholders however are concerned that international schools encourage Westernization in place of traditional Sri Lankan values. As Jenkins et al. (2005:122) observe, if international schools teach English at the expense of the vernacular languages, Sri Lankan cultural identity can be threatened but if English is 'anchored in local cultural traditions', these schools can ultimately strengthen Sri Lankan culture.

Nevertheless, by imposing very high school fees, these schools accentuate class-based discrimination. The average term fees of Sri Lankan International Schools vary from

Approximately USD 65-300 to those that charge even higher rates such as USD 8000. Class, in this instance, can be purchased if one possesses enough capital (Jayawardena 2000). Thus international schools cut across the traditional schooling system by producing socially constructed knowledge of what it means to be classy, global knowledge in English and co-educational institutions. They are criticized by some for creating a new kind of privilege.

Amarasinghe and Ratnayake (2009) point out the advantages of establishing private schools in Sri Lanka by stating that they increase the volume of resources invested in education, and allow upper income families to participate in paid education that allows more public resources to be available for students from poor families. Moreover, if more private schools were established in the country, it would stimulate economic activity in a sector that has so far been restricted. Lastly, private schools are compelled to provide high quality education in order to compete with free public education. The fact that International Schools manage to exist within a loophole in the system without much opposition show that the real reason for the resentment of private schools has more to do with the historical recollections that continue to persist rather than a genuine concern for exacerbating social stratification.

There are, however, many disadvantages to choosing an international education. Some of these include a lack of national identity, lack of connections to local society, deficiencies in local language skills and the difficulties of having lasting friendships (Ezra 2007, Heyward 2000). As Hanchanlash and Rutnin (2004) note, the 'fourth culture kids' that attend international schools within their country of origin grow up in their country of citizenship espousing Western cultural values. They become alienated from their home culture to the extent that they 'feel like strangers in their own land'. They often also have a lower standard of literacy skills in their mother tongue even though it is the 'instrument of communication and understanding' within their home culture (Hanchanlash and Rutnin 2004:13). It is for this reason that national schools are resistant to international schools, 'fearing that their own culture may be contaminated by the Anglo-American' culture' that often predominates international school settings (Jackson 2005:207). However, it is important to realize that international schools cannot operate with absolutely no connections to the local setting as accreditation, authorization and quality assurance measures require international schools to have affiliations with national governing bodies (Hayden 2006). In Sri Lanka however, as international schools fall outside the Ministry of Education, there is little to no governance, making accountability of quality education a major cause for concern.

METHODOLOGY

Four contrasting international schools from four different provinces of the island were selected using deviant case sampling. One case study was a high fee levying school from Sri Lanka's capital Colombo. Another was a high fee levying school from Sri Lanka's second largest city, Kandy. The third and fourth schools were from two more peripheral regions where the predominant populations are Sinhalese and Tamil alternatively. The third school was from the city of Matara in the Southern Province, while the fourth case study was from Jaffna in the Northern Province that was ravaged by the civil war for the past thirty years.

A range of international school stakeholders, namely parents, students, teachers and international school administrators, were targeted from each of these schools. These participants were provided with questionnaires in stage one and later invited to participate in interviews and focus groups. Two hundred questionnaires were distributed among parents and students in the initial phase. Focus groups consisting of about 8-10 participants were also conducted with teachers as well as students in each of the four schools. In addition, an interview each was conducted with sixteen parents, the Secretary to the Ministry of Education as well as the international school Principals.

The questionnaire data were manually entered in to statistical software and then analyzed quantitatively. Descriptive statistics were used through scatter plots, histograms and pie charts to show the various factors in play (see the table below). The qualitative data obtained was then analysed using grounded theory. Payne and Payne (2004:98) describe grounded theory as 'a method of analysis where the theoretical statements are built inductively from coding and analyzing data'. It requires 'defining and refining of conceptual categories which are then tested and retested with further data collection'. In grounded theory, 'theory emerges from the data' and is a 'continuous method of discovery'. However, the researcher does not begin with a blank slate but brings in background knowledge from subjective life experiences (Strauss and Corbin 1998). The interviews and group discussions were analyzed from the time they were recorded using this method. Initially, 'open coding' was used to highlight items that seem important without too much overthinking. Next, 'axial coding' where comparison and grouping at a more intense stage was performed. Finally, all categories were unified around core categories in the 'selective coding' stage before certain theories were put forward (Strauss and Corbin1998). In addition to manual coding, qualitative analysis was conducted using the software NVivo. This software facilitates coding of transcriptions as the transcription takes place. NVivo also allows for the creation of hierarchies of linked themes, create memos, coding templates, and transfer coding between the four different case studies.

RESULTS

Why opt for an international education?

Foreign Curriculum

Most international schools offer a variety of foreign curriculums. The most common out of these are the British (Edexcel and Cambridge) syllabi, that the four case studies for this research offered, and the International Baccalaureate (IB) that only two schools in Sri Lanka follow. Foreign curriculums are constantly updated and contested to be of a superior standard. The interviews conducted highlighted that the standard of English and ICT were far superior in the international syllabuses. The textbook anecdotes, experiment procedures and in-text explanations were also deemed more modern in foreign curriculums. Another feature that international school clientele appreciated was the critical thinking and independent learning that these curriculums promoted. The Sri Lankan curriculum was criticized for providing the student with a lot of theory but not enough practical experience. The international curriculums are very much practice oriented and promote independent learning and fact-finding. This, parents argued, encourages students to take initiative and readily face challenges rather than develop a generation of individuals who need to be constantly spoon-fed information. The foreign curriculum also fostered

multiple non-academic skills such as inter-personal communication and group work, which again was highly valued.

English Language

English opens many doors. If one is fluent in English, they are able to gain access to a wider range of books, media and other material available through the World Wide Web. It helps communicate with a wider audience and ensures greater mobility. English has world recognition; it is symbolic of social and cultural capital and is seen by most parents as the way forward. Since the international schools teach all subjects in the English medium, the standard of English proficiency is significantly higher. This, coupled with the introduction of English literature from an early stage allows the international school students to possess a superior command of English. Parents, therefore claimed English as the primary factor for choosing an international education:

> *"Now our son and daughter's future is clear because they are learning in an International School they are fluent in the English. Now you can understand my English is not fluent no, I got my studies in the government school, I got a degree also but my English is not fluent…it's mainly that I wanted him to have a good knowledge of English because that's the most important thing" (Parent 5, Kandy)*

> *"Actually parents, those who have missed the English education, they feel, why not give this. Because the parents think, because I did not get English, I couldn't go to that level, I couldn't get a job, I couldn't go to a higher level in life so why not I give that opportunity to my children" (Parent 8, Colombo)*

Fluency in English combined with the global exposure provided by international school mean that students, even if they are not necessarily better qualified, can secure employment.

> *"One student from here, he went for an interview with Dialog (a leading telecommunications company in Sri Lanka) and he only had O/Levels. He was selected over a graduate because of his English and the leadership qualities" (Vice Principal, SISM, Jaffna)*

> *"In Jaffna, not all the schools teach English well so for jobs they expect English…so even if we fail examinations, the international school students, they get jobs outside" (Student 4, Student Focus Group, SISM, Jaffna)*

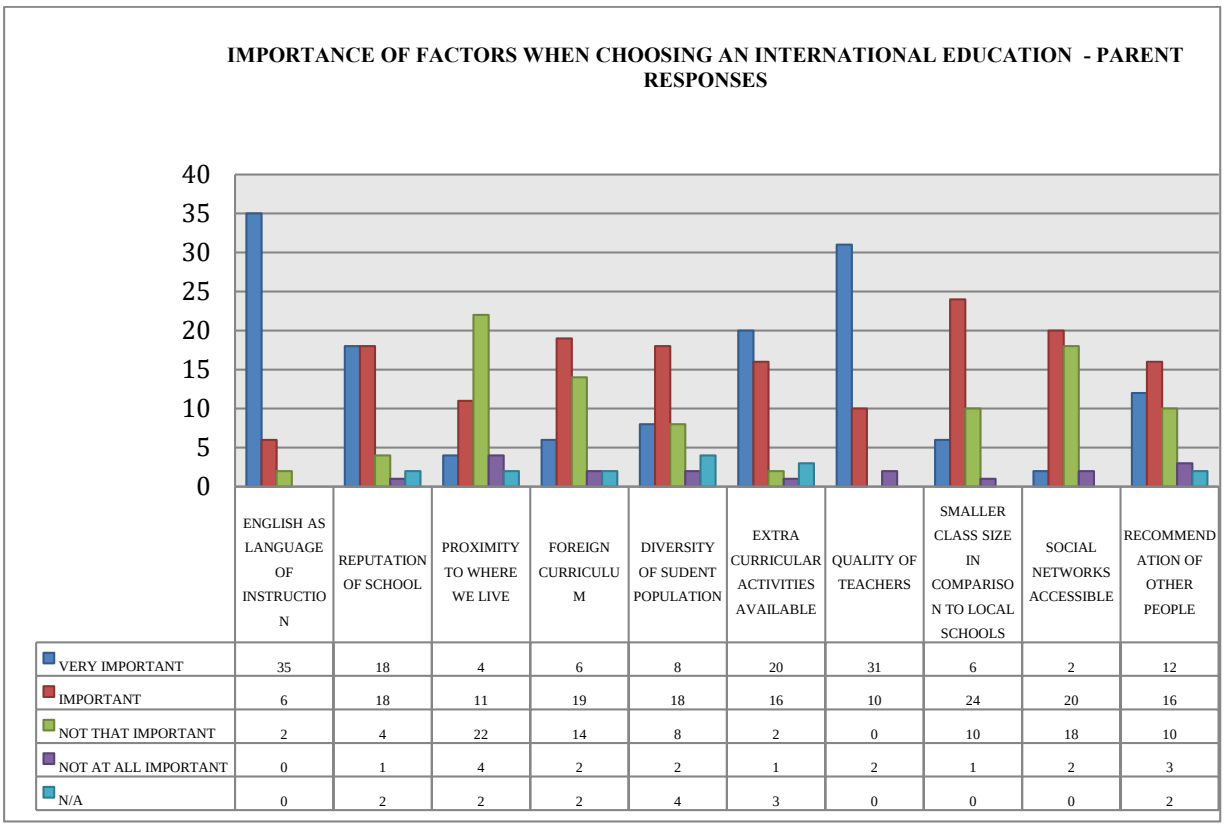
A quality education, parents illustrated, resulted in forward-thinking citizens who had good leadership, practical skills and were critical thinkers and independent learners as these were areas that the international curriculum placed more emphasis on. The co-educational and all-encompassing nature of international schools, furthermore, allowed students to mingle with various racial, ethnic and religious groups as well as members of the opposite sex. This was perceived to make them tolerant individuals with better socializing skills who were able to break cultural barriers and fit well within a pluralistic society.

