Guofang Wan
Editor

The Education of Diverse Student Populations

A Global Perspective

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EXPLORATIONS OF EDUCATIONAL PURPOSE

Volume 2

Series Scope

In today's dominant modes of pedagogy, questions about issues of race, class, gender, sexuality, colonialism, religion, and other social dynamics are rarely asked. Questions about the social spaces where pedagogy takes place - in schools, media, and corporate think tanks - are not raised. And they need to be.

The *Explorations of Educational Purpose* book series can help establish a renewed interest in such questions and their centrality in the larger study of education and the preparation of teachers and other educational professionals. The editors of this series feel that education matters and that the world is in need of a rethinking of education and educational purpose.

Coming from a critical pedagogical orientation, *Explorations of Educational Purpose* aims to have the study of education transcend the trivialization that often degrades it. Rather than be content with the frivolous, scholarly lax forms of teacher education and weak teaching prevailing in the world today, we should work towards education that truly takes the unattained potential of human beings as its starting point. The series will present studies of all dimensions of education and offer alternatives. The ultimate aim of the series is to create new possibilities for people around the world who suffer under the current design of socio-political and educational institutions.

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Jean C. McPhail recently retired from the College of Education at the University of Canterbury, New Zealand, and formerly of the University of Michigan, has dedicated her work to the exploration of schooling contexts that support rich disciplinary learning for all students. Of late, this work has motivated her to understand more fully the various dimensions of the sociocultural impact of schooling policies that decentralize public education toward site-based management while increasingly ceding curriculum ideas to managerial, undemocratic systems.

Georgina Tsolidis is professor and chair of education at the University of Ballarat, Australia. She took up an academic position after working as a teacher, consultant, researcher, and policy analyst with the Victorian Department of Education. Her research interests center on identity and difference with a particular focus on gender and ethnicity. Schooling and youth subcultures also are an area of specific interest. Her most recent monograph is *Youthful Imagination: Schooling, Subcultures and Social Justice* (2007), published by Peter Lang, New York.

Guofang Wan is as an associate professor of education and associate director of the Literacy Center at Ohio University in Athens, Ohio, USA. She holds a Ph.D. from the Pennsylvania State University. Guofang's longtime research passions include exploring effective ways to educate children with diverse backgrounds and building bridges between home and school. She has published several books, chapters, and numerous journal articles on these topics.

Jun Yang is professor of minority education at Northwest Normal University in China. He advises both master's and doctoral students of education. Being a Yugur minority himself, he focuses on developing quality and equity in education for Chinese national minority children. Jun also is interested in promoting multi-cultural education in China and globally. He has published and edited numerous books and more than 30 journal articles on minority education in China, and also contributed to several major state research projects on making a difference for minority education in China.

Contents

Introduction and Overview

Guofang Wan

This volume on the education of diverse student population takes up the challenge of examining the thorniest of educational issues from a global perspective. It results from the understanding of the global and pressing nature of the issue, the importance of knowing how other countries tackle with this problem, and the benefits of information exchange. It aims to contribute to the evidence-based discourse among policy makers, educators, and researchers about what works to improve education outcomes and what can make a bigger difference for the education of all our children and young people.

Over the past three decades, many nations have displayed increasing racial, ethnic, linguistic, and cultural diversity. They are faced with the challenges of educating diverse student populations, equal distribution of education resources, and the problems of achievement gaps between mainstream students and students from racial and ethnic groups, as well as those with low social economic status and in the linguistic minority. Because these issues have become a global phenomenon, an examination of how they are manifested and grappled with in different societies and different national contexts is meaningful and imperative.

Our increasingly interdependent lives and globalization make it important that we understand how other societies – be they Chinese, Australian, Singaporean, or Canadian – solve similar educational problems. Bereday (1964) once said that education is a mirror held against the face of a nation. How nations take care of their children tells unerringly who the people are (cited in Gibson & Ogbu, 1991, p. vii). Studying other educational systems and their challenges will provide us with a better understanding of our own system and problems. Stepping outside of our own limited experiences and commonly held beliefs about education and comparing them with others gives us different perspectives, opens our minds, and allows us to recognize other ways of solving similar problems in education. Indeed, the educational system of any nation reflects its deep-rooted political, economic, and cultural factors. However, conscious recognition that there are other ways of doing things may result in new approaches that we have not thought of before. We hope the insights, lessons, and conclusions drawn from examining these pressing issues from a global perspective will help nations to better understand and deal with them in their own educational system.

This volume compiles country-specific studies by education professionals from 11 countries – the United Kingdom, Austria, Canada, the United States, South Africa, Ghana, China, Singapore, Malaysia, Australia, and New Zealand – representing several continents. The nations selected are representative and unique in their situations, and yet overlap in the sense that they all face similar challenges in educating diverse student populations. The authors, being education and cultural insiders of the nations represented, discuss country-specific policies, efforts, and best practices in the education of diverse students; share stories of success and failure; and explore current best practices from global, social, political, and economic perspectives. The volume builds on previous theories and research, describes diverse students' experiences in the global and information age, and looks for effective policies and practices that help these students to perform better in school and in life.

Chapter 1 introduces the issue in question and prepares the reader for the 11 country-specific discussions in the volume, while Chapter 13 concludes the volume with an effort by New Zealand to synthesize and put into practice the research-evidence on what makes a bigger difference in teaching the diverse population. To achieve our comparative goal and to keep the studies consistent for readers, each country-specific discussion provides the following information:

- Major challenges the nation faces in educating diverse student populations
- A brief overview of the historical background of the issues
- Analysis of policies, efforts and practices implemented to educate diverse students, pointing out effective measures and best practices
- Look into the future with possibilities and/or problems

However, while theme-based, this volume in no way reduces this complex subject matter to simplistic etiquettes or transnational definitions without consideration of local contexts. Indeed, the authors resolutely provide a historical, political, sociological, and educational context for the discussions of how the countries in question have responded to this issue. It indeed is an eye-opener with bountiful ideas and examples of both success and failure.

This collection will become a useful resource for undergraduate and graduate teacher education programs; courses in multicultural education, comparative education, educational foundations, curriculum studies, and educational leadership; inservice teachers looking for practical and accessible ideas to meet the challenge of closing achievement gaps in the 21st century; and education administrators, government policymakers, community leaders, and parents concerned about the education of diverse students.

Chapter 1 of this volume is a synthesis and critical analysis of research published in academic journals in English between 2000 and 2007 about how to better teach the diverse student population with an emphasis on strategies and models to improve students' performance. It also sheds light on the theoretical perspectives of the issue in question and provides a global context that this volume builds upon.

Chapter 2 examines the way in which England's ethnic mix has changed as a result of European Union expansion and increasing globalization, and the effects of

these changes on education. It reviews the English system of ethnic monitoring of achievement and its impact on policy and practice, as well as the provision for the languages of minority linguistic groups within England. It outlines the current policy shift away from comprehensive forms of education for all toward diversity and choice in the types of schooling available to students, including an increasing emphasis on specialist and religious foundation schools, and the implications of this move for intercultural education and interethnic understanding.

In Chapter 3 we learn how the immigration of foreign workers in the second half of the 20th century diversified Austrian society ethnically and linguistically. Austrian students with an immigration background underachieve compared to the majority population. The chapter discusses current developments in the education of immigrants and minorities and intercultural learning in the Austrian educational system and situates it within the wider context of the European Union, which Austria joined in 1995.

Chapter 4 shares successful Canadian school practices aimed at improving educational outcomes of ethnic minority students, particularly bilingual education programs, community-based initiatives such as ethnic schools, and inclusive school practices. Specific school-level practices that have been deemed successful in promoting ethnocultural equity in Canada's increasingly diverse schools also are reviewed.

Chapter 5 looks at how the US education system – in one of the most diverse societies in the world – has worked to close the achievement gap and provide equal opportunity for quality education to all students. It focuses on culturally responsive education, success strategies of teachers of children in poverty, best practice strategies that support the learning of all children, and models of high-performance schools.

Chapter 6 critiques education policy reform in postapartheid South Africa, arguing that education policy has been limited to symbolism and compensatory legitimization from 1994 until mid-2000, threatening the possibility of reconstructing an equitable education system. It shows how education policy was developed in interaction with the structural and political dynamics operating in the political terrain of the 1990s. To challenge the conservative policy environment, the author suggests that the reinsertion of equality into the policy framework and conceptualizing change on the basis of a long-term sustainable development path are key elements of educational reconstruction in South Africa.

Chapter 7 examines the Ghanaian dilemma in educating its children after the country's independence from Britain in 1957. This chapter identifies, reviews, and analyzes the factors that have created disparities in access and success in education. These factors lie in the foundations of the establishment of schools in Ghana; the structure of education; teacher quality, training, motivation, and conditions of work; curriculum and textbook usage; the length of the school year; and use of instructional time. The cumulative impact of these factors, further challenges, and attempts to remedy the inadequacies also are discussed.

Chapter 8 outlines the challenges and efforts in the education of China's 55 national minorities, who still face the problems of poverty and illiteracy. The gap

between the education of minority and majority is still wide. Increased government funding, compulsory education policy, efforts to eliminate adult illiteracy, bilingual education policy, support for minority higher education, development of minority relevant curriculum, flexible school schedule, and training of minority teachers have shown effects. However, challenges still exist in many areas and further actions are called for to improve and reform the education of minority groups in China.

Chapter 9 looks at the relationship between education and social cohesion in Singapore. With a highly centralized approach to educational planning and policy-making over the past 40 years of its political independence, the Singapore government has tried to harness its education system to encourage social cohesion. Some attempted measures to unite a linguistically, culturally, religiously, and ethnically diverse population have proved to be more divisive than cohesive, and longstanding ethnic differences in educational attainment still remain. Various policy dilemmas and challenges with regard to language-in-education policy, ethnic disparities in educational attainment, and social class disparities in educational attainment are discussed.

In Chapter 10, the author argues that the politics of ethnic identification involving the three major ethnic groups of Malay-Muslims, Chinese, and Indians in postcolonial Malaysia have resulted in power imbalances in social, educational, and economic hierarchies. These power dynamics have in turn produced a highly politicized and ethnicized Malaysian education system. The ways in which the schooling system is used as a political tool rather than a means of correcting social inequality and promoting social unity among the Malaysian populace are described. Practices of social exclusion and inclusion within the education system are discussed in relation to state policies. The multiethnic Malaysia provides a non-Eurocentric context to add to contemporary understandings of education of diverse cultural populations.

Chapter 11 demonstrates that in Australia, multicultural education is understood to include English-language education, programs to promote bilingualism and second language acquisition, intercultural communication, and effective liaison between schools and minority communities. Globalization and the so-called culture wars have created new imperatives. In this context, it is important to consider the relevance of previous practice and how this can become a stepping-stone for more contemporary ways of teaching to difference. The author argues that such explorations also need to account for shifts that increasingly construct education as a market within and between nations.

Chapter 12 searches for social justice and equity in schooling for diverse learners in Aotearoa, New Zealand. The authors believe schools could create a richer and more democratic society by being more inclusive of diverse populations. This chapter outlines a brief history of educational challenges presented by differences in ability, ethnicity, gender, culture, and class, as well as some policy initiatives crafted to respond to these challenges in Aotearoa. It shares three recent policy initiatives – Tomorrow's Schools (1989), Disability Strategy (2002), and Schooling Strategy (2005) – and how they shape the current educational experiences of diverse learners in New Zealand schools.

Chapter 13 concludes the volume with the Best Evidence Synthesis Programme (BES) initiated by the New Zealand Ministry of Education, designed to bring together and make accessible for policymakers, teachers, and researchers evidence about what makes a bigger difference for learners. BES synthesizes evidence linked to a range of desired learner outcomes derived from both international and New Zealand research. It describes BES, how BES reports have been implemented in schools, and some effects observed. Special attention is given to information derived from the BES report "Quality Teaching for Diverse Students in Schooling."

Reference

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Chapter 1
Research Evidence: Narrowing the Achievement Gaps

Guofang Wan

"Research is an organized method of finding out what you are going to do when you can't keep on doing what you are doing now."

Charles F. Kettering

Introduction

Today's schools mirror today's diverse society. The number of students with ethnic, cultural, linguistic, and socioeconomic diversity attending schools has increased dramatically in recent decades in many countries (see other chapters in this book). Many of these students are at-risk for education failure. Poverty, health, social problems, and cultural and historical practices have made it difficult for some students to improve their educational status. Policymakers, school leaders, teachers, and parents who feel the urgency of the issue and want to create classrooms where every child succeeds often wonder about strategies that will work. Thus informing the concerned parties about effective, research-based strategies and practices is vital to addressing the educational crisis facing at-risk students.

Based on the belief that all children can learn and learn well if provided with the kind of teaching that ensures learning, and the belief that research should inform and direct teaching practices and policymaking, this chapter synthesizes some 250 studies focusing on efforts to improve diverse students' academic performance. The issue of improving minority children's academic performance has long been the concern of the public, policymakers, educators, parents, and researchers, resulting in numerous studies being conducted over the years. The phrase "closing the achievement gap" generates 1.8 million results on Google. As we know, globalization, technology and changes in education policy frequently and consistently affect the environment of teaching and learning. To keep this study current, relevant, and manageable, only journal articles published in English between 2000 and 2007 are included. Unlimited by the boundaries of nations, this review study aims to describe, critically analyze,

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and synthesize what research suggests will work in narrowing the achievement gap between minority and majority students, and how schools, teachers, and policymakers can best serve these children well. Through a meta-analysis, findings from 18 empirical studies are integrated and analyzed statistically to add to the narrative review. It is hoped that such information, highlighting the factors and strategies that can make a difference, will guide future explorations, teaching practices, and decision-making, and provide a context for discussions in the rest of the book.

Diversity encompasses many characteristics: ethnicity, socioeconomic background, home language, gender, special needs, disability, and giftedness. Effective teaching needs to be responsive to diversity and recognize individuality among students. For the purpose of this synthesis and this book, characteristics of diversity include racial or ethnic minority, limited English proficiency, and low socioeconomic status associated with low student achievement and high school-dropout rates. The issue of raising educational standards and attainment level across the board is very complex, but it must be tackled. This discussion aims to stimulate conversations on this topic.

What Research Says

Several interesting themes have been found from a review of recent studies to answer the questions, "What are the strategies that raise attainment levels?" and "Does what we are doing make a difference in narrowing the achievement gap?" The three main themes are: (1) the nature of the "gap" – what the gap is, theories that explain the causes of the gap, and the types of gaps; (2) critical analysis of current policies, schooling, and assessment that affect student achievement; and (3) strategies and interventions aimed to close the achievement gap. These studies utilize various methods: qualitative, case studies, quantitative, meta-analysis, theoretical analysis, etc.

Nature of the Achievement Gap

"Across the USA, a gap in academic achievement persists between minority and disadvantaged students and their white counterparts. This is one of the most pressing education-policy challenges that states currently face" (National Governors' Association, 2005). Over the years scholars have tried to explain the existence of the gap with various theories. In the 1960s, cultural deficit theorists suggested that children of color were victims of pathological lifestyles that hindered their ability to benefit from schooling (Bereiter & Engleman, 1966; Deutsch, 1963; Hess & Shipman, 1965; Ogbu, 2007). Then sociolinguists argued that it is the culture mismatch that contributes to the gap (Delpit, 1995; Heath, 1983; Irvine, 2003; Lee, 2004; May & Aikman, 2003). Multicultural curriculum theorists (Banks, 2004; Freng et al., 2007;

Gay, 2004; Grant, 2003; Popkewitz, 1998;) blamed the nature of the culturally irrelevant curriculum and schooling for the gap; teacher educators such as Zeichner (2002), Sleeter (2001), Cochran-Smith (2004), and many others focused on the pedagogical practices of teachers as contributing to either the exacerbation or the narrowing of the gap (Ladson-Billings, 2006). Educators such as Ladson-Billings (2006), Bainbridge and Lasley II (2002), and Garner (2007) explained the gap with an economic concept, the "education debt," referring to the persistent social inequality in schools. The "education debt" that has accumulated over time – comprising historical, economic, sociopolitical, and moral components – is the real source for the gap, according to Ladson-Billings (2006). This school of thought further suggested that to close the achievement gap we must first deal with its main cause: social inequalities. Haque and Bell (2001) reinforced this point of view with their study, conducted in the United Kingdom, that discovered some of the gaps in attainment that appeared to be correlated to ethnic minority status, were in fact due to other, largely socioeconomic factors such as social class, date of arrival in Britain, and mother's education. Gosa and Alexander (2007) identified the harsh reality of racial stratification in society as the cause for many Black children, even in families of high economic standing and abundant home resources, to fall short of their educational potential.

Over the years, the trend of the explanations for the roots of the learning gap seems to have moved away from the deficiency theory to societal reasons. However, most of the studies reviewed did not go beyond theoretical explanations, leaving the readers wonder "Then what?"

Research indicates that this gap persists in various areas, such as standardized test scores; graduation rate; dropout rate; enrollment in honors, advanced placement, and gifted programs; and admission to college, graduate, and professional programs (Ladson-Billings, 2006). The 2005 National Assessment of Educational Progress reported that the gap between Black and Latino fourth graders and their White counterparts in reading scaled scores was more than 26 points (Perie et al., 2005a). In fourth-grade mathematics the gap was more than 20 points (Perie et al., 2005b). In eighth-grade reading, the gap was more than 23 points; in eighth-grade mathematics the gap was more than 26 points, and in eighth-grade science the gap was 37 points (Grigg et al., 2006). The achievement gap in social studies and science starts in kindergarten, based on evidence from an early childhood longitudinal study (Chapin, 2006). Research evidence in the USA has indicated that the gaps are real and deep.

About Current Policies and Practices

Scholars also have noticed the relationship between educational success and schooling system, comprising policies, school systems, and assessment. As the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) has been enacted in US public schools since 2002, many have attempted to assess this sweeping reform that is allegedly poised to alleviate the underachieving profile of poor and minority children. Key concerns are whether

NCLB fulfills its promise to improve the quality of districts, schools, and teacher instruction, with the ultimate aim of eliminating the achievement gap between White, middle-class youth and US ethnic minorities (Valenzuela et al., 2007). Research evidence reviewed thus far presents a mixed picture to that effect.

In answering the question of whether NCLB is working in narrowing achievement gaps, Fuller et al. (2007) examined evidence drawn from the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) spanning 1992–2006, and found test score growth for fourth graders – where gains had been strongest since the early 1970s – has largely faded since the enactment of NCLB in 2002. Gains in math achievement have persisted in the post-NCLB period, albeit at a slower rate of growth. Fuller et al. (2007) concluded that progress seen in the 1990s in narrowing achievement gaps has largely disappeared in the post-NCLB era. Dillon (2005) pointed out that the rate of improvement was faster before the law, and questioned whether *No Child* is slowing down our progress nationwide. A report from the Thomas B. Fordham Foundation has revealed that most states are getting an average grade of D on student achievement, and contends that progress has been negligible since *A Nation at Risk* was released in 1983 (Jacobson, 2006). However, the Center on Education Policy recently reported that achievement gaps between white and minority students have narrowed since the passage of No Child Left Behind, but cautioned that it was difficult to determine if the gains occurred because of NCLB (Dillon, 2007).

Interrogations on how the NCLB-mandated high-stakes testing affects teaching and learning produced a confusing picture. Au (2007) identified two contradictory trends: (1) curriculum being narrowed to tested subjects, subject-area knowledge fragmented into test-related pieces, and teacher-centered pedagogies used; and (2) certain types of high-stakes tests leading to curriculum content expansion, the integration of knowledge, and more student-centered cooperative pedagogies. Some research finds that high-stakes tests have little to no influence on what teachers do in the classroom (Gradwell, 2006; van Hover, 2006), or lead to improved learning experiences and positive student achievement (Braun, 2004; Williamson et al., 2005). Other research challenges these claims, showing that high-stakes tests undermine education by narrowing curriculum, limiting opportunities for teachers to serve the sociocultural needs of a diverse population, and by corrupting the educational assessment system (Amrein & Berliner, 2002; Lipman, 2004; Nichols & Berliner, 2007; Watanabe, 2007). Series of other research (Amrein & Berliner, 2002; Sloan, 2007; Stiggins & Chappuis, 2005; Valenzuela et al., 2007) demonstrated the inappropriateness of holding schools accountable for scores on standardized tests and intensifying the stakes associated with low test scores, and contended that these tests have widened the gap by forcing increases in dropout rates and declines in graduation rates, especially among minorities (Amrein & Berliner, 2002). These high-stakes tests have caused low achievers to give up in the face of what they believe to be unattainable achievement standards, even as they have spurred high achievers to try even harder. So test score averages flatline, with gaps between different subgroups of our student population apparently cast in stone (Stiggins & Chappuis, 2005). Evidence from Amrein and Berliner's (2002) study

of 18 states with high-stakes tests found that learning is indeterminate, remains at the same level it was before the policy was implemented, or actually goes down when high-stakes testing policies are instituted.

Research evidence (as cited in Stiggins & Chappuis, 2005) gathered around the world over several decades reveals strong achievement gains and reduced achievement score gaps when teachers implement student-involved classroom assessment in their teaching (Black & Wiliam, 1998; Bloom, 1984; Jerald, 2001; Meisels et al., 2003; Rodriguez, 2004). "If we are to help them – if we are to close achievement gaps – we must help them believe they are capable of succeeding and that success is worth the investment" (Stiggins & Chappuis, 2005, p. 11). Evidence suggests that ongoing student-involved classroom assessment to give students successful experience in learning kindles their faith in themselves as learners and motivates them to learn more. Wise teachers use the classroom assessment as an instructional intervention to teach the lesson that small increments in progress is normal. Success is defined as continual improvement over the long haul (Stiggins & Chappuis, 2005).

Strategies and Programs

The final theme that emerged from this review provides information on characteristics of effective schools, leaders, and teachers; synthesis on relationship of parental involvement in student achievement; psychological and sociological factors – teacher expectations, motivation, positive peer norms, and ethnic identification on school learning; and the effectiveness of out-of-school and in-school programs, initiatives, and interventions to improve student achievement.

Much research has been conducted in search of the characteristics of high-performing schools as models for school improvement. A study out of Washington State (2003) did a good job summarizing these components into nine key areas:

1. A clear and shared focus
2. High standards and expectations for all students
3. Effective school leadership
4. High levels of collaboration and communication
5. Curriculum, instruction, and assessments aligned with state standards
6. Frequent monitoring of learning and teaching
7. Focused professional development
8. A supportive learning environment
9. High levels of parent and community involvement

These common features echoed an earlier study (Blair & Bourne, 1998) in the United Kingdom of schools that raised student attainment:

- A strong and determined lead on equal opportunities given by the head teacher.
- Listening to and learning from students and parents and trying to see things from the students' point of view.
- They created careful links with local communities.

- Understanding of and working with the whole child.
- Clear procedures for responding to racist bullying and harassment.
- Strategies for preventing exclusion.
- High expectations of both teachers and students and clear systems for targeting, tracking, and monitoring of individual student progress.
- Monitoring by ethnicity-enabled schools to see whether all groups were achieving equally; to identify unexpected shortcomings in provision and to target specific areas for attention. Monitoring also raised wider questions about setting, banding, and exclusion processes.

Research suggests that high-poverty schools need to engage in systemic change (Cawelti, 2000; The Center for Public Education, no date.) to achieve gains in student performance. They must do a number of things differently, and all at the same time, to begin to achieve the critical mass that will make a difference in student outcomes. Brock and Groth (2003) reinforced this point of view with the result of their 50-school study, "A comprehensive approach to school reform that addresses the organizational structure is most effective at improving student achievement" (p. 1).

Conversations on schools that have closed achievement gaps often focus on the critical roles of school leaders (Cawelti & Protheroe, 2001; Skrla et al., 2000). The attributes of leaders in schools that have closed achievement gaps fit within six comprehensive areas of knowledge, dispositions, and skills that influence student learning: (1) the vision of learning; (2) the culture of teaching and learning; (3) the management of learning; (4) relationships with the broader community to foster learning; (5) integrity, fairness, and ethics in learning; and (6) the political, social, economic, legal, and cultural context of learning (Johnson & Uline, 2005).

As Hirsh (2005) suggested, the single most important ingredient that has an effect on student achievement is the quality of the teacher in the classroom. Another research tradition reviewed focuses on the power of quality teaching with culturally relevant curriculum and instructions, caring teachers, and teacher expectation. Research points out minority students are more susceptible to teachers' low expectations than are White students, and this may serve to further widen the achievement gap when such students accept and confirm teachers' negative expectations (McKown & Weinstein, 2002; Nichols & Good, 2004; Pellegrini & Blatchford, 2000). One of the primary ways in which teachers' expectations mediate student achievement is through opportunity to learn. Minority students simply are not given the opportunities to enhance their learning that could decrease the achievement gap (Nichols & Good, 2004; Weinstein, 2002; Weinstein et al., 2004).

Researchers (Li, 2002; Rickford, 2001) also have suggested that teachers use instructional strategies to achieve educational equity in the classroom, i.e., culturally congruent materials and instructions (May & Aikman, 2003; McKinley, 2005); encourage critical thinking; hold high expectations for all; and provide challenging tasks and texts. Effective professional development that deepens participant understanding, transforms beliefs and assumptions, and changes habits and affects practice (Sparks, 2003) is needed. Lee (2005) stated that just as nonmainstream students

must become bicultural and bilingual border-crossers to gain access to school learning, teachers must learn to cross cultural boundaries to make learning meaningful and relevant for all students.

Research syntheses (Cooper et al., 2005; Jeynes, 2005b, 2007) on the relationship between student learning and parental, family, and community involvement show that the influence of parental involvement overall is significant for school children. Families are key to students' development, sustainment of educational and career aspirations, and school achievement. However, Fan and Chen (2001) indicated that the vast proportion of the literature in this area is qualitative and nonempirical. Among studies that have investigated the issue quantitatively, there appear to be considerable inconsistencies. Fan and Chen's (2001) findings revealed that parental aspiration/expectation for children's education achievement has the strongest relationship, whereas parental home supervision has the weakest relationship with students' academic achievement. Society, and educators in particular, have considered parental involvement a remedy for many problems in education, but in fact it is not a solution for all.

Research on motivational factors on student achievement (Andriessen et al., 2006; Suliman & McInerney, 2006) reveals that future goals are important in enhancing the school motivation and learning of minority and nonminority students alike. The adaptive effect of internally regulating future goals suggests a possible means of improving minority students' educational performance. Future goals should receive attention in multiethnic classrooms by stimulating students to think about their futures and set their own goals.

Jeynes (2002, 2005a) synthesized studies on the impact of attending religious schools on the academic achievement of low-SES students and Black and Hispanic children, and reported that religious schooling and religious commitment each have a positive effect on academic achievement and school-related behaviors. He noted that the achievement gap between high-SES and low-SES students is smaller in religious schools than in public schools, and that low-SES students derive a particular and considerable academic benefit from attending religious schools. He also called for more studies in this area so that private and public schools may learn from each other.

Another tradition of recent studies with emphasis on the important role of school counselors (Constantine et al., 2007; Mitcham-Smith, 2007; Shin et al., 2007; Villalba et al., 2007) asserts high school counselors' unique positions to shape and facilitate student learning, and calls for culturally relevant interventions and appropriate counseling to educate parents and teachers to help students develop positive ethnic identity. Evidence suggests that both positive peer norms and positive ethnic identity affect achievement and may serve as significant protective factors for urban youth of color (Shin et al., 2007). Conchas (as cited in Roach, 2006) found that "[p]ersisting and doing well in school is often seen being at odds with masculinity" by Hispanic boys and called for intervention programs. New Zealand researcher Nakhid (2003) showed the link between intercultural perceptions and academic achievement. When not given opportunities to construct their own identities,

Paskifika (Pacific island) students are resigned to conforming to or rebelling against the identities that have been constructed for them, which has not benefited the students' academic achievement (Nakhid, 2003).

This review also generated a series of studies on special programs, initiatives, interventions, and strategies designed to improve reading, math, and science achievement among at-risk children (Durán et al., 2001; Francis, 2002; Gardner et al., 2001; Kim, 2004; Koskinen et al., 2000; Neufeld et al., 2006; Roach & News Wire Reports, 2006), and the use of technology (Moore et al., 2002). These reports showed national, state, and local efforts and initiatives to help close achievement gaps in many aspects. However, more longitudinal studies focusing on the effectiveness of these measures will be more informative. Here are some examples of this tradition.

While schools and districts have been adopting out-of-school-time (OST) programs such as after-school and summer-school programs to supplement the education of low-achieving students, research evidence is inconclusive about their effectiveness (Cooper et al., 2000; Lauer et al., 2006; McComb & Scott-Little, 2003). There are studies (Lauer et al., 2006; Cooper et al., 2000) indicating positive academic effects of summer school for both middle-income and low-income students; in comparison with middle-income children, low-income children are more in need of after-school opportunities and more likely to benefit from them (Cosden et al., 2001; Miller, 2003). Other studies, such as McComb and Scott-Little's (2003) on after-school programs, concluded that large variations in program content, size, goals, and research design prevented a simple answer to the question of the effects of after-school programs on academic outcomes.

Beglau (2005) reported significant gains in the achievement of African-American students in Missouri as a result of an education program called enhancing Missouri's Instructional Networked Teaching Strategies (eMINTS), an instructional model of inquiry-based teaching, combined with multimedia tools in the classroom to improve test scores for all students. Grossen's (2002) research during the last 2 decades has found the BIG Accommodation Model to be successful in helping the highly at-risk students achieve rigorous academic standards in mainstream classrooms at the secondary level. The project further established a professional development model that allowed for replication of success in other middle and high schools. Miranda et al. (2007) applauded the Student Success Skills intervention program that raises student attainment by meta-cognitive, social, and self-management skills that are vital to learning.

A supplemental and supportive education adaptation that has been researched frequently is ethnic school (Nelson-Brown, 2005). Created by ethnically and culturally conscious civic or religious groups, ethnic school is a form of informal or non-formal education (Mahoney, 2001) and could be a full-scale, comprehensive school, or after-school or weekend program. Research on such efforts usually takes the form of a longitudinal study of a single group or school and the use of educational apparatus to meet needs (Galush, 2000; Sexton, 2000), or explores the creation of an ethnic school, the motives, and impact on children's cultural sense and learning in schools (Nelson-Brown, 2005; Wan et al., 2005). Chinese schools that teach children Chinese culture, language, math, and science can be found actively operating

in big cities or small towns over weekends in many countries (Wan et al., 2005). Community-based and culturally focused ethnic schools use community resources, enhance children's sense of cultural identification and group belonging, and supplement their formal school learning (Wan et al., 2005).

This review also generated 14 empirical and four meta-analysis studies examining strategies, interventions, and teaching practices used to raise students' learning. In order to gain a better sense of the overall effectiveness of these efforts, and to explore patterns of recent developments to close achievement gaps, the results from these empirical studies are combined and reported below by a meta-analysis. It adds a strong quantitative perspective to this review and an important close up picture to the efforts examined.

A Closer Look: Meta-Analysis

Method

By definition, meta-analysis is a statistical technique for aggregating the results of multiple individual experimental studies (Glass, 1976, p. 3). To better understand the overall effectiveness of interventions and strategies applied to enhance K-12 students' achievements, and to identify the patterns, a meta-analysis is conducted to combine the results of identified studies into effect size "d" (Cohen, 1988, 1992), which is obtained by changing the findings from each study into a standard deviation unit to show whether an experiment has a statistically significant effect.

Following the common steps of meta-analysis (Bangert-Drowns, 1986; Cooper & Hedges, 1994; Glass et al., 1981; Hedges & Olkin, 1985) – location and selection of studies, coding of study features, calculation of effect sizes, and statistical analysis of effect sizes – a basic search was performed using two major educational databases, Education Resources Information Center (ERIC) and Education Abstracts Full Text. Keywords search was performed to seek published journal articles between 2000 and 2007. Initially, the keywords were *strategies to close achievement gap*, *diversity of student population*, and *ethnic minority students*. From the 250 studies generated from the initial search, we derived other keywords for further search: *Maori, Pasifica, Latino, African American, Black education, indigenous education, parental involvement, after-school programs, out-of-school programs, school counselor, technology,* and *school reform*. As a result, 42 related empirical studies were found in 21 journals. However, only 14 out of the 42 studies met the following selection criteria for effect size calculations.

(a) Involve strategies or interventions used to close learning gap for K-12 students
(b) Examine the effectiveness of strategies or interventions
(c) Involve some direct assessment (e.g. classroom assessments, standardized tests, pre- or post-tests, and course grades) of students' academic achievement in a school subject

(d) Include a control/comparison group, with participation or nonparticipation in studies under investigation

(e) Include sufficient quantitative information for calculation of effect sizes for meta-analysis

This search also generated two synthesis studies using meta-analysis on the impact of family involvement (Fan & Chen, 2001; Jeynes, 2007) and two on the impact of religious schools on student achievement (Jeynes, 2002, 2005a). As the four studies meet selection criteria *a, b,* and *e* directly, and *d,* and *c* indirectly (the studies they synthesized meet these criteria directly), we decided to incorporate their results, the average effect sizes, and total samples into our overall effectiveness assessment. As these studies synthesized large numbers of relevant studies – 52 by Jeynes (2007), 25 by Fan and Chen (2001), 15 by Jeynes (2002), and 13 by Jeynes (2005a) – the integration of their results adds rich information to the current work. Each of the four meta-analysis studies was treated as an individual study when its sample size and average overall effect size were combined.

Hence, the 14 empirical studies plus the four relevant meta-analyses came from 13 journals. The top five representative journals are shown in Fig. 1.1.

Results

Table 1.1 lists the 14 studies used in this meta-analysis with their individual sample size and effect size indicated, and the four previous meta-analyses with the average sample sizes and the effect-size outcomes. The overall integrated effect size *d* of the studies is 0.43, and the total sample size is 363,577. According to a commonly used interpretation of effect size by Cohen (1988), a standardized mean effect size of 0

Top 5 Representative Journals

Journal of Education for Students Placed at Risk 40%

Professional School Counselling 20%

The British Journal of Education Psychology 20%

The Journal of Negro Education 10%

Urban Education 10%

Professional School Counselling

The British Journal of Education Psychology

The Journal of Negro Education

Urban Education

Journal of Education for Students Placed at Risk

Fig. 1.1 Top five journals

Table 1.1 Summary of effect sizes of studies

Article #	Title of study	Sample size	Effect Size
1	The Relationships of Peer Norms, Ethnic Identity, and Peer Support to School Engagement in Urban Youth (Shin et al., 2007)	132	0.82
2	Future Goal Setting, Task Motivation and Learning of Minority and Non-Minority Students in Dutch Schools (Andriessen et al., 2006)	352	0.34
3	Motivational Goals and School Achievement: Lebanese-Background Students in South-Western Sydney (Suliman & McInerney, 2006)	271	0.21
4	Expecting the Best for Students: Teacher Expectations and Academic Outcomes (Rubie-Davies et al., 2006)	540	0.33
5	First-Grade Latino Students' English-Reading Growth in All-English Classrooms (Neufeld et al., 2006)	16	0.87
6	Reducing the Gap: Success for All and the Achievement of African American Students (Slavin & Madden, 2006)	6,000	0.54
7	Student Success Skills: A Promising Program to Close the Academic Achievement Gap for African American and Latino Students (Miranda et al., 2007)	1,123	0.32
8	Latino Immigrant Parents and Children Learning and Publishing Together in an After-School Setting (Durán et al., 2001)	18	1.05
9	Summer Reading and the Ethnic Achievement Gap (Kim, 2004)	1,678	0.73
10	Mathematics Reform in a Minority Community: Student Outcomes (Haneghan, 2004)	371	0.71
11	Anthropology, Culture, and Research on Teaching and Learning: Applying What We Have Learned to Improve Practice (Foster, 2003)	17	1.8
12	Book Access, Shared Reading, and Audio Models: The Effects of Supporting the Literacy Learning of Linguistically Diverse Students in School and at Home (Koskinen et al., 2000)	162	0.60
13	Increasing the Reading Achievement of At-Risk Children Through Direct Instruction: Evaluation of the Rodeo Institute for Teacher Excellence (RITE) (Francis, 2002)	1,461	0.52
14	Creating a System of Accountability: The Impact of Instructional Assessment on Elementary Children's Achievement Test Scores (Meisels et al., 2003)	3,134	1.6
15[a]	The Relationship Between Parental Involvement and Urban Secondary School Student Academic Achievement: A Meta-Analysis (Jeynes, 2007)	205,861	0.53
16[a]	Parental Involvement and Students' Academic Achievement: A Meta-Analysis (Fan & Chen, 2001)	133,577	0.25
17[a]	The Impact of Religious Schools on the Academic Achievement of Low-SES Students (Jeynes, 2005a)	4,323	0.23
18[a]	A Meta-Analysis of the Effects of Attending Religious Schools and Religiosity on Black and Hispanic Academic Achievement (Jeynes, 2002)	4,541	0.25
	Total	363,577	0.43

[a]Indicates the results were taken from previous meta-analysis directly.

means no change, negative effect sizes mean a negative change, with 0.2 a small change, 0.5 a moderate change, and 0.8 a large charge. Wolf (1986), however, suggested that 0.25 is educationally significant and 0.5 is clinically significant. The effect size of this study, 0.43, is close to 0.5 – a moderate change by Cohen's (1988) benchmark and close to 0.5, *clinically significant*, by Wolf's (1986) standard. The overall effect size of 0.43 indicates that the latest efforts in closing learning gaps are making some moderate differences for children at-risk.

From the 18 studies examined, 6 major categories (Table 1.2) of efforts emerged addressing the issue of achievement gap: (1) school counseling; (2) teacher expectation; (3) strategies/ programs/interventions; (4) assessment; (5) family involvement; and (6) religious school. Table 1.2 and Fig. 1.2 present detailed information about these categories. The individual category effect sizes are 0.3, 0.33, 0.5, 1.6, 0.42 and 0.24 respectively, with *assessment* having the highest (1.6) and *religious impact* on the low side (0.25). All produced some effect, since none shows zero or negative effect.

Table 1.2 Summary of research categories

Interventions	Effect size	Article #s
Counseling	0.3	1, 2, 3
Teacher expectation	0.33	4
Strategies/programs	0.5	5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13
Assessment	1.6	14
Family involvement[a]	0.42	15, 16
Religious impact[a]	0.24	17, 18

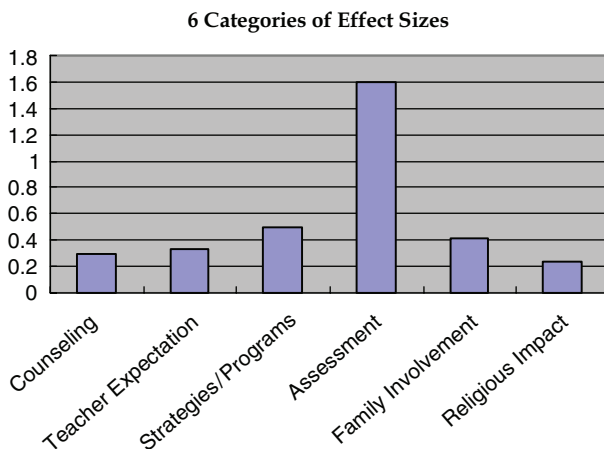[a]Indicates interventions obtained from previous meta-analyses.

Fig. 1.2 Six categories of effect sizes

Discussion

With an effect size of 0.3, the empirical studies reviewed on youth in urban USA (Shin et al., 2007) in Dutch (Andriessen et al., 2006), Lebanese students in Australia (Suliman & McInerney, 2006) confirmed the role of school counselors (Holcomb-McCoy, 2004) in helping students and families deal with a series of social and psychological factors. Positive peer norms, future goals, and appropriate motivations were found to be significantly related to school engagement. As research indicates (Andriessen et al., 2006; Suliman & McInerney, 2006), students' motivational goals direct their behavior and attitudes toward learning and achievement. In looking at ways to enhance the educational outcomes of diverse students, it is important that schools aim at developing and enhancing those goals that are found to be strong predictors of school achievement. Understanding and considering what types of goals motivate students to learn may help students succeed. Positive ethnic identity – and the security and self-confidence associated with having a strong, positive sense of self – may protect them from the various challenges and pressures that adolescents generally face. Social identity theorists have long asserted that individuals need a firm sense of group identification in order to maintain a sense of well-being (Lewin, 1948).

The claim that teacher expectation affects student achievement was supported by the study on Maori students (Rubie-Davies et al., 2006). Teachers' low expectations for Maori were aligned with their achievement, and their learning gains in reading were considerably below those of all other ethnic groups (Rubie-Davies et al., 2006). This perhaps suggests a sustaining expectation effect (Cooper & Good, 1983). Maori students were given learning opportunities that maintained their achievement at similar levels throughout the year, while the other groups were provided with more challenging learning opportunities that significantly augmented their achievement, and their learning reflected it. It also may be that Maori students' awareness of their teachers' expectations prompted them to accept and respond to these expectations, hence making less progress than their peers. Teacher expectation research has been carried out for almost 50 years and consistently indicates that teacher expectations can significantly influence student learning (Rubie-Davies et al., 2006). High expectations and equal opportunity for all in the classroom may become one of the tools that help narrow the achievement gap.

Students in Working Sampling System (WSS) classrooms, a curriculum-embedded performance assessment, displayed better growth in reading and math on the Iowa Tests of Basic Skills (ITBS) than children in non-WSS contrast schools with similar demographics (Meisels et al., 2003). The lesson gained from this study, with an effect size of 1.6 for performance assessment, is that accountability should not be viewed as a test, but as a *system* (Meisels et al., 2003). When accountability is seen as a system that incorporates both instructional assessment and on-demand tests, both teaching and learning can be affected positively. The complementarity of performance-based and normative tests in systems of accountability and the potential value of using a curriculum-embedded assessment (Stiggins & Chappuis,

2005) to enhance teaching, improve learning, and increase scores on conventional accountability examinations are indicated.

The combined result, 0.42 of 77 studies (Jeynes, 2007; Fan & Chen, 2001) on parental involvement confirmed that family and other domestic factors can contribute to reducing the learning gap, and as a whole it affects students learning outcomes. Another interesting finding (Jeynes, 2007; Fan & Chen, 2001) was that subtle aspects of parental involvement such as parental style and expectations have a greater impact on student educational outcomes than some of the more demonstrative aspects of parental involvement, such as having household rules and parental attendance and participation at school functions. The results suggested that parental involvement may be one means of reducing the achievement gap. Further research is needed to help determine why parental involvement strongly influences the achievement of minority children in particular, and why certain aspects of parental involvement are more noteworthy than others.

Various studies have arrived at different conclusions on the debate over whether attending private religious schools is associated with increased academic achievement among poor, Black, or Hispanic children (Jeynes, 2002, 2005a). Jeynes's two studies (2002, 2005a) shed light on this question. The overall combined effect size of 0.24 from the two meta-analyses (Jeynes, 2002, 2005a) suggests that religious schools positively affect low-SES, Black, and Hispanic children's educational outcomes, and the school behavior of low-SES students at religious schools also was better than their counterparts attending public schools. In trying to explain why students from religious schools tend to outperform students from nonreligious schools, researchers have offered a variety of possible reasons: Gaziel (1997) asserts that the achievement gap can be attributed specifically to differences in school culture; religious schools do a better job of helping disadvantaged students (Coleman, 1988; Gaziel, 1997); and religious schools promote parental involvement more than public schools do (Coleman, 1988; Riley, 1996). This positive result has implications for a number of controversies involving religion and education, e.g., proposals calling for private religious school as a choice, and whether public school educators can benefit from examining the strengths of religious schools (Jeynes, 2005a).

Last, on the effectiveness of the specific interventions and programs reviewed, the nine studies on out-of-school, after-school, and summer programs and reading and math initiatives had a combined positive effect size of 0.5, suggesting all have potential for increasing student learning in one way or another. The finding about Latino first graders (Neufeld et al., 2006) who made equal growth in English reading instruction as their native-English-speaking counterparts resonated with prior research documenting that kindergarten through second-grade English language learners can reach reading achievement levels similar to those of their native-English-speaking peers (Araujo, 2002; Manis et al., 2004). Such results suggest that Latino students in all-English classrooms might benefit from sound reading instruction that is similar to that provided to their monolingual counterparts. The evaluation of the efficacy of the Success for All (SFA) program (Slavin & Madden, 2006) with African-American students, combing data from over 40 studies, concluded that if programs like SFA were widely applied, it seems likely that the

average reading performance of a number of children would advance and the gap between African-American and White students would be significantly reduced. Similarly, studies on Student Success Skills programs showed that learning these skills improved student academic scores in reading and math (Miranda et al., 2007) and can be used as a potential helpful intervention. Durán et al. (2001) showed how an after-school program helped Latino immigrant parents and children grow together in computer skills; Kim (2004) concluded that summer reading and easy access to books prevent minority students' reading loss over the summer; the reports on a 3-year mathematics reform (Increasing the Mathematical Power of All Children and Teachers) showed modest success (Haneghan, 2004); Direct Instruction (Francis, 2002) and several other reading strategies were (Koskinen et al., 2000) effective in supporting the literacy development of at-risk children.

The positive results of these strategies and interventions indicate that they have potential to bring success and effectiveness to student learning, and there are lots of efforts at the grass root level. This also supports the latest report by the Center on Education Policy (Dillon, 2007) about the narrowing achievement gap in US schools.

Conclusion

Reported in this chapter is a synthesis of some 250 studies on the latest developments and efforts in closing the achievement gap. It presents the various attempts to interpret and explain the gap, a mixed picture of the education law No Child Left Behind with its associated high-stakes testing, characteristics of effective schools, leaders, and teaching, and strategies/interventions/programs that aim to close the gap. The results of the combined empirical studies by a meta-analysis enhance the information provided by the narrative literature review. The research evidence indicates strategies such as appropriate school counseling, family involvement, out-of-school programs, and various initiatives, interventions, and instructional techniques geared toward advancing student learning may become tools to close the achievement gap. It shows specifically which of these efforts work and to what degree in closing the achievement gap. In general we may conclude that the reviewed studies show that our efforts are making a difference in some moderate ways, and it takes the "whole village" – all parties concerned – to educate our children.

Like other studies, this study has its share of limitations. Limited by time, resources, and space, this study with an initial ambition to go global, ended up with a focus on the US context. Although information about countries, such as New Zealand, Australia, the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, and Canada was included, we got only a limited picture. Thus, the dearth of information on other countries becomes a limitation in this review. However, it is hard to expect a single study to comprehensively cover such an involved topic as this one, and this limitation will be compensated by the discussions in the rest of the chapters in the book. Also, this review generated very few studies on the use of technology to promote academic attainment. Because instructional technology is used more and more in

teaching, reports or longitudinal studies on the effects of IT use will add a meaning-ful dimension. With the meta-analysis being part of the study, we are limited by space so the descriptions of the technical aspects of it were not as detailed as desired. The number of usable empirical studies for some areas in this meta-analy-sis, such as assessment and teacher expectations, is much smaller than anticipated. For this reason, there should be some caution in interpreting the results.

Future studies that go beyond the rhetoric of closing achievement gaps and tap-ping into practices will benefit diverse children and society. More systematic empirical studies are needed to identify specific policy threads, regulations, initia-tives, programs, or teaching practices that prove effective for specific students and conditions with implications for classroom application. Explorations on dealing with the roots of education problems – various social inequalities are also needed.

The discussion generated by this study sheds light on the theoretical conceptu-alization and instructional and policy issues about closing the gaps. It indicates the degree of awareness of this issue among the education world. What is more, research evidence does paint a fairly optimistic landscape that schools do make a difference and that with continued efforts, teachers and administrators working with families and communities will substantially increase student learning.

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Chapter 2
Centralization, Devolution and Diversity: Changing Educational Policy and Practice in English Schools

Jill Bourne

Introduction

This chapter examines provision for the education of minority ethnic groups within England. It discusses the effects of regional practices since the 1960s which led to different forms of provision in the south of England, where serious attempts at interculturalism, particularly in inner London, provided a model for schools to follow, compared to the increasingly ethnically segregated schools which developed in the north of England. It draws attention to the English system of ethnic monitoring of achievement, which identifies educational outcomes for the largest minority ethnic groups nationally, regionally and by school, and the impact of this on policy and practice. It then considers the way in which England's ethnic mix is changing as a result of European Union expansion and continuing globalization, and the effects of this on education policy and school practice. Finally, it outlines the current policy shift away from comprehensive forms of education for all, towards 'diversity' and 'choice' in the types of schooling available to students, including an increasing emphasis on 'specialist' and religious foundation schools, and the implications of this move for intercultural education and inter-ethnic understanding.

Diversity in English Schools

Recent evidence collected by the UK government Department for Education and Skills (DFES, 2006) shows that as many as 21% of primary students and 17% of secondary students in state schools in England come from minority ethnic group backgrounds, and analysis of the trends over time suggest that this proportion is steadily increasing. England is truly a multi-ethnic society, a fact explicitly recognized in current national curriculum and teacher training documentation.

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Of course, England has always been multicultural, developing its language through intermingling after successive waves of colonization by Romans, Saxons, Vikings and Normans, and developing its written language and spelling system with the help of Dutch printers; its cities more recently the home of strong communities of people of Jewish, Huguenot and other backgrounds, including notable exiles from other parts of Europe, Asia and Africa. However, ethnic diversity was not something generally recognized within the school system by any special provision until the 1960s, with the growth of 'visible' immigration into England from the 'New Commonwealth', most particularly the Caribbean, India, Pakistan and Bangladesh, calling for measures to alleviate a racist backlash in some areas, and in the best local authorities, tying educational provision for minority ethnic groups to the development of strategies to tackle racism among the 'majority' communities in schools.

The instrument developed by the UK government at that time was enshrined in Section 11 of the Local Government Act, 1966. This offered special funding from the Home Office to local authorities to enable them, as they thought fit, to meet the 'extra' resources perceived to be necessary to meet the perceived needs of new arrivals from the New Commonwealth. This allocation of funding to the decentralized education system followed a racist backlash within certain regions of high immigration, where local residents (and voters) were complaining that new arrivals were drawing resources away from the local community. Section 11 was designed, therefore, to defuse ethnic tensions, and to be used only to meet the needs of New Commonwealth immigrants (i.e. visible minorities), not for others, leading to some anomalies. For example, Section 11 funding could be used for language teaching for Hong Kong Chinese but not for mainland Chinese; for Turkish or Greek Cypriots, but not for those from the Turkish or Greek mainland. For some years, local authorities ignored this restriction, using the funding for ESL and community language teaching for any of their major minority language groups, until, to limit spending, Section 11 restrictions were tightened in the 1990s to exclude its use for minority language teaching and for non-New Commonwealth groups. At that point, its use was limited only to provision which would ease integration into English, English culture and the existing English school system.

For many years, educational provision for diversity in England was seen by local authorities mainly in terms of special provision for English as a second language, especially for students of Pakistani, Bangladeshi and Indian origin; alongside attempts to widen the curriculum to reflect the culture of students of Caribbean and South Asian origin, focused on addressing the recognized educational underachievement of these groups as well as in an attempt by some local authorities to develop an 'anti-racist' at best, or 'multicultural' at least, curriculum for all students, to improve inter-ethnic understanding. While multicultural and anti-racist initiatives tended to be limited, but not exclusively, to areas of high minority ethnic group populations, by the 1980s there was no local education authority in England, even the most rural, which was not making some provision for supporting the language and learning needs of bilingual pupils (Bourne, 1987). While this was strongly focused on English as a Second Language provision, in the 1970s and

1980s when small amounts of extra government funding was available, a number of authorities also attempted to make provision for mother tongue curriculum support and mother tongue language classes for the major minority language groups in their areas (Bourne, 1987).

Different Regional Practices, North and South

However, there was a difference in emphasis between parts of the south and north of England that has had lasting effects on practice and community relations. In the South, the Inner London Education Authority (ILEA) developed policy and practice which has had a strong and lasting impact on schools. ILEA, with radical left wing leaders attempted a wide-ranging transformation of its schools through policy formation, teacher education and materials development through the 1970s and into the 1980s until its dissolution by the Thatcher government in the early1990s. ILEA set up an active and influential multi-ethnic school inspectorate, with two divisions, one focusing on the development of multi-cultural (later shifting more to inter-cultural) and anti-racist curriculum and pedagogy for a diverse student population, aimed at impacting on all schools; the second division focusing on developing language policy and provision. ILEA's commitment to diversity was shown in its undertaking of the first language census in England in 1978. The ILEA language policy, developed in 1981, had three strands: ESL provision, based in mainstream schools and mainly in-class support in mainstream classrooms; support, where numbers made that feasible, for 'mother tongue' and 'heritage language' classes and in-class support for learning; and, importantly, the development of language awareness for a multilingual society through activities meant for *all* children, not just those who were themselves bilingual or in multilingual schools.

A number of curriculum development resource centers were set up across London, showcasing materials and running courses for teachers, often with teams of advisers going into schools to work alongside teachers in transforming the curriculum and developing new forms of pedagogy for diversity. As schools grew more aware of multicultural approaches, policy and practice moved more towards approaches which emphasized the flexible and changing nature of cultures in contact, involving students themselves more directly in analyzing and reporting on intercultural development both among youth and mainstream cultures and its impact on their lives. Most controversial of the initiatives was the work on anti-racist education, directly impacting as it did on teachers' own evaluations of their actions, beliefs and values, as well as confronting social norms in different local communities. Efforts were also made to increase the proportions of teachers from relevant ethnic minority communities in London, admittedly starting from a very low base. By 2006, although the national average of ethnic minority teachers was just 10.5%, 40% of these were in Inner London and 27% in Outer London (DFES, 2006).

In contrast, with some notable exceptions, in the Midlands and North of England, provision tended to be made in such a way (in effect if not always in

intent) as to avoid impact on the majority White, monolingual population. Educational provision for minority group learners was perceived essentially in terms of ESL provision for minority language groups. There was relatively little work carried out in developing intercultural and anti-racist forms of curriculum and delivery in comparison to the work in the ILEA, and where this was undertaken, it tended to be focused on the needs of students of Caribbean origin. ESL Language Centers were set up to receive the children of new arrivals from South Asia, and to instruct them in English until they were deemed ready to take their place in unchanged schools. In some areas, students could enter and remain in separate language centers or language 'streams' within schools for a number of years, even until school leaving age.

In 1985, following complaints, The Commission for Racial Equality in England found one such authority, Calderdale, guilty of racial discrimination by the provision it was making, even though most children only attended its Language Centre for around 1 year. It noted, for example, that students and their parents were given no choice of school, unlike other students, but were placed in the Language Center by means of tests and interviews which no other students had to undergo. Students had to travel distances by bus to these Centers, when there were other, more local, schools nearby. Furthermore, the Center focused on ESL, and had little in the way of specialist teachers or specialist equipment, thus denying students access to the full curriculum enjoyed by other students.

The effect of the Calderdale Report on local authorities across England was dramatic. Existing Language Centers were phased out rapidly in subsequent years. However, unlike ILEA, by relying on language centers to meet the needs of new arrivals, many schools had not been prepared over time to respond to diversity by re-evaluating their pedagogic practice and curriculum. Some local authorities, like Bradford, with large minority populations, responded by redesignating their Language Centers as primary schools and, as the Centers had been located in areas of high minority group density, thus avoiding any impact on the mainly White schools in the neighboring areas, so maintaining ethnic separation, some would say with disastrous results in terms of community segregation and lack of inter-ethnic understanding in the present millennium. The northwest conurbations remain the most obviously segregated communities in Britain today, a source of ethnic tension supporting the growth of neo-fascist political 'national' parties on the one hand, and religious fundamentalism on the other.

Provision for Linguistic Minorities in England

Despite a number of schools that were homogeneous in intake, there were no bilingual schools instituted by national or local government in England, unlike the Hispanic schools in the USA. All maintained schools remain English medium. Nevertheless, through the 1980s and early 1990s, a number of local authorities developed mother tongue support in primary classrooms and heritage language

teaching as an option in secondary schools, using Section 11 funding. Once this source of extra funding was withdrawn from all but ESL provision (see below), however, these initiatives flagged and stopped in most regions as schools were reluctant to make provision from their own limited budgets.

Since the 1990s, many schools have adopted the range of strategies for supporting bilingual learners within the mainstream classroom. One strategy which had a national impact was developed in the pack of teacher training materials on Partnership Teaching (Bourne and McPake, 1991). These materials responded to the reality of classroom practice by querying strategies of co-operative teaching by mainstream and specialist teachers, with concomitant issues of status inequalities between mainstream subject specialists and 'support' teachers. In the place of co-operative (sometimes called collaborative) teaching, Partnership Teaching recommended a time limited cycle of teachers working together to identify areas of underachievement, research successful strategies developed in other classrooms and schools, experiment with new strategies, evaluate their outcomes, and, if successful, disseminate the work to other teachers within the schools or even across schools. Partnerships might involve language specialists and mainstream subject teachers, but could also include subject teachers working together on improving practice in their language diverse classrooms, or even whole departments. Partnerships might involve teachers working together collaboratively within the classroom, but could also include teachers working together only outside the classroom, developing more suitable curricula materials, assessment activities, for example. The focus was on whole school development in order to respond to a changed and changing student intake, where language diversity is increasingly the norm.

Ethnic Monitoring of Achievement

With the introduction of a National Curriculum in England in the late 1980s, major changes took place in mainstream education policy and practice, which have impacted on education for diversity. There has in effect been a change from a competence to a performance orientated curriculum (Bernstein, 1996). Previously, curricula and expectations of achievements were a matter for individual schools, supported by strong decentralized local authorities. While this gave schools flexibility to respond to students' needs as they perceived them, in many cases it would appear that schools held unreasonably low expectations of students, and especially those from minority ethnic groups. Since the introduction of a national curriculum, access to a full broad and balanced curriculum has come to be seen as an entitlement for all students, with a determined focus on raising the attainment levels of underachieving students in schools. This has been monitored by national testing of literacy and numeracy at the ages of 7, 11, 14, and by school certificate examinations at age 16 and 18.

Since 2000, monitoring of school attainment has been extended to the monitoring of school achievement in relation to their ethnic group composition. One strong

recommendation of the study into successful multi-ethnic schools (Blair and Bourne, 1998), now implemented nationally, was that student attainment in national tests should be monitored by ethnicity as well as by gender and poverty (measured by uptake of free school meals). It was recognized that this is controversial, but it enables policy makers to identify schools which are more and less successful with different groups, and to explore the reasons why this should be so. It also enables them to counter the arguments of those schools that have low expectations of their students, by showing them the outcomes of schools with very similar student intakes that are doing much better. The focus is on showing that schools can and do make a difference.

Although the ethnic categories used in ethnic monitoring remain crude, they give an indication of trends and patterns in achievement at national, regional and school levels, allowing for the identification of underachievement, and a starting point for investigation of how best to address and turn around such trends. First monitoring results in 2003 showed that overall, students of Chinese and Indian origin were achieving above the national average. In contrast, students of Black Caribbean, Pakistani and Bangladeshi origin were achieving below the national average. However, this trend was not true in some regions and in some schools, encouraging further investigation of reasons and strategies. Continued monitoring showed that all the underachieving groups had gradually improved their level of performance by 2005, suggesting that schools were taking pains to address their performance.

DFES statistics are collected by ethnic group on student success in passing at least 5 academic subjects in the General Certificate of Secondary Education (commonly called the GCSE, the first school leaving examination usually taken at age 16). In 2006, the results for those achieving a grade of between A* and C were as follows:

Chinese – 85%
White British – 78%
Black African – 73%
Black Caribbean – 65%
Pakistani – 67%
Bangladeshi – 66%
Pupils overall – 77%

However, greater subtleties of performance can be achieved by breaking down the results by indicators of poverty and by gender. For example, when gender is taken into account, it reveals that boys from the White British and Black Caribbean groups are disproportionately underachieving: only half of White British boys and only one third of Black Caribbean origin boys achieving the expected levels. When poverty indicators are also taken into account (using the indicator of eligibility for free school lunches) the percentages drop to 24% of Black Caribbean boys, and just 21% of White British boys.

This data, also presented to schools at school by school level, provides a starting point for policy makers and school leadership teams to identify strategies and target resources to combat underachievement. It also suggests that policy makers and schools need to look much wider than they have historically done simply at

language support in order to meet the needs of minority ethnic students, as Blair and Bourne (1998) suggested, above. Controlling for other factors, such as social deprivation, prior attainment and gender, ethnic monitoring also reveals that although these minority group students make less progress compared to their White peers in primary schools, they go on to make greater progress than their peers in secondary school, suggesting, like the findings of Collier and Thomas, that students who have to learn in a second language can and do 'catch up' given high expectations and the right support from schools. For while less students learning English as an Additional Language (EAL) achieved the expected standards than non-EAL learners in the first years of primary school (78% compared to 86%), by age 16 they appear to have caught up with their peers with 40.3% obtaining five GCSEs (the General Certificate of Secondary Education, usually taken at age 16) at the upper Grades A*–C including English, compared to 42.8%, and with the gap narrowing to just 0.2% when looking at results for five A*–C grades in any subjects (that is, removing English from the equation) (DFES, 2006).

Raising the Attainment of Minority Students

Blair and Bourne (1998) set up a number of focus groups for minority ethnic group parents and children from the largest minority language groups, to gather their own perspectives of what sort of provision might be helpful in addressing underachievement. What was interesting and even unexpected was how seldom parents and students from minority language groups mentioned language issues as barriers to their learning. The issues they addressed were overwhelmingly the same as those identified by parents and students of Black Caribbean origin – those of low expectations by teachers, and the placement by schools of minority group learners in low ability streams and groups, resulting in low achievement and lack of educational qualifications. As an example, parents told us:

'The expectation is low. Because they are different cultures or they are from third world countries, they are expected to be down the ladder somewhere.'

'Usually when I go to Parents' Evenings and that, they are always saying, 'Oh yes, he has done so well and done this and that'. But the work I see, I know he can do better than that, yet he is not being pushed further, half the time he is just left to get on with it.' (Blair and Bourne, 1998)

So parents from minority language groups quite clearly thought there was more to tackling underachievement than merely addressing language issues, and that schools needed to look very carefully at structures and processes within the school system itself if they were to address underachievement.

There were a number of key findings identified and disseminated by the Blair and Bourne (1998) project. The main findings can be summarized as follows: In successful schools, leadership is crucial. A strong and determined lead on equal opportunities was given by the head teacher, who gave clear vision and direction to staff.

Successful schools were 'listening schools'. Successful schools established an ethos of respect in which adults spent time listening to students and tried to see things from students' point of view, and tried to adapt school practices in the light of these. Successful schools had clear procedures for responding to bullying and harassment, whether of individuals or towards groups. They recognized that no child can learn when frightened or worried. They also worked hard on strategies to avoid and prevent exclusions of students from school. For example, the report describes a young man who was introduced to the researchers as someone who had got in with 'the wrong crowd', but who had managed to turn himself around and was now achieving well. He explained that one day his head teacher had called him into her office and told him 'I've seen a spark in you and I am not going to let that die.' He said, 'Now she is on my case the whole time, asking to see my homework, wanting to know what I have been doing. But I don't mind. I can see that she cares.' Often it appeared that it was the small things said and done, little things that showed that teachers cared, that seemed to make the biggest difference to students themselves in keeping them on track. These things are small, but take time, and a particular type of school ethos.

Successful schools established high expectations of both teachers and students, and had clear systems in place for tracking and monitoring the progress of students, and for targeting support to those found to be underachieving. One primary school had large charts up in the staff room, identifying individuals and groups of students who appeared to be underachieving, and tracking their progress, to ensure that their performance improved over the short and medium term. Targeted support was put into classrooms where underachievement was identified. Where students appeared to be underachieving in one particular subject area, this was the focus of investigation and successful subject departments and teachers were encouraged to share their practice with others.

Successful schools created careful links with the local communities. Schools made efforts to recruit a school staff representative of the community they served, in some cases supporting the training of teachers from specific groups. These teachers helped the school engender trust with parents, and helped to sort out misunderstandings. In one school which had developed strong links with the local mosque, a group of young boys had begun pushing school boundaries by requesting to wear prayer hats in class as well as at prayer times in the designated prayer rooms, a practice the school thought had potential to create unnecessary divisions. The head teacher called on the local imam, who came up to the school and spoke to the boys, reminding them of their duty to show respect to their teachers, and to follow school rules, appreciating the efforts that the school had already made to respond to their needs for space to worship.

Effective schools were sensitive to the identities of students, and made efforts to include in the curriculum appropriate reference to their histories, languages, religions and cultures. They provided a rich curriculum, combining arts and excursions with a strong focus on literacy and language development.

Secondary schools offered a broad range of modern languages in the curriculum, including languages spoken in the local community. The most effective secondary

schools had well-trained language support teachers who worked alongside subject teachers in mainstream classrooms, using partnership teaching strategies (see Bourne and McPake, 1991) to develop greater awareness of the language demands of subject lessons, and to encourage a range of teaching strategies which would be supportive to all learners, such as co-operative group work, structured writing frames, visual support materials, etc.

Primary schools in particular were strongly aware of the role and importance of language in learning for all children. Most effective schools employed bilingual teachers and classroom assistants to support learning in the classrooms. The most effective had clear, shared and understood policies for using bilingual strategies in the mainstream classroom (as the mere presence of bilingual staff is no guarantee that other languages will in fact be used to support learning, or indeed, used at all). Children's first languages were given status in the classroom and used in collaborative group learning.

