



Evolution in educational change: A literature review of the historical core of the *Journal of Educational Change*

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Abstract This literature review explored educational change trends as reflected in the first 15 years of the *Journal of Educational Change (JEC)*, from 2000 to 2014. The examination of 52 articles accounting for 61% of the Journal’s historical citations indicated that the *JEC* has evolved through five periods, which relate to ‘waves of educational change’ beyond the Journal itself. At the center of this development there has been a process of de-centering of Anglo-American perspectives on educational reform, pushed both by an increasing pessimism among U.S. and U.K. scholars regarding their countries’ reforms and by systematic evidence that other educational systems are achieving better student learning outcomes. The aforementioned evolution also shows a shift from more conceptual works by the field’s historical leaders toward more empirical research conducted by emergent scholars. After discussing the predominant concept of educational change, the major silences in the reviewed literature, and what this evolution in the *JEC* says about the field of educational change at large, the paper ends reflecting on challenges as a new generation of scholars begins to enter the conversation.

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Introduction

What will educators from the twenty-second century see when they look back on the history of education? If their perspective is too large, they will probably see a tide going all the way back to the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries in Europe, when institutionalized schooling emerged as we know it today (Hamilton 2015). Nevertheless, if they zoom in on this ebb and flow, focusing on the first decades of the twenty-first century, they will likely see waves of different sizes and shapes related to the expansion of schooling around the world and its adaptation to the learning needs of the emerging technological and globalized society. This article looks at these movements through the lens of the *Journal of Educational Change (JEC)*.

Changes in education are dynamic, complex, and non-linear. More so today, when the world seems to be moving rapidly due to technological innovations and increased interconnectedness among nations and cultures, despite the persistence (or even increase) of gaps in educational outcomes between and within countries, races, and variations of economic privilege. In this complex scenario, what are the most relevant change trends in education, and how is research on them dealing with change itself? This literature review of the historical core of the *JEC* analyzes how this Journal that aims at theorizing about such movements has, itself, navigated them.

Past and present of the Journal

The *JEC* was founded by Andy Hargreaves in 2000, when he was based at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education in Canada. In the opening issue, he wrote that he hoped that the Journal would become

a prime place to discuss the leading edge of thinking and research on educational change, to look for the most recent evidence and research knowledge on change patterns and their implications, and to reflect more deeply about the fundamentals of educational change and its moral and political purposes. (Hargreaves 2000, pp. 2–3)

Two years later, he moved to Boston College (BC), in the U.S., where he continued to manage the Journal until the beginning of 2011.

There have been two other editors-in-chief of the *JEC* after Hargreaves, both from the U.S. First, Amanda Datnow led the Journal from mid-2011 to mid-2014, based at the University of California, San Diego. Shortly after assuming the editorship, she expressed that

Throughout its history, the Journal has made an extremely important contribution to the field's understanding of educational change. One of the

most critical reasons for this is the international focus ... This has helped the field move beyond a myopic view of reform in the U.S. The Journal has also tended to publish more qualitative research on change than some other journals, which has allowed us to get a better sense of educational change on the ground, as lived through the daily experiences of educators. (Datnow 2012, p. 3)

After her period in charge, the *JEC* returned to BC with Dennis Shirley as the third (and present) editor-in-chief. Through its almost 17 years, the Journal has published more than 450 articles by authors from diverse latitudes who have studied educational change from an array of disciplines.

Opinions about the Journal's accomplishments and contributions are divided, however. Some consider it an essential venue for debates about educational change. For instance, Sahlberg (2015) wrote that the *JEC* represents one of the "key forums within which contemporary knowledge is communicated" (p. 141). Others diminish the work of both the Journal and the field of educational change as superficial and fashionable. Smith (2016) wrote that

The *Journal of Educational Change* caught up with the publishing trend in 2000, evidently a good year to foreground the theme of change. Its editor, Andy Hargreaves, began his first editorial with the rhetorical question, 'What better time could there be than the opening months of a new Millennium to launch a major new educational journal on the subject of change?' ... Really there seems to be no excuse for failing to join this particular in-crowd. Who would not want to practice the new 'calculative science' of change, 'something you could plan and manage through models of effective schooling, planned cycles of managed change and predictable stages of implementation'? (p. 9)

Critiques such as Smith's highlight the fact that change has become a trendy topic in many disciplines, including education, and is rarely theorized with depth. Along this vein, the broad range of topics and perspectives represented in the *JEC* could be interpreted as providing evidence for either Smith's or Sahlberg's observations; it is true that several articles could have been published elsewhere, which makes it difficult to grasp the *JEC's focus and niche*, but it is also true that the Journal has played a relevant role in discussions about the direction of educational reforms. This review will show that a fair judgment about the *JEC's* accomplishments probably lies somewhere between Sahlberg's praise and Smith's critique.