The education received at international schools, hence go beyond the academic dimensions

to become a 'lifestyle' choice where children mingle with all kind of people and develop inter-personal communication skills. Most students were described as 'polished', meaning they were able to converse fluently and eloquently in an international stage. Several research participants stressed the importance of promoting a tolerant society stating that in a globalized world, people need to be able to get along with all different kinds of individuals.

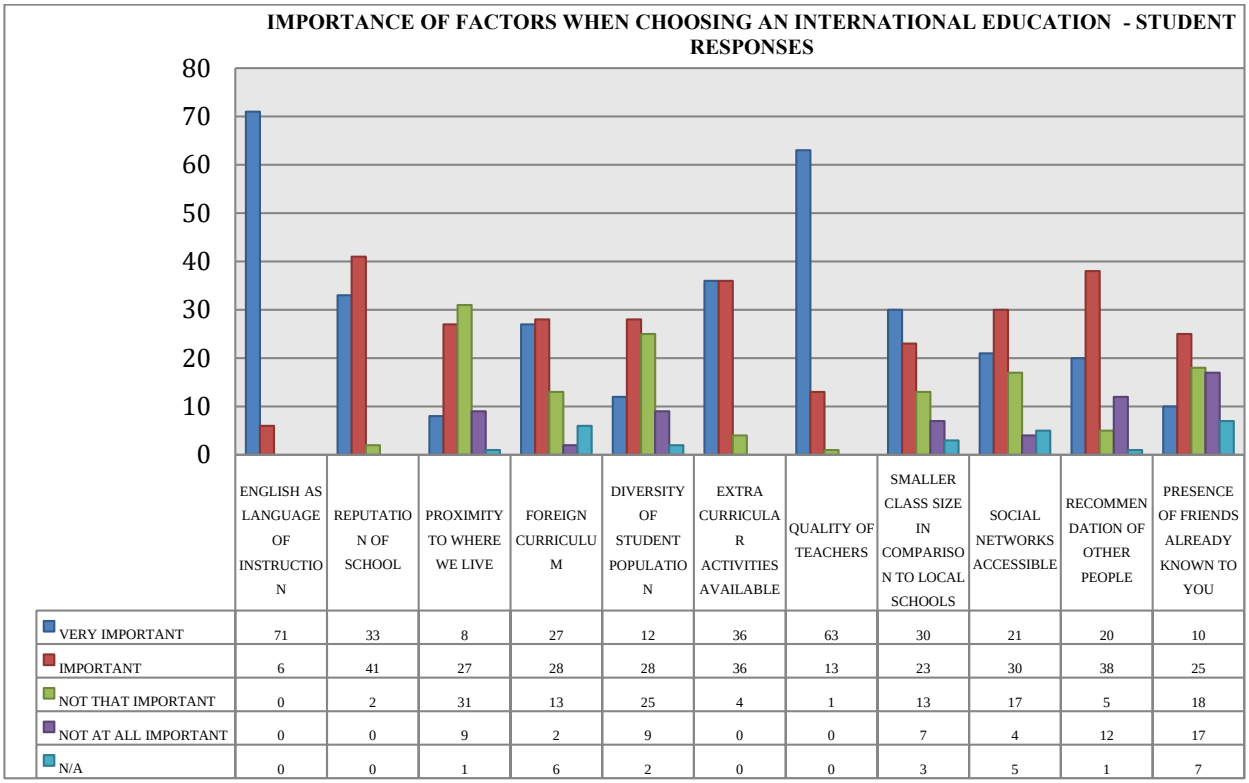
The Principal of the Colombo case study (Kingston Institute, KI) remarks that for a trilingual country, Sri Lanka is lagging behind. Languages, he observes, should be a core strength in a country and not a divisive element. The physical location of Sri Lanka in the centre of Asia, coupled with its cultural diversity should be something that needs to be promoted in the global market. Investing in an international education hence facilitates a smoother transition to the global market. The Principal remarks:

> *"Whatever the school, the question should be can the students compete in the market place? The market place is not local, it is global. So our students can compete in the global market place" (Principal, KI Colombo)*



	ENGLISH AS LANGUAGE OF INSTRUCTION	REPUTATION OF SCHOOL	PROXIMITY TO WHERE WE LIVE	FOREIGN CURRICULUM	DIVERSITY OF SUDENT POPULATION	EXTRA CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES AVAILABLE	QUALITY OF TEACHERS	SMALLER CLASS SIZE IN COMPARISON TO LOCAL SCHOOLS	SOCIAL NETWORKS ACCESSIBLE	RECOMMENDATION OF OTHER PEOPLE
VERY IMPORTANT	35	18	4	6	8	20	31	6	2	12
IMPORTANT	6	18	11	19	18	16	10	24	20	16
NOT THAT IMPORTANT	2	4	22	14	8	2	0	10	18	10
NOT AT ALL IMPORTANT	0	1	4	2	2	1	2	1	2	3
N/A	0	2	2	2	4	3	0	0	0	2

Figure 1: Parents' responses to the importance of factors when choosing international education



	ENGLISH AS LANGUAGE OF INSTRUCTION	REPUTATION OF SCHOOL	PROXIMITY TO WHERE WE LIVE	FOREIGN CURRICULUM	DIVERSITY OF STUDENT POPULATION	EXTRA CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES AVAILABLE	QUALITY OF TEACHERS	SMALLER CLASS SIZE IN COMPARISON TO LOCAL SCHOOLS	SOCIAL NETWORKS ACCESSIBLE	RECOMMENDATION OF OTHER PEOPLE	PRESENCE OF FRIENDS ALREADY KNOWN TO YOU
VERY IMPORTANT	71	33	8	27	12	36	63	30	21	20	10
IMPORTANT	6	41	27	28	28	36	13	23	30	38	25
NOT THAT IMPORTANT	0	2	31	13	25	4	1	13	17	5	18
NOT AT ALL IMPORTANT	0	0	9	2	9	0	0	7	4	12	17
N/A	0	0	1	6	2	0	0	3	5	1	7

Figure 2: Students' responses to the importance of factors when choosing international education

Socio-cultural Impacts of receiving an International Education

The creation of a Western cultural bubble

International schools were accused of not giving their students enough opportunities to assimilate with the local culture. Since English teaching was the primary focus, mother tongue was often overlooked. As a result, the students sometimes were unable to communicate with locals. Another allegation was that international schools did not teach religion in schools that gave rise to individuals that had few good values ingrained within them. An outcome of this, parents often expressed, was that children grew up too fast engaging in activities that were inappropriate for their age. For example, parents indirectly raised concern about students having romantic relationships with each other and possibly engaging in sexual relations. Others were concerned about the norms and values that international schools fostered such as dress codes that were culturally inappropriate.

> *"International school students are more advanced in both the good ways and the bad ways. What I see is that even though they go to internationals, children should be children. Now children who are 12 or 13 years do things that we do at 18 or 19. So when they become 18 or 19 they have nothing left to do. The children don't have a childhood in international schools. It is because they are too advanced and want to hasten everything. They don't behave like children in their childhood but they go to be like adults" (Parent 16, Matara)*

Another issue was that international schools did not encourage teaching Sri Lankan history or geography. Hence international schools produced a generation of Sri Lankans that had much knowledge about the outside world but little awareness of their immediate

surroundings. One dangerous outcome of not being familiar with their own culture was that international school students engaged in culturally inappropriate behaviour that sometimes even caused them physical harm. As one student focus group pointed out, it was 'inappropriate attire' or 'over friendly' interactions of female international school students that could lead them to be raped, or even murdered, in Sri Lanka!

> *"We get more westernized when we come to these schools. Normally the girls get more westernized…start wearing all those westernized clothes and they forget our traditions. They move out with guys and all sorts…in Sri Lanka girls don't talk much with boys unless they are related or you know bonds or something like that. When you come to internationals they interact, they get a little too much. When they interact too much they end up getting raped or something…it leads to unnecessary things" (Student 3, Student Focus Group, KI, Colombo)*

While Sri Lanka recognizes private education as an essential driver for economic growth and choice as an intrinsic element of democracy that should be made available to the public, private education is a reminder of the stark inequalities that existed during colonial times. English education furthermore is not only represented as a form of capital available to a rich minority that often attends private schools but is also seen as a hindrance to the national traditions and cultural values. It is seen as a driver for Western ideals that contradict with traditional Sri Lankan norms. As international schools begin to grow exponentially in Sri Lanka without regulation, an issue that arises is about what is being taught in these schools. Sri Lankan international schools were criticised for failing to provide sufficient education about Sri Lanka. As the Secretary of Education pointed out, since the majority of students at these schools were Sri Lankan citizens, it was crucial that they were grounded within the local culture to begin with. By overlooking the teaching of history, geography, mother tongue or religion, international schools were producing a newer generation of Sri Lankans who didn't really fit in to their immediate surroundings.

> *"We do have a long history, more than 2500 years…the objective of education development should be to produce fully fledged persons to the nation. The government is thinking that way; International Schools are away from our tradition as well as Sri Lankan objective because we do need to maintain the Sri Lankan identity. It is not happening in International Schools because one thing is the mother tongue. They are not promoting that one. Next one is, we do practice the religion and what is our history. Sri Lankans need to know what is our history and how generations and generations developed the country because then you have that strong feeling you know of belonging to the Sri Lankan nation and you are one of those persons with historical value. Not only Sri Lanka but all the countries believe that...children should start with the mother tongue…they have to be localized to start their life" (Secretary of Education, Ministry of Education, Sri Lanka)*

In extreme cases, international school students had such poor local language skills that they found it difficult to communicate with locals. However, in most instances it was more of a reluctance to mingle with those outside of the international school circles. It was an inability to communicate and a reluctance to mix that caused the 30-year civil war in Sri Lanka, which is why Sri Lanka has now switched to a bilingual policy where both Sinhalese and Tamil are strongly encouraged. According to the Secretary of Education,

there is no restriction anymore as to which medium of language you can choose to be educated in. International schools therefore should be aware of the long-term consequences that generation of Sri Lankans without the ability to converse in the local languages could produce and therefore attempt to bring in a localized education into their education system as well.