At the same time, successful schools did in some circumstances, and where appropriate, make special provision for classes in English language and literacy to meet particular needs identified within the school. Where possible, such classes were held outside the regular school day so that students did not miss subject lessons. In some cases, new arrivals to England and refugee students received short induction courses varying in length from 1 to 6 weeks, before joining mainstream classes. The main feature of any such special provision was that it was time-limited, and had clear objectives, understood and agreed with students and their parents.

Specific Projects to Address Underachievement

Ethnic monitoring has enabled projects focused on addressing underachievement to analyze their results by ethnicity, to ensure that they are addressing the needs of a diverse student population.

One major project has been that of the government funded 'Excellence in Cities' project, launched in 1999 and focusing on underachievement in disadvantaged urban areas, involving about one third of state maintained secondary schools in England. Ethnic monitoring revealed that over 60% of ethnic minority students attended school in Excellence in Cities areas. The project provided targeted support to and encouraged collaboration between schools to address underachievement. In the final evaluation, the impact of the project on ethnic minority underachievement was unclear (Kendal et al., 2005), however, the evaluators were able to report that over the period of the project, more students from ethnic minority groups were identified as entrants for the national Gifted and Talented support program, apparently as school's strategies for identifying such students were widened and teacher understanding and expectations of students were increased.

A second initiative launched by the English Department for Education and Skills (DFES) in 2003 focused on addressing underachievement among students of African-Caribbean family origin. 'Aiming High' set out to work with school leaders

to develop a whole school approach to addressing the needs of African-Caribbean students. It offered the 30 participating schools in the pilot project a grant of an extra £10,000 annually, together with consultancy support and staff training. In its evaluation, the DFES found that parents of African-Caribbean origin 'overwhelmingly' saw unfair and inconsistent behavior management policies as the largest barrier to learner achievement. The project therefore targeted both academic and pastoral strategies, for example, challenging exclusion practices, teacher training and the provision of mentoring for students. In doing so, the project found the involvement of school leaders crucial in challenging staff reluctant to focus on one ethnic minority group in particular, preferring to take a 'color-blind' approach, not understanding how this disadvantaged certain students.

A third initiative set up by government was the 'English as an Additional Language' pilot project begun in 2004, targeted at raising the achievement of bilingual learners in primary schools. It focused on school-based teacher training, working with three schools in each of 12 local authority regions to develop models of good practice. A pilot consultant was funded in each authority, to work with school leaders to first undertake a school audit of needs. In an independent evaluation (White et al., 2006), staff reported a better understanding of how EAL pedagogy related to effective mainstream teaching and how strategies could be integrated into regular classroom practice to the benefit of all, although as yet there were no measurable improvements in attainment test results – expected by 2007. Strategies introduced included planned flexible groups for speaking and listening activities, the introduction of 'talk partners' in minority languages to support curriculum learning, and more use of speaking and listening activities as a prelude to writing. The evaluators noted that the least important feature appeared to be that of materials development, with greater benefits derived from effective consultancy involvement and, once again, the strong commitment of senior leadership in schools.

EU Expansion and Globalization Lead to England's Ethnic Mix Changes

Whilst in some areas of England there are still large and established minority ethnic community groups, the ethnic composition of England is rapidly and radically changing in the new millennium, with European integration and globalization. Instead of three or four major minority groups, often concentrated in specific locations, the picture is much more diverse. The Office for National Statistics (2005) comments on continuing immigration from the 'Old' and 'New' Commonwealth countries, but with increasing numbers from previously less represented countries such as Nigeria, Ghana, Zimbabwe, and Hong Kong. There are also increased numbers from Arabic speaking countries, also from conflict zones such as Somalia and Afghanistan, and increased immigration from Latin America. Long established European communities such as those from Italy, Turkey, Greece and Cyprus are being joined by larger numbers from across Europe, including rapidly increasing

immigration from the European accession countries, in particular from Poland. For example, in a mid-sized city in the south of England, Southampton, one school previously with over 90% of its student intake of South Asian origin, from mainly Sikh religious backgrounds, now has a large and growing new Polish student intake, many arriving with high standards of education but with little English, for whose arrival the school was unprepared. Polish shops are opening in the area, Polish meals joining the South Asian meals on offer at local take aways. The speed of change reflects that of the 1960s, when South Asian immigration caught schools by surprise and there was increased evidence of xenophobia in the press and on the streets.

Whilst these new immigrants may be disproportionately settled in areas of high deprivation, alongside many of the older, established minority ethnic groups, this is not always the case. Ethnic diversity is increasingly the norm across England. Greater ethnic diversity is accompanied by greater social diversity, the new immigrants bringing a wide range of educational and social histories, some well educated and highly skilled, others with little formal education, some urban and others from rural backgrounds, some traumatized by war or social conflict.

Religion is also a major feature in the increased societal diversity. While 42% of children classified as 'White' and 37% of those from mixed heritage backgrounds claim to have no religion at all, the majority of those classified as of Black Caribbean or Black African origin claim to be Christian, while the majority of those classified of Bangladeshi and Pakistani origin claim to be Muslim, and roughly equal proportions of those from Indian backgrounds claim to be Hindu, Sikh or Muslim by religion. As the DFES (2006) study concludes, religion is more likely to be important to those students, and their parents, from minority ethnic group backgrounds than for 'White British' or 'Mixed heritage' groups.

These changes have considerable implications for the way in which the education system responds to diversity. Apart from the emergence of religion as a high profile issue, and while language issues and language provision become less obviously intertwined with issues of 'race' and racism, the cultural and political histories of new EU citizens have barely entered teachers' awareness for curriculum adjustments to be made.

'Diversity as the Norm'

The strategy adopted in England for changing mainstream schools to make them more hospitable to bilingual children has been a focus on structural change – through centralized statutory requirements, training and monitoring. Changes have been made in teacher training, assessment procedures and national curriculum requirements, as well as efforts continuing in developing language aware forms of classroom practice for all teachers through the government funded and led 'National Literacy Strategy', impacting on all maintained schools. The National Primary and Secondary Strategies, national initiatives for in-service teacher training, which

impact on every school and teacher, have advisers on supporting bilingual students attached to them, and are producing additional training materials for each subject area, freely available online on the internet, as well as the focus of training courses.

Such understandings are now also included in the training of government school inspectors, and school inspection schedules include questions on the schools' approaches to supporting language minority students, and report publicly on schools' success in raising the levels of achievement of students from minority backgrounds.

Just as the national curriculum 'mainstreamed' diversity, requiring all students to receive the same broad and balanced curriculum, so new centralized 'Standards' for the pre-service training of teachers required all new teachers to be prepared to work with multi-ethnic and multilingual classes. All new teachers are now required to receive training on strategies for supporting English as an additional language learners in the mainstream, and on effective and fair planning, teaching and assessment of students from diverse cultural backgrounds. Furthermore, national targets have been set for increasing the proportion of minority ethnic group teachers into teacher training, with local targets set for each teacher training institution, with financial sanctions taken if they fail to meet them.

'Diversity', 'Choice' and Devolution

However, at the same time, there has been a separate, and perhaps contradictory, strand of government policy on 'diversity'. In this development 'diversity' does not refer to ethnicity, but relates to differences between schools, not people. The aim of the policy is to increase the variety of type of school available to parents to 'choose' for their children (Whitty et al., 1998). Since the New Labor government took power in 1997, a range of different initiatives have been developed, all with the stated aim of raising attainment – 'specialist' schools, increased numbers of religious 'faith' schools, 'city academies', many receiving enhanced funding, and, most significantly, having the possibility to select their students on different criteria. Prior to the 1997 Labor government, the most widespread government maintained secondary school was the 'comprehensive' school, open to everyone in the surrounding community. A few already existing selective 'grammar schools' remained in a small number of local authorities, 'creaming off' those students aged 11years who chose to sit an entry examination from joining their peers in the surrounding comprehensive schools, but these were few in number.

As centralization of curriculum and assessment increased under the Labor government, on the one hand, greater autonomy of selection was passed to the schools, by-passing local authorities. Demand exceeds the number of places available at highly successful schools. With pressure on schools also to show themselves successful in published school assessment league tables, there is pressure on head teachers to select their students, although explicit selection by 'ability' alone is still not permissible outside of the few remaining 'grammar schools'. Within this constraint, the choice of specific selection criteria is left to individual schools. Many

highly popular schools use a defined 'catchment area' as a means of limiting the number of eligible students, drawing on the streets closest to the school. It is well known that house prices increase in the vicinity of successful schools, lessening access for the less financially secure. The effect is less of parental choice in respect of school placements, but of school choice of student.

One effect of all this is that less successful schools find themselves taking up those students whose parents have been unable to negotiate their way into the more popular schools, or who are unaware of the disparities in the education on offer, or too concerned with the pressures on their own lives to be able to consider their children's schooling. In one area of London I am personally aware of, this 'choice' led to the splitting up of a cohesive multi-ethnic class of children across a wide number of schools, with one child, a refugee from a war-torn area of Africa, who had been previously excluded from another primary school, but had settled down and made good progress, now being allocated to an unpopular school across London, having failed to get into a local school with his peers. Traveling to his new school meant traveling alone on the underground system, involving two changes of trains, to an unknown and potentially hostile area by a small 11-year-old boy with limited English and a history of behavioral problems. Such was one effect of a devolved system of 'choice'.

Thus while the New Labor government on the one hand argued its commitment to equality in education and to raising the attainment of the disadvantaged, its continuation of the previous right wing Conservative government's market policies of diversity and choice in schooling appears to have increased social segregation and inequalities in relation to 'race', class and ethnicity (Tomlinson, 2005). The DFES (2006) reports clear differences in the relative deprivation of different ethnic groups in England, with many more students of Bangladeshi, Pakistani, Black Caribbean and Black African backgrounds living in areas of high deprivation, where residents are categorized as 'hard pressed' to live within their means. Thus, social segregation within schooling on socio-economic grounds has implications for ethnic diversity within schools.

In a detailed statistical analysis, Goldstein and Noden (2003) have been able to show that the underlying variation in levels of poverty between schools increased considerably over the period 1994–1999. More recently, Jenkins et al. (2006), in an international study, showed not only that English schools had a high degree of social segregation, but also that social segregation was strongly associated with the prevalence within a country of selective choice of pupils by schools. Thus low segregation schools such as Scotland and the Nordic countries had negligible opportunities for schools to select pupils, while countries which selected such as Austria, Germany and Hungary were found to have highly socially segregated schools. This effect is also to be clearly seen in South Africa, where, following the destruction of the apartheid system, desegregation on racial lines but accompanied by allowing schools to set their own fee levels has resulted in little change in the social composition of schools today from that of apartheid times.

In a study of two schools in England, Gillborn and Youdell (2000) show how insidiously this selection and separation came about in routine practice as the

schools attempted to maximize their performance in the light of published tables of school test results (popularly called 'league tables', mirroring the football league tables of match results), and the effect this social segregation had on ethnic groups in a locality.

Such contradictory reforms do not appear to be limited to England. Apple (2001) outlines similar moves in the USA, and argues that such contradictory reforms emerge from the combination of weak state practices (education as a 'market' and school choice) with strong state practices (centralized statutory curriculum and testing). As Skidelsky (1989) has argued, the concept of the social market contains two important political ideas: freedom and power. He writes: 'A person lacks freedom if he is forced to carry out someone else's plan; he lacks power if he is unable to carry out his own plan.' Freedom and power are clearly different. A person might be free to choose a school, but lack the power (resources, the 'right' address, the information, the tutoring necessary to pass selection tests) to be able to do so. Apple's solution is to call for a 'repositioning' (p. 197) of education which would entail policy makers examining all suggested reforms for their implications from the perspective of those most oppressed.

However, such a strategy relies on an expectation of good will on the part of policy makers, and their willingness to give up the advantages currently offered by the system to their own children for the benefit of the disadvantaged. Some minority communities have decreasing patience in waiting for such a solution, but are attempting to take the education of their own people into their own hands. School choice has opened the doors to the possibility of establishing, with government funding, schools for different 'faiths' in addition to the existing church and Jewish schools long established in England. As I have noted earlier, religious diversity has gained a higher profile in England in recent years. Woods and Woods (2002) note the differentiating public domain this is creating, but suggest the move to diverse 'faith' schools will create a number of different models for what counts as valid learning and of valid learning styles. While such diversity may challenge the hegemony of public education (although the room for curricula diversity of publicly funded schools will be severely limited), the effects of increased numbers of 'faith' schools, and thus of increased social segregation along religious lines, on intercultural understanding and social cohesion in areas already experiencing community tensions have yet to be explored.

This suggests the way in which policies developed for different purposes even within the same department can work against each other. Despite the rhetoric of responding to multi-ethnic and social diversity, community cohesion becomes the victim of the global and globalizing neo-liberal rhetoric of individualism and 'choice'; and provision continues in many subtle and not so subtle ways to promote the interests of those who have the necessary social capital and economic power to make the 'right' choices, those leading to success in the existing social structure.

I want to end this chapter with a story by Reginald Wilson. It goes like this:

'I am standing by the shores of a swiftly flowing river. I hear the cry of a drowning man, so I jump into the river, pull him to the shore and apply artificial respiration. Then just as he begins to breathe, another cry for help. So back into the river again, reaching, pulling,

applying, breathing and then another yell. Again, and again without end goes the sequence. I am so busy, jumping in, pulling them to the shore and applying artificial respiration that I have no time to see what's upstream, pushing them in' (quoted in Smitherman, 1981).

I think the message of this story is clear; we cannot look at strategies and provision for the education of students from minority ethnic group backgrounds separately from addressing the wider context of collective social justice and equity in a diverse society.

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Chapter 3
Education of Ethnic Minorities and Migrants in Austria

Mikael Luciak

Introduction

In the 19th century, the multiethnic state of the Austrian Empire and its successor, the Austrian-Hungarian dual monarchy, led to interrelations between different national and cultural groups. For centuries, several ethnic minority groups have lived in border regions in eastern and southern Austria, as well as in the capital city, Vienna. However, present-day Austrian society's ethnic and linguistic diversity is due mostly to immigration of foreign workers in the second half of the 20th century. From a total population of more than 8 million, 1 out of 8 people living in Austria today are foreign born (Münz et al., 2003).

In recent years, students with an immigrant background (first- and second-generation immigrants) have posed a big challenge to the Austrian school system. In this predominantly German-speaking and Roman Catholic country, cultural, linguistic, and religious diversity in classrooms has become a reality in many schools, particularly in urban areas. Different educational policies, measures, and practices have been implemented to help educate the diverse student population. Still, compared to the majority population, students with an immigrant background tend to underachieve in education, a trend that also has been reflected in previous PISA study results (OECD, 2004).

This chapter will discuss current developments in the education of migrants and national ethnic minorities as well as intercultural learning in the Austrian educational system. Results will be situated within the wider context of the European Union, which Austria joined in 1995.

Cultural and Linguistic Diversity in Austria

Austria has six officially recognized national autochthonous minorities (Volksgruppen): Slovenes, Croats, Hungarians, Roma, Czechs, and Slovaks. These minorities have lived in certain regions of the country for centuries and became

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officially recognized in Austria between the 1970s and 1990s. (Roma were the last
to be recognized in 1993.) However, throughout the 20th century, politics regarding
minority rights of the various groups have been rather inconsistent and controver-
sial. Domestic and foreign politics have had a greater influence on accompanying
developments than language and civil rights per se (Baumgartner, 1995).

Because official statistical data do not distinguish among groups according to
ethnicity, there is no reliable data about the size of these minority groups. Self-
estimates of group size by minority representatives and official data on the dispersal
of minority language use vary. In spite of these variations in census data, it appears
that none of these groups exceeds 50,000 people (Council of Europe, 2003;
Statistics Austria, 2001), which amounts to a rather small percentage, given the
total population of more than 8 million people.

Austria was a country of emigration in the postwar period. This began to change
slowly in the 1960s, when labor shortages led to bilateral agreements with Spain,
Turkey, and Yugoslavia encouraging immigration of foreign laborers. The assumption
that the so-called "guest workers" would stay in Austria only for a short period of
time and be followed by new labor migrants in a "rotation system" proved to be erro-
neous. Interests of both employers and migrants themselves worked against this idea
(Münz et al., 2003). Instead, longer-term employment and residency has led to a
gradual immigration of family members and an ongoing increase of these populations
in Austria. As will be discussed, the assumed repatriation of migrants carried a differ-
ent set of goals with respect to schooling than the educational strategies developed
later, when it became clear that most migrants would stay in Austria permanently.

In addition to labor migration, other events in the second half of the 20th century
affected the demographic situation. Austria accepted refugees from communist
countries during political crises in Hungary in 1956, Czechoslovakia in 1968, and
Poland in 1981–82 (Münz et al., 2003). In the 1990s, wars in former Yugoslavia
brought refugees from Croatia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, and Kosovo, which sharply
increased the number of foreigners living in Austria. In addition, asylum-seekers
and refugees from a variety of other countries (Eastern Europe, the former republics
of the Soviet Union, the Middle East, and Africa) came to Austria. Thus, over time,
Austria had become a country of immigrants. In the early 1990s, the government
tightened its immigration policy as a response to these increases in immigration and
to accompanying political pressures from right-wing parties. New laws replaced the
guest worker policies with a yearly quota system for new residence permits, which
in the following years reduced net immigration continuously, as shown in Fig. 3.1
(National Contact Point Austria within the European Migration Network, 2004).

The 2001 census shows that 12.5% of the Austrian population was born abroad.
Among all groups that migrated to Austria, the largest are labor migrants, predomi-
nantly from countries outside of the European Union. In 2005, 9.6% of the popula-
tion (788,699 persons) had foreign citizenship. Citizens from the states of former
Yugoslavia (39.3%) and Turkey (14.8%) make up the largest proportions of this
population. More than one-third of the population of foreign citizens lives in the
capital city, Vienna. While the group of labor migrants initially consisted mainly of
male adults, the number of women and children with an immigrant background has
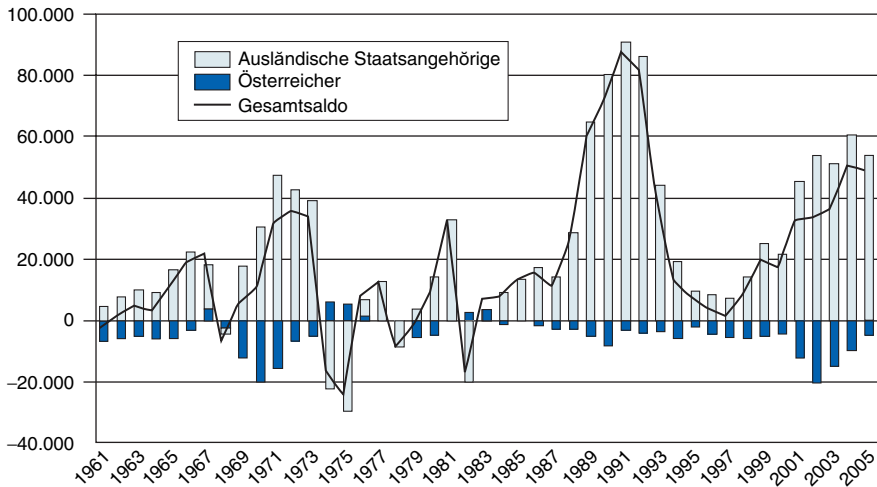
Fig. 3.1 Migration balance (credit balance after immigration and emigration), 1961–2005

increased sharply, due either to family reunification or births after immigration to Austria. Including descendants of migrants born in Austria who still hold a foreign citizenship, as well as naturalized aliens, the total population with an immigrant background now exceeds 15% (Statistics Austria, 2001, 2006b).

Most Austrians are Roman Catholics. The number of members of other religious denominations is comparatively small. However, migration from Turkey as well as from Bosnia and Herzegovina over the years led to an increase of Muslims in Austria. According to the Census 2001, 4.2% of the population or 338,998 residents were Muslim (Statistics Austria, 2001).

Until recently, the Austrian public, for the most part, has found it difficult to accept that the country has become increasingly culturally and linguistically diverse. Despite the fact that several autochthonous national minority groups have lived in the country for centuries and that immigration in the second half of the 20th century has greatly affected the country's ethnic composition, Austria is seen neither as a multicultural nation nor as a country of immigrants. Immigrants, still are largely regarded as foreigners rather than as fellow citizens, even though most members of the second and third generations are born in the country and frequently regard Austria as their homeland.

Minority Schooling and Bilingual Education: National Autochthonous Minorities

Autochthonous minorities have special rights in Austria, many of which date to Article 7 of the 1955 State Treaty of Vienna. Constitutional rights and bilateral agreements eventually led in 1976 to the Ethnic Minorities Act that promotes the

language and culture, continued existence, and protection of these minorities. Under these laws, members of the Slovene, Croat, and Hungarian minorities are entitled to instruction in their minority languages or to bilingual education in elementary schools. In some provinces they also are entitled to a certain number of secondary schools in which the minority language, as well as German, are the languages of instruction. Various activities supported by government policies for ethnic groups further promote minority languages.

The provinces of Carinthia and Burgenland adopted Minority Schools Acts (in 1959 and 1994, respectively) that grant autochthonous minorities specific language rights in regard to elementary and secondary education. In Burgenland, instruction in the Croatian language was offered in 31 public primary schools and instruction in Hungarian in 16 public primary schools in the 2002–03 school year. In Carinthia, Slovenian was taught in 83 bilingual primary schools in 1998–99. Croatian, Hungarian, and Slovenian are taught in some schools at the secondary level, including a higher bilingual academic secondary school in Burgenland with German-Croatian or German-Hungarian instruction and a higher bilingual academic secondary school in Carinthia with German-Slovenian instruction (NFP Austria, 2004). Members of the Czech and Slovak minorities have no legal entitlement to bilingual education; these languages are mainly subject to Article 68(1) of the 1919 State Treaty of St. Germain. However, some schools in Vienna offer instruction in the Czech and Slovak languages, such as the European Middle School programs (EMS).

The proportion of students who attend bilingual schools or minority language classes, particularly in Carinthia, is rising. However, according to teachers' observations, minority language proficiency of Slovenian students who enter school has declined. It is regarded as a positive development, however, that the number of Austrian German native speakers who attend bilingual schools that offer instruction in minority languages is increasing (NFP Austria, 2004).

Austria lacks studies of the educational achievement of autochthonous national minorities. A government report from 2000 states that there are no basic differences between educational levels attained by the Croatian population and the rest of the population in the province of Burgenland (Council of Europe, 2000). This report does not mention how educational success of other autochthonous groups compares with that of the general population, but it is generally assumed that all groups except for Roma achieve adequate results.

The total population of Roma in Austria ranges between 25,000 and 30,000 people. About one-third belongs to the officially recognized national minority group, consisting of Burgenland-Roma, Sinti, and Lovara. The other two-thirds belong to recent Roma migrant groups (Kalderas, Gurbet, and Arlije) from eastern and southern European countries. Until recently, members of the Roma minority benefited least in regard to minority schooling. Romani, which is still spoken by many Roma students, initially was not a literary language. Following recent attempts to codify the language and to develop teaching methods for the language varieties spoken by the Austrian Roma, one primary school in Burgenland now offers courses in Romani. Two Roma native speakers also offer first-language instruction in a few Viennese schools.

Research on the educational situation of the Austrian Roma suggests that most group members rarely continue beyond compulsory schooling. For a long time, Roma children frequently received their education in special-needs schools rather than in regular schools. The educational achievements of autochthonous Roma have somewhat improved more recently, mostly due to after-school learning projects offered by Roma associations (Samer, 2001). Little is known about the educational situation of Roma migrants, a circumstance that prompts the author of this chapter to conduct research in this area.

Migrant Minority Education

The cultural, linguistic, and religious background of Austria's school population has become increasingly diverse in recent decades. Today, students from more than 160 countries attend Austrian schools. Education statistics distinguish the student population according to citizenship and first language, but not according to ethnicity. There is data distinguishing Austrian and foreign citizens ("aliens"), EU citizens and Non-EU ("third country") citizens, and various nationality groups. Migrants or their descendants who have attained Austrian citizenship are listed as Austrians. This constitutes a problem if one wants to obtain information on school enrollment and scholastic achievement of all students with an immigrant background. Another category used in the data collection is "pupils with a first language other than German." These statistics do not account for students with an immigrant background who consider German to be their first language.

In the 2002–03 school year, almost 1.2 million students attended Austrian schools. Of those, 9.5% (113,138 students) held foreign citizenship; most were third country nationals (BMBWK, 2004b). As shown in Table 3.1, the largest proportion were from Turkey (26.4%), followed by Serbia and Montenegro (18%) and Bosnia and Herzegovina (17.7%).

In the 2004–05 school year, 157,370 students or 12.7% of the total school population spoke a first language other than German (BMBWK, 2006b; Statistics Austria, 2006a). In Vienna, 70,437 students (31.4%) spoke a first language other than German. In the first 9 years of mandatory schooling, the proportion of all

Table 3.1 Austrian students according to national citizenship, 2002–03

Origination	Number of students	Percentage of total student population
Austrian citizens	1,078,184	90.5
Foreign citizens	113,138	9.5
Citizens of selected countries		
Turkey	29,875	26.4
Serbia and Montenegro	20,849	18.0
Bosnia and Herzegovina	20,005	17.7
Total	1,191,322	100

Table 3.2 Students with a first language other than German, 2004–05

	Austria		Vienna	
Population	Number of students	Percentage	Number of students	Percentage
All schools	157,370	12.7	70,437	31.4
General mandatory schooling (9 years)	111,561	16.7	47,535	45.9

Students belonging to Austria's autochthonous minorities and those who exceed 6 years of schooling in Austria are not included in these statistics.

students with a first language other than German is even higher: 16.7% of all students in Austria and 45.9% of all Viennese students do not speak German as their first language (Table 3.2).

Educational and Language Programs for Migrant Students

German is the primary language of instruction in Austrian schools. Students with a first language other than German are offered German as a second language as well as first-language instruction. Multilingualism in schools is also fostered by providing foreign language instruction. However, for the most part, foreign languages taught in schools to all children are not the languages of migrants or autochthonous minorities. English is most frequently taught as a modern foreign language, as well as French, Italian, and Spanish at different educational levels.

Students with a first language other than German attend the same classes as native-speaker students. Two main language provisions foster their schooling and integration. Since 1992–93, German as a second language (*Deutsch für Schüler mit nicht-deutscher Muttersprache*) and first-language instruction (*Muttersprachlicher Unterricht*) are offered at the level of compulsory schooling up to 9th grade. Starting in September 2006, German as a second language also could be chosen as a "nonbinding" elective course in upper secondary schools. Since the 2004–05 school year, first-language instruction has been part of the curriculum at the upper secondary level as well (BMBWK, 2006c).

Students who enter schools with little knowledge of German may be regarded as "irregular students" for the first 12 months; unlike regular students, they will not be graded during this period. This policy can be extended for an additional 12 months in exceptional cases. Subsequently, these students will be graded but may continue to take German as a second language as well as first-language classes (BMBWK, 2006c).

German as a Second Language

At the level of general compulsory schooling, German as a second language may be offered in lessons parallel to standard instruction, in integrative settings (team

teaching), or as separate additional classes in the afternoon. In general, German as a second language instruction is offered to all students with a first language other than German throughout the first 6 years of schooling. German as a second language lessons must not exceed 12 hours per week for irregular students, 5 hours for regular students at primary and special schools, and 6 hours for regular students at general secondary schools and prevocational schools. At academic secondary schools, these classes may be offered as electives (BMBWK, 2004a). Even though second language instruction is meant to foster students' language acquisition sufficiently, budget cutbacks for personnel currently allow most schools to offer no more than 2–3 hours of language instruction per week (NFP Austria, 2004).

First-Language Instruction

First languages other than German may be taught in schools as elective subjects. This instruction can take place either in separate classes, generally held in the afternoon, or integrated into the regular schedule in the form of team teaching with a native language teacher working alongside a subject teacher. While the integrated model is widely practiced in Vienna, afternoon provision generally is preferred in other provinces of the country. First-language instruction is offered in 2–6 lessons a week (Eurydice, 2006).

In the 2005–06 school year, 314 native language teachers instructed 26,019 students in 17 different languages. About half of these first-language classes for students with an immigrant background took place in Vienna. Students with Turkish as first language (45.7%) and students with Bosnian-Croatian-Serbian as first language (42.9%) constitute the largest groups among students with a first language other than German (BMBWK, 2006a). To some extent, students' first languages (primarily English) also are taught as foreign languages in secondary schools. However, since the 2000–01 school year, the two most commonly spoken languages of immigrants in Austria (such as Bosnian/Croatian/Serbian and Turkish) are offered as foreign languages at some general secondary schools as well. Serbo-Croatian also has been added to the curriculum of academic secondary schools (Eurydice, 2006; BMBWK, 2004a).

If a student's first language is not German, the School Education Act also offers the option of a "language exchange" (*Sprachentausch*). This implies that German is considered to be the student's first foreign language. The student's first language is graded according to the same standards as the official language of instruction (German). However, this may apply only in cases in which the curriculum offers mandatory foreign language instruction in addition to classes in the student's native language (BMBWK, 2006c). Overall, neither the teaching of immigrants' first languages in foreign language classes nor the practice of "language exchange" is widespread in the Austrian school system.

"Intercultural Learning" as an Educational Principle

Similar to several other European countries that faced a high proportion of labor migration during the 1970s, Austria met the increase in diversity in its schools mostly with educational measures aimed at students with an immigrant background. At first, this comprised a dual approach: preserving students' original language and culture to allow repatriation at any given time while offering measures to learn the host country's language. Once it became clear that it was unlikely that many migrants would return to their home countries, compensatory measures and an assimilatory approach ("pedagogy for foreigners") took over (Portera, 2005). "It was only in the '80s that theoretical considerations and practical intervention strategies with respect to intercultural pedagogy slowly began to form" (Portera, 2005, p. 1). The most crucial aspect of this reconsideration was the fact that intercultural education was meant to target all students rather than just minority students and migrants. An intensified process of European Union integration fostered this development and heightened awareness that students must be better prepared to live in a world characterized by intercultural relations and globalization rather than to live in a homogeneous nation-state.

In the early 1990s, Austria introduced the educational principle "intercultural learning" at general compulsory schools and academic secondary schools. Rather than teaching a specific subject on intercultural issues, intercultural learning takes the form of an interdisciplinary principle applied to all subjects taught at school. Intercultural learning is meant to foster mutual understanding between students of different cultural and linguistic backgrounds. It not only implies learning about other cultures but also intends to provide a learning environment in which cultural values can be experienced and shaped by all students in a concerted effort. Intercultural learning should enable students to value diversity and to counter racism and ethno- and Eurocentrism.

The implementation of the goals that underlie intercultural learning, however, is lacking in many ways in daily school practice. While it is rather common for schools to develop special projects with an emphasis on intercultural learning (95 intercultural projects are currently listed in a database provided by the Ministry of Education), there is no systematic implementation of this educational approach on a broader scale. A recent research study showed that whether intercultural learning becomes an integral part of teaching depends highly on individual teachers' interests and efforts (Fillitz, 2003). Many teachers still lack knowledge of the principles and goals underlying intercultural education or do not know how to implement them in their daily teaching.

Teacher training institutions offer little or no training in intercultural education, and Austrian universities do not systematically prepare educators in this field. In order to provide better guidelines for teachers, the Ministry of Education commissioned the author and one of his colleagues to write a handbook on intercultural learning and its application. This handbook is scheduled to be published and distributed to Austrian schools in 2008. Aside from guiding teachers who want to integrate intercultural approaches in their teaching, this handbook illustrates that

curricular guidelines do address many intercultural issues, while schoolbooks, in general, do not include intercultural perspectives and fail to represent the culture and language of ethnic minorities and students with an immigrant background (Luciak & Binder, forthcoming).

Educational Success of Migrant Students

As previously stated, Austria does not collect data on the school population that distinguishes groups by ethnic background. Data on citizenship and students' first language are the main categories in data collections that allow, though imprecisely, the distinguishing between students with and without an immigrant background. An assessment of the educational success of students with an immigrant background is further hampered by the fact that only data on student enrollment – not data on student achievement – is published. Given the lack of relevant data that could more precisely clarify the educational attainment of students with an immigrant background, conclusions will be drawn in this analysis from two different sets of data: student enrollment and test results from the OECD's international assessment of student achievements (PISA, 2003, 2006).

Student Enrollment and Choice of Schools

Data on student enrollment indicates which school-types minority students attend as well as the length of their schooling. Primary school is the most common type of school for all children in the first 4 years of their education (aside from special-needs schools). After that period, most students attend either general secondary schools or academic secondary schools. Students attending general secondary schools for 4 years may finish their mandatory schooling either with a prevocational year or, provided that they have adequate grades, continue in intermediate or upper secondary schools. Intermediate secondary schools are vocationally oriented and do not qualify students for university entry. Upper secondary schools can be either academically or vocationally oriented and do qualify students for university entry (Fig. 3.2).

Thus, it can be considered a significant indicator of lower academic achievement if students attend general secondary or special-needs schools and do not go beyond the 9 years of mandatory schooling. In contrast, higher academic achievement can be assumed if students attend higher secondary schooling and finish with a university entry exam (*Matura*).

School statistics on enrollment show that students with a first language other than German made up 12.7% of the total school population in the 2004–05 school year. Table 3.3 shows that the highest proportion of these students in any school type can be found in special education (24%). Of the entire school population of all
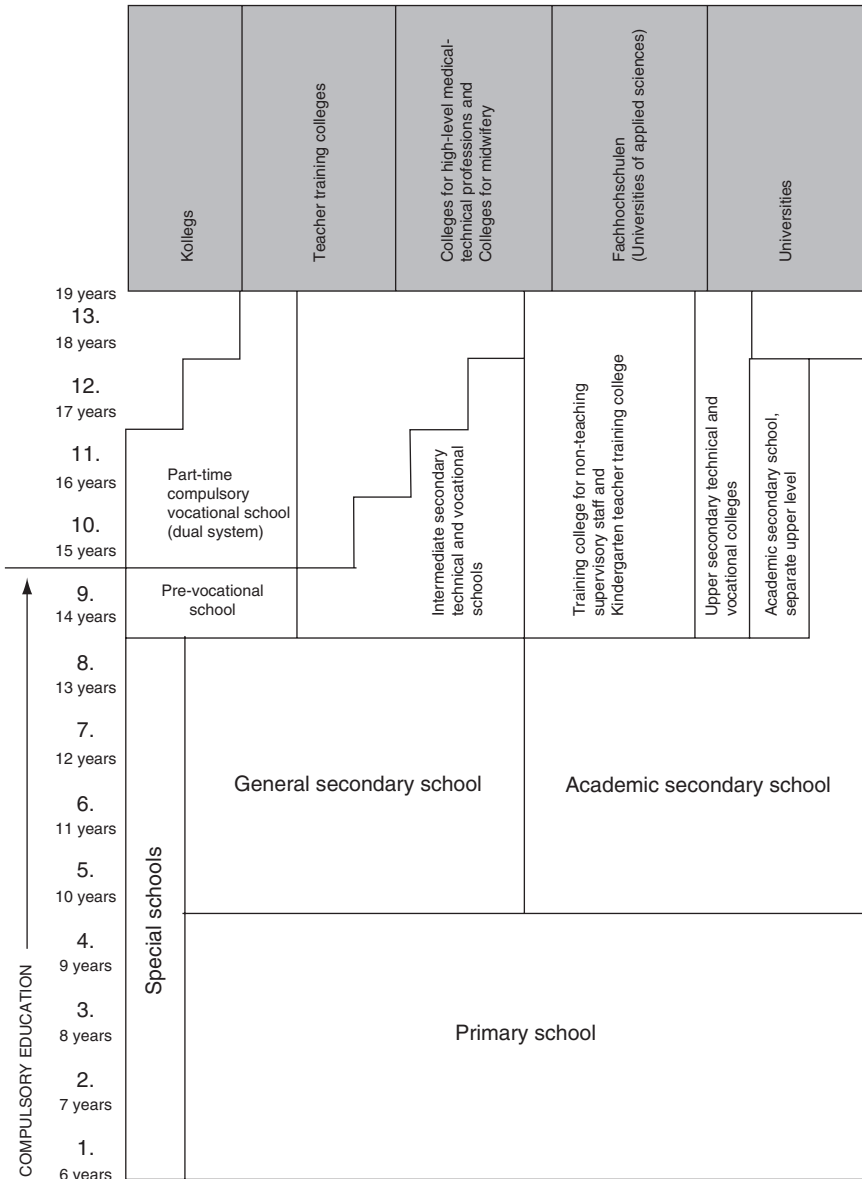
Austrian educational system

Fig. 3.2 Austrian educational system. (From Development of Education in Austria 2000–2003 by the Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Culture (BMBWK, 2004a), Vienna, p. 5)

Table 3.3 Percentage of students with a first language other than German in different school types, 2004–05

Type of school	Total number of students including German first-language students	Total number of students with first language other than German	Percentage of students with first language other than German
Primary schools	364,900	63,468	17.4
General secondary schools	269,418	40,722	15.1
Prevocational school	21,769	4,176	19.2
Special needs schools	13,301	3,195	24.0
Lower academic secondary	116,283	11,978	10.3
Higher academic secondary	81,135	7,837	9.7
Higher vocational sec. schools	132,060	11,105	8.4
Other[a]	242,180	14,889	6.1
All schools	124,1046	157,370	12.7

[a]For example, intermediate secondary schools, training colleges, etc.

German native speakers, only 0.9% attended special-needs schools in 2004–05, compared to 2% of all students with a first language other than German. These figures clearly indicate that students with a first language other than German are over-represented in special-needs schools and classes (BMBWK, 2006b; Statistics Austria, 2006a).

In schools that are less academically challenging, such as general secondary schools and prevocational schools, the proportions of students with a first language other than German also are higher compared to the proportions of these students in academically more challenging schools, such as higher academic secondary schools and higher vocational schools. In general secondary schools, 15.1% of students speak a first language other than German; in prevocational schools, the percentage is 19.2%. But the percentage of students with a first language other than German is only 9.7% in higher academic secondary schools and 8.4% in higher vocational schools (BMBWK, 2006b; Statistics Austria, 2006a).

Likewise, a comparison between German-native speakers and students with a first language other than German in grades 5–8 (Table 3.4) shows that students with a first language other than German are less likely to attend academically more challenging schools and thus have fewer opportunities to enter higher education and in the long run higher qualified jobs. While 21.1% of all German native speakers in this age group attend general secondary schools and 9.6% attend the more challenging academic secondary schools, the respective numbers of students with a first language other than German are higher in general secondary schools (25.9%) and lower in academic secondary schools (7.6%; BMBWK, 2006b; Statistics Austria, 2006a).

Students with an immigrant background face disparities and disadvantages that have not ceased over the years despite the fact that many of these students have lived in Austria all their lives. The rigid two-track system requires parents and

Table 3.4 Distribution of German native speakers and of students with a first language other than German across school types, 2004–05

Type of school	German native speakers (%)	Students with first language other than German (%)	All students (%)
Primary schools (grades 1–4)	27.8	40.3	29.4
General secondary schools (grades 5–8)	21.1	25.9	21.7
Prevocational school (grade 9)	1.6	2.6	1.7
Special-needs schools (grades 1–8)	0.9	2.0	1.1
Lower academic secondary (grades 5–8)	9.6	7.6	9.4
Higher academic secondary (grades 9–12)	6.8	5.0	6.5
Higher vocational schools (grades 9–12)	11.2	7.0	10.6
Other[a]	21.0	9.5	19.5
All schools	100	100	100

[a] For example, intermediate secondary schools, training colleges, etc.

teachers to make a crucial educational decision for students at the age of 10. This decision highly correlates with the parents' background, income, and social status, which works against migrants' educational and future vocational opportunities. The migrants' often short educational careers and, in particular, their overrepresentation in special-needs schools have been criticized repeatedly in reports to the European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia (Luciak, 2004a; NFP Austria, 2004) and the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI, 2005).

Special-education schools target students with disabilities. For the most part, these schools offer special-needs education for students with learning disabilities. While it can be assumed that disabilities are not that much more prevalent in the immigrant than in the native population, overrepresentation of immigrants in special education indicates wrongful assignment of minorities based on the students' language and sociocultural differences, rather than on learning disabilities. This is in spite of the fact that Austrian school legislation explicitly states that lack of competence in the language of instruction does not justify a determination of special educational needs (BMBWK, 2006c). Furthermore, studies have shown that underperforming students with an immigrant background benefit more in learning progress and social integration from regular classes than special classes (Kronig et al., 2000).

Furthermore, legal regulations provide for the possibility of integrated teaching of students with special educational needs in primary schools and lower secondary schools. "The decision whether students will be educated in a special needs school or in a conventional school rests with the parents of the child or other persons vested with the right of education" (BMBWK, 2006d). This decision presupposes a certain amount of parental knowledge and understanding of the different options of schooling, which puts immigrant parents at a disadvantage.

Results of the PISA Study

Similar conclusions can be drawn from data received by the OECD's Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA, 2003, 2006). The PISA studies tested 15-year-old students in 41 countries in mathematics, reading comprehension, science, and problem-solving skills. A special analysis published in the report "Where immigrant students succeed" focused on 17 territories with large immigrant populations (OECD, 2006a). These data show that students with an immigrant background in Austria achieve much lower test results compared with their native counterparts. For example, more than a third of children with an immigrant background in Austria, "who have spent their entire schooling in the host country, perform below the baseline PISA benchmark for mathematics performance" (OECD, 2006b). Commenting on a similar situation in several OECD countries, it is pointed out that "at the same time, immigrant children express equal, if not more, motivation to learn mathematics than their native counterparts and very positive general attitudes towards school" (OECD, 2006b). In countries like Austria with a highly tracked education system, students with an immigrant background perform substantially less well compared with students in other countries that have a less differentiated school system (OECD, 2006b).

Following are some of the most important findings on the educational situation of students with an immigrant background in Austria from the OECD report:

- Comparing the native-born and foreign-born populations age 15 years and older by highest level of education attained, "immigrants show substantially lower levels of education, with much higher proportions not having attained upper secondary level education" (OECD, 2006a, p. 23).
- Austria is below the OECD average for first- and for second-generation students in performance on the mathematics and reading scales. It belongs to those countries where second-generation students "have the lowest mean performance in reading and mathematical literacy" (OECD, 2006a, pp. 37–39). There is a wide gap in performance between native students and immigrants.
- At least 10% of second-generation students in mathematics and reading are below level 1 on the respective proficiency scales. "These students are unable to answer at least 50% of questions at the lowest proficiency level and can be considered at serious risk of not having the reading and mathematics literacy skills necessary to help them tackle real-life situations, to continue learning and to enter successfully into the work force" (OECD, 2006a, p. 54)
- There are "trends in performance differences between males and females in reading, with native, second-generation and first-generation females generally outperforming corresponding males" (OECD, 2006a, p. 54). However, "the gender differences are larger for second-generation students than for native students" (OECD, 2006a, p. 54).
- Among the most common immigrant groups, students from former Yugoslavia and from Turkey show statistically significant lower scores than native students on the mathematics scale. "Both groups perform consistently below the OECD

average…. The gap in performance between Turkish students and native students is exceptionally large… (OECD, 2006a, pp. 52–53)".

By accounting for factors such as the structure of the school system, parents' level of education, socioeconomic situation, and language used at home, as well as students' instrumental motivation and self-efficacy, the study provides background information that helps to contextualize the educational attainment of students with an immigrant background. Some of the most relevant findings from the study are:

- Countries like Austria that have large disparities between immigrant and native students "tend to have greater differentiation in their school systems with 15-year-olds attending four or more school types or distinct educational programmes" (OECD, 2006a, p. 54).
- "…[T]he parents of first-generation students and of second-generation students have generally completed fewer years of formal schooling than the parents of native students. … Interestingly, the gap tends to be smaller for [parents of] first-generation students than for [parents of] second-generation students. This could reflect interruptions in school careers as a result of immigration" as well as "changes in the composition of the immigrant groups" (OECD, 2006a, pp. 60–62).
- In general, "immigrant students have lower levels of economic, social and cultural status than native students…" (OECD, 2006a, p. 63). Still, after accounting for parental education (in years of schooling) and parents' occupational status, there are statistically significant differences in mathematics performance between native students and both first-generation and second-generation students (OECD, 2006a).
- The performance disadvantage is larger for both second-generation and first-generation students who do not speak the language of instruction at home than for immigrant students who do speak the language of instruction at home. This "pattern does not necessarily imply that immigrant families should be encouraged to abandon their native languages" (OECD, 2006a, p. 48). In fact, "immigrant students in some countries perform at similar levels as native students when they do not speak the language of instruction at home. Large disadvantages associated with the language spoken at home may suggest that students do not have sufficient opportunities to learn the language of instruction… [S]trengthening the language support measures available within the school systems" needs to be considered (OECD, 2006a, pp. 69–70).
- "[T]he school environment for immigrant students compared to native students is less favorable in terms of school or disciplinary climate" (OECD, 2006a, p. 78). In other words, immigrant students more frequently atttend schools with disadvantaged school populations.
- In general, "individuals with higher levels of instrumental motivation (motivation related to external factors) tend to show higher levels of performance. … Although first-generation and second-generation students show equivalent or higher instrumental motivation in each country," in Austria (and Luxembourg) they "demonstrate the lowest levels of instrumental motivation among the countries in this report" (OECD, 2006a, pp. 91–92).

- "Second-generation students report lower levels of self-efficacy than their native peers in Austria, …" (OECD, 2006a, p. 101).

It is well known that parents or private tutors quite frequently help Austrian school children accomplish their homework assignments and study for tests. Taking private lessons with tutors is particularly widespread at the secondary level. Austrian parents spend about 140 million euros a year for these private lessons (Arbeiterkammer, 2006). These factors have to be considered to better understand the educational opportunities of students with an immigrant background. Immigrant students whose parents have reached only lower educational levels and who might not be fully competent in the language of instruction – and, as a consequence of their socioeconomic situation, do not have spare money to pay for private tutoring – are at a great disadvantage in a school system that heavily relies on educational support from outside sources.

Upward Mobility of Migrants: The Social and Economic Context

A recent study of educational and occupational careers of second-generation migrants in Austria targeted 16- to 26-year-olds who were either born in Austria or came to the country before age 4, but whose parents were born abroad. All had spent their entire educational careers in Austria. The study was based on 1,000 interviews and included a control group of 400 individuals without an immigrant background (Weiss, 2006).

The parents of 46% of second-generation youths had a Turkish background; 36% came from the former Yugoslavia (Weiss, 2006). The study showed that, compared to Austrian natives without an immigrant background, youth with an immigrant background are highly underrepresented in higher education. Social background – the parents of most youth of the second generation belong to the working class – rather than cultural background or language used at home was shown to be the most relevant factor influencing their educational attainment (Weiss, 2006). Their parents' social mobility is often hampered by their low vocational mobility due to legal restrictions, by a long-enduring "foreigner" status, and by ethnic segregation in residential housing (Weiss, 2006).

According to labor market statistics from September 2006, 72% of migrants with a foreign citizenship were blue-collar workers; only 36% of Austrian nationals were blue-collar workers. Yet only 12% of a total of 3.3 million employees held foreign citizenship (*Der Standard Online*, 2006, August 12). Of the fathers of the second-generation youth in the Weiss study, 60% were nonskilled workers. Only one-third of their offspring also were nonskilled workers; the remaining two thirds obtained vocational training. However, manifestations of unequal treatment in the job market – such as longer transition periods from school to work, lower participation rates in in-service trainings in companies, and higher unemployment risks – work against the upward mobility of second-generation youths. Given these

structural disadvantages, the study's author concludes that second-generation youths will only slowly be able to match their Austrian peers without an immigrant background (*Der Standard*, 2006, June 11).

Another report on the social mobility of the second-generation concludes that the majority of descendants of migrants from Turkey and the former Yugoslavia are at a great disadvantage in education and the labor market in what the author terms "ethnic segmentation" (Herzog-Punzenberger, 2003, p. 47). Upward mobility to middle-class status is more likely to occur for Eastern European immigrants who are generally better educated and do not belong to the groups considered to be guest workers. However, the majority of descendants of guest workers who came to Austria in the late 1960s and 1970s run the risk of staying in low-qualified positions in the employment sector (Herzog-Punzenberger, 2003).

Conclusions

Austria's society underwent considerable changes through immigration of foreign workers and refugees in the second half of the last century. Other central European countries, such as Germany and Switzerland, or Scandinavian countries such as Sweden and Denmark faced similar situations. This differs from immigration patterns in European countries with a colonial past, such as the United Kingdom or the Netherlands, which experienced immigration and diversity for a longer period of time, and differs also from southern European countries such as Italy, Spain, and Greece, which have been confronted with more recent immigration. The situation in Austria also differs from that in Eastern European countries where immigration plays a marginal role. The analysis of similarities and differences between minority groups in the "old" and the "new" EU Member States shows that the educational situation of ethnic minority groups depends in many ways on minority group status in the respective country, which is influenced by each groups' historical relationship with the dominant society as well as by political and demographic developments (Luciak, 2004a, b, 2006; Luciak & Binder, 2005).

In Austria, recent demographic changes have posed the biggest challenge to the school system. The necessity for adequate educational reforms becomes more and more apparent because students with an immigrant background frequently underachieve in education, although many of them have spent their entire school careers in Austria. The awareness of the need for changes in the education system also has been triggered by results of recent PISA studies. Overall, students in Austria showed only average results; compared with other countries, parents' socioeconomic background can be regarded as a much more decisive factor for school performance.

It has been pointed out above that early differentiation in school tracks with differing academic demands constitutes a drawback for students from disadvantaged social backgrounds. Therefore, plans to introduce a common school for all children for the first 8 years of schooling are well founded. Currently, the Ministry of

Education is considering implementing a common school at the lower secondary level as a continuation of the 4 years of common primary school. However, this is still a point of heated discussion within the current coalition government.

It should be taken into account, however, that students' individual socioeconomic circumstances are much less predictive of performance than the average economic, social, and cultural status of the entire student population in a given school. The overall variation in student performance between schools is much higher compared to the within-school variance (OECD, 2004). "In Austria, the effect of a school's average economic, social and cultural status on student performance is very substantial" (OECD, 2004, p. 196).

In light of residential segregation in urban areas with high socioeconomic variability between districts, it is unlikely that positive effects of supposed social heterogeneity in a common school for all children will affect education outcomes in areas highly populated by residents of low socioeconomic status. Thus, students with an immigrant background who predominantly live in those districts are less likely to benefit from common schools as long as residential segregation persists.

Another current consideration, a compulsory kindergarten year at age 5, has received high acceptance by the general public. In part it is assumed that this will benefit students with an immigrant background who lack language competency in German (BildungOnline, 2006). While a restructuring of the school system is required, other measures to foster the education of disadvantaged students have to be introduced as well.

As discussed earlier, teacher training has to be improved in regard to the instruction of culturally and linguistically diverse student populations. Also, incentives should be provided to increase the proportion of teachers with an immigration background. Furthermore, resources for language programs and for teachers of second- and first-language instruction have to be increased to improve the achievement levels of students with an immigrant background.

Overrepresentation of migrant students in special education must be counteracted. This phenomenon, which also has been described in Germany (Kornmann & Klingele, 1996; Merz-Atalik, 2001; Powell & Wagner, 2002) and Switzerland (Kronig et al., 2000; Lanfranchi & Jenny, 2005),should be regarded as an indication that schools are not yet adequately prepared to educate a diverse student body. The reasons minority students are assigned to special-needs education must be studied and policies should be enacted to prevent unjustified assignment to these schools and classes.

The implementation of intercultural learning in all schools and in all subjects could benefit all students. It is unlikely that intercultural learning will alleviate disparities in achievement between students with and without an immigrant background to a great degree. However, intercultural learning could contribute to more positive views of cultural and linguistic diversity among students and teachers and ensure that students of all backgrounds are represented in the curriculum, thus creating a more tolerant and positive learning environment for all students.

The effects of demographic changes, globalization, and European Union integration constitute a big challenge for Austrian education. Majority and minority

students alike must be prepared to live in an increasingly diverse society. It is in the hands of the forthcoming generation to create a world in which people feel more at ease with diversity and which ensures equal opportunities for all.

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Chapter 4
Educating Ethnic Minority Children: The Case of Canada

Jazira Asanova

Issues of immigration and integration are at the core of Canadian public policies and have become the focus of much public concern and debate (Anisef & Kilbride, 2001). Canada accepts around 250,000 newcomers annually and is experiencing the highest proportion of foreign-born residents in 70 years. For example, in 2001, 18% of Canadians were born outside of the country (Biles et al., 2005), and in major cities like Toronto and Vancouver, immigrants make up close to 50% of the population (Harvey & Houle, 2006). Moreover, Canada's visible minority population is growing quickly; between 1996 and 2001, the visible minority population grew six times faster than the rest of the Canadian population (Biles et al., 2005). Since the 1970s, the majority of immigrants have been coming from countries other than Europe, mainly from Asia, the Caribbean, Latin America, and Africa. These demographic changes grew out of changes in Canada's immigration policy aimed at combating the effects of low birth rate and a rapidly aging population. Canada's multicultural landscape will continue to change: Statistics Canada (2004) projected that by 2017, visible minorities will account for close to one quarter (17–23%) of Canada's population.

Canada's increasing ethnic, racial, linguistic, and religious diversity paved the way for a national multiculturalism policy. Officially declared in 1971, the policy acknowledged cultural pluralism as fundamental to Canadian identity. Given Canada's multicultural policy, the country's institutions, including schools, are expected to adapt to meet the needs of the changing population. There has been increased pressure on schools to create educational practices, policies, and programs to meet the needs of immigrant and minority students. This becomes a daunting task in cities like Toronto, where up to 50% of the school population speaks English as a second language.

Against the backdrop of the changing demographic landscape, Canada's schools offer a large repertoire of exemplary programs and services that address the needs of ethnic minority students. Such programs and services include (a) reception centers for newcomer children and parents, (b) Settlement Workers in School (SWIS)

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partnership, (c) community liaison workers in schools, (d) first language (L1) assessment and tutoring, (e) transitional bilingual support, (f) heritage language programs, (g) multilingual resources, (h) orientation and mentoring for immigrant teachers, (i) antiracism education for students and teachers, and (j) translation and interpretation services (Coelho, 2005).

This chapter examines successful school practices aimed at improving educational outcomes of ethnic minority students in Canada. The chapter begins with an overview of disparities in academic achievement among various ethnic groups in Canada, followed by a discussion of the changing educational policies and practices to address education of ethnic groups. Then it addresses particular practices, including bilingual education programs, community-based initiatives including ethnic schools, and inclusive school practices. Specific school-level practices that have been deemed successful in promoting ethnocultural equity in Canada's increasingly diverse schools also are discussed.

A Vertical Mosaic

Porter (1965) has famously described Canada as a "vertical mosaic," contending that members of some ethnic groups "often fare much better than people from other ethnic groups in the pursuit of important advantages and privileges in the society" (Ali & Grabb, 1998, p. 4). Other scholars (Agocs & Boyd, 1993; Pendakur & Pendakur, 1995) similarly asserted that minorities are "subject to economic exploitation in the form of a job ceiling, to residential segregation, inferior education, and to political manipulation and exclusion" (Ogbu, 1987, p. 269). Anisef and Kilbride (2001) maintained that immigrant minorities often face devaluation of their credentials when seeking employment and encounter other forms of systemic discrimination in Canadian labor markets. These studies point to a link between school achievement and attainment and opportunity structures available to ethnic minorities and immigrants in their adult lives.

Canada's First Nations Indians (Aboriginals), Latin American immigrants (both long-term and recent), Canadian-born Blacks, and recent immigrants from the Indian subcontinent, West Asia-Middle East, and Africa can be considered the most economically underprivileged groups (Harvey & Houle, 2006), with lower educational attainment, higher unemployment rates, and lower income compared to other ethnic groups. Academic achievement of Canada's Aboriginals is a cause for serious concern. According to Battiste (2005, cited in Harvey & Houle, 2006), Canada's Aboriginals have few incentives to remain in school, receive little career-related skills training, have high dropout rates from high school, and have weak English skills. For example, the percentage of Aboriginal youth who have ever dropped out of school is over 30%, compared to 15% for non-Aboriginal youth. The performance of Aboriginal children in the province of British Columbia is considerably lower than non-Aboriginal children. For example, completion rates

for students in Grade 8 from 1997–2001 were about 75% for non-Aboriginals and 37% for Aboriginal students (Harvey & Houle, 2006). The reasons for these are numerous and complicated and include a number of factors including historical exclusion; eroded families, bonds and skills; colonization and assimilation; poverty and unemployment; lack of transference and parenting skills; erosion of native languages; geographical isolation; as well as southern Canadian curricula and the attitudes of the non-Aboriginal population (Battiste, 2005).

Further, African Canadians of Caribbean descent have lower academic scores and higher dropout rates than other ethnic groups (Cummins, 1997). Systemic barriers to these students' academic engagement include low expectations of African Canadian students, curriculum that fails to reflect students' experiences or provides only negative images of students' culture and backgrounds, low representation of African Canadian teachers among school staff, and frequent insensitivity of Euro-Canadian teachers to issues of difference and race (Brathwaite & James, 1996). Under these conditions, students form an oppositional identity that removes them further from academic success.

Given that there are two official languages in Canada, academic achievement of francophone (French-speaking) students compared to anglophone students also merits attention. A report released by Statistics Canada indicated that the average reading performance for students in French school systems in the provinces of Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Ontario, and Manitoba was significantly lower than performance of students in English-language school systems in those provinces. The study found that in each province, there was a different combination of factors that distinguished students in French and English schools. These factors included adequacy of school resources, language spoken at home, socioeconomic background of students, and the nature and availability of jobs in the community (Statistics Canada, 2004).

Education is one area where disparities persist between native-born and majority Canadians and newcomer and minority populations (Biles et al., 2005). While claims are made that immigrant students in general tend to do as well in school as nonimmigrant students, academic success of some groups (Chinese and Korean) may tend to mask the underperformance of other groups of non-English or French-speaking immigrants (Harvey & Houle, 2006). Given that in cities like Toronto up to 50% of the school population speaks English as a second language, providing language support to those with limited proficiency in English or French (Canada's official languages) requires urgent attention and funding. According to Coelho (2005), many newcomers from other countries have little or no previous knowledge of English or French and many Canadian-born children begin learning English or French when they start school. While the ESL needs have increased, at least in Ontario, services and programs have declined in recent years (Coelho, 2005).

Watt and Roessingh (2000, cited in Majhanovich, 2007) tracked 540 ESL students in one Calgary high school over a number of years. In the school studied, the first languages of about 40% of the students included Vietnamese, Chinese,

Arabic, Spanish, and Punjabi, among others. The study looked at students registered in secondary school who withdrew before completing graduation requirements. Watt and Roessingh found that overall 74% of the ESL students dropped out before graduation and of those who began secondary school as ESL beginners, 93% were likely to drop out. Since financial cuts were made to the public education system in the late 1990s, the situation has worsened considerably for immigrant and refugee students. In another study, scholastic achievement scores in the Vancouver District School Board (one of the most ethnically diverse school boards in Canada) of over 2000 immigrant students were reviewed and compared with those of Canadian-born students (Siegel & Gunderson, in press). The authors studied the grades students obtained in the core subjects English, mathematics, science, and social studies as they progressed from the 8th through the 12th grades. Results indicate that there was what the authors termed a "disappearance" rate of 60% among immigrant students. The term "disappearance" was chosen over dropouts because the scholars could not track how many students had moved, changed from the college/university track and dropped the subjects they were interested in (or perhaps had managed to gain the credit outside the system), or had reentered the school system after a hiatus of some kind. Refugee students provided the highest disappearance rates, perhaps because of their traumatized background or impoverished conditions in Canada.

Cultural Identity in Canada: From Denying to Celebrating Difference

The assimilationist policies of the past have emphasized the need for various ethnic groups to adopt the values of the dominant ethnic group. In Canada, such policies were reflected in the residential schools for First Nations. Such schools were established, with a "peak year" in 1931, following a policy called "aggressive assimilation." The Canadian government believed the best chance for success for aboriginal people was to learn English and adopt Christianity and Canadian customs. It was hoped that they would pass their adopted lifestyle on to their children and native traditions would diminish or be completely abolished in a few generations. The government felt children were easier to mold than adults, and the concept of a boarding school, attendance of which was mandatory, was the best way to prepare them for life in mainstream society (CBC, 2005).

The effects of these residential schools, the last of which was closed in 1996, included a lack of sense of belonging when students returned to the reserve. They didn't have the skills to help their parents and became ashamed of their native heritage. The skills taught at the schools were generally substandard; many found it hard to function in an urban setting (CBC, 2005). The devastating effects of residential schools on Aboriginals have contributed to increasing policymakers', educators', and scholars' awareness of the need to affirm and sustain students' ethnic and cultural identity through schooling experiences.

In contrast to the assimilationist policies a few decades earlier, the recent emphasis has been on public educational policies that allow ethnic minority students to retain their cultural identities and to create multiple identities that will facilitate their move across school, peer, and home cultures (Gibson, 1997). Research on minority and immigrant students indicates that their academic achievement is correlated with the strength of their ethnic self-identification: those who are embedded in their ethnic cultures tend to do better in school compared with those who abandon their ethnic culture and language under the pressures of teachers and nonimmigrant peers in school (Gibson, 1997). Thus there has been a gradual shift from notions of equality to notions of equity in educational policies and practices (Harper, 1997), including a move away from color-blind approaches that deny social difference, including ethnic and racial difference.

In Canada, growing demands to accommodate difference have led to various policies at federal and provincial levels (Harper, 1997). Chief among them were Canada's multicultural programs initiated in 1971, intended to promote cultural pluralism. The impetus for these policies generally developed out of resurgence of ethnic consciousness after World War II, the establishment of the United Nations Charter of Human Rights, the growing economic and political clout of Aboriginal and French Canadians, the ensuing linguistic and cultural resistance to assimilation, and the declining power of Great Britain (Shapson, 1990, cited in Harper, 1997).

Federal initiatives on multicultural education were accompanied by educational policies that encouraged establishment of multicultural committees to set specific policies and practices. Many schools introduced cultural celebrations, encouraged the teaching of heritage languages, and reformed school curriculum (Harper, 1997). To help implement curriculum changes, the Ontario Ministry of Education established in-service programs for teachers and published curriculum support materials on multiculturalism, and, in 1997, created the Heritage Languages program for publicly funded after-school language instruction. The Heritage Languages program reflects efforts to recognize Canada's cultural pluralism by providing minority parents with instructional opportunities to retain their native language (Rezai-Rashti, 2001). It grew out of the multicultural policy "to preserve and enhance the use of languages other than English or French" (Wu, 2005). Under this program, any group of parents can approach the local school board with a request that heritage language classes for elementary school children be provided. In Ontario, for example, instructors hired by the boards for these classes do not need an Ontario teaching certificate, although they are expected to have qualifications acceptable to the hiring education stakeholders. The Heritage Languages program has faced criticisms in Canada, including assertion that this program remains peripheral to mainstream education in Canada's schools.

Despite the criticisms of the Heritage Language schools, research suggests that competency in first language is positively associated with academic achievement (Bankston & Zhou, 1995) and second-language acquisition (Cummins, 1986). Given this, school practices that focus on language integration, including bilingual education programs, are potentially successful practices.

Bilingual Education Models

In the context of Canada's multicultural policy, bilingual programs in Ukrainian, Hebrew, Chinese, Arabic, Spanish, and other languages appeared in Canada's schools. Bilingual education is generally perceived as a means to empower minority students by acknowledging their home language and culture (Wu, 2005). While various bilingual programs exist, language maintenance bilingual education programs are intended to maintain and enhance the home language proficiency among minority students while gradually introducing the dominant language. In these programs children receive instruction in an ethnic minority language for about half of their total school instruction time from kindergarten to grade 6.

For example, the Chinese bilingual program, established in 1981, is one of the largest bilingual programs in Western Canada. Over 1,000 students are enrolled in the Chinese bilingual program in five elementary schools in Alberta, a city in Western Canada. These schools offer the same basic academic curriculum as in publicly funded schools in Alberta. According to Wu (2005), one half of instruction time takes place in English, the other half in Mandarin Chinese. Social studies, art, health, and physical education are taught in Chinese, while math, science, and music are taught in English. Instructors who teach Chinese tend to be recent immigrants, whereas most of the English-subject instructors are typically native English speakers who do not speak Chinese. Children of first-generation immigrants are among the majority in the student body and most children do not speak English or even Mandarin, as many use one or several Chinese dialects, such as Cantonese and Shanghainese.

The Chinese bilingual program is a versatile program that functions in several ways. First, it is a maintenance program for Chinese minorities to sustain their language and cultural heritage. Second, it functions as a two-way bilingual program with both native Chinese and English speakers in the same class. Third, it also serves as a transitional program for new immigrant children to learn English as a second language and to adapt to the Canadian school system. And to many, it is an immersion program for learning two new languages simultaneously (Wu, 2005).

