



Handbook of Teacher Education

Globalization, Standards
and Professionalism in
Times of Change

Tony Townsend and Richard Bates (Eds.)

 Springer

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*Globalization, Standards and
Professionalism in Times of Change*

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PREFACE

This book has its origins in conversations that started when the International Council on Education for Teaching (ICET) and the Australian Teacher Education Association (ATEA) jointly agreed to co-sponsor a World Assembly of Teacher Educators in Melbourne in July 2003, hosted by Monash University. The editors of this book were not only intimately involved in the management of the conference but had also been key figures in the Associations involved. Tony Townsend had been secretary, and on the national board of the South Pacific Association for Teacher Education (SPATE), which later became ATEA and had previously managed a SPATE conference in Frankston, Australia, in the 1980s. He is currently the President of ICET and now works at Florida Atlantic University. Richard Bates has been a long time board member of ATEA and is currently President of that organization. He is also a Board member of ICET.

The International Council on Education for Teaching (ICET) was founded in 1953 for the purpose of emphasizing international cooperation in educational development in order to improve the quality of teacher education as well as to expand global educational opportunities for people in teacher education. Since that time, ICET has developed into an international association of practitioners of teacher education, policy and decision-makers in education, government and business dedicated to global development through education. ICET is a Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) and participates in NGO meetings and other UNESCO-sponsored conferences around the world.

Scholars, administrator, practitioners from universities, colleges, departments and institutes of education as well as members of government ministries, the teaching profession and business leaders that are interested in educational development participate in ICET and share their ideas, research and experience with other professionals from around the world. The main goals of ICET are:

- To foster international cooperation in improving the quality of preparation of teachers, administrators and other education specialists through the development of national, regional and international networks.
- To promote cooperation between higher education institutions, government and the private sector to develop a worldwide network of resources for innovative programs in international educational development.
- To provide an international forum for the exchange of information and the discussion of issues and trends in education and development.
- To assist educational personnel training institutions all over the world to respond to the need for improved facilities, diversified curricula and alternative and non-traditional educational methods.

The Australian Teacher Education Association (ATEA) is the major professional association for teacher educators in Australia. The mission of the Australian Teacher Education Association is to promote:

- The preservice and continuing education of teachers in all forms and contexts;
- teacher education as central in the educational enterprise of the nation;
- research on teacher education as a core endeavour.

The Association enacts this mission through several key strategies, namely:

- to foster improvement in initial teacher education;
- to engage in national advocacy for teacher education;
- to promote and support the teaching profession;
- to form strong links with individuals and organisations involved in educational change;
- to improve the nature, quality and availability of professional development for teachers educators, and
- to promote and disseminate research, ideas and practices, innovation and evaluation in teacher education.

The Melbourne Conference was a good example of ICET and ATEA at their best. With a partnership between an international and a national association, it was able to bring key speakers and delegates from all over the world to consider its theme ‘Teachers as Leaders: Teacher Education for a Global Profession’. The keynote speakers and the papers contained topics of such interest that we felt that it was timely to gather together a series of perspectives of critical issues facing teacher education at this time. This idea was supported by Michel Lokhorst, then editor of Kluwer-Springer and has been subsequently been followed through by Astrid Noordermeer of Springer. The editors would like to acknowledge both people for their support, without which this book could not have been published.

In addition, we dedicate this book to the thousands of teacher educators around the world, many of whom are feeling under various types of pressure, from the community and the government, from lack of funding and other resources and from an increasingly difficult task that faces them, for their sustained commitment to developing young people into the teaching force necessary to confront a rapidly changing and increasingly complex world.

SECTION ONE

GLOBALIZATION AND DIVERSITY:
PROMISE OR PROBLEM?

1. TEACHER EDUCATION IN A NEW
MILLENNIUM: PRESSURES AND POSSIBILITIES

INTRODUCTION

Teacher education is currently facing a number of tensions as pressures have come from many quarters in the last decade, with perhaps the most intense focus being on the issue of teacher quality. This call for an improvement in the quality of teachers is welcomed by many, but there are inherent dangers too. Cochran-Smith (2004a, p. 3) writes:

Over the past several years, a new consensus has emerged that teacher quality is one of the most, if not the most, significant factor in students' achievement and educational improvement. In a certain sense, of course, this is good news, which simply affirms what most educators have believed for years: teachers' work is important in students' achievement and in their life chances. In another sense, however, this conclusion is problematic, even dangerous. When teacher quality is unequivocally identified as the primary factor that accounts for differences in student learning, some policy makers and citizens may infer that individual teachers alone are responsible for the successes and failures of the educational system despite the mitigation of social and cultural contexts, support provided for teachers' ongoing development, the historical failure of the system to serve particular groups, the disparate resources devoted to education across schools and school systems, and the match or mismatch of school and community expectations and values. Influenced by the new consensus about teacher quality, some constituencies may infer that "teachers teaching better" is the panacea for disparities in school achievement and thus conclude that everybody else is off the hook for addressing the structural inequalities and differential power relations that permeate our nation's schools.