Money-making Priorities

The multicultural nature of international schools and their popularity for providing a wide range of extracurricular activities were sometimes critiqued for being mere excuses to charge additional fees. Moreover, being multicultural was described as a survival tactic rather than something implemented with genuine good intentions:

> *"If you take Christmas season they have Christmas Carols and they charge a very big amount for it. So parents, not that they like or not that they want to, just because now they have put their children, there is no other option but to pay all the extra fees that they charge. Then you get Vesak (Buddhist Festival) Pirikara (offerings for the monks). For Iftar, I mean, our Ramazan (Muslim festival), fasting days, they organize to break-fasting. They should have it otherwise it's difficult for them to survive. So that is just to make sure all communities will come" (Parent 8, Colombo)*

Another issue that the interviewees brought to light were that these schools failed to implement any disciplinary action against students due to fear of losing business:

> *"At meetings the Chairman or Principal, they say, ''these are the moral values and we want this type of children; you have to be useful citizens and all'', but when it comes to disciplinary side, though they preach like that they can't take action, they don't take action. They don't even suspend or they don't, like, put a child out because they fear in return there won't be admissions" (Teacher 5, Teacher Focus Group, SIS, Matara)*

Moreover, teachers are constantly at risk of being fired at the slightest complaint made by students or parents. This is because finding a replacement for a teacher is easy compared to losing business through customer dissatisfaction. Children hence sometimes abused this knowledge to misbehave as they had the assurance that the school would always take their side instead of the teachers. In some cases, parents too increasingly interfered with teaching matters abusing their power, often threatening to remove their children if their requests were not met:

> *"It's really challenging… for the teachers, they are like sandwiched in between the management and the parents. They have to satisfy the management, they have to satisfy the parents" (Parent 8, Colombo also a teacher at KI, Colombo)*

> *"Mainly it's a business for them, they want their customers. If there is a simple complaint they chase the teacher out. They always...what they want is their customer. They don't want the parent to take their child and go but more than that they want to chase the teacher out and there*

> *is million to come, walk-in. Whether you are qualified or experienced or, the moment something happens you have to be ready to walk out. They just chase you out. That's because they want money, they don't want to lose their customers" (Teacher 1, Teacher Focus Group, KI, Colombo)*

DISCUSSION

Westernization via international schools in Sri Lanka was seen as an impediment to tradition. International schools that try to be global as well as maintain ties with their immediate locality are as Lowe (2000:1999) describes 'caught in a dialectic of sub-nationalism and supra-nationalism'. Certain international schools are reluctant to embrace the languages, values and customs of the local culture. This lack of contact with local culture is usually a result of a preoccupation of winning over the international community. When international schools do interact with the local culture, the interaction is critiqued of being merely at a superficial stage that only delves into the exotic and merely touristic 'saris, samosas and steel bands' aspects of the local culture (Pasternak 1998:260). At other times, Heyward (2002:27) highlights that 'genuine attempts to engage with local cultures may unwittingly reinforce attitudes of superiority and paternalism of cultural chauvinism'.

At national level, introducing a curriculum such as the IB is seen as the 'acquisition of a form of cultural and symbolic capital that eventually contributes to a country's overall worth in a market driven economy' (Ong 1999:221). The primary focus of the IB is 'stimulating curiosity, inquiry, reflection and critical thinking (IBO 2002:1) by encouraging an 'eclectic, creative and independent approach to inquiry and learning' (IBO 2002:10). The IB allows and encourages insertion of local cultures into curriculum. However, teachers perceive international text as superior and are therefore reluctant to incorporate local culture into the curriculum of international schools. Although the nation state remains important and the national education system is far from obsolete (Green 1997), the local culture is often disregarded in favour of the global at international schools. The common belief here is that tradition is a hindrance to modernization. This is because tradition and modernity are seen as two dichotomies that are unable to co-exist within the same setting. However, traditional society itself is dynamic and constantly evolving. In Sri Lanka, the eroding of Sri Lankan culture via international schools was addressed in 2014 by the government through the imposition of compulsory local language, history and religious education to the international school curriculum.

Intercultural Education

Cambridge and Thompson (1999, as cited in Allen 2004:112) highlight that 'international education can be interpreted as an ideological construct which promotes hyper globalism. Yet, the essential pro-democratic logic of internationalism stands in sharp contrast to the logics of globalization'. As Thomas (1998, in Hayden and Thompson 1998: 103-104) further elaborates, education for peace has ironically been made a priority by the same education ministers who 'in the contexts of their own national systems, have been traditionally associated with a mission of seeking to produce citizens proud of their national identities and heritage, and willing to give up their lives if necessary in the service of their country'. The focus of international schools to produce global citizens with national priorities thus at times contradicts their ideological stance. In the case of Sri Lanka, where the majority of students that attend these schools are locals, international

school curriculum should facilitate students to integrate with the masses. If not, the international school students grow up alienated from the majority of their own national peers in having more in common with people beyond their national borders, to the point that sometimes they have not had any physical connections with than those within their immediate vicinity.

One solution to these pitfalls in 'international education' is for international schools to instead promote an 'intercultural education'. Luke (2004:1429) defines intercultural capital as 'the capacity to engage in acts of knowledge, power and exchange across time/space divides and social geographies, across diverse communities, populations and epistemic stances.' An intercultural education therefore requires teachers to access both local and global knowledge in order to understand and teach in local conditions. Local and global are intimately interconnected and an education that is aware of this fact and tries to genuinely promote this concept seems the most appropriate way forward for international schools. As Hannerz (1990) concludes, true cosmopolitanism requires understanding the place where one is situated in order to understand others. A relevant curriculum therefore keeps both these aspects in mind.

The pitfall of intercultural literacy however is that it may not necessarily 'deepen understanding of others and their cultures; instead it may be a superficial emotional multiculturalism that is effective for teamwork in transnational corporations' (Loh 2012: 222). This is because the aims of building intercultural awareness are not humanistic but primarily economically driven. It is fundamentally seen as a 'way of giving rise to global workers to take part in global knowledge economy'. (Tarc 2009:109) Moreover, haphazard and improper implementation of intercultural education could help highlight confusing stereotypes. Stereotypes pose a real danger because they represent the unknown with negative characteristics that goes against the whole ethos of intercultural education. In a country like Sri Lanka, where long histories of enmity and mistrust prevail between different religious-ethnic groups, a superficial intercultural education that reinforces stereotypes merely for the sake of having a curriculum that addresses a multicultural student body can pose an even greater threat to the people. The good intentions of having an intercultural education, in this instance can sadly misfire reinforcing pre-existing divides.

An alternate option, then, for international schools is to try and foster multiculturalism within their student body. Multiculturalism, as defined by Hoopes (1979:21) is 'the state in which one has mastered the knowledge and developed the skills necessary to feel comfortable and communicate effectively with people of any culture encountered and any situation involving a group of diverse backgrounds'. A multicultural person then is someone who has 'achieved personal growth as a result of encountering cultural diversity, enhancing and extending their individual cultural identity' (Allan 2003: 84). A multicultural education highlights the importance of interdependence, connectedness and perspective where perspective should be of both global as well as multiple local perspectives. As Pike (2000:66) notes, there is national distinctiveness on what constitutes as global education and ideological differences. The common thread in multicultural education then is 'understanding similarities and differences among people'. With global education hence, national culture does not disappear into an 'amorphous global pot', because culture is 'essentially about an individual's sense of belonging' (Pike 2000:68). Instead, multiculturalism is about cross-fertilization of ideas and practices.

The biggest issue for international schools however is that it is their superiority, as well as the view of separateness of these schools, be it religious, curriculum wise, etcetera, that tend to be a valid marketing tool for attracting customers. The challenge hence for international schools is to make them both selective and inclusive at the same time. That is, to juggle the dual promotion of an education system that reinforces privilege and promotes multiculturalism at the same time.

Embracing the global while safeguarding the local: A possible reality?

In the late 19th and early 20th century, gender, class, language, ethnicity and region of origin dictated the quality of education that an individual received in Sri Lanka. To counteract the unfair advantage that those educated in private English schools during the colonial times gained, the government actively encouraged free education in the vernacular. Educational inequality however continued to persist as the quality of Sri Lankan public schools was under serious scrutiny. A response to this was the emergence of international schools. However, these schools reinforced existing class divides based on language competency and led to a newer generation of Sri Lankan students that grew up in an alienated fourth culture environment. Despite allegations that these schools mar Sri Lankan traditions, their popularity reflects an urgent need for improvements in public education.

When governments take a neoliberal stance, the state is no longer able to satisfy the welfare needs of all of its citizens that expect protection (Wickramasinghe 2006). The political upbringing of Sri Lanka is such that postcolonial Sri Lanka expects complete protection from the state. As Wickramasinghe (2006:333) states, it is a 'problem of self vision and national identity' where people continue to see themselves as 'a nation of proud and self sufficient peasantry' even though the existence of such a prominent self-sufficient community is doubtful.

For example, Wickramasinghe (2006:334) relates the following depiction from a current public school textbook:

> *The adventures of Nayana and Kumari, two children growing up in an idyllic Sri Lankan Village. The setting is timeless. The children collect fruits and play at selling them in a make believe shop while mothers cook and their fathers work in the field.*

A quick look around one's surrounding paints a different picture entirely if one is able to see their surrounding objectively by isolating the imagery that is ingrained into the minds from an early age. Compare this to the social imagery painted via international school textbooks and it is apparent that an international curriculum prepares students for a 21st century education. The world of twitter and virtual learning networks is nothing new as international schools prepare students to face globalization. As Bourdieu (1984:32) remarks, 'Education is in fact one of the most effective means of perpetuating the existing social pattern, as it both provides an apparent justification for social inequalities and gives recognition to the cultural heritage, that is, to a social gift treated as a natural one'. The education offered by Sri Lankan international schools paves a path for the accumulation of cultural and social capital. The English medium education offered at international schools, coupled with foreign qualifications, modern pedagogy, facilities and access to the wider world help students to reproduce advantage. Moreover, the long spanning historical connotations attached to fee-paying private schools and English medium education further

facilitates in the creation of an exclusive reputation that serves as a class distinguisher in some cases.

Gradstein and Justman (2000) observe that public schooling plays an important role in building social capital and, in particular, nation building in multi-ethnic countries such as Singapore. Contrastingly however, in the Sri Lankan education system where public schools are segregated along linguistic and religious divides, the international schools due to their all-encompassing nature tend to play a more significant role in fostering pluralism. Yet the business priorities of these schools sometimes mean that cross cultural education is merely a business tactic to keep customers of all faiths happy and is a superficial feature that is not genuinely practiced at a deeper level.