What has been the effect of this program on language minority students? Results of the Provincial Achievement Test conducted each year indicate that average scores of the Chinese bilingual students are consistently higher than the provincial and school district average. Interviews with students in Alberta's Chinese bilingual program indicate positive psychosocial effects of the program on students. The Chinese bilingual students expressed pride in speaking the home language and security in their ethnic identity (Wu, 2005). Further, they did not seem to have experienced pressure for assimilation and overall, interviews indicated that students felt empowered through bilingual education. One criticism that bilingual programs have faced is that there is little systematic evidence on their effectiveness and/or impact on minority student achievement. Evaluations of such programs have tended to be qualitative and based on a snapshot approach, rather than quantitative or mixed methods and longitudinal in nature. Further research that throws light on educational outcomes of ethnic minority students in bilingual programs is essential.

Community-Based Initiatives: Ethnic Schools

Where publicly funded bilingual programs are not available, members of some ethnic communities have initiated private schools with elements of bilingual programs. For example, in Canada, Asanova (2005) reported that immigrant parents from the former Soviet Union (FSU) founded an ethnic school for their children in Toronto, as they perceived that the public school system was not meeting their educational needs and expectations. Newcomers from the FSU are among new source countries that continue to change Canada's multiethnic landscape. This group is polyethnic in nature, characterized by a myriad of ethnic, linguistic, and religious differences, though they share common high educational aspirations and expectations.

Asanova (2005) noted that newly arrived and Canadian-born children of FSU immigrants make up this ethnic school's main contingent. It was founded by immigrant teachers from Russia and other republics of the former Soviet Union to accommodate the learning needs of students who had experienced advanced math and science curriculum in the former Soviet Union and were ahead of their peer cohorts in these subjects in Toronto's neighborhood schools.

The school is licensed by the Ontario Ministry of Education and uses the province's recommended curriculum as a basis. However, the educational programs are enriched by courses in math, science, and foreign languages, which clearly extend beyond the core curriculum. For example, first graders can study up to four foreign languages (Russian, French, Spanish, and Hebrew) in addition to English. A rigorous approach to curriculum has been borrowed from the Soviet-era schools; for example, chemistry and physics are introduced in grades 4 and 5 respectively, and the high school offers a number of college preparatory courses in math and sciences.

It is important to note that while the language of instruction is English, in practice, Russian-speaking teachers who are themselves immigrants code switch from English to Russian in the classroom to facilitate learning, and outside of the classroom, depending on students' preference and convenience. For recent arrivals, teachers' ability to speak Russian means improving their academic performance. If students do not understand the material, they can ask questions and the teacher will explain in Russian. Out of class, many students speak Russian with their teachers because it is easier to express themselves in Russian to a teacher.

Asanova (2005) maintained that the ethnic school has created educational conditions conducive to academic success of immigrant students whose academic achievement can be jeopardized by dissonant school practices (Zhou, 1997). For two consecutive years, this ethnic school was a nationwide winner in the Canadian National Mathematics League's High School competition. According to its principal, about 90% of its graduates are admitted to institutions of higher education in Canada.

The majority of FSU immigrant students felt embedded in the school community and had positive attitudes towards their ethnic culture. Teachers in this school provide normative and emotional support to FSU immigrant students through a use of a distinct "pedagogical nexus" (Hufton & Elliott, 2000) rooted in Russian pedagogy.

Students' high reported grades, awards in math competitions, and high college admission rates offer evidence that FSU immigrant students are able to realize their academic potential in their new home country. Asanova's findings support research on the impact of culturally sensitive learning environments on language minority students' educational outcomes.

As a community-based initiative, this ethnic school represents an alternative to neighborhood schools as an "outpost of academic excellence." It can be argued that ethnic minority groups such as FSU immigrants might be well served if public schools incorporate lessons gleaned from research on ethnic schools. What is less clear, however, is what such privately run schools teach their students about intercultural communication, social difference, and power in a larger society. In the following section, I discuss more recent thinking about educating children, including ethnic minority children in a pluralistic society.

From Celebrating Difference to Interrogating Power: Inclusive and Anti-Racist Education

Canada's multiculturalism approach received extensive criticisms for its superficial forms and for ignoring how power and status relations operating in the wider society relate to school practices and educational outcomes. As culture and identity are not static and homogeneous entities, but rather are fluid, ambivalent, and complex (Hall, 1987), the multicultural project was criticized for its essentializing approach that defined cultural identity in fixed terms. Further, the multicultural project failed to become an integrative part of the curriculum, instead remaining as an add-on component of schooling (Dei & James, 2002; Harper, 1997).

Against this backdrop, the challenge of educating the young generation is seen not only in recognizing and supporting maintenance of cultural identity among ethnic minority students, but also in transforming schools so they become sites where social difference is critiqued and interrogated. In this context, schools are seen as sites where identity is negotiated, as schooling experiences affect how students feel about themselves and the world around them. Some scholars whose work is grounded in critical studies in education emphasize the need to acknowledge that schools mirror social relations in a larger society, as well as participate in reproducing inequalities by defining cultural and racial difference (Dei, 1994). Educational structures and teacher role definitions are understood to influence microinteractions between students, teachers, and communities; shaping of knowledge; and negotiation of identities. The structure of schooling can, thus, reflect institutional forms of inclusion and exclusion of students, reproducing inequalities in a larger society (Dei & James, 2002). Such structures include teacher-student relationships; school-community relationships; teaching and learning processes; the official curriculum; the texts that are used; the languages that are validated; and the methods of evaluation, testing, and promotion that can serve to exclude certain histories, experiences, and knowledges (Dei & James, 2002).

Thus, the emphasis has gradually shifted to critical multiculturalism, antiracist, and inclusive education. In his definition of inclusive education, Dei (2005) moves beyond a traditional reference to special-education children and their inclusion in the mainstream classroom. Rather, Dei refers to education that responds to the concerns, aspirations, and interests of a diverse student body, so that every student can identify and connect with her/his social environment, culture, population, and history. The focus of inclusive education is on the intersection of ethnicity, class, gender, religion, and other social relations (Dei, 2005).

Research on best practices of inclusive schooling in Ontario, undertaken by George Sefa Dei and his colleagues (Dei et al., 1996) identified five broad domains of successful school practices: (1) representation, (2) language integration, (3) family and community partnerships, (4) cooperative learning, and (5) values, equity and access to education. In the following, description of selected practices within these domains is presented.

Exemplary Programs

Representation

Inclusive schools maintain school content, environment, and teaching cadre that are representative of the schools' diverse population. Representation include three components: (1) visual representation, or inclusion of racial and ethnic minorities and their cultures within the visual parameters of the school; (2) knowledge representation, or bringing to the fore non-European cultural knowledges and discourses; and (3) staff diversity, or integration of teachers from diverse ethnic backgrounds (Dei et al., 1996). The *visual representation* includes a variety of practices: displays of culturally diverse art forms; displays of students' art that depict ethnocultural/racial diversity; displays of posters/pictures depicting people of different ethnic and racial backgrounds; cultural artifacts; and dramatic productions related to issues of cultural inclusion and anti-racism. Examples of a school's commitment to *knowledge representation* include the availability of multicultural books and resources, active celebrations and recognition of different religious holidays, or media literacy programs that focus on global current events and allow students to make linkages between their local reality and broader global issues. For example, one school on Ontario has a "Read Around the World Program" in which elementary school students participated in a reading project that took them around the world, drawing on countries of birth of each student in the school. A large world map traces the reading voyage, and each week a display was assembled in the school library based on the countries visited that week. For every 10 minutes of reading that the children did, they received flight units. The third subdomain of representation is *employment equity*. This involves active recruitment of teachers and teaching assistants from different racial and ethnic backgrounds who serve as role models and an important cultural resource. One specific example is a teacher training pilot project for teachers

trained in Somalia. This was a community-initiated project with partnership with a local board of education. Somali-trained teachers were paired with host teachers and the project included workshops and staff development. At the end of the year-long certification course, Somali-trained teachers receive a permission to teach in Ontario (Dei et al., 1996). In brief, the visual, knowledge, and employment equity representations combine to address ethnocultural equity in schools.

Language Integration

Successful programs oriented towards language integration include ESL projects that address students' linguistic and social needs; a Children's Aid program including support for parents' ESL; counseling services for ESL students; multilingual communication; information videos about the school in various languages; a liaison officer employed for interpreting and translating parent-school communications; a Bilingual Book project that involves purchasing books in different languages by the school so English-speaking parents can read to their children in their first language; school choirs performing songs in various languages; creating bilingual books (grade 4 students write short stories in both English and their first language with their parents' assistance); the Ambassador Program, which pairs a new student with a student from the same racial/ethnocultural background; and preparation by students of a school welcome bag and a booklet (Dei et al., 1996).

Family-School Partnership

One set of successful school policies relate to strengthening links between communities, parents, and schools. Research in Canada and the USA has shown that school initiatives that build relationships with parents and communities have multiple positive effects on students, school staff, and parents, such as parents' increased trust in school staff's daily work and professionalism; parents' increased sense of empowerment; students' enhanced educational outcomes (academic and psychosocial); school staff's raised knowledge of families' languages and cultures; and increased awareness of how to improve students' learning (Harvard Family Research Project's).

One example of family-school partnerships includes school outreach to parents. One school asks parents on the report card if they need an interpreter for parent-teacher communications, with interpreting services paid for by the school. In another school, a school liaison worker and two volunteer parents placed calls to parents of one ethnic community in order to increase attendance at a PTA meeting. As a result, participation increased from 2 to 50 parents. Another practice deemed successful is the Black Student Association (BSA), a community initiative that links students of African descent from 12 schools and 6 school boards in the Metropolitan Toronto Area. The BSA works to inform students of their rights and to advocate on their behalf; in meetings held outside and within the school, students discuss issues related to schooling and to the students' ethnic communities. Focus

group sessions for students of minority ethnic background is yet another school practice that provide space for such students to voice opinions, discuss concerns, and deal with issues of crisis management and conflict resolution. These focus groups, often run by a community member, empower ethnic minority students to speak up and to learn about their rights and avenues for action (Dei et al., 1996).

Equity, Accommodation, and Values in Education

Equity education includes those strategies, practices and programs that address issues of race, gender, and class equity in the school and society, and actively work toward elimination of these barriers within the school environment and promote equal opportunities for all students (Dei et al., 1996). Programs geared toward accommodation of differences include providing places for worship; taking into account cultural/religious restrictions in school cafeterias and school functions; student clubs based on cultural/racial affiliation; antiracism in counseling; advisor-advisee program in which antiracism and antisexism issues are taken up; and mission statements that include teaching tolerance and antiracism, etc.

Specific projects include a multicultural interschool leadership program initiated by a local school board. One of the program's criteria was that students should represent various ethnic and racial backgrounds. The program includes a week-long retreat and training opportunities with a focus on leadership strategies (Dei et al., 1996). Each year students in participating schools are surveyed about issues of concern to be discussed at the leadership program's meeting. Another program, entitled "All Together Now Canada," is a means of providing a systematic integration of antiracism into primary-level curriculum (senior kindergarten to grade 5). The program consists of four units that deal with issues of similarities and difference, conflict resolution, and Canadian identity. These units have related activities that incorporate art, language, geography, science, geometry, and social studies. For example, art and visual media were used to introduce to very young children to concepts such as racial diversity and a critique of the normativity of Whiteness; race as a social and not biological category; and the deconstruction of color as a pejorative frame of reference, followed by a discussion of "Who is Canadian?" (Dei et al., 1996).

Conclusion

Given ethnic minority students' complex experiences in school, successful policies and practices that enhance these students' educational outcomes tend to combine both macro and micro (microinteractions at the school and classroom level) approaches, and focus on academic as well as psychosocial outcomes (such as engagement in school and a sense of belonging to the school community). Notwithstanding the success many of the practices discussed above have enjoyed at

individual schools, educating cultural minority students has not realized its full potential in Canada. To meet minority and immigrant students' needs, more schools need to recognize the unique circumstances and experiences of newcomer youth, involve parents in the education of children, and facilitate training of teachers, school staff, and settlement workers (Anisef & Kilbride, 2001). There is a need for culturally appropriate teaching to move beyond the margins. For example, while employment equity programs were established in school hiring and promotion practices in Ontario as well as in other provinces (Harper, 1997), minority immigrant teachers experience difficulties in converting teaching credentials obtained in their homelands. Minority immigrant teachers "uniquely interact with and advocate for minority students" (Bascia, 1996, p. 152), yet they experience difficulties in being integrated into Canada's school system.

Canada's changing demographic landscape requires attention to immigrant and ethnic minority parents as stakeholders in, not just the recipients of education. This calls for greater stakeholder participation among such parents both at the micro and macro levels of the school system. Exercising stakeholder voice requires attention to mechanisms through which immigrant and ethnic minority parents can express their interests with regard to the provision and structure of schooling and, fundamentally, to shape educational policy that would affect the schooling of their children in the host country.

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Chapter 5
Meeting Challenges in US Education: Striving for Success in a Diverse Society

Celia Johnson

> *John Dewey once said, "The education that is best for the best of us, is also best for the rest of us."*
>
> Hale-Benson, 1982, p. xvi

Having one of the most diverse populations in the world, the United States has sought to address many different challenges over the past century. The challenges faced by the educational system in the United States have revolved around the primary issue of inequality of educational opportunity for children of cultural minority populations or children living in poverty. These same challenges have moved into the 21st century with renewed complexity due to the changes in demographics and cultural perspectives, implementation of governmental policies, advances in technology, and a substantial research knowledge base relative to school improvement also referred to as school reform.

The educational system in the United States has as its goal to serve more than 53 million students in public and private K-12 schools. The racial and ethnic composition of students has and will continuously change. Currently, non-Latino White students comprise 58% of the school age population. Minority children make up approximately 40% of the school age population with Black students equaling 17% and Latino students 19% of the total. By the year 2020 it is expected to be reversed with 66% of the students being African American, Asian, Latino, or Native American (US Department of Education, 2005). Many of the children from minority backgrounds are from families who have immigrated and are faced with learning a new language and the need to learn new skills to work and provide for their families. Newly immigrated families typically settle in city neighborhoods experiencing economic poverty. Their limited skills do not allow for them to live in better neighborhoods (Crosnoe, 2005). As a result, the children of immigrant families entering the schools also are learning a new language and experiencing the effects of poor economic opportunity.

America's schools are financed according to property tax revenues generated by the appraised value of homes and businesses within the boundary lines of a school

Bradley University, USA

district. When the people within a particular school boundary/district are living in homes that are not valued or appraised such that they generate a substantial property tax, the school has less money to provide the resources necessary for a quality education. Basically, low income homes generate low property tax which limits the overall operating budget of the school. The problems that accompany poverty are carried into the schools such that they permeate the educational system and programs intended. Schools having the highest percentage of minority children also have the highest percentage of children receiving free or reduced lunch due to family poverty income level, approximately 88% (US Department of Education, 2005; Orfield & Lee, 2004). When children living in poverty, primarily children from minority populations, are segregated, their educational opportunities are limited which in turn limits their later life opportunities.

During the 1950s and 1960s the Civil Rights movement and federal legislation, specifically, *Brown v. Board of Education* of 1954, introduced desegregation that diversified children in public schools. The purpose of school integration was to provide equal quality in education to poor African American children residing in poor city schools. School integration continued through the 1970s and 1980s until the Supreme Court passed new rulings in the 1990s relaxing desegregation; *Board of Education of Oklahoma v. Dowell* in 1991, *Freeman v. Pitts* in 1992, and *Missouri v. Jenkins* in 1995. These three federal court decisions have resulted in a return to neighborhood schools and the process of resegregation (Orfield & Lee, 2004). Currently, inner-city schools have the highest population of minority children with some schools having 99–100% non-white students. The greatest impact of segregation has been with the two largest minority groups, Black (17%) and Latino (19%) students with 70% of Black students attending segregated/majority-minority schools and 76% of Latino students in segregated schools (Orfield & Lee, 2005; Task Force on the Common School, 2002). Asian and American Indian students are more likely to integrate into schools with greater numbers of white students.

Keeping those percentages in mind as we examine the achievement gaps in reading and math between White and Black and White and Hispanic (includes Latino) children at 4th and 8th grades, the gaps have had some fluctuation, but essentially have remained about the same since the early 1990s. The US Department of Education (2006) 2005 data on reading shows Black students scored an average of 29 points lower and Hispanic students scored an average of 26 points lower than White students in 4th grade with little change at the 8th grade level, 27 and 25 points lower respectively (US Department of Education, 2006). The mathematics data on the achievement of white, Black, and Hispanic students indicates similar consistency since the early 1990s. Although there were some years with decreases, the gap in 2005 of 20 points at 4th grade was not measurably different from 1990. In 2005, the White-Black gap at 8th grade was 34 points, and the White-Hispanic gap was 27 points. For Asian students, there do not appear to be significant differences in achievement as compared to White students; a 2–3 point difference in reading (lower) and mathematics (higher) consistently at 4th and 8th grades (US Department of Education, 2006). Additionally, Black and Latino students lag behind white students in high school graduation rates and entrance into postsecondary

education. Asian students have higher achievement scores, higher rates of high school graduation, and higher rates of college entrance than White students.

It is more difficult to address achievement gaps with American Indian/Alaskan Native due to the small number of students, but there are indications of concern as the gaps in the 2003 reading data were 27 and 26 points lower in reading at 4th and 8th grades, respectively. In mathematics, the 2003 differences were 20 and 25 points lower at 4th and 8th grades, respectively. Again, the low numbers merit caution with the low numbers.

Although the discussion of segregation has focused on race, the concern is not just a racial one as Orfield and Lee (2006) point out; segregation has multiple dimensions that encompass poverty, language, and educational inequality. Research has compellingly revealed that segregated schools are unequal and that "separate but equal" schools are unlikely to ever be achieved (Crosnoe, 2005; Kozol, 2005; Ladson-Billings, 1994; Orfield & Lee, 2005; Task Force on the Common School, 2002).

When we really look at segregation and its affiliations, we cannot ignore the poverty issue. The poverty rate of school age children in the United States in 2001 was at 17% (US Department of Education, 2005). It has been well established that poverty and success in school and later life are connected unless deliberate effort is made to intervene (Annie E. Casey Foundation, 2006; Task Force on the Common School, 2002). Poverty and its effects are of primary concern when discussing the education of children in the United States. The impact of poverty drains family energy needed for nurturing children because of the complexities such as time needed to provide food and clothing, possible illiteracy limiting intellectual stimulation, and poor prenatal care and nutrition, all of which affect a child's natural ability to be successful in school. High poverty schools are further challenged by a lack of resources, high teacher turnover, greater numbers of less experienced or unqualified teachers, low parental involvement, more single parent homes, and high mobility rates among other problems (Orfield & Lee, 2004; Silberman, 2002). Many leaders in education feel that it is poverty that creates the achievement gap, not race, and research findings support this (Kahlenberg, 2006; Rumberger & Palardy, 2005). Even though poverty may be the underlying force perpetuating the achievement gap, we cannot afford to ignore what we have learned as a result of the educational reform movement and about how different kinds of children learn.

The Civil Rights movement is associated with initial substantial efforts to meet the challenges of unequal education currently referred to as the "Achievement Gap." Following *Brown v. Board of Education* in 1954, the 1960s was when the Congress of the United States took deliberate steps toward enforcing school reform focusing on the effects of poverty by implementing Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). The Title I program provides financial assistance through State Education Agencies (SEA) to Local Education Agencies (LEA) and schools with high numbers or high percentages of poor children to help ensure that all children meet challenging state academic standards. Title I is associated with programs such as Head Start, Follow-Through, and various bilingual education programs. Since then, each administration of the US government has continued to have an education policy agenda resulting in renewed legislation for the purpose of

improving the educational outcomes of children from low-income or racial minority backgrounds. The evolution of educational reform efforts on the part of the US government has been well documented by many scholars (Berends et al., 2002; Brown & Moffett, 1999; Chrisman, 2005; Duke, 2006; Evans, 2003; Eisner, 1998, 2003; Ferrero, 2005; Goodlad, 2002; Hatch, 2002; Kaplan & Owings, 2002; Levin & Wiens, 2003; Littky & Grabelle, 2004; Lytle, 2002; Wagner, 2003) and is comprehensively covered in a special issue of *Review of Research in Education* (Parker, 2005). This special issue shares research-based insights on the reform movement from 1965 into the 21st Century. Different initiatives are examined to address program effectiveness. The authors provide insight on which programs have been effective and why, the role of various social factors (e.g., political economy, social context, discrimination), and how the ESEA has changed as it has evolved into the current No Child Left Behind (NCLB) legislation.

In short, Borman (2005) identifies four stages in the evolution of educational reform efforts since the implementation of Title I in 1965 through the 1990s. Initial reform efforts were fraught with "intergovernmental conflict, poor implementation, and a lack of research-based and practitioner-based knowledge of how to develop effective educational interventions for disadvantaged students" (p. 7). Continued reform efforts were followed by the development of policy guidelines and "pullout" service delivery; emphasis on national standards, site-based management, and improved test scores; and most recently is focused on research-based practices to establish effective replicable models as a means of closing the "Achievement Gap." Additionally, the introduction of the NCLB Act of 2001, under the George W. Bush administration greatly expanded the role and control of the federal government relative to what and how states would go about educating their children (Shaul & Ganson, 2005; Hoff, 2007). The NCLB Act has become very controversial as the different states and school districts have sought to implement and follow through with the mandates. The goal of NCLB is for children to be proficient in reading and mathematics by academic year 2013–14. On the one hand, focusing on successful achievement as a goal can hardly be refuted and purported as negative, leading policy makers to stress the importance of retaining the legislation. On the other hand, critics have stressed that the emphasis on national testing has led to teaching to the test, limiting the quality of instruction needed in today's classrooms; the lack of funding, needed to support program implementation; and the unrealistic timetables for meeting established goals.

The efforts of school reform to close the "achievement gap" are justified and clearly revealed upon examining the outcomes of minority students, primarily Black and Latino. Although the performance of Black and Latino students improved significantly for the two decades of the 1970s and 1980s, in the 1990s the improvements slowed down and have never returned to the earlier gains which were still lagging behind the performance of white students. Aside from all the focus on demographics and political intervention, the research is very clear; what matters in school is what teachers do within those schools (Eisner, 2002; Haycock, 2001; Littky & Grabelle, 2004). This statement seems to simplify the task. But don't be deceived, the human nature of teaching makes the task very complex.

It is important that we do not neglect to discuss the benefits of integration aside from providing appropriate educational instruction and adequate resources to all students. Quality academic education can and should be provided in all of US schools, but that is not to say it is enough to provide quality instruction. We are living in a global world where people from many different cultures, backgrounds, beliefs, etc. are expected to work together, live together, and learn together. To ignore the benefits of integration and only focus on quality instruction for academic opportunity would be a disservice to our children, society, and the world. The benefits of integrated schools are evident when one examines the outcomes of educational reform over the past 50 years. The Task Force on the Common School (2002) specifically identifies the benefits of integration that include higher teacher expectations, increased student motivation, greater financial resources, more parent involvement, enriched language experiences, fewer behavior problems, smaller class size, lower dropout rates (Guryan, 2001), and a reduced adult poverty rate (Fischer et al., 1996). Most significantly, the Task Force reports that integrated schools are better able to teach and model the principles of democracy where students learn to understand, care about, and respect differences.

Striving for Success

Before we examine the research on triumphant models of school reform in the United States and what that means to the classroom teacher when providing instruction, it is important to discuss some foundational issues that must be in place for any model, program, or instructional strategy to be successful.

Teacher Quality and Beliefs

There is substantial research attesting to the positive impact that highly qualified teachers can have on student achievement as compared to other variables such as socio-economic status and student background (Darling-Hammond, 2000; Haycock, 1998, 2001; Kuykendall, 2004; Wenglinsky, 2000). Consequently, the NCLB Act has made teacher quality a primary objective. The importance of teacher quality is precisely addressed by Kaplan and Owings (2002),

> We know what constitutes good teaching, and we know that good teaching can matter more than students' family backgrounds and economic status. There is significant research to indicate it is the quality of the teacher and teaching that are the most powerful predictors of student success. (p. 1)

Additionally, what school personnel know, believe, and think directly impacts what they do (Kaplan & Owings, 2002; Kuykendall, 2004; Starnes, 2006). For example, Starnes, who teaches Native American children in Montana states, "… solid teaching skills, good intentions, hard work, and loving the kids just aren't enough" (p. 385).

What Starnes is saying is, when teaching children from different backgrounds and cultures than our own, it is important for teachers be open to taking risks. Starnes recommends that risks embrace the following: (1) learning from those who are different from oneself, (2) ridding oneself of stereotypes that perpetuate erroneous information, (3) participating in the community in which one teaches, (4) questioning one's personal knowledge and being open to new perspectives, (5) creating relevant materials connected to the children one teaches, (6) patience to make mistakes and learn, and (7) advocating for appropriate professional development connected to teaching children who are different from oneself. In other words, it is important for teachers to stretch themselves beyond their own culture to be truly successful in teaching students who have different beliefs, different cultures, are a different race, and who come from different backgrounds (e.g. economic, family structure) than themselves. Although Starnes is sharing what she has learned from working with Native Americans, the elements she identifies are critical to success when teaching any group of children. Similar attitudes needed for teachers to teach African American and Hispanic children have also been identified:

- Help students become intellectual leaders in the classroom to improve the academic self-image
- Apprentice students in a learning community rather than in an isolated and unrelated way to increase student motivation
- Legitimize students' real-life experiences by making them part of the "official" curriculum – help students set goals
- Have students participate in a broad conception of literacy that incorporates both literature and oratory – make teaching and learning styles congruent – create opportunities where students can demonstrate knowledge and skills in a variety of ways
- Teachers have high expectations and engage themselves and their students in a collective struggle against the status quo – use creative problem solving
- Teachers are cognizant of themselves as political beings – check your attitude and communication style – be open to making changes
- Provide educational self-determination building on the strengths of all students
- Honor and respect the students' home culture
- Help students understand the world as it is so they can learn to live "inside" and "outside" their culture equipping them to change the world for the better (Ladson-Billings, 1994; Kuykendall, 2004; Waxman et al., 2007)

When teachers stretch themselves beyond their own culture, their views and beliefs about their students are easily translated into successful teaching. They develop a genuine liking and understanding of the students and families they are teaching. They believe in their students' abilities to achieve and commit to ensuring their students succeed. Most importantly, teachers must choose to take responsibility for creating engaging lessons that are connected to students' lives such that they can understand and apply their learning to new situations (Kaplan & Owings, 2002; Kuykendall, 2004).

Similar qualities are also important to address the needs of English Language Learners (ELL). Waxman et al. (2007) have indicated that a most critical need of

Hispanic students is for highly qualified teachers to be appropriately prepared, especially for Hispanic ELLs. The National Research Council (NRC) committee identifies the following attributes of effective schools and classrooms that benefit all students, especially ELLs:

- Supportive but challenging schoolwide climate (including aligning teacher, student, and family beliefs, assumptions, and expectations toward high academic achievement)
- Strong instructional leadership at the school level
- Customized learning environment, adapted to meet the identified instructional needs of students
- Articulation and coordination of programs and practices within and between schools
- Use of native language and valuing of home cultures as resources to be built upon, rather than liabilities to remediate
- Curriculum that balances basic and higher-order skills
- Explicit skills instruction for certain tasks, particularly in acquiring basic skills and learning strategies
- Opportunities for student-directed activities (small group work on conceptual tasks, peer tutoring) particularly in using language to make sense or create meaning
- Instructional strategies that enhance comprehension (sheltered instructional approaches, calling attention to language while using it, providing background knowledge and building on previous knowledge)
- opportunities for practice (built-in redundancy, extended dialog and instructional conversation)
- Systematic student assessment to adjust instruction to students' needs and improve program practices in a timely way
- High-quality, sustained staff development that improves classroom practice
- Family involvement to build supportive environments at home and home-school connections (Linquanti, 1999)

The literature is full of research evidence where successful teaching qualities are recognized. Each seems to have a list of qualities, strategies, or characteristics deemed essential for creating the kinds of environments where quality teaching and learning can take place. Haberman (1995) shares what he learned from star teachers of children in poverty and says, "it is clear to me that they live what they believe … their basic decency is reflected by, but not limited to, the following attributes" (p. 93),

- They tend to be nonjudgmental. As they interact with children and adults in schools, their first thought is not to decide the goodness or badness of things but to understand events and communications.
- They are not moralistic. They do not believe that preaching is teaching.
- They are not easily shocked even by horrific events. They tend to ask themselves, "What can I do about this?" and if they think they can help, they do; otherwise, they get on with their work and their lives.

- They not only listen they hear. They not only hear, they seek to understand. They regard listening to children, parents, or anyone involved in the school community as a potential source of useful information.
- They recognize they have feelings of hate, prejudice, and bias and strive to overcome them.
- They do not see themselves as saviors who have come to save their schools. They do not really expect their schools to change much.
- They do not see themselves as being alone. They network.
- They see themselves as "winning" even though they know their total influence on their students is much less than that of the total society, neighborhood, and gang.
- They enjoy their interactions with children and youth so much they are willing to put up with irrational demands of the school system.
- They think their primary impact on their students is that they have made them more humane and less frustrated, or raised their self-esteem.
- They derive all types of satisfactions and meet all kinds of needs by teaching children or youth in poverty. The one exception is power. They meet no power needs whatever by functioning as teachers (Haberman, 1995).

It seems that Haberman's list of attributes would fit right in with Starne's requirements necessary for teaching diverse children and Albano's "teachers++" (see below) where he explicitly states that teachers need something else besides the certificate indicating they are qualified. Because the research has supported the importance of such qualities, teacher preparation programs accredited by the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) are requiring candidates to demonstrate such attributes or dispositions. Teacher education programs are expected to document how they help teacher candidates develop the kinds of dispositions that contribute to high quality teaching.

What Works? America's Successes

In the last half century we have learned a lot about how children learn and what works to promote success in education. But again, caution must be exercised because we are working with so many different variables. Each person is very different whether a teacher, student, or parent. The human nature of teaching makes the task very complex. Assuming that teacher quality, beliefs, and values are accounted for, we can move on to examining common elements of success based on what is being done. Following are three examples of schools that have successfully closed the achievement gap. The minority children in these schools, many in poverty, have consistently made gains in achievement. Personnel in these schools have identified and implemented what needs to happen to successfully close the achievement gap and serve as models being replicated in other areas of the United States. These are not the only examples of successful schools; there are others where teachers and administrators have chosen to implement what research has shown to work.

Lincoln Elementary School
Mount Vernon, New York

Lincoln Elementary School is a K-6 inner-city school with 800 students of which 60% are Black and Hispanic, 38% are White, and 2% are Asian. Fifty percent of the children are considered to be from poor families and 6% are in special education. In spite of the fact that Lincoln Elementary fits the profile for one of American's failures, there is not an achievement gap. The principal, George Albano and the teachers at Lincoln have experienced the success of their students because of "…hard work; great and dedicated teachers; a thoughtful approach to testing, an integrated curriculum; lots of art, music, and physical education; the willingness to bend and break rules occasionally; and the complete refusal to let any child fail to learn" (Merrow, 2004, p. 456).

Testimonials to Mr. Albano's success in applying what he believes are numerous. One middle school principal stated, "…You demonstrated that 'all children can learn' is more than a pleasant-sounding adage. The phrase has real meaning at Lincoln Elementary School…" (Albano, n.d., Letters & Excerpts).

Albano's "Tips for Creating a Culture That Breeds Success" is focused on leadership, empowerment to overcome daily stresses, and classroom expectations illustrating what is required for success.

Following are the leadership characteristics he emphasizes in his school:

- Specific methods for hiring, training – retaining teachers
- Well prepared knowledgeable teachers who love children, teamwork, leadership, learning, and have a respect for life
- Believe there is no excuse for children not to achieve
- Emphasize an outstanding arts program – especially for children who don't have those opportunities – it sparks their creativity and they get hooked on learning
- Fair financial compensation
- Exude appreciation to teachers that they are making a difference
- Educate parents
- Tap the talents of individuals within the school network and the community – then make it work for the children
- Share what is working to make a difference (refer to John Merrill's book Choosing Excellence and the National Urban League book by Ron Morris)
- Do what is necessary – remove the school board if necessary
- Educate the whole child literally
- Collaboratively everyone is welcome
- Upgrade the curriculum – it must reflect the culture in the school
- Media center (grant money)
- Physical environment – include the arts, children's projects
- NCLB does not allow us to sweep "the gap" under the rug – the data is out there
- Zero tolerance – for disrespect of anyone
- Open doors – teachers do not need to talk so loud they need to close the door – yelling is abusive disrespect of children
- Classical music playing

- Innovative ways to level the playing field – rely on the talents available (teacher networks, community)
- Gifts and contributions – do not have people contribute to the school or district – instead have the funds earmarked for …)
- Lots of grant writing
- Look for donations (Lincoln had no computers because the achievement was too high – Albano shared the problem and computers were donated)
- Art and music are critical aspects – it promotes listening skills
- Excite people to want to go there everyday – whatever is happening outside must be pushed aside at the door – the school is the oasis – we are here to achieve
- Focus on the teachers – certificate says they are qualified, but they need something else (teachers++)
- Standards are part of the daily routine
- Parents come to pick up report cards (Albano, 2004).

When the New York State Education Department sent representatives to visit Lincoln Elementary School they summarized their visit attesting to Mr. Albano's efforts to empower the teachers and staff:

> Our visit to Lincoln Elementary School was a very exciting and rewarding experience for both of us. We were tremendously impressed by your strong commitment to educate every child to very high achievement levels, in a wonderfully diverse school setting…The school has an outstanding literacy program; the K-6 writing program is especially remarkable… (George Albano, n.d., Letters & Excerpts)

Ten steps of empowerment that help teachers and staff to overcome daily stresses are:

- A clear mission statement
- Recruit quality teachers++
- Develop a learning environment where child and staff feel like they are part of something special
- Empowering the staff – where is the talent – retired experts
- Staff accountability – Albano is very visible – everyone knows him (children, parents, staff) – he inspires the staff – flexible time for staff – lead by example
- Promote high morale – develop school projects with teachers – compliment – acknowledge – be involved with the children – plan time for the children – greet the children
- Principal must be an entrepreneur and parents are the resources
- Have *High Quality Staff Development* – strong mentor program – tie in with colleges Show you care
- M – Everyday management C – Crisis I – Improving grant writing and staff development (Albano, 2004)

Lincoln Elementary School has also identified classroom characteristics necessary to raise expectations for student to perform optimally as confirmed by one parent, "You've provided my daughter, Jesse, with the kind of male leadership we can all appreciate. One mixed with gentleness, humor and fairness" (George Albano, n.d., Letters & Excerpts).

Ten characteristics for classroom expectations at Lincoln Elementary School include:

- Flexible
- Teachers actively teach
- Student creations
- Papers are graded
- Curriculum is aligned
- Promote literature and a love of reading
- Whole child development – pessimism may be developed outside the class, but optimism is developed at school
- Celebrate success – good deeds and honesty are recognized and announced on the PA
- Use role models – bring them in
- Parental involvement – make parents feel important – bring them in (Albano, 2004)

The Metropolitan Regional Career and Technical Center – "The Met"
Providence, Rhode Island
The Met schools, or Big Picture Schools, are small, personalized, public high schools where students work intimately with their communities. Founded by Dennis Littky and Elliot Washor in 1996, The Met in Providence, RI has the highest rates of attendance and college acceptance in the state. The school is built on the principle of personalized learning, one student at a time. In *The Big Picture: Education is Everyone's Business*, Littky (Littky & Grabelle, 2004) shares his philosophy that has served as the foundational core of Big Picture Schools:

> Schools should be educating and evaluating one student at a time, using real work and the standards of the real world. Schools should be allowing kids to follow their interests and should be connecting them to adults and the outside world. Schools should be engaging every family in their child's learning and the life of the school (p. 199).

Extending the above philosophy statement, Littky identifies the following educational goals that he feels are the real goals of education:

- Be lifelong learners
- Be passionate
- Be ready to take risks
- Be able to problem-solve and think critically
- Be able to look at things differently
- Be able to work independently and with others
- Be creative
- Care and want to give back to their community
- Persevere
- Have integrity and self-respect
- Have moral courage
- Be able to use the world around them well
- Speak well, write well, read well, and work well with numbers
- *Truly enjoy their life and their work* (Littky & Grabelle, 2004, p. 1)

Littky (Littky & Grabelle, 2004) cautions against using a list of goals and making them fit into traditional methods. He emphatically states, "Being a teacher – and building a system of education, for that matter – is about taking these goals and creating the best possible environment for supporting kids and learning" (p. 11). The Big Picture Schools emphasize teaming and collaboration in teaching. For the adults in Big Picture Schools teamwork is a defining aspect of the culture. Principals create regular opportunities for professional development and life-long learning. Staff members also reflect regularly and share ideas through a weekly, internal publication called TGIF. Additionally, staff members meet regularly in a variety of configurations (whole staff, grade level, buddies, etc.) (Littky & Grabelle, 2004).

One advisor, after his first year teaching stated, "Teaching is so much more than I ever thought it would be" (The Big Picture Schools, n.d., Our Philosophy-Professional Development). Littky describes teaching (Littky & Grabelle, 2004):

- The *act of being a teacher* is understanding these goals of education, under-standing how learning works, and figuring out how to apply all this to each student, one at a time (p. 11).
- Teaching cannot happen in a vacuum (p. 13).
- … an environment that allows students the freedom to find themselves with the support and motivation of inspiring adults (p. 14).
- Teaching and learning are about problem solving. Education is the process by which you put teachers and learners in the best possible environment for them to do this together (p. 16).

Teachers' beliefs about students also play an important role in student success as is illustrated in the following quote:

> The philosophy of educating one student at a time expands beyond "academic" work and involves looking at and working with each student holistically. Everything that makes up the student's learning experience – the curriculum; the learning environment; the use of time during the school day; the choice of workshops or college classes; the focus and depth of investigation through the Big Picture learning goals - is developed based on the student's individual interests, talents, and needs (Big Picture web home page, n.d.).

Littky (Littky & Grabelle, 2004) addresses the importance of personalization and flexibility to support any student when learning, but especially those in greatest need:

- You cannot know a kid whose voice you don't listen to, whose interests are a mystery, whose family is excluded, and whose feelings are viewed as irrelevant to the educational process (p. 21).
- Students need to feel that school is a safe place (p. 22).
- Kids are fragile. They are also very resilient (p. 22).

Characteristics of the school environments created in the Big Picture schools can subsequently be summarized:

> One of the things that is striking about Big Picture Schools is the ease in which students interact with adults. There is a culture of respect and equality between students and adults, as well as among students and among all of the adults in the school. Students are encouraged

to take leadership roles in the school and student voice is valued in decision making processes (Big Picture web home page, n.d.).

Littky (Littky & Grabelle, 2004) shares thoughts about schools to consider if we really want to reform and improve schools:

- We need to stay focused on the student (p. 28).
- If we care about kids more than we care about schools, then we must change schools (p. 28).
- Think about how people learn best (p. 28).
- The world is integrated! –[Not] put into boxes called subjects and separate things that are not separate in the real world (p. 28).
- When we talk about reform, we should not be talking about tweaking the scheduling and modifying the curriculum, but about completely overhauling the entire structure of schools as we have known them for way too long (p. 29).
- Society is asking our graduates for skills and fast-paced communication, and schools are still giving them facts and one-way lectures (p. 31).
- The world is changing – schools are not (p. 32).
- When education is defined by the number of minutes a kid sits at a desk, it is way too far away from what is really important (p. 32).
- Many times teachers, principals, and superintendents have standards for themselves and their schools that are way too low (p. 33).
- We measure what we *can* measure – not what we *should* or even *want* to measure (p. 34).
- There is no "one set of knowledge" (p. 34).
- We have to have *higher* standards, and they've got to be *different* standards (p. 35).

The Navajo Language Immersion School – "Tsehootsooi Dine Bi'olta'"
Fort Defiance, AZ
The Navajo Language Immersion School, with 71% of students from low-income families, infuses culture and native language into a standards-based curriculum. The school emphasizes cultural preservation, parental support, and standards. Many families choose to enroll their children (attendance is voluntary) for the opportunity to learn their native language, something their generation did not realize. Children in kindergarten and first grade receive all instruction in Navajo. English instruction begins in second grade with 50% or more of instruction in English by 6th grade. The Navajo Language Immersion School has been successfully meeting goals, while less than 40% of regular public schools on American Indian reservations failed to make progress (Zehr, 2007).

School leaders feel the key to their success has been the infusion of native culture and language. Many parents have regretted the loss of the Navajo language their generation experienced and feel the school is the best chance to save both the spoken and written language. They are preserving their culture and learning along with their children. One parent shared how the school reinforced her family's interest to stay connected to Navajo traditions by holding a traditional Navajo-language puberty ceremony at the family's sheep camp (Zehr, 2007).

School personnel also try to get support through community and parental involvement. Mr. Demmert, a member of the Oglala Sioux and Alaska Tlingit tribes explains the important connections,

> When you talk about an extended family in the Native American community, you talk about clans and tribes. What some of these schools are doing is creating a new kind of extended family that includes parents, students, teachers, school administrators, and the leaders of the community. They work as a group, as a part of this extended family, to make sure that the students do well (Zehr, 2007, p. 26).

In addition, the school's teachers pay close attention to state content standards, federal accountability requirements, and the standards for Navajo culture published by the tribe. Teachers meet to decide on which aspects of the curriculum will be taught in Navajo and which will be taught in English. The following example of a 5th grade teacher illustrates the blend of the different standards. This teacher, who teaches only in Navajo, had her students working on "mental math," an area needing improvement. Another time, when working on word problems written in English, the discussion was in Navajo. During a literacy lesson, the teacher read a story, discussed vocabulary and pronunciation. Then the children did a shared reading followed by a writing experience. As a follow-up the children tested themselves seeing how fast they could read another story on the same topic (Zehr, 2007).

The Navajo Language Immersion School has been successful teaching the knowledge and skills necessary in today's society with the infusion of native culture and language into the classroom. The importance of culture and education's willingness to embrace it is a lesson that has been repeatedly established (Kuykendall, 2004, Paik & Walberg, 2007). When students and families feel valued they are empowered to participate in the learning process enhancing experiences and reaching goals that will close the achievement gap.

This chapter has addressed the historical and political aspects of providing equal education to US children in one of the most diverse countries of the world. The educational reform movement is not new, the face has changed over time with new legislation, yet the objectives have remained the same – to provide a quality education to all US children. Change is possible and there are many schools successfully closing the gap. Characteristics and strategies supporting quality education have been presented. The future of the US will be determined by the 53 million students currently in the educational system. Today's educators have a choice to move forward and make changes based on research and successful models – they can close the achievement gap.

> All children want to learn and can learn…
> There is a brilliant child locked inside every student.
>
> –Marva Collins

To learn more about the above featured schools and other schools where the achievement gap is closing, refer to the following resources.

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5. The George Lucas Education Foundation. http://www.edutopia.org
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Chapter 6
Education Policy Reform in Postapartheid South Africa: Constraints and Possibilities

Aslam Fataar

Introduction

This chapter is an analysis of the postapartheid government's policy vision that was meant to guide the reconstruction of South Africa's inequitable education system. By assessing the period from 1994 until about mid-2000, this paper argues that education policy is characterized by a restricted vision of reconstruction, which failed to provide the necessary basis for developing an equitable and united education system. The dramatic narrowing materialized in a complex and circumscribed political context. The focus of this analysis is on the interaction between the structural dynamics that delimited the policy terrain and the political dynamics that shaped education policy. Specific developments in the sphere of education, given its relative autonomy, shaped the eventual policy outcomes. Given the interaction between the structural and political dimensions, the government made very definite choices in giving effect to its favored vision of educational change. In this light I raise some thoughts towards an alternative conceptual approach to education policy reform in South Africa. This interpretative analysis is based on integrating work written over the last few years (Badat, 1997; Christie, 1996; Jansen, 1998; Kallaway, 1997) and my own work on schooling policy (Fataar, 1996, 1997, 1999, 2003, 2006).

Education Policy Reform in the Context of a Negotiated Political Settlement

The Black majority in South Africa has been looking to the postapartheid dispensation for a development platform to improve their lives. The post-1994 democratic state has had to confront a deep legacy of racially based inequality. The continuing impact of unequal education has its roots in the country's successive forms of colonialism under the Dutch (1652) and the British (1815). The apartheid

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state ruled from 1948 on the basis of a policy of rigid racial segregation, which led to an enormously inequitable education system. It was clear that the new democratic state had to confront enormous challenges in order to build a unified and equitable education system.

Educational reform must be understood in light of the political arrangements negotiated between the old apartheid state and the liberation movements. The nature of the political settlement played a fundamental role in shaping the direction of education reform. The transition to a negotiated political settlement limited the government's ability to establish an equity-informed policy agenda. Contrary to popular perception, the negotiated settlement displaced radical reform objectives with a narrow reform orientation. The constitutional framework entrenched liberal democratic rights while failing to guarantee the exercise of social rights such as the right to housing, free education, and health care. These were relegated to the realm of delivery given "existing capacity". Thus the political settlement had a negative impact on the government's ability to establish a viable platform for fundamental public and education reform.

The impact of the history of inequality under apartheid continued to have an impact during the postapartheid period. Under apartheid, educational development vacillated between the state's racial separatist ideology and the demands by industrial capitalism for appropriate forms of urban social reproduction (Cross & Chisholm, 1990; Molteno, 1984). By the late 1980s South Africa had the most racially skewed education system in the world. White education was 10 times better funded than that for the African majority (Fataar, 1997). One million Black kids of school age were not in school. The Indian (subcontinental origins) and Coloured (people of mixed-race origins) groups also were at the receiving end of education that was generally poor but slightly better than that for African groups. This intra-Black racial hierarchy was part of the grand plan of an ideology of racial differentiation. Schooling was meant to inculcate and naturalize an ideology of racial separateness among the country's different races.

The postapartheid government established in 1994 inherited a vastly unequal system with two fundamental challenges. The first was the need to place the 1 million poor and mostly African and Coloured children into school, which amounted to the challenge of an enormous expansion of the school system (Fataar, 1997). Research showed that the government succeeded fairly spectacularly in this regard. The current access rate of children attending school is about 98% (Fataar, 2003). The second challenge was the equitable provision of teachers, resources, and institutional capacity to provide the platform for a unified and qualitatively improved school system. A very complex and disappointing story began to emerge over the last few years in response to this latter challenge.

In this light, it is important to understand that the political settlement of 1994 accommodated the requirement to secure the basis for new forms of capitalism congruent with the country's desire to enter the global economy. The apartheid state's reformism during the 1980s failed to secure this new form of reproduction mainly because of refusal to scrap its race-based policies (Nasson, 1990). The official desegregation of South Africa in 1994 was a central element in laying the foundations for capital accumulation and gearing the country toward entry into the global economy (Wolpe, 1994). Global capital presumably could do business comfortably in a politically

normalized country. The political changes in South Africa came at the end of the Cold War and the accompanying discrediting of socialism and radical reform. The education policymaking arena was thus characterised by a conservative ideological and political climate. In this light a policy vision for equitable reforms failed to take account of the existing inequalities and power relations in society.

Narrowing of Socioeconomic and Education Policy

The conservative turn in both socioeconomic and education policy was the outcome of the government's choice of a macroeconomic framework that targeted the country's entry into the global economy as the principal and overarching policy ideal of the postapartheid period. This thwarted the progressive educational idealism that underpinned the popular uprisings against apartheid education in the preceding decades. The Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP), adopted in the early days of the Government of National Unity (GNU) was an attempt to keep the contradictory pressures of equality and economic development in tension as the conceptual undertow of socioeconomic policy. However, the choice of Growth Employment and Redistribution Strategy (GEAR) to replace the RDP in 1996 showed a clear preference for a growth-first strategy in which redress and redistribution would depend on a trickle-down economic policy. Some labelled GEAR as "voluntary structural adjustment" in reference to the absence of direct pressure from northern monetary institutions to move in this direction (Vally & Spreen, 1998). This is not to discount the manifold pressures brought on by global political and economic dynamics that the government was unable to ignore in its choice to develop a functioning export-led economy and attract foreign investment.

However, the many internal contradictions that beset the GEAR strategy have resulted in the failure of its macroeconomic vision. GEAR's preference for economic development along post-Fordist lines, based on high-end quality production to establish global competitiveness, was unrealistic given the uneven and underdeveloped nature of the existing economy. A key consequence of the developmental approach was the entrenchment of fiscal conservatism as the basis of the approach to development. This led to a decrease in public financing of key social welfare sectors. In education this meant that for 4 consecutive years beginning in 1995, the education budgetary increase in real terms was well below the inflation rate. Internal budgetary reprioritization, not budgetary increase, became the chief mechanism to fund the government's commitment to equity in education (Greenstein, 1997). Building a unified school system of quality had to happen in a constricted financial environment. Funds from a smaller overall education budget had to be moved from certain parts of the education system to other, more disadvantaged parts of the system. As the aborted teacher cutback plan illustrated (Fataar, 1996, 2003), policies that attempted to effect internal budgetary reprioritization had disastrous consequences, incurring greater costs, which ran contrary to the need for fiscal discipline. Teachers were enticed to leave the profession with attractive retrenchment packages that drained the government financially. The government's

minimalist approach to funding the recurring costs of schools did not enable the majority of poor schools in the country to rebuild their shattered physical learning conditions.

A conservative education policy discourse was established concomitant to the neoliberal orientations of the state's economic approach. The need for fiscal discipline played a major role in determining the Education Ministry's approach to education reform. After initial contests inside the state, in which an expanded approach was defeated, a definite orientation emerged only during 1996 based on an integrated approach to reform. The National Qualifications Framework (NQF) was presented as a key part of the GEAR strategy. Both were grounded in an economic growth agenda. The NQF was touted as a way to produce the necessary sophisticated technological labor that would complement the development of a globally competitive economy. The idea of integrating education and training is based on developing an inclusive system able to incorporate adults, workers, and out-of-school youth. Integration would address the need for greater access to and mobility within the education system. The NQF envisages multiple sites of educational delivery and a flexible qualifications framework to provide expanded learning opportunities for those outside the formal education system.

However, the NQF's preferred pedagogical approach and assessment methodology, driven by industrial training interests, has resulted in a narrow pedagogical approach in the realm of the school curriculum. While outcomes-based education (OBE) may be suited to the needs of training for measurement and demonstration of skills and competencies, teaching to predefined outcomes in educational contexts such as schools undermined the development of a democratic pedagogy based on open-ended and critical enquiry. OBE was an essential part of the NQF's attempt to effect closer alignment between education and the economy based on the human capital theory view that education, among other factors, should play a leading role in constructing a competitive economy. This is predicated upon the flawed assumption that socioeconomic development is in large part dependent upon the ability of education to produce skilled workers. However, the logic of both GEAR and the NQF was internally inconsistent and flawed. The GEAR growth strategy did not lead to the development of a sophisticated post-Fordist globally competitive economy, placing the NQF's attempt to generate a high-skill HRD strategy in jeopardy. Thus, the relationship between GEAR and the NQF was not sustained. The government's choice of the NQF as the pivotal feature of its macroeducational framework, and OBE as the curriculum model, encompassed a narrow and conservative vision of education reconstruction.

The Politics of Education Policymaking

A number of developments before and during 1994 and mid-2000 came together to shape policy. The moderate constitutional dispensation affected the nature of education policy, which compromised attempts to imbue policy with a redistributive

ethos. Provinces were awarded semiautonomous powers in educational decision making, which enabled them to make legislation that focuses on the implementation dimension of policy. This gave provinces such as the Western Cape the ability to retain a conservative policy thrust in order to protect its relatively privileged status. This resulted in incongruence between national and provincial education policy (Kruss, 1997). Examples of a conservative trend can be detected in the Western Cape's elaboration of national policy on school governing bodies, mother-tongue education, and religious observances. Furthermore, conservative groups in the province brought two court challenges against aspects of national legislation. These were (1) the successful challenge that brought the government's teacher rationalization and redeployment plan, intended to shift teachers to oversubscribed Black schools, to a halt (Fataar, 1996; Vally & Spreen, 1998), and (2) the unsuccessful challenge against dropping school admission requirements on the basis of language and religion (Chisholm & Vally, 1996). These challenges illustrate the complexity of advocating particular policy positions in a democratic environment made up of competing interests. It also highlights the difficult legal and constitutional environment in which a coherent policy framework had to be developed.

Protecting the jobs of senior apartheid-era civil servants in the education bureaucracy, a feature of the negotiated constitutional dispensation, constrained the Education Ministry in developing a coherent policy framework. While the policy rhetoric symbolically pronounced on the need for redress, the real power to change the functioning of the educational bureaucracy remained largely in the hands of these bureaucrats. Through their expertise, knowledge of the policy process, and an accommodating human relations approach they retained technical, though not political control, over the policy process. These White bureaucrats, for example, exercised technical control over the school curriculum policy processes. Their influence on the policy and bureaucratic processes are illustrated by the following two examples. First, they provided the framework for the provincialization of the education system (Kruss, 1997). New provincial bureaucracies were set up on the basis of their work in the Education Coordination Services. Second, they brought very important discursive influences into the school curriculum processes, such as the emphasis on learning areas, to replace the old subjects. These influences played a prominent role in shaping the postapartheid school curriculum (Fataar, 1999, 2006) and the integration approach of the NQF (Fataar, 1999; Mohamed, 1996). The apartheid-era bureaucrats also played a very important role in placing limitations on the structure and functioning of the bureaucracy. Attempts were made by the new ministry to break this conservative bureaucratic culture. For example, the redress-inspired Culture of Learning Programme (COLP), which targeted the physical refurbishment of schools, was an unsuccessful attempt to reorient the bureaucracy's financial and administrative functioning to be more responsive to the need for a redistributive orientation in educational delivery (Bloch, 1996; Chanza, 1995).

The reconstitution of civil society during the 1990s had a decisive impact on the education reform environment. The people-state dichotomy, in terms of which the progressive education movement galvanized popular resistance against apartheid education, was replaced by the need to develop policy in anticipation of governance.

In the process the substance of the radical People's Education discourse of the antiapartheid movements of the 1980s was marginalized. The closure of the leftist National Education Coordinating Committee (NECC) in 1995 represented the collapse of a vibrant civic culture in education. Some prominent NECC activists became bureaucrats in the Department of Education (DoE), and organizations such as the South African Democratic Teachers Union (SADTU) and the Congress of South African Students (COSAS) were co-opted into government (Fataar, 1999). This diminished the capacity of the left to sustain a critique of a rapidly narrowing policy orientation. In the vacuum created by the dispersal of leftist activists and organizations, a constellation of conservative interests, motivated by the need to protect their privileged status and spurred on by the mainstream media, began to have an impact on the policy process. Consequently, the period after the 1994 election was characterized by the emergence of conservative groups that used the leverage provided by the moderate constitutional dispensation to push for the retention of educational privilege. This placed constraints on the government to legislate for a new path in educational reconstruction.

The establishment of the National Education and Training Forum (NETF) in 1993, an attempt to deal with the intermittent short-term crises that beset education in the early 1990s, gave rise to stakeholder politics in education policymaking. Instead of vibrant and critical civic participation in shaping the reforms, stakeholders essentially represented various organized interests, which mostly excluded poor and vulnerable sectors of society. Thus, only identified constituencies could participate in the policy reform processes, of which teacher unions and national provincial bureaucrats were the most powerful. Many groups were excluded, such as academics, subject associations, and curriculum and policy experts. The majority of teachers were sidelined because of the lack of consultation by their unions on the various reform initiatives. The curriculum policy process, driven by stakeholder participation, served to alienate teachers from the new curriculum (Kruss, 1997). The curriculum process was criticized as having been produced in smoke-filled committee rooms without any connection to the learning context. The policymaking model was technicist in that the process was divorced from the exigencies that had existed at the level of implementation.

The conceptual underpinnings of the NQF were generated mainly by a confluence of business and labor interests, which agreed on the need to make education and training more responsive to labor requirements. The education sector was almost completely ignored in the process (Human Sciences Research Council, 1995). OBE was determined as the school curriculum framework outside of the school curriculum process. The intensive work by stakeholder representatives in the curriculum policy processes between late 1996 and early 1997 amounted to an elaboration and ratification of the OBE. Paradoxically, an influential schooling interest group such as the South African Democratic Teachers Union (SADTU) agreed to this predetermined agenda because of its political support for the integration of education and training – even when it became clear that the new curriculum would have negative consequences for teachers. Policy borrowing from countries like Australia, New Zealand, Canada, and Scotland informed the conceptualization of the NQF and OBE

(Mohamed, 1996). It is clear that education policy narrowing was the outcome of a number of influences, mainly conservative, that operated in the conjuncture of the 1990s and which sidelined a transformational view of education.

Challenging Education Policy as "Symbolism"

My analysis supports the position that education policy reform during the first years of democratic rule favored the economic growth and development conceptual dimension. Equality became contingent on the social dividend gained from a growing economy. Put in another way, the postapartheid government developed a reform vision that aimed to have the education system facilitate the country's entry into a global capitalist environment. A constricted policy environment has become the dominant feature, leading to the government's wavering on providing social welfare, including education. In this light, the government has found it increasingly difficult to provide minimally acceptable living conditions for an expectant citizenry.

A vision of a just and equitable education system was thus compromised, rendering the government unable to sustain its legitimacy through actual delivery of equitable educational restructuring. In this context education policy has become limited to playing a mainly symbolic role in the government's attempts to regain lost legitimacy, especially for the then-Education Ministry that was widely regarded as ineffectual. Following Weiler (1990) and Fuller (1991), it can be said that education policy turned out to be a mechanism used by the government to achieve compensatory legitimization. The government symbolically used policy to signal progress and a commitment to transformation (as opposed to effecting real change). This was illustrated in its school access and school curriculum policies (Fataar, 1999). The government used the Culture of Learning Project (COLP), a cosmetic school refurbishing project, and Curriculum 2005 to attempt to reestablish legitimacy. The appropriation of populist education concepts to cloud an essentially technicist curriculum framework was an attempt to present policy at the symbolic level as tied to a vision of transformation in education. The COLP amounted to an endeavor to signal the government's commitment to fundamental change. However, this kind of use of policy at the symbolic level served only to mask patterns of educational inequality, which had begun to manifest along old and new lines in the postapartheid period (Fataar, 1999).

Given the pattern of policy conservatism established in the first few years of the postapartheid period, the question for progressive education praxis arises as to the manner in which an alternative policy orientation could be conceptualized. This task essentially involves the reinsertion of the principle of equality into public policy in such a manner that an appropriate development path can be laid. Currently, the sidelining of equality is having negative consequences for social redress. A starting point is to appreciate the particular character of the postapartheid policy settlement in order to ascertain the "limits of possibility" in terms of which policy has to be generated. A "sociology of possibility," i.e., a policy basis understood as the outcome of

converging global and national political and economic parameters, has to inform our understanding of what is achievable under the current circumstances, while keeping the demands of the majority of people for fundamental change firmly in sight. Tempering entitlement and heightened expectation may be a necessary consequence, but a more fundamental outcome would be to view policy more pragmatically in modest and realistic terms. This is consonant with Bowles's observation about South African education that "modesty … is not a prescription for quiescence or lowering expectations, it is only to recognise the way in which structures of domination may defeat progressive educational objectives" (Bowles, 1993, p. 36).

I believe that the current political climate provides space for launching a sustained challenge, on both the political and academic terrain, in destabilizing the prevailing situation. The period between 1994 and 2000 represented an unstable truce between social forces, which defined a historically specific relationship between state and civil society (Smyth, 1995) and in terms of which the current policy orientation was achieved. The conflict that did occur in this period was subjected to the imperative of putting in place a functional policy environment, which drew leftist individuals and groups into the government's agenda for social reconstruction. While right-wing interest groups have been active in manipulating this truce, their political objectives became prominent on the back of global and national circumstances that have operated to circumscribe the policy process (Fataar, 1999). The government's macroeconomic and education policy choices had to be made in response to the complex apartheid legacy of educational development on the one hand, and the economically constraining impact of global dynamics on the other. Policy narrowing, I contend, has occurred as a result of weak policy decisions by the government whose desire to create conditions for South Africa's entry into the global capitalist economy left it with very few policy options. The contradictions of these policies have now become visible especially in the light of the end of "reconciliation politics" as symbolized by former President Nelson Mandela, who has retired from political office. Recent criticism from the left of the political spectrum, mainly against negative policy outcomes in practice such as Curriculum 2005, the COLP program, and the school funding formula, has highlighted fundamental questions about the efficacy of current education policy in meeting the objectives of social reconstruction. This potentially holds the seeds for more robust debate and contestation that could set new political boundaries for education reform. The extent to which an emerging new settlement would favor the reinsertion of equality will depend partly on the ability of education-based social movements to organize themselves around and advance pragmatic policy objectives in attempting to destabilize the current policy settlement.

Toward an Alternative Reform Approach

A different education reform approach has to be founded on a viable alternative to the current macroeconomic framework. The education reform trajectory has confirmed the truism that a country's economic approach sets delimitations for other

areas of public policy. GEAR's stringent fiscal approach led to financial austerity, which affected the government's capacity to provide social welfare and other public services. Instead of an expanded budget to fund increasing demand in social consumption, the result of incorporating the Black majority as political equals into the democratic polity, the government's financial policy resembles the smaller state approach found in many other developing countries. Despite heroic attempts by ministries that deal with provision of social services such as health and social welfare, and those who concentrate on infrastructural provision in areas such as water, electricity, and housing to expand basic services, their work has been hampered by limited budgets. In education, limited finances have led to a number of measures that target formal equity but which are devoid of effective redress strategies.

A necessary condition for social reconstruction is to increase social consumption spending, which I believe is dependent upon a more flexible monetary strategy. Economists have, for example, pointed out that South Africa's approach to reducing the fiscal deficit to an arbitrary figure of 3% is much too stringent for a developing country when compared to other OECD countries (Marais, 2002). Too great a percentage of the overall budget goes to servicing the debt, which diminishes funds available for social spending. Even World Bank economists allowed for a less stringent approach to fiscal deficit reduction, as long as it is integral to a growth pattern (World Bank, 1993). Padayachee argues for a reconsideration of fiscal policy elements such as taxation and inflation, growth, and investment targets to derive a financial and budgetary approach that would make more money available for social spending (Padayachee, 1995). The point I want to make is that enough space exists for a debate in economic policy circles about the most appropriate economic approach to developing a flexible fiscal strategy that would enable an increase in social consumption spending. This is not to suggest that such an approach would either lead to huge increases in social services provision or be a panacea for the eradication of social inequality. On the contrary, while it would be expected that a flexible fiscal approach would provide more money for social spending, it is clear that in the current global economic climate the increase would not be much greater than current levels. South Africa, as other countries at the same level of development, does not have much room to maneuver in determining financial policy.

While a new financial approach would not lead to a marked increase in funding, the extra money could nevertheless contribute to laying a bedrock for greater equity and redress that current funding levels have impeded. Instead of equity without redress, a long-term development path at the community level could be stimulated that would involve community participation, local industries, and human resource-capacity building. Strategic funding of sustainable development and capacity-building projects that would lead to state-community partnerships could be put in place without having to establish inefficient bureaucracies. The idea that communities are responsible for their own development would be promoted. Without financial stimulation from the central government, this kind of development would be difficult to put on track. Greater financial investment in stimulating community participation in development would not just signal the government's commitment to alleviating

conditions of poverty, but would place communities in a favorable position to embark on actual social improvement.

Toward a Principled Approach to Educational Reform

Two issues are central to an approach for effecting greater equity and redress in education. First, a basis for prioritizing certain aspects of education over others has to be put in place by identifying those areas that have greatest need. For example, schools in Black townships and rural areas, which make up 70% of all schools, have the most impoverished conditions (Department of National Education, 1997). Redress strategies would thus have to prioritize schools in these areas, as opposed, for example, to former White schools in urban centers. The latter schools have displayed a remarkable ability to develop their own redress strategies, ranging from user fees to corporate funding and investment. A case could be made for these schools to share their resources with poor schools in mutually enriching partnerships that could involve exchange of teacher expertise, sharing of learning resources, use of athletic and extracurricular facilities, and sharing financial and managerial know-how. As public institutions essentially established on the basis of racial differentiation under apartheid, these schools must find a way to play a bigger role in augmenting the resource-poor environments of Black schools. However, this strategy has obvious limitations. It would be difficult, if not constitutionally impossible, to legislate for this kind of partnership. This strategy thus would depend mostly on the volition and goodwill of the former White schools. Also, the strategy could not be universally applied because there are too few former White schools to establish partnerships with the large number of the Black schools. Large geographic distances between these schools are another constraining factor.