The issue of increasingly varied demographic conditions that have led to students from all over the world being in a single classroom, with the associated need for teachers to deal with multiculturalism, whether they like it or not, has created a new complexity not faced by most teachers a decade or so ago. Teacher shortages in some parts of the world has led to the possibility of teachers moving from one country to another as the demand for teachers and associated wage rates make teaching a market unlike we have experienced before. As teachers increasingly are blamed for lack of student performance, as politicians choose to offset any responsibility they have for the conditions under which teachers work, so too, teacher educators are targeted as being one of the problems associated with what is perceived to be low levels of student achievement.

These and other dilemmas for teacher education institutions and teacher educators open up the opportunity for a detailed analysis of a number of major issues using data collected from around the world. The key issues of globalization versus diversity, the need for high quality pre-service programs, for well managed and supported integration of new teachers into the teaching force and ongoing professional development for that workforce, lead to two of the major factors that will impinge on the teaching profession in the future; the need for the teacher to become a consistent, reflective practitioner and the need to use rapidly developing technologies, both ICT and other learning technologies, in an increasingly effective manner, to promote high quality student learning for all students.

It is a fairly trying time for teacher educators, as well as for anyone else in education. In many western countries, governments are now thinking that the cost of educating their populations should be lowered at the same time as they expect school administrators, teachers, and teacher educators, to do much more, in more difficult circumstances, than they have ever done before. This has been translated by government as the need to have 'highly qualified teachers' in front of every classroom. US Secretary of Education, Margaret Spellings, in her 2005 report on teacher quality argued the focus should be on:

... the essential principles for building outstanding teacher preparation programs in the 21st century and ... on the critical teaching skills all teachers must learn. In particular, all teacher preparation programs must provide teachers with solid and current content knowledge and essential skills. These include the abilities to use research-based methods appropriate for their content expertise; to teach diverse learners and to teach in high-need schools; and to use data to make informed instructional decisions. Successful and promising strategies for promoting these skills include making teacher education a university-wide commitment; strengthening, broadening, and integrating field experience throughout the preparation program; strengthening partnerships; and creating quality mentoring and support programs.

(Spellings, 2005, p. iii)

Each of these strategies involves the necessity of doing things differently than how they were done in the past. Typically, Colleges of Education are seen as being at the bottom of the totem pole in universities, with some disciplines arguing that Teacher Education shouldn't even be there in the first place.

As well, comparatively recent research activity, now called the school effectiveness movement, has tried to show that schools can and do make a difference, as a refutation of the earlier work by Coleman and others in the 1960s which concluded:

Schools bring little influence to bear on a child's achievement that is independent of his background and general social context.

(Coleman *et al.*, 1966, p. 325)

However, the school effectiveness research has been a double-edged sword. As Reynolds has argued, the school effectiveness research has had the positive effect of

‘helping to destroy the belief that schools can do nothing to change the society around them ... and the myth that the influence of the family is so strong on children’s development that they are unable to be affected by school’ (Reynolds, 1994, p. 2), but he also argues that it has had the negative effect of ‘creating the widespread, popular view that schools do not just make a difference, but that they make all the difference’ (Reynolds, 1994, p. 2).

This fairly new expectation that every student can and will be educated to high levels of achievement, as typified by the *No Child Left Behind Act* in the USA, has been made more difficult by a government that chooses to spend less on all forms of education than previously. Although nearly 60% of Americans indicated they would vote for a presidential candidate with a strong focus on public education and who would funnel more resources into education (Public Education, 2004), in February 2005, President Bush called for almost a 10% cut in education funding for the 2005–06 year, which would have seen the elimination of 48 programs (AACTE Briefs, March 21, 2005).

The challenge is even greater when one looks at student achievement historically in the United States. For almost thirty years, the percentage of students who achieve proficiency has remained at approximately 30%. To imply that teachers, and teacher educators, can somehow increase this percentage to 100% or somewhere close to it, with less funding at the classroom level and less public support for the profession than ever before suggests that *No Child Left Behind* might simply be another slogan to disguise a chronic and perhaps unmovable level of underperformance. One might ask why the richest country in the world, one that could put man on the moon, when it put its mind to it, fails to educate nearly seventy percent of its people? One possible answer is that, as a community, it chooses not to. A commitment to address the real social issues that support underachievement in school would have far greater implications than any new slogan might have.

Instead, there have been reports in some parts of the world that suggest that teachers are not well trained. Much of the criticism has been directed at the training institutions.

Schools of Education ... are neither preparing teachers adequately to use the concrete findings of the best research in education, nor are they providing their students with a thoughtful and academically rich background in the fundamentals of what it means to be an outstanding educator.

(Steiner and Rozen, 2003, np)

Comments such as these have led to a lowering of status for teachers and, in many cases, an unwillingness on the part of young people to enter the profession. To try and overcome this, alternative ways of certifying teachers has emerged. The 2003 Report to Congress by then Secretary Rod Paige (see www.title2.org), indicated the Bush government’s commitment to ‘raising the academic standards for teachers while lowering the barriers that are keeping many talented people out of the teaching profession’ and the response to this has been twofold. First there has been a push to increase the responsibility on Colleges of Education to improve what they do, and this has been accompanied by more focused attention on certain areas (such as