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Gendered poverty and education: Moving beyond access to expanding freedoms through microfinance policy in India and Australia

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Microfinance has been recognized globally as a poverty alleviating strategy and particularly as a gender equality enhancing approach. There have been immense, intense and nuanced debates in the field of international development, feminist studies and comparative social policy regarding the role of microfinance in addressing gendered poverty. This paper provides an account of these debates and the conceptual and theoretical perspectives underpinning them. These debates are used as a way to frame the dominant understandings of the relationship between gendered poverty and education in the context of microfinance policies and practices. These global discourses are interrogated against particular representations of the same by consumers of microfinance. In other words, employing narratives of 27 in-depth interviews with consumers of microfinance and their kin from India and Australia, the paper highlights how global discourses are contested in the local everyday lives of poor women and men. By doing so, the paper calls for re-casting educational goals, in poverty alleviation and gender equality strategies, as moving beyond access for women to expanding freedoms of women and men.

Keywords: Gendered poverty, Education, Microfinance, India, Australia

WHY AND HOW GENDER MATTERS IN POVERTY

Conventional measures to assess poverty use the informational space of income, or consumption of goods and services (UNDP 1998, p. 5). Called the utilitarian foundations of welfare economics, this informational space is constrained in what it includes as potentially valuable and what it excludes as not valuable (Sen 1999, 1993). For instance, conventional poverty measures include in their informational space household income levels as a proxy for standard of living for all members of the household. What is excluded in this informational space is certain household members' (mostly women) contributions to unpaid work, their lower participation in paid work and different quality of leisure time. As such, the wellbeing of these members of the household is inaccurately measured, if measured at all. Feminist critiques of such measures of poverty have given rise to nuanced analyses that are able to capture the underlying structural causes and consequences of poverty.

There have been key theoretical and conceptual frameworks underpinning the global discourses on poverty, gender and development. Table 1 summarises four such frameworks – their period of influence, links to feminist and other theories, influence upon development thinking and actions as well as their primary criticisms. Whilst in practice there are overlaps in these frameworks, in this paper they have been separated out as a rhetorical tool to highlight key differences. The Women in Development (WID) framework which was prominent in late 1960s to early 1970s was informed by Western liberal feminism which viewed gender in uncomplicated economic efficiency terms. In other words, WID emphasised women's incorporation into the development agenda for economic growth and social cohesion (Boserup 1970; World Bank 2001). The Gender and Development

(GAD) framework, which continues to be influential since the mid 1980s, grew out of radical and social feminist movements and viewed gender as part of complex and shifting social relations. GAD focussed upon the gendered structures of power in society and the ways in which this impacted women in an unequal manner (Moser 1993; Molyneux 1998).

In the late 1990s, the Women, Culture and Development (WCD) framework emerged, primarily informed by post-structural feminism and post-colonial theory, which questioned the fixed notions of gender and identity. That is, WCD stressed the fluid processes and shifting identities of gender generating new and multi-faced narratives within the development landscape (Spivak 1999; Kabeer 1994). Around the same time period, and continuing on to present day, emerged the Capability Approach (CA) framework linked to theories of human development and philosophy. CA was primarily concerned with evaluating inequalities and social arrangements in society and did so through the concepts of freedoms and capabilities. According to CA, notions of gender and gender-based inequalities were associated with "disparate freedoms" (Sen, 1995, p. 125) between men and women.

This paper employs the CA framework to interrogate dominant understandings of gendered poverty and education against particular representations of the same through narratives of microfinance program consumers and their kin. In other words, this paper explores the gendered poverty assessments in microfinance policy and practice, beyond utility, resources and the sum total of commodities that women lack vis-à-vis men. This paper is based on a study of microfinance programs and practices in two different country contexts– India and Australia. Such a comparison has provided a fresh perspective on the dominant debates regarding gendered poverty and education as well as afforded an opportunity to deconstruct binaries in development though regarding 'developed' and 'developing' countries.

In order to achieve these goals, the paper is divided into four sections. First, a background of the design of microfinance in India and Australia is presented to develop the context for this paper. Second, an account of the key debates surrounding gendered poverty and education in global microfinance policy and practice is provided. Third, particular representations of the relationship between gendered poverty and education in everyday lives of microfinance program consumers in India and Australia are outlined. Fourth and finally, a discussion is put forth of how educational goals need to move beyond access for women to expanding freedoms for women and men.

DESIGN OF MICROFINANCE POLICY AND PRACTICE IN INDIA AND AUSTRALIA

Microfinance encompasses a broad range of financial services provided to people or groups of people otherwise unable to access mainstream financial services. Although historically associated with credit and savings, recently microfinance has come to include broader services such as enterprise, insurance and financial counselling (Burkett 2003; Matin, Hulme & Rutherford 2002). The global microfinance sector has experienced phenomenal growth since its early days in the 1970s. For instance, in late 2002, there were 2,572 MFIs servicing around 41,594,778 million poorest people globally. Of those receiving microfinance services, 79 per cent were women. More recent statistics show consistent growth. As at the end of 2010, there existed 3,652 MFIs reaching 137,547,441 million poorest people of which 82.3 per cent were women (Maes & Reed 2012, p. 3).

Table 1. Theoretical and conceptual underpinning of how and why gender matters (adapted from Voola 2012, p. 12; Unterhalter 2005, p. 16; Singh 2007, pp. 102 – 103)

Distinguishing features	**Women in Development (WID)**	**Gender and Development (GAD)**	**Women Culture and Development (WCD)**	**Capability Approach (CA)**
Time period	1960s and early 1970s	Mid 1980s to present	Late 1990s and 2000	1990s to present
Linked theories	Western liberal feminism; Modernisation; human-capital theory	Radical and socialist feminism; Structuralism; Marxism	Postmodern feminism; Post-structuralism; Post Colonial theory	Human development, Philosophy, justice and ethics.
Approach to gender	Pro-efficiency and anti-poverty; gender = women, girls	Changing structures of inequality; gender understood as social construction of the unequal status quo of women	Integrates women, development and culture as a way to acknowledge fluid processes and shifting identities of gender	Women and men decide what is of intrinsic value to them
Approach to development	Promotes integration of development goals and women's agenda	Targeting women in development policy and practice as a way to challenge oppressive patriarchal structures.	Made the category, 'women in Third World' more flexible and highlighted variations in local contexts of women	Expanding freedoms; Integrating economic and non-economic aspects of individual's wellbeing
Understandings of education	Formal schooling	Conscientisation	Deconstructive	Lifelong learning
Limitations	Ethnocentric; does not challenge capitalism and modernisation	Gynocentric, reductionist and fixed notions of powerful (read: men) and powerless (read: women).	Might lead to glorification of local culture as opposed to global culture and modernity	Underspecified theory (no definitive list of capabilities or conversion factors) limiting practical and operational significance

The Indian microfinance industry germinated in government programs of the 1970s and 1980s that sought rural credit expansion as a way to serve poor people living in rural areas (CCAP 2010; Taylor 2011). In Australia, microfinance as a concept, although not as a term, has existed historically through credit unions and friendly societies, which provided mechanisms for small-scale savings, loans and other types of financial assistance (Burkett 2003). But it was only in early 2000s that microfinance program pilots were being implemented in Australia (Burkett, Sheehan & Brotherhood of St. Laurence 2009). While there are similarities in the purpose and principles of microfinance as deployed in India and in Australia, to alleviate poverty and improve quality of life, there are nonetheless fundamental differences in program design (Corrie 2012; Dale, Feng & Vaithianathan 2012). The primary one being that in India, programs specifically target groups of poor women, whereas in Australia the focus is on reducing financial exclusion of individual men and women in receipt of welfare income. The second difference relates to loan use. That is, in India, the loan amount is offered for investment in income generating projects whereas in Australia, the loans are offered towards emergency consumption needs such as white goods, car registration etcetera.

A significant aspect of the construction of gendered poverty in India has focused on financial and economic inequalities pertaining to women. In the 1980s the State established different cells to coordinate development programs for women, especially those relating to income generation, literacy and health schemes and extension of credit facilities (DWCD 2001). With such a contextual understanding of gendered poverty, microfinance in the mid-1980s emerged as an ideal tool developed by the State to address poverty and disempowerment of women (Holvoet 2005; Morgan & Olsen 2011; Panda 2009). A majority of microfinance programs, particularly those sponsored by the State, targeted women with the explicit goal of empowering them. Empowerment was often measured through level of income generated, health outcomes and narrowly defined notions of reading and writing to a certain level (Chakravathi 2012; Kabeer 1999).

On the other hand, in Australia, gender was not a significant factor in the framing of poverty and inequalities. Indeed, Australia has been heralded as a world leader in closing the gender gap. For instance, the World Economic Forum (WEF) 2006 *Global Gender Gap Report* noted that Australia achieved a rank of 15 out of 115 countries (Greig, Hausmann, Tyson & Zahidi 2006). Reflecting the mainstream view of (lack of) gender inequalities in Australia, the literature on microfinance policy and practice is gender neutral (Goodwin & Voola 2013). Nevertheless, the gendered patterning of poverty in Australia was made evident in the report 'Poverty in Australia', which claims that "women (including female children) face a significantly higher risk of poverty than men" (ACOSS 2012, p. 14). This report also clarified that single parents have a significantly elevated risk of poverty (ACOSS 2012, p.18), 80% of whom are female (Australian Bureau of Statistics 2011). And accordingly, this group forms the majority of clients of microfinance programs (Good Shepherd Microfinance 2012, pp. 7-9; Scutella & Sheehan 2006, p. 9; Vawser & Associates 2009, p.10). Given these overarching contrasts and continuities in the design of microfinance programs in India and Australia, it is interesting to note the association between gendered poverty and education as framed by 'paid experts' (i.e. dominant understandings as represented by policy makers, academics and think tanks) and 'real experts' (i.e. narratives of program

consumers and their kin). The following section will provide an outline of the dominant understandings of the association between gendered poverty and microfinance.

DOMINANT CRITIQUES OF MICROFINANCE POLICY AND PRACTICE

The microfinance movement is predicated on the assumption that poverty can be ameliorated if the poor are given access to appropriate resources such as credit, savings, financial literacy, business training and insurance. Indeed, experts in the field note that the appeal of microfinance lies in its ability to enable the poor to participate in the market economy (Armendariz & Morduch 2010; Arun & Hulme 2009). For example, as Dichter claims, the poor are represented as "budding entrepreneurs, who, with access to formal financial services, would pull themselves out of poverty through business development, asset accumulation and wealth creation" via microfinance (2007, p. 1). Scholarship in microfinance focuses on the economic lens of efficiency and productivity noting the potential of microfinance to challenge "market failures that stem from poor information, high transactions costs, and difficulties enforcing contracts" (Armendariz & Morduch 2010, pp. 23).