It is therefore clear that Black townships and rural schools will depend on government intervention for their improvement. The COLP amounted to a one-off intervention under the now-abandoned RDP to improve the physical conditions but has failed to lay a material basis for the generation of a learning culture in schools (Fataar, 1999). Schools in townships and rural areas remain impoverished without basic resources such as textbooks, desks, and electricity. The question as to the basis for redress funding for these schools is therefore an urgent one. A redress tax has been proposed that would see the user fee income of those schools that charge more than 1,000 rand per capita taxed by 20% (Fataar, 1996: 37–39). This money would then be redistributed to poorer schools. This measure has been deemed unpopular by an already overtaxed middle class's objection to having their tax burden increased. A second measure is based on applying different funding norms to different schools without increasing the education budget. Differential funding would be implemented in terms of which the poorest schools would receive the largest proportion of money and the richest schools the least. While this measure is worth considering, despite protestations from middle class parents that it would amount to indirect taxation, calculations have shown that a viable implementation

of the measure would not redirect enough funding to implement redress mechanisms in poor schools. Clearly, what is required is an expansion in the educational budget that would apply a higher funding norm to impoverished schools. An increase in the education budget is justified on the basis of the dictum that redress needs money. As I have indicated, a more flexible financial policy approach would result in an increase in social consumption spending from which areas such as education could benefit. While the level of funding would not lead to a sea change in the conditions of schooling in poor communities, it could establish a sound basis for a sustainable community participatory approach to improving conditions in these schools. The extra money should be made available to poor schools for targeted school development programs that conform to strict measurable development criteria. Redress funding should be regarded as an inspiration of broader school development as opposed to a cure-all for the problems, whether material or behavioral, that impoverished schools currently face.

The second principal issue of a redress orientation relates to the pace of educational development, which I contend should be determined by the pace of the overall development of society. Generally, this means that an equitable education system would be generated over a much longer period compared to the rapid and unsustainable approach to change envisaged by government policy. A fundamental criterion of such development has to be visibility of social change and educational improvement. Educational development has to be a key part of a long-term overall socioeconomic development strategy. I would suggest that an educational rationale for slower and more sustainable implementation of change is based on the wisdom that teachers, schools, and educational bureaucracies take a very long time to adapt to a new orientation. The new school curriculum – labeled "Curriculum 2005" – that was introduced in 1998 and replaced the apartheid-based curriculum, confounded this wisdom. It proposed a radical new pedagogical and curriculum orientation that was alien to most teachers. It adopted an outcomes-based approach that resulted in wide-scale implementation problems and confusion (Fataar, 2006). The inefficacy of Curriculum 2005 is in part the result of the policymakers' inability to factor into their curriculum planning the capacity of teachers to give effect to the required new pedagogy. Teacher identities are constituted and reinforced over a long period of time. The shift to a new pedagogy and thus teacher identity has to be conceptualized and supported over a long period. The Education Ministry's unwillingness to institutionalize teacher development, and instead to have information workshops on the new curriculum, points to a lack of understanding of teachers' capacity to implement the curriculum. A slower and more sustainable pace of change has to be established in areas such as institutional reorientation, the development of new textbooks and learning resources, and managerial capacity. And a fundamental priority, even a precondition, for any policy change and innovation is to establish conditions of stability and orderly routines in schools where the learning culture currently is dysfunctional.

In sum, it is clear that South Africa's approach to educational development after apartheid has been complex and uneven. The majority of poor schools for Blacks have not been placed on a sustainable platform for their improvement. This has by

and large been the result of a policy orientation driven more by financial impera-tives than the requirements to qualitatively improve the everyday functioning of schools. A change in reform orientation will depend on the ability of schools, their communities, and social movements active in education to develop a political plat-form to influence the government's policy approach. A responsive government has to be cajoled to serve the interests of the majority of those Black people whom apartheid excluded from a decent education. This should the main driving force in the country's approach to constructing a viable school system.

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Chapter 7
Education at the Crossroads: The Ghanaian Dilemma and Puzzle

Francis E. Godwyll

Introduction

Ghana is a former British colony and is the first country in Africa south of the Sahara to gain independence in 1957 after a half-century of British colonial rule. The legal system is based on the English common law. Governance is through democratically elected president with a 4-year tenure. It observes separation of powers among the three branches of government. Roughly the size of the state of Oregon, Ghana has a population of about 20 million. Of those, 10.87 million comprise the labor force, distributed among agriculture, industry and service as 37.3%, 25.3% and 37.5%, respectively. An estimated 31.45% of the population is below the poverty line (Central Intelligence Agency, 2007).

The overall gross domestic product (GDP) is estimated around $10.7 billion and growing by 4–6% per year (ISODEC, 2006). Agriculture contributes about 41.4% to the GDP. Expenditures on education is estimated at 3.5% of GDP, which translates into about 2.8 billion cedis and 68.2% of the social sector allocation (ISODEC, 2006).

Inflation as of December 2006 was 10.9% (Bank of Ghana, 2007). Currently, total external debt stock as of December 1, 2005, stood at US$6.307 billion apart from internal debt. About 30% of the national budget is devoted to education – but more than 80% of that goes into personal emoluments, which leaves the educational system with very little capital for infrastructure investments.

In Ghana, the average child enters the first grade at age 6. The majority of children enter the first grade with no prior exposure to early education, and their first encounter with a piece of chalk or a pencil will be in this class. The nurseries in the main cater for children between 2 and 4 years of age, and kindergarten to 4- and 5-year-olds, but these two terms are sometimes loosely used. For example, one can find a school with only a nursery that caters to children from age 4 onward. There are some children who before entering first grade would have had early education on a continuum from 1–3 years. The importance of preschool education in

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laying a strong foundation for a child's education cannot be over emphasized, yet a few will receive this needed preparation while the majority of Ghanaian children, mostly rural, will not benefit.

Ghana has a basically agrarian economy, which also engages the majority of its workforce, but the system denies this majority its fair share of the national wealth. If education, which is supposed to fuel the development of human resources, charts the same pattern of the poverty dynamics, then a breakthrough in the cycle of poverty is far from being realized. Education will become a tool for the production and reproduction of an elite minority and the realization of the right of every child to quality education will remain a farfetched dream. In sum, a real dichotomy in the chances of Ghanaian children at school success is drawn. This dichotomy has serious implications for educational policy, planning, and practice in Ghana.

This dichotomy is further complicated by the impact of missionary work and colonialism. Because the missionaries and their successors – the colonial administration – were Christians, they stayed away from areas where Islam had already taken roots 100 years before. As a result, these areas were neglected in the establishment of formal schooling as introduced by the missionaries. Thus Ghanaians in these parts of the country lack behind in education. They therefore migrate to the other parts of the country in search of jobs and naturally occupy the lower levels of the social strata. This phenomenon also has implications for access to schooling.

This chapter identifies, reviews and analyzes the forces and factors that have created the disparities in access and success in education. The factors that are considered germane in contributing to the dichotomy between the rural and urban centers, as well as the chances of pupils (students), will be discussed. These factors among others lie in the foundations of the establishment of schools in Ghana; the structure of education; teacher quality, training, motivation, and conditions of work; curriculum and textbook usage; the length of the school year; and use of instructional time, among others. The cumulative impact of these factors, further challenges, and attempts to remedy the inadequacies also are discussed.

Establishment of Schools: The Legacy

The legacy bequeathed to Ghana through the establishment of formal schooling carries with it inherent challenges that have persisted over the years and still affect the schools in no small measure. As in the rest of Africa, Western schooling was introduced to the Gold Coast (Ghana) in the mid-1880s by the Portuguese, Danish, and English missionaries. These schools came to be known as "Castle Schools" (Martin, 1976). "Many of today's educational systems in Africa are still quite similar to those originally designed by Europeans" (Booth, 1997, p. 435). Because the missionaries arrived by sea, their immediate influence was over the coastal states; thus the schools that came as a byproduct of their work also were concentrated more in the coastal states. Additionally, Islam had penetrated Africa about 100 years before the Christian missionaries and most missionaries avoided the heavily

Islamized settlements. Because Islam came to Africa from the Arabian Peninsula across the Sahara desert to West Africa, it had greater influence on the northern territories of most countries in West Africa, and Ghana was no exception. Thus a combination of these two factors, religion and geography, played a major role in shaping the destiny of Ghana with respect to education. Because education later became the vehicle for upward social mobility in both the new colony and in independent country, those who had no education or little of it became the new underdogs. Thus in Ghana the seed had already been sown for a dichotomy between the fortunes of people from the southern to middle belt and those in the northern extremities.

Because the schools were established primarily to produce interpreters, catechists, and clerks for the colonial administration, their focus was very narrow. The curriculum emphasized what has come to be called the 3Rs: arithmetic/math, reading and writing. It was a very rigid and teacher-centered curriculum. Educational administration and the curriculum were highly centralized. There was little or no provision for those who fell out of the formal structure to rejoin or find viable alternative routes that led to some level of decent living. Thus it was almost a state of "stay the full course and pass or be damned." The content lacked relevance to the socioeconomic needs of the country because it was based primarily on British culture. Stratmon (1959) reported an exchange between a heckler in an Accra audience and a speaker in the summer of 1958:

> Ghana's schools have simply aped the British and are consequently woefully inadequate, to meet the needs of a newly developing country like Ghana. The speaker while agreeing in part with the heckler, carefully pointed out that all the present leadership in Ghana, which includes the Prime Minister, the entire cabinet, all of Ghanaian doctors, nurses, lawyers, teachers and senior African civil servants were in real sense products of the present school system. (p. 395)

In a sense, the system was reproducing itself. This trend has persisted over the years even through various reforms. The issue of content relevance has been of great concern for years, but almost all the educational reforms (e.g., 1967, 1969, 1972, 1974, 1980, 1987, and 2004) have not succeeded in shifting the paradigm dramatically. The 1987 reform is credited as a landmark departure that attempted to tackle this issue headlong, but we still have long ways to go.

Although the colonial government showed some interest in the schools and made attempts to control, or at least participate, in their administration, it was not until 1919–1927 that the partnership of church and state in educational matters became fully operative. Until then, schools had been financed almost entirely by the missionaries, but thereafter the government assisted them by giving grants-in-aid because of the quest for the orderly development of the country's education. This system established four categories of schools: government, government-assisted, mission, and private schools.

In 1951 the Gold Coast Colony announced the Accelerated Development Plan for Education, which focused the government's efforts on rapid expansion of primary and secondary schools as well as teacher training colleges (Ministry of Education, -MOE- 1951). This focus was given a further boost by the promulgation

of the Education Act of 1961 (MOE, 1961). These two instruments laid the foundation for many important features of the present system of education, most notably the six 6-year Free Compulsory Universal Primary Education (UPE). In 1951 there were 19 preuniversity teacher training colleges. Their programs led to the award of Teacher Certificate "B" after a 2-year post middle training course and Teacher Certificate "A" after a 4-year post middle training course or a 2-year postsecondary course (Report of the Educational Review Committee, 1967). These designations for teacher preparation will be discussed in detail later in the chapter.

These two actions by the government increased access because all children of school age were to be sent to school in an attempt to increase and make up for the low levels of enrollment during the colonial era. Consequently the number of children in schools increased exponentially from 4,312 schools with enrollment of 571,580 in 1957 to 10,421 with a total enrollment of 1,404,929 by 1966 (McWilliam and Kwamena-Poh, 1975).

As part of the effort to encourage children from all levels of the economic divide to go to school, the government introduced a free textbook scheme in 1963. But due to economic difficulties, the government rescinded this decision in 1966 and children once more had to pay for books, which usually hurt those from poor families. Regardless of the amount of money families paid for books, these books never belonged to the students. They were kept in school and used while children were in school. School buildings were inadequate to accommodate the growth in school population, leading to schools without buildings and the shift system. In the shift system the school can support double the number of students because half of them attend school in the morning and the other half in the afternoon. In spite of this, not all students could be absorbed, so some schools began to convene under trees. As of 1995 there still were some schools being held under trees in the northern sections of the country.

The growth in student population was not matched by a proportional increase in numbers of teachers to handle them. This led to the employment of individuals without pedagogical training, known as "pupil teachers," to fill the gap. The government established 10 Emergency Training Centers in 1953 to run 6-week intensive courses for pupil teachers to prepare them for primary school teaching. The focus was on English and pedagogy. The Emergency Training Centers were phased out around 1962. Emergency measures are certainly not prudent ways to plan for such a critical component of education. Ultimately quality began to suffer as more of less qualified individuals joined the teaching field. As teacher quality suffered, the less endowed regions of the country suffered more. This situation always favored urban students to the disadvantage of rural children.

Structure of Education

The structure and content of education from independence until 1987 were based on the British system. It provided 6 years of primary school; 4 years of middle school; 5 years of high school; 2 years of advanced level high school education,

called sixth form or precollege preparation; and 4 or more years of college education. This system, designated as 6-4-5-2-4, offered a theoretical 17 years of preuniversity education, which was disadvantageous to the rural child. Many parents could not afford to have their children spend that length of time in school because they needed them to assist with farm work that was their main source of income. Coupled with this was the competitive Common Entrance Examination used to select students for high school. The content of this examination was not based on the public school curriculum and therefore required extra tutoring or special classes to ensure a good score. The curriculum of many private and preparatory schools was geared towards this examination, which gave them a huge advantage over to their counterparts in the public schools. All of these factors favored urban students.

But in 1987 the structure was changed to 6-year primary, 3-year junior secondary, 3-year senior secondary and 4+ years in college (6-3-3-4). This provided a 9-year compulsory basic education that integrated 6 years of primary education with 3 years of junior secondary school (JSS) education. To establish the two components as a single entity, the term Basic Education was substituted for primary and JSS. The classes were therefore named Basic Stage 1 to Basic Stage 9 (BS1-BS9). In addition, the reform abolished the selective Common Entrance Examination. Coupled with this was the fusion of a 3-year junior secondary level education into basic education making attainment of some level of secondary education a reality. Enrollment in JSS 1 in 1987 was well over 200,000; previously about 18,000 would have gained access to the traditional secondary school (MOE, 1987).

The ninth grade (BS9) is both terminal and continuous with a nationwide examination called the Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE) conducted by the West African Examination Council (WAEC). Those who qualify enter the Senior Secondary Schools (SSS) for 3 years. Those who fall out or fail to qualify can either retake the BECE or enter apprenticeship schools to be trained for various trades and crafts. This is a very poorly developed component of the educational system (Djangmah, 1993). The apprenticeship schools are almost nonexistent, so the majority of 60% of those who complete JSS find nothing to do. The Ministry of Education indicated in its own statistical projections in 1987 that only about 30% of children from JSS could enter SSS because there were not enough spaces for them (MOE, 1987).

Unfortunately this picture has not changed much. Since the 1990s, out of the average of 240,000 JSS graduates, only about 72,000 (30%) gain admission to SSS and roughly 10,000 go into vocational and technical institutes (MOE, 2002). With no other absorption avenues the school system throws onto the streets about 158,000 15- to 16-year-olds with nothing to do. The MOE report notes that in a registration of youth across the country, the Ministry of Manpower Development and Employment found that about 32% had absolutely no skills to equip them for the world of work (MOE, 2002). Many in this 30% were from the rural areas. This is not surprising; the speed with which the 1987 reform was implemented left most schools in rural and hard-to-reach areas without adequate academic preparation.

The SSS level also has a terminal examination called the Senior Secondary Certificate Examination (SSCE) conducted by the WAEC. In both examinations

students used to be graded on a 40% internal assessment score based on a cumulative continuous assessment record and a 60% external assessment score based on the WAEC examinations. However, due to serious inadequacies in the implementation of the continuous assessment program such as a high level of subjectivity in teacher-made tests, validity problems, and sometimes near forgery of scores by teachers, the new recommendation was to use 30% internal assessment and 70% external (WAEC Report, 1997).

The successful completion of SSS ushers a student into a wide range of post-SSS and tertiary institutions. The post-SSS institutions include nursing training colleges, agricultural training institutions, and teacher training colleges (for the Basic Education level) while the tertiary institutions consist of diploma-awarding (associate degree) institutions, polytechnics, university colleges, and universities. In the mid-1990, a new recommendation was made to upgrade all post-SSS institutions into tertiary institutions under a new umbrella of Regional Colleges of Arts and Sciences (RECAST) to prepare students for diplomas. The length of training at the university level varies depending upon the discipline but on average is between 3 and 7 years.

In April 2007 President John Agyekum Kufuor launched a new Education Reform Program that changes the 1987 structure. Beginning in September 2007, it makes 2 years of kindergarten for pupils at age 4 a part of the basic school structure, followed by 6 years of primary school until age 12 and then 3 years of junior high school (JHS) to age 15. After JHS, the student can select a 4-year senior high school offering general education with electives in general, business, technical, vocational, and agricultural education in preparation for entry into tertiary institutions or the job market. Thus the latest reform changes the structure from 9 years of free compulsory universal basic education (FCUBE) to 11 years, plus 4 years of senior high school.

This reform makes kindergarten part of the basic education, thus ensuring a solid foundation for all children instead of a few. It also extends the senior high by 1 year, which addresses the concerns about coverage and mastery of the curriculum at the former SSS expressed by many stakeholders. This reform also purports to address the apprenticeship school component, which never took off in the 1987 reform. The government plans to bear the cost of the first year apprenticeship for all students who are unable to continue to senior high and enroll in the apprenticeship schools. It is envisioned that this reform among other things will prepare a skilled, technologically advanced, and disciplined workforce with the right ethics to serve the growing economy.

The reform also acknowledges the important role information and communication technology (ICT) plays in the global world. The government plans to extend broadband connectivity throughout the country to facilitate the development of ICT infrastructure in schools. The issue of teacher quality is once again in focus; as such the reform reiterates that teacher quality is critical to the implementation of the program at all levels. Hence the government says it is committed to improving the conditions of service for teachers to motivate them to give their best. As part of this quality improvement all 38 teacher training colleges in the country are being

upgraded and refurbished. Of those, 15 are expected to be equipped for science, mathematics, and technology to serve as the new focus of the educational delivery program.

In addition the government will establish a national teachers council to regulate the profession and a distance education program to help working teachers stay abreast with the best practices of their profession irrespective of their location in the country. The reform is not limited to basic education, but extends to the tertiary sector. A policy is underway to expand residential accommodation, lecture halls, laboratories, and libraries of the 15 universities and 10 polytechnics of the country (Ghanaweb, 2007).

The structural changes effected in this latest reform give another ray of hope to students in areas where academic preparation is not strong to enable them to master the requisite knowledge and skills. In addition it gives them a head start through compulsory 2-year kindergarten. The government hopes to amend the shortcomings of the 1987 reform by providing apprenticeship schools for those who fall off, but already there are grave concerns about the ability of the economy to support such a huge capital injection into education.

The Teacher Factor

To obtain a better understanding of the state of Ghanaian education and the disparities that exist especially at the basic level, it is crucial to trace the trend in the recruitment of student-teachers in the country. Analyses of the teacher factor will reveal fundamental weaknesses including low teacher quality, ad-hoc approaches to teacher training, a multiplicity of teacher education programs, large class sizes, and unattractive conditions of service leading to low levels of motivation, among others. The effects of these conditions affect rural and hard-to-reach areas more than urban centers, which invariably reflect on the caliber of students produced through the schools in rural areas and their chances for upward social mobility.

The reforms in teacher training can be traced back to the significant work of the Education Review Report in 1937, which recommended setting up a 2-year teacher training program. Successful candidates were awarded the Teacher's Certificate B. The main objective of the program was to cut down on costs in teacher education to meet the increasing demand for teachers at the primary level of education. After 2 years of teaching on completion of the initial training, Certificate B teachers were given an additional 2 years of training to qualify for Certificate A Post B. The immediate policy objective – to have qualified teachers for primary education – was deemed to have been largely achieved in the early 1960s, and as a result the Certificate B program was phased out in 1962. Considering that the emergency centers for training teachers were phased out at about the same time, one questions how officials arrived at the conclusion that they had enough "qualified" teachers.

The Certificate A Postsecondary program for prospective teachers was launched in the 1940s with an aim to increase facilities for the postsecondary teacher training

courses. During this period, Post A specialist courses in housecraft, art and craft, music, and physical education were established for teachers. Later these specialist programs were moved to one training institution at Winneba called the Specialist Training College. The specialist teachers were posted to high schools and educational offices. Beginning in the 1964–65 academic year, 2-year further training (specialist) courses for already certificated teachers in English, geography, history, mathematics, etc., were offered in nine training colleges to meet the specialist staffing needs of middle schools. This program also was later moved to Winneba to establish the Advanced Teacher Training College in 1966.

In 1961 the University College of Cape Coast (now University of Cape Coast - UCC) was established to produce graduate teachers for the then-secondary schools. The number of first-degree holders graduating from UCC was inadequate to meet the growing needs of the secondary schools. Thus in 1973 selected training colleges were asked to mount 2-year specialist courses. The graduates of the program were expected to staff the lower forms of the then 7-year secondary schools, middle schools, and post middle training colleges. These specialist programs were short-lived. They were phased out in 1976 to make way for the 3-year postsecondary quasi-specialist programs meant to prepare teachers for the junior secondary schools. This program also was phased out because all the graduates could not be absorbed by the existing junior secondary schools. This was replaced by the 3-year postsecondary general program in 1979. In a further effort to enhance teaching in the secondary schools, 5 advanced/specialist training colleges were upgraded to diploma status to add to the specialist training college that was already offering diploma courses in 1976.

Another attempt to upgrade the large numbers of post middle pupil teachers occurred in 1983 with the Modular teacher training program. This program allowed a serving pupil teacher to teach and earn a regular monthly salary while at the same time undertake a series of in-service training, organized in modules, for 2 years. The modules were divided into 50 units or groups of lessons comprising the first 2 years of work in subject areas offered in the regular residential 4-year post middle training colleges. Each module was written to last hours and contained assignments and home-study sections. The pupil teacher finally topped off with 2 years of course work in a regular residential 4-year post middle training college, leading to the award of a Certificate A 4-year Post-Middle. This program was later phased out.

The diploma-awarding institutions mentioned above became the nucleus for the University of Education, Winneba (UEW) established in 1992 by government ordinance and placed in a special relationship with the University of Cape Coast. The university was established as part of the tertiary education component of the Education Reform Program of 1987. UEW was mandated to train professional teachers and educational administrators for the pretertiary education sector in Ghana, adding another university to augment the training of teachers for the country. Currently there are 38 public schools, 4 private schools, and 2 universities involved in provision of teacher education in Ghana.

From this short historical account of the development of teacher education in Ghana, it can be seen that teacher training programs were developed on ad-hoc basis to meet the changing needs of basic education. Therefore, over the years,

Ghana has built up a teaching corps comprising different categories of teachers. A system of teacher education that produced so many categories of teachers was bound to lead to a confused image of the profession. Also, the nature of the development of teacher education created the need for more institutional training to upgrade teachers to meet the ever-changing needs of basic education. The need to harmonize, standardize, and strengthen teacher training for basic schools continued to grow.

A critical factor to consider in terms of teacher education in Ghana is a phenomenon I will term "last-resort option rather than intentional choice," which crept into the recruitment of student-teachers. The results of interviews I conducted with 20 Ghanaian senior citizens will be used to explain this last-resort option verses intentional choice phenomenon. All the respondents were above 73 years old and had all retired from active service. Five retired educationists, five civil servants, three medical practitioners, three diplomatic corps personnel, and four university teachers or professors formed the sample.

There was a clear consensus among them when they were asked to describe how people were chosen or selected for the various fields or occupation in their time. Apart from the medical practitioners, who had their training outside the country after initial bachelor's degree, the respondents had to attend an interview to determine where they were posted after graduation. They concurred that the top-performing graduates always were encouraged to go into teaching at the high school level or assist in teaching at the newly established universities in the country. Two educationists said they had wanted to join the diplomatic corps but were denied by the interview board and rather sent to the teaching field; they confirmed that the interview board did not see the justification of using such high performers in applied fields. The interview board, according to them, felt strongly that the higher-caliber students should be placed directly in teaching to raise a new crop of scholars for the newly independent nation to strengthen the manpower base. Five of the respondents hinted that they had two friends who failed in the final university examination but were given scholarships to pursue training as medical practitioners outside the country. The thrust of their argument was that the higher-performing students were seen as more capable of teaching others and therefore they were posted into teaching jobs.

They concluded that as time went on the other sectors began to attract the higher brains, probably due to an intricate combination of economic, social, and political factors. As teaching became less lucrative and less prestigious, individuals opted to teach when they failed to attain their best options. The analysis here will further buttress their conclusion. For example, under the old system of education individuals who failed to attain places in the 2-year 6th form as preparation for university work after their ordinary-level examinations opted to go to the teacher training colleges, nursing training colleges, agricultural training institutions, or the polytechnics. Usually it was either a fail or a weak pass in science, math, and English that made students fail to obtain 6th form places. The teacher training colleges in effect became breeding grounds of student-teachers who had a weak base in math, English and science. Because these three subjects were the pivots of the educational

system, it goes without saying that people with weak foundations in these subjects will likewise prepare children with an equally weak understanding of and competence in these subjects.

Furthermore, some candidates who failed their "O" level entirely or with just the minimum pass were enrolled into the 4-year teacher education program. In order words, they were treated as post middle candidates and spent 4 years to complete the work that their counterparts with slightly better grades completed in 3 years. But did this help to improve fundamental competence needed for effective teaching? Under the 1987 structure of education, this phenomenon has not changed. Candidates who pass very well in the SSCE gain admission into the universities and other tertiary institutions, and those with weaker passes find their way into the other institutions including teacher training colleges.

The Educational Reform of 1987 phased out the 4-year teacher training program because its graduates were judged not to have the prerequisites to teach at the JSS level. Thus all those with 4-year teacher training preparation already in the system were reassigned to the primary schools. But was this a prudent move? If they were presumed not to have the prerequisite skills to teach the subjects at the JSS level, was it automatic that they would have the competencies to lay the solid foundation required for learning those subjects at a higher level? This presumption might have failed the test of time, because more than 18 years after the reform it has become abundantly clear that the foundation is equally as important as the body or superstructure. Policymakers and educators have had to revisit the issue of laying a strong foundation because the low performance exhibited at the higher levels (e.g., JSS) is evident of weakness and sometimes the complete absence of the subskills necessary for the mastery of higher skills.

Though a conscious effort was made to improve the quality of the candidates recruited into the teaching service as part of the 1987 reform, there is more to be done. A new policy that came into effect in the late 1990s required teacher trainees after the first year to take a "justify your inclusion" examination; if the candidate failed, his or her career as a student-teacher was curtailed. In 1999, about 500 first-year student-teachers from the 38 teacher training colleges failed those examinations and were consequently withdrawn from the institutions. The chief examiners report indicated that a good percentage of them could be described as illiterate, basically not able to read or write (MOE, 1999). How such candidates passed the interview and gained admission into the institutions is a wonder. The Ghana Education Service (GES) and the Ministry of Education (MOE) are contemplating the introduction of teachers entrance examinations conducted by an examining body. But will this also be the solution? Plans to upgrade the teacher training colleges into diploma-awarding institutions that could demand equivalent entry requirements as other tertiary institutions has not as yet materialized. Currently the 3-year postsecondary program for teacher training is based on the structure known as the IN-IN–OUT. Under this structure, trainees spend the first 2 years on college-based activities, doing academic coursework together with education and methodology. The third year is devoted to practical teaching attachments in schools supplemented with monitoring and distance learning materials in education courses.

Trainees return to college to write their final examination at the end of the third year. With the first graduates of this program out, the weaknesses are already obvious (MOE, 2002). Through distance education and other after-school evening programs the government hopes to upgrade the level of all teachers in the basic schools to a diploma level equivalent to an associate degree. This has been vigorously pursued by the University of Cape Coast and University of Education at Winneba.

The introductory statement from a Ministry of Education (1995) report on teacher education indicates that since the mounting of the educational reform program in 1987 questions have been raised about the quality of teachers produced in the teacher training colleges. The consensus was that teachers at the basic education level cannot perform. But I contend that the issues and concerns over the nonperformance of the teacher at the basic level had long before the reform been of great concern to educators and had been raised and discussed in many forums before 1987. Probably what the reform did was to incorporate 3-year high school academic work into basic schools while many of the teachers were not academically prepared to grapple with the level of academic rigor. This can be deduced from the backdrop that high school teachers were required to have academic preparation at the bachelor's degree level in order to teach the content of the high school syllabus. It therefore stands to reason that if part of the content at that level had been brought to the basic level and the majority of teachers there held only a postsecondary teachers certificate, it was a recipe for failure. In a sense the reform altered the spirit and letter of the curriculum and placed higher cognitive and greater pedagogical demands on the teacher without adequate preparation. It therefore aggravated the already low performance of teachers at this level. The situation can be likened to removing from before a starving man the only nourishing meal left for him. Thus 20 years after the reform the performance of the teacher at this level is still questionable. The empirical data available, which will be discussed later in this chapter, indicate that the issue of quality envisaged in the reform of 1987 is yet to be realized.

The same MOE report referred to above blamed the nonperformance of the classroom teacher on the initial training program of the teachers by stating that "the theoretical approaches to teaching in the Training Colleges are directly transferred by the student-teachers to the classroom" (MOE, 1995. p. viii). It further indicated that in-service training is divorced from preservice training and places the training ground (the school) out of context. It again viewed the 12-week period for student teaching as inadequate for professional development of the teacher. These problems notwithstanding, it is my considered opinion that the situation of the classroom teacher is more complicated than has been painted. The teacher is saddled with a large class size averaging not fewer than 40; in fact MOE (1995) research pegs the mean and median class size at 48 with some schools averaging well over 50 or 60 pupils.

Research is quite persuasive that class size above 40 begins to have negative effects on achievement (Goodlad, 1987). I witnessed a class in the northern part of Ghana where there were 136 pupils in BS1 and 66 in BS2 – a total of 196 pupils put together in one class for one teacher to handle due to insufficient number of

teachers. This is not a single-case example; similar cases can be found in other parts of the country. If in a child's first years of school the teacher is saddled with such numbers, what meaningful teaching can be expected? Any teacher in such a situation would be gravely stressed and regardless of preservice training, competent performance in this class would be severely undermined.

Coupled with this is the problem of teaching about 9 subjects in the primary schools – a figure considered by teachers and some educators as too high and overloaded (Ghana Education Service, 1993; Godwyll & Dako-Gyeke, 1994; MOE, 1994a). Deepening the plight of the teacher is the continuous assessment policy introduced by the 1987 reform. In a study conducted by Godwyll and Dako-Gyeke (1994) among 174 primary school teachers, 84% considered the continuous assessment as increasing their work load, 69% preferred terminal assessment instead, and 82% disagreed with the view that continuous assessment enabled pupils to learn continuously. An analysis of the above data indicates that irrespective of the advantages of the continuous assessment concept envisaged by policymakers, the teacher's perception of it erodes them. Thus if teachers are required in principle to submit an average of 10 assessment results for each of the 9 subjects in a term (of not less than 31 weeks) within the framework of a concept they place a low value on, then it would be nothing more than a ritual that has lost its meaning for its adherents. Granting that a greater part of their free time is taking up by a meaningless ritual is a tragedy.

The physical structures or the classrooms in which teachers work are in deplorable condition. Most of the old structures have not been rehabilitated for years. A 1993 Ministry of Education report indicated that 50% of the primary schools had inadequate classroom furnishing such as desks, chairs, and cupboards. My own experience in visiting schools in the rural areas of Ghana support the above finding and reveals even starker realities. There are still some schools without buildings. They are organized under trees and when it rains then there can be no school. Textbooks are inadequate and teaching-learning materials are almost nonexistent in most schools. Above all, these teachers have low salaries, relatively low social recognition, poor or nonexistent incentives, and generally unattractive working conditions. My sympathies go with the report of the researchers on Basic Education Review (1995), which stated,

> Teachers who for little pay, and in near unbelievable working conditions, continue to provide a basic education for hundreds of thousand of children need commendation. Teachers while deeply concerned about their salaries, continue to list the most fundamental things as major priorities: pupil and teacher furniture, teaching-learning aids, textbooks, building improvements, recreation, library books, toilets and drinking water top the list of their recommendations. (MOE, 1995, p. 24)

Newly trained teachers are to replace either Middle School Leaving Certificate (MSLC) holders or fill vacancies in junior secondary schools. For example, available statistics from the Teacher Education Division show that in 1996, 5,439 teachers graduated from the 38 initial teacher training colleges. Out of this number, 1,634 replaced MSLC pupil teachers, while 2,179 filled vacancies in primary schools. Also, 1,626 of the newly trained teachers filled vacancies in junior secondary

schools. The policy on replacing MSLC teachers is that account should be taken of their performance when replacing them. Various studies of teacher supply in Ghanaian basic education schools show that teachers are in short supply at all levels (MOE, 1999). The Education Review Reform Committee (ERRC) in their report in 1994 attributed poor academic performance of primary and junior secondary pupils largely to lack of trained and qualified teachers. This problem has been compounded by the fact that pupil teachers have had to be withdrawn from the educational system to improve the quality of basic education. There are more pupil teachers in rural areas than urban; thus when pupil teachers were removed from the schools, more rural classrooms went without teachers. In fact as part of a research team in 1995 I visited a school in the northern sector of the country that only had a head teacher (principal) without any supporting staff because he was the only certified teacher.

In other words, the issue of teacher supply involves much more than simply training more teachers to replace pupil teachers. If after a short period of service these trained teachers leave the profession, then perhaps the profession has become very unattractive. A study commissioned by the Ghana National Association of Teachers (GNAT) revealed that the most important factors which demotivated teachers were inadequate or poor salary, lack of opportunity for promotion and low prestige in teaching (Anamuah-Mensah et al., 1996). These findings were confirmed by Godwyll and Ablenyie (1996). These are issues that require addressing particularly at the policy level to ensure that projections of teacher requirements can be realistically met.

In a speech delivered at the launching of the new Educational Reform in April 2007, Professor Jerome Djangmah, who chaired the function, urged the government to ensure that conditions of service for teachers were improved to support the implementation of the Reform. He considered the neglect of teachers by West African countries as "sins" they were going to pay dearly for (Djangmah, 2007).

As professionals, teachers must have their basic needs and those of their pupils met if they are to improve the quality of education in their classrooms. Unattractive working conditions such as poor salaries, lack of opportunities for promotion, low prestige, and poor relationships with fellow teachers are among the factors that demotivate teachers and compel majority of them to be dissatisfied (Anamuah-Mensah et al., 1996; Godwyll & Ablenyie, 1996; Wyllie, 1966).

Curriculum and Textbook Usage

Some educators blame of lack of performance of pupils only on the curriculum and therefore call for curriculum revision. The policy document on the Free Compulsory Universal Basic Education (FCUBE) of 1996 strongly supported this assertion. It stated among others that: "the present curriculum will be revised and the number of subjects studied at the Basic level rationalized to facilitate teaching and learning" (MOE, 1996, p. 17). Huge sums of money were spent on this exercise.

Although a curriculum – the embodiment of all the planned activities and behavioral patterns that students are expected to acquire in a variety of programs through formal and informal teaching-learning processes – should undergo periodic review in consonance with the expectations of the society or nation, it must not be seen as an end in itself but a means to an end. Merely reviewing the curriculum will not automatically lead to higher levels of pupil achievement if other factors such as teacher quality, maximum utilization of instructional time, and availability and effective use of textbooks are not addressed. I strongly contend that on a scale of preference, how to promote teacher quality should supersede curriculum revision because using the same curriculum, pupils in the private schools are able to obtain the objectives of this envisaged review, namely acquiring numeracy, literacy, communicative, and manipulative skills and developing creative and inquiring minds for further development (Godwyll et al., 1996).

In his evaluation of teaching and learning in Ghana, Kraft (1994) rated the existing English and mathematics textbooks as 2 on a 1–7 rating scale, ranging from "not at all" (1) to "a great deal" (7). The implication of this rating was that the existing textbooks used at the basic level of education were of low quality in terms of 51 criteria including clarity, illustrations, interest levels, developmental level, cultural sensitivity, factual accuracy, creativity, availability, higher order thinking skills, and gender sensitivity. Perhaps this finding has goaded policymakers to think that the problem of low academic performance at the basic level is based more in curriculum than pedagogy.

But a further finding of Kraft (1994) lends weight to teacher quality, instructional materials, and lack of language proficiency as the bases for the failure of the curriculum.

> [T]he major point made in several places in this evaluation is that if all the teachers were well trained and fluent in English, the students were all native speakers of English, and there were sufficient supplementary instructional materials, then the current textbooks would be considered adequate perhaps worth even 4 or 5 on the rating scale. … Since more of these conditions exist, the books must be considered inadequate to meet the current and future needs of Ghana. (p. 24)

Kraft recommended rewriting the primary textbooks and preparing appropriate guides, handbooks, and materials needed for a complete instructional system. Despite the rewriting of the textbooks the quality of teaching and learning at the basic education level is still a problem. The factors raised by Kraft were echoed by Anamuah-Mensah et al. (1996), who argued that three elements, "the instructor (teacher), the search image (content/curriculum) and the learner (his or her entry behavior and characteristics), are so interrelated that the malfunctioning of one affects the others as well as the whole teaching-learning process" (p. 23). The researchers concluded that for teaching-learning efficiency to be achieved the following conditions should exist:

- Adequate number of well-trained teachers, well remunerated and highly committed to the profession

- Well-designed curriculum with content tailored to meet the interests and the developmental needs of the learner
- Prepared and well-motivated learners whose basic physical and psychological needs are adequately provided for.

Because these three conditions are interdependent, it stands to reason that when we produce textbooks that satisfy all 51 criteria mentioned by Kraft without meeting the teacher and learner requirements, teaching-learning output still will be very low. It is important to note that within the framework of the 1987 reform, an extensive review of the curriculum was carried out and textbooks rewritten to reflect the objectives of the reform. A decade later there was another call for a revision, which was done, yet the results have not drastically changed. I think the crux of the matter is that it does no good to revise the curriculum and rewrite the textbooks, syllabi, and handbooks if neither the primary teachers nor the pupils can read them. Thus, in the urgent measures to salvage the educational system in Ghana within a limited time frame and financial constraints, supporting teachers to develop competencies to teach more effectively should be a first option rather than embarking on an expensive review of the curriculum whose outcome is uncertain. A holistic approach is therefore needed in dealing with the issues of quality at the basic level of education.

I consider both availability and usage of textbooks by teachers and pupils as major determinants of observed low-level performance of pupils at the basic level, a viewpoint also supported by Centre for Research in Improving Quality Primary Education in Ghana (CRIQPEG) 1993 and 1995 research reports. CRIQPEG findings reveals through baseline data gathered in 1993 that the public schools were performing below average proficiency level in English language (CRIQPEG, 1993). In 1994, English reading textbooks were supplied to all pupils in the seven intensive schools while the other seven nonintensive schools had no supply. At the end of the period the assessment results revealed slight improvement in pupil performance in oral expression, reading, and written English in the intensive schools while pupil performance in the nonintensive schools continued to remain low (CRIQPEG, 1995). In 1995 some intervention strategies were introduced in the seven intensive schools; these strategies aimed at assisting teachers to adapt more creative and pedagogically sound ways of using textbooks to promote learning in pupils. The nonintensive schools were not exposed to these interventions but were supplied with textbooks. The posttest results at the end of the 1995–6 academic year showed tremendous improvements in oral expression, reading, and writing skills of the pupils in the intensive schools and slight improvements in the performance of pupils in these areas in the nonintensive schools (CRIQPEG, 1996).

I strongly contend that the availability and right usage of textbooks cannot be overlooked as a critical factor in pupil performance. Thus, in our educational system where there are inadequate textbooks for all children and other supplementary materials for both teachers and pupils are almost nonexistent, teaching and learning output are not likely to be high. Once again children in schools situated in economically disadvantaged regions suffer more from these inadequacies.

Length of School Year and Use of Instructional Time

Another critical factor that influences teaching-learning output is the length of the school year and utilization of instructional time. An analysis of the length of the Ghanaian school year and instructional time utilization will bring to light bottlenecks to maximizing on-task behavior by pupils. Class time devoted to academic instruction and pupil involvement in academic work is consistently related to achievement test scores (Brophy and Good, 1984; Good and Brophy, 1987; Gulliford, 1985). There is a growing consensus that school days and years need to be lengthened in many countries. Research also points out that it is not sufficient to just add hours or days, unless that time is spent in actual learning (Good & Brophy, 1987).

Before the 1980s, a majority of schools ran two sessions for their students. The morning sessions began at about 7:30 a.m. and ended at 12:30 p.m. Pupils were expected to take a lunch break and return at 1:30 p.m. to continue with the afternoon session which lasted to 3:30 p.m. for the primary schools and 4 p.m. for middle schools. The double session system was abolished by the then-PNDC Secretary for Education in the early 1980s. Thus, instead of 7 hours of instructional time per day, students had 5 hours. Therefore Ghanaian basic schools – which were doing about 1,085 hours per annum if factored by an average of 31 weeks of the school year before 1981 – had a drastic reduction to about 775 hours per annum. Currently 1,224 schools representing 6.5% of the school population still operate the shift system (MOE, 2002). It was not surprising that one of the World Bank conditions for loans given to the government called for an increase in instructional time in the middle 1990s.

A research report of school review published by the MOE (1995) indicated that "variations in the length of the school day should be considered, particularly for small children" (p. 8). It further states that "without breakfast, water, canteen or feeding, many children have a near impossible time learning after 11 am" (p. 8). Thus care must be taken not just to increase the length of the school day because it could be counterproductive. If lengthening the school day may not be profitable and the school year is short compared to those of other countries then we are caught in this dilemma, yet policy has not tried out the alternative of varying the school day in a way that will ensure maximum utilization of time available.

A comparative study of the school years in 10 countries reveals that Ghana's school year is among the lowest (Table 7.1). Ghana is next to Nigeria B from the bottom and also is 640 hours lower than Japan, which has the longest school year. From the above information, it is clear that Ghana is second only to Nigeria B in the shortness of its school year, and is 640 hours lower than Japan, which has the highest.

Coupled with these short school years are interruptions that further reduce the effective contact time between teachers and their pupils. The following anecdote reveals the reality of school life for children in rural areas. This is a vivid description of the practical issues on the ground as I witnessed in an educational research team. The following extracts are from the report we wrote for the Ministry of Education based on our research (MOE, 1995).

Table 7.1 Length of School Year (by hours) in selected countries (MOE, 1995)

Country	1st Year	6th Year
Benin	1,080	1,080
Burkina Faso	1,290	1,290
Cameroon	1,024	1,024
Congo	900	900
Ethiopia	1,230	1,230
Ghana	800	800
Nigeria A	1,128	1,128
Nigeria B	666	666
Japan	1,440	1,440
USA	1,080	1,080

After an hour drive on a paved, but crowded highway, our four-wheel drive vehicle turns off and heads towards the village. The slippery red clay makes it apparent that we will not only need four wheel drive, but the "extra power" option that our little Sportage features.… A few men are walking into the village, one of who happens to be a teacher coming to school.… We need not have worried about arriving an hour late, shortly after 9 am, as the Head teacher had not yet been able to make it through the mud on his priced cycle and only three of the seven classes had a teacher present.

We found some 150 children sitting quietly at their desks, waiting patiently in hope that a teacher would teach them that day. No classes had yet started in those rooms with teachers, and it wasn't until shortly before 10 a.m. that the traditional scratching of the blackboards and unison repetition of words and phrases began in earnest. According to the posted schedule, 10:15a.m brought break time, and with the sounding of the bell, the 23 children in the P2/P3 class, who had been sitting quietly at their desks in their outdoor, but in roof covered classroom without a teacher, got up to go and play on the slippery red mud "play ground." No vendors hover around the school selling anything to eat, and while a few head home to get something from their huts, most return to the classroom as hungry as they entered. The J.S.S students mingled around their classrooms, afraid to try out their limited English on the visitors from Accra. After assurances about anonymity and confidentiality, the teachers timidly agreed to fill out our questionnaires and permit us to visit their humble classrooms.

The kindergarten and P1 classes were in an old mud walled building, in a state of terminal disintegration. Preschool children sat on small chairs or lay on the one bamboo mat, reciting patiently after their teacher the foreign sounding words 1,2,3,4,5 and trying to decode the strange symbols a, b, c, d. With little English ability of the teacher teaching the kindergarten class, the children appeared to have no concept of either the basics of numbers or how the strange letters on the chalk board could be connected in any way to anything else in the room to make learning an inviting prospect. It was therefore not surprising to see the class size drop from 40 at the kindergarten level to eleven at the JSS 3. As the P1 children go out for break, the ubiquitous goat family makes its way through the classroom to see if the children have left anything for them to eat. The neighborhood rooster also leads his brood in and out, leaving a few reminders of their presence on the floor.

The P2 class shares one end of the open-air second "building". … In the middle of the open classroom building, separated only by a large blackboard from the other children, the P3/P4 class also awaits its teacher, who arrives at 10:45, just as the children are returning from their break. The teacher spends fifteen minutes writing the story of *The Little Black Cat* on the board and students in both classes participate in the same lesson, with no attempt to differentiate those who may have participated in the curriculum the previous year (MOE, 1995, pp. 33–34).

School days are disrupted by cultural and sport festivals, teachers' meetings, strikes popularly called "ALUTA", etc. "In addition, there was an all too pervasive atmosphere of not ensuring regular teacher and pupil attendance and schools had high teacher and pupil absences" (MOE, 1995, p. 58). The report further indicated that few schools ran very tight shifts, while others started late and ended early. Although teachers and head teachers unanimously denied it, parents, children, and observations confirm that children are being used to collect wood, work on farms and do a range of tasks in the homes of teachers and head-teachers. These practices tend to be more predominant in rural areas. Furthermore some classes have no teachers at all and there are some head teachers who in addition to their administrative responsibilities teach full classes. It is a logical consequence that they will miss certain classes due to overload of work such as attending meetings, covering for other absent teachers, supervising other teachers, and working with the community. The extract below from a school survey carried out by a research team of which I was a member will crystallize the situation.

> Interviewer: Where is the P2/P3 teacher?
> Pupils: Oh, he never comes on Fridays.
> Observation: The children therefore come and sit all day (Rural school in the South)
> Interviewer: Where are the pupils? Isn't this a school day?
> Teacher: Yes, but they are all away on a sports festival today and tomorrow (School in Asante)
> Observation: The Head-teacher of a school in the Northern part of the country had to ride 24km. on his bicycle to pick two registration books (for recording student attendance) from the district office. After hours of riding the unpaved roads he finally got them, but on his way home, the district supervisor drove up in his four wheel vehicle (SUV) to tell him he only needed one of them and took one back. (MOE, 1995)

The narrative below also buttresses the fact that other natural phenomena such as rain disrupts school periods because a good percentage of the infrastructure of schools are not well protected against these natural occurrences.

> The JSS2 class is sitting quietly under the thick spreading tree, due to the fact that their building was blown down in the big rain storm last week. No one was hurt, but the little shelter these children had from the elements had been taken from them. Community members were digging new post holes and putting up new cross beams, at their old classroom site to replace those that had been rotted out over the past few days. Shortly before noon, the wind and rain came down in torrents, with the JSS children all taking shelter under the JSS3 thatched roof 'classroom.' The primary children were on break, when the clouds rolled in ominously, so a quick prayer was said, and the children who lived in the nearby Frontier Ville ran home, missing the final two hours of class. The storm blew over within a half hour, but by then the few children who remained were sitting quietly in their thatched classrooms, surrounded by a sea of mud and water. The officials from Accra had retreated to their four-wheel drive vehicle to attempt to extricate themselves from the morass. On finally making it back on to the main road, it appeared that most of the villages had sent their children home at the appearance of the wind and rain, effectively cutting the school day by one-third. (MOE, 1995, p. 60)

Thus, the historic rise in enrollment figures poses a number of emerging challenges such as high pupil-teacher ratios, large classes, inadequacy of infrastructure, textbooks, teaching learning materials, etc; improving the quality of teacher education

remains critical. Funding the additional 2 years added to basic education (particularly kindergarten education), especially given the push for increasing primary enrollment, could prove challenging. Because this sector is new there is a weak infrastructural base for kindergarten at all levels, there is weak capacity of personnel to implement KG programs. Inadequate community involvement in educational provision places more responsibility on central government. In 2005, 4% of the total expenditures on education was directed to kindergarten education (Baiden-Amissah, 2006). There are still long distances and natural impediments to schooling, which are more of a problem in rural areas. Trained teachers are not available in adequate numbers. In addition trained teachers, and particularly female trained teachers who act as key role models to young girls, are not adequately deployed in rural areas.

Cumulative Impact of Factors

The cumulative impact of all the above factors is school failure. In this subsection empirical evidence of different measures of school failure will be discussed. The opening words in a speech delivered by the then-minister of education, Harry Sawyer, at a one-day National Forum on Basic Education to the year 2000 in 1994 for about 150 stakeholders spells out unequivocally the recognition by government of school failure.

> Since 1988 we have been able to reorganize the financing and rehabilitated the infrastructure of the education system. But today we see that that is not enough. In spite of the excellent work that has been started, pupils are not learning what is expected. The greater majority of primary 6 pupils are functionally illiterate in English and Mathematics. Without functional literacy pupils won't gain comprehension and skills in other subjects, they will not be prepared for the world of work. How can we justify continuing expenditures on expanding a system that doesn't lead to learning? Reaching a target of universal participation in primary schooling is not a sensible goal unless that participation leads to learning and skills. To examine strategies for providing effective basic education, to revitalize the teaching and learning in the schools – this is the focus of our policies, and of this forum. (MOE, 1994a, p. 3)

The summoning of this national forum came immediately after two important assessment events took place in Ghana. First, the first cohort of JSS graduates promoted wholesale from primary 6 at the start of the reform program in 1987 had run the full length of 3 years of JSS and 3 years of SSS. They had sat for the terminal examination, SSCE, and the results were deplorable. Of 42,105 students who took the examination in 1993, 3.9% passed in nine subjects and 12.9% in seven or more subjects. Only 1,354 of the total of 42,105 candidates qualified to enter universities (MOE, 1994b). Although university entry requirements should not be used as the measure of the success or failure of a reform program, the educational system pretty much operates on the phenomenon I described earlier as "stay the full course and pass or be damned." The educational system therefore emphasizes academic achievement and access through secondary school to university as its ultimate goal.

No program exists for terminal students and dropouts at the JSS and SSS levels. Hence the great majority of school pupils and their parents measure success in terms of examination performance and judge the reform on the basis of examination results. Based on this measure, the reform was found wanting.

Second was the result of a 1992 nationwide Criterion Reference Test (CRT) program based on the Ghanaian school syllabi in math and English administered to 11,488 sixth graders. Only 1.1% correctly answered more than 55% of the items in mathematics. On the English items only 2% answered more than 60% of the questions correctly (MOE/USAID, 1995). The performance was so low that the educational authorities were very reluctant to make it public. The results first came to light through a nongovernmental, noneducational body, the Institute of Economic Affairs. Those who had firmly criticized the government's rushed pace of reform had been justified and the government had to find a face-saving action by calling for a review of it through a national forum. Performance has progressively increased to 8.7% in English and 4.0% in Math by 1999, respectively (Ghana Education Service, 2000).

The poor performance of pupils in English proficiency was corroborated by the research findings of CRIQPEG. Results from CRIQPEG Phase 1 Study (1995) suggested that many Ghanaian pupils were experiencing difficulty meeting expectations of the educational system and that children did not have the opportunity to acquire even basic language skills. Classroom observations revealed that children were not interacting with the teacher, classmates, or written materials in ways that would promote English language fluency and literacy. Classroom-based research conducted by CRIQPEG at the University of Cape Coast indicated that a substantial proportion of the children at all grade levels were nonliterate (i.e., unable to read 30% of the words in a primary school passage). Even at grade 5, 40–50% of the children were unable to decode typical passages from the 2nd, 3rd, 4th and 5th grade books. Only about one-sixth of the grade 4 children and one-third of the grade 5 children could decode with at least 70% accuracy (CRIQPEG, 1995; Harris & Pasigna, 1994; Schubert, 1993; Yakubu, 1993).

> In 1997, a screening test was administered to 300 BS1 and BS2 pupils in 12 out of the 55 primary schools in Cape Coast to identify those who were encountering difficulties in learning and performing far below their grade-level expectation. Of those students, 59.9% were identified as low-performing in writing and drawing, 79.8% in reading, and 57.4% in spelling. (Godwyll & Hefasona, 1997)

In an assessment of the written expression of 150 JSS3 pupils from 10 out of 28 schools in 3 suburbs in the Accra metropolis, 94.6% and 34.7% of the sample had lower-than-average performance on the Index of Diversity and Type Token Ratio (TTR), respectively. The Index of Diversity measures the average number of words between each occurrence of the most frequently used word in a written sample; TTR measures the ratio of different words used by students in a sentence to the total number of words in a sentence (Godwyll & Mensah, 1997).

Another study which assessed fluency of written expression among JSS3 students in the Cape Coast municipality supported the above findings (Godwyll & Yelkpieri, 1997). This study covered 34% of all the JSS schools in the study area

and involved 168 pupils. In this study fluency is defined as the quality of verbal output that also is age related. It states that the average sentence length of an 8-year-old child is eight words and this increases by 1 word per year through age 13. Thus any deviation of more than 2 words indicates a problem. The results of the study indicated that the verbal output of 52% of the sample did not match their age (Godwyll & Yelkpieri, 1997).

The conclusions of another study carried out by Godwyll and Essiaw (1997) among 252 BS6 female pupils from 24 out of the 55 primary schools in Cape Coast municipality to identify their problems in Mathematics indicated that as much as 80% of the sample of suffered from what Bloom (1965) described as "cumulative deficit syndrome." That is the tendency for a person to drop below the average performance level of one's age, which results in a situation, for example, in which by the 8th grade these low achievers lie about 3 years behind their grade norms in reading, arithmetic, and academic skills. This was the situation of the majority of the BS6 female pupils: 80% of the items on the curriculum-based test was selected from the BS4 and BS5 textbooks, yet the pupils failed to score. This implies an accumulation of deficits from the lower classes (Godwyll & Essiaw, 1997). Because mathematics is a spiral subject requiring the mastering of lower-order level skills for the learning of higher-order skills, these pupils will continue to have problems in mathematics unless an effective intervention program is planned for them.

However, even with the introduction of a new structure and system of education there is still concern that the nation is not reaping the benefits. The new educational structure that has been put in place came with an increase in volume of quality inputs and more school facilities resulting in increased enrollments. Yet the educational reforms of 1987 had limited success in delivering quality teaching and learning outcomes. As reported in a policy document on education, the lack of access, poor quality and economic constraints make the policy more of a promise than a reality (MOE, 1995). Pupil achievement continues to be very disappointing and enrollments are also problematic:

> Gross enrolments at the primary and junior secondary school levels stand at 78 and 61 percent respectively. Enrolments in the Northern Regions range up to 30 percent lower. In some areas of the Northern Region, girls comprise only 21 percent of the primary enrolments and as little as 10 percent of the junior secondary population.… The results of the 1992 – 1994 National Criterion Referenced Tests in BS6 showed how serious the problem of quality is at this level: fewer than 5 percent of the students tested demonstrated command of English and Mathematics at acceptable levels of achievement. (MOE, 1995, p. 12)

The Ministry of Education has identified the following as some of the reasons for the weak learning results:

- Lack of learning material; even where these materials were available, teachers often did not make use of textbooks, equipment and other learning materials
- Inadequate funding by Government on nonsalary recurrent expenses
- High levels of pupil and teacher absenteeism
- Insufficient use of teacher-pupil instructional contact hours
- Ineffective preservice teacher training and inadequate in-service teacher training to introduce teachers to new curriculum

- Unmotivated teachers due to unattractive incentives, ineffective sanctions, and poor social appreciation of the roles of teachers
- An overly ambitious curriculum burdensome to both teachers and pupils
- Noninteractive mode of teaching
- Weak supervision, both in school and by district/circuit supervisors and inspectors
- Lack of workshops, equipment, and qualified technical teachers for JSS (MOE, 1995).

The data on a study I conducted as part of my dissertation throws further light on the dichotomy between urban and rural students and their chances at school success. This section of the study sought to find out the performances of two groups of pupils and show their interactions with some identified independent variables, namely locality, gender, preschool experience, attendance of private or public schools, age, and dominant language use. The first group comprised 24 academically Strong pupils and the second group 36 Weak pupils, for a total of 60 subjects (Godwyll, 2003). The relationships among these are shown in Figs. 7.1 and 7.2.

Figure 7.1 shows that the 24 high performing children had high English-language usage, were from urban schools, and were between 5 and 7 years of age. Additionally 91.7% of them had early childhood education; of those, 36.4% were from the private schools. It may be interesting to study the structure and operations of the private school system to identify the strengths that can be learned by the public school system. I observed that there were more trained teachers in the public schools than in the private ones, at least in the classes I worked with, but the private schools had stronger teacher supervision practices and demanded higher accountability
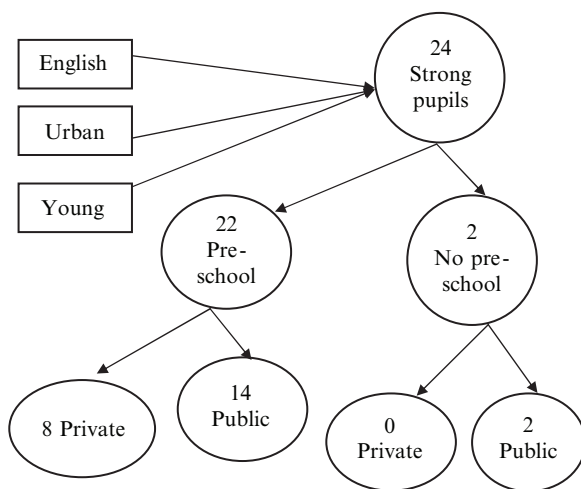
Fig. 7.1 Pattern among strong pupils (Godwyll, 2003)
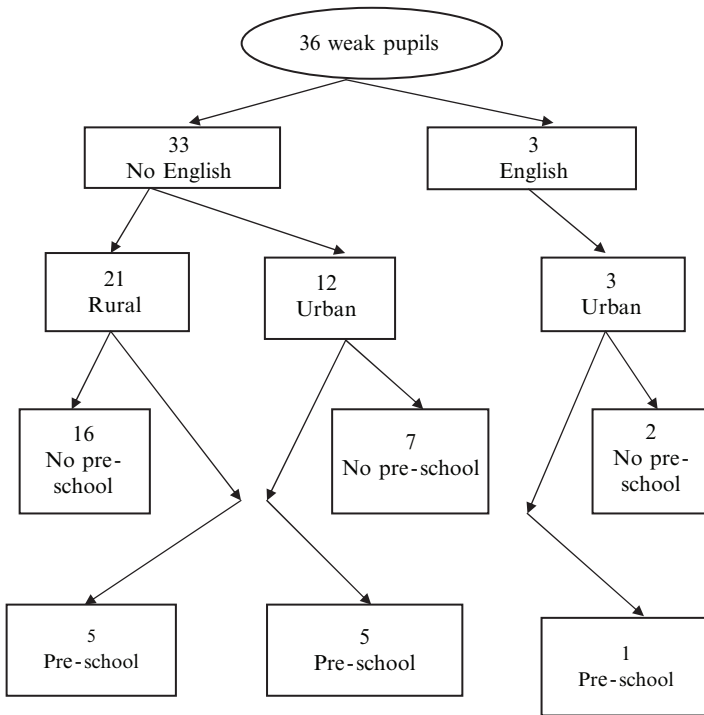
Fig. 7.2 Pattern among weak pupils (Godwyll, 2003)

from teachers for performance. Thus, Ghanaian students who possess higher English language ability, have preschool experience, attend an urban school, and attend a private school have a better chance at school success.

Interestingly all the Weak students in the sample were from the public school system. Of these, 33 (91.7%) were low in English. Only 8.3% were high English users and all were from the urban schools. Among the low English users, 63.6% were from rural settings and 36.4% were from the urban schools. Among those who had preschool experience, 27.8% were low in English and 2.8% had high English The majority of the 36 pupils, 69.4%, had no preschool experience. Out of this percentage without preschool experience, 69.7% were low in English. Again the majority of the pupils without preschool experience, 72.7%, were from rural schools versus 28.3% from the urban schools. Age and gender did not play a significant role in these clusters; as such they were left out (Godwyll, 2003).

It is clear from the above analyses that a rural child has a higher tendency to use lower-level English a higher chance of not having preschool experience, and is more likely to perform lower. Thus preschool experiences as well as ability to use English were strong determinants of performance among this sample, which confirms the pattern already emphasized in the conclusion for the Strong group.

These determinants of school success tilt in favor of the urban child to the disadvantage of the rural child (Godwyll, 2003).

Interestingly, the demographic distribution of poverty in the country follows a similar pattern. The Central region, from which 95.6% of the sample was selected, is one of three regions with an increased index of poverty in the 1990s at a ratio of 1 out of 2. Food farmers, the majority of whom live in rural areas, experience high incidence of poverty. It has been argued that poverty in Ghana is not only rural but also largely agricultural in nature. Inhabitants of rural areas, though about two-thirds of the country's population, constitute four-fifths of total poverty. Food crop farmers, about two-fifths of the population, constitute a high three-fifths of total poverty, yet they contribute 41.4% of GDP (Dittoh & Ankomah, 1997; Dittoh et al., 1998; Republic of Ghana, 1998, 1999, 2000).

Ghana has a basically agrarian economy, which also engages the majority of her workforce, but denies this majority their fair share of the national wealth. If the education system, which is supposed to fuel the development of human resources, charts the same course as the poverty dynamics, then a breakthrough in the cycle of poverty is far from been realized. Education will then become a tool for the production and reproduction of an elite majority and the realization of the right of every child to quality education will remain a far-fetched dream (Godwyll, 2003).

Attempts to Remedy Inadequacies

In the mid 1990s the government of Ghana embarked on further reforms to address some of the identified problems limiting the impact of the 1987 education reform program. A new agenda for educational reform has been drawn under the program acronym *FCUBE* (Free Compulsory and Universal Basic Education). A background paper for the National Educational Forum described the FCUBE program as planned for implementation in a 10-year period from 1996 to 2005, but is to be implemented in two 5-year phases, from 1996 to 2000 and 2001–2005 (MOE, 2000a). Policies and strategic plans of the FCUBE Program indicates that it addresses three major goals namely; improving the quality of basic education services, the efficiency of the education system; and access to basic education services (Fobih et al., 1996; MOE, 2000b).

Measures that have been planned to improve the quality of teaching and learning processes in basic education schools (Primary 1–6 and JSS 1–3) are targeted at increasing the pass rate for admission into second-cycle schools (senior secondary and technical/vocational schools) to 80% by 2005. By the same year, it is expected that at least 70% of Primary 6 pupils will meet minimum acceptable standards of performance on a national criterion-referenced test (MOE, 1996).

According to the FCUBE policy document, repetition and dropout rates will be reduced substantially. Targets of 1% reductions annually at each grade level have been established. The reform also will increase the accuracy and relevancy of data to be used to monitor performance results at the district and local levels.

Basic education services are to be expanded for all school-age children, but especially for girls and pupils living in disadvantage areas. The Ministry of Education has established a target for 2005 of equalizing gender balance in the number of entrants to Primary 1 nationally and of reducing the gender differential in P6 completion and JSS 1 entry by 50% compared to present level. The program is committed to universalizing entry to first grade by the year 2000 and to achieving an overall 95% completion rate at P6 by 2005. The proportion of the relevant age group entering JSS is expected to reach 95% by 2005, with 85% completion for JSS 3 in the same year (MOE, 1995). All these targets and projections have not yet been met.

Deputy Minister for Education Baiden-Amissah made the following suggestions in a 2006 speech:

- Reaching the vulnerable and excluded.
- Strong government commitment, backed by a strategic vision and policy framework for the education sector that has the support of other key ministries like finance, local government, women and children's affairs, and health, among others.
- The establishment of inclusive, effective partnerships, domestic and international, which will help to build a strong constituency for education. This should be government-led.
- More predictable flows of aid from both government and main funding agencies that will enable the government to improve planning and implementation. Timely, flexible donor support is a critical factor.
- Maintaining the political commitment to further increase budgetary allocation to the education sector as a whole and primary schooling especially, leading to a rise in the share of primary education and real per-pupil spending.
- Addressing concerns of parents with regard to what motivates them to send their children to school, and how to keep them there.
- Mainstreaming gender equality through the development of all policies, strategies, and institutional practices to ensure that boys and girls are accorded equal opportunity.
- Strengthening decentralization for the management of schools, and for the spending of at least some resources, to the local level, including by school managers. Also, strengthening the capacity of institutions for planning, management, monitoring, and accountability.
- Ensuring access and inclusion of all children.
- Improving quality of education.
- Expanding basic health care to deal with some of the common diseases that afflict school children, namely malaria, pneumonia, diarrhea, guinea worm, etc., in order to have healthy minds in healthy bodies.
- Taking action on emerging issues like HIV/AIDS, child trafficking, and child labor
- In addition to the suggestions made by Baiden-Amissah the decision by government to make available model high schools in every district on a planned schedule is a major effort to bring quality education to the doorsteps of the poor.

- A reevaluation of length of school year as well to allow less endowed school districts to have additional time to complete the school curriculum before taking the graduation examination could be considered.
- School terms could also be varied to allow students to be at home during peak harvest seasons for farming areas and peak fishing seasons for those along the coast.
- Some schools could start late, others could close early, and others could have a 4-day school week and make that up with more weeks in school to meet the minimum number that will be set by the Ministry of Education and the Ghana Education Service. The bottom line is rearranging school times to fit into the demands of varying communities so that school attendance is not negatively impacted.
- Since direct and indirect cost of education was presenting a problem to parents, especially poor ones, the government through the capitation grants and school feeding projects is absorbing this cost to relieve parents so that this does not become a hindrance to their children's participation in school (Godwyll, 2007).