Along with the aforementioned debate, the Journal's 2015–2016 managing team felt there was a lack of historical knowledge about the Journal, without which it was not easy to judge which submissions fit the *JEC's* scope or with which other articles authors should dialogue if they are writing on a topic already represented in the Journal. In other words, after almost 17 years of history, and in the hands of its third editor-in-chief, there were indications that the *JEC* had reached a stage in which it was important to consider more carefully what the Journal had (and had not) accomplished in order to inform the Journal's future directions and possible contributions to the field.

The goal of the review

Given these circumstances, the *JEC*'s managing team commissioned a study on the Journal's history, which forms the basis for the present paper. Although this work was not a content analysis of all of the Journal's publications, it was inspired by the study conducted by Lee and Taylor (2013) for the *Journal of Moral Education (JME)*. Their objective was "to explore moral education trends as reflected in *JME* from 1971 to 2011" (p. 400). Analogously, the aim of this literature review is to explore educational change trends as reflected in the field's eponymous *Journal from 2000 to 2014*. Therefore, this review intends both to offer a portrait (and analysis) of the *JEC*'s most significant publications and to spark a conversation about what this may indicate about the field of educational change at large.

Methods

Articles reviewed

The review process began in January 2016, when the *JEC* had published 61 issues and 467 articles. In order to fulfill the purpose of the review, we determined that it should focus primarily on articles that had been widely circulated among the Journal's readership. Random selection of papers was, therefore, deemed antithetical to this goal. Using article downloads as a criterion was considered, but a comparison of downloads and citations for several articles indicated that some widely-downloaded works had very low citation counts, which made it difficult to discern the impact of such articles on the field. Consequently, citation counts, though decidedly imperfect, served as the main criterion for selecting the sample for this review. An in-depth consideration of the limitations of building a sample based on citations is addressed in the Discussion section.

A quick analysis of the *JEC*'s historical citations indicated that the bulk of them came from a small number of articles. In fact, 50% of the citations were due to 28 articles, more than 100 articles were never cited, and 90 articles were cited only once or twice. This information reinforced the idea that, in studying educational change trends in relation to the Journal's impact, citations provided a way to capture high-impact publications in the history of the *JEC* in a relatively consistent way, as well as yielding an appropriate number of articles for in-depth analysis.

Another important criterion for selecting the sample was historical. Since the aim was to discover trends in the Journal from 2000 to 2014, the sample had to include articles from every year before 2015, regardless of the citation counts for that year. The top line of Fig. 1 shows the distribution of the 11,486 citations that the *JEC* had by January 25, 2016, according to year of publication. We did not include articles from 2015 or 2016 because they were too recent for citations to serve as a reliable metric.

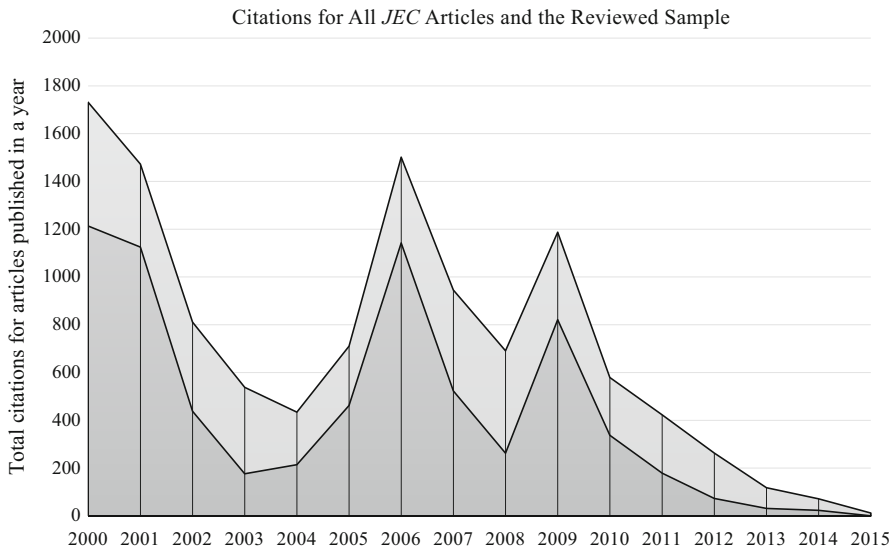


Fig. 1 Number of citations for all articles published in the *JEC* each year and number of citations captured by the sample of articles considered in this review

In addition to citations and ensuring inclusion of works from every year of the Journal's existence, the third criterion for selection was supplementing our analysis with key historical editorials. These texts were not highly cited but framed the *JEC*'s agenda. We decided to include three editorials that marked milestones in the Journal's history: the opening editorial (Hargreaves 2000), the text celebrating the *JEC*'s first decade (Hargreaves 2009), and the editorial framing the transition from Hargreaves to Datnow as editors-in-chief of the Journal (Shirley 2011).