Viewing microfinance policy and practice primarily through an economic lens is problematic as there is a potential for overlooking or, rather, undermining issues of inequalities and injustices. An example of such undermining can be found in the evidence-based analysis of microfinance programs by Armendariz and Morduch (2010). They note that gendered programs are regarded as efficient because of women's comparative advantage in small-scale microenterprises relative to men, women's labour immobility leading to easier repayments monitoring and women's fearful and risk-averse attitude making them reliable financial bets. They conclude these observations by stating that, "Employing women can thus reduce institutions' operational costs through two separate channels: via enhanced productivity and via low wages relative to male employees. As a result, women don't only make good clients for microfinance institutions, they also make good employees" (p. 219).

Clearly, the objects of study, gender and women, are constituted via the material aspects of their lives with far less attention paid to the social construction of categories. Interestingly, feminist critiques of microfinance policy and practice, especially those that focus on women's empowerment, also fall into economic assessments of programs. The primary critique of microfinance relates to *women's personal and political agency*. This prominent feminist narrative in the microfinance literature avers that loans made to women are in practice controlled by their male kin (Goetz & Gupta 1996; Leach & Sitaram 2002). For instance, Supriya Garikipati (2008) refers to the 'impact-paradox' whereby loans to women may benefit their household but do not necessarily benefit the women themselves. Garakipati suggests that women's lack of authority over family assets means that loans to women can potentially lead to domestic dissidence and disempowerment of women. These types of critiques suggest that autonomy and independence are important characteristics in the project of addressing gendered poverty. Critics therefore put forth recommendations such as the "patriarchal hold on family's productive assets needs to be challenged" (Garikipati 2008, p. 2638) and the need for "women (to) develop meaningful control over their investment activities" (Goetz & Gupta 1996, p.45).

A second critique of microfinance concerns the *relations of domination and subordination*. Scholars assert that microfinance programs rarely challenge the norms which entrench women's unequal position in society. Critics have suggested for example, that the representation of women as deserving and creditworthy as compared to men is an ideological cover used to implement a loan program via a group that is less mobile, easier to monitor and more likely to succumb to the pressure of repayment (Kannabiran 2005; Rahman 1999). They argue that development organizations, in their keenness to maintain goodwill of the community, work within the patriarchal structures for program implementation rather than challenge them. For instance, Karim notes that the Grameen Bank microfinance has appropriated rural codes of honor and shame to control poor women, especially with regard to loan recovery concluding that "micro-credit loans and women borrowers do not operate outside of local patriarchy but within it" (Karim 2008, p. 19).

Third, critics question the potential of microfinance to challenge existing *gender divisions of labour*. Scholar**s** contend that, whilst there might be positive implications of paid work through microfinance loan, these in no way change the division of labour for women with regard to domestic chores and care work (Kabeer 2005). In their critique of participatory intervention programs with poor women in India, Tanya Jakimow & Patrick Kilby (2006) contend that by equating self-worth to financial contribution made to the household, these microfinance organisations further reinforce the norm that domestic and reproductive work is of less value, consequently cementing women into marginal positions.

And lastly, a significant critique of microfinance relates to the *collusion of microfinance with neoliberalism*. Critics argue that microfinance programs collude with neoliberal rationalities to cultivate gendered subjectivities of the "entrepreneurial, empowered and nurturing 'rational economic women'" (Rankin 2008, p. 1975). To support their critique, scholars have cited for example, a change in the nomenclature of program subjects from 'beneficiaries' with social rights to 'clients' with responsibilities to be indicative of the neoliberal influence (Fraser 2009; Benería 2003; Rankin 2001). The neoliberal narrative, of the entrepreneurial poor woman who saves and repays regularly and is committed to the wellbeing of her family, is implicated in entrenching existing gender inequalities. Such critiques imply that microfinance programs in their articulation as "roll-out neoliberalism" (Rankin 2008, p.1967) are unable to address the structures of gender inequality.

According to these critiques, programmatic success[1] of microfinance interventions has undermined the transformative capacity of gendered programs (Ferguson 2010; Fernandez 2012; Jakimow & Kilby 2006; Kannabiran 2005; Kilby 2006; Thorpe, Stewart & Heyer 2005). All four themes that emerged in the dominant critiques view the role of education within microfinance through a hybrid of WID and GAD frameworks. That is, education needs to be conscientious, one that allows women to critically reflect upon their lives and the larger structures that govern them and to develop alternatives to bring about change. But the WID/GAD frameworks operate with inadequate and rather fixed notions of gender (women) and power (powerful men;

[1]Programmatic success is evaluated based on proxy indicators which are easy to measure such as income, death rates, longevity etcetera. It rarely includes non-quantifiable indicators such as well-being, choice, self-determination and the like.

powerless women) (Mohanty 1986; Unterhalter 2005; Singh 2007). In other words, the dominant critiques have recommended an overthrow of inequitable gendered structures (patriarchy) by targeting women at the expense of excluding men. Microfinance then, needs to provide credit, business training, assets and market knowledge to women and therefore, reverse the status quo of women. Whilst not disparaging these criticisms, this paper makes the claim that global representation of the negative assessments of the relationship between microfinance, gendered poverty and education are contested at the local everyday level in the lives of microfinance consumers and their kin. Before delving into the narratives extracted from 27 in-depth interviews conducted with microfinance program consumers in India and Australia, the next section will provide a note on the larger study from which this paper is drawn.

A NOTE ON RESEARCH STUDY

This paper is based on a larger research study, which seeks to critically engage with understandings of gender inequalities in the policy and practice of microfinance in developing and developed country contexts. The research methodology is based on a qualitative exploration using a combination of document analysis, participant observation and interviews. Rather than begin with an *apriori* notion of what gender inequality is, and how microfinance addresses or does not address it, the approach utilised in this study, began with the inquiry of what gender inequalities are (or are represented to be) through the narratives of microfinance program consumers, and if and how microfinance addresses or exacerbates the conditions of inequalities. The interview questions were framed to elicit consumer understandings of programs, rationale for participation in the programs, and the changes they perceive to have occurred since joining the program. In other words, the data provided consumers' perspectives on what microfinance is for (that is, who needs microfinance and the 'problems' microfinance seeks to address) and what microfinance does (that is, what it is used for, how people access it, the 'solutions' that microfinance offers).

The study has elicited multiple and varied meanings of the relationship between microfinance and gender inequalities through interviews with 27 microfinance program consumers (and their male kin in the case of women only programs) in two different countries, one developing (India) and one developed (Australia). By comparing and contrasting this type of information from both countries, the study sought to deconstruct or, rather, destabilise the binaries in development thought regarding developed and developing countries (Connell 2007; Kabeer, Stark & Magnus 2008). Since microfinance is considered an emerging poverty alleviation strategy in Australia, there were fewer respondents for the study as compared to India, which is considered a microfinance saturated market. The particular microfinance programs in India and Australia from where program consumers were recruited are SKS Microfinance and No Interest Loans Scheme (NILS) respectively. SKS Microfinance provided loans to groups of poor women, but in consultations and with the commitment of their male kin. NILS on the other hand provided loans to individual men and women who were in receipt of welfare income. Further program differences can be found in Table 2. Also a profile of the program consumers interviewed for this study is available in Table 3. Whilst six particular themes emerged from the study regarding the association between microfinance and gender inequalities, only those particular representations regarding poverty, gender and education have been drawn on for the purposes of this paper and are outlined in the following section.

Table 2: Program differences

	India (SKS Microfinance)	***Australia (No Interest Loan Scheme, GSY&FS)***
Targeting	*Women only, but joint (male kin) signature and photographs required for application approval. Gender sensitisation campaigns, counselling and advocacy before recruitment.*	*Men and women on low income*
Loan purpose and amounts	*Investment in income generation activity; AUD $ 37 – 222*	*Emergency consumption of household goods (fridge, washing machine); AUD $ 800 – 2000*
Loan Delivery	*Through NGOs and financial entities*	*Through community service organisations*
Loan Repayments	*Weekly*	*Monthly deducted from welfare payments*
Research participants	*15 female program consumers; 6 male kin of female program consumers*	*3 female program consumers; 3 male program consumers*

Table 3. Profile of the program consumers interviewed for this study

Pseudonym	***Age***	***Marital status***	***Educational profile***	***Household type***	***Occupation***	***Loan purpose***	***Years of membership***
Roja	*32*	*Married*	*Undergraduate*	*Nuclear*	*Computer operator*	*Invest in family business*	*10*
Lalitha	*50*	*Widowed*	*No schooling*	*Joint*	*Agricultural worker – coolie*	*Purchase of buffaloes, land, seeds, fertilisers and land development*	*14*
Shilpa	*35*	*Married*	*No schooling*	*Nuclear*	*Agricultural worker – coolie*	*Purchase of buffaloes, hotel (cafe) expenses*	*7*
Shankar	*50*	*Married*	*2nd grade*	*Joint*	*Agricultural worker – coolie*	*Purchase of buffaloes*	*8*
Dilip	*26*	*Married*	*6th grade*	*Nuclear*	*Building construction work*	*Purchase of construction related material*	*9*
Suneeta	*45*	*Widowed*	*9th grade*	*Female headed*	*Agricultural worker – coolie*	*Purchase of buffaloes*	*18 months*
Padma	*34*	*Widowed*	*4th grade*	*Female-headed*	*Agricultural worker – coolie*	*Purchase of inventory to stock shop – village convenience store*	*18 months*
Kalyani	*28*	*Married*	*5th grade*	*Joint*	*Tailoring*	*Purchase of auto.*	*4*
Suma	*39*	*Married*	*7th grade*	*Joint*	*Saw mill – family business*	*Purchase of wood and running the business.*	*10*
Swapna	*45*	*Married*	*No schooling*	*Joint*	*Making beedis; Kirana (convenience) shop*	*Purchase of inventory for small shop*	*10*

Kamal	*50*	*Married*	*5th grade*	*Joint*	*Agricultural worker – coolie*	*Kirana shop and supplies*	*3*
Suriya	*36*	*Married*	*10th grade*	*Nuclear*	*Bookkeeper*	*Started poultry and fertiliser business*	*10*
Keertana	*50*	*Single*	*5th grade*	*Female-headed*	*Rearing goats*	*Purchase of 2 goats*	*18 months*
Deepti	*32*	*Widowed*	*5th grade*	*Female-headed*	*Agricultural worker – coolie*	*Purchase of buffalo*	*18 months*
Meena	*30*	*Married*	*12th grade*	*Nuclear*	*Anganwaadi teacher (government child care worker)*	*Setting up of Kirana shop*	*6*
Shivani	*30*	*Married*	*No schooling*	*Nuclear*	*Agricultural coolie work*	*Purchase of buffalos*	*15*
Ramana	*45*	*Widowed*	*No schooling*	*Joint*	*Vegetable vendor*	*Purchase of groceries for vending*	*14*
Sundeep	*30*	*Married*	*7th grade*	*Nuclear*	*Agricultural worker – coolie*	*Purchase of buffaloes and goats*	*10*
Ravi	*36*	*Married*	*2nd grade*	*Nuclear*	*Auto driver*	*Kirana shop, house construction and auto rickshaw*	*8*
Urvasi	*45*	*Deserted*	*No schooling*	*Female-headed*	*Agricultural worker - coolie, tea shop owner*	*Purchase of buffalo*	*18 months*
Bindu	*30*	*Widowed*	*No schooling*	*Female-headed*	*Agricultural worker – coolie*	*Purchase of buffalo*	*18 months*