Conclusion

Despite changes in the curriculum and structure of education there is indication that the quality of education at the basic first-cycle level is still unsatisfactory. The reasons numerated above are some of the key issues that are considered critical among others and need attention to improve the quality of basic education in Ghana. In sum, a real dichotomy in the chances of Ghanaian children at school success is drawn. No wonder the research team that reviewed the basic sector of Ghanaian education in 1995 titled their report The Tale of Two Ghana's: A View from the Classrooms (MOE, 1995). This dichotomy has serious implications for educational policy, planning, and practice in Ghana.

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Chapter 8
How China Best Educates Its Ethnic Minority Children: Strategies, Experience and Challenges

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Introduction: The Multiethnic China

China, with a territory of 9,600,000 km² and 1.3 billion people (National Bureau of Statistics of China, 2001, 2003b), is a vast and the most populous country in the world. From the hinterlands of the north to the lush jungles in the south, from the mountains of Taiwan in the east to the top of the world in the west, China is home to 56 official ethnic groups. The largest group, Han, makes up over 92% of the population, and it is the Han civilization that the world considers to be Chinese culture. Yet the 55 ethnic minorities nestled away on China's vast frontiers maintain their own languages and rich traditions and customs (Chinese Culture Center of San Francisco, 2007). The 104.49 million ethnic minority people account for 8.41% of the nation's total population (Information Office of China's State Council, 2005). The five largest ethnic minority groups (Tian, 1991) are Zhuang (15 million), Manchu (9.8 million), Moslems or Hui (8.6 million), Miao (7.4 million), and Uygur or Weiwu'er (7.2 million). While the Han are concentrated mainly in the Northeast Plain and the middle and lower reaches of the three major rivers (the Yellow, Yangtze, and Pearl rivers), 95% of the minority population lives in the underdeveloped northwest, west and southwest border regions of China, which account for 64% of the nation's territory and boast the richest natural resources of minerals, grazing land, forests and water. Except for Hui and Manchu, who speak Mandarin as Han does, all other 53 minorities have their own languages, which amounts to a total of more than 70 tongues (Xinhua, 2005b).

In the 1950s, five provinces with large minority populations were designated as autonomous minority nationality regions: Xinjiang, Inner-Mongolia, Tibet, Ningxia, and Guangxi. This constitutes the basic principles of Chinese ethnic relations: equality, respect, solidarity, and mutual assistance (Wangden, 2006). It means increased local control over the administration of resources, taxes, birth planning, education, legal jurisdiction, and religious expression. The central government would provide social and cultural services, including education.

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Because of historical factors (feudal society, religion, and wars) and geographical remoteness, the socioeconomic development in minority-inhabited areas falls far behind Han regions. Prior to 1950s, the illiteracy rate among ethnic minorities was often over 95%, compared to the 80% overall illiteracy rates in China (Law, 2006). Fifty years ago, only 10% of school-age children attended school in Ningxia, 97% of the people in Tibet were illiterate, and there were only 16 secondary schools in Inner Mongolia (Information Office of the State Council, 2000). Even in the 2000s, 80% of the nation's poverty is found in minority areas, which also shelter most of the illiterate and semi-illiterate populations in China. The Per capita income for two cities in minority areas, Qinghai (4,426 yuan) and Ningxia (5,804 yuan) is much lower than that of Beijing (28,449 yuan) and Shanghai (40,646 yuan) (National Bureau of Statistics of China, 2002b). In 2003, the per capita net income of rural residents in Xinjiang and Tibet was 2,106.19 yuan and 1,690.76 yuan respectively, equivalent to 80.32% and 64.48% of that of rural residents nationwide (Information Office of China's State Council, 2005). Fifty percent of the counties in minority regions have 10–15% illiteracy rates, while other areas in China have less than 5% illiteracy (Ministry of Education, n.d.a.). The average education received by people in the east is 10 years and 9 months, compared to 3 years and 6 months for people in the west (Liu, 2005). Poverty plus illiteracy have hindered the economic, social, and educational development in minority areas for centuries.

Disparities in educational resources and student achievement exist between the majority and minority groups in China. Since the founding of the People's Republic of China in 1949, the Chinese government has given top priority to the education of minority population, providing various funds and adopting a series of preferential policies and strategies to improve minority education and to help the ethnic minority areas develop their own educational systems. While these efforts have made tremendous and unprecedented progress and impact on minority education, there are still many unanswered questions and unsolved problems. This chapter, focusing on the reform efforts since the 1980s, outlines the current status of minority education in China, overviews the policies and strategies employed, and discusses the effectiveness of these reforms and the challenges that still exist.

Policies and Strategies to Improve Minority Education

Beginning in the mid-1980s, China initiated many fundamental education reforms to enhance the quality of its labor force for economic development at the lower, middle, and top occupational strata, including minority education. The education of minorities in China has developed considerably during the past 20 years. A fairly complete minority education system has been established, which has greatly increased the literate population. This system with Chinese characteristics consists of early childhood, basic education (primary and secondary), vocational and technical education, and adult and higher education. For example, the Tibet Autonomous Region now offers early childhood, primary, and secondary education, continuing through tertiary education.

The system also offers specialized ethnic personnel training and adult education for local communities. Schools teach in ethnic languages and use textbooks written in ethnic languages as well. According to the State Ethnic Affairs Commission (Xinhua, 2005a), 90,704 primary schools, 11,486 secondary schools, and 92 higher education institutions had been founded in ethnic regions by 2004. There were 21.35 million ethnic students enrolled in elementary schools, high schools, and colleges nationwide, up 13.48% from 1999. The numbers of those in middle schools and colleges reached 6.76 million and 807,300 the same year, up 31.47% and 69.31% respectively over 1999. The number of full-time ethnic minority teachers reached about 1.025 million in 2004, up 11.36% over 1999 (Xinhua, 2005a).

In addition, an established administrative system of ethnic education at various levels has played a positive and supportive role in promoting and managing the development of education in ethnic minority areas (see Fig. 8.1).
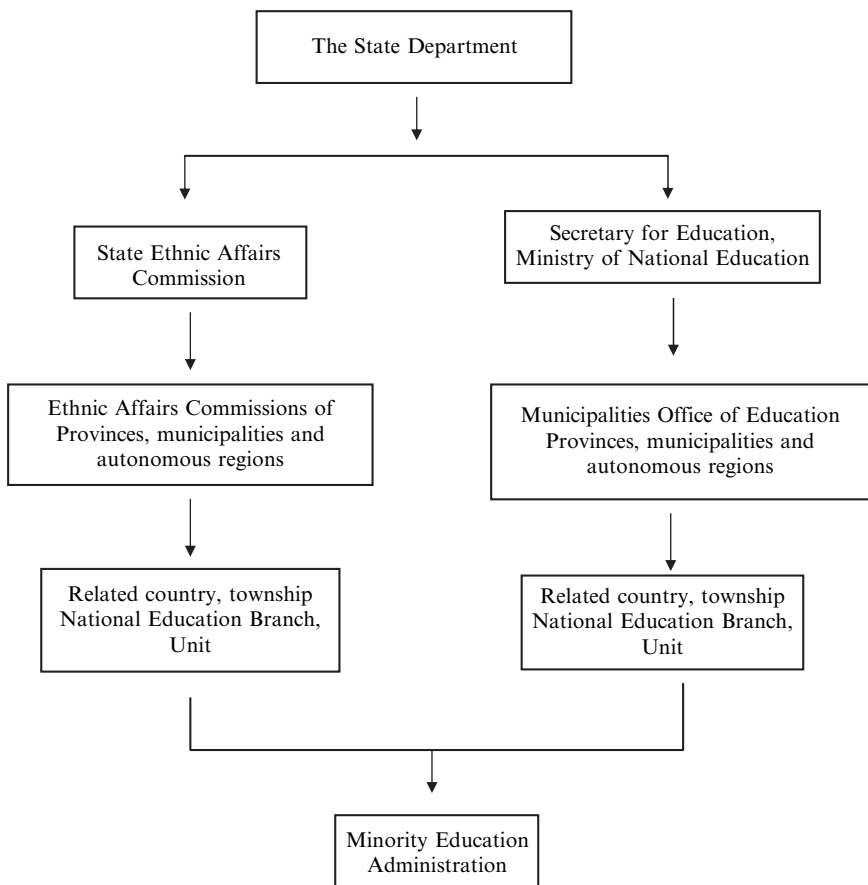
Fig. 8.1 The system of Chinese Ethnic Education Administration (State Ethnic Affairs Commission of PRC, 1952).

Major policies and strategies implemented to support minority education in China and to narrow the gap between minority and majority include increasing educational opportunities for minority children through flexible and various ways of schooling, bilingual instructions, recruitment and training of minority teachers and salary increases for them in minority regions, various state funds, and several preferential policies – affirmative action for university admission (Johnson & Chhetri, 2002).

Legislation: Eradication of Illiteracy and Universalization of Basic Education

As the 3rd National Census in 1982 showed, 235 million people, or 23.5% of the population, were illiterate or semi-illiterate (National Bureau of Statistics of China, 1982). As this became one of the obstacles to economic development, two major education goals were set in 1985 to inculcate basic literacy and numeracy skills.

The eradication of illiteracy among people age 15 and above to less than 5% by the end of the 20th century was the first goal. Various literacy programs were set up, monitored, and evaluated at national, provincial, prefectures, and country levels. Full-time teachers were employed by townships to teach these classes, assisted by teachers from primary and secondary schools. The Ministry of Finance and Ministry of Education raised and provided various funds for these literacy programs. Also monetary awards were given to excellent literacy programs. Every 2 years a total of 5 million yuan in awards were given to excellent teachers and administrators of literacy programs. As a result of this initiative, the illiteracy rate was reduced to less than 4% in 2004 according to Ministry of Education (Xinhua, 2005c), while minority population illiteracy was down to 10–15% or below. The existing illiterates are located mainly in remote rural and mountain areas inhabited by ethnic minorities, which is quite a challenge because the population is scattered and migrates often.

To keep illiteracy rates low and decrease school dropout rates, the universalization of basic education or the 9-year basic compulsory education for children ages 6–15 was initiated in 1986 (Sixth National People's Congress, 1986). To support these two initiatives, child labor was forbidden in 1991 by law. Ethnic autonomous regions were key targets for 9-year basic compulsory education. The government implemented many projects to help fund the initiatives in minority areas such as the Basic Education Development Project in Poor Areas, National Compulsory Education Program for Poor Areas (NCEP) (Zhang et al., 2004). Eighty-three percent of the school-age children in Xinjiang, Tiber, Ningxia, and Qinghai receive free textbooks and are exempted from school fees. In rural areas of Tibet, children receive free meals on top of exemptions from school and textbook fees. All these efforts helped secure the right to compulsory education of school-aged children in poor rural minority areas.

According to the 2000 census, Chinese children above age 15 had received an average of 7.85 years of schooling, an increase of 5.3 years from 1982 (National

Bureau of Statistics of China, 2003a). In minority areas the average length of education was 7.2 years in 2005 (Ministry of Education, 2006). In the 1990s, the Korean minority achieved the goal of compulsory education for the entire population. With the enrollment rate of school-aged children reaching 100%, Korean minority took the lead in the 9-year compulsory education in the country (Xu, 2004).

State Funding to Promote Equity in Minority Education

Commitment to funding minority education is one of the Chinese government's major ethnic minority policies (State Ethnic Affairs Commission of PRC, 2004a). Since 1990, the Chinese government has established various major funds to prompt equity and support to minority education. The National Compulsory Education Program for Poor Areas (NCEP) was a major one. Of the 39 billion yuan in the fund, 22 billion went to the 12 underdeveloped western regions and provinces; another 1.3 billion supported children from ethnic groups with financial difficulties (Ministry of Education, 2006). In addition, the government allocated special funds to support teacher education and vocational and technical education in minority and impoverished regions. Four World Bank project loans totaling $200 million helped building and renovating dilapidated school buildings in 200 minority counties. From 1996 to 2001, the Chinese government dedicated funds to strengthen higher education in minority areas through a series of education projects, such as the minority poverty reduction project and the "211" project, which is the largest government investment aimed at strengthening about 100 institutions of higher education and key disciplinary areas as a national priority for the 21st century (State Council, 2001). Universities in minority areas, such as the Central University for Nationalities, Inner Mongolia University, the University of Yunnan, Guangxi University, and Yanbian University were among the institutions that benefited from the 211 project, which helped with campus building construction and computer networks. Recently, the central government allocated 30 billion yuan to renovate dilapidated primary and secondary school buildings in minority areas. In the period of the 10th Five-Year Plan, the government invested 50 million yuan to help with improving education in minority areas (Liu, 2005; Ministry of Education, 2006).

Flexible and Diverse Forms of Schooling

Another major strategy to promote education in minority areas is to build schools that meet the needs of ethnic minorities (State Ethnic Affairs Commission of PRC, 2004a). To help achieve the two basic goals (eradication of illiteracy and universal basic education) and to meet the needs of minority students, flexible and diverse forms of schooling were adopted. For example, boarding schools were built to attract student enrollment. Because of the vastness of the regions, the scattered

population, the lack of schools in some areas and lack of transportation, it is hard for some children in the northwest area to commute miles to schools daily. To solve this problem, the government dedicated special funds to build large numbers of rural boarding and semiboarding schools in which both teachers and students reside. These funds cover students' living expenses at school, teacher salaries, and school fees. Six thousand boarding schools for ethnic primary and secondary students have been built in autonomous regions with more than 1 million students attending total. The boarding schools not only helped to increase the enrollment of school-age children in remote areas, but also helped to equally distribute primary and secondary schools in minority areas. Boarding school has become the main schooling system for China's ethnic minorities in pastoral and the mountainous areas. The central government invested 100 billion yuan for "Rural Boarding School Project" from 2004 to 2007 (Ministry of Education, 2005c).

To accommodate minority religious beliefs, girls-only schools have been founded in some areas to encourage parents to send their daughters to school. For example, in 1986, Hairu Girl Middle School, a Muslim girls' school, was founded in Tongxin County of Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region. Because girls school respects the religious beliefs of Muslim families and young women, the enrollment rate of girls in this community increased from 40% in 1984 to 75.6% in 2004 (Ma, 2002; Ministry of Education, 2005a). The region also tries to hire female principals and teachers for girls' schools and allows girls to bring younger siblings to classes with them (Cai, 2005). Similar girls' schools were established in many other minority regions, such as Guangxi, to increase girls' school enrollment. Schools with flexible schedules and informal forms, such as half day and every other day schedules, can be found.

By 2004, 474 of the country's 699 autonomous counties, or 67.8%, had achieved the two basic goals (Xinhua, 2005a). The illiteracy rate in minority regions had dropped to less than 15% (Xinhua, 2005c). The enrollment rate of school-age children has increased steadily in most minority areas. In Tibet, primary school enrollment has increased from 85.8% to 95.9% and the rate of secondary school enrollment has increased from 32% to 75.4% (China Education Statistics, 2006).

Bilingual Instruction and Textbooks

The Article 4 of the constitution of the PRC states clearly that each ethnic group has the right and freedom to use and develop their own spoken and written languages (Fifth National People's Congress, 1982). The Compulsory Education Law explicitly states that schools with majority minority enrollment may use minority languages for instruction (Sixth National People's Congress, 1986). Acknowledging that language carries important cultural knowledge and that native languages help minorities inherit and preserve their cultural values and beliefs (Lin, 1997), the use of ethnic local language in school instruction has been encouraged. In minority regions, most schools use both ethnic language and Mandarin as instructional

languages. Twenty-nine ethnic groups with some 10,000 schools and 6 million students have conducted classroom instruction in Mandarin and ethnic languages, e.g. Mongolian, Tibetan, Uygur, Korean, Miao, Zhuang, Buyi, Dong, etc. (State Ethnic Affairs Commission of PRC, 2006). Huang (2003) said bilingual instruction of the minorities in China roughly falls into two types. On one hand are the bilingual programs of Mongolian, Tibetan, Uygur, Kazak, and Korean, in which all courses are conducted in the mother tongue and Mandarin Chinese is taught as a subject. There also are programs in which courses are taught in Mandarin Chinese and the mother tongue is taught either as a subject or used as an auxiliary language of instruction. Huang's study (2003) proved that bilingual instruction in the mother tongue is much more effective than instruction solely conducted in Mandarin Chinese. However, the study also found that minority children lack enthusiasm for learning in their mother tongue because they believe that ethnic languages won't help them advance in society, whereas mastery of Mandarin Chinese will.

To assist bilingual instructions, ethnic education publishing companies appeared in Mongolia, Xinjian, Jilin, Qinghai, Sichuan, and many other ethnic regions to publish textbooks and instruction materials in local ethnic languages. The annual publication of ethnic language textbooks reached 3,500 titles with about 1 billion volumes (State Ethnic Affairs Commission of PRC, 2006).

The implementation of bilingual education has made teaching and learning in schools more effective, and promoted the implementation of the nation's education policy in ethnic minority regions.

Teacher Recruitment and Training

Knowing that the priority for the development and advancement of ethnic education is to have qualified minority teachers who could meet the needs of the children, education administrations at all levels have done everything possible to invest in teacher training since the mid-1980s.

Efforts have been made to recruit and train adequate number of qualified ethnic-language-speaking teachers, including encouraging college graduates to go to teach in minority areas. Professional development courses and half-time training programs have been offered to in-service teachers in minority areas. Since 2000, 400,000 teachers from minority areas have participated in the training. Other efforts to recruit quality teachers for ethnic minorities include founding teacher training institutions in ethnic minority regions and communities, e.g. normal universities, 2-year normal colleges, and normal secondary schools; and establishing ethnic teacher training centers in major universities, e.g. Northwest Normal University, Beijing Normal University, etc. At present, there are more than 40 ethnic teacher colleges and 110 secondary ethnic normal schools in China (State Ethnic Affairs Commission of PRC, 2004c).

Another initiative to provide teachers to minority schools is the linking of college admissions with future employment in minority regions (Ming, 2006a). Students in

this program agree at the time of college admission to work in minority regions for 5 years after graduation; in return they receive scholarships and free tuition for their college studies. In addition, the China Teachers Legislation enacted in 1993 stipulated that graduates from teacher education programs will receive subsidies if they choose to teach in minority and remote areas of the country (Ming, 2006b).

By 2005, there were 1.4 million full-time ethnic minority teachers in all types of schools at all levels across the country (State Ethnic Affairs Commission of PRC, 2004c). These efforts improved the situation, but a shortage of qualified teachers still exists.

Eastern and Western Regions: Partnership and Support

In 2000, the State Council initiated some projects to encourage urban schools to pair up with rural schools and urban inland cities to pair with rural western counties to support minority education development (Ministry of Education, 2000, 2001). The guidelines called for help to schools and regions that did not meet the two basic goals through establishment of sister schools, provision of funding, instructional equipment, and materials, offering on-campus programs for minority students, and conducting professional development for minority teachers and administrators.

In 2 years, schools in the east regions sent to the west some 18,000 teachers and administrators, funding of 1842.9 million yuan, 14,619 computers, 1,18 million pieces of clothes, 6.49 million books, 410,000 pieces of stationery, 60,000 pieces of instructional equipment, 80,000 desks and chairs, 13 sets of laboratory equipment, and 11 computer assisted learning labs, and had sponsored 13,211 minority students (Xinhua, 2002; "To improve education," 2002). Eastern schools also trained some 1,400 minority teachers and administrators ("To improve education," 2002). Zhejiang province in the east region allocated 40 million yuan annually to support minority education (Zhejiang Minority Commission, 2005).

Since 1984 Tibet programs and schools have been established in about 20 developed Han provinces and cities. A total of 33,100 students from middle school through college graduated from special Tibet programs. The 14,000 Tibet college graduates went back to their hometown and became major forces in social and economic development of Tibet (Li, 2007).

In the past 10 years, 20,000 Xinjiang students from middle school to college graduated from programs for them in Han provinces and cities. Programs for Xinjiang students can be found in Beijing, Tianjing, Shanghai, Nanjing, and other major cities in China (Cao, 2006).

Preferential Policies for Minority Students

It is believed that one of the reasons that minority areas lag in social economic development is the shortage of professionals and leaders with expertise and skills. To narrow the gap between eastern and western regions, to raise the living conditions

of people in ethnic regions, and to assist the development of higher education in these areas, the Chinese government has had a number of preferential policies for minority recruitment in college since 1950s (State Ethnic Affairs Commission, 2004a, b). Giving minority student priorities and preferences for admission with similar qualifications and flexible admission requirements (lower admission scores) for minority students are two examples. The number of scores to be lowered for minority student admission depends on universities and regions and varies from 40 to 80 points (Ministry of Education, n.d.b) on national entrance examinations.

In 1980, the Ministry of Education and the State Ethnic Affairs Commission announced that college admission of minority students should follow merit admission plus appropriate ratio. The ratio of admission of minority students should not be lower than the ratio of minority population in that region (Ministry of Education, 2004b, c). Some regions implemented affirmative action in minority admissions and set up annual quotas for minority recruitment in colleges. In Guangxi Autonomous Region, the regional higher education institutions had a minority enrollment of more than 90% (later changed to 80%) annually. The local colleges and universities in Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region had 20% minority enrollment each year.

Also acknowledging that students whose primary language is not Mandarin are in disadvantageous positions when they take national entrance examinations in Mandarin, the Chinese government passed the Law of Regional Minority stipulating that examinations should be given to minority students in their native languages (Sangay, 1998). If these students do take entrance examinations in Mandarin, bonus points are added to their final scores (Johnson & Chhetri, 2002). They do have the choice of taking this exam in their mother tongues.

Universities offer college preparation programs for minority students, which teach them English, computers, Chinese, and math for a year before letting them start college classes (Ministry of Education, 2005b, n.d.b). Currently, more than 100 colleges and universities have set up ethnic matriculation classes and ethnic classes in the country with an annual enrollment of 20,000 students (Ding, 2007). Target admission program enrolls students from underdeveloped regions and provides scholarship to them for their college study under the condition that they agree to work for 5 years in their hometown after graduation. The purpose is to provide these regions with skilled people for economic development and break the vicious circle.

The latest news on 2007 university admission of minority students reports that all the preferential policies discussed above are still in place (Jiang, 2007).

Challenges

Minority education in China has made significant achievement in the past 20 years due to the efforts, policies, and various strategies reviewed (China Internet Information Center, 2007). However, the development of minority education is still too slow to meet the need of the country's fast economic development and globalization.

The gap between education in minority and other areas in China still exists, and the education in rural minority areas still faces many challenges. Professor Wu (Zhu, 2006) points out that shabby classrooms with falling roofs, unpaid teachers, and shortages of funds and instructional equipments are some words often used to describe western rural schools.

Gaps in Socioeconomic Development and Education

The socioeconomic development of minority regions lags behind other areas in China. A wide gap between rural and urban education is obvious. As discussed earlier, nearly half of the minority areas still need to meet the two basic goals (Xinhua, 2005a, c) – eradication of illiteracy and universal basic education. Resources are needed to improve and reform minority education. The still-developing economy in China, especially in minority areas, makes it hard to completely universalize basic education and eliminate illiteracy because it limits the resources and available funds to carry out these tasks. Poverty and illiteracy always come together and feed each other, and this circle needs to be broken.

Tables 8.1–8.5 show major discrepancies and gaps between living standards and education in minority regions and the rest of the nation. The per capita income of minority groups is much lower than that of other areas in the nation; the use of technology, Internet, and telephone is much less popular in minority regions than in other parts of the nation. In minority regions there are higher rates of school dropout, lower school enrollment, and higher illiteracy rates than other areas. More secondary schools, vocational schools, and higher education institutions are needed to meet the needs of minority education, and more teachers with appropriate qualifications are especially needed for middle and high schools. There are only 53.03% of primary teachers with educations at associate degree and above, and 39.65% middle school teachers with college degrees (Ministry of Education, 2006). It is a challenge to hire and keep qualified teachers for schools in minority regions, especially teachers of music, physical education, fine arts, and foreign languages. The tables below are comparisons between the northwest and western provinces, where most of the Chinese minority population live, with the northeast and eastern provinces, where the majority Han Chinese live.

Incompatibilities: Education and Minorities

There still exist incompatibilities between minority education and minorities' lifestyles, beliefs, and religions in terms of the schooling systems, curriculum, instructional languages, and strategies.

First, for historical reasons, most minorities live in remote and underdeveloped rural regions away from cities and modern amenities with different lifestyles.

Table 8.1 Major economic indicators: Eastern and northwestern provinces, 2002

Provinces	GDP (10,000)	Income per capita (yuan)		Consumption per capita (yuan)		Disposable income per capita (urban)	Per capita net income (rural)
Eastern Provinces							
				Urban	Rural		
Beijing	3,212.71	28,449		11,365	4,390	12,463.92	5,398.48
Shanghai	5,408.76	40,646		16,457	7,516	13,249.88	6,223.55
Guangdong	11,796.73	15,630		10,890	3,001	11,137.20	3,911.90
Jiangsu	10,631.35	14,391		7,742	3,109	8,177.64	3,979.79
Zhejiang	7,796.00	16,838		10,481	4,017	11,715.60	4,940.36
Northwestern Provinces							
Shananxi	2,035.96	5,523		5,837	1,320	6,330.84	1,596.25
Gansu	1,161.43	4,493		5,344	1,078	6,151.44	1,590.30
Xinjiang	1,598.78	8,382		6,257	1,525	6,899.64	1,863.26
Qinhai	329.28	4,426		5,558	1,423	6,170.52	1,668.94
Ningxia	341.11	5,804		5,426	1,404	6,067.44	1,917.66

Figures adopted from National Bureau of Statistics of China, 2002a

Table 8.2 Indicators of socioeconomic development: Northwest minority regions vs. national averages, 2003

Areas	Poverty (%)	Rural per capita income vs. national average (%)	Telephone Use (%)	InternetUse (per 10,000 head) (%)	Human Development Index Rank (in China)
Shaanxi	9.0	65	5.06	3.88	25
Gansu	11.5	63.4	3.78	1.26	28
Qinghai	14.0	65.9	4.43	0.83	29
Ningxia	12.6	79.6	6.97	0.14	26
Xinjiang	8.9	74	6.84	0.80	15
Northwestern areas average		11.2	69.58	5.42	2.58
National average		4.6	100	7	5.42

Figures from National Bureau of Statistics of China, 2004

Nomads, who live in grazing land move about with the change of seasons. This lifestyle becomes a huge inconvenience for children to go to school, hence the low enrollment rate among children of nomads.

Second, the value, culture, and belief systems of minorities sometimes prevent children from going to schools. Some minority parents believe that knowing about their language and religion is more important than learning mathematics and science. Religion and education are not related in the Chinese national curriculum, while in

Table 8.3 Comparison: illiterates and semi-illiterates in 5 eastern and 5 northwestern provinces (person and %)

Areas	Population: ages 15+			Illiterate and semi-illiterate population			Percentage of illiterate/semiliterate of population ages 15+		
	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female
Nationally	921,891	463,566	458,253	140,026	40,341	99,685	15.14	8.81	21.5
Eastern provinces									
Beijing	10,413	5,183	5,230	672	148	524	6.45	2.85	10.01
Shanghai	12,469	6,150	6,318	1,083	206	877	8.68	3.35	13.88
Zhejiang	35,491	17,825	17,666	5,573	1,535	4,041	15.70	8.60	22.87
Jiangsu	56,498	27,705	28,794	9,484	2,165	7,319	16.79	7.82	25.42
Guangdong	50,707	24,958	25,749	4,679	948	3,731	9.23	3.80	14.19
Average							11.37	5.28	17.27
Northwestern provinces									
Shaanxi	26,058	13,259	12,798	4,766	1,589	3,176	18.29	11.99	24.82
Gansu	17,999	9,053	8,947	4,515	1,476	3,139	25.64	16.30	35.09
Qinghai	3,587	1,806	1,781	1,095	355	740	30.52	19.66	41.53
Ningxia	3,764	1,898	1,866	878	283	595	23.52	14.89	31.90
Xinjiang	12,521	6,353	6,168	1,223	469	754	9.77	7.38	12.22
Average							19.55	14.04	29.11

Figures from National Bureau of Statistics of China, 2003a

Table 8.4 Enrollment and dropout rates of school-age children in various regions, 2003 (%)

Regions	Enrollment rate of school-age children				Dropout rate			
	Overall	Male	Female	Gender difference	Overall	Male	Female	Gender difference
National average	99.09	99.13	99.04	0.09	0.90	0.93	0.86	0.07
Eastern areas average	99.72	99.72	99.73	−0.01	0.25	0.26	0.24	0.02
Western areas average	97.86	98.03	97.66	0.36	1.13	1.18	1.07	0.11
Northwestern areas average	97.12	97.63	96.57	1.06	0.85	0.82	0.88	0.06
Shaanxi	99.38	99.34	99.43	−0.09	0.45	0.37	0.53	−0.16
Gansu	98.62	99.10	98.11	1.00	1.33	1.42	1.23	0.19
Qinghai	93.53	94.58	92.39	2.19	1.11	1.04	1.21	−0.17
Ningxia	97.01	98.18	95.74	2.44	0.98	0.87	1.09	0.22
Xinjiang	97.09	96.97	97.21	−0.24	0.39	0.42	0.36	0.06

Figures from Development and Planning Division, Ministry of Education, 2004

Table 8.5 Percentages of full-time teachers with high school or higher education, 2003 (%)

Regions	Primary school teachers w/high school+	Junior high teachers w/associate degree+	High school teachers w/ college degree+
National average	95.90	85.63	65.85
Eastern area average	97.28	88.22	70.98
Northwestern area average	95.54	83.40	55.93
Shaanxi	94.71	77.95	58.41
Gansu	91.59	80.44	52.94
Ningxia	95.30	90.13	68.66
Qinghai	94.31	81.51	46.92
Xinjiang	96.81	86.96	52.71

Data from Development and Planning Division, Ministry of Education, 2004

Tibet, religion is the main form of organized education outside the family (Postiglione, 1999). The transition from religious education to mass secular education has been slow and difficult in Tibet and some other minority regions. Minority groups would like to include some religious information in the curriculum so their children will be motivated to learn (Johnson & Chhetri, 2002; Postiglione, 1999). This often results in parents sending children to temples or monasteries and lowering school attendance rates. The national curriculum, without much relevance to local ethnic content and characteristics, does not help minority participation in school learning (Johnson & Chhetri, 2002; Postiglione, 1999).

In addition, minority parents and children do not see much future or meaning in schools. Because of the competitive nature of Chinese education, most minority children will not be able to make it to college despite of various preferential policies for them. They will return to work on farms or tend herds like their parents after high school, so going to schools is regarded as useless and waste of money. Thus, some parents prefer to have their children leave school to help the families make money. On the other hand, some minorities undergoing economic hardship cannot afford to send their children to school. The average dropout rate for middle school in the western regions is as high as 10.31% (Ministry of Education, 2006).

All these factors become challenges to keep high enrollment and low dropout rates from middle to high schools in remote and mountainous areas especially.

Problems with Bilingual Instruction

The biggest challenge for bilingual education in China is the severe shortage of qualified native language-speaking minority teachers. "The number and diversity of languages used by the non-Han peoples of China is a formidable barrier to the popularization of education in China's rural and remote frontier regions" (Postiglione, 1999, p. 95). There are some 70 mother tongues spoken in China. How to deal with

this diversity has been a challenge. For the past 20 years, graduates from teacher education programs have been encouraged to teach in minority areas with incentives such as better working and living conditions, higher wages, and permission to have a second child (Lin, 1997; Johnson, personal interview with teachers at Lhasa Language School, Lhasa, Tibet, June 26, 1999). Unfortunately, the trend of qualified minority teacher shortages is likely to continue for some time.

Other challenges to bilingual education come from minority families who believe minority languages may "not help their children's future" (Sangay, 1998, p. 294). They are concerned about their children's ability to pass the Chinese national entrance examinations to move on to higher education. School administrators and teachers are worried that study of a native language may slow the learning of Chinese, and that minority textbooks will not offer the same curricula as the Chinese language textbooks, which are required for the national examinations (Johnson & Chhetri, 2002).

Lack of Technology in Minority Education

Despite the 2003 state initiative calling for the use of technology and distance learning in rural schools (Ministry of Education, 2006), there is a lack of awareness in the use of information technology in minority education, which makes it hard for minorities to compete with students in other areas in China, let alone other countries worldwide. As information technology is still a new concept for educators and government officials in many minority areas, they do not have the training and knowledge of integrating technology in education, thus can not take advantage of it in instruction. Some of them have never used a computer and use traditional method in instruction.

There is also a shortage of equipment for information technology in education and personnel for professional training in technology (see Table 8.6). As shown in Table 8.2, the national average use of telephone and Internet are 7% and 5.42%, while in northwest regions they are 5.42% and 2.58%, respectively. Although the use of the Internet has been developing rapidly in China since the end of the 20th century, the majority ethnic population has been left far behind. While most existing equipment is obsolete, it will take some time to change the situation due to economic constraints.

Table 8.6 Computer sets in primary and middle schools in selected western regions

Province	Year		
	2001	2005	Percentage increase, 2001–2005
Yunan	55,821	130,424	133.7
Tibet	2,566	13,806	438.1
Shannxi	210,340	274,364	30.4
Gansu	144,711	161,715	11.8
Qinghai	21,410	36,165	68.9
Ningxia	38,096	51,596	35.4
Xinjiang	11,242	134,171	20.6

Data from Ministry of Education, 2006, p. 2

Discussion

To meet the need for economic development and globalization and to turn the large population into human resources, education in China still has a long way to go. The Chinese government has made great efforts in funding since 1980s, enacting various legislation and strategies to support minority education. Although minority education has improved in many aspects over the past 25 years, continuous efforts and some fundamental reforms are needed for it to catch up with that in Han areas and to close the gap of learning among the 56 ethnic groups.

First, research shows a strong correlation between household poverty and illiteracy and that illiteracy/undereducation is not simply an education problem. It is a symptom of deep and widespread social inequality created, in large part, by poverty (Literacy Alberta, 2005). Poverty is not just about having too little money. Poverty is about lack of dignity, respect, choice, and opportunity. People must work to end poverty. Literacy is about more than just reading and writing, which are only the tools for participation. To reform the education and raise literacy rates in minority areas, social economic development for minority people must catch up first.

Second, the issue of how to implement universal education for all children and at the same time preserve the language and culture of minority students is a problem that China must face (Johnson and Chhetri, 2002). China struggles with how best to educate its minority students. Should emphasis be on preserving ethnic cultures or advancement into the mainstream? For the two basic goals to be fully embraced in minority areas, education must be seen as a way to improve one's future in life. Minority students need to believe that there is a possibility of making it through the competitive secondary program and gaining a place at a university. More preferential policies in college admissions and even in job markets may contribute to this course. Founding more colleges and universities in minority regions for minority students might be another way. Otherwise, minority student will continue to drop out.

Along with autonomous self-governing policies, more autonomy of school curriculum and management will make schooling more relevant and meaningful to the life, religion, and beliefs of minority families and children. Efforts should be made to revise curriculum and add ethnic-related content and literature to make curriculum truly multicultural learning. More local participation in curriculum making should be encouraged for this effort.

Bilingual education beyond the elementary years could be one way to infuse minority culture and language into the school system, and has the potential to encourage minority participation in schools, improve minority school achievement, and enhance student self-confidence of their origins. However, the debate over bilingual education is part of a larger political debate over two competing visions of the future – diverse societies made up of many cultures or one societal or global culture. While some praise diversity, others believe that the country will be divided by differences with too much diversity. China has embraced a multilingual approach. However, lack of policy enforcement and conflicting political forces within the nation could continue to make bilingual education a policy dilemma for many years to come (Johnson and Chhetri, 2002, p. 151).

In short, closing the gaps in economic development among the regions will boost minority education. With economic development, more funds will be available to build more schools and higher education institutions, to hire and retain more qualified teachers for minority regions due to improved living condition and income, and to provide equipment and training for the use of technology in instruction. Also promote rural distance learning in all rural schools (to include a CD-ROM with the curriculum package for each village school or class, a satellite receiver and relay facilities for each school, and a computer classroom in each lower secondary school) and multimedia-equipped classrooms will facilitate resource sharing among all nationalities. Provide flexible scheduling for students, facilitate various formats of schooling, and extend access to education to areas where schools and transportation are not available are also ideas to improve minority education. Finally, to successfully improve education in minority areas, efforts and motivation from minority people themselves are equally important, if not more. Through joint efforts between local ethnic groups and local government, with the support and funds from the state, minority education will catch up and meet the need of globalization.

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Chapter 9
Managing Diversity: The Singapore Experience

Jason Tan

Introduction

This chapter outlines the relationship between education and social cohesion in
Singapore, an ethnically and culturally diverse country of some 4 million people at
the southern tip of the Malay peninsula, and the only one with a Chinese-majority
population in Southeast Asia. It begins by outlining the British colonial govern-
ment's general inattention to educational provision throughout most of its 140-year-
long rule. It was not until after the end of the Second World War that efforts were
begun to provide some kind of coherence to the education system in preparation for
eventual self-government. The chapter then continues with an examination of how
the advent of self-government and political merger within Malaysia affected educa-
tion policy, especially with regard to the fostering of social cohesion. Attention then
falls on the period since the attainment of political independence in 1965. Various
policy dilemmas and challenges with regard to language-in-education policy, ethnic
disparities in educational attainment, and social class disparities in educational
attainment are discussed.

Historical Background

British Colonial Rule, 1819–1959

Singapore first came under British control in 1819 as a result of a treaty signed
between Sir Stamford Raffles, an official of the English East India Company, and
the Malay hereditary ruler of Johor at the southern tip of the Malay peninsula. Over
the course of the subsequent century, increasing numbers of immigrants from China
and India arrived, changing the demographic profile from a Malay-dominant one to

National Institute of Education, Singapore

a Chinese-dominant one with Malays forming the largest numerical ethnic minority group. Throughout much of the 19th century the British colonial authorities' involvement in educational provision was minimal. Apart from providing free education in the first few primary years in the Malay language to a small number of ethnic Malays, the authorities accepted no other responsibility for running schools. The task of establishing and funding schools was left almost entirely in the hands of Christian missionaries and wealthy merchants from various ethnic communities. A system of limited government grants was introduced for privately run English-medium schools, but none were forthcoming for Chinese- and Tamil-medium schools that catered to a limited number of children from the immigrant Chinese and Tamil communities.

In 1903 the Education Department began accepting administrative responsibility for a few English-medium schools, which became known as government schools. Educational enrollments in English-medium schools expanded during the first two decades of the 20th century. At the same time, enrollments in Chinese-medium schools rose as a result of local Chinese, who formed slightly over 75% of the population, being inspired by political and social reforms in mainland China. However, education remained far from universal.

The system in the first four decades of the 20th century was characterized by "the absence of a single, clearly enunciated, guiding policy" (Wilson, 1978, p. 29). No attempts were made to articulate a common set of goals towards which all schools ought to strive. There were a wide range of schools, varying in terms of management structure, government control and supervision, medium of instruction, curricula, and quality of teaching staff. The only schools where children of different backgrounds were enrolled were the English-medium schools, which catered only to a small minority of school-age children. These schools were favored by the colonial government in terms of funding and opened doors to clerical employment in the colonial civil service or in trading firms.

The overall effect of such a system was socially divisive, accentuating cultural, linguistic, and cultural differences as well as the gap between rich and poor. Higher education was available in the King Edward VII College of Medicine or the Raffles College, but was accessible only to a small minority who had successfully completed their secondary schooling in the few English-medium schools that existed. Malay- and Tamil-medium education did not progress much beyond the primary level and thus did not offer attractive prospects for economic advancement. Chinese-medium schools provided primary and secondary education but were heavily China-centric in their focus. At the same time, there was also no Chinese-medium higher education. Thus the political and economic gulf between ethnic Chinese who had been educated in Chinese-medium schools and those who had been educated in English-medium schools grew as well.

The first attempt to design educational policies that were related to clearly defined goals came in the form of the Ten Years Program, which was adopted in 1947. Two of the general principles underlying the policy were the need for education to foster the capacity for self-government and for education to inculcate civic loyalty and responsibility. The program also outlined plans to provide universal free

primary education through one of the following languages: English, Malay, Chinese, and Tamil. In addition, all schools were to encourage intermingling of ethnic groups in all school activities. Furthermore, the same curriculum should be provided for all races. This policy was promulgated against the backdrop of increasing recognition by the colonial government that self-government was on the horizon.

The Ten Years Program was never faithfully implemented. The main obstacle was government financial stringency, which meant that there were never sufficient places in the four types of schools for complete freedom of choice to be exercised. The second factor was the grossly unequal economic opportunities open to graduates from different kinds of schools. Because English was the dominant language of government administration, higher education, and commerce, enrollments in English-medium schools expanded much more rapidly than those in Chinese-, Malay-, and Tamil-medium schools.

Third, relations between the colonial authorities and Chinese-medium schools, which had never been cordial, underwent further strains. The government enacted a School Registration Ordinance in 1950 empowering the authorities to search and close schools engaged in subversive activities, a move aimed at countering Communist influence after the rise of the Chinese Communist Party to power in 1949. In addition, the neighboring Federation of Malaya, also under British colonial rule, had launched a new education policy in 1952 that concentrated on English- and Malay-medium schooling to the exclusion of Chinese-medium schooling, a move that caused much concern among sections of the ethnic Chinese community in Singapore.

A further aggravating factor was the lack of Chinese-medium higher education in Singapore. There was only one university, the University of Malaya, which operated solely in the English language. Access to higher education was thus limited for graduates from Chinese-medium schools, a situation made worse by the difficulty in traveling to study in China after 1949. Despite colonial opposition, a group of local Chinese business leaders managed to raise funds to establish a Chinese-medium university that opened in 1956.

In a bid to find a long-term solution to the problems afflicting Chinese-medium education, a Legislative Assembly committee made recommendations in 1956 for improving Chinese-medium education. The All-Party Report recommended equal treatment for all the four language streams. The second recommendation dealt with the need to foster a Singapore-centered loyalty and a pan-ethnic Malayan identity in preparation for eventual political merger with the Malayan Federation. Third, opportunities should be provided for students in English-medium and non-English-medium schools to interact through extramural activities. Fourthly, civics should be a compulsory subject in all schools. Fifthly, English and Malay (which was about to be made the national language in a Malayan Federation on the brink of political independence) were mentioned as compulsory languages for all students as part of bilingual education in primary schools and trilingual education in secondary schools.

Most of the report's recommendations were included in the White Paper on Education Policy released a few months later in 1956. Steps were subsequently taken to implement some of these recommendations. First, a single Education

Ordinance was introduced along with common grant-in-aid regulations to govern schools. Second, the first government-run Chinese-medium schools were established in 1956. In addition, the Education Ministry attempted to devise common school syllabuses and textbooks. Fourthly, civics was introduced into all schools.

Despite official talk about equality among various language streams, educational opportunities for Malay- and Tamil-medium students remained extremely limited as these two streams still did not provide any post-primary education at all. In 1956 the Malay Education Council demanded the immediate establishment of Malay-medium secondary schools, a Malay-medium teacher training college, and a Malay-medium university. Lee Kuan Yew, then the leader of the opposition People's Action Party (PAP), stated his party's support for the council's demands for Malay-medium secondary schools.

Self-Government, 1959–1963

The first major change upon the attainment of self-government in 1959, with the PAP now in power, was the standardization of national examinations at both primary and secondary levels. The first Primary School Leaving Examination was made available in all four languages in 1960. Secondary students in all four language streams sat for the first common School Certificate Examinations in 1963. In yet another move to unify the education system and prepare for political merger with a newly independent Malaya, Malay was declared the national language. The PAP attempted to allay the fears of the ethnic Malay majority in Malaya over the political and economic consequences of merger with a Chinese-majority population in Singapore (the only such Southeast Asian country) by proposing Malay as a lingua franca between various ethnic groups. All non-Malay medium schools were ordered to teach the national language as a second or third language. These gestures were in keeping with the new constitution's explicit recognition of the Malays, who comprised about 14% of the population, as the indigenous people of Singapore. Other preferential policies included the offering of free secondary and tertiary education to ethnic Malay citizens or their offspring. Special bursaries and scholarships, free textbooks, and transport allowances were awarded to deserving Malay students. In addition, Malay-medium secondary and pre-university classes were begun by the government in 1960 and 1963, respectively.

Political Merger with Malaysia, 1963–1965

Further political developments after 1959 led to the political merger of Malaya, Singapore, North Borneo, and Sarawak to form Malaysia in 1963. Singapore

retained autonomy over education and did not implement the system of Malay enrollment and job quotas and special rights practiced in the rest of Malaysia, despite Singapore Malays now being part of an ethnically and politically dominant Malay community within Malaysia. The PAP rejected Singaporean Malay calls for it to institute preferential enrollment and job quotas for Malays similar to those in the rest of Malaysia (where these preferential policies were constitutionally enshrined), claiming instead that educational achievement was to be the main means through which Singapore Malays would close the long-standing socioeconomic gap separating them from other Singaporeans, especially the majority ethnic Chinese. This fundamental disagreement between the PAP and the federal Malaysian government on how to approach the problem of interethnic socioeconomic disparities led to a heightening of ethnic tensions, interethnic riots in 1964, and the eventual expulsion of Singapore from Malaysia in 1965.

Political Independence, 1965–

In the immediate wake of political independence, the PAP government (which has held a monopoly on political power from 1959 until this day) reiterated its commitment to a multiracial and multilingual society, and to equal treatment of all four language streams in education. Direct government involvement in the running and funding of schools, which had begun increasing since the mid-1950s, escalated, as did general enrollment figures. For example, enrollments in government-run schools formed 64.3% and 71.3% of total primary and secondary enrollments respectively in 1970, compared with 49% and 46.9% respectively in 1960 (Department of Statistics, 1983, pp. 232, 235). Because of the Education Act and Grant-in-Aid Regulations, both government-run and government-aided (mainly schools formerly run by religious and community-based bodies) schools had to implement identical curricula, with the sole exception of religious education in the latter. Such provisions further strengthened government attempts to impose standardization and coherence on the school system even as practically universal primary school attendance was attained in 1966.

Social cohesion took on an added urgency after 1965. In a speech to school principals in 1966, Lee Kuan Yew said that Singaporeans lacked the "in-built reflexes" of loyalty and patriotism (Lee, 1966, p. 3). He claimed the colonial authorities had never designed an education system to "produce a people capable of cohesive action" (Lee, 1966, p. 3). The Finns, Israelis, and Swiss had "managed to withstand much larger neighbors" because of "the tight nature of their social organization" (Lee, 1966, p. 4). From 1966 onward, all students were required to attend daily rituals that persist to this day, during which they would sing the national anthem while the national flag was being raised or lowered. They also had to recite a pledge of loyalty. Civics and history syllabuses were revised yet again.

Language-in-Education Policies

The PAP government continued its policy of supporting bilingualism in schools. The study of two languages, one of which was English, had already been made compulsory in all primary schools in 1960. This policy was now extended to secondary schools in 1966. The policy rationale for bilingualism now became more explicit. The English language was to be retained for its economic value, and as a major lingua franca, in contrast to earlier pronouncements stressing the importance of both English and Malay. Although Malay was retained as the national language, official enthusiasm for promoting its widespread use gradually faded. The last National Language Month was held in 1966. By the end of the 1970s the study of Malay as a national language by nonethnic Malays in secondary schools had all but ceased. There was less talk about trilingualism and the emphasis shifted instead to bilingualism, with heavy stress on English language competence. Consequently, enrollments in English-medium schools continued to surge, while enrollments in non-English-medium schools fell steadily. By 1970, 62.5% of primary school students were enrolled in English-medium schools, compared with 31.7%, 5.4%, and 0.3% in Chinese-, Malay-, and Tamil-medium schools respectively (Department of Statistics, 1983, p. 234).

Now that Singapore was no longer part of Malaysia, Singapore Malays had to adjust to minority status once more. The government reassured them of their continued special status in the constitution. However, it reiterated its previous stand that there would be no special privileges for them beyond the provision of free education and bursaries. Despite the retention of the Malay language in the national anthem, it was clear that Malay-medium education and the Malay language were no longer to be accorded the prominence they had enjoyed during the brief period between 1959 and 1965.

Amid growing problems such as a shortage of teachers and textbooks in Malay-medium schools, various Malay organizations urged the government to try to improve the situation. In 1970 the Singapore Malay Teachers' Union formally proposed a national system of education based on English as the main medium of instruction. Such a system would replace the existing practice of having four parallel language streams of education. The proposal met with a cold response from the government, which was then under pressure from sections of the ethnic Chinese community for allegedly neglecting Chinese-medium education. The government made no attempt in the 1960s and 1970s to impose universal English-medium education. Instead, it allowed the drift to English-medium schools to continue. It was not until 1983, when enrollment in English-medium schools approached 90% of total enrollment at both primary and secondary levels of schooling, that an official announcement was made that all schools would use the English language as the major medium of instruction from 1987 onward. This was yet another milestone in the standardization of the entire school system. English is now the language with the highest literacy rate among the general population and is also the predominant lingua franca among younger Singaporeans. It has now made inroads into many families, especially among higher-income Singaporeans. Furthermore, English,

especially in its indigenized colloquial form, has recently begun emerging as a language of unique Singaporean identity.

While the spread of the English language through the school system may be regarded as a unifying device in a multilingual population, the use of English as the major medium of instruction in schools privileges to some extent students from higher income, English-speaking families. Other language-in-education policies have been criticized as being socially divisive. For example, the Ministry of Education designated nine existing Chinese-medium secondary schools as Special Assistance Plan (SAP) schools in 1979. These schools were intended to provide top-scoring primary school leavers with the opportunity to study both English and Mandarin Chinese to high levels of competence. Also, these schools would preserve the character of traditional Chinese-medium secondary schools and allay fears that the government was indifferent to Chinese language and culture amid declining enrollments in Chinese-medium schools and the closure of the Chinese-medium Nanyang University in 1980. Over the past quarter-century, the SAP scheme has been extended to a 10th secondary school and 15 formerly Chinese-medium primary schools. SAP schools have been provided with additional government funding and resources.

The establishment and continued existence of the SAP schools has been criticized periodically on several grounds (see for example, Lai, 2005; *Parliamentary Debates Singapore,* 1990, 1995, 1999, 2003). First, it is not fair to non-Chinese students who do not enjoy access to these better-resourced schools because they have to seek special permission from the Education Ministry in order to study the Chinese language in schools. Beginning in 1981, the Education Ministry mandated that students entering primary school had to study a second language associated with their putative ethnic group instead of enjoying a free choice of second language. This policy change has led to a marked decline in the number of students who cross ethnic boundaries to study a second language. Second, there also is concern that the students in these schools, many of whom are destined for top roles in politics, business, and the civil service, are not being provided opportunities to mingle with non-Chinese students, which would appear in direct opposition to the government's earlier policy of encouraging social cohesion in the school system. Equally contentious is the increasing promotion since the early 1980s of Mandarin as a key economic language. This move has come amid growing economic liberalization of mainland China and its emergence as a major international economic power. In other words, Mandarin Chinese is no longer touted solely as a language for cultural transmission, but is now promoted for its economic advantage in terms of work, trade, and investment in mainland China. Since non-Chinese students are not normally allowed to study Mandarin Chinese in schools, the promotion of the language thus raises questions of interethnic economic disparities (see for example, *Parliamentary Debates Singapore*, 1993). In early 1997 then-Prime Minister Goh Chok Tong attempted to allay the worries of the non-Chinese by stressing that English would remain the common working language in Singapore (Goh, 1997a).

Since the start of the 21st century, the SAP schools have been targeted as part of an Education Ministry plan to nurture a Chinese "cultural elite." This elite is

supposed to prove useful not only for the purposes of trade with mainland China, but also to form the basis for recruitment into journalism, the arts, education, and clan community leadership. The SAP schools have been urged to ensure that students socialize with their counterparts in non-SAP schools in response to public criticism over their ethnic exclusiveness. Up until 1994, the presence of the subject "Chinese as a first language," later replaced by the term "Higher Chinese," proved a distinguishing characteristic of SAP secondary schools vis-à-vis their non-SAP counterparts. However, little has been made of the fact that since 1994 a number of non-SAP secondary schools have been allowed to offer "Higher Chinese" as well. In addition, the selection criteria for students to study "Higher Chinese" have been progressively liberalized since the mid-1990s. The emergence of "Higher Chinese" in non-SAP schools may call into question the need for the SAP scheme to continue, especially when some SAP secondary schools have in fact a large proportion of students who study an easier form of Mandarin Chinese instead of the more demanding "Higher Chinese." It is also interesting to note that more than a quarter century after the inception of the SAP scheme, despite the existence of the subjects "Higher Malay" and "Higher Tamil" in non-SAP schools, no corresponding SAP schools have been established to promote the Malay or Tamil languages. This state of affairs may be linked to the fact that neither of these two languages enjoys the societal prestige or wider economic value of English or Mandarin Chinese. Government officials have, over the course of the past four decades, repeatedly touted English as the language of international business, science, and technology. In addition, since the late 1980s, they have claimed that a knowledge of Mandarin Chinese is vital to taking advantage of the recent rise of China as an economic power. The official rhetoric that Malay is vital for trade with Malaysia and Indonesia, and that Tamil is vital for trade with India, holds up less well compared to the more pressing arguments being made for English and Mandarin Chinese competence.

The SAP scheme may be seen as part of broader government policy over the past three decades to promote the status of Mandarin Chinese and to eliminate the use of other regional Chinese languages, and to ensure high standards of proficiency in Mandarin Chinese. In particular, the Ministry of Culture launched a Speak Mandarin campaign in 1979 targeted at replacing the use of regional Chinese languages among Singapore Chinese with Mandarin Chinese (which had hitherto been the native language of a tiny minority of Singapore Chinese) instead. The campaign, which has continued on an annual basis to the present, has led to an increase in the use of Mandarin Chinese among ethnic Chinese students. This phenomenon, along with the decline in the number of students who cross ethnic boundaries for the study of another school language and a concurrent decline in younger Singaporeans' multilingual ability, may deter mixed friendship networks from developing (see for example, Gupta, 1994; Kang, 2004; Lee et al., 2004). The Education Ministry has in the last few years taken piecemeal measures to address the problem of cross-ethnic compartmentalization in schools by encouraging schools to offer lessons in conversational Mandarin for students who are not studying Mandarin Chinese as a school subject and conversational Malay who are not studying Malay as a school subject.

Interethnic Disparities in Educational Attainment

Complicating the task of social cohesion has been the lingering of long-standing ethnic disparities in educational attainment, which in turn contribute to socioeconomic disparities across ethnic lines. Since the early 1980s government leaders have expressed public concern over this issue. Much of the concern has focused on the Malay minority. The results of the 1980s population census revealed that the Malays, who at that time constituted about 14% of the total population, had had the largest percentage increases over the previous decade in terms of persons with at least a secondary qualification.

However, the Malays were still grossly underrepresented in the professional/technical and administrative/managerial classes of the workforce, constituting 7.9% and 1.8% in these two categories, respectively (Khoo, 1981b, p. 66). In addition, there were only 679 Malay university graduates, making up 1.5% of the 44,002 university graduates in Singapore. Likewise, Malays made up only 5.7% of those with an upper secondary qualification (Khoo, 1981a, p. 15). These figures paled in comparison with those for the ethnic Chinese majority and ethnic Indian minority (then comprising about 6% of the Singapore population).

In August 1981 then-Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew urged Malay community leaders and educationists in the government service to give top priority to upgrading the educational level and training of the large number of Malays who did not possess any secondary school qualification. This effort was part of the national drive to improve educational levels so as to keep pace with the recently launched economic restructuring program, which involved moving away from labor-intensive industries to highly skilled ones. As a result of discussions between Malay Members of Parliament (MPs) and Malay community leaders, the Council on Education for Muslim Children (or Mendaki for short) was formed in October 1981.

In his opening address at the inaugural Mendaki Congress in May 1982, Lee observed that "it is in the interests of all [Singaporeans] to have Malay Singaporeans better educated and better qualified and to increase their contribution to Singapore's development" (Lee, 1982, p. 6). This statement was a clear acknowledgement of the fact that the Malays' educational and socioeconomic problems posed a threat to national integration and political stability. In addition, Lee promised government assistance for Mendaki. Lee also stressed the importance of the Malays helping themselves when he said that "a government-run scheme cannot achieve a quarter of the results of this voluntary, spontaneous effort by Malays/Muslims to help themselves" (Lee, 1982, p. 9).

Over the past two decades Mendaki's efforts to improve Malay/Muslim (this term is sometimes used in recognition of the fact that the vast majority of Malays are Muslim, and the majority of Singapore Muslims claim Malay ethnicity) educational achievement have been concentrated in three main areas: (1) running tuition classes from primary to pre-university levels with a focus on preparing students in key subjects such as English, mathematics, and science for major national examinations in a highly competitive education system; (2) providing scholarships, bursaries, and study loans to students with outstanding public examination

results and to those undertaking undergraduate and postgraduate studies; and (3) promoting Islamic social values that Malay leaders feel will promote family support for educational success. By the early 1990s, another group, the Association of Muslim Professionals, had appeared, one of its objectives being to boost Malay educational attainment. More recently, there has been growing emphasis by both these groups on the need to provide skills retraining programs for less educated members of the workforce.

The active government support of ethnically based groups in tackling the Malays' educational problems was extended to other ethnic communities in the early 1990s. By the late 1980s there was growing evidence that many ethnic Indian students were faring badly in their studies. Various ethnic Indian community leaders called for the establishment of an organization for Indian students along the lines of Mendaki. In response, the government, along with community leaders, established the Singapore Indian Development Association (SINDA) in 1991 to tackle Indian educational problems.

In July 1991 the then Prime Minister Goh urged the setting up of a "Chinese Mendaki." His suggestion received new impetus when the PAP failed to capture as many votes as it had expected in the 1991 general elections. The PAP saw the electoral outcome as an expression of discontent by poorer Chinese who felt neglected by the government focus on helping the Malays. Accordingly, the Chinese Development Assistance Council (CDAC) was established the following year. In October 1992 the Eurasian Association launched an endowment fund to finance education and welfare programs for the minority Eurasian community. The government pledged financial support for the SINDA, CDAC, and the Eurasian Association, and also allowed working adults to make monthly financial pledges to these organizations.

These government moves to establish more ethnically based self-help groups have raised questions about their compatibility with officially espoused multiracial ideals. Besides fears about the heightening of ethnic differences, worries have been expressed in various quarters that the smaller organizations will simply be unable to compete with the CDAC, with its substantially larger financial resource base. Also, empirical research studies conducted by Mendaki, the SINDA, and the CDAC have shown that many of the problems facing educational underachievers are often closely related to their economically disadvantaged status. Research conducted by the government's chief statistician has demonstrated that intraethnic class differences have assumed greater significance as interethnic income differences have begun to narrow. It has therefore been argued that since the problems facing underachievers cut across ethnic lines, a more effective strategy might be to have a national body, instead of ethnically based ones, to coordinate efforts to help educational underachievers (Rahim, 1994).

The various criticisms leveled at the use of ethnically based groups have so far failed to make any inroads in official policy. The government response has been threefold (see for example, Goh, 1994). First, promoting these groups is not incompatible with multiracialism as long as the groups reaffirm their commitment to multiracialism and avoid competing against each other. To this end, the various

organizations have launched several joint projects and pooled their resources on occasion. Second, a national body would not be sensitive enough to the special needs of each community. Last, and most important of all, community self-help is more effective because it draws on and mobilizes deep-seated ethnic, linguistic, and cultural loyalties. The government claims that civil servants can never have the same degree of personal commitment as community leaders who are driven by a sense of mission.

The latest available data show the persistence of ethnic disparities in educational attainment. For example, ethnic Chinese (comprising 76.8% of the Singapore population) are heavily overrepresented in local universities and polytechnics, forming 92.4% and 84% of the respective full-time undergraduate and postgraduate enrollments in 2000. Ethnic Malays (2.7% and 10%, respectively) and Indians (4.3% and 5.2%, respectively) are correspondingly underrepresented in relation to their percentages in the national population (13.9% and 7.9%, respectively; Leow, 2001a, pp. 33–36). At the secondary level, the percentage of Malay students who passed at least five subjects in the national General Certificate of Education "Ordinary" Level examinations in 2005 was 62.8, far below the national average of 80.7% (Ministry of Education, 2006, Chart B2). Similarly, Malay students performed far below the national mean in mathematics in the national Primary School Leaving Examination that year (Ministry of Education, 2006, Chart A4). A disproportionately large percentage of Malay and Indian students are streamed into the slower-paced streams at both primary and secondary levels. In other words, the educational gap is already present at the lower levels of schooling and perpetuates itself at the higher levels.

These statistics are compounded by figures that show relatively high ethnic Malay rates for divorce, teenage pregnancy, family dysfunction, and drug addiction (see for example, Zakir, 2006), along with continuing Malay and Indian complaints about discrimination in the job market, especially during times of economic recession (see for example, *Parliamentary Debates Singapore, 70*, 17 March 1999, Cols, 1006–1008). In this latter regard, the government has only recently begun to consider drawing up guidelines to minimize discrimination in job advertisements ("Guidelines," 2006). These resentments, along with deeply rooted local stereotypes of Malays as being fun-loving and lazy (see for example, Li, 1989), have at times been highlighted by politicians in Malaysia and Indonesia as evidence that the Singapore government has not been treating the Malay minority as well as it might. Ethnic Malay politicians in Singapore have had to respond by claiming that Malay Singaporeans have improved their socioeconomic mobility through the government's espoused ideals of equal opportunity for all through a system based on individual merit (see for example, "Habibie," 1999; "Malay Singaporeans," 2000).

The Malay MPs attempted to address the problem of Malay educational achievement in 1987 by pleading with the Education Ministry to impose a 30% limit on the percentage of Malay students enrolled in each primary school. They claimed that controlling Malay enrollments would encourage Malay students to speak to each other in English instead of in Malay, thus improving their academic results in English and in other important school subjects. This enrollment cap was put in place soon after but was quietly abandoned in the 1990s after it proved impossible

to enforce in practice due to the complexities of residential patterns and school admission policies. As a result, and also because of the SAP scheme, there are primary and secondary schools with a disproportionately low number of ethnic Malay students. These schools tend to be the more prestigious schools that produce above-average academic results. Correspondingly, there are other schools where ethnic Malay students are proportionally overrepresented, and which tend to be much lower down the prestige hierarchy as well as the academic performance league tables. All of this throws a spanner in the works for attempts to address the concern voiced by then-Prime Minister Goh: that schools ought to serve as a "common space" for students from different racial and religious backgrounds to interact with one another (Goh, 2002). There is anecdotal evidence as well of ethnic compartmentalization in various extra-curricular activities, including sports. For example, basketball has been stereotyped as a typically Chinese sport, while soccer has been stereotyped as a typically Malay sport (see for example, Lai, 2005). There is also evidence that four decades of common socialization in an ostensibly common national school system have still not managed to eradicate racial prejudice among school students (see for example, Lee et al., 2004).

A major challenge for the government in the coming decade will be the vexing question of how best to reduce these stubbornly persistent disparities. The controversial nature of the whole question of ethnic disparities has been illustrated in the issue of full-time *madrasahs* (privately run Islamic religious schools). After a period of declining enrollments in the 1960s and 1970s, the small number of *madrasahs* began enjoying increasing enrollments in the late 1980s. Even though the actual percentage of Malay/Muslim children enrolled in these schools (3.5%) is actually relatively low, government concern has been voiced over the possibility that students enrolled in these schools "would not be able to integrate successfully into Singapore's social and economic system, or learn to cooperate and compete as part of the Singapore team, or think critically, or be discerning about ideas and people" (Koh, 1997). This led to heated debates in the late 1990s over the existence of the *madrasahs*. Besides the question of whether schools should encourage and perpetuate ethnic segregation, there is also the question of the apparently unequal treatment of SAP schools, on the one hand, and *madrasahs* on the other. The latter receive only nominal government funding. The controversy also has touched on the right of Muslim parents to choose a more religious educational alternative for their children.

The passing of legislation in the year 2000 providing for 6 years of compulsory schooling in government-run and government-aided schools from the year 2003 onward served only to fuel the controversy. The government agreed to allow the *madrasahs* to continue enrolling students subject to their students' meeting government-imposed targets for their students' performance in national primary-level examinations in the year 2008, but imposed curbs on their enrollment figures. Early in the year 2002, several parents of Muslim girls enrolled in government-run schools chose to have their daughters wear *tudungs* (Islamic head-veils) during school hours, in defiance of official regulations prohibiting the use of such attire among students (but interestingly enough, not among Muslim teachers; at the

same time, Sikh students are allowed to wear turbans and religious bangles) as an expression of their religious faith. These parents had been unable to enroll their daughters in one of the six *madrasahs* because of an insufficient number of vacancies in these schools.