The final sample of articles consisted of 52 works (see Table 1), which accounted for 61% of the *JEC*'s citations, as suggested by the darkened area in Fig. 1. This included

- a. All articles with 100 or more citations (27 articles).
- b. Articles with 50 or more citations for years in which less than 50% of the year's citations were captured by the first 27 articles (additions made until we reached 50% of the citations for that year) (16 articles).
- c. The two most cited articles for those years in which no articles had 50 or more citations: 2012, 2013, and 2014 (6 articles).
- d. The aforementioned historical editorials (3 texts).

Table 1 Reviewed articles by year of publication

Year	Total of citations for articles published each year	Articles selected from each year	Total of citations for selected articles	Percent of year's citations accounted for by selected articles (%)
2000	1731	5	1213	70.08
2001	1472	5	1125	76.43
2002	811	5	438	54.01
2003	538	3	176	32.71*
2004	434	3	214	49.31*
2005	710	2	462	65.07
2006	1501	3	1142	76.08
2007	945	4	523	55.34
2008	691	2	262	37.92*
2009	1187	7	821	69.17
2010	579	3	337	58.20
2011	423	4	179	42.32*
2012	263	2	73	27.76*
2013	118	2	31	26.27*
2014	71	2	23	32.39*
Total	11,486	52	7019	61.11

* For years in which the selected sample accounted for less than 50% of the citations for that year, this was because there were no more articles with 50 or more citations from that year

The team of reviewers

Although doctoral students at BC, where the *JEC* has primarily been based, the four team members who conducted this review belong to a new generation of scholars. In this sense, even though we have learned (and are still learning) from those who have led the *JEC* and the field, we do not have a stake in debates about the Journal's accomplishments. In brief, because we have not been part of the *JEC*'s history until now, we believe that we have the distance needed to consider the Journal's contributions and make the necessary constructive critiques.

The four of us come from primary and secondary teaching; although, we have diverse backgrounds and interests. Our research foci are curriculum theorizing, special education, bilingualism, and teacher preparation. Three of us are from the U.S. and one is from Latin America. Most of us have had teaching experience outside of the U.S. (in Argentina, Chile, Italy, Morocco, South Korea, and Spain). We have diverse ideological standpoints regarding educational research, yet we all agree on the crucial importance of context and positionality for educational endeavors, as well as the need for understanding educational change beyond administrative or organizational reforms.

How were the articles reviewed?

After selecting the sample of 52 articles, the team reviewed them one-by-one. The articles were read and reviewed chronologically beginning with Hargreaves's (2000) opening editorial and finishing with the most recently-published article in the sample by Pyhältö et al. (2014). Our team analyzed the articles through a *consensual qualitative research* approach (Hill et al. 1997). During the first round of reviews, the team iteratively established a framework of “rationally derived domains” (Hill et al. 1997, p. 521) through which core ideas in the articles could be compared across cases and historical periods (e.g., general topic, genre, intended audience, findings). In accordance with the *constant comparative method* (Charmaz 2000; Strauss and Corbin 1990), additional domains were added throughout the reviewing process as our analysis revealed the importance of these categories as historical trends (e.g., conceptualization of educational change, country in which the study was undertaken, connections to articles already reviewed). Previously reviewed articles were revisited for these themes, resulting in an analysis of each article across all categories.

The team review process had three steps. First, prior to every meeting, each team-member analyzed two to four articles independently through the process outlined above, such that every article was read by at least two team members who then compared their analyses for *inter-rater reliability*. Second, one of the two who analyzed the article presented his or her analysis to the whole team during a series of two-hour meetings during which six to nine articles were discussed, including the other analyst's comments. Finally, the rest of the team asked clarifying or probing questions, suggesting connections and interpretations of the article, as well as helping to reconcile analysis disagreements between the two initial reviewers. At the end of each meeting, time was reserved for considering commonalities among the reviewed articles and noting any relevant trends evidenced by the articles discussed in that session.