Janet	*29*	*Divorced*	*TAFE Certificate III in Library information*	*Female headed*	*Hospitality and cleaner*	*Purchase mower and the whipper snipper*	*12 months*
Mary	*62*	*Divorced*	*TAFE course*	*Female headed*	*Administration worker*	*Purchase TV*	*2 years*
Deborah	*32*	*Married*	*MSW*	*Nuclear (Blended)*	*Hospitality, social worker*	*Purchase desktop computer*	*1.5 years*
Thomas	*62*	*Separated*	*Year 10*	*Single*	*Professional cleaner*	*Purchase washing machine and TV; ADDS Up - buffer*	*12 months*
Steve	*46*	*Single*	*Year 8*	*Single*	*Road works, building works (construction)*	*Purchase fridge, TV, drier and microwave, chainsaw and air blower; ADDS UP - potential purchase of awning*	*3 years*
Martin	*54*	*Single*	*Year 10*	*Single*	*Truck driver, labourer (construction)*	*Purchase fridge, washing machine, internet stick ; ADDS UP - buffer*	*12 months*

LOCAL REPRESENTATIONS OF GENDERED POVERTY AND EDUCATION: NARRATIVES FROM INDIA AND AUSTRALIA

Microfinance program consumers in India and Australia made a straight-forward connection between the program processes/outcomes and education. On the surface, education appeared to represent knowledge about the financial options and other skill sets related to business operations, but a critical interrogation of the interview responses clarified that education involves lifelong learnings rather than narrow conceptions of reading, writing and financial literacy. Many respondents touched upon the aspects of future aspirations, citizenship, agency and attitudinal shifts. When questioned about the significant change in their lives since joining a microfinance program, respondents in both contexts spoke about attitudinal shift. That is, a shift in how they viewed themselves and their abilities. Based on their responses, it seemed that this was not a one-off event but rather lifelong learning which was prompted as a result of participating in the program. For instance, Martin, while reflecting upon significant changes in his life since taking up the NILS loans, noted that it:

> *...gives me encouragement, to try to save a little bit harder, and it has made me think about money, to help like it goes so quick, I need to focus more on trying to leave it in the bank, instead of buying things that are really unnecessary.*

The new attitude towards money and savings has made a difference to how he perceived himself. He noted,

> *Sometimes it's nice to buy little things that make you feel good, that you're not in a gutter, you're not down and out, you're not homeless.*

It has increased his self-worth. The savings component of the microfinance program has made him think about possibilities for the future. He observed:

> *I'm starting to make me think ahead, I'm thinking $2000, well, I can go on a nice cruise, $1200, I have $800 spending money, you know what I mean like, if I wanted to?*

Echoing a similar comment was Thomas, who found an outlet through the NILS program to increase his self-esteem. He noted:

> *Nothing really changes around me, it's an upheaval, but it gives me an opportunity to skite sometimes. Skite is a big "I'm the best." Look at my flash stereo. Look at my new TV. Look at my new washing machine. I'm like the best. See, I'm able to do that to my friends. Look, this cost me $368. So, it's a matter of self-confidence.*

The notion of future aspirations and goals resonated with program consumers in India as well. The microfinance loans together with the opportunities for employment and further credit had instilled optimism about the future for Kalyani. She noted:

> *...we want our children to be in good jobs. We like to see them flying. We want them to become a doctor or an engineer. We want them to study well and settle at a higher level. Whatever hardship we undergo*

> *is for our children only. We are poor and we don't have anything. If they study well their future will be good. If you can continue giving us loans that will be a great help for us. We can provide good education for our children.*

The various opportunities for lifelong learning through microfinance, is likened to a map with routes by program consumer Meena. She explained:

> *Now there is a route. You [researcher] came here to me, either to teach me something or to learn something from me. Through you I will know something and through me you can learn something like our ways. How do you think I got this route? Because of [microfinance], because of sangams [groups]. If you create routes, only then will people use it. If you want to go on a long tour, it is because of the routes that you can get there. Because there was route you were able to come here.*

Program consumers in India felt that the microfinance program was inclusive because of the specific targeting of the poor and the vulnerable, such as women. For instance, Padma, a single mother considered as ultra-poor by the microfinance organisation in India, was initially apprehensive about joining the *sangam*, but when the loan officers came on two separate occasions to explain the benefits of the program, she decided to join. In addition to gaining access to information regarding finance options for landless agricultural workers, Padma reported on the increased communication skills. She stated:

> *We never knew how to talk to people like you. We were afraid and we kept quiet. As and when the volunteers [microfinance staff] would come and talk to us, we opened up gradually. Like I am able to talk to you now, earlier I could not do so.*

Delving further into interpersonal communication skills as part of lifelong learning, Meena, another program consumer from India, reflected:

> *We have learnt how to speak with different types of people. We have learnt padathi [etiquette]. In the sangam meeting when we go, we can't walk in with money and leave. We need to say our pledge, put in our signatures and take attendance. It's like studying, the sirs are teachers and we are students. Earlier when any sirs [loan officers] came they were never acknowledged. Now when they come, we say namaste [Hello]. That is also padathi [etiquette] right?... Public speaking was not something we could do earlier. If anyone asked us to give our opinion, we would sit still. Since the sangams have started, everyone has an opinion and everyone wants to give it.*

Another aspect raised by the program consumers was regarding learning everyday life skills. Fifty year old Keertana, described the 'better life' that she learnt to live since joining the group. She noted:

> *We have learnt how to wash our face, washing hands properly before eating our food, we have to take medicines when we are ill, we have to use medicines for goats and buffaloes, we have to drink boiled water, we have to cook rice with necessary water and should not pour more*

> *water and should not drain away the extra water. We learnt all these things.*

The life skills enhancing aspect of the microfinance loans was echoed by a program consumer in Australia as well. For instance, talking specifically about people with intellectual and mental health disabilities, Janet explained:

> *I know a lady that…actually this would probably really benefit her. She is intellectually disabled but she is still bright enough. And I think she could actually – if she was to utilise this program it would really help her. She would start utilising what she has learned from it and start doing – if she had to pay back twenty dollars a fortnight, she would probably realise. And I know she would learn from it.*

In other words, the microfinance programs in Australia could facilitate a phased learning process for certain people suffering from intellectual and mental disabilities.

Interestingly, the responses surrounding microfinance, education and poverty elucidated a gender dimension. In the Indian context, the majority of poor men and women had limited education, but speaking specifically about how microfinance provided an opportunity for women to gain numeracy Meena said:

> *All those who did not know math have learnt it. Not many women were good at mathematics. Now they are taking loans ranging INR 40,000 – INR 50,000, they know they need to pay weekly INR 375. They understand the numbers in the loans.*

Women's primary role in the home highlights women's limited interaction with numbers on a day-to-day basis. In other words, their limited participation in the labour market, access to financial systems, impacted their fluency with numbers, especially if they were not exposed to them through formal learning (school system). But for these very women i.e. - with limited education, labour market participation and access to financial systems - the microfinance loan process has provided a medium which requires them to achieve numeracy. In addition to basic numeracy, as cited earlier, Meena highlighted the direct way in which loan officers discuss the issue of gender inequalities in wage labour. She reported:

> *Now in the sangams [microfinance groups] what they have told us is that, whether men do a coolie [agricultural labour] job or women do a coolie job, both have to demand equal pay. This generation even though they are not well educated, they have realised in their minds that they are no less than men. So inequalities are gone. And this is mainly due to sangams.*

Her comment indicates that, while formal education might not create awareness regarding the systemic nature of gender based inequalities, the informal learning that occurred in gender sensitive program broaches the topic in a direct manner.

Another interesting finding with regard to educational experiences has been the opportunity to develop life skills. One of this was interpersonal communication skills. According to Dilip, his wife does not participate in the labour market and even the loan that she has taken through microfinance was used toward the family construction business

in which she was not directly involved. Nevertheless, according to him, she has had several opportunities to develop her interpersonal communication skills with people outside their kinship via the microfinance program. The group nature of the microfinance program in India meant that women had to elect leaders from with groups, who would represent the overall group interest at public forums in other villages, towns and cities. Dilip, whose wife was as a leader for 11 microfinance groups (five in each group), often had to travel and interact with various stakeholders. Commenting on his wife's governing skills and self-confidence since becoming a leader he noted:

> *The political leaders in our village are saying that there is no need to pay back the loan. They are threatening my wife that they will file a case against her if she pays. But my wife is waiting to talk to the government officials. She is waiting for the chance to approach the government officials.*

The interpersonal communication skills complimented by leadership skills have enabled Dilip's wife to defend her group and their interests despite threats.

The opportunity to engage in leadership roles was reiterated by other program consumers as well. For instance, Swapna reflected upon certain restrictions imposed upon women like herself due to religion. Since becoming a *sangam* group leader, she made an observation regarding a shift in the norms, which hitherto restricted her. She noted:

> *Before the sangams started we never ventured out of the house even. We always stay in the house. Because I left my home to go to the hill and talk to the leader of the groups there, we were able to form a group. Because we moved the groups here, I became the leader. If the groups were not there, I would not have had this kind of power. It was good as I was able to help others get loans.*

Elaborating further on identity and power, she revealed:

> *Before the program, the people in my lane never knew me. Why would the people on the hill near the bus station or in other lanes of the village know who I am? Because I have been a leader for 14 groups, that is 70 people, I have earned a name for myself. People recognise me. Until my signature is present on an application, others cannot get a loan approved. I have to sign for all.*

It is not just women who gained self-confidence as a result of being in leadership roles in the *sangam* who reported on the benefits of the program. Even those who considered themselves self-confident prior to joining the program, reported on the value of participation in *sangams*. As Shivani explained:

> *...earlier also I was outspoken, but after joining the group, the members elected me to be a group leader and I was then also able to talk in public. I definitely got a name and identity as a sangam leader.*

Gaining visibility and identity in the local community amounted to a significant change in Shivani's life as she described it.