The controversy attracted the attention of politicians in Malaysia, who attacked the Singapore government's stand on the issue. It provided yet another point of contention between the two governments, which have engaged in less-than-cordial public exchanges periodically since the mid-1990s over various issues such as the renegotiation of agreements surrounding the purchase and supply of water. Another issue that continues to rankle both governments is the divergence in official policies regarding how best to address the continuing socioeconomic disparities between the ethnic Malays on the one hand and the non-Malays on the other hand (see for example, Li, 2006; Reme, 2006). The terrorist attacks in New York and Washington on September 11, 2001, and the subsequent discovery of an Islamic terrorist cell in Singapore, have served only to exacerbate religious sensitivities that had already been heightened in the course of the discussion over the future of the *madrasahs*.

Socioeconomic Disparities in Educational Attainment

A further complicating factor in the discussion about disparities in educational attainment concerns the role played by social class. Official PAP ideology speaks of Singapore as a meritocratic society, in which socioeconomic advancement is independent of one's home background and is instead dependent on one's ability and effort (Chua, 1996). However, this ideology sits uneasily at times alongside a deeply entrenched elitist conception of how Singapore society ought to be structured. Lee Kuan Yew articulated this clearly in 1966 when he spoke of the need for the education system to produce a "pyramidal structure" consisting of three strata: "top leaders," "good executives," and a "well-disciplined and highly civic-conscious broad mass." The "top leaders" are the "elite" who are needed to "lead and give the people the inspiration and drive to make [society] succeed." The "middle strata" of "good executives" are to help the elite "carry out [their] ideas, thinking and planning," while the "broad mass" are to be "imbued not only with self but also social discipline, so that they can respect their community and do not spit all over the place" (Lee, 1966, pp. 10, 12–13).

Furthermore, the predominant belief of the top government leadership is that success in the education system is dependent on intelligence, which is in turn largely genetically determined. Thus, for example, Lee spoke in 1983 of the threat posed to Singapore's future if well-educated women failed to marry and reproduce themselves adequately as compared to their less-educated counterparts (Lee, 1983). There was a brief and unsuccessful attempt in 1984 to entice married female university graduates to have more children by providing priority in school admission for their third or subsequent offspring. Despite the failure of this policy, the Education Ministry released data several times in the 1980s and 1990s claiming to

demonstrate that the children of mothers who are university graduates outperform the children of mothers who are not university graduates. As Chua (1995, p. 63) points out, " 'meritocratic' inequality is unapologetically accepted as a consequence of nature."

The introduction of streaming in both primary and secondary schools since the early 1980s has serious implications for social stratification. For example, secondary school students are channeled into one of four streams upon entry to secondary school. Students in the Normal (Technical) stream, who have obtained the lowest scores in the Primary School Leaving Examination, follow a highly watered-down curriculum compared to students in the other three streams. These students form about 15% of each secondary school cohort. Not only do they study fewer subjects, the content of each subject is considerably pared down. For example, they are merely expected to develop oral proficiency in the "mother tongue" languages, while their peers in the other three streams are expected to develop written skills as well. Despite recent attempts to encourage upward interstream mobility, mobility between this stream and other streams remains limited and becomes increasingly difficult as students progress through secondary school. Whatever the merits of streaming based on academic achievement, it is worth pondering whether the children of these students will in years to come be disadvantaged in the academic competition against the children of better-educated parents.

Moreover, the practice of streaming students into various tracks at the primary and secondary levels within the context of a highly competitive, high-stakes education system has contributed to prejudice on the part of students in faster-paced streams, and teachers as well, toward students in slower-paced streams (Kang, 2004; Tan & Ho, 2001). This sort of stratification sits somewhat at odds with the government's claim that

> [e]veryone has a contribution to make to Singapore. It is not only those who score a dozen A's, or those who make a lot of money who are important and an asset to the country…. Each one of us has a place in society, a contribution to make and a useful role to play…. As a society, we must widen our definition of success to go beyond the academic and the economic. (Government of Singapore, 1999, p. 11)

The instituting of the independent schools scheme in 1988 has serious implications for class-based inequalities as well. These eight prestigious secondary schools have been allowed greater operating autonomy than other government-run and government-aided schools in terms of matters such as teacher salaries, student enrollment policies, and curriculum. Evidence had already emerged by the 1990s that students from wealthier family backgrounds were over-represented in these schools (Tan, 1993). Amid public criticism over the allegedly elitist nature of these schools, the government has tried to dispel the notion that nonindependent schools are inferior to independent schools (*Parliamentary Debates Singapore*, 1994). At the same time, though, it intends to develop the independent schools into "outstanding institutions, to give the most promising and able students an education matching their promise" (*Parliamentary Debates Singapore*, 1992). Furthermore, growing inter-school competition since the early 1990s in the form of annual school performance league tables (Tan, 1998) has led to increased selectiveness by top schools, and

other schools aspiring to maintain or improve their prestige, as they strive to maximize the number of students who are "assets" and reduce the number who are "liabilities."

Although the Singapore school system is ostensibly meritocratic, an individual student's family background rises to the forefront right at the beginning of the journey through the school system. All of the factors that accord a student priority for admission to a primary school are family-linked, for example, having siblings who are attending the same school, proximity of one's residence to the school, parents' religious affiliation, having parents who are alumni, and having parents who work in the school. Despite government attempts to reassure the public that all primary schools are of good quality, and despite relatively generous government financial subsidies and infrastructure provision for all mainstream schools, the fact remains that some schools enjoy better reputations and are perennially oversubscribed. The secondary school admission system involves a greater reliance on individual merit in national examinations at the end of primary schooling. However, the competitive nature of school admission means that the most prestigious schools enroll the top examination performers, while those at the bottom of the prestige hierarchy end up with the academically weakest students. The most prestigious schools are exempted from offering classes for students in the weakest academic stream, which further adds to the stratification and segregation of students of differing academic abilities (and by implication ethnicity and social class backgrounds) across different schools of varying prestige. A newly introduced modification to the secondary school admission procedures allows individual schools to select students they feel are talented in the arts or sports, thus furthering the divide since the prestigious schools are in the best competitive position to lure these talented students.

Several observers have pointed to the growing prominence of social stratification on the government's policy agenda, especially in the wake of the 1991 general elections (see for example, Rodan, 1997). Whereas the issue of income stratification was largely taboo in public discussions up until 1991, there has been growing acknowledgement on the part of the government since then of the potential impact of income disparities on social cohesion, especially as Singapore is further affected by economic globalization. For example, then-Prime Minister Goh Chok Tong acknowledged in the mid-1990s that not all Singaporeans stand to benefit equally from the global economy. He also pointed out that highly educated Singaporeans are in a more advantageous position compared with unskilled workers, and that there is a great likelihood of widening income inequalities and class stratification (Goh, 1997b). Goh drew an explicit link between income inequalities and the need to maintain social cohesion. However, Goh thought that "we cannot narrow the [income] gap by preventing those who can fly from flying…. Nor can we teach everyone to fly, because most simply do not have the aptitude or ability" (Goh, 1996a). Instead, he suggested a greater emphasis on worker training so as to ensure that unskilled and semiskilled workers would not lose their jobs as a result of multinational corporations moving their labor-intensive operations to countries with abundant and relatively inexpensive labor costs. Social cohesion, Goh pointed out, "is not just a political objective. It actually makes good business sense. Social

harmony motivates people to work hard" (Goh, 1996b). A few schemes such as the Skills Development Fund, which offers workers financial subsidies for training courses, have since been launched in a bid to mitigate the effects of restructuring on less-educated workers.

National Education: Binding Everyone Together?

Over the past five decades, the Education Ministry has attempted several civic and moral education programs in a bid to promote civic and moral values and social cohesion. For example, between 1984 and 1989, Religious Knowledge was made a compulsory subject for all upper secondary students amid fears of a moral crisis among young people. Six options were offered: Bible Knowledge, Buddhist Studies, Confucian Ethics, Hindu Studies, Islamic Religious Knowledge, and Sikh Studies. Students were segregated on the basis of their choices. The government had originally intended to offer a World Religions option but abandoned its plans, claiming that it was too difficult to formulate such a syllabus (Tan, 1997). The mandating of Religious Knowledge was a marked departure from the government's usual stance of prohibiting any discussion of religion in the secular school system. Government-aided schools with religious affiliations had been permitted to hold religious lessons or services provided they were conducted after official school hours.

One of the main reasons Religious Knowledge was made an optional subject in 1990, after having been compulsory for the previous 6 years, was due to its role in contributing to religious revivalism and evangelistic activities among Buddhists and Christians. The zeal with which these activities were conducted drew criticism from adherents of other religious faiths. In place of Religious Knowledge, a new compulsory civic and moral education program was designed for all secondary school students. Its main objectives were to foster cultural and religious appreciation; to promote community spirit; to affirm family life; to nurture interpersonal relationships; and to develop a commitment to nation building.

A few years later, the quest for something to bind young Singaporeans together continued unabated. At a Teachers' Day rally in September 1996, then-Prime Minister Goh Chok Tong lamented the lack of knowledge of Singapore's recent history among younger Singaporeans, as reflected in the results of a street poll conducted by a local newspaper. The Ministry of Education also had conducted a surprise quiz on Singapore's history among 2,500 students in schools, polytechnics and universities. The results proved equally disappointing.

Goh claimed that the gap in knowledge was the direct result of a deliberate official policy not to teach school students about the recent political past and the events leading up to political independence. However, he felt that this ignorance was undesirable among the younger people who had not personally lived through these events. He claimed too that these events, constituting "our shared past," ought to "bind all our communities together, not divide us.… We should understand why they took place so that we will never let them happen again" (Goh, 1997c, p. 425).

Goh highlighted the possibility that the young people would not appreciate how potentially fragile interethnic relations could prove to be, especially in times of economic recession. Not having lived through poverty and deprivation meant that young people might take peace and prosperity for granted.

Calling on all school principals to throw their support behind this urgent initiative, which he termed National Education (NE), Goh pointed out that NE needed to become a crucial part of the education curriculum in all schools. Emphasizing the importance of nation building in existing subjects such as social studies, civic and moral education, and history would be insufficient. More important was the fact that NE was meant to develop "instincts" in every child, such as a "shared sense of nationhood [and] understanding of how our past is relevant to our present and future." NE was to make students appreciative of how Singapore's peace and stability existed amid numerous conflicts elsewhere around the world. This meant that what took place outside the classroom, such as school rituals and examples set by teachers, would prove vital in the success of NE. Goh announced the establishment of an NE Committee to involve various ministries, including the Education Ministry, in this effort.

Goh's remarks came on the heels of the increasing concern on the part of senior government officials over how to satisfy the consumerist demands and material aspirations of the growing middle class. Since the mid-1980s, access to higher education has widened tremendously. By the year 2000, more than 60% of each age cohort was enrolled in local universities and polytechnics. This massive expansion of a better educated citizenry was also a cause for official concern. For example, in 1996 former Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew commented that

> thirty years of continuous growth and increasing stability and prosperity have produced a different generation in an English-educated middle class. They are very different from their parents. The present generation below 35 has grown up used to high economic growth year after year, and take their security and success for granted. And because they believe all is well, they are less willing to make sacrifices for the benefit of the others in society. They are more concerned about their individual and family's welfare and success, not their community or society's well being (Lee, 1996, p. 30).

Likewise, in 1995 Goh had claimed that

> [g]iving [students] academic knowledge alone is not enough to make them understand what makes or breaks Singapore.… Japanese children are taught to cope with earthquakes, while Dutch youngsters learn about the vulnerability of their polders, or low-lying areas. In the same way, Singapore children must be taught to live with a small land area, limited territorial sea and air space, the high cost of owning a car and dependence on imported water and oil. Otherwise, years of continuous growth may lull them into believing that the good life is their divine right …. [Students] must be taught survival skills and be imbued with the confidence that however formidable the challenges and competition, we have the will, skill and solutions to vanquish them. ("Teach students," 1995)

The NE initiative was officially launched in May 1997 by then-Deputy Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong. Lee claimed that countries such as the United States and Japan, with longer national histories, still found it necessary to have schools transmit key national instincts to students. Singapore, being barely one generation old, therefore needed a similar undertaking in the form of NE.

NE aimed at developing national cohesion in students through

- Fostering Singaporean identity, pride, and self-respect
- Teaching about Singapore's nation-building successes against the odds
- Understanding Singapore's unique developmental challenges, constraints, and vulnerabilities
- Instilling core values, such as meritocracy and multiracialism, as well as the will to prevail, in order to ensure Singapore's continued success (Lee, 1997)

Lee called on every teacher and principal to pass on six key NE messages:

- Singapore is our homeland. this is where we belong
- We must preserve racial and religious harmony
- We must uphold meritocracy and incorruptibility
- No one owes Singapore a living
- We must ourselves defend Singapore
- We have confidence in our future (Ministry of Education, 1997a)

Several major means were suggested for incorporating NE in all schools. First, every subject in the formal curriculum would be used. Certain subjects, such as social studies, civic and moral education, history and geography were mentioned as being particularly useful in this regard. Social studies at the primary level would be started earlier, at primary one instead of at primary four. It would also be introduced as a new mandatory subject for all upper secondary students in order to cover issues regarding Singapore's success and future developmental challenges. The upper secondary history syllabus would be extended from 1963, where its coverage had hitherto ended, to include the immediate postindependence years up until 1971.

Second, various elements of the informal curriculum were recommended. All schools were called upon to remember a few major events each year:

- Total Defence Day, to commemorate Singapore's surrender under British colonial rule to the Japanese in 1942
- Racial Harmony Day, to remember the outbreak of interethnic riots in 1964
- International Friendship Day, to bring across the importance of maintaining cordial relations with neighboring countries
- National Day, to commemorate political independence in 1965

In addition, students would visit key national institutions and public facilities in order to feel proud and confident about how Singapore had overcome its developmental constraints. A further means of promoting social cohesion and civic responsibility would be through a mandatory 6 hours of community service each year. An NE branch was established in the Ministry of Education headquarters to spearhead this initiative.

One can read in the importance accorded to NE a pressing concern among the top political leadership about how, on the one hand, to satisfy the growing desires among an increasingly affluent and materialistic population for car ownership and bigger housing amid rising costs of both commodities, and on the other, to maintain civic awareness and responsibility. A related concern is that the population might translate its dissatisfaction with unfulfilled material aspirations into dissatisfaction with the

ruling party. There also is concern that social cohesion might suffer, should the economy falter and fail to sustain the high growth rates of the past few decades.

In the late 1990s, Goh introduced the terms "cosmopolitans" and "heartlanders" to illustrate the class divide between the well-educated, privileged, globally mobile elite on the one hand and the working-class majority, on the other (*Parliamentary Debates Singapore*, 1999). A PAP Member of Parliament expressed his fervent hope that Singaporeans would not "allow our system of education [to] create a bipolar society of cosmopolitans and heartlanders that will be destructive for nation-building" (*Parliamentary Debates Singapore*, 1999).

This tension between social inequalities and social cohesion permeates the underlying framework of NE. Different emphases are planned for students in various levels of schooling. For example, students in technical institutes are to

> understand that they would be helping themselves, their families and Singapore by working hard, continually upgrading themselves and helping to ensure a stable social order. They must feel that every citizen has a valued place in Singapore (Ministry of Education, 1997b, p. 3).

Polytechnic students, who are higher up the social prestige ladder, are to be convinced that "the country's continued survival and prosperity will depend on the quality of their efforts, and that there is opportunity for all based on ability and effort." Junior college students, about four-fifths of whom are bound for university, must have the sense that "they can shape their own future" and must appreciate "the demands and complexities of leadership" as future national leaders (Ministry of Education, 1997b, p. 3). One sees in these differing messages clear and unmistakable vestiges of the stratified view of society espoused by Lee Kuan Yew more than 30 years earlier. Lee also had lamented the tendency among many Singaporeans to be more concerned with individual survival rather than national survival, a theme that both he and Goh later repeated within the setting of a much more materially prosperous society.

This task of holding on to citizens' sense of loyalty and commitment will come under increasingly severe strain as globalization and its impact mean that Singaporeans are exposed via overseas travel, the Internet, and news and print media to social and political alternatives outside of Singapore. Increasing wealth also means that individuals are able to send their children to be educated outside of Singapore, after which work opportunities beckon. Furthermore, the government itself has been calling upon Singaporeans to work outside of Singapore in order to further broaden the country's external economic competitive advantage. It also has been government practice for four decades now to sponsor top-performing students in the General Certificate of Education Advanced Level examinations for undergraduate studies in prestigious universities such as Oxford, Cambridge, Harvard, and Stanford. It is perhaps ironic, if somewhat unsurprising, that the well-educated elite – in other words, the very individuals who have been accorded generous support and funding in their schooling in the hope that they will take on the mantle of national leadership – are the most globally mobile and who are best placed to take advantage of economic opportunities around the world, to the point of contemplating emigration. This policy dilemma was exemplified in the late 1990s when

parliamentarians debated the merits of publicly naming and shaming individuals who had been sponsored for their undergraduate and/or postgraduate studies in elite foreign universities, only to repay the government the cost of their studies upon completion of their studies instead of returning to Singapore to work for the government (*Parliamentary Debates Singapore*, 1998). A few years later there were echoes of the "cosmopolitans-heartlanders" issue in the wake of Goh Chok Tong's National Day rally speech about two categories of individuals, the "stayers" (Singaporeans who were "rooted to Singapore") and the "quitters" ("fair weather Singaporeans who would run away whenever the country runs into stormy weather") (*Parliamentary Debates Singapore*, 2002).

Entangled with the question of class-based disparities is that of ethnic inequalities. Data from the population census in the year 2000 indicated that the ethnic Malay and Indian minorities formed a disproportionately large percentage of the lower income strata and a correspondingly small percentage of the higher income strata vis-à-vis the majority ethnic Chinese (Leow, 2001b). These disparities compound the inequalities in educational attainment mentioned earlier in this chapter. There is sufficient cause for concern that these class and ethnic disparities will not narrow as the effects of economic globalization make further inroads into Singapore society.

The various tensions and dilemmas that have been discussed in this section have serious implications for efforts to impart the key messages of NE in all students. In a sense, the Singapore government has never pretended that ethnoreligious tensions have been swept away as a result of various educational policy initiatives (including civic and moral education) and other economic and social policies. In fact, certain government pronouncements may have served unintentionally to make the task of forging social cohesion more problematic. For example, the question of ethnic Malay representation in the Singapore Armed Forces (SAF) has continued to remain controversial ever since the establishment of the SAF in 1967. Government leaders have openly stated that Malays are not recruited into certain military units in case their religious affinities come into conflict with their duty to defend Singapore (Hussin, 2002). In addition, Lee Kuan Yew has stated publicly that Singapore needs to maintain current ethnic ratios in its population in order to ensure continued economic success (see for example, "Entry of Hongkongers won't upset racial mix," 1989).

These ethnic-based controversies have been complicated in the last two decades by the influx of new immigrants from countries such as the People's Republic of China and India. The latest official data indicate that out of a total population of 4.35 million in 2005, about 440,500 (10.1%) were permanent residents, while 797,900 (18.3%) were holders of student, dependent, or work visas (Department of Statistics, 2006, p. 3). Those among the new immigrants who are highly educated have been the direct beneficiaries of government policies to import "foreign talent" (Goh, 1997d) and at times have had to cope with resentment among some Singaporeans over perceived competition for jobs. NE will have to grapple with the task of socializing the children of these immigrants. Even in the schools arena, there is worry among some parents, teachers and local students about the added competitive element that talented foreign students are perceived to represent (see for example, Quek, 2005; Singh, 2005). Another parallel concern is how to ensure that the children of Singaporeans

who return to work and live in Singapore after having spent some time working outside the country will be able to readjust to schooling in Singapore.

Concluding Thoughts

This chapter has traced the relationship between education and social cohesion in Singapore from the British colonial period to the present. Besides highlighting several key policies it has raised areas of concern as well. The Singapore government continues to be ambitious and interventionist in its efforts to promote social cohesion and manage social diversity. Despite the often purposeful and zealous manner in which policies are pronounced, this chapter has demonstrated that it is by no means the case that policy implementation and outcomes are unproblematic and uncontroversial. The problems involved in managing a culturally diverse and now increasingly class-stratified population will not prove amenable to quick-fix solutions and dictates by bureaucratic fiat. Although the ruling party claims to be aware of the potential impact of ethnic and social stratification on social cohesion, it shows no signs of bowing to pressure on such issues as independent schools and greater interschool competition. This is part of its urging of Singaporeans not to allow "our children to be softened" by the alleged denigration of academic excellence and the promotion of a "soft approach to life" by "liberals in the West" (Goh, 1992, pp. 32–33). It continues to insist that the education system is fair and based on individual merit. Also, it claims that it is only right to nurture the more able students as the whole country will ultimately benefit (*Parliamentary Debates Singapore, 59*, 16 January 1992, Col. 365). According to its logic, equality of opportunity is what counts, not equality of outcomes (Goh, 1997b).

A recurring concern for the foreseeable future will be whether the dramatic upward social mobility that has been experienced by an entire generation will be repeated as the current privileged classes and elites attempt to consolidate their own positions (Rodan, 1997). An example of this concern emerged when the Minister of State for Defense denied in 2003 that a hitherto secret system, under which national servicemen with influential parents received a special classification upon enlistment, had ever been intended to ensure preferential treatment for them during their tenure in the armed forces (*Parliamentary Debates Singapore*, 2003). Language-in-education policies, and other policies that have a bearing upon individuals' life chances and social mobility, will remain contentious. A balance will have to be sought between entrenched views about the role of genetic endowment vis-à-vis environmental nurturing in students' overall development. If policymakers strongly believe, for example, that ethnic differences in educational attainment or aptitude are largely genetically determined, then this belief will in turn have serious implications for how policymakers view the limits to potential of different groups of individuals. The challenges and dilemmas mentioned in this chapter show no signs of diminishing in the early years of the 21st century and will continue to test the ingenuity and resolve of the government.

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Chapter 10
Ethnicities and Education in Malaysia: Difference, Inclusions and Exclusions

Cynthia Joseph

Introduction

The politics of ethnic identification involving the three major ethnic groups of Malay-Muslims, Chinese and Indians have resulted in power imbalances and hierarchies along the various social, educational and economic dimensions. These power dynamics have in turn produced a Malaysian education and schooling system that is highly politicised and ethnicised.

This chapter examines the ways in which British colonial history, Malaysian state policies, contemporary ethnic politics and globalisation are played out within the Malaysian schooling and education system in relation to the inter and intra dynamics of the three major ethnic groups of Malay-Muslims, Chinese and Indians. Practices of social exclusion and inclusion within the education and schooling system will be discussed in relation to state policies such as the 1970 National Economic Policy (NEP), 1990 National Development Policy (NDP), 2001 New Vision Policy (NVP), and the National Education Policy. The ways in which the different types of Malaysian schools are ethnicised will be also examined. These schools vary in terms of Government funding, ethnic community support, resources and future educational opportunities. These schools are also used strategically by the Government and the ethnic collectives in the social and political positionings of these ethnic groups in contemporary Malaysia.

The chapter begins with an overview of the politics of ethnicity in contemporary Malaysia as this provides the historical and socio-cultural context of this chapter.

Contemporary Malaysia: Politics of Ethnic Identification

The economic and social imbalance amongst the ethnic groups in Malaysia is a by-product of both British colonial legacy of more than 150 years and contemporary ethnic politics (Andaya & Andaya, 2001). A largely Malay society became transformed

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into a culturally diverse society of Malays, Chinese and Indians as the three main ethnic groups during this colonial era. By 1957, just before Malaysia gained independence from the British, Malays were 49.8% of the population, Chinese 37.2% and Indians 11.3% (Jasbir & Mukherjee, 1993).

In contemporary Malaysia, the Malay-Muslims, the largest ethnic group in Malaysia, monopolise the public and government sector. The Malay-Muslims comprise 80% of the *Bumiputera* category. The *Bumiputeras* are Malays and other indigenous people who constitute 67.3% of contemporary Malaysian society. This group has indigenous status that guarantees attendant privileges. Malay ethnicity and the Malays' entitlement to special rights as *Bumiputeras* are constitutionally defined in Malaysia. All Malays are Muslims and speak Malay, which is the official and national language of the country. Islam, as the official religion of the state, is the most important factor in Malay identity and a significant social, political and ideological force influencing the Malays (Saravanamuttu, 2001).

The Chinese, a significant ethnic collective, monopolise the corporate business sector and constitute 24.5% of the Malaysian population. The Indians constitute 7.2% of the population and generally lag behind the Malays and Chinese economically, educationally and socially. There are exceptions to this general patterning.

These are the three major ethnic groups but other ethnic groups include the Eurasians, Chinese Babas, Melakan Chitties and others who trace their ancestries through intermarriage and cultural diffusion from inter-ethnic interactions centuries ago. Another group is the *Orang Asli,* who are the aboriginal people of Peninsular Malaysia. Cultural plurality also exists in the East Malaysian states of Sabah and Sarawak.

The official public and political discourse on identity in Malaysian society categorises each Malaysian as either *Bumiputera*, Chinese, Indian or Others. This official ethnic labeling determines certain rights and privileges within Malaysian society. These communal divisions have often resulted in contestation as well as encouraged consultation and compromise especially between the two major ethnic groups, the Malays and the Chinese. There are spaces for each of these ethnic collectives to exercise their dominance and power within contemporary Malaysia. There is the public or governmental space for the Malays/Bumiputeras and there is the corporate/private sector for the largest group of non-Malays, namely the Chinese. The numerical configuration of the Malays (53% of the population) with their political power and the Chinese (25%) with their economic power seems to be a compensatory mechanism for these two major ethnic collectives to power and profit-share in Malaysia (Maznah, 2005). Through the ethnic politics, a symbiotic relationship exists between these two major ethnic groups where neither groups alone influences political outcomes. The consolidation of the Malay-Chinese elite alliance is the key element in defining the context and parameters of political and economic power in Malaysia (Maznah, 2005). There are some exceptions to this, as any system that attempts to classify in this way has contradictions.

I use the term "politics of ethnic identification" to capture these differences and power imbalances along the various social, economic and educational dimensions that are linked with the official political ethnic categories in Malaysia. This politics of ethnic identification is inextricably intertwined with the politics of difference.

Difference is located within the intertwining of dimensions including gender, ethnicity and class within specific contexts (Mohanty, 1994). Difference here is not just attributed to diversity but to differences that are embedded within webs of power. Power according to Foucault, is a relation and inheres in difference (Foucault, 1980). A Foucauldian analysis of power uses the notion of discourse to examine practices through which power is exercised. Power is conceptualised as a set of relations and strategies dispersed throughout society and enacted at every moment of interaction.

Contemporary theorists of ethnicity who work with the notion of difference (Brah, 1996; May et al, 2004; Yuval-Davis, 1997) posit that the politics of identity is intertwined with the politics of difference in conceptualizing the notion of ethnicity. This conceptual framework is useful in understanding the ways in which ethnic differences and politics are played out within the schooling and education system in multicultural nations. Within such a framework, the notion of ethnicity involves the positioning of ethnic collectivities in terms of the social allocation of resources, with a context of difference to other groups (Anthias & Yuval-Davis, 1995). Ethnicity cross-cuts gender and class divisions, but at the same time involves the positing of a similarity (on the inside) and a difference (from the outside) that seeks to transcend these divisions (Anthias & Yuval-Davis, 1995). Ethnicity is socially constructed and discursively produced and always involves a political dimension.

The Malaysian educational and schooling systems are social sites where discourses of nationalism, the politics of ethnic identification and globalization intersect with the historical legacy of British colonialism. These educational sites are political where staff, educators and students negotiate the interplay of state's discourses, the discourses of education unique to that social site and other discourses. These social institutions also function to mediate the social, political and economic tensions of the wider society in complex and contradictory ways (Apple, 2003). The education and schooling systems are powerful political mechanisms used to maintain the status quo of the dominant groups within a specific society. This comes through the various educational policies implemented within the schooling system (Apple, 2003; Giroux, 2001). Giroux (2001) states that the imprint of the dominant collective within a particular society is inscribed in a whole range of school practices such as the official language, school rules, classroom social relations, and the selection and presentation of school knowledge. He further adds that this imprint is always mediated – sometimes rejected, sometimes confirmed. More often than not it is partly accepted and partly rejected.

Elements of Islam and the Malay culture are manifested through various aspects of the Malaysian school curriculum and education system. However, there are also processes of contestations and negotiations between the different ethnic groups that impact upon the Malaysian education system.

The Malaysian education and schooling system caters for a multiethnic population in a variety of ways through the different types of primary and secondary schools. There are three types of Malaysian primary schools in Malaysia: National schools (with a mix of ethnic groups in the student enrolments), National Type Chinese and National Type Tamil schools. The 2002 educational statistics indicate that 75% are National schools, 17% National Type Chinese and 7% National Type Tamil schools.

The types of Malaysian secondary schools are: Regular (a mix of ethnic groups), Residential and Science Colleges (mainly Malay-Muslim students), Religious (Muslim students), Independent Chinese Secondary Schools and Technical Schools. The 2002 educational statistics indicate that 89% are regular schools, 2% residential schools, 3% religious, and 5% technical schools. There are 60 Independent Chinese secondary schools and these schools do not operate within the national education system. There is a national primary school and secondary school curriculum as well as national public examinations for all schools to adhere to.

However, the national and national type schools are unequal in their share of resources and funding. Resource allocations in the Chinese and Tamil schools remain below that of the national schools as these schools are only partially financially aided by the Malaysian government.

The ways in which the curriculum and examination results are used for future educational pathways and opportunities varies for each of these ethnic groups. Markers of academic success are also ethnicised and vary for each ethnic group. The assessment and education and schooling system subordinates and marginalises particular ethnic groups. Access and opportunities to post-secondary and tertiary education is also highly ethnicised. Social inequalities are generated by these practices and processes.

The British Colonial Era: Divide and Rule

The ethnic schools in Malaysia were established during the colonial period. Early colonial practices towards education were determined by the identification of ethnicity with a specific economic role (Andaya & Andaya, 2001). The British colonials were totally focused on economic imperialism and this governed their attitudes towards education (Andaya & Andaya, 2001). The objectives of education during this period were for most children to receive a basic education in their own language that would prepare them for their allotted role in the colonial scheme. Europeans were to govern and administer, immigrant Chinese to labour in the tin mining industry and commercial sectors, immigrant Indians in the rubber plantation sector and Malays to till the rice paddy fields (Andaya & Andaya, 2001). Only a few gained access to English schools and therefore to prestigious positions in government or European firms.

During the colonial era, the British colonial government and Christian missionary bodies sponsored English-medium schools in urban areas which generally enrolled middle-class and elite students from all ethnic groups. These English-medium schools were seen as a means for social mobility during the colonial era during which English was the basic language of colonial administration (Hirschman, 1979). There were also vernacular schools in Malay, Chinese and Tamil.

Hirschman (1979) states that the Malay vernacular schools were located in rural villages and was part of the British government's "paternalistic policy of not disturbing rural Malay society and culture" (p. 68). Chinese primary and secondary

schools was a product of the Chinese community in various towns in Malaysia. These schools were provided modest subsidies from the colonial government and were largely supported financially by private donations by the Chinese communities. Tamil schools were only at the primary school level. These schools were provided modest subsidies from the colonial government and managed by large rubber plantations that employed mainly Indian work force.

Malaysia became ethnically stratified due to the British colonial government's policy of unrestricted immigration, divide and rule policy and the practice of separate educational systems. The different ethnic groups were differentiated along social, economic and educational dimensions that resulted in social and economic hierarchies between and within the different ethnic groups. These social inequalities were also linked to the geographical positionings of the towns and states in Malaysia. An elite stratum of each ethnic community was created through the English schools and the lower socioeconomic group from each ethnic group through the vernacular schooling system. However, due to the capital accumulation of the ethnic Chinese collective and strong financial backing from the Chinese communities, the Chinese vernacular schools were in a much stronger position economically and socially in comparison to the Malay village schools and Tamil schools.

The more modern or urbanized states were the west coast states where most of the export enclave economy under colonial rule was concentrated and attracted most non-Malay immigrants (Hirshman, 1979). It was also in these areas that the colonial government concentrated most of its infrastructure development, such as roads, schools, hospitals and other public facilities. Chinese and Indians were more likely to live in towns and in close proximity to schools. Malays in the villages had less access to schools initially. Malays also had lower educational aspirations (Hirshman, 1979). There were also limited opportunities for Malay youths in the eastern and northern states from entering primary school and for Malay youth throughout the country from making the transition from primary to secondary school. There was also the cultural bias that made females less likely to progress through the educational system, especially at the initial stages, in all ethnic communities and regions. Access to future educational opportunities and economic prosperity was also differentiated along ethnic lines.

Independence of Malaysia: Nationalism and Ethnic Politics

The model of governance in Malaysia upon gaining independence in 1957 was a consociational model. The ruling structure is represented by an elite group who purportedly speaks for and makes claims on behalf of their ethnic communities (Ng et al., 2006). The British colonial government transferred power to the local elites in 1957 and the post-independence consociational Alliance. The Alliance, a coalition of ethnic-based parties – the United Malays National Organisation (UMNO), Malaysian Chinese Association (MCA) and the Malaysian Indian Congress (MIC) represented the elites from the three main ethnic groups in Malaysia. There is unwritten but

unchallenged understanding that highest leadership will be Malay-Muslims from UMNO (the dominant partner in the multiethnic consociational arrangement). The Alliance was later replaced by the expanded Barisan Nasional (BN, National Front) from the early 1970s. Since then, this coalition has been in power and the ruling political party in Malaysia. The power bargaining between the elites of the major ethnic groups and the British colonial government, and later on between the major ethnic groups resulted in social and political hierarchies where the Malay elites positioned themselves as the dominant political party and the elite Chinese and Indians as power-brokers for their ethnic collectives in newly independent Malaysia. There were also economic and educational inequalities in this newly independent society where the Malays were still entrenched within the agricultural sectors in rural areas, the Chinese in the town sectors and the Indians both in the estate and town areas.

Upon gaining independence, the objective of the educational system was to foster national identity among the different ethnic communities. There were three major changes. Firstly, primary schooling in the four language media of English, Malay, Chinese and Tamil would continue with full governmental support and supervision. There was national curriculum for all schools. Secondary schooling with government sponsorship included the already existing English language stream and a new Malay language stream with the few Chinese-medium secondary schools being converted to English-medium in order to receive government support and recognition.

There was hardly any changes in the socio-economic position of Malays compared to the other ethnic groups during the first 12 years of independence in Malaysia. Unequal rates of urbanization and participation in the modern sector of the newly-independent Malaysia economy resulted in differential rates of educational achievement and income (Jasbir & Mukherjee, 1993). Instead of breaking down ethnic barriers, the processes of modernization and industralisation led to further ethnic differences and social inequalities. On the surface, ethnic relations were fairly cordial until 1969 ethnic riots.

The ethnic riots were due to the outcome of the 1969 Federal elections, wherein the party in Government, the Alliance party failed to capture the 2/3 majority which had previously enabled it to obtain constitutional amendments with ease (Andaya & Andaya, 2001). The riots were also due to frustration between the Malays and non-Malays. Under the Alliance coalition government's laissez-faire regime, the Malay-Chinese income disparity increased. The Malays had not really achieved any significant progress in the economy with the institutionalisation of the Malays' special rights in the Malaysian constitution in 1957. In 1957, 97.5% of rice farmers were Malays, 66% of individuals employed in commerce and 72% of those in mining and manufacturing were Chinese (Brown, 1994). Malays had 2% equity in firms, the Chinese 22.8% and foreigners 62% in 1969. Free market and open competition in the economic spheres of Malaysia, without interference from the government allowed for the expansion and diversification of Chinese economic activities (Heng, 1996). The ethnic riots forced the Government to reassess the entire question of economic growth in relation to the vocal Malay demand for a greater share in the country's wealth (Andaya & Andaya, 2001). This led to the implementation of the National Economic Policy in the 1970s and 1980s.

The implementation of the National Economic Policy, a state affirmative action, was seen by the government as a way of eliminating poverty and removing the identification of economic function with particular ethnic groups, a situation that had arisen as a consequence of British colonialism (Andaya & Andaya, 2001). More recent social engineering policies such as the National Development Policy and New Vision Policy that have replaced previous affirmative action policies have only departed superficially from ensuring that the privileges of the *Bumiputera* remain untouched, even though they may vary in macroeconomic and fiscal emphases (Maznah and Wong, 2001).

The ethnic riots in May 1969 resulted in the urgency of strengthening Malay political will in order to improve the socio-economic position of the Malays. There were major economic and educational reforms put in place under the New Economic Policy (NEP) with the aim of fostering national unity through the creation of a more equitable society and eradicating the social divisions and stratification that were a result of the colonial era (Andaya & Andaya, 2001). The government put in place a number of specific strategies and policies that placed the Malays in favoured positions of access to opportunities and advancement within the educational and employment sectors. Ethnic quotas favouring the *Bumiputeras* for employment in the government sector and in private enterprises, for stock ownership in corporations, and for government contracts were put in also place.

A minimum of 30% was set for *Bumiputera* (read Malay) participation in all economic activities that still holds today. However, *Bumiputeras* in most of these instances refer to the ethnic majority of this category, the Malays and exclude the other minority *Bumiputera* groups Chin (2001) provides a detailed description of the ethnic quota "All Malaysian business over a certain size had to allocate 30% of their shares, even it is sold at a discount to meet this shareholding requirement. State-funded education institutions, especially tertiary institutions could legally admit *Bumiputera* students with much lower grades than non-*Bumiputera* school leavers. Ninety percent of all government scholarships were awarded to *Bumiputera* students. Banks and other financial institutions were required to set aside a certain portion of their loan portfolios to *Bumiputera* businessmen. Certain categories of government contracts were only awarded to *Bumiputera* contractors" (p. 80). Furthmore, the Sedition Act and other legislations prohibit public and parliamentary debates and discussions of these "special positions". These ethnic quotas function as a mechanism for differential access to educational and economic opportunities between the *Bumiputeras* and non-*Bumiputeras*.

Education and Ethnic Politics: Inclusion and Exclusion

The National Economic Policy and related social engineering policies created a distinction between the *Bumiputeras* and non-*Bumiputeras* (which is synonymous with the Malays and non-Malays, given that 80% of the *Bumiputera* category are Malays).

The speeded-up transitions from English to Malay medium of instruction converted secondary schooling to Malay by 1982. There was a complete reversal of status between Malay and English within a space of a decade. This enabled Malay children to gain access to schooling. Malay became the sole medium of instruction in all secondary schools within the national system and in all public institutions of higher learning. The Chinese and Tamil primary schools were left intact with the Chinese language and Tamil language being the medium of instruction in these respective schools.

Another major change was the implementation of an ethnic quota in admission of students into tertiary education institutions. For example, public universities are required to reserve the ethnic quota of at least 60% of university places for Bumiputeras. High status professional courses such as medicine and engineering have a higher percentage in keeping with the government's goal of increasing the number of professional and middle-class Malays. The remaining quota within the public government universities are allotted to the best Chinese and Indian candidates in terms of educational merit. The best students within each ethnic group would gain access to public university education based on an ethnic quota. However, the academic achievement criteria used to establish the 'best students' is different for each ethnic group.

The Government also introduced various affirmative action policies to reduce inter-ethnic differences in educational attainment. These included special scholarships to *Bumiputera* students and the establishment of special secondary schools (such as the residential science schools and MARA junior science colleges) and programmes (such as the pre-university matriculation programs) to prepare *Bumiputera* students for the professional and technical fields. These residential science schools and junior science colleges have better physical facilities and smaller student-teacher ratio in comparison to the regular schools. These schools provide the supply of suitable *Bumiputera* candidates in the Science and Technology based courses in the Malaysian and overseas universities. The Ministry of Education and universities have matriculation or pre-university foundation courses for *Bumiputera* students. These programs provide *Bumiputera* students with an additional entry route to science and technology based faculties in Malaysian universities. The Malaysian Higher School Education certificate program in the Malaysian government schools also provides a route to the public universities. This 2-year program is open to all Malaysian students who qualify based on the results of the end of the secondary schooling public examination. However, there are resource disparities between the schools or institutions that offer these two types of programs. Furthermore, there are differences in degrees of difficulty, length of the program and the ways in which these two programs are used as to differentiate access to tertiary education along ethnic dimensions.

The Malaysian Government used and still adopts these educational policies to control access to higher education because education at the tertiary level is perceived as a means to social mobility (Joseph, 2006). This preferential treatment of *Bumiputeras* within the education system has made competition among the non-*Bumiputeras,* especially from the Chinese, very keen.

   These educational practices resulting from the affirmative action policies still continue to rouse much emotions and controversy in Malaysia, especially between the Malays and the Chinese. The national language of Malay language has to some extent served an integrative role in the multiethnic Malaysian society and contributed to inter-ethnic communication. However, the Malay language is also seen as an advantage to the Malays as it is their mother tongue and a disadvantage to the non-Malays who were more comfortable with English language instruction and their own mother tongue languages. The various curriculum reviews within the education system have also been seen as a political strategy in putting Malay culture and values and Islamic religion in the centre of the schooling system so as to represent Malaysian identity as Malay-Islamic identity. In the secondary schools, the subject Islamic Studies is compulsory for all Muslim students. The non-Muslim students do the subject, Moral Education rather than having the option of choices of variety of religious studies. Darwin's evolutionary theory is not taught in schools as it is considered contradictory to the Islamic belief in Allah as the creator of the Universe (Lee, 2001). A study on the textbooks used in Malaysian secondary schools shows that the Malay language and History subjects tend to overplay the role of Malay, Malay culture and traditions, instead of being sensitive to the national needs of unity and integration (Santhiram, 1997).

   The politics of ethnic identification at the national level is also translated into education, academic, research and management practices within schooling and higher education institutions. There is a Malay bias of bureaucracy within the Education Ministry as in all other Government sectors due to the NEP policies (Joseph, 2006). There is limited opportunity for public input regarding the education system. Furthermore government decisions are influenced by the push and pull of demands from different ethnic blocs, voting blocs and various interest groups. All state actions necessarily benefit some social interests and disadvantage others. The national level of governance with its lack of transparency, money politics, and corruption also impacts on the practices within the Ministry of Education.

   Within the implementation of this affirmative action policy, a new generation of middle class, professionals, capitalist and entrepreneurs Malays was created. The Malaysian Government was able to eliminate in a single generation the educational inequalities during the colonial era that had fostered the stereotype that Malay culture were lazy and did not value education. However, this was done at the expense of further stratifying the Malaysian society along ethnic and class lines. As discussed earlier, the Malay-Muslims monopolise the public and government sectors and the Chinese the corporate and private sectors. The Indians and other minorities generally lag behind these two ethnic collectives socio-economic and education sectors.

   While the objectives of the NEP was for the redistribution of resources and growth benefits so as to achieve greater equality since there were more non-Malays in the higher economic classes, the NEP intensified the politics of ethnic identification given that the redistribution was and still is along ethnic lines. Critics argue that the redistribution would have been more effective with less ethnic divisiveness had these social engineering policies been along economic class (Maznah, 2005). A 1986 study by Ozay Mehmet and Yip Hat Hoong in Malaysian

universities showed that only 12% of the *Bumiputera* students surveyed and who received government scholarships came from poor families (Maznah, 2005). It is the elite Malays and non-Malays with connections who have benefited more from the policy than poor Malays.

The NEP which was originally seen as a state policy to correct the economic and social imbalance amongst the ethnic groups that resulted from the colonial era is now been being capitalized by a small section of the *Bumiputera*/Malay community in terms of corporate enhancement. The NEP has also created a sense of complacency amongst the *Bumiputera* and Malay community due to the economic and educational benefits. This has also resulted in a lack of global competitiveness and professionalism amongst this group.

The elites and the middle class of all ethnic groups benefited from the rapid industralisation, urbanization and economic liberalization in the late 1980s and 1990s. In addition, the NEP also provided economic and educational benefits to the Malays. The Chinese have the historical capital accumulation. The Indians do not have the economic clout as the Chinese had or the affirmative action policy for the Malays. Thus, there was a widening of the economic and social gap between the Indians and the two major ethnic groups of Malays and Chinese during the 1980s and 1990s. There was also a widening of the gap within the Malay ethnic collective between the elite, middle class Malays and the poor Malays. The widening of the intra-ethnic inequality gap most especially among the Malays/*Bumiputera* and the Indians, and the inter-ethnic gap between the Indians and, Malays and Chinese has intensified over these last few years. Maznah (2005) highlights some of the social inequalities that are currently prevalent in Malaysia: regional differences, federal-state power imbalance, marginalization of non-Malay groups of *Bumiputera*, the unaddressed plight of the Indians and the dispossession of a growing class of non-citizen migrant workers.

Having set the socio-cultural and political contexts for the politicization of education in Malaysia, the following section of this chapter provides an analysis of different types of Malaysian schools. A brief discussion will also be provided on the access to educational opportunities at the post-secondary and tertiary levels. This is examined within the context of the social inclusions and exclusions in relation to the Malaysian ethnic politics.

"Malaysian" National Schools: Multiethnic Spaces

There are 5,756 national primary schools and 1,802 regular secondary schools in Malaysia (Ministry of Education Malaysia, 2005). The medium of instruction in these schools is the Malay language. All these schools follow the national school curriculum and national examinations. The national examination at the end of the secondary schooling is used as an entrance to pre-university and matriculation programs. However, these schools differ in relation to their geographical location, ethnic mix, ethnic politics and academic achievement.

There tends to be a mix of the different ethnic groups in these schools. However, this ethnic mix is also dependent on the geographical locations of these schools in terms of towns, cities and states. Urbanization and industrialization also plays an important role in this. For example, the state of Penang, a highly urbanized state has an almost equal number of Malays and Chinese in the state and this numerical representation is reflected in some of the schools in Penang. The East Coast states of Malaysia, Kelantan and Terengganu which are less urbanized than the West coast states are predominantly Malay states and this is also reflected in the student and teacher demographics of the schools in the state.

While all these schools are fully funded by the Malaysian government, there is also an urban-rural divide in terms of physical and human resources. The urban schools tend to perform better on the national examinations compared to the rural schools due to better physical and human resources in urban schools. Schools in the rural areas also have difficulties in getting proper qualified teachers. The Ministry of Education over the years has made it compulsory for new teacher graduates to serve between 3 and 5 years in rural areas so as to ensure these schools obtain professional teachers who are well-qualified in order to improve the levels of education and achievement in these areas. However, there is still a problem of getting fully qualified teachers in the areas of Sciences and Languages for the schools in rural areas.

There is a lack of data available in relation to the ethnic distribution of academic achievement in the different types of Malaysian schools as this is seen as being 'sensitive' by the Malaysian government. In Malaysia, public or academic discourses on issues to do with ethnicity, religion or other related controversial issues are considered as sensitive and prohibited if it is perceived to directly or indirectly challenge political stability. Thus, there is a lack of public debates and critical academic research that examines ethnic and social inequalities within the Malaysian schooling and education system.

Joseph (2003) in her ethnographic study of an urban girls' school in the state of Penang found in her research site, most of the top academic achievers and school leaders were Chinese girls. The Malay girls were located in the average and low achieving classes and the Indian girls were located mostly in the average achieving classes. The school culture also has to be considered in her study given that most of the school teachers in this school were Chinese teachers at that time. It is problematic to make general conclusions about the ethnic distribution of academic achievers within such schools. However, given the lack of such official data, the author based on her ethnographic study (Joseph, 2006) and her professional years as a teacher and university lecturer within the Malaysian education system has noted that in such Malaysian national schools where there is a reasonable mix of the different ethnic groups, the Chinese tend to be top achievers. Her study also indicated that the Malay students in the top achieving classes tend to be less competitive in comparison to the Chinese girls. The Malay girls in her study said in their interviews that as members of the indigenous group, they do not work hard and were not as competitive as the Chinese girls because they were confident they would get the scholarships for further studies due to the affirmative action policy for the *Bumiputeras*. There is a tendency for some Malay students in these schools

to think along these lines as there is a lack of competitiveness and meritocracy within the schooling system in relation to access to tertiary education and scholarship opportunities. Most of the Malays in these secondary schools tend to be those who are average academic achievers in the primary schools as most of the top Malay achievers usually go off to special residential colleges and secondary science schools. While Joseph's study (2003) does not provide a general representation of the dynamics of such schools, her study does provide an insight into some of the politics of schooling in Malaysia.

These national primary and secondary schools are complex in the ethnic distribution of academic success and future educational opportunities. Normative notions of academic success with markers of pro-school behaviors such as high grades, respect for teachers and education, capacity for hard work, self-discipline, high motivation, ambition, good behaviour, deference for teachers and school authority are very much emphasized in all Malaysian schools. There is also a strong focus on academic excellence and high grades in Malaysian schools. However, there is ethnic bias in the present education system that is not based on merit in terms of government scholarships and future educational opportunities at the post-secondary and tertiary levels as *Bumiputeras*-Malays have more opportunities at these. As discussed earlier, they also have a different entry route through the Matriculation programs into tertiary level education following on from the affirmative action policies for this ethnic collective. Thus, the discourses of schooling in Malaysia are located within these multiple contradictory discourses of normative academic success, ethnic politics and the schooling culture of the particular schools.

Residential Science Schools and Colleges: Malay Privilege

There are special provisions made for the *Bumiputeras* within the national education system through the MARA junior science colleges and the residential secondary science schools. These schools were built in the 1970s and 1980s so as to increase the number of *Bumiputeras* in the fields of Science and Technology, and the Applied Sciences. This was also done within the context of the affirmative action policies for the Malays/*Bumiputeras*. Educational statistics in relation to ethnic distribution in schools and academic achievement is considered sensitive within the Malaysian context and is not available in the public domain. The schools were also to provide a competitive education for rural Malays who were disadvantaged both economically and socially due to the British colonial education system.

The Majlis Amanah Rakyat (Malay Indigenous People's Trust Council; commonly abbreviated as MARA) is a Malaysian government agency that was formed in 1966 under the Rural and National Development Ministry to aid, train, and guide Bumiputra (Malays and other indigenous Malaysians) in the areas of business and industry. MARA is now under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Entrepreneur

& Cooperative Development. Initially MARA's economic and educational policies and practices were targeted at Malays in the rural areas. However, access and entrance to MARA Science colleges was extended to all Malays despite their socio-economic status.

There are 32 MARA Junior Science colleges in Malaysia with a total enrolment of 20,900 students and 2,171 teachers (Ministry of Education, 2005). In addition to these MARA Junior Science Colleges, there are also the fully residential science secondary schools that have mainly *Bumiputera* students. There are currently 54 such schools in Malaysia.

The high academically achieving *Bumiputeras* are given the opportunity to apply for entry into MARA Junior Science Colleges and Residential Science Secondary Schools at the end of their primary schooling in Primary Year 6. These high academically achieving *Bumiputeras* are segregated from the rest of the communities, leaving the average and less academically inclined *Bumiputeras* in national secondary schools. This ethnic division is further exacerbated in Form Six where *Bumiputeras* attend matriculation colleges for separate entrance into the local universities.

A 10% quota allocation has been provided to non-*Bumiputeras* to attend these MARA Junior Science Colleges and the residential science secondary schools. However, generally this quota is hardly near the 10% mark.

The school culture in these MARA Junior Science Colleges and residential science secondary schools is generally Malay and Islamic given that most of the students are Malay-Muslims. Most of the teachers also tend to be Malay-Muslims. These schools have the very good physical facilities and resources with small classes. There are also extra tuition or coaching classes after the formal schooling hours with these classes being conducted by the teachers. There is also moral support for these students to ensure that they perform extremely well in the national examinations. The recent 2006 Budget has allocated RM90 million for the construction of two new Mara Junior Science College (MRSM) and for the purchase of equipment for existing MRSM facilities.

These MARA and Science Schools have created an exclusive and elitist space for the education of high achieving *Bumiputera* who mainly Malay students. In the early 1980s and 1990s before the 1997 Asian financial/economic crisis, most of the top Malay achievers in these schools would be sent overseas on extremely well-funded government scholarship to England or the United States to pursue their undergraduate and postgraduate degrees. The socioeconomic status of their families did not matter and this resulted in the elite Malays benefiting more from this system than the rural and poor Malays that this system was originally designed for.

These schools have been instrumental in creating the capitalist, entrepreneurial middle class and professional Malays in the country. In this sense, these special schools for the *Bumiputeras* and Malays have been successful in addressing the social and educational inequalities from the British colonial era. However, on another level these schools have not only created the inter-ethnic divisions but intra-ethnic divisions that are classed.

Chinese Vernacular Schools: Visible and Powerful Spaces

Malaysia is the only country outside of Greater China today where education using Chinese Mandarin as the medium of instruction is available. Based on 2003 education statistics, there are 1,284 National-Type Chinese Primary schools, 74 National-Type Secondary schools that were formerly Chinese schools and 60 Chinese secondary schools that do not operate within the national education system. There are approximately 600,000 students in the Chinese primary schools, 99,000 in Chinese secondary schools in the national system and 60,000 in Independent Chinese schools.

The Chinese schools in Malaysia began as schools serving the Chinese migrant community in the 19th century. The Chinese in colonial Malaysia set up their own community-funded schools, drawing on a tradition of self-reliance in education which can be traced historically to China (Tan, 2000). These Chinese schools continued to teach essentially in Mandarin and to cater predominantly to ethnic Chinese children during the colonial and early post-independence era.

Tan (2000) argues that a mix of inter-related demographic, socio-cultural, economic and political factors have enabled the Chinese schools in Malaysia to negotiate the terms for their survival through the different phases of their history. There was a transformation of the Chinese from an immigrant society to an integral component of a multiethnic nation with the provision of citizenship to the Chinese within the constitutional framework of the Federation of Malaya and the Independence struggles in the 1950s. The Chinese community consolidated their efforts in establishing a stable and significant presence in the education scenario through these Chinese schools. The Chinese community invested time, energy and money into the founding of these schools. They were and still are motivated by a pride in their culture and language (Tan, 2000).

The British colonial government developed multiethnic schools as part of the decolonization process for post-war Malaya. These schools were seen as agents of integration and English was the medium of instruction (Tan, 2000). This new emphasis resulted in fears amongst the Chinese community and a move was launched to save these Chinese schools through the *Dong Jiao Zong* movement. *Dong Jiao Zong* (DJZ) is the Chinese acronym commonly used to refer jointly to the United Chinese School Committees' Association *(Dong Zong)* and United Chinese School Teachers' Association (*Jiao Zong)*. The DJZ is responsible for the administration and management of 1,287 Chinese primary schools in Malaysia (Collins, 2005). They also manage and raise funds for the Independent Chinese secondary schools, the New Era College and supplement the inadequate finding that is provided at the government level. The DJZ is a powerful organization in that it has strong historical and communal links with the Chinese all over Malaysia. The DJZ movement that was initially seen as a resistance towards colonial policy developed into an alternative vision of a multiethnic nation in which different languages and cultures thrived (Tan, 2000). In the negotiations between the different ethnic political parties during the independence struggles, the Chinese politicians and *Dong Jiao Zong* leaders were given an assurance that the Chinese were given a

chance to preserve their schools, language and culture. This was also seen as a strategic political move on the part of the Malay political party of the Alliance to garner votes from the Chinese community for a win in the first elections. The large number of 1,381 Chinese schools with a total enrolment of 319,879 students and 8,417 teachers in 1956 was also vital in the continuation of these schools (Tan, 2000).

The early post-independence period was a time during which issues of nationalism within the context of the education and schooling system were becoming more important. There was a move towards a common medium of instruction, common curriculum and examinations in integrating the existing schools into a national system. The Malaysian Chinese Education movement, *DJZ*, during this period resisted the Alliance government's efforts to erode the Chinese schools. The tensions within and between the ruling parties of the Alliance, namely the Malay party UMNO and the Chinese party MCA finally resulted in the most of the Chinese secondary schools being converted to schools teaching in English and receiving full Government aid. The Chinese primary schools remained within the national system and continued to receive Government aid. The Chinese primary schools continue to be a source of political tension in communal politics in Malaysia.

There have been three Malaysian Education Acts (1957, 1961, 1995/6) that have reduced the role of Mandarin in the national education system (Cheong, 2006). At present, these National Type primary Chinese schools (pupils aged 5–11) are the only schools in the national education system that use Mandarin as a medium of instruction. Each Act has been seen by Chinese educationalists as obstructing the continuation of a Chinese identity in Malaysia (Collins, 2005). The DJZ has been instrumental in raising the Chinese communities' awareness of threats posed by the government's education policies (Cheong, 2006). For example, the DJZ reaction to the 1961 Education Act that stipulated that in order for Chinese schools to gain acceptance into the national system and therefore continue to receive government funding, these Chinese schools must stop teaching in Chinese (Collins, 2005). There have been various other incidents. In 1987, the then Minister of Education promoted 100 non-Mandarin educated Chinese teachers in Chinese primary schools (Collins, 2005). This was seen as a move by the government to undermine the status of Chinese medium schools because these teachers were not literate in Mandarin. The DJZ mobilized support amongst the Chinese community and the various Chinese political parties for a protest (Collins, 2005).

In 2002, the Government proposed the use of English as the language for the teaching of Mathematics and Science in all National and National-type primary schools. There was a complete turn in the post-independence and postcolonial discourse of Malay national language as a symbol of nationalism and unity to a new discourse that emphasizes the importance of English as an international language to be competitive in the globalised world economy. The Government warned the DJZ that action will be taken if there was incitement of racial sentiment leading to national disharmony. However, in this instance, unlike 1987, the dominant Chinese coalition parties within the ruling party while being sympathetic to the issue did not back the DJZ. A compromise was then made between the Malay and Chinese ruling parties due to the approaching national elections. The children at the Chinese

primary schools would learn Maths and Science both in Mandarin and English. The DJZ rejected this and this was seen as threat to the economic prosperity and societal stability of the nation.

There is a strong belief amongst the Chinese community and educationalists that in order for Chinese culture to survive and flourish in Malaysia, these schools are essential as the transmitter of Chinese culture to the next generation (Chin, 2001; Collins, 2005). Much emphasis is placed on academic achievement and on the Chinese culture, traditions and language in these schools. In this way, the presence of these Chinese schools has also contributed in significant ways to the development of human resources within the Chinese business community.

These Chinese schools are seen as a success story in terms of providing a visible identity marker, strong ethnic pride and a powerful educational institution for the Chinese community. The strong economic positioning of the Chinese ethnic collective during the pre and post-independence era and in present day Malaysia have enabled these schools to thrive successfully due to the economic and cultural patronage of the Chinese community, in particular the business community.

Tamil Vernacular Schools: Poor Schools, Marginalized Spaces

The development of Tamil schools in the Malaysian context must be understood against the backdrop of social history, and economic and political marginalisation during the British colonial era and contemporary Malaysia.

The South Indians Tamils constitute about 80% of the total Indian population. This is due to the colonial labour policy wherein the British colonial government brought in large numbers of cheap and docile Indian labour from South India to work the plantations and government projects (Santhiram, 1999). They were grouped into separate collie lines in the estates and formed a poor landless rural class (Santhiram, 1999). They also formed the bulk of manual labour that was involved in the construction and development of the infrastructural network of roads and railways in the country. They were also the backbone of the public utilities sector like the Public Works Department and the Sanitation Department in the major towns (Santhiram, 1999). They were also brought in to counter-balance the growing numbers, influence and unequal competition of the commercially astute Chinese who were considered too devious for the Malays (Sandhu, 1969, p. 58). The British practice of discriminatory ethnic politics until the 1920s excluded the educated Indians and intellectuals from the occupational opportunities in Malaya.

The Indian community in present day Malaysia has also been characterized by a relatively large social divide between the predominantly labour class and the professional and business class. Indians own less that 2% of the nation's wealth even though the Indians constitute about 8% of the country's population of 22 million (Kuppuswamy, 2003). They also make up less than 5% of successful university applicants.

Spaeth (2000) in quoting, Ramachandran, argues that: "Indians have neither the political nor the economic leverage to break out of their vicious cycle of poverty … if

their problems are not arrested and reversed, it is almost certain they will emerge as an underclass". He further adds that "Affirmative action-type quotas for the Malay population, along with a political system controlled by the Malays and Chinese, make many Indian Malaysians feel like third-class citizens".

Muzaffar (1993) attributes the current political and economic status of Indians in Malaysia to the effects of British colonialism. Due to low wages and harsh and brutal working conditions in the plantations during the colonial times, it was difficult for a large segment of the Indian community to move into the middle class. Muzaffar (1993) contrasts this to the Chinese community, which had more mobility between the different sectors of the economy and this resulted in the Chinese becoming well entrenched in the middle and upper strata of colonial society after a generation or two.

Tamil schools in colonial British Malaya were established in the late 19th century and early 20th century (Andaya & Andaya, 2001). The colonial government's participation in Tamil education was minimal and there was no provision beyond primary education was considered necessary as a basic knowledge of agriculture and handicrafts were considered sufficient for the needs of an Indian labourer (Andaya & Andaya, 2001). The ways in which the Tamil education developed under colonial rule further intensified the existing divisions in Indian society, separating the middle and upper class, who were primarily urban and English-educated from the rural and urban poor (Andaya & Andaya, 2001).

There are about 500 odd Tamil schools in present day Malaysia – with more than half of these schools being in deplorable conditions. In 2001, there were 527 such schools with a student enrolment of 90,502 students. These Tamil schools are mainly located in the rubber and palm oil estates but the conditions of these schools are deplorable and many lack basic necessities such as libraries, tables and chairs. These schools are patronized by the poorer sections of the Indian-Tamil community both of the estate background and the urban sector (Santhiram, 1999). There has been a decline in the enrolment of children in Tamil schools due to the rapid development of agricultural land banks between 1990 and 2000 that has resulted in the large scale migration of plantation labour to urban areas.

Santhiram (1999, p. 36) provides a description of the education in Tamil schools during the British colonial era

> Initially, a Tamil primary education of a minimum 4 years' duration was available for the Indians under the auspices of the missionaries, estate managements or the government. Estate Tamil schools which formed the bulk of these schools were in the main, makeshift structures. Teaching was often carried out in a multiple class environment. The facilities were very poor and Spartan at the most. Primary textbooks were Indian in orientation on account of their importation from India. Anyone in the estate who was literate in the Tamil Language could double up as a teacher in these Tamil schools.

Tamil education, unlike Chinese vernacular primary and secondary schools, was provided for in the primary level only. Most of the children on leaving these Tamil schools were absorbed into the working environment of the estates (Santhiram, 1999). The parents who were mostly illiterate did not see the value of a secondary education. They saw their lives in the estates much more comfortable to the harsh

and impoverished life without any educational opportunities they left behind in South India. However, given the state of these schools in comparison to other schools in Malaysia, "the estate schools often become ghetto schools for an under-privileged group" (Rothermund & Simon, 1986, p. 142).

Upon gaining independence, Tamil education was streamlined into a 6-year primary education (Santhiram, 1999). Pupils from Tamil primary schools had to attend a year of Remove Classes to gain proficiency in the medium of instruction of English and later on Malay in the secondary schools. The Chinese community and educationalists who had a much stronger economic and political positionings than the Indians within the newly independent Malaysia protested strongly against various nationalistic moves by the government such as the making the Malay language the main medium of instruction in all schools. The Indians, who lacked this economic and political power just tagged along without any of the vigor shown by the Chinese and Malays (Santhiram, 1999). The New Economic Policy (NEP) that favoured the Malays and *Bumiputeras* further marginalised majority of the Tamils and Tamils schools.

The quality of most Tamil schools is very much below the standards of the National Type and National Type Chinese schools in terms of teaching quality and infrastructure. These schools sometimes lack even the basic facilities such as a proper school building, adequate classrooms, playing fields, toilet facilities and libraries. These schools have a higher percentage of untrained, temporary teachers compared to other types of schools. As most of these schools are on private land, they tend only get partial government funding. And unlike the Chinese schools that have the financial backing of the community, the Indian-Tamil community does not have that economic clout. Santhiram (1999, p. 51) states that the culture of poverty at home combined with the poor facilities of the school provide an educational climate that can only be described as hopeless.

In recent times, the plight of Indians in Malaysia from the lower economic status has not changed considerably. This group is not performing academically within the schooling system and is under-represented in the tertiary educational institutions. They continue to be concentrated in the lower paying jobs. There is a widening intra-ethnic gap between those from the lower socio-economic groups and the Indian elites. The historical marginalized positionings of Indians during the colonial era coupled with the present day marginalized positionings of this ethnic collective has created an underclass of Indian-Tamils in contemporary Malaysia. This cohort of Malaysian society is multiply disadvantaged at the educational and economic levels.

The Indian political party in Malaysia, Malaysian Indian Congress (MIC) which is part of the then Alliance and present dominant ruling coalition has been the ethnic Indian collective's sole representative since independence. This party does not have the number or economic clout and are also weak in influencing the political process in Malaysia (Nagarajan, 2004). Arumugam (2002) argues that the total weakness of these Tamil schools and the lack of governmental support and intervention in improving these deplorable conditions in these schools is a clear indication of this Indian political party's bargaining power within the ruling party.

There have been debates in recent years as to the benefits of these Tamil schools. Many middle and upper-middle class Indians/Tamils hold the view that Tamil schools are useless. There are questions raised as to why the Tamils/Indians cannot organize their education like the Chinese. The Chinese and Indians have different trajectories of history in colonial Malaya and later Malaysia. The leadership and economic positionings of the Chinese and Indian communities are also very different in terms of its power brokerage within the larger Malaysian society.