The aforementioned conversations served as the foundation for three subsequent meetings in which the team analyzed the literature comprehensively toward a large-scale analysis of the resultant findings. To accomplish this, the team moved from examining the articles as individual cases to comparing core ideas across articles and historical periods in order to highlight salient trends in how educational change was conceptualized, articulated, and researched across the sample. The team built upon existing notes, identifying and discussing trends both present across the reviewed literature and those emerging as the Journal progressed.

Findings: a five-period historical evolution

The overall findings of the review indicate that there was a historical evolution in the *JEC* from 2000 to 2014 that we broadly categorized into five historical periods related to ‘waves of educational change.’ Distinct from the periods, these waves are trends that ebb and flow across periods, combining to create the evolution at the heart of the *JEC*'s history. Whether prompted by an occurrence in the Journal itself

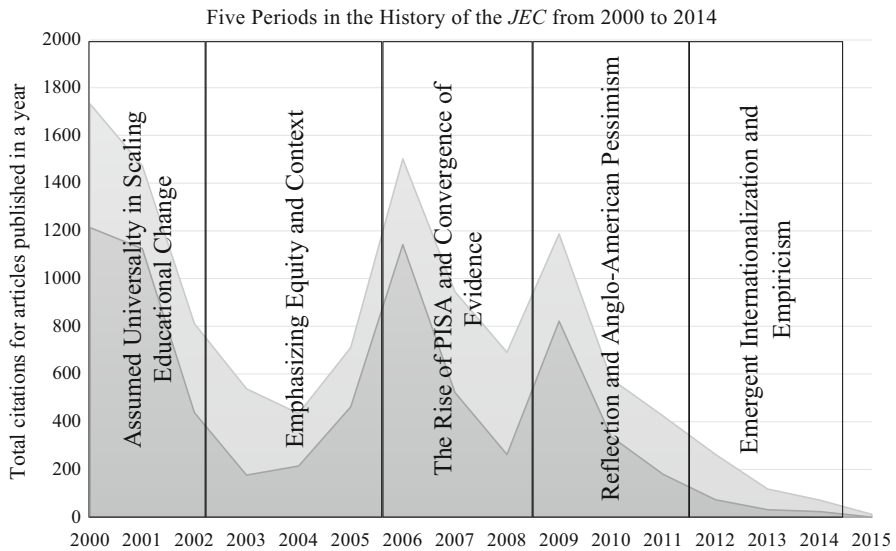


Fig. 2 Five periods in the history of the *JEC* from 2000 to 2014

or responding to an event in education at large, most of the articles published during a given time were cohesive around a set of topics, enabling us to draw the historical delineations that frame the findings of this review. Figure 2 superimposes these historical periods over the citations graph previously presented.

Given the results depicted in Fig. 2, this section is organized by five subsections describing the five time periods chronologically:

1. Assumed Universality in Scaling Educational Change (2000–2002);
2. Emphasizing Equity and Context (2002–2005);
3. The Rise of PISA and Convergence of Evidence (2006–2008);
4. Reflection and Anglo-American Pessimism (2009–2011); and
5. Emergent Internationalization and Empiricism (2012–2014).

This organizational structure seeks to acknowledge the *uniqueness of a given time period* as well as highlighting the *waves of change over time*. The waves themselves, though, are analyzed in the [Discussion](#) section.

Each subsection begins with an explanation of the time frame. Next, there is a description of characteristics shared by the articles in that period followed by a presentation of selected topics addressed. In some cases, there were outliers, articles which did not exactly fit the overall depiction of the period, but may fit the larger evolution of the *JEC* as indicated by the five-period framework, either anticipating changes to come or reflecting a trend during the previous period. These outliers reminded us that any attempt to categorize historical periods is an inherently imperfect endeavor.

Assumed universality in scaling educational change (2000–2002)

When the *JEC* launched, its founding editor sought to establish the Journal as a forum for discourse and debate throughout the field of educational change (Hargreaves 2000). The first of the five time periods spanned from this opening issue in 2000 to the second issue in 2002, totaling 10 issues. This initial period in the Journal's development coincided with several world events that would come to impact education worldwide. In the year 2000, for example, the United Nations released its Millennium Development Goals, one of which included universal primary education by 2015. In addition, the first round of scores by the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) was released in 2001. Eleven reviewed articles fell into this period: five from 2000 (Fullan; Hargreaves; Levin; Sachs; Troman and Woods), five from 2001 (de Lima; Fielding; Goodson; McLaughlin and Mitra; Timperley and Robinson), and one from 2002 (Leithwood et al.).