Visibility of the program and the program consumers in the local community lead to attitudinal shifts in what women could achieve and were able to achieve. Reflecting upon this, Shilpa averred:

> *In my street or in this village I was not able to get loan nine years back, but now we are getting loan from sangam. In our house, in our street and in our village now people are able to say and appreciate the fact that women getting and earning money. People are able to appreciate our boldness.*

All the examples thus far have highlighted the potential for positive gendered impacts of transformative education through the program, but Urvasi remains cautious about the potential negative consequences of women gaining numeracy, leadership and visibility. She ruminated on the potential rise in conflicts and inequalities if women become the focus of microfinance programs and noted, "…it is worse and the woman cannot fend for herself".

At the same time, she reported that in her situation (that of a woman who was deserted by her husband) participating in the program was positive. She noted:

> *I got a good name. I joined the group, made one into two...with whatever we got we made more. We got comforts. So others got to know of us.*

She described the change in her life as, "For instance when Indira Gandhi got back to political power, is that not a significant change? Likewise, I feel the same."

The attitudinal shift in how the local community perceives her and how she perceived herself is suggestive of the lifelong learning potential of such programs. In the Australian context, there were no examples to demonstrate the gendered lifelong learning as a result of program. The reason for this could be attributed to the design and practice of the program, which is neutral in terms of gender positioning of the program.

MOVING BEYOND ACCESS FOR WOMEN TO EXPANDING FREEDOMS FOR MEN AND WOMEN

Program consumers in both contexts highlighted the possibility for education through microfinance programs. The responses in the Indian context revealed training related to employment and business generation, civic education, interpersonal and leadership skills, and aspects of lifelong learning. In the Australian context, program consumers revealed life skills regarding money and attitudinal shifts regarding future aspiration. Interestingly, interrogation of gendered experiences in the responses revealed the ways in which men and women benefit differently through microfinance programs. In the Indian context, the targeting of women with the knowledge and consent of male kin implied that women gained, numeracy, visibility and in some instances leadership roles. In their role as group members, they developed interpersonal communication skills to tackle bank officers, political leaders and other elders in the community. Program consumers reported attitudinal shifts (within and without) resulting from lifelong learning causing fractures in gendered norms regarding these issues. This had positive as well as negative consequences. On the other hand, in the Australian context, there was no reporting of gendered lifelong learning and this could be attributed to the neutral positioning of the

programs. This implied that gendered norms were not recognised and as such were not or could not be tackled through the programs.

The global dominant narratives of the association between gendered poverty and microfinance provided an understanding of education and development through a hybrid of GAD/WID frameworks. That is, an understanding linked to formal schooling as well as conscientious education with the particular goal of overthrowing patriarchal structures. Such ethnocentric and women-centric frameworks operate with reductionist and fixed notions of power and who (dis)possesses it, therefore, leaving little theoretical as well as practical room to account for men who want to change, or women who might not always seek out wellbeing of family and community. This paper has contributed to theory and research by employing the CA framework to interrogate the narratives of microfinance program consumers, and therefore opening up the informational space to draw out an understating of education and development that incorporates what is of intrinsic value to men and women. While traditional descriptions of education such as, literacy, numeracy, business skills and financial training, were part of the program processes and outcomes, the *freedom* to access education and achieve outcomes such as lifelong learning, agency, future aspirations and attitudinal shifts, expanded the traditional notions of education and its association to gendered poverty in contexts of microfinance policy and practice. Clearly, education was valued not just for *instrumental* purposes such as enhancing financial or employment pathways, but also for *intrinsic* purposes, that is towards transformative ends.

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From Comparative Education to Comparative Pedagogy: A Physical Education Case Study

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In the last two decades forces of globalization and the rise of and access to information technology have transformed the nature of educational research. Traditional disciplines such as comparative education have not been immune to these transformational impacts. Although one might expect globalization to promote the study of comparative education, comparative perspectives are yet to permeate many corners of education and little attention has been paid to their potential to inform the area of physical education. This paper argues that comparative education has a unique role to play in informing physical education policy and practice. To support this claim this article presents one particular example: comparative physical education pedagogy.

Therefore this study compared and contrasted two methods of teaching physical education (direct versus indirect) in order to determine which approach is more effective for student learning. The comparison was evaluated and measured for 'enjoyment', 'skill developed' and 'tactical understanding'. Participation in sport at a young age has shown to positively influence young people's physical activity later on in their life. At a time where participation rates in youth sport are dropping significantly and there are high rates of obesity, the results of this study will be of interest to policy makers as the findings have the potential to contribute to new knowledge and practice in education.

Further, by providing a case study for physical education, we demonstrate how comparative education can play a useful and multidimensional role in wide and varied areas of educational research.

Keywords: Globalization; Physical Education; Pedagogy

INTRODUCTION

It is more than a century since Jordan (1905) completed his seminal work *Comparative Religion*, which presented a description of 26 comparative fields. Writing on comparative education, Jordan (1905) concluded that, "no method of inquiry has proved more fruitful of wise suggestions" (p.35). Early comparative educationalists primarily examined various national education systems, and in America, for example, there was a fascination in the early twentieth century with the Prussian education system (see for example: Hinsdale, 1906; Stowe 1930). Hans (1955) noted that the early comparative educationalists were interested in drawing on foreign models with the "purpose of perfecting national systems with modifications and changes" (p.57). Comparative educationalists argued that the study

of international perspectives enabled an informed critical perspective on one's own system.

The discipline grew steadily and, by the 1950s, comparative education became integral in the tertiary education sector. For example, in most Australian and other Western countries the discipline formed an important part of teacher training departments (Trethewey, 2014). This post-1950s period was the golden age of comparative education as evidenced by the establishment of professional organisations, associated academic conferences and research output (Phillips & Schweisfurth, 2014). The period immediately after the rise of globalization and the associated internationalization of education, changed the landscape that comparative education was positioned in (Carroll, 2012). Many of these early comparative education activities and influences noted above disappeared and in recent years there has been a trend of promoting issues related to post-modern influences and perspectives. Further, emerging comparativists struggled to define whether comparative education was a discipline, methodology or a field (Phillips & Schweisfurth, 2014).

While there are still strands of comparative education interested in applied research, such as policy borrowing (Phillips & Ochs, 2004; Phillips, 2014), the overwhelming body of contemporary research has moved towards post-modern research and methodologies; and focus has drifted from examination of education and schooling systems. Further, mainstream comparative education has conscripted the advancement of modernity as the underlying definition of education. Consequently, comparative education's legitimacy has been questioned (Crossley, 2000; Broadfoot, 2000). Broadfoot (2000) argued that comparative education:

> *…has a unique capacity to make the familiar strange but so far, despite the advent of exciting new methodologies and the rapidly increasing prominence of comparative studies as a tool for policy-making, comparative education has largely worked within the conventional 'delivery model' conception of education. (p.357)*

Crossley (2000) went further and noted that if the field is to be reconceptualised:

> *…in ways that articulate and demonstrate its continued relevance for the 21st century, it is argued that its history and traditions deserve both celebration and challenge. The field's multi-disciplinary origins and nature, for example, position it well for further advancement in a future in which the socio-cultural analysis of global trends and developments will require concerted attention. (p.319)*

In the last decade a number of publications, including special editions of journals and edited books, were published which looked at the scope, trends, contours and boundaries of comparative education (Wellington, 2015; Bray, Adamson & Mason, 2014; Trethewey, 2014). Key terms in titles of publications included 'rethinking', 'reconceptualising' and 'rethinking the role'; it was clear that considerable debate had been generated regarding future directions of the discipline. There were more worrying trends and Wilson (2006) noted that in England at least, comparative education was in decline and was slowing disappearing from the tertiary education settlement. This decline has been accompanied by a parallel rise in research based on international educational assessments such as the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development's (OECD) Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) and international surveys of educational policy

and practice such as the OECD's Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS). This research on policy and practice is now substantial, highly influential and the focus of strong critique (Sjøberg, 2015). Whilst these studies are ostensibly international and comparative, they sit outside the disciplinary community of traditional comparative educational research and threaten to further marginalize the significance of the discipline. However, their highly applied nature and broad ambitions may provide lessons for traditional comparative researchers.

One theme, which clearly emerged from retrospection of the comparative field, was the reality that the decline in the standing of the discipline was also related to the resistance to broaden the discipline's appeal and inquiry. In the two-volume compendium to comparative education, Cowen and Kazamias (2009) devoted a section of the second volume to new directions of inquiry into comparative education, as they believed there was clearly an urgent need to address these shortcomings. Therefore, one of the primary aims of this article is to highlight the possibilities and opportunities which Cowen and Kazamias (2009) called for. While the example or case study noted in this article is physical education, other subject areas could have been selected, such as science or maths education.

While physical education has a long history in modern school education, and in most countries around the world it is a mandated subject in both elementary and secondary schooling (Hardman & Marshall, 2009), comparative educationalists have been reluctant to address issues associated with physical education and there is sparse mention of it. For example, a survey of articles in the three most prestigious comparative education journals (*Compare, Comparative Education Review* and *Comparative Education*) between the years 2010 and 2015 finds there are no physical education entries. A similar picture is evident in the papers which were presented at various comparative education conferences. For example, between 2010 and 2015 at the 'Annual Conference of the Comparative and International Comparative Education Society' (CIES), held in the United States, there was no evidence of physical education. Furthermore, physical education is an area also neglected in the large international assessment and survey programs run by the OECD. It is not clear why there is an absence of comparative international physical education research. This lack of focus on physical education reinforces the criticisms made of contemporary comparative physical education research (Cowen & Kazamias, 2009) mentioned earlier.

Therefore the aim of this paper is to highlight and demonstrate how there can be an important synergy between physical education and comparative education by using research presenting a comparative physical education pedagogy research project on research conducted in 2014 and not previously published.

COMPARATIVE PHYSICAL EDUCATION PEDAGOGY

It is almost a decade since Planel (2008) noted that one area of neglected potential in comparative education has been in comparative pedagogy. She argued that there were three main reasons why comparative educationalists should focus on pedagogy:

> *Firstly, comparative education has, since the 1990s and following the trend in the study of education in general, turned its attention more to pedagogy. Hence, comparative pedagogy now has a greater knowledge*

> *basis. Secondly, pedagogy is the area of comparative education which is arguably most relevant and useful to all teachers since it deals with the act and discourse of teaching. Thirdly, pedagogy is wider than what goes on in the classroom: 'Pedagogy connects the apparently self-contained act of teaching with culture, structure and mechanisms of social control'. (Planel, 2008, p.386)*

While Planel (2008) clearly articulated the research possibilities above, it is not clear why there has not been a focus on pedagogy. Across educational research, pedagogy is a strong research theme. Alexander (2011) further lamented that pedagogy was the "most prominent of the themes which comparativists have tended to ignore" (p.509) and there exists evidence which support this claim. For example, Little (2000) produced some empirical research and calculated that less than seven per cent of articles in *Comparative Education* between 1977 and 1998 dealt with "curriculum content and the learner's experience" (p.285). To address some of this neglect this article conducted comparative physical education pedagogy research in an Australian secondary school. The point of this study is not to demonstrate pedagogical innovation or claims made, but rather to provide a pertinent example regarding the possibilities available for important comparative scholarship.