These Tamil schools form part of a struggle by Tamil cultural and Tamil language advocates in Malaysia to sustain and maintain the history of the Tamil language as one of the oldest surviving languages (Arumugam, 2002). The Tamil language also represents an important ethnic marker of the Malaysian-Tamils who constitute about 80% of the Indian population in Malaysia. Thus, these Tamil schools are a matter of pride and dignity for the Tamil community. However, the Tamil schools are located within the marginalisation of a large proportion of Tamils in Malaysia which has its roots in colonialism, the plantation economy, ethnic politics and Tamil weakness to influence political decisions and state neglect (Nagarajan, 2004). These Tamil schools have not been effective as a social and educational institution in improving the social and economic positionings of the community. The Tamil education system can only be improved through concerted initiatives by the community and political leaders, and state intervention. These initiatives should focus on improving early childhood education, modernizing learning facilities and the school environment, and improving the professionalism of educators within the Tamil schooling system.

Religious Schools: Educational Spaces of Islam

In 2005, there were 55 Religious secondary schools in Malaysia. There is lack of academic literature on these schools. An Islamic and Malay culture prevails in these schools given that most of the teachers and students are Malays and all are Muslims. These schools are fully funded by the government and adhere to the national school curriculum and national examinations. In addition to the regular subjects such as Mathematics, Sciences, Languages and Humanities, these schools also offer specific religious subjects such as Arabic language, Islamic Religious Knowledge and Quranic skills. High and average achieving students from these schools tend to go into the matriculation programmes as with the students in the residential schools. These schools prepare students for Islamic studies and professional courses at the tertiary level either at the local universities or overseas universities. A number of these students are also seen as potential professionals in Islamic understanding and knowledge. These schools are seen as providing human resource for Islamic spaces within the Malaysian system such as the Islamic legal system, Islamic banking and Islamic education. These schools are also seen as producing future knowledgeable and responsible Islamic missionaries.

Orang Asli (Original Peoples)

In discussing the inter and intra ethnic dynamics of the education and schooling system in Malaysia, a special mention has to be made of the indigenous peoples of Peninsula Malaysia, the *Orang Asli*. The term *Orang Asli* translates as 'original peoples' or 'first peoples' (Nicholas, 2002). In 1999, they represented 0.5% of the national population. The *Orang Asli* are not a homogenous people. The State for administrative and political purposes officially classified 18 ethnic sub-groups under the collective term (Nicholas, 2002). The *Orang Asli* were the targets of Christian missionaries and subjects of anthropological research during the British colonial era (Nicholas, 2002). Since 1961, the Malaysian state has adopted a policy of integration of the *Orang Asli* into the wider Malaysian society. Endicott and Dentan (2004, p. 2) state that this policy of integration has come to mean "bringing them into the market economy, asserting political control over them, and assimilating them into the Malay-Muslim ethnic category". Endicott and Dentan (2004) argue that the political reason for absorbing *Orang Asli* into the Malay population would eliminate a category of people arguably "more indigenous" than Malays. However, most of the *Orang Asli* have strongly resisted government pressures to turn them into Malays (Endicott & Dentan, 2004). During the periods of increased development and modernization, there was and still continues to be encroachments and appropriation of *Orang Asli* traditional lands and economies by the State and business concerns. There continues to be much tension between the *Orang Asli* in relation to this community's own leadership and practices, and the Department of *Orang Asli* Affairs, the State appointed custodian of this community. The *Orang Asli* have experienced considerable social stress and marginalization in the appropriation and exploitation of their traditional territories and resources (Nicholas, 2002). Most *Orang Asli* still live on the fringes of Malaysian society, cut off from most social services, poorly educated, making a meager living (Endicott & Dentan, 2004).

This community has also been marginalised in relation to access and future opportunities to education. The Malaysian Government through the Department of *Orang Asli* Affairs developed a three-tiered educational program aimed at preparing *Orang Asli* children to enter the national education system (Endicott & Dentan, 2004). Children attended the village school during the first 3 years. The teachers in these schools were provided by the Department of *Orang Asli* Affairs and were generally not trained and had a low level of education themselves. These children would then go on to central primary schools in larger *Orang Asli* communities where they could finish their primary schooling. The teachers in these schools were Malays, provided by the Ministry of Education. Students who passed their final primary school examination would then go on to the normal government secondary schools in nearby rural or urban areas. The drop-out rates for *Orang Asli* children is very high in the primary schools (Endicott & Dentan, 2004).

There has been a mismatch between *Orang Asli* cultures and the Malaysian education system. *Orang Asli* children are not fluent in the medium of instruction in schools, the Malay language. The schooling curriculum that centres around the needs and experiences of urban children from other ethnic groups does not take into

consideration the experiences of *Orang Asli* children. There is also a lack of trained teachers in the remote *Orang Asli* schools. The very few *Orang Asli* children who go on to secondary schools are faced with a number of challenges in adjusting to the new schooling and cultural environment. Most of the teachers do not know much about *Orang Asli*. These students also face harassment from other students. Their parents also encounter financial problems in supporting their children through the secondary schooling.

Education for the *Orang Asli* has to move beyond the Government's objectives of total assimilation into the Malay society. There has to be an educational program moulded to the special needs and cultural experiences of these peoples. There is a need for a curriculum that both builds on their traditions and experiences as well as prepares them for living in the wider community.

Access and Opportunities to Future Educational Opportunities

Social and educational inequalities have been created through the vernacular education system comprising of government aided Chinese and Tamil primary schools, community funded Chinese secondary schools, the national primary and secondary schools as well as the residential science schools and MARA junior science colleges and the other types of Malaysian schools. These inequalities are further exacerbated at the post-secondary and tertiary education levels.

Students upon completion of their secondary schooling have various options that are dependent on their academic achievement and family financial background. Students with average and high grades can choose between the pre-university courses at the matriculation colleges (specifically for Malays) or the Malaysia Higher School Education certificate program in the government schools as pathways to the public universities. Students who can afford the fees can also choose to go into the various private colleges. And there is also the option of getting out into the Malaysian workforce. All these different pathways upon completion of secondary schooling are also located within the discourses of ethnic politics in Malaysia.

All public Malaysian universities are fully-funded by the Malaysian Government. These universities have been the site for ethnic and demographic transformation since the affirmative action policies were implemented in the 1970s. Most students and senior ranking academics are *Bumiputeras* and Malays. There is a dominant discourse of Malay-*Bumiputera* bureaucracy within Malaysian public universities as most of the university staff are *Bumiputera* Malay-Muslims. There are spaces for the non-Malays within these institutions but again this is political and strategic to ensure the dominancy and power of the *Bumiputera*-Malay ethnic collective.

In the late 1990s with the massification of higher education and the 1997 Asian economic crisis, the Malaysian government encouraged the private sector to play an active role in the provision of higher education (Lee, 2004). The number of private educational institutions has increased from 156 institutions in 1992 to 707 in 2002 (Lee, 2004). Most of these private educational institutions are profit-oriented

enterprises. These educational institutions within the private sector are located within a hierarchy with the financially successful and top colleges having a majority of Chinese students and top management and teaching staff members. This liberalization of government policies towards private higher education is also due to the lack of places (especially for the Chinese and other non-Malays) in the public institutions of higher learning to meet the increasing demands as well as the ethnic quota system. There are also significant numbers of Malaysian-Chinese students who are studying in tertiary education institutions in Singapore due to this ethnic quota within the Malaysian education system that does not reward academic excellence for the Chinese and other non-Malay students in terms of limited choices and places in degree programs like medicine, engineering and law.

Future educational opportunities and pathways for Malaysian students are also deeply embedded within the politics of ethnic identification in Malaysia and these are increasingly linked to class in recent times.

Politics of Exclusion and Inclusion: Contemporary Malaysia

The official discourses of education and schooling in the Malaysian context has always been one of national integration and national identity since independence in 1957. The education system aims to give education to the masses as is noted in the National Philosophy of Education and various education policies in Malaysia. Education is represented as the arbiter of social equity and the instrument of social reconstruction in these discourses. However, after 49 years of independence, 37 years since the 1969 ethnic riots and the implementation of the National Economic Policy in 1970, the 1990 National Development Policy, 2001 New Vision Policy and the various Malaysia Development Plans, the education system is used more as a political tool rather than a means of correcting social inequality and promoting social unity among the Malaysian populace.

Following the Independence in 1957 and the 1969 Racial Riots, the Malaysian government introduced various educational strategies such as special schools, scholarships, ethnic quotas through a highly sponsored education system for the *Bumiputeras*. These measures were aimed at correcting the social inequalities that were the product of British colonialism. It is ironical that these measures of national unity are now the discord of national disunity and contemporary ethnic politics on some levels.

The educational system advocates for an ideology of meritocracy but this is located within the discourse of ethnic politics. There are contradictions here as not all students have equal opportunities and access to educational resources and pathways. As seen in the discussions, different types of schools provide different pathways to students from different ethnic groups. These different schools have resulted in educational differences that are located along social and economic hierarchies. The affirmative action policy, while important and justified when introduced to rectify social inequalities along ethnic lines can no longer play an important role in promoting national unity and identity. Contemporary Malaysia

is divided along both ethnic and class lines – and education can be used as an important social tool in addressing these inequalities.

The Chinese ethnic schools are thriving with the economic and cultural backing of the Chinese community. These schools are seen as a great success story both in relation to the Chinese ethnic community and nationally as well. The Tamil ethnic schools are an example of an ethnic education that is a social and educational handicap to the Indian ethnic minority group. The social and political marginalization of the Indian community does not help in the deplorable state of these schools. The *Orang Asli* continues to be disadvantaged on many levels within the education system. There are also marginalized groups such as the non-Malay groups of *Bumiputeras* and the non-citizen migrant workers that are disadvantaged. As discussed earlier, *Bumiputeras are the Malays and other indigenous peoples. Eighty percent of the Bumiputeras are Malays and the Malays are the dominant ethnic and political group in Malaysia. Given this socio-cultural context, the category of Bumiputera tends to refer to the Malays*, The residential science schools and MARA junior science colleges not only create an ethnic divide but also an intra-ethnic divide as the Malays who benefit from these well-resourced and funded schools are generally not the Malay poor. Students in these different schools do not have equal opportunities in the acquisition of knowledge and skills needed for social and economic mobility within the Malaysian society. There are also inequalities in terms of physical infrastructures and resources in these different schools. These social injustices within the current education and schooling system are further exacerbated at the tertiary education levels. There are also intra ethnic as well as inter ethnic differences to be considered in these debates.

Malaysia has to ensure that the education system maximizes the creative and educational potential of each child and citizen to the fullest. To do so, issues to do with social, economic and educational inequalities between and within the ethnic groups have to be addressed urgently. The Government has to look hard at the structural and resource inequalities between the different types of schools. Issues related to school infrastructure and facilities, teacher professionalism and funding have to be considered. The different future educational opportunities and pathways for students from these different schools have also to be examined. The suitability of the curriculum and national examinations has also to be analysed. Do the present system privilege some students and marginalizes other students? The education system has to move beyond a policy of ethnic exclusivism which promotes segregation rather than integration.

The NEP and related educational policies and practices have resulted in the emergence of the middle-class Malay professionals and Malay business elite. The Chinese have also benefited from the economic symbiosis through their business ventures with these groups of Malays. Furthermore, with deregulation and privatization together with the economic boom in the late 1980s and early 1990s, both the Chinese and elite Malays have benefited economically and socially further strengthening their economic and political positionings.

The education system has to move forward with good and transparent governance with accountability through a reliable surveillance mechanism. While there

has to be some competitive rigor and element of meritocracy within the system, an affirmative action policy based on income and poverty levels rather than the *Bumiputera*-non-*Bumiputera* binary will ensure that marginalized Malaysians have access to educational opportunities and pathways. There also has to be an emphasis on critical educational research that examines issues to do with social, economic and educational inequalities between and within the ethnic groups. There has to be some move from Malaysian educational research being constructed as an organized, political, and state directed academic activity to an academic and social activity that is driven by the needs of the different social and ethnic groups, as well as the global and nationalistic agendas of the nation. Such research will be highly beneficial for the nation in future educational reforms.

There also has to be more spaces for public and academic debates on social inclusions and exclusions in relation to education. There has been an increase of such debates within non-mainstream media such as *MalaysiaKini* and *Aliran*. For example, recent debates on the effectiveness of the affirmative action policies in Malaysia in addressing wider social and economic inequalities between and within the ethnic groups. Questions as to whether these policies have produced groups of Malays who are complacent and lack competition have also been raised in recent public discourses have also been raised in these debates.

The legacy of Malaysia's rich cultural and ethnic mix is reflected in these different types of schools in Malaysia. These cultural differences are also located within discourses of colonialism, nationalism, ethnic politics and globalization. Writers in the critical tradition of education have argued that education and schooling systems are vibrantly located within the production of social hierarchies (Apple, 2003; Giroux, 2001). Education and schooling in the Malaysian context continue to be sites of political and cultural contestations. These unequal relations of power and marginalization between these different types of schools cannot be ignored in order for Malaysia to position herself as a leading international exemplar for education of a culturally diverse nation. The Malaysian government and other stake-holders have to address notions of equity, fairness and democracy in the education system into order to take this multiethnic nation forward in the global arena.

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Chapter 11
Australian Multicultural Education: Revisiting and Resuscitating

Georgina Tsolidis

Introduction

Australia considers itself as a successful multiethnic society. Since the significant demographic shifts that occurred after World War II, the social cohesion that is accounted for with great pride is often linked to the policy of multiculturalism. Increasingly, politicians are describing multiculturalism as a core Australian value (Sheehan, 2005; Silkstone, 2005). In this chapter, Australian multiculturalism will be considered in relation to imperatives triggered by an increasingly globalized world (Appadurai, 1996; Castells, 1996; Robertson, 1996). Can a social policy that some have described as assimilationist in intent (Castles et al., 1988; Jakubowicz, 1981) foster global citizenship? Can a policy designed to manage intranational cultural difference dovetail successfully with transnational belongings, which are arguably the hallmark of contemporary social existence? These issues will be considered with specific reference to education, which in Australia continues to be emphasized in debates about multiculturalism. Education has been called upon to enact shifting policy emphases related to values, citizenship, and social cohesion. In the context of current debates about the so-called culture wars, the place of multiculturalism within Australian schools takes on added significance, particularly given the nation's historic reliance on immigration for population growth.

In broad terms, the education of Australian school students is divided between government and nongovernment schools, with the latter comprising systemic Catholic schools, and what are known as independent schools. Within each of these sectors there is great variation. Within the nongovernment sector there are elite Catholic and independent schools as well as parochial Catholic schools, often underresourced. The independent sector also contains schools associated with less mainstream ethnoreligious communities. In Melbourne, for example, there are Islamic, Jewish, and Greek Orthodox schools that are full-time day schools. The nongovernment sector also includes schools associated with particular pedagogies including, for example, Steiner schools.

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New imperatives related to cultural difference are coupled with a general shift to small government, including in relation to education. In this context, there has been a consolidation of marketization within the school sector, particularly with reference to secondary schools. It is at this level that competition for university entry is most intense and schools are judged as more or less equipped to facilitate the high scores requisite for university places. School reputation in this regard is responsive to the student population and perceptions about particular types of students and their academic proclivities, the curriculum offered, and the types of pedagogies utilized. In this way multiculturalism is implicated in such considerations, both in terms of the diversity of the student population and the curriculum and pedagogy offered (Tsolidis, 2006). A historical and policy context for these issues will be provided in the next sections of this chapter.

Australia: A Nation of Immigrants

In Australia, the terms "minority" and "majority" are commonly used to differentiate between the ethnic majority, seen as the "real" Australians, and the "new Australians." This notion of "Australianness" must be explored in the context of Aboriginal history. White occupation in Australia is just over 200 years old. The distinction between "real" and "nonreal" non-Aboriginal Australians needs to be considered in this context. The claim to legitimate "Australianness" by those with British ancestry is related to the colonization of Aboriginal Australia. Colonization established the British cultural hegemony that still characterizes mainstream Australian society, an important element of which is racism.

British colonialism was underpinned by social Darwinist understandings of race, which created a hierarchy of peoples and cultures based on an assumption of British superiority. The late-19th-century scientific obsession with classification extended to the exploration of national types. There was a belief that factors such as national prosperity and morality were a product of a national character; this notion was used to support the belief that the Anglo-Saxon race was superior. There was great interest in whether this superiority would degenerate or progress in the colonies. The Australian national type was understood as the best of British stock combined with an environment that allowed outdoor living and sport. The understanding was that the British type would thrive, particularly in Australia, because unlike other colonies, 98% of the population was British. However, this racial purity needed to be protected and immigration policy has historically been used to this end, specifically the notorious White Australia Policy. This policy was instituted in response to the Gold Rushes and the desire to control Chinese immigration. It remained active in various forms and in response to various groups of would-be immigrants until the 1970s.

Despite a clear preference for a British population, non-British immigration to Australia has had a long history. This was most pronounced after World War II, when there was heavy reliance on immigration to increase the population. However, immigration policy was underpinned by a clear understanding of what constituted

"Australian" and the "Australian way of life". This was reflected in the government's explicit preference for British immigrants. When such immigrants failed to come in the desired numbers, despite incentives such as assisted passage schemes, the government set about consolidating a hierarchy of desirability. This coincided with familiarity, often established on the basis of physical features. For example, people from northern Europe were deemed more desirable because of their blonde hair, blue eyes, and fair complexions. Cultural traits also were important in determining the possibility of successful assimilation. As the government grew more desperate for immigrants, the source countries became more diverse. It was in this context that so many people from southern Europe entered Australia. They were simultaneously least desirable and imperative for the planned rapid industrialisation (Castles et al., 1988; de Lepervanche & Bottomley, 1988; Hage, 1998; Jakubowicz, 2002; Tsolidis, 2001).

Racism takes many forms as the context shifts with time and place. The emphasis on compatibility through sameness nonetheless continues. In Australia this has been traditionally framed through political discourse related to assimilation. Southern Europeans and so-called "Asians" have been considered incompatible because of a range of physical and cultural attributes. More recently, Muslim groups have been highlighted as not belonging; their dress and, therefore, appearance, as well as cultural practices associated with their religion, have been used to demark exclusion and natural nonbelonging (Browning & Jakubowicz, 2003; Hage, 2003; Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission, 1991; Poynting, 2004; Victorian Committee to Advise the Attorney-General on Racial Vilification, 1992).

Managing Diversity

The success of managing the rapid demographic changes that occurred subsequent to World War II have been attributed to multicultural policy. This has been distinguished from the explicitly assimilationist policies that characterized the immediate postwar period. Nonetheless, debates have continued as to the nature of and rationale for such policy. Castles (1997) offers several models of multiculturalism and argues that the dominant model operating within Australia has been toward managing, rather than valuing, diversity. Such a view of multiculturalism is in contrast to radical or critical interpretations of it, which take into account structural inequalities that work against different minorities in various ways, most notably, those related to socio-economic factors. In the next section of the paper an overview of key elements of Australian multicultural policy will be provided.

The Schools Commission

In the 1970s the election of the first Labor Government after 25 years of Conservative rule led to a number of significant shifts in policy emphasis, which

were arguably aligned with the social movements that had characterised the 1960s and 1970s. Providing more opportunities and human rights for working-class people, women, indigenous peoples, and ethnic minorities became a priority, and this was reflected within education policy. There was a fervent belief that education could spearhead social reform; to this end the Schools Commission was formed to recommend on related priorities and accompanying funding strategies. It reported in 1973 through the Karmel Report, named after its chairman, Peter Karmel. The education of ethnic minorities was foreshadowed as an issue requiring special attention in this report and taken up in more detail in the first Schools Commission Triennieum Report (1975).

The right of ethnic minorities to maintain "dual cultural identity within a framework of Australian allegiance and to keep this possibility open for their children" (Schools Commission, 1975, p. 88) was the framing sentiment in the first Schools Commission Triennium Report. In the report was outlined the responsibility of schooling to assist with the maintenance of minority students' first language and culture. Also stressed was the need for English-language competence in order for all students to access the full range of opportunities within Australian society. In relation to the teaching of English as a second language (ESL), the Schools Commission emphasised the role specialist language teachers had in providing withdrawal classes for newly arrived non-English-speaking students and in assisting with the professional development of their colleagues so schools could provide a language-across-the-curriculum approach. Such an approach, it was argued, would benefit all students who had literacy problems including ethnic minority students born in Australia and Anglophone Australians. The Schools Commission also emphasised the responsibility schooling had to provide ethnic minority students with cultural reinforcement and to acquaint mainstream students with the multicultural nature of Australian society:

While these changes are particularly important to undergird the self-esteem of migrant children they also have application for all Australian children growing up in a society which could be greatly enriched through a wider sharing in the variety of cultural heritages now present in it (Schools Commission, 1975, p. 91).

In its first Triennium Report, the Schools Commission extended what had hitherto been known as "migrant education" beyond the teaching of English to non-English speakers. It highlighted the need for mother-tongue and cultural maintenance and recognized the important role these played in students' self-esteem and learning. It recognized the need for a two-way process that required the education of both majority and minority students. It also challenged the understandings that had dominated previous ESL programs. Rather than specialist staff withdrawing minority students into separate programs and separate rooms to learn English, there were references to bilingual programs, professional development programs for nonspecialist staff so they could take some responsibility for these students' acquisition of English, and the provision of resources so specialist and nonspecialist staff could work together on the development of language-appropriate curriculum. In these ways the education of ethnic minority students had the potential to become integrated into the mainstream life of a school, rather than remain peripheral.

This report represented a significant shift away from compensatory models of teaching and learning. It had been common for immigrant students to be withdrawn from classes and isolated in peripheral locations, including those not intended for teaching. These were makeshift arrangements in schools where it had been assumed all students were native speakers of English. It was not uncommon for students with English language difficulties to be deemed to have learning difficulties and placed in the care of what were known as remedial English teachers. In this context, allowing students into the mainstream classroom, where they received some additional support to develop English language skills more naturally, was welcome. This approach allowed immersion into an English language environment, gave students access to learning in other curriculum areas, and encouraged all teachers to develop awareness and strategies that brought language awareness into their teaching, regardless of the subject taught.

The Galbally Report

In 1977 the Australian Commonwealth Government appointed a committee to review services available to ethnic minority communities. The committee, which had Frank Galbally as its chairman, produced the report *Review of Post Arrival Programs and Services to Migrants*, which is more commonly referred to as the Galbally Report (1978). This was an extensive review of both government and nongovernment services including education, health, and law, whereby their appropriateness for ethnic minority communities was assessed. In relation to education, the establishment of the Multicultural Education Program to allocate $5 million specifically to assist with the development of multicultural curriculum was recommended. The rights of ethnic minorities to maintain their cultural identity and the need for all students to acquire knowledge of Australia's multicultural character was advocated. The allocation of $5 million was intended to stimulate a range of initiatives including the teaching of community languages and cultures, bilingual approaches, multicultural perspectives programs, related teacher professional development, relevant materials development, parent and community involvement, and research.

The review committee responsible for the Galbally Report drafted its recommendations under broad guiding principles that stressed concepts of equal opportunity and access, cultural maintenance and tolerance, the need for specialist services and programs as an interim measure towards the issues being taken up by existing programs, and the importance of self-help towards self-reliance. Within it was embedded an understanding of multiculturalism that equated pluralism with democracy and social cohesion. It was argued that "[p]rovided that ethnic identity is not stressed at the expense of society at large, but is interwoven into the fabric of our nationhood by the process of multicultural interaction, then the community as a whole will benefit substantially and its democratic nature will be reinforced" (Committee of Review of Post Arrival Programs and Services for Migrants, 1978,

p. 104). Within this framework, respect for cultural difference was expected to guarantee social cohesion by fostering in ethnic minorities a sense of security.

It was recommended that a committee of educators with relevant expertise draw up guidelines for the allocation of the $5 million and that policies and programs in related areas be coordinated through formal structures established at the Commonwealth level (Committee of Review of Post Arrival Programs and Services for Migrants, 1978). In accordance with this recommendation, two committees were established: the Committee on Multicultural Education and the Commonwealth Education Portfolio Group. The Committee on Multicultural Education was convened by McNamara and reported to the Schools Commission with its advice on the allocation of the $5 million. In its report, *Education for a Multicultural Society*, published in 1979, the committee defined some key terms. It stated a preference for the phrase "education for a multicultural society" because it indicated a "philosophy which permeates the total work of the school" (Committee on Multicultural Education, 1979, p. 10) rather than a strand of education that was implicit in the term "multicultural education." Similarly, the committee stressed that education for a multicultural society was intended for the whole community, not just for schools with large percentages of ethnic minority students. Three areas of work were identified as particularly significant: (1) relationships between schools and homes and students and teachers; (2) the curriculum, particularly multicultural perspectives and language teaching and learning; and (3) support mechanisms including training, research, and communication of information (Committee on Multicultural Education, 1979, p. 11). *Education for a Multicultural Society* included a series of recommendations on how schools should approach multiculturalism. The relationship between the home and the school was emphasized within these.

This needs to be considered in the context of prevailing discourses of the time. Commonly, the education of so-called migrant students was considered with reference to "culture clash". The school represented the mainstream way of operating and the family, the ways of the parents' homeland, often assumed to be backward-looking and thus potentially inhibiting the students' academic and social achievement. Flowing from psychologistic frameworks and the assumption that the desired end point was assimilation, emphasis was placed on reconciling students with the dominant culture as a way of eliminating the contradictions assumed to exist between the cultures of their home and school. Within this framework, the committee offered a range of strategies to assist schools communicate with ethnic minority homes. While this was a different path to the same end point (assimilation), it did represent a new orientation by advocating communication between homes and schools. Funding was provided to schools so that newsletters and reports could be translated. Interpreters were employed so that teachers could communicate with parents. Perhaps most significantly, people from relevant communities were employed to work as liaison officers or Ethnic Teacher Aides, integrating families, their communities, and cultures into the mainstream running of schools. Ethnic Teacher Aides often ran informal groups at the school for non-English-speaking parents. These were ethnospecific and became important conduits for bringing parental expectations into schools. Most often, mother-tongue maintenance was a

priority supported by these groups. Through these groups, minority parents became visible in schools and in many cases this became a means of breaking down stereotypes about such parents and their communities.

Established almost at the same time as the Committee on Multicultural Education, the Commonwealth Education Portfolio Group represented the first stage in implementing the Galbally Report recommendation to establish formal structures dealing with multiculturalism at the commonwealth level. Their intention was to set down the major issues as they saw them and in this way act as a stimulus for further discussion towards the creation of a commonwealth policy on multicultural education. In their discussion paper entitled *Education in a Multicultural Australia*, published in 1979, the group aimed to clarify the term "multicultural education" because they believed no consensus existed around the concept, but instead were concerned that it "may divide the community by highlighting existing differences rather than foster understanding, tolerance and social cohesion" (Commonwealth Education Portfolio Group, 1979, p. 1). In line with the Galbally Report, the Portfolio Group stressed cohesion through diversity. It identified several elements within Australian society that protected this cohesion. These were national institutions such as parliament and the legal system; English as the lingua franca; and shared values, primarily those of democracy and egalitarianism.

Multiculturalism has remained an amorphous concept. Government reports, until as late as 1987, still had as a stated aim the need to define multiculturalism and its implications for educational practice (Committee on Multicultural Education, 1979; Commonwealth Education Portfolio Group, 1979). Despite the attempts of a number of committees and reviews, established during both Liberal and Labor Governments, this situation continued – so much so that in 1983, the newly elected Hawke Labor Government, through its Minister for Education and Youth Affairs Susan Ryan, appointed the first national advisory body for multicultural education. One of its tasks was to provide a rationale for policy in multicultural education. This rationale was provided in 1987 (NACCME, 1987) but was never developed into policy.

Understanding Shifts in Emphasis

Despite the stated aim of early government policy to assimilate immigrants, by the 1970s it became evident that some immigrant communities were becoming earmarked by their low incomes, poor housing, lack of English-language skills, and limited career opportunities. Furthermore, inadequate and inappropriate services, including within education, were re-creating similar circumstances for the children of immigrants. There was increasing concern about "ethnic ghettos" forming in cities such as Melbourne and Sydney, were immigrants were concentrated. Teachers, particularly through their professional associations, were one group seeking government recognition that their work with ethnic minority students needed additional support.

The notion of culture clash was very influential in shaping debate about the children of postwar immigrants, the so-called second generation. Through this framework, the emphasis was placed on immigrant groups, particularly those deemed least compatible with the Australian lifestyle and values. Their children, it was argued, faced the burden of having to reconcile their family values with those of mainstream society. The need to assist them with this became the priority. Thus the aim was to explore mechanisms that could minimize the effects of culture clash on ethnic minority students. The dichotomy between "Australian" and ethnic minority students was consolidated and the emphasis placed on models seeking to compensate minorities for their "un-Australianness." Within this framework education was constructed as pivotal.

The changing political environment, however, was evolving to include larger ethnic minority representation within peak bodies. This contributed to the evolution of an alternative multicultural policy orientation, which sought to challenge the mainstream conceptions of "Australianness" and extend this to include nondeficit images of minority cultures (MACMME, 1984; NACCME, 1987). This was evident in the way language education was being considered. Biculturalism and bilingualism became important elements in such explorations and there was an important shift in emphasis between the teaching of ESL and bilingual approaches to the acquisition of English. The significance of bilingualism was extended to anglophone monolinguals through the teaching of community languages more broadly.

Internationalization

It would be reasonable to describe the 1970s and 1980s as a peak period in multicultural education. Funding provided by the national government initiated extensive work in various states, notably Victoria, where innovative policy, curriculum, and professional development initiatives were undertaken. However, such initiatives by and large assumed cultural diversity as bounded by nation and premised on the perspectives and priorities of those groups associated with postwar migration. Increasingly this became limiting. Debates were situating Australia in relation to the Asia-Pacific region and increased interest in languages from this region was shifting the emphasis from those associated with ethnic minority communities to so-called trade languages, including Japanese and Indonesian. Coupled with this shift was the growing emphasis on international education, including within secondary schooling. The growing number of students from the Asian region studying in Australian schools and universities, the move towards the teaching of languages and cultures from this region within Australian schools, and increased economic relations and changes in migration patterns increased the relevance of international education. Internationalising the curriculum, much like multicultural education, has been interpreted in multiple ways. It can be understood as a response to globalization, whereby teaching to cultural difference transcends national borders and becomes responsive to ongoing flows rather than migration and settlement. In this way, it can be associated with wider social justice agendas, including those related

to postcolonialism (Vasta & Castles, 1996). In other cases international education is teaching and learning about specific countries in our region, a type of cultural exchange program that facilitates understanding and economic relations. This approach is associated with Australian students learning about Asia as well as approaches taken to international students studying in Australia.

The amorphous nature of multiculturalism continues to characterize discussions related to cultural diversity. In essence these discussions are about the nature of Australianness and how it is envisaged, its critical elements, and how these can be preserved given current imperatives related to globalization. Of increasing significance is the so-called war on terror and how this constructs an enemy inside as well as outside national boundaries. In the context of such debates, the absence of any explicit policy related to multicultural education is particularly noteworthy. Similarly, the priority given to values and citizenship education and a reinvigorated exploration of the teaching of Australian history by a conservative government have been interpreted as a move to consolidate an understanding of Australianness in conventional and narrow terms. In 2003 the Australian Commonwealth Government released a 3-year policy aimed at updating the 1999 strategic directions for the implementation of multiculturalism (Commonwealth of Australia, 2003). In this document, multiculturalism is situated firmly within the context of conflict, including the bombing of the World Trade Center in New York and the bombings in Bali, where many Australians lost their lives. The 2003 policy stresses the importance of nation building in times of conflict and links this firmly to social cohesion. Multicultural policy is understood as imperative to shaping this social cohesion through the promulgation of shared values. Following from this policy, the Department of Education, Science and Training released *The National Framework for Values Education in Australian Schools* (Australian Government Department of Education, Science and Training, 2005). Attached to this proposal was a total of $29.7 million to be spent over 4 years supporting schools and communities with the teaching of values. Nine core values are advocated in this document, the last entitled "Understanding, Tolerance and Inclusion." This is explained with reference to awareness of others and their cultures and the respect of diversity in the context of a democratic society (Australian Government Department of Education, Science and Training, 2005, p. 4). Not surprisingly such policy has elicited public debate about the nature of Australian values and the processes through which these are determined. This debate needs to be considered in the context of government initiatives related to citizenship tests for would-be immigrants, more aggressive border protection, and interventions within education that foster nationalism, including a Prime Ministerial summit on the teaching of Australian history.

Challenges for the Future

Australia still relies heavily on immigration for population growth, and while the source countries and reasons for immigration have altered over time, immigrant communities still are concentrated within major cities, particularly Melbourne and

Sydney. Within these cities there is stratification linked to ethnicity. In Sydney, for example, there are suburbs with high concentrations of Middle Eastern families. This community, despite long-term Australian settlement, has a strong association with unemployment, low-income employment, and weak educational achievement. Riots in the suburbs of Sydney in 2006, which involved youth from these communities and those who identified as "real" Australians, have brought to the fore the divisive potential of narrow understandings of Australianness that promulgate "them" and "us" notions of citizenship. Similar events in other countries highlight the interdependency of global and local discourses including those that are anti-Islam and anti-Arab. These events have increased awareness of the need to consider why particular communities experience alienation, the possible impact of this alienation, and the role of schooling in its management.

Refugee settlement remains a critical challenge, particularly with regard to schooling. Students from such communities remain concentrated in specific suburbs and professional development and support for teachers is a priority. In many instances such students have experienced trauma as a result of war, escape, living in camps (sometimes for long periods), and immigration to a country where they are constituted as members of a visible minority. The management of the needs of such students can be intensive and multifaceted.

Since World War II, refugee settlement in Australia has included communities from the Balkans, Lebanon, Vietnam, Latin America, and, most recently, from the Horn of Africa. Students from such communities can have little experience of formal schooling and often are illiterate in any language. Extended periods of war and residency in refugee camps can have serious implications for their future schooling. This can include direct experience of extreme violence and torture, rape, poverty, and emotional and social dislocation. Their life experience includes much, which should not be assumed for young people their age. Furthermore, they and their communities are targets for racism and public debates about immigration policy. This has been the case historically in Australia, including with the first "refos" who arrived from the Balkans after World War II. However, subsequent groups of refugees have experienced exacerbated difficulties because of being Asian, Black, or non-Christian. Such factors are assumed to make assimilation more difficult and therefore to threaten social cohesion. There have been various examples of public debate about the number of refugees, their visibility within the community, and the possible outcomes of such factors on the Australian way of life. A notorious example of this occurred in relation to the Vietnamese community in the 1980s, which resuscitated debates about the White Australia Policy (Hage, 1998; Tsolidis, 2001). More recently such debates are occurring in relation to African refugees.

Commonly refugee students are inducted into mainstream schooling after periods of time in Language Centres. These centres specialise in the teaching of English as a second language and are intended to transition students into nearby schools where they will continue to receive such tuition as well as participate in all other aspects of school life. There are various levels of success with such programs, which are unlikely to provide solutions to the range of obstacles such students face,

particularly in Australia, where Blackness is still relatively unusual and refugee students remain clustered in some areas, commonly those where poverty dominates.

Students whose parents and grandparents immigrated to Australia still have specific needs, which can be overlooked because of length of settlement. Sometimes referred to as second- or third-generation immigrants, such students highlight experiences of schooling that they claim illustrate racism. This is more obvious for particular groups including those described as "Asian" and those from Muslim communities. Nonetheless, students from other groups also make similar comments.

Australia includes international education as one of its major income earners. While most students in this category attend universities, there is increasing enrolment at secondary schools. There is evidence that such students feel alienated in the Australian context. Changes in systems of funding mean that many institutions, particularly within the Higher Education sector, need to attract full-fee-paying students, most of whom are overseas students. The imperative to increase funding can mean that services provided to these students remain inadequate. Furthermore, the experience of studying in Australia may not offer the anticipated outcome of learning about anglophone culture through lived experience, as many international students remain relatively isolated or in situations in which they rely on each other for support and company.

A major challenge for Australian schooling remains creating programs that speak to global citizenship and are suitable for all students. In the context of globalization there are strong imperatives for all students to develop transcultural experience and expertise. Arguably there is considerable room for improvement with regard to this priority, particularly in relation to mainstream curriculum. While particular cohorts of students may have such expertise and experience through family circumstances, its value within formal schooling structures and its broader application remain minimal.

Cultural Fluidity as a Way Forward

While global citizenship may sound like a cliché (and in some ways it is), once we connect it to the real lives of individuals its impact resonates. As educators we have an obligation to remain relevant and prepare young people for futures that will be lived in an ever-shrinking world. Many young people already are living globalized lives through recreational, work- or study-related travel, cultural pursuits- and technological facility. These shifts assume the cultural fluidity that some have argued is the hallmark of successful citizens of the future. Bauman (1997), for example, states

> Well-sewn durable identity is no more an asset; increasingly and ever-more evidently, it becomes a liability. *The hub of postmodern life strategy is not making identity stand – but the avoidance of being fixed* (p. 89, original emphasis).

Yet teaching to cultural fluidity needs to be considered in the context of the para-doxes presented by new political imperatives. In Australia, as elsewhere, fear is being promulgated by references to a "clash of civilizations" (Huntington, 1993). Young people most often are left to their own resources to make sense of the contradictions implicit in the modern condition. On the one hand, they live identi-ties that plug into global cultures of consumerism and popular culture and they network globally; on the other hand, they enact discourses of (non)belonging. Most particularly, adolescence is a time when identity issues are at the forefront. In schools, young people are left to reconcile identities associated with the sub-cultures of their peers, the identities the adult world (school, family, work) pre-sumes for them, and the identities they see themselves adopting in the future. Identification is responsive to factors such as gender, class, and ethnicity. It also is responsive to time and place. These are complicated relationships, and while schools are critically placed with regard to them, identity issues rarely come to the fore in formal ways (Tsolidis, 2006).

What might curriculum and pedagogy for fluid cultural futures look like? A cur-riculum and pedagogy premised on a static sense of self remains by comparison relatively straightforward. The idea of national rather than global citizenship invokes a history and a geography to teach. A seemingly natural consequence of this history and geography will be a designated set of languages, a version of high culture, and perhaps a range of sports to be played, et cetera. And even if opposi-tional perspectives are introduced, these coexist or are contested within a tightly bounded framework. Additionally there will be a seemingly unproblematic vision of appropriate pedagogy linked to particular cultures. This is evidenced, for exam-ple, by the common assumption that Western pedagogies are student centered and value exploratory and self-actualizing learning. By comparison pedagogies in the East are understood to be based on rote learning, discipline, and deference to hier-archically situated authority. In this way, what is taught, the means of teaching it, and consequential systems of authority and assessment flow from a culture that is presumed to be self-contained and homogeneous. Increasingly this model is problematic because the understanding of culture on which it is premised is itself problematic. Instead education needs to be compatible with globalization and the fluidity of culture that it implies. An essential component of such an education is the relation-ship between sameness and difference and the need to construct a pedagogy that assists students to understand, manipulate, and construct culture as fluid, including with regard to their own cultural identities.

In the context of globalization and related understandings of culture, the empha-sis shifts from intercultural to transcultural pedagogy. Intercultural education assumes communication between distinct and bounded cultures. Instead we need to recognize that cultural boundaries are both fixed and fluid, reconfiguring them-selves in response to various shifts in emphasis over time and space. In this context, we are teaching all students how to be cosmopolitan and the experiences they bring with them to the classroom will impact greatly on their future success with cultural fluidity. If we understand our classroom as situated in global space rather than bor-dered by the parochial, this view of cosmopolitanism inverts traditional conceptions

of ethnic disadvantage. The students who, because of hegemonic power relations, are located at the cultural margins are likely to be the students with experience in what are referred to as "border cultures" (Anzaldua, 1987). Border cultures are those that sit closest to the interface between sameness and difference. It is here that there is the most familiarity with understanding and negotiating "them-" and "us"-ness. This transcultural expertise is commonly silenced. A reinvigorated multicultural education needs to sustain and extend this expertise to all students.

Multicultural Pedagogies for Globalized Times

Teaching and learning needs to be premised on the understanding that there is an ongoing and productive tension between sameness and difference. Rather than construct pedagogies that aim at either sameness or difference, we should be teaching to the relationship between these by focusing upon what is shared as a means of making difference familiar to all students. An example of this strategy is curriculum that has at its foundation a theme that is crosscultural and explores such a theme in relation to specific cultures or periods of history. This illustrates practices that are at once common and interpreted variously.

Often we assume that students wish to learn about another culture because they do not value their own culture as highly. Wanting to learn something new does not mean that what is already known is not valued. Transcultural facility assumes knowing more – more about less familiar cultures, more about what is familiar between cultures, and more about how to move between cultural differences in productive ways. In this sense it is about adding rather than replacing. This is an extremely valuable component of international education, which is emblematic of globalization. Furthermore, as students experience increasingly distinct cultures, the more challenging is their curriculum and the more thought has to go into how appropriate pedagogies are constituted.

In order to successfully teach, we need to respect what it is that students bring with them to the classroom, both as learners and as members of particular cultures. In a globalized world it is more likely and appropriate that a classroom will be culturally heterogenous. Attempting to silence or assimilate difference is denying all students transcultural experience. Utilizing existing cultural difference in order to teach about cultural difference is good teaching and learning because it makes the most of what students bring with them to the classroom and provides a lived lesson of allowing students to engage with cultural diversity. This method can be extended beyond the classroom to the community more generally. And through the use of technologies, opportunities for transcultural teaching and learning can be expanded to other students and places in ways that reflect globalization.

We cannot assume that culture is linked solely to ethnicity, although ethnicity is a key underpinning for culture. Place of residency and migration history will bring to the same ethnicity a varied range of meanings. The notion of diaspora has become integral to globalization. This inextricable linking together of various

cultures (Brah, 1996; Morely & Chen, 1996) is lived in many countries. This is particularly the case with diasporic culture, which is lived transnationally. For example, what it means to be Chinese will vary in Singapore, Taiwan, Malaysia, Hong Kong, the People's Republic of China, the USA, or Australia. We cannot assume that there is something essential about being Chinese. The meanings attributable to "Chinese" will shift in response to factors such as gender, religion, class, age, and place of residency. Because of this, developing a snapshot of Chinese culture is unlikely to assist us as educators. Stylized renditions of particular cultures rely on static and homogenous understandings of particular communities. As educators we need to develop cultural awareness, sensitivity, and agility as primary pedagogies as well as end points for our teaching. We also need to recognise that what is "ours" is also diasporic. In Australia we are fortunate to experience cultural diversity in dynamic ways. We have a history of immigration and progressive policy responses to this, particularly with regard to education. This provides an explicit stepping-off point for students to recognize the positive nature and potential of diasporic cultures.

Our classrooms need to be democratic spaces (Giroux & McLaren, 1994) in which students can share, exchange, and experiment with cultures without fear of retribution, being misunderstood, or exposing themselves to ridicule. There needs to be trust and reciprocity between students so that this can occur. Often I have experienced classrooms where a wealth of knowledge and experience remains private because students lack the confidence or opportunity to share. Creating pedagogies that build on and extend cultural diversity present in the classroom should not be understood as an act of benevolence but instead as a means of sharing knowledge that will benefit all students, especially those who lack transcultural experience.

An important element in making classrooms democratic spaces where students can share and experiment with cultures in this way is providing a common medium of exchange. English language occupies such a function in Australia. We need to ensure that all students have adequate support developing the "must haves" of any curriculum. Apart from obvious support such as ESL tuition, we need to make culturally assumed knowledge transparent. Looking behind what is assumed is a way of providing meaning and also a way of opening up for debate whether or not such understandings should remain assumed.

Understanding the world is a smaller place brings with it new possibilities, but also new responsibilities. As educators we have to nudge ourselves out of cultural complacency. Students need to know what we teach and we should teach what they need to know. In countries like Australia, there can exist a tendency to assume without reflection that English and other aspects of Western culture are all students need in order to become successful global citizens. The argument I am making here is that cultural fluidity is the currency of globalization. Students need to know how to function between cultures not just within one, albeit one associated with dominance. In Australia, educators are surrounded by cultural resources that allow this shift in consciousness to occur successfully.

Conclusion

Australia takes pride in its multiculturalism. As a formal policy it is associated with social reform movements that began in the 1970s and were consolidated into a range of policies in the 1980s. Although the policy has had bipartisan government support, there have been marked differences of emphasis over time. Nonetheless, a major plank of Australian multiculturalism has been schooling and the belief that citizens can be educated for cultural difference and that this will sustain social cohesion through respect and opportunity. In summary, multicultural education has had a number of key characteristics. The importance of English has been a key element. The opportunity to learn to speak, read, and write English has been linked to success and active citizenship. This right has been reiterated in various national language policies (Lo Bianco, 1987). Various modes of acquiring English have received government support over the years and there have been responsive to shifts in emphasis within language teaching, funding priorities, and government priorities related to the promotion of languages other than English. In this context, bilingual approaches to teaching, particularly young students, have waxed and waned. There have been some remarkably successful examples of such programmes in Australia and these have been linked the successful acquisition of both languages (Clyne, 1991). Similarly, the teaching of community, foreign, or so-called trade languages has shifted in emphasis as well. Multicultural education has nonetheless promoted the teaching of languages other than English for reasons of cultural maintenance and in order to induct monolingual English speakers into other cultures. Language issues often have dominated multicultural funding priorities. However, there have been a range of innovative interventions associated with culture more broadly. Multicultural perspectives across the curriculum received support through some curriculum development initiatives and were intended to encourage teachers to teach in ways that were inclusive of a wide range of cultural perspectives. This led to strategies such as the incorporation of so-called migrant history or literature into mainstream subjects. Another element that characterized multicultural education was communication between parents and schools. These priorities were reinterpreted in various ways to include antiracist strategies or curriculum and professional development that targeted specific groups of students, including refugees or ethnic minority girls (Tsolidis, 1986).

Australian multiculturalism continues to remain a priority. However, it is now situated in relation to ongoing debates about the so-called war on terror. Globalization has severely challenged the underpinning assumption of previous renditions of multiculturalism, whereby it was evaluated in relation to intranational social cohesion. Increasingly it is evaluated in relation to the possibility that it can engage meaningfully with cultural difference as this operates transnationally. This becomes the new challenge: to learn from and successfully reinterpret and extend the strategies that have characterised multicultural education.

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Chapter 12
Searching for Equity and Social Justice: Diverse Learners in Aotearoa New Zealand

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The structure, forms and practices of modern schools have remained relatively unchanged since their emergence as sites of mass instruction, established to meet the needs of burgeoning industrialized economies. However, schools have also traditionally sat in contest between economic necessity and more intransitive public good (Ramirez & Boli, 1994). The progressive impulses evident throughout the twentieth century were expressive of widely held beliefs that schooling could create a more democratic society. In a shift away from conservative and authoritarian schooling practices, New Zealand progressive educational ideas were enacted through egalitarian policies, legislating for broader definitions of "good citizenship" through a wider curriculum, greater autonomy for teachers and rhetoric on fostering the development of individual potentials through education. These initiatives took root in the mid-twentieth century, a period defined by the country's economic prosperity and commitment to social equity. However, national social policies enacted for the public good served to reinforce social norms, and obscured diversities such as gender and ethnicity (Novitz & Wilmott, 1990) or excluded and segregated others as in the case of disabilities (Rata, O'Brien, Murray, Mara, Gray & Rawlinson, 2001).

Current education policies in New Zealand can be counted among the most progressive and inclusive in its history as far as their intention of addressing the needs of diverse student population and ensuring the widest possible participation of all interest groups in schooling are concerned. Two recent policy initiatives, *Schooling Strategy 2005–2010 – Making a Bigger Difference for all Students* and *Special Education Action Plan: Better Outcomes for Children (2006–2011)*, taken together highlight the centrality of concerns regarding diversity in New Zealand education policy (Ministry of Education, 2005a, 2006a). These strategies sit within the framework of a structurally devolved educational system, that was made possible through a radical policy initiative in the late 1980s, *Tomorrow's Schools* (Department of Education, 1989a).

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   The current policy focus on diversity is significant, given that in recent times,
the population within New Zealand schools has continued to diversify along several
dimensions. For example,

• A report by the New Zealand government's statistical agency found the gap
  between high and low income households had grown significantly between 1982
  and 1996 (Statistics New Zealand, 1999).
• Increasing migration – in the year to September 2006, there has been a net
  inflow of 4,500 school-age migrants to NZ. Approximately similar increase is
  projected for 2007 by Statistics New Zealand (Ministry of Education, 2006b),
  and increased ethnic diversity (see Table 12.1).
• However, in a period of unprecedented national population growth, rural com-
  munities have been facing continual cycles of school closures or amalgamation,
  as a result of government cutbacks and urban drift. Total number of schools
  reduced by 145 from 2,722 to 2,577 between 2001 and 2006 (Ministry of
  Education, 2006c)

In this chapter, we invite you, the readers, into a discussion by setting out the recent
policies and supporting initiatives that frame issues of social justice and diversity in
New Zealand schooling, interrogating our research cases, for their politics of the every-
day (Gitlin, 2005), and asking you to think about the resonances and dissonances
between our examples and your own educational, socio-cultural and political contexts.

   We argue that whilst state schooling is inevitably shaped by political contestation
at the level of policy, classrooms are also politically charged spaces, evident in the
contests between individuals who are invested with varied positionalities and moti-
vations. Policy initiatives despite their explicit intent to address issues related to
diversity, while necessary, are not sufficient to create contexts of equity or equality
for historically marginalized learners (Raudenbush, 2005). While policy initiatives
can create some possibilities within the micro-settings of schools, what happens
within those sites largely depends on the ways in which wider historical and social
discourses constitute the role of teachers, their students, and the ways in which a
range of participants, including researchers, engage with the purposes of policy ini-
tiatives and teaching and learning practices. Wider participation and social justice
are influenced by the extent to which intentions can be acted upon and realized.

   Ethnographic studies undertaken to explore issues of teacher and student learn-
ing in relation to student diversity within the micro sites of school contexts have the

Table 12.1 Percentage of students enrolled in New Zealand schools by ethnicity
(Ministry of Education, 2006d)

	NZ European/Pākehā and other European	Māori	Pasifika	Asian	Other ethnic groups
2006	59.0	21.6	9.1	8.2	2.0
2005	59.6	21.6	8.8	8.0	1.9
2004	60.5	21.4	8.5	7.8	1.7
2003	61.3	21.1	8.4	7.5	1.7

potential to engage critically with both the intended and unintended outcomes that can arise in the research process. We will use case studies undertaken in three public schools – two elementary and one secondary – to highlight the affordances and limitations of acting within the contexts of particular policy initiatives. We suggest that critical attention must be paid to understanding the implications of what happens when initiatives to address diversity as part of teaching and learning are played out within the micro contexts of schools.

Further, it is our position that as economies have globalized towards the end of last century and the beginning of this one, and discourses of competitive individualism taken hold within our public institutions, the expression of hope for greater social justice in schooling continues to be played out through public school policy. In this context, discourses of neo-liberal economic rationalism work against impulses of social democracy with global solutions to educational dilemmas traded across national boundaries coming into conflict with policies and initiatives representative of national interests and cultural specificity. Placing the policy initiatives within the larger socio-political-economic context of this historical time reveals alternative ways in which they can be and have been interpreted to serve intended and unintended interests.

Charting the Policy Terrain in New Zealand

Tomorrow's Schools (1989)

The New Zealand Education Act of 1989 was a radical experiment designed to shift the authority of school governance and management from the centralized government control to individual school boards comprised of 3–7 community members (usually parents), the school principal and a teacher representative. The policy initiative known as *Tomorrow's Schools* is unique to New Zealand in that it officially devolved the administrative control to individual school communities for the entire country. It was promoted as a means of ensuring community involvement in educational decision-making, enabling parents/caregivers to participate in schooling in ways that were socially and culturally appropriate to local communities. The schools, at least theoretically, were thus situated to be accountable to the communities rather than to the government bureaucracy. Whilst administrative accountability was devolved to local communities, the most critical aspects of educational decision-making have remained under the centralized control of the then newly established Ministry of Education, and its policy frameworks for curriculum and assessment (O'Neill, 1996/97). Following the implementation of this Act, some New Zealand education writers have criticized it vociferously. There have also been concerns that all communities are subject to the same accountabilities under the Act despite having unequal capacities to effectively negotiate the administrative demands of running a school.

New Zealand Disability Strategy (2001)

> "Disability is not something individuals have. What individuals have are impairments.… Disability is the process which happens when one group of people create barriers by designing a world only for their way of living, taking no account of the impairments other people have.… Disability relates to the interaction between the person with the impairment and the environment. It has a lot to do with discrimination, and has a lot in common with other attitudes and behaviors such as racism and sexism that are not acceptable in our society." (Ministry of Health, 2001, p. 3)

New Zealand's special education policy affirms the right of every student to learn in accordance with the principles and values of the Education Act 1989. In particular, Section 8 of the Education Act legislates for equal rights, freedoms and responsibilities for primary and secondary education for all learners – 'People who have special educational needs (whether because of disability or otherwise) have the same rights to enroll and receive education in state schools as people who do not.' (Department of Education, 1989b) Using a Human Rights argument, the New Zealand Disability Strategy (Ministry of Health, 2001) holds a "vision of a fully inclusive society" and aims to remove the barriers that prevent disabled people from participating fully in society.

The policy in itself is an emancipatory document, and has been instrumental in challenging and changing a wide range of beliefs and practices within and beyond educational institutions. Yet, as evident in the national consultation process undertaken in 2004 (Ministry of Education, 2004), its influence in the daily lives of students with disabilities remains highly variable, depending on the micro level contestations for resources and access in specific schools and class rooms.

Schooling Strategy (2005)

New Zealand Government's oft-reiterated goal of "… the transformation of New Zealand into a knowledge-based economy and society" through a high quality education for all is reflected in the Minister of Education Hon Steve Maharey's comments that,

> "Education is at the heart of this transformation. We have an education system to be proud of. But we can't rest on our laurels. We need to build an education system for the 21st century; a system where every child and student is stimulated to learn. We need to improve the system's ability and the ability of all those within the system to respond to the diversity of our learners of all ages" (Ministry of Education, 2005b).

The statement mirrors a widely accepted official and society's view of the high value placed on egalitarianism in this country. However, alongside this view rests the uncomfortable reality of the persistent and still significantly wide gap "… between our highest and lowest achievers" in various international comparison studies of selected educational outcomes, for instance PISA results (Ministry of Education, 2003).

In response to this dilemma, the focus of state educational policy has recently shifted to evidence-based practice in ensuring high 'academic and social outcomes' for all learners (Alton-Lee, 2003, 2004; Ministry of Education, 2005b). The Schooling Strategy (2005) is indicative of the case being built for developing iterative evidence-based frameworks for teacher competency and professionalism in relation to their effects on student learning. The Strategy reveals the extent to which evidence-based frames are embedded in current conceptions of educational policy, with research and evaluation underpinning all initiatives linked to schooling, such as curriculum, leadership, initial teacher education and school improvement.

With its basis in meta-analyses and syntheses of extant research, this strategy can be situated within the ongoing international contestation of the nature and comprehensiveness of empirical educational research (Egan, 2002). While only the most extreme positions would today dismiss the significance of empiricism entirely, many contributors to the debate have argued that a broader range of intellectual practices be brought to bear on the conceptualization of educational issues (Atkinson, 2000; Phillips, 2005). Within the New Zealand context, the recent conceptualization or implementation efforts, by and large, have scarcely drawn on this debate so far.

Addressing Diversity Issues in Schools – Three Case Studies

It is hard to disagree with the notion that addressing schooling inequalities is important and that addressing diversity as part of teaching and learning should inform the ways in which students and teachers work together. In fact as Atkinson (2000) suggests, raising critical questions about such notions can appear to be engaging in a form of heresy, seen to be resistant to both progress and democracy. However, as researchers working at the micro level of schooling contexts to address issues of student diversity and teaching and learning, our experience has been that notions of diversity and teaching and learning, taken both separately and together pose considerable challenges for teachers and researchers (Quinlivan, 2005). We turn to our empirical studies to highlight some of these challenges.

Case Study 1: Home School Relationships
with Reference to Diversity

Our first case study is based on a longitudinal school-wide project that I (Baljit Kaur) initiated in 1999 in a primary (elementary) school situated in a low-income area (Referred to as a low decile school in New Zealand – Decile 3, rated on a scale of 1–10). The school roll of 5- to 11-year olds in 2000 was 225, with ethnic composition of Pakeha (NZ European) 65%; Mäori 25%; Others (including Somali, Ethiopian, Chinese and Fijian) 10% (Education Review Office, 2000). The study

aimed to investigate the complexity of the relationships among parents, teachers and children with focus on diversity, and explored issues of power, voice, authority and knowledge. A consideration of children's voices in what has traditionally been seen as contestations of the relative roles and perceptions of teachers and parents was a significant dimension of the project. Children positioned 'outside the mainstream' had views and experiences that often contradicted the views of teachers and parents as well as the findings of extant research on home school relationships.

We will focus here on three questions. First, as already pointed out the New Zealand Education Act of 1989 significantly altered the relative positions of parents and teachers in the administration of schools. To what extent has this policy change opened spaces for parents from diverse, usually disadvantaged and minority groups in this case study school, to participate in schooling? Second, the Disability strategy with its base in human rights advocates for an inclusive education system. However, given the wider instrumental and accountability discourses prevalent in New Zealand, the teacher education and special education professional development continue to draw much more significantly on deficit theories of disabilities. How does such professional preparation interface with and influence the lived experiences of children with disabilities in schools? Third, children's voices are virtually missing from research on home school relationships; from policy informed by such research, and in turn, from the policy driven practice. What, if anything, can young children, positioned variously in the school system, according to perceived dis/ability, culture or class background, add to our understandings of how they experience and manage home-school relationships?

Parents and Schools – Partners?

Home school relationship as a plank for social and educational reforms to deal with society's problems or with individual students seen to be 'at risk' for failure in schools has a long history (Cutler, 2000). Research in home school relationships has traditionally been driven by deficit thinking largely informed by developmental-psychological/medical assumptions about difference and diversity. Although this still remains a dominant approach, increasingly it has come under criticism by those studying the broader socio-cultural context of schooling and school's function of social reproduction of inequities (Lareau, 2000, 2003; May, 1994). Alternative frames to understand home school relationships that stemmed out of such criticism underline the significance of visiting the question of home school relationship from the situated perspectives of parents from 'disadvantaged' groups in society such as the lower class, ethnic minorities, or parents of children with disabilities.

The Education Act was promoted as a means of ensuring schools' accountability to their local communities, encouraging community involvement in educational decision-making, and enabling parents/caregivers to participate in schooling. Thus, it was seen as a mechanism through which diverse members of the population will be able to participate and have a voice in educational decision-making, thus creating more inclusive schools.

The policy change enabled a few parents, mostly women in this study, to participate actively in the school in roles that gave them unprecedented prestige and authority. It provided them with opportunities to handle what to them was a big budget and huge responsibilities as employers of the staff. These women felt grateful to the school for providing them with the opportunity to feel important and useful. Many noticed significant changes in their self-confidence.

Several mothers volunteered long hours in the school, providing much valued help in the traditionally accepted roles of parents as helpers in junior classes. The school attempted to make them feel welcome by opening the staff room to them. They in turn reciprocated by regularly volunteering more time, doing anything that needed to be done.

The home school relationship seemed very positive to all concerned. It is clear from the interviews with these mothers that school's uptake of the policy created a legitimate space for them to engage actively with the school, giving them opportunities to be recognized for their efficiency, allowing several of them to act on a scale much bigger than that offered to them by their lives outside of the school. They deeply appreciated these opportunities. However, the obverse side of this grateful acknowledgement was that they were highly compliant to the ideas of the principal and the teaching staff. In fact in all the observations of the board meetings in one year, I did not note a single disagreement or question from the board members about anything that the principal or the teacher representative proposed. The effect was that the principal ended up with most of the governance work. Most of the decision making power too rested with the principal rather than with the board members. The board more often than not served as a ratifying rather than as a decision making body.

Further, there was no mechanism for the board members to seek the views of other parents were they so inclined. Migrant or refugee parents often did not understand the role of the board members or the administrative structure of the school. Not a single respondent from immigrant or refugee families had considered becoming a member of the board despite several of them having high education levels. Many of them did assume the traditional roles of parents in school relative to their own children's education. For Maori whanau and Pacific Island mothers, the reasons for poor participation were often related to their negative association with schooling, frustration about the lack of genuine cultural responsiveness, and financial and time constraints. Children and families, who were positioned outside the school norm, whether based on dis/ability, culture, ethnicity or class, had no public space or mechanism through which their concerns or needs could be aired or addressed.

Thus, while the policy positioned the board members, acting on behalf of the school community, in the powerful role of employers of school staff, in this low decile school they felt beholden to the principal and the staff not only for their children's education but also for opening new opportunities for themselves. The extent to which then they can be expected to exert any decision-making independence to represent the interests of the community that they purportedly represent is questionable. The 'private' gains for the concerned mothers and their children might at times be significant and positive. Whether such parent participation has brought much 'public' benefit to the wider community of parents is doubtful at best.

Children with Special Needs, Their
Families and Inclusive Schooling – A Mirage?

The Disability Strategy had not come into force when this project started, but public consultations about it were well underway and it was in the process of being implemented by the time the fieldwork was completed. The school had a large number of children seen to have learning and/or behavioral problems. To deal with them, some innovative initiatives, such as a pull out program called Academy where these children were engaged in interesting activities such as art, were put into place. An elaborate system of rewards and punishments was implemented rigorously. The staff sought active involvement of the concerned parents. The school hired a counselor, an uncommon practice in New Zealand primary schools, who in addition to working with individual children was charged to run a parent education and support group on a regular basis. "At risk" children, identified by teachers, were pulled out of their classrooms twice a week for half day for the 'Academy' activities on the condition that their parents, mostly mothers, must attend the parent education program to learn effective parenting skills in order to support their children's learning and behavior outside the school. Thus while the school was proactive in supporting the children, it did so from a deficit perspective where the children and their families were positioned as dysfunctional and in need of interventions. Unlike children, the adults, teachers and parents alike, saw the disciplining system as transparent, largely fair and effective in managing children's behavior. Children participating in the Academy program mostly saw it as a positive experience. On the other hand, several mothers attended the parenting program because they were required to do so, thus minimizing the benefits they were expected to derive from it.

The school had only three children with noticeable sensorial, physical or intellectual impairments. None of the teachers felt confident to teach these children. A boy with profound hearing impairments was already in the school when the project started. While the school received funding to support his learning, it was not able to find an adequately trained person to take up such a role. One of the mothers was given the responsibility of helping him in a common sense manner off and on during most days and periodically a trained person visited the school from a local school for the hearing impaired.

A boy with Down syndrome and a girl with impaired mobility were admitted during the duration of the project. In both cases, the school tried quite hard to refuse the admission diplomatically, largely because the staff felt that they did not have the expertise to deal with such children. In the end, both children were accepted largely without any interventions from the Ministry of Education. The initial apprehension on the part of the teacher as well as several parents about admitting the child with impaired mobility soon dissipated as everyone came to appreciate the sharp intellect and warm disposition of this child. The child with Down syndrome had a full time teacher aide and was left alone in her care with little attempt at inclusion of any kind. Given the emphasis on standards, achievement and efficiency, it is no wonder that there was little concern or space in this school for a child seen to have intellectual disabilities.

Children from other countries were regularly pulled out of classrooms to teach them English, however, interviews with the children and their parents suggest that this was not the kind of support they considered relevant. Many of them wanted the school to provide increased opportunities for the children to participate alongside 'kiwi kids' so that the other children could learn to accept them as equals and desirable mates instead of pulling them out of the whole class activities that reiterated their differences. But they had not found a way to inform the school of their wishes, since most of them felt such a 'demand' on their part might seem signal that they were ungrateful for the good life and new opportunities that being in New Zealand had offered to them.

In all these cases, the parents/caregivers felt overwhelmingly indebted to the school for admitting them, accepting whatever the school was able to offer and had little further expectations about better inclusion or more appropriate instructional support.

Children in Home School Relationship – The Silent Beneficiaries of Adult Benevolence?

As noted earlier, children's voices are virtually missing from research, policy and practice related to home school relationships. Children and their learning is assumed to be at the center of this relationship and it is taken for granted that parents and teachers should and do work collaboratively to ensure best learning outcomes for all children. There are very few studies of home school relationships undertaken from the perspective of children, in New Zealand or elsewhere. When children's views are included, these have been restricted to relatively older children and at best form an incidental part of the study.

This state of affairs is contrary to the participation rights of children. According to the UNCORC to which New Zealand is a signatory, children should be able to participate in decisions that impact their lives significantly. Research in the area of home school relationships continues to treat children as silent or passive beneficiaries of adult benevolence, and yet, there is plenty of evidence that all adults do not work in the best interest of all children. Once I moved to question this assumed benevolence of adults and the forced silence of children, it became evident that children often were not at the center of decision-making priorities in the school under study. Only some of them became visible to the adults engaged in shaping their lives, and not always for the right reasons or with positive consequences.