The name ascribed to this period summarizes what distinguished it from other periods: despite the intention of beginning an open forum for addressing a plethora of ideas related to educational change (Hargreaves 2000), the dominant voices in the Journal during these years were primarily representative of what our review conceptualizes as *the Anglosphere*, a collection of English-speaking countries—including the U.K., the U.S., Canada, Australia, and New Zealand—that share certain key customs and values (Bennett 2002). Rather than referring to a geographic area, *Anglosphere* relates to a sphere of cultural influence based on a common historical lineage. Only one of the 11 articles offered a different perspective (de Lima 2001, from Portugal). Most importantly, though, these articles did not explicitly theorize or address issues of context nor situate themselves contextually; they tended to implicitly assume universal relevance, generalizing findings and theories from the Anglosphere to a global arena. For these articles, a student was generally a student, regardless of nationality, culture, gender, race, social class, or ability; and a school was generally a school whether it was rural or urban, well-funded or under-resourced, or public or private. While 'assumed universality' is arguably a chronic phenomenon across a broad range of academic research, a field that conceptualizes itself as having global applicability (Hargreaves 2000) must continuously reflect upon this tendency.

The general characteristic of assumed universality was particularly true of those works with a *big-picture perspective* that theorized how to scale educational change in a sustainable way (Fullan 2000; Goodson 2001; Leithwood et al. 2002; McLaughlin and Mitra 2001). Fullan (2000) argued that sustainable change needs buy-in from educators and the public because "they are all shareholders with a stake in the success of the system as a whole" (p. 23). Similarly, Goodson (2001) asserted that educational change, which had historically been about balancing forces that were internal and external to the schools, must consider teachers' beliefs and motivations in order to be sustainable. Both Fullan and Goodson built their work upon the narrative that assumes that the field of educational change began in the 1960s, after the U.S. National Defense Education Act that followed the Russian launch of Sputnik in 1957, another indicator of their assumed universality. McLaughlin and Mitra (2001) focused on the sustainable implementation of theory-

based reforms developed in lab or university settings. For this to happen successfully, they suggested that teachers must understand the theory underlying the reform rather than simply adapting their teaching practices to comply with the reform. In contrast to the three previous articles, Leithwood et al. (2002) gave more attention to factors undermining sustainability than to those supporting it. From their review of six large-scale reform efforts (all from the Anglosphere), they identified three key hindrances to successful reforms such as designing an assessment to measure the effectiveness of a reform that narrows the curriculum.

The six articles that did not focus on large-scale reforms studied the role of teachers and students in educational change with a *locally-based perspective*. Four of them dealt with teachers (de Lima 2001; Sachs 2000; Timperley and Robinson 2001; Troman and Woods 2000), and two discussed the role of students (Fielding 2001; Levin 2000). Troman and Woods (2000) investigated the impact of stress on teachers' careers and found that, due to the stress that educational reforms place on teachers, reforms pushed out both uncommitted and effective teachers. The other three articles on teachers focused on their role in educational change, which can be thought of as three points on a spectrum of whom should drive educational change. On one end, Sachs (2000) asserted that teachers should be the primary driver of change, taking leadership roles and conducting practitioner research. Toward the middle of the line, de Lima (2001) argued for utilizing cognitive conflict among teachers to promote change. And on the far side of the line, Timperley and Robinson (2001) claimed that external agents were necessary to challenge teachers' erroneous schema about low achievement and suggest alternative practices. In relation to students' role in educational change, Levin (2000) advocated for their involvement in the decision-making processes, while Fielding (2001) argued that they should participate through inquiry that fosters student–teacher dialogical processes leading to school-level changes.

In sum, these 11 articles were a combination of big-picture narratives related to the sustainability of educational change after decades of unsuccessful reform efforts (in the Anglosphere) and local studies on teachers and students as key actors in educational reform. Despite Hargreaves's (2000) intention when launching the Journal, the common denominator of these first works was a lack of attention to context that led to generalizing experiences and theories from the Anglosphere as if the issues faced by the rest of the world could be addressed through similar solutions. Hence, during this period, educational change was conceptualized, at its core, as *large-scale public interventions as conducted in the Anglosphere*. By this time, however, Finland, South Korea, and Hong Kong had already undergone a series of systemic reforms and had achieved the highest results in the first PISA assessment, yet their processes were largely overlooked by the most cited articles from this period.

Emphasizing equity and context (2002–2005)

The second periodization in the *JEC*'s history began with a special issue on *Social Geographies of Educational Change* from December 2002 and spanned through 2005. It is worth noting that, aside from the more recently-released articles

beginning in 2012, these years had the lowest citation counts in the Journal's history. Twelve articles were reviewed from this period: four from 2002 (Datnow; Hargreaves; Oakes and Lipton; Rowan), three