Physical education, like comparative education, is a long established academic discipline and there has since the 1950s been significant research in the area. One of the most dominant streams of research is related to pedagogy (Ennis, 2016). Kirk and Haerens (2014) argue that:

> *…that there is an emerging consensus (in the English-language research community) that pedagogy is the proper object of study of educational research in physical education and sport, confirmed by the increasing prevalence of studies that explore relations between the components of teachers, teaching and teacher education, curriculum and learners and learning. (p.899)*

This growth and consolidation of physical education pedagogy has also been the result of a strong focus by researchers advocating or privileging one method over another. While it is well accepted the physical education is an important tool for addressing poor health outcomes such as obesity and physical inactivity, there has been considerable debate on the most effective method. Views have been polarized. Therefore what transpired was an abundance of research which focussed on key pedagogical approaches, such as Game Sense, Sport Education or Fundamental Movement Skills and their effectiveness (Light, 2013; Breed & Spittle, 2013; Okely, Booth & Chey, 2004; Hardy et. al., 2010; Siedentop, Hastie & Van der Mars, 2011). Much of this research is based on responses from pre-service teachers or results from various school interventions (Pearson, Webb & McKeen, 2005; MacPhail, et. al, 2008). What has clearly characterized this research has been the narrow research focus; all these studies examine one particular method in isolation. There are innumerable studies for example on Fundamental Movement Skills (FMS) or on Game Sense pedagogy undertaken independently in research silos, which has lacked both influence and impact (Kirk & Haerens, 2014). Effective physical education pedagogy also received impetus due to the reality of ever decreasing time made available for physical education, globally, both in the primary and secondary sector (Hardman & Marshall, 2009).

While there is a strong and growing research base underpinning all these various pedagogical models (Metzler, 2005; Kinchin, 2006; Oslin & Mitchell, 2006) there is little research to document if they have influenced practice in physical education or if they have impacted at a policy level. Also physical education pedagogy researchers for the most part have not been able to integrate knowledge from different domain and fields, and this of course includes comparative education. That is, in each of the related domains researchers are generating valuable knowledge which is ultimately fragmented.

The research presented here attempted to address this neglect by comparing and contrasting two diametrically opposed pedagogies which underpin international physical education curriculums and in particularly which approach is the most effective in teaching physical education.

The Games Sense and FMS physical education pedagogies are both denoted by a range of names; Game Sense is often referred to as 'Teaching Games for Understanding', and FMS is also known as drills and skills. For the purposes of this study the FMS approach is termed the 'direct approach'. In this approach students receive direct instruction from the teacher in which a set of body of knowledge is transmitted. This involves the refining of particular skills that are seen as fundamental to playing the particular sport (for a thorough description see Darst, Pangrazi, Brusseau & Erwin, 2014). For example in the sport of basketball, the first levels would focus on dribbling, shooting, passing and defending. Skills are practiced in isolation from the game and other tactical aspects of play until the teacher feels the players are confident enough to play the game.

The second approach, Game Sense, is termed the 'indirect approach'. In this approach the instruction is student-centred, inquiry-based and allows students to develop their own understanding while actively involved in the game (for a thorough description see Light, 2013). Unlike the direct approach noted above, in this approach games are immediately played and no skills or techniques are practiced. The games are small sided, modified and are manipulated to cater for different ages, abilities and inclinations. While there are number of names given to various physical education pedagogies such as Game Sense, Fundamental Movement Skills, Sport Education, skills and drills, all these approaches fall into either the direct or indirect approach.

RESEARCH DESIGN

Therefore, we conducted a study in 2014, which compared the two approaches (direct approach versus indirect approach) in order to determine which approach was more effective for student learning and engagement in a secondary school setting. The comparison was evaluated and measured for 'enjoyment', 'skill developed' and 'tactical understanding'. According to physical education research these three aspects are considered central to effective physical education outcomes (Alexander & Luckman, 2001).

Tactical understanding is important to effective physical education teaching because students are more likely to show interest and participate in a game or sport if they develop a tactical understanding of the game early (Light, 2013). That is, if students do not understand the tactics involved in a sport they won't be able to participate actively. The literature is also unanimous that enjoyment is an essential aspect of effective pedagogy. As enjoyment is key to learning and participation in physical education, it is important to

utilize the influence pedagogy can have on student enjoyment levels (Dishman, et.al., 2005). Finally, a focus on skills is central to effective instruction because they are considered building blocks to participating in sport. That is if you cannot do the skills that comprise a sport you won't be able to participate (Mayer, 2014).

In order to measure tactical understanding the Team Sport Assessment Procedure (TSAP) instrument was used. TSAP is an effective validated tool in testing for a tactical knowledge and understanding of the game (López-Pastor et. al., 2013). The TSAP instrument was used to measure the tactical output of students in a basketball game and soccer game. Following the implementation of the TSAP instrument, a table was created that comprised of three levels of tactical understanding, which were: proficient, adequate and below average. Student levels were determined by their TSAP scores. In order to measure enjoyment the study used a survey with close-ended 20 questions which was established and validated by Hashim et. al. (2008). Regarding skill development, two pre-existing skill tests were administered. For the sport of basketball the AAHPERD (1984) skill test was adopted which examined three basketball skills: shooting, dribbling and passing. While for the sport of soccer, the skills test focused on the three core skills of soccer passing, dribbling and receiving as identified by the Football Federation Australia (Berger, 2013).

Participants and Setting

The research setting was a public secondary school of approximately 1,000 students located in a suburb of Sydney's inner west. The school represented a typical government school in Australia with varying levels of ability from class to class. The sample included two classes consisting of 48 students in total from the Year 8 cohort. There were 27 boys and 21 girls who consented to participate in the study. The researchers instructed the students once a week for term 3 of the calendar year. Each class was 70 minutes long. In total each class spent five weeks with the sport of basketball and five weeks with the sport of soccer. Jacobson, Kim, Pathak and Zhang's (2013) study demonstrated that it was possible to show the benefits of an intervention after only four sessions. The two sports selected (basketball and soccer) were selected because they formed a mandated part of the NSW Health and Physical Education syllabus (New South Wales Board of Studies, 2003). The researchers had prior experience teaching the sports and had acquired coaching qualifications in basketball and soccer. The selected sports that were being used to conduct the research were chosen in recognition of basketball and soccer being two of the most common sports taught in physical education. Furthermore, the fact that these sports are ranked high in participation rates and popularity in Australia meant the majority of students had background knowledge of the games (Australia Bureau of Statistics, 2014). For each of the sports a syllabus (for both indirect and direct approaches) was developed. It must be noted that regardless of the approach (direct or indirect) the teaching was taught at a superior level.

RESULTS

The indirect approach clearly produced higher tactical understanding scores. While results ranged significantly for both sports: basketball (4.2 to 31.7) and soccer (5 to 12.3) there is no doubt that students who had the indirect treatment had higher results. What was statistically significant with the results was that the girls demonstrated a stronger tactical understanding of the sports especially in basketball. Using the TSAP tool girls also clearly exhibited a higher volume of play. The results show that after playing games in their

respective sport, overall girls exhibit a higher volume of play, which is the general involvement within the game. Furthermore, the girls' efficiency ratings as a group were significantly higher than that of the boys'. The findings indicate that indirect instruction is significantly more effective in eliciting tactical awareness in Year 8 students especially in girls.

Enjoyment levels also correlated with the tactical understanding results. That is students had significantly higher enjoyment levels during their indirect teaching in both soccer and basketball. Scores were significantly lower using the direct approach especially in soccer. It is not clear why levels were significantly higher, as there is no qualitative data generated although it would be fair to assume that they were more active in the indirect instruction. Looking at the volume of play from the TSAP results it is evident that the majority of students were actively taking part in the activity. When a gender breakdown is provided there are no statistical differences, although a number of female participants indicated they were not enthusiastic about participating in basketball prior to the commencement of the unit however, after completing the indirect unit they altered their stance. The boys produced similar results in relation to their enjoyment of the soccer unit.

Regarding the skill component of the study, the collected data was analysed through the use of two tools. The first being the use of the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS), which allowed for the use of Independent T-tests to verify whether or not data was statistically significant (Gratton & Jones, 2010). The second tool used was excel to analyse the combined total of both girls and boys. Independent T-Tests demonstrated that students obtained higher skill scores from the direct instruction group. In the direct approach both boys and girls as a whole demonstrated a significant improvement in the post-test compared to the pre-test. Therefore, this difference demonstrates greater growth in skills after the use of direct instruction in a Year 8 school setting.

In summary, the results highlighted that overall there was more enjoyment and tactical understanding evident amongst the students in both classes in both sports when the indirect approach was used. This was even more statistically significant for girls who demonstrated a significantly higher tactical understanding than the boys. Regarding skill acquisition, there is no doubt from the statistical analysis undertaken that the direct approach yielded stronger results. This was the case in both classes and both genders.

CONCLUSION

It is 200 years since Marc-Antoine de Paris (1775-1848) published *Esquisse et vues préliminaires d'un ouvrage sur l'éducation comparée (1816/1817)* which is considered to be the founding date of the comparative education discipline. While the discipline itself has been a legitimate academic pursuit with associated departments, undergraduate and postgraduate university representations and academic research, there has been considerable debate in recent years on both the shortcomings of the discipline and also future directions. Using the case study of comparative physical education pedagogy, this paper has argued that comparative education has a useful and relevant role to play in physical education. There are a number of reasons for this. First, it addresses some of the criticisms noted in comparative education critiques of the discipline such as the insular nature, where the same topics are recycled over and over again. Second, due to rising levels of obesity and physical inactivity around the world, physical education is now an area of research which is 'topical' and significant interest and funding are located in this area.

Third, comparative educationalists with all their expertise in the discipline, in particular methodological, are perfectly positioned to be at the front of this globalized interest. Therefore this article provided a 'roadmap' of opportunities that comparative educationalists can adopt to address the shortcomings noted above. Future research might, for example, provide studies into comparative youth obesity and physical inactivity research; or studies into comparative physical education policy by country. The test for comparative educationalists now is to make this transition. As has been clearly noted above, the possibilities are endless.

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