Children, when given a chance to share their views of home school relationship, revealed thoughtful and strategic responses to their specific situatedness within the school. It was clear that depending on how a child perceived his/her position within the school and the home, he/she actively engaged at times to facilitate and at others to subvert the adult plans and actions meant to enhance relationships between the two settings. Most children made a clear distinction between the 'private' world of home and the 'public' world of school. It was fine to share what happened at school

with family members, but what happened outside the school was their private life, none of school's business; unless of course, they trusted to tell about it to a friend or a teacher. 'Trust' featured prominently in many responses from children.

Children, as young as nine, actively and successfully managed the relationship between their home and the school. The continuity between the two settings, home visits by teachers or parent teacher meetings at school were all fine in the eyes of those children who were from Pakeha, middle class families, were doing fine in sport and/or achieving well at school, or were considered to be well behaved, "no problem" children. For children who felt that the school disapproved of them or their family, or saw them as disruptive or their parents as troublemakers or different, and a few who felt that adults in their lives neither at school nor at home cared about them, did not want close connections between their home and the school. They did not think continuity or a close connection between their home and the school was to their advantage. To some it was not acceptable that contact between their parents and teachers that excluded them, should occur at all unless they trusted the teacher concerned.

Research and policy strongly advocate that a close connection between home and school acts to the benefit of children's learning. I would agree that, it does indeed for some children, most of whom already do have a relatively closer match between their home and school values and practices. But the applicability of this research and the policy recommendations based on it for the children at whom the 'closing the gaps' initiatives are usually aimed is questionable at best. The children in this study indicate that they, and sometimes their families, feel alienated in the school system and are fearful of 'them' – the state agencies like social welfare or police, and including school. However, they were not passive recipients, instead they were managing the perceived or real threats to their life worlds quite well by dodging or manipulating the system and its mandates to the extent possible, and/or by complying with it to the extent necessary.

Case Study 2: Drawing on Quality Teaching for Diverse Students in Schooling Evidence to Interrogate Constructions of Sexual Diversity and Gender – Possibilities and Problematics

In the second case study, two contextual issues that explore the gap between intentions and enactments in policies and practices will be explored within the context of a the research partnership that I (Kathleen Quinlivan) built with a year 12 Health teacher, Emma, and her students in order to widen understandings of gender and sexual diversity (Quinlivan, 2006). The first issue relates to the challenges and complexities of what it means to work against normalizing constructions of gender and sexuality with secondary school students. The second issue pertains to the affordances and challenges of working with best evidence teaching pedagogies to address learner diversity in a secondary school classroom.

The Quality Teaching for Diverse Students in Schooling – Iterative Best Evidence Syntheses (IBES) program, underpinning the Schooling Strategy (2005),

provides an officially sanctioned and supported venue for undertaking work with teachers and students to explore the ways in which a range of student diversities can be addressed within the classroom. While issues of sexual and gender diversity are not addressed specifically, Alton-Lee (2005) has developed a "responsiveness to diversity framework" (p. 3) which draws attention to the role that notions of normalisation play in constructing a sense of 'otherness' for diverse students, and rejects binary frameworks.

> "Our approach is to put difference (original emphasis) at the centre of this work through a 'responsiveness to diversity' framework. Because difference is a characteristic that all learners share, the approach allows for a universalizing discourse of difference (Britzman, 1995; Town, 1998). This approach moves away from 'norm' and 'other' thinking that can constrain mainstream educational thinking to focus on the homogenous and the 'mean' and seeks to strengthen our evidence base about what works for all learners." (Alton-Lee, 2005, p. 3)

A 'responsiveness to diversity' framework that emphasizes universalizing as opposed to minoritizing constructions of sexual diversity (Sedgwick, 1990) is concerned with the possibilities inherent in 'working against' normalisation (Kumashiro, 2002). Within the context of my own research such frameworks provide an opportunity to undertake ethnographic work in classrooms to explore what might be possible in terms of 'working against' heteronormativity and gender norms. This can begin to widen understandings of sexual diversity and gender, and to address the material effects these constructions have on students, both academically and socially. Emma was aware that in the past her strategies for addressing homophobic student comments mostly had the effect of shutting down rather than opening up dialogue about diverse sexualities (Sedgwick, 1990). She was interested in working with students to problematise constructions of heteronormalcy in ways that would facilitate, rather than foreclose the work of thinking about thinking (Britzman & Gilbert, 2004). Acutely aware about the centrality of gender and sexuality in the ongoing self constructions of young adults on the one hand, and the usual silence around these topics in the formal curriculum on the other, students too recognized the importance of creating a venue to explore the wide range of ways in which gender and sexuality are construed. The willingness of all the participants to engage in this critical initiative, however, did not prepare us for the challenging responses that this work produced. Paradoxically, at certain crucial moments, that will become evident below, the dangers inherent in interrogating the highly emotive constructs of gender and sexuality with young adults forced Emma and me to step back into the safety of competency based affirmations of our roles as a teacher and a researcher.

Dangerous Learning – Interrogating Hetero and Gender Normalcy in the Classroom

Several researchers note the high level of emotionality that surrounds pedagogical work undertaken in relation to the interrogation of gender and sexuality issues in classroom contexts (Berlak, 2004; Britzman, 2003; Quinlivan, 2005). Given such

dynamics, it is not surprising that working to interrogate and critically analyze the heteronormative constructions of masculinity and femininity produced in popular culture resulted in strong reactions. Peer policing and re-inscribing of hegemonic forms of gender and sexuality emerged as pervasive features of the hidden peer curriculum in classroom interactions during the research project. For instance, during a discussion analyzing desirable representations of femininity across historical contexts one male student made derogatory comments about female size, reinforcing hegemonic constructions of femininity in relation to thinness (Harris, 2004). In a later interview two female students recalled the negative effects that the comments had on their female peers who were size 14 and above.

Instances of some male students subtly policing hegemonic constructions of masculinity and heterosexuality through underhand comments (Nayak & Kehily, 1996) also occurred when representations of gender and sexuality in magazine advertisements were being analyzed. Several male students appeared to be uncomfortable when looking at images of desirable men in the ads designed to sell underwear, as evident in the excerpt below:

> Interestingly when we were giving out copies of the advertisements, especially the one of the spunky guy with the tiger tattoo on his abdomen, one of the male students [Justin] who appears to have a deep investment in hegemonic masculinities commented to one of the other male students [Guy], who enacts a less normative form of masculinity, "Oh I bet you think he's really hot!" He appeared to insinuate Guy was gay and was putting him down for that, and in so doing reiterating his own heterosexuality in front of his peers. (Researcher Fieldnotes 20/5/04)

Justin in a later interview explained that he felt obliged to counteract discourses that legitimated same sex desire in order to establish his own heteronormative masculinity in the situation. For Justin and his friends, the danger of being perceived as gay by their peers within what they understood to be a profoundly heteronormative school culture was too overwhelming to risk. Their fears accurately reflected the power of dominant heteronormative discourses that circulated amongst the students, especially amongst young men. One of the male students whom I had observed being harassed for his lack of conformity to masculine gendered norms informed me that he had been physically hit in the school yard for challenging the heteronormative assumptions of his peers by talking about the high incidence of bisexuality in society generally. We had previously discussed notions of bisexuality in class in order to disrupt and problematise dominant heteronormative discourses.

Further, the gendered and heteronormative policing incidents that emerged within the class had the material effect of silencing the non-normative male students. The silence, in effect, reinforced the students' otherness in relation to the masculine norm that was dominant in their peer culture.

Such incidents produced a great deal of anxiety and distress amongst the students as well as for Emma and me. They resulted in Justin being excluded from the class on a number of occasions. Ongoing debates between Emma and the students concerned the fairness of this action. While Emma's actions were well intentioned in terms of sending a message to the students that Justin's harassment was unacceptable, his absence shut down the opportunity for us to explore the influential role

that understandings of gender and sexuality play in crafting a sense of self for the students, and in finding ways to negotiate such complexities. In practice it proved challenging for us to acknowledge and work productively with the high emotionality that emerges when working against repeating heteronormalising and gender normalising discourses (Kumashiro, 2002).

Thus, our attempts to create a venue in the classroom to problematise normalising constructions of masculinity, femininity and sexual diversity proved paradoxical and much more complex than we had expected. In some instances students challenged the attitudes and behaviors of their parents and peers in unexpected ways, and demonstrated an openness and respect for sexual diversity amongst their peers. While at the same time a small group of male students covertly policed the masculinities of their non-normative male classmates, out of a fear of being labeled as gay themselves.

During the project, Emma and I became aware that while the students could readily engage in critical dialogue in terms of analyzing and challenging heteronormative sexual diversity and gendered discourses, they were not as facile when faced with the task of communicating their understandings in writing. We turned to the Quality Teaching for Diverse Students in Schooling Best Evidence Synthesis (Alton-Lee, 2003) in order to develop their metacognitive and writing skills. We had intended to use the Synthesis to help us integrate our ongoing conceptual work on sexual and gender diversity with developing their metacognitive and writing skills.

Pleasures and Dangers of 'Quality Teaching' Frameworks for Teachers and Researchers

Current constructions of teacher professionalism are increasingly influenced in New Zealand by discourses of teaching excellence and mastery in relation to learning outcomes for diverse students (Alton-Lee, 2003). Emma and I experienced both enjoyment and tensions over the course of the research project in endeavoring to move beyond ways of working with 'Best evidence' frameworks for 'quality teaching' in an instrumental fashion. 'Best evidence' frameworks for 'quality teaching' appear both unsettling and alluring for secondary school teachers and researchers such as me who have secondary school teaching backgrounds. Given the traditional construction of secondary school teachers as subject specialists, encountering more generic pedagogical knowledge related to learning processes to address student diversity might be both deeply exciting and also terrifying for them. As explained later, the instrumental frameworks in which the research is couched also fit rather worryingly well with other nationally driven instrumental student assessment procedures that teachers have had to adjust to within the increasingly practice driven instrumental cultures of schools (McWilliam, 2000).

The process of learning about, and developing and practicing our understandings of pedagogical processes to build students' metacognitive skills proved to be pleasurable for both of us. Emma reported that she enjoyed the extent to which the best

evidence synthesis affirmed her competence as a teacher, in making explicit strategies such as scaffolding, which, as a subject specialist, she had not encountered before. She noted the pleasure she felt over time as she was able to draw on the strategies more readily and comfortably when working with students. Within the context of our work, the ten teaching features that the synthesis identifies and describes provided a way to value the pedagogical practices that Emma was already drawing on to inform student learning. As a keen and highly motivated teacher she independently obtained a copy of the synthesis for herself, and really enjoyed learning about, not only what was working well in her class, but also wider research findings related to teaching and learning for diverse students.

It is not surprising that 'best evidence' frameworks are alluring to ambitious teachers (and researchers) such as Emma and myself. There was an understandable desire on both our parts to examine our own teaching in the light of 'best evidence' in order to evaluate the extent to which our teaching practices reflected 'best practice'. Emma also acknowledged, as an ambitious and successful teacher, her desire to be able to 'tick all the boxes' of the best evidence synthesis and in so doing achieve pedagogical mastery:

> [I].... at some level got a little bit annoyed because I'm an achiever, but I didn't get all the tick boxes…(laughs) oh, bloody overachiever … laughs … but you know, it didn't put me off enough to worry about that. (Emma, Health teacher, 40 years old, Final Interview, 9/7/05)

McWilliam (1999) draws on Lacanian frameworks to suggest the pleasures of mastery and excellence are something of a double edged sword. She proposes that the notion of achieving excellence and mastery can be problematic because achieving excellence is an end in itself, and that at that moment nothing more is required. Within this illusory triumph of reason over emotion, she explains, there is literally nothing more to know. Felman (1982) suggests that such fantasies mitigate against authentic learning, which occurs instead from the acknowledgement that human knowledge in reality is untotaliable.

The mastery that Emma and I enjoyed over the pedagogical skills, and the increasing success that students showed in metacognitive skills as a result of our pedagogical focus were pleasurable. But at some point I realized that we were moving away from the focus on addressing the challenging issues of sexual and gender diversity, and from the implications of engaging with the dangerous knowledge of legitimating same sex desire and gender diversity (Britzman, 1998). It was as if the pedagogies and learning skills became an end in themselves, seemingly disconnected from the intentions with which we had decided to focus on these in the first instance. Looking back now, the rush of success we experienced from our expertise with developing students' metacognitive skills felt in many ways like ticking a box in comparison to the much more demanding pedagogical and challenging questions that were raised when Emma and I, along with the students, had to come to terms with the enormity of the fact that the hidden peer culture was actively subverting our intentions to widen student understandings of sexual and gender diversity. The ways in which we dealt with the policing of masculinities and sexualities within the peer culture was inadequate at best, and ended up shutting down the very dialogue

that we had set out to promote. Perhaps it would have been more transformative, had we, despite our fears, persisted with interrogating that issue more fully instead of shifting our focus to metacognitive skills.

Talking about these tensions later, Emma drew my attention to the extent to which best evidence frameworks sit comfortably within the current climate of evaluation and standards that strongly inform student assessment in schools (Hipkins & Vaughan, 2002). On one hand she suggested that teachers could benefit from meeting standards that best evidence frameworks had identified as facilitating diverse students' learning. On the other hand, she was wary of the dangers of using the best evidence syntheses in an instrumental fashion, recognizing from our work together that facilitating diverse students' learning is a complex process. The questions concerning the understandable disjuncture between policies and practices (Raudenbush, 2005), especially within a pragmatic and practice orientated culture such as New Zealand (Quinlivan, Boyask & Carswell, 2006), remain. Can approaches underpinned by instrumental frameworks and framed as a series of ten interconnected strategies that could also be interpreted as standards, be used in thoughtful and considered ways towards addressing issues of diversity in relation to student learning within the increasingly instrumental cultures of schools? To what extent are we in danger of losing rich conceptual and content knowledge through a narrow emphasis on learning skills and strategies for both students and teachers? Is it possible for researchers and teachers to 'stretch' quality teaching and best evidence synthesis frameworks to accommodate and explore the tensions that arise as part of the research process? Or is that just too tall an ask, given that rich and nuanced understandings of diversity, and their relationship to student learning pose a challenge to the traditional constructs of secondary school teachers as subject specialists within the profoundly instrumental cultures of the schools? Perhaps it may be worth considering the potential of wading into the dark and murky waters of fear, uncertainty, high emotionality and failure as sites of learning. (Felman, 1982; Britzman, 2003; Ellsworth, 2005) Open and thoughtful dialogue between New Zealand policymakers and educational researchers that engages with the complexities of the gap between the 'hope' of educational policies, and the 'happening' of their enactment on the ground', as Kenway and Willis (1997) describe it, would be helpful in negotiating the challenges.

Case Study 3: Practice Meets Policy – Encountering Undemocratic Practices in an Intended Democratic Educational Context

In turning to our third case study, we begin with a discussion of the dilemmas drawn from our unexpected, encounters with undemocratic the nature of the everyday politics in a neo-progressive experimental school for children between the ages of 5 and 12 in New Zealand. This school emerged as a state funded primary school under Section 156 of the Education Act that permits, with sufficient public interest

and support, the development of special character schools. The designated special character status of this school rests on its philosophy of "discovery learning" captured in the school's mission statement as, "Free to discover, to uncover, and create your own path". My colleagues who are co-authors of this Chapter, and those who are not, Kane O'Connell and John Clough, and I (Jean McPhail) chose to engage in a participant-observation action study of this experimental school during its first 4 years because its broad vision overlapped with key aspects of progressive schooling that reflected our long-term research interests. We were, therefore, drawn to this opportunity to study the ways that this neo-progressive school implemented quality-learning programs in a distinctly different socio-cultural political context from the origins of progressive thought.

Through our work at this school, we were pressed to raise numerous questions that bear on the intersection of educational policy and macro-politics, and educational policy and school practice. What, we wondered, were the possibilities inherent in the intersections of end of the twentieth century neo-liberal educational policy and practices with progressive thought espoused almost 100 years before? What did it mean that, like Dewey, members of the Foundational Board of Trustees of this experimental school viewed their school as having a significant role to play in the shaping of democratic character and the creation of a mini-democratic community with impact extending to traditional schooling? Could the democratic social engineering efforts on the ground of this neo-progressive school ultimately lead to more equitable and communitarian principles and practices both within this school and in traditional schooling? Would the numerous practice changes be enough to meet the democratic-educational ideals or would they be compromised or co-opted by more traditional and hierarchical educational discourses and/or neo-liberal socio-political discourses circulating both inside and outside the school?

The Design of the School

The founding body of this experimental school was composed of six individuals – three education professionals and three parents with deep commitments to alternative education. They believed that significant changes on the ground of the school would lead to young children becoming new kinds of learners better prepared to confront the opportunities and challenges of the twenty-first century. While these six individuals shared a general neo-progressive vision that became the bedrock of this school, each of them also had specific interests that they worked to instantiate in the practices of the school. So the administrative and teaching staffs were hired because of their general enthusiasm about the general progressive, pedagogical vision articulated by the founding members in pubic forums, newspaper articles, and publicity, but they also represented a collection of people who initially ensured that the interests of the individual members of the foundational board would be served. Thus, among the staff were individuals with disparate interests and expertise authorized to develop practices consonant with the general pedagogical vision.

To work towards the development of twenty-first century democratic learners the members of the foundational board of trustees transformed educational beliefs and practices associated with the primary content of children's learning, the practices associated with that learning, and the role ascriptions of children, parents and teachers. The school building was architecturally designed to provide an environment in which these changes in schooling practices could be supported.

Drawing on the general pedagogical progressive idea of bringing the curriculum to the child through his or her genuine interests in learning, each child's primary learning was designed to capitalize on his or her individual interests. After identification of each child's interests, children were to undertake study of their interests in a self-managed context that emphasised experimentation, entrepreneurship and risk-taking, with effective learning necessarily extending outside the school walls to contexts in the community.

The foundational board members were committed to a participatory democratic community flourishing on the ground of this school in which the children, parents, teachers and members of the board were fully engaged in the pedagogical aspects of the school. They instantiated this democratic ideal through changes in the traditional relationships between children, parents and teachers in public schools. First, teachers were reconceptualized as facilitators and renamed as 'learning advisors,' positioned to facilitate and monitor children in their subject areas of interest, but not to serve as central sources of information nor as direct guides. Instead, children were authorized and expected to manage their daily interactions with their interest-based learning programs without direct, hands-on adult supervision.

Second, each child and his or her parents/caregivers were conceptualised as equal partners with the child's learning advisor in the design of each child's interest-based learning program. Periodic meetings between this team occurred to insure that each child was pursuing his or her interests in learning and meeting his or her learning goals. As well, the parents/caregivers were expected to be as actively involved as possible in assisting not only his or her child but other children as well in their interest-based learning in the school, community and at home. Thus, interest-based learning design and facilitation was the responsibility of the learning advisors and the parents/caregivers, with active participation of children.

Two Examples of Undemocratic Practices
Spawned from Democratic Educational Policies

While this experimental school emerged through a state educational policy that empowered citizens and educational professionals in unprecedented ways to design, govern and manage schools, this was operationalized at the level of 'practice' and not theory. Several issues are paramount here. First, in the face of only a general, progressive vision not grounded in the theory and history of progressive education, this experimental school did not develop a coherent and specific curriculum and set of practices. This theoretical and historical vacuum created the context

for the interests of individual members of the foundational trust, the teaching staff and the parents/caregivers to emerge as significant sources of contestation and ultimately develop into powerful vested interest groups. For example, some members of the foundational trust board, learning advisors and parents believed that each individual child's interests in learning should be elevated above the social concerns of the school community. This meant that if the shared curriculum of the school did not dovetail with an individual child's interest then the rights of the child to pursue his or her interest-based learning should prevail. Given that this school was committed to social-democratic ideals, but at the general, non-theoretical political level, it was unprepared for the volatility created by the social conflicts within the school and the impact of the neo-liberal individualistic discourse outside of the school. Without recognition of the inevitable social conflict that would emerge in any experimental school committed to participatory democratic principles and, in particular, in one that was under-theorized relative to progressive educational ideas, there were no systems or processes in place which could work steadily to advance democratic, community processes.

Second, this experimental school as a self-governing and managing unit experienced the same problems as reported by the traditional schools in New Zealand since the Education Act of 1989. However, in addition, there were unique and significant difficulties at this experimental school. While in all schools the board members who were parents or community members were in charge of governance and the principal/director responsible for school management issues, a blurring of boundaries of the functions of 'governance' and 'management' emerged in this school since parents/caregivers were assigned a significant pedagogical role. This was exacerbated by the fact that most of the parent/caregiver members of the first elected Board of Trustees were among the most active participants, facilitating interest-based learning for groups of children at the school and in the community and regularly assisting the learning advisors in numerous ways. Additionally, these parents/caregivers engaged in pedagogical discussions with the learning advisors sometimes on a daily basis. As a consequence, these parents/caregivers and others who were regular, pedagogical contributors believed that they were authorized to speak on behalf of issues related to teaching and learning through their 'teaching' and 'leadership' status in the school community. Further, as almost all of the most active parents were well-educated and from middle class, they were not only eager to share their ideas and perceptions about educational practices but, also, believed it was their responsibility to do so as members of the participatory democratic community of the school.

This breakdown in the clear role ascriptions attributed to parents/caregivers and teachers relative to governance and management created unanticipated social challenges. Whereas the structure of traditional schools afforded the principal and teachers a higher and therefore certain status relative to the management of the educational affairs in their school and classrooms respectively, in this experimental school the director and learning advisors experienced daily threats to their higher professional status as educators while the most active of the parents/caregivers felt a concomitant lowering of their presumed elevated teaching-learning status. This concern over the respective status of the significant stake holders at this school thrust a wedge into the

community idea; it became difficult for the director/learning advisors and a growing number of parents to trust that the members of the school community did, indeed, share beliefs in the general democratic-progressive ideals. Over time, the social-democratic vision of this school was compromised through an increasing balkanisation of professional teachers-learning advisors and non-professional teacher-active parents.

Everyday Politics and Educational Policy

In thinking about this unexpected undemocratic meeting of practice and policy, we draw on a range of political and educational theorists who have exposed the tensions that exist in any culture between the interests of the state and those of the citizens. Like Tyack and Cuban (1995) in their book on a century of school reform, we, too, have come to appreciate that educational reform efforts have their origin in political ideas, and in this case study we inquire about the role of the state relative to that of its citizens through an examination of the ways The Education Act of 1989 was enacted in a neo-progressive experimental school. While this Act and its vision of Tomorrow's Schools was promoted as a way to make schools more responsive to community needs and interests through greater parental involvement, Wolin (2006) alerts us to the fact that democratic ideas do not in and of themselves lead to democratic purposes and ends, and that anti-democratic power can arise in institutions and be used to develop and reinforce anti-liberal policies. In fact, he sees this as a limitation of Deweyan progressive educational thinking in that the embryonic democratic, school communities that he envisioned as directly influencing political thought were, in fact, too weak to confront the larger macro-political anti-democratic politics. From his twenty-first century perspective, Wolin (2006) sees Dewey's ideas as being limited because he could not appreciate

> … where the conditions of democracy have become precarious: public education, corporate power and the dominance of the economic, the engulfing of the public – not by its supposed opposite, the "private" – but by the pacifying culture marketed by the media. (p. 519)

In a similar vein, it appears to us that the democratic vision of the policy of Tomorrow's Schools is also compromised by its limitation in recognizing the impact of late twentieth century neo-liberal macro-politics in creating the precarious conditions of democracy in the public school. As Apple (2005) argues, the orthodoxy of neo-liberalism shifts democracy to an economic rather than a political concept, an individual good rather than a collective good, therefore undermining the democratic values inherent in collective deliberation and mobilization about the common good on the part of citizenry. In examining the impact of this political turn on education practices, Robertson (2000) argues that neo-liberalism centers the new morality on the values of individual teachers and individual students and away from the collective good. Further, Ryan (1998) suggests that in emphasizing individual goals, the concept of liberty in the democratic contract has supreme status over the values of fraternity and equality.

This neo-liberal emphasis on the supreme rights of individual interests and tastes in the practices of this neo-progressive experimental school was gradually grafted onto its general participatory-democratic vision, creating deep tensions in its every-day politics, in spite of the best intentions. The general non-theoretical, political-educational vision of this experimental school in interaction with neo-liberal political thought was not robust enough to work against the neo-liberal, individual grain and towards the progressive, communitarian ideals of the founding members. As Wolin (2006) argues Deweyan progressive thought floundered because his asser-tion in a general belief in humanistic culture did not provide clear links to the exer-cise of power in public education. While some of this power results in the resistance to change on behalf of individuals who benefited from the social status quo (Westbrook, 1991), other resistances are the consequences of non-participatory democratic values in the macro-political discourses of neoliberalism. Taken together these kinds of powers, without clear understandings of their potential undemocratic impulses, can work against the best of educational dreams and ideals.

Policy, Practice and Research Interface –
Some Concerns and Hopes

It is commendable that the New Zealand government is explicitly setting out to use research as a base for informing policy with an aim to make a bigger difference for all children. However, reflexivity is critical within a policy context where schooling practice is increasingly framed by the "evidence" produced by researchers. The authority invested in research, through government initiatives such as the *Schooling Strategy* (Ministry of Education, 2005a) and the Iterative Best-Evidence Synthesis Programmed that underpins it, has potential to destabilize democratic processes in schools if not employed carefully and strategically. The salience of positioning 'evidence based practice' at the center of policy initiatives makes it imperative for researchers and policy makers alike to be constantly aware of what gets excluded when 'research' is equated with 'best evidence for what works', irrespective of how that might be construed. And to what extent does the available 'research evidence' shut down alternative perspectives, which albeit less fashionable might be equally important?

As we search for instances of democratic potential in educational policy and practice, we are aware that as researchers our own vision will be clouded. Researchers become immersed in the everyday politics of their sites of investiga-tion, bound by the power invested in them through expert knowledge and institu-tional authority. Bringing this with them into the political arena of the classroom, it is of special importance for those concerned with democratic schooling to acknowl-edge the political nature of research.

Without a strategic, deliberative and contemplative exercise of power, researchers themselves are at risk of subjection to discursive frames that work in opposition to

their aims. For example, without cognizance of the political interests operating on research practice, can we ensure that by making teachers' pedagogies accountable to our available evidence of best practice, we are not contributing to the construction of a culture ruled by economic imperatives?

The Schooling Strategy (2005) reiterates the ideas based on the available research evidence on best practice for diverse learners in an unproblematic and uncritical manner, urging educators to take action based on the identified focus points. Although the intent of the syntheses is clearly to continue to modify the understandings of 'what works', the authority and legitimacy of schooling strategy, both in the perceptions and the practices of the school personnel as well as the quality assurance agencies like the Education Review Office (ERO), would most likely not allow for much iteration to occur. Given the increasingly instrumental cultures of schools, and the ways in which teachers work has been driven by notions of standards and accountability over the last short while (Atkinson, 2000; McWilliam, 2000), it is more likely to be utilized in a similar instrumental fashion, as standards that teachers are measured against rather than as a discussion to be engaged with. So a significant question remains, how to position research evidence as 'subject to work on' rather than as an 'object of uncritical consumption and compliance'?

What Possibilities Do Public Policies Offer Diverse Individuals in Attaining Personal Liberty?

The extent to which state policies and initiatives enable liberty and wider participation is a question of great significance given their incomparable authority in the construction of public schooling. Obviously, some policies are constructed with greater concern for issues of social justice and wider participation than others. Focusing on the expression of hope for democratic transformation, it was not our intention to question policies that have non-democratic ideals at their centre. We contend that examining the possibilities inherent within policies that do address issues of equity is likely to be much more fruitful in furthering a discourse of hope. Yet, our work suggests that given their general nature, even the most democratic of social policies are too broadly defined to unproblematically improve educational outcomes for all. Policies are blunt instruments, and it is not until they are enacted within specific locations that the blunt instrument becomes refined enough to give a precise effect on the lives of individuals. However, there is rarely a direct line between policies and their implementation in practice, so that the precise effect of a policy is often clouded by commitment to previous educational policies, ritualized professional knowledge or the influences of other social discourses. Making explicit the process of enactment through its close investigation reveals strengths and limitations of a policy by demonstrating how it serves the purposes either of its democratic intentions or alternative social discourses. But perhaps most crucially,

demonstration of the complexities of achieving desired ends through implementation alerts us to the possibility that the nature of policy as a closed or all encompassing framework is itself problematic.

Following Andrew Gitlin, we undertook to search amongst our inquiries into schooling for a deeper politic, and to question the policy frames applied to schooling that "… limits our ability to be human and to imagine…." (Gitlin, 2005, p. 18). However, despite recognition of the limitations within policy frameworks, we maintain that to continue the discourse of hope is to look for the instances of potential within them, in order that they may be strengthened and reconfigured in response to wider and more diverse interests. Through interrogating our own descriptions of the politics of the everyday within schools, we can identify conditions under which current New Zealand state schooling policies, such as the administrative and curricular reform in the Education Act 1989 and initiatives that are associated with its implementation in the first decade of this century, intersect with democratic possibilities for schooling. We suggest that this can further dialogue both in terms of understanding the nature of ground level practice and how it intersects with policy initiatives, as well as opening agentic possibilities for school practitioners to give shape and definition to macro-policies.

Whilst we have already proposed that research should interrogate the micropolitics of the classroom, this position behooves us to open our own practice and political situation to interrogation. We advocate for extending dialogue on educational research to researchers and thinkers from different cultural settings, to help us to "see" our own situation more clearly. We would argue for intercultural dialogue to make visible assumptions hidden within our contexts of practice. This advocacy comes in the face of global generalizations of educational dilemmas and their solutions, such as disparities in the achievement of literacy evident through international studies like PISA (OECD, 2001, 2004). New Zealand's recent political responses to these global dilemmas make claims of sensitivity to national interests (Alton-Lee, 2004, 2005). However, if the dilemma arises from evidence that reflects global interests, as in the case of the OECD studies, there may be some mismatch between a globally constructed dilemma and the significance of that dilemma to national identity and aspirations. For example, in the PISA study, against whose epistemologies are learning and achievement measured? In this respect it is worthwhile to converse across the cultural boundaries of nations, institutions and disciplines so that we, as researchers, can work against reductionism and expand our understandings of what counts as research, its role and use in the construction of subjectivities through public education.

In closing, it is our hope that our sharing of this micro-examination of the everyday politics of specific school contexts can help us as social scientists to carry out Popper's (1945) role of coming to understandings of "the unintended social repercussions of intentional human actions" so that we can learn "what we cannot do." Too much of democracy is at risk in early twenty first century schooling not to heed Popper's call.

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Chapter 13
Making a Bigger Difference for Diverse Learners: The Iterative Best Evidence Synthesis Programme in New Zealand

Adrienne Alton-Lee

Introduction

The Iterative Best Evidence Synthesis (BES) Programme is a collaborative knowledge-building approach across policy, research, and practice in New Zealand. The Iterative BES synthesizes and explains evidence about what works for diverse learners. The touchstone of the program is its focus on explaining the influences on a range of desired outcomes for diverse learners. The primary purpose of the program is to support sustainable educational development whereby a whole education system and its communities strengthen a range of desired outcomes for all learners through iterative processes of shared knowledge building and use. The iterative approach is designed to be a collaborative tool and catalyst to intensify and embed the interplay of research and development (R & D) as a systemic lever for sustainable development in education.

In this chapter I begin by highlighting the importance of the focus on diversity in our work and then explain the Iterative BES, its fit-for-purpose methodology, its collaborative and iterative approach to development, the emerging findings about making a bigger difference for diverse learners, early work in an evidence-informed strategy for dissemination and use, and the vision for BES as a systemic lever for sustainable development.

Foregrounding a Responsiveness-to-Diversity Framework

There are new challenges for education systems in knowledge societies. It is no longer sufficient for education systems to sort learners into those who pass and those who fail. Rather, all learners need to be well served by their education to develop their capabilities, their sense of belonging, their well-being, and their abilities to succeed and contribute to wider communities. Governments are looking to

education systems to rise to the challenge to be more responsive to the diversity of their learners and to meet the higher expectations and future-focus required by knowledge societies.

The PISA studies show marked differences amongst education systems in how well 15-year-old students are able to apply their learning in mathematics, science, and reading literacy (OECD, 2001, 2004). They also show marked differences in disparities between groups of students within countries. New Zealand has high mean scores, performing in the second-highest band of countries across the PISA studies. But New Zealand's results show relatively high disparities in achievement by comparison with most OECD countries. Despite high achievement by many Māori (indigenous population) and Pasifika (New Zealanders of Pacific nations heritages) learners, there is a pattern of poor outcomes, particularly for Māori from New Zealand schooling.

The high disparities, the relatively high variance within schools in the New Zealand PISA results, and our rapidly growing demographic profiles for those learners traditionally underserved by New Zealand schooling indicate a need for teaching, educational leadership, and systemic development to be more responsive to diverse learners.

Because the context for this work is New Zealand, all BES developments are informed by, and inform educational practice in, both Māori and English-medium education. Māori have a treaty relationship with the Crown that protects Te Reo (Māori language) and tikanga Māori (Māori culture) and guarantees Māori the same educational opportunities as non-Māori. However, the published BESs provide substantial evidence over some decades of inequitable teaching of Māori learners: fewer teacher-interactions, less positive feedback, underassessment of capability, mispronounced names, and so on (Benton, 1986; Carkeek et al., 1994; Clay, 1985; Millward et al., 2001; St. George, 1983; Thomas, 1984). Although Māori-medium education has been only a very recent system provision in New Zealand, and despite resourcing challenges in a language revitalisation context, early cohorts of students emerging from continuous Māori-medium education have performed more highly than Maori students in English-medium contexts (Alton-Lee, 2005).

As is similarly the case for many countries, New Zealand's population projections show increasing diversity by ethnicity and multiple cultural heritages. Over and above cultural heritage, classrooms and other educational groupings of students are always characterized by diversity or heterogeneity. The diversity of any group of learners can be unpacked across many dimensions. For example, diversity is a feature of the varied experiences the students bring to their learning of a particular topic and their previous achievement levels in relation to the topic or skill area whether high, average, low, or gifted. What students bring to the classroom is in turn influenced by their gender, families, and wider affiliations and heritages, and the extent to which these become resources in their in-school learning. There are substantial research literatures that show these aspects of learner identity and background to be integral to educational achievement or failure, particularly when there are cultural mismatches between home and school (Alton-Lee, 2003).

However, students do not fall into simplistic categories by identity. Rather, for students, family social class, ethnicity/ies, cultural heritages, gender, and dis/ability intersect in ways that are often likely to be salient for their participation and learning. Further, students continually change and grow. There is much evidence that reveals difference to be salient in education, albeit in complex and context-specific ways. Our approach is to put difference at the center of this work through a responsiveness-to-diversity framework. Because difference is a characteristic that all learners share, the approach allows for a universalizing discourse of difference (Britzman, 1995; Town, 1998). This approach moves away from norm and other thinking that has constrained mainstream educational thinking to focus on the homogeneous and the mean and seeks to strengthen our evidence base about what works for all learners.

The daily and complex challenge for teachers is that they need strategies to teach a diverse group of learners effectively and simultaneously. Educators need to be working effectively and simultaneously with students with different prior knowledges and experiences; speakers of different languages; high and low achievers; students with multiple, fluid, and complex ethnic, gendered, and social class cultures, heritages (including indigenous heritage) and identities; and students who bring varied dis/abilities and cultural resources to their learning. This is where the evidence can be particularly helpful, because it identifies evidence-based strategies and approaches that have enabled teachers to be effective with their whole class. Accordingly our collaborative knowledge-building and use approach, in order to be useful in education, has at its foundation the goal of being more effective with diverse learners – at the same time. This goal has required a fit-for-purpose methodology for synthesis development. In the following section I provide a brief outline of the program, giving particular emphasis to the importance of learner outcomes as a touchstone, and explain how the methodology has been developed to serve its purposes.

The Iterative Best Evidence Synthesis Programme

The Iterative BES Programme synthesizes bodies of educational research and development that provide credible evidence about influences on a range of desired outcomes for diverse learners (what? what magnitude of impact? under what conditions? for whom? why? and how?). The series of BESs is successively focused on the major areas of influence on learner outcomes including family and community influences (Biddulph et al., 2003), teaching (Aitken & Sinnema, forthcoming; Alton-Lee, 2003; Anthony & Walshaw, 2007; Farquhar, 2003), teacher professional development (Mitchell & Cubey, 2003; Timperley et al., forthcoming), and educational leadership (Robinson et al., 2007, forthcoming). The touchstone for the BES methodology is the focus on learner outcomes.

Valued Learner Outcomes as a Touchstone

In taking an outcomes-linked approach, the Iterative Best Evidence Synthesis attends to a range of outcomes including for example, academic, social, well-being, learning, metacognitive, identity, and other possibilities valued by communities including those of indigenous communities.

Part of the rationale for the incontrovertible concern with impacts on diverse learners is the compelling evidence across studies that have linked educational goals, processes mediating learning, and student outcomes that well-intentioned, caring, and experienced teachers and teacher educators can unknowingly teach in ways that have impacts counter to their own goals (Alton-Lee, 2006; Alton-Lee et al., 1995; Bossert, 1979; Doyle, 1983; Nuthall, 2004; Timperley et al., forthcoming). The concern for impact on outcomes is similarly critical for well-intentioned policy settings and initiatives that can also have impacts counter to their goals and do harm, for example, policy initiatives related to drug education that increased rather than decreased student use of illegal drugs (Biddulph et al., 2003).

An outcomes-linked approach can reveal that widely used educational practices may have little or even negative impacts, particularly on those students traditionally underserved in schooling. A report by Education Review Office (2003) showed that the learning styles approach is widely used in New Zealand. In a series of case studies (Higgins, 2001), learning styles approaches have been found to be linked to less effective instructional experiences for Māori and Pasifika than for other learners in junior class mathematics in New Zealand. Māori and Pasifika learners were classified as kinaesthetic learners and encouraged to work with blocks, while other learners focussed on metacognitive strategies, for which there is, by contrast, strong research evidence across our syntheses of positive links to higher achievement (see Cardelle-Elawar, 1992; Marzano et al., 2001).

The term "learning style" often is used loosely in practice, but in this context denotes a learner's apparent preference for an auditory, visual, tactile, or other source and/or expression of information (identified through a learning styles inventory). Within this approach teachers are encouraged to match mode of information to the learner's preference. A review by Irvine and York (1995) of evidence of about 30 instruments to measure learning styles concluded that, despite the popularity of the Learning Styles Inventory, " 'the design strategy, reliability and validity of the inventory were largely unsupported by the research evidence" (p. 487). Riding and Rayner (1998) and McMillan (2001) highlight several concerns, including distracting teacher attention from the actual learning process and the potential to restrict opportunities to learn. The intention behind the approach is undoubtedly good, but even those who argue they have found significant evidence of effectiveness tend to emphasise a multisensory approach (auditory, visual, kinaesthetic, and so on) rather than a preference-matching approach that limits rather than broadens the ways in which learners engage with new information (see Farkas, 2003).

BES has been valued by the New Zealand secondary teachers' union' for its challenge to what they call the "snake oil" myths and fads that have beset teachers, such as the myth that has and is driving the widespread focus on kinaesthetic activities

for Māori and Pasifika learners as a supposedly ethnically based learner need (Post Primary Teachers Association, 2003). BES findings, by contrast, provide insights that explain what can make a bigger positive difference for diverse students and lessen teacher stress: an emerging finding with the New Zealand Numeracy Project. Some examples are enhanced academic and social outcomes by strengthening student self-regulation, problem-solving and conflict-resolution skills, intensifying reciprocal peer supports for learning, and optimizing school-home-community linkages in ways that dramatically lift the achievement of at-risk students (Alton-Lee, 2003; Biddulph, 1983, 2004).

Methodological Mandate

Four initial BESs were published in 2003. These informed guidelines for subsequent BES development. One of the key challenges in BES development is the contestation of what counts as rigorous evidence among researchers, especially when so much of educational research traditionally has been siloed within different paradigms and methodological traditions (Alton-Lee, 2004). In order to gain the confidence of the educational research and practice communities and their engagement in iterative processes of BES development and use, the Ministry of Education initially drew upon research expertise across New Zealand. The process included not only research but also policy and teacher union representation to strengthen the approach and to get a high level of agreement about the methodology.

The approach taken was to gain agreement about the purposes, which then informed a fit-for-purpose methodology described in *Guidelines for Generating a Best Evidence Synthesis Iteration*. This allowed for the beginning of a national, structured, and transparent process of dialogue to inform BES development.

The *Guidelines* provide a critical resource to support the collaborative process and are themselves subject to iterative review. While international formative quality assurers have provided valued criticism and substantial suggestions for improving the *Guidelines*, they have been a useful and transparent tool to mediate the iterative process across different stakeholders. Professor Paul Cobb of Vanderbilt University, formative quality assurer for the Effective Pedagogy in Mathematics/Pangarau BES Iteration, commented that the BES Guidelines are outstanding and are clearly grounded in the hard-won experience of synthesizing research findings to inform both policy and practice (Anthony & Walshaw, 2007).

We have used the metaphor of a jigsaw puzzle to describe the best-evidence synthesis methodology because pieces of the puzzle about the links to student outcomes often are spread over and embedded within a wide range of research studies including practitioner research (see Pawson, 2006). Where possible, effect sizes are used or constructed to allow relative magnitude of impact of different approaches to be considered.

A realist approach gives primacy to explanation and theoretical coherence in BES (Haig, 2004). The rationale for the realist approach is that theory is the tool that

produces understanding in those using the evidence. The use of theory enables a future-focused and context-sensitive approach to building upon what has gone before.

BES writers are required to draw upon systems thinking about the interdependencies and ecological relationships that influence effectiveness of any one part of the education system. For example, the BES focused on family and community influences highlights the impact of poverty and health issues such as student hearing on educational outcomes, calling for a wider societal and interagency policy response to support educators in their work (Biddulph et al., 2003). Each successive BES contributes to a developing health-of-the-system framework for New Zealand education.

A feature of BES, and its concern to maximize accessibility without sacrificing meaning, is the use of vignette and case to exemplify the theory and bring the findings to life for educators and policymakers. We are mining research illuminating how the presentation of case can be most effective in influencing teacher practice. Our purpose is to overcome the problem of overassimilation, when novices engage with findings and use the same language as the BES findings but without the depth of understanding needed to engage in a way that changes practice:

> One method for overcoming this assimilation problem is to use carefully calibrated sets of contrasting cases, grounded in practice, as well as in theory, that help people progressively differentiate their understanding rather than simply assimilate new information to pre-existing idea. (Hammerness et al., 2005, p. 368)

The approach taken in BES has been described by Allan Luke and David Hogan (2006) in the *World Yearbook of Education: Educational Research and Policy* as

> The most comprehensive approach to evidence is the New Zealand Ministry of Education's Iterative Best Evidence Synthesis Programme. … What is distinctive about the New Zealand approach is its willingness to consider all forms of research evidence regardless of methodological paradigms and ideological rectitude, and its concern in finding contextually effective, appropriate and locally powerful examples of "what works." Its focus is on capturing and examining the impact of local contextual variables (e.g., population, school, community, linguistic, and cultural variables). Indeed, "what authentically works" in educational interventions may be locally effective with particular populations, in particular settings, to particular educational ends. (p. 170)

Four more BESs have been developed via collaboration across policy, research, and practice with the *Guidelines* as a foundation. The first of these new BESs developed through a national iterative process became available in February 2007 (Anthony & Walshaw, 2007). That process, designed to embed use in BES development, is explained below.

The Iterative BES Approach to Knowledge Brokerage

The BES development process requires BES researcher-writers to have iterative engagement with colleagues across educational policy, research, and practice. The decision to take such a collaborative approach meant more time would be needed

for BES development but laid the foundations for more impact. While such dialogue is challenging, Ginsburg and Gorostiaga (2003) explain the costs of not taking such a collaborative:

> Dialogue isn't necessarily more efficient, but it's more democratic and, therefore, more effective.… Our preference is also based on the belief that in the long run dialogue and participation by a wide range of stakeholders produce better and more relevant educational research, policy and practice.…Certainly, it may be easier – and, in that sense, more efficient – for researchers, policy makers, and practitioners in education to engage in action (or even in praxis) in isolation of members of the other groups. However, the decisions that are made and the actions that are pursued are likely to be less effective. This is the case not only because the quality of judgements may be lower but also because the activities of one group may detract from or cancel out those of other groups. (p. x)

The rationale is that bringing together rigorous and useful bodies of evidence about what works in education needs to embed within its approach, ways of working that attend to the knowledge utilisation challenge as well as the knowledge-building challenge. If such ways of working are built into knowledge building, then the endeavor of itself can be a transformational process that not only constructs a new kind of dialogue and understandings among policy workers, leaders, practitioners, and researchers, but also provides the foundation for using the knowledge to make a bigger difference in education.

There is a mandate within the New Zealand public service for the kind of intensive engagement with stakeholders used in BES development. Eleven case studies of innovation in the public service commissioned by Treasury, the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet, and the State Services Commission (Wright & de Joux, 2003) identified the following implications for effective and innovative policy development and implementation:

- Develop diverse and diffuse invisible colleges, partnerships, and collaborations across agencies, individuals and organizations
- Exploit opportunities by consistent forward planning and engagement with stakeholders

A recent review of evidence about the links between research and practice found that interactive approaches such as the development of partnerships and collaborations between researchers, policy advisers, and practitioners facilitate the adaptation of research findings to local contexts (Walter et al., 2005). The reviewers note that success is constrained by "the time and energy required to establish effective working relationships, differences in culture, goals, information needs, timescales, power, regard, systems and language, issues of project control and direction" (p. 344). The Iterative Best Evidence Synthesis Programme is seeking to negotiate these kinds of constraints through agreed national guidelines, strategic partnerships, power sharing, and iterative processes that enable policy workers, researchers, and educators to learn not only from emerging BES findings but also from each other. Such learning is critical to achieving an inclusive "responsiveness-to-diversity" approach because no one contributor or writer has the expertise needed to accomplish such challenging work.

Iterative Processes of Stakeholder Engagement in BES Development

Many collaborative strategies are used to strengthen BES development, including appointing national, international, and practitioner advisors to the BES writers; national and international conference presentations of work-in-progress; and fit-for-purpose national think tanks. The most extensive consultation occurs during a formal daylong formative quality assurance forum in which sector stakeholders and national and international experts provide and discuss formative quality assurance reports in response to a preliminary BES draft. Professor Jere Brophy, the formative quality assurer for the Effective Pedagogy in Social Studies/ Social Sciences/Tikanga-ā-iwi commented,

> I am impressed with what I have seen here in your country of the Ministry seeking to get that kind of coordination, and consensus, but in an outreaching kind of way rather than just bringing in an elite group to make decisions and push them downward. They are actively getting input from all sorts of stakeholders and seeking to negotiate as broad a consensus as possible and that is the way to do it. (Brophy, December 16, 2005)

A BES Management Group is the primary vehicle for stakeholders to engage with the iterative process. For each BES development, stakeholder representatives from across policy, research, and practice are invited to join a BES management group. Detailed notes or transcripts are made of meetings and think tanks so the oral feedback is systematically attended to in BES development and the process is transparent.

The work of a BES Management Group includes:

(a) Shaping requests for proposals
(b) Selecting the successful tenderer
(c) Iterative scoping of the BES
(d) Communicating with and from constituencies about the emerging scoping and findings
(e) Engaging with an iterative and collaborative process with BES writers through discussing, evaluating, and giving feedback to the milestones reports of work-in-progress
(f) Participating in national think tanks and seminars organised to support BES development
(g) Contributing to the formative quality assurance of new BESs
(h) Advising about approaches to the strategy for use of BESs

Educational leaders and educators are able to influence the scoping and the search strategy for a BES development by raising issues from their experience that they consider significant. This interaction can help strengthen the synthesis or identify gaps in the knowledge base that need to be highlighted in BES and addressed through future R & D. Policy colleagues from different parts of the Ministry of Education have ongoing opportunities to influence scoping, search strategies, framework development, and the naming of gaps as they bring policy needs and issues to the BES development process.

This collaborative knowledge building process has forged sector and policy ownership and greater rigor, trustworthiness, and usefulness in BES development – but is not without its tribulations. For example, when BES writers share early and emergent work in progress, sector stakeholders have the chance to proactively engage with and provide feedback. If early work in progress is used as a political weapon, then risk management is heightened in the policy context, researcher writers become vulnerable, and the iterative process may be threatened. The process needs trust to work.

The lesson we have taken from the evidence about the importance of teaching as the key system influence (Alton-Lee, 2003; Hill et al., 1996; Nye et al., 2004) and the risks of ineffective policy responses to the need to strengthen teaching for diverse learners, is to work in partnership with both New Zealand teacher unions in advancing the Iterative Best Evidence Synthesis work. While the decision to work with the teacher unions was a practical way of establishing a broad partnership with New Zealand teachers, there is evidence for there being a link between more intensive teacher union activity and higher student outcomes in the USA (Carr Steelman et al., 2000). The teacher unions have a history of professional leadership in New Zealand particularly in the areas of curriculum and subject associations.

The Iterative BES has a constructive partnership with both New Zealand's teacher unions, which has profoundly strengthened the best evidence synthesis work. Judie Alison, Advisory Officer (Professional Issues) Post Primary Teachers' Association commented,

"PPTA regards itself as a partner in the BES programme. As the policy adviser at PPTA specialising in professional issues, I have been closely involved with the Best Evidence Synthesis work ever since 2003.… I believe that the BES is absolutely committed to promoting social justice, and for that reason our union, like NZEI, has committed itself to working alongside this research. (J. Alison, February 23, 2006, Personal communication)

"The BES TPLD (Teacher Professional Learning and Development) writers have pulled the key messages from the research and have remained unbiased in their reporting and have used the research sensibly. … There is no doubt the BES TPLD in general serves to inform and has the potential to impact positively on teaching practice linked to student outcomes for a diverse student population…It would be dispiriting to see such work approached in a piece meal manner. (Liz Patara, formative quality assurance report endorsed by Irene Cooper, president of the NZ primary and early childhood teachers' union, New Zealand Educational Institute Te Riu Roa, October 11, 2006, Personal communication)

Strategy for Use of BES

As the current set of BESs is coming to completion, we are using systems thinking, collaborative and iterative processes of consultation, the findings of the BESs, and other relevant evidence to generate an evidence-informed strategy for dissemination and use.

A big step forward has occurred in the potential of the Iterative BES to make a difference to diverse learners in New Zealand education with the Ministry of Education's positive response to formal requests from both teacher unions for access to hard copies of the new BESs (with supporting materials) for New Zealand schools and early childhood centers. Within 6 weeks of the prepublication of a teacher educators' edition of the Effective Pedagogy in Mathematics/Pangarau BES, 4 out of the 7 New Zealand universities have provided this BES as a text for all final year preservice teacher education students, and inquiries have followed from private providers of initial teacher education.

The use of BES is conceptualized not at all as a prescriptive approach, but rather as an iterative inquiry process that gives precedence to outcomes-linked evidence in any particular context. Graeme Aitken and Claire Sinnema, the writers of the Effective Pedagogy in Social Sciences/Tikanga-a-iwi BES, frame the findings of their BES as being appropriately used within an Evidence Informed Inquiry and Action Model of Pedagogy (Aitken & Sinnema, 2007a, b).

> This Evidence-Informed Inquiry and Action (EIIA) model conceptualizes pedagogy as a continuous cycle of evidence informed inquiry and action. The EIIA model (see Fig. 13.1) encourages teachers to view … [the synthesis findings] as the basis for explaining findings about the impact of their own practice on their students' learning, and as sources of better informed conjectures about what might enhance learning for students in their classrooms. The ideas inherent in the model are not new. The close examination by teachers of the impact of their work on teachers is "the pedagogical imperative" (Shulman, 2002) that reflects the professional nature of teaching (Stoll et al., 2003). Cochran-Smith and Lytle, (1999) have argued, as we do here, for the value of teachers to adopting a deliberate "inquiry stance" on their own practice in which they treat "their own work as sites for systematic and intentional inquiry into their own and other's research [our emphasis] as generative of new possibilities" (Cochran-Smith, 2005). What we are arguing here is that the mechanisms, and the particular examples within each of the mechanisms, can be integrated into such a model of practice to inform both inquiry into the outcomes of teaching, and inquiry into the possibilities for revised practice. In developing this model we are conscious of Cochran-Smith and Lytle's (1999) warning about reifying researcher knowledge over the practical. The model has been designed in a cyclical way, and in a way that acknowledges multiple sources of evidence, to reinforce the close and reciprocal relationship between the research and practice. While the BES is the particular informant of the inquiry process … paper we acknowledge that teachers do, and will continue to, draw on a much broader knowledge base to make decisions about their practice (Kennedy, 1999). Our prime intention is to encourage a tentative, questioning but not dismissive view of our findings and, in much the same way as Cochran-Smith and Lytle (1999) suggest, to conceptualize teacher learning as "associated more with uncertainty than certainty, more with posing problems and dilemmas than solving them, and also with the recognition that inquiry stems from and generates questions" (p. 294).

The model developed by Aitken and Sinnema (2007a) frames the BES findings as conjectural knowledge that is useful when teachers take an active inquiry approach that checks out impact on student outcomes. The conditions that support teachers in taking an outcomes-linked inquiry stance are emerging across the series of BES findings.
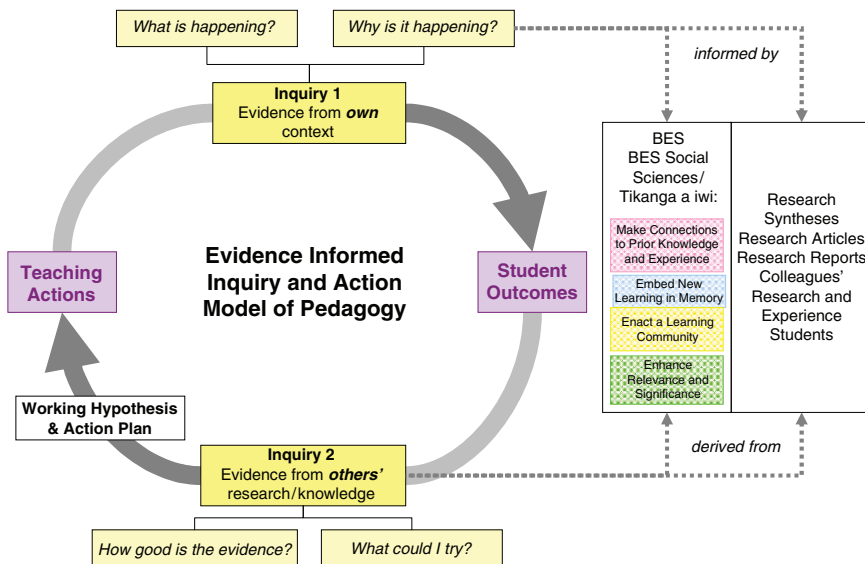
Fig. 13.1 Evidence Informed Inquiry and Action Model of Pedagogy

Because New Zealand has a highly devolved school-based management model, a strong partnership with educational leaders, particularly principals, will be critical to the potential of BES being realised.

Early findings from the Educational Leadership BES emphasize how important pedagogical knowledge is for effective school leadership, particularly when integrated with an approach to leadership that involves staff in decision making (Timperley et al., 2007). While traditionally leadership effects have been found to be relatively small, a careful analysis of particular findings across the small number of outcomes-linked studies of leadership has shown particularly high effect sizes to be associated with educational leadership practices that are linked to effective pedagogical leadership. One of the highest effect sizes (0.84) is associated with leaders promoting and participating in teacher learning and development as a leader, a learner, or both (Robinson et al., 2007).

Early findings from the *Teacher Professional Learning and Development BES* (Timperley et al., forthcoming; Timperley, 2007) also are compelling. That BES includes an analysis not only of what facilitates the kind of teacher learning that made marked improvements in student outcomes, but also analyses of interventions that led to student achievement deteriorating from what it had been before intervention. Such findings will be critical in policy development. That BES will include a table of effect sizes and selected qualitative cases for 97 outcomes-linked studies.

The findings highlight the importance of external and challenging expertise with strong pedagogical content knowledge to facilitate and support changes in practice, although poor expertise even from the research community can result in negative impacts on student outcomes. The findings indicate the importance of engaging teachers' theories and challenging discourses that are a barrier to improvements for some students. The findings highlight the importance of sufficient time for extended opportunities for teachers to learn and of the importance of using time effectively – particularly using diagnostic information about students' understandings in a teacher's own context.

In those studies that had the biggest impacts on student outcomes, teachers had opportunities to participate in professional learning communities; but in studies of ineffective professional development, teacher communities also were in place and much time was spent and/or funded, sometimes over several years, to no effect for students. In the most effective school-based studies, leadership was actively involved in supporting a learning culture. Whether or not teachers volunteered was not related to impact of professional development. What motivated teachers were the marked positive shifts they saw in the students they were teaching. The BES shows remarkable improvements to be possible for previously underserved students when effective professional development and support conditions are available. Of particular note are the extraordinarily high effect sizes across a number of studies focused on students with special needs, suggesting that traditional underserving of these students has been a particular area of education system failure.

The findings of the Teacher Professional Learning and Development BES and the Leadership BES signal the kinds of systemic conditions that will be needed for the kind of change required to better serve our diverse learners.

BES *Quality Teaching for Diverse Students in Schooling* (Alton-Lee, 2003) is intended to contribute to the development of our evidence base for policy and practice in schooling. Quality teaching is identified as a key influence on high-quality outcomes for diverse students. The evidence reveals that up to 59% of residual variance in student performance is attributable to differences between teachers and classes, while up to almost 21%, but generally less, is attributable to school-level variables.

This BES has produced 10 characteristics of quality teaching derived from a synthesis of research findings of evidence linked to student outcomes. The central professional challenge for teachers is to manage simultaneously the complexity of learning needs of diverse students. The concept of "diversity" is central to the synthesis. Evidence shows teaching that is responsive to student diversity can have very positive impacts on low and high achievers at the same time. The synthesis provides examples from the research on learning and teaching to illustrate the principles for different curricular areas across schooling from junior primary to senior secondary classes.

The 10 characteristics generated out of the synthesis (Alton-Lee, 2003) include:

1. Quality teaching is focused on student achievement (including social outcomes) and facilities high standards of student outcomes for heterogeneous groups of students

2. Pedagogical practices enable classes and other learning groupings to work as caring, inclusive, and cohesive learning communities
3. Effective links are created between school and other cultural contexts in which students are socialised, to facilitate learning
4. Quality teaching is responsive to student learning processes
5. Opportunity to learn is effective and sufficient
6. Multiple task contexts support learning cycles
7. Curriculum goals, resources including ICT usage, task design, teaching, and school practices are effectively aligned
8. Pedagogy scaffolds and provides appropriate feedback on students' task engagement
9. Pedagogy promotes learning orientations, student self-regulation, metacognitive strategies, and thoughtful student discourse
10. Teachers and students engage constructively in goal-oriented assessment (Alton-Lee, 2003, pp. vi–x)

As one of the risks of state the findings as a list is that readers will over-assimilate the findings into their existing theories of effective teaching, the explanation of the theoretical understandings, underpinning, and the vignettes exemplifying these findings are significant in ensuring their usefulness.

Brokerage from a Policy Agency: Constraints and Opportunities Where There Is an Evidence Gap

A further significant challenge in facilitating systemic conditions to strengthen educational practice occurs within the arena of the use of evidence in policy development. The Iterative Best Evidence Synthesis carries out its brokerage role from a government agency, the New Zealand Ministry of Education. The New Zealand Ministry of Education has a commitment to strengthening the evidence-base informing policy. This commitment is critical within a policy context not only for the use of BESs, but also the integrity of BES development to ensure that the outcomes-linked findings produced cannot be altered for immediate political exigencies but are a trustworthy product transparently generated through an open process.

Perhaps the most substantial gap in the available evidence base is that which explains the links between policy decisions, activity, and outcomes for diverse learners, or explains the communication, organizational learning, and other processes that mediate policy decisions and activities. Reid (2003) could find no significant international or national body of academic research on the actual process of research integration with policy as seen from the policy advisers' viewpoint.

Court and Young (2003), in their study of 50 case studies in developing countries, found two critical factors influencing policy uptake of research:

1. The nature of the *evidence* and whether the research was credible and relevant in terms of operational usefulness and problem solution

2. The *social context* linking researchers and policymakers

BES brings strengths consistent with both of these findings. However, Court and Young (2003) found that political context was the most important factor affecting the degree to which research had an impact on policy.

A recent study of effective innovation within the New Zealand public sector found the following to have been critical to success: (1) sufficient resources; (2) tireless risk management; (3) senior management support, mandate, commitment, faith, and trust; and (4) management of diverse stakeholder interests, concerns, and their tolerance for risk (Wright & de Joux, 2003). Risk is a big issue in a democracy, where evidence of what does and does not work can be a gift to the political opposition particularly if current government policy is inconsistent with the findings (Levin, 2005). The risks would be heightened if a government were not briefed early and its policy agencies were not proactive in integrating the implications of new findings into its work. Cranefield's (2005) study of knowledge transfer in the New Zealand State Sector found organizational factors (such as CEO support), knowledge-related factors (such as representation of knowledge and the strategy for staff engagement with the new knowledge), and gatekeeper-related factors to be critical to a shift towards outcomes-focused policy.

A State Services Commission report (1999) concluded that policy analysis and design of delivery instrument, process coordination, and the design and management of implementation have been the focus of most attention in the policy cycle in New Zealand. Gaps were evident in New Zealand policy development around evaluation; issues identification; the notion of long-term, forward-looking, research-based policy analysis; public consultation; and strategic analysis and management. The Iterative BES has much to offer these gaps in the policy cycle. But the State Services Commission also noted that whether or not advice is backed by quality information, the brevity required in the presentation of advice, and the fact that advice generally is not referenced with information sources means that there is no mechanism to assure ministers that the assertions in advice are more than informed guesswork. Whether policy is underpinned by trustworthy outcomes-linked evidence may not be transparent in such a format.

Court and Young (2003) found that policy uptakes were greatest where influencing and communication strategies were in place from the beginning of research program. Kirst (2000) noted a discrepancy between the pervasive view that policy research either does not reach or is not used by educational policy advisers and the frequent citation or acknowledgement of policy research in the US Kirst noted that decades of research on issues in research dissemination help to explain this gap. Nutley et al. (2003) *Framework for Understanding: The Evidence-into-Practice Agenda* helpfully suggests 6 research fields that may advance knowledge about research utilization: (1) diffusion of innovations, (2) institutional theory, (3) managing change in institutions, (4) knowledge management, (5) individual learning, and (6) organizational learning. Drawing upon this framework, adding in a consideration of information literacy, and conducting an interview study about the use of BES within the Ministry of Education, a small pilot study has been carried out to

help inform developing theories of action for BES, a communication strategy and strategic planning about policy influence (Moore, 2006). A strength of the BES approach in the policy context at this time is the use of relevant policy partners to collaborate throughout each BES development so that the iterative process and emerging findings feed progressively into policy thinking from the outset.

Vision

To achieve the sustainable improvement demanded by old and new challenges of knowledge societies, more is needed of evidence work than the generation and explanation of new knowledge. To achieve its potential, knowledge building needs to be cumulative, iterative, and synergistic. BES needs to feed into, and be iteratively informed by, strategic and productive research-and-development collaborations between researchers, teachers, leaders, teacher educators and policy workers. The term "research-and-development" (R & D) is hyphenated here to denote an integrated process whereby research informs, improves, evaluates, and supports educational development. Educational development denotes not only improvement resulting in enhanced outcomes for all learners, but also transformation as education anticipates and responds to futures challenges.

This vision is of education valuing and building upon, but moving beyond, its craft practice roots, and its "rediscovering the wheel" history. The goal is not one of tired educators negotiating fads and working harder to produce a more efficient education system for new demands of a knowledge society. The vision is of shared knowledge about what works and why in local contexts as a valued, dynamic, and transformational resource enabling an education system to sustainably renew itself. A stronger and renewing evidence base about what works offers value for money, value for educator time, and value for learners. The energy for such a vision comes from the synergies and rewards of educational development that genuinely makes a much bigger positive difference not only for children and young people but also for leaders, educators, families, and wider communities.

The single most compelling finding across the BESs is that effective R & D has enabled educational practice to make a much bigger positive difference for diverse learners. In the light of Coburn's (2003) analysis of the evidence of a history of failed educational reform, the magnitude of positive impact, the responsiveness, the sector ownership gained, and the futures orientation of the most effective R & D are compelling. Often such R & D has gone through many iterations to create the kind of educational development that can work powerfully for diverse learners. As an initial step, through funding educational researchers and the collaborative and iterative processes necessary to undertake first iteration BES developments, BES is seeking to build the capability of the national research community to transform relevant but fragmented research knowledge into a more useful tool for both policy-makers and practitioners. BES also is seeking to steer the research community toward a greater focus on informing educational development through R & D.

Getting policy and research support for this strategy is critical so that BES is not just a way to pull together what can be learned from past research.

Each completed BES iteration is an invitation to researchers and educators to engage with the gaps in our knowledge base, the areas of need, and the areas of most potential to contribute more deliberatively to a cumulative agenda to strengthen educational practice. The vision is that the Iterative BES will act as a catalyst for policymakers to fund, and researchers and practitioners to build, an integrated outcomes-focused research-and-development culture in education that enables systemic capability building, transformation, and sustainable renewal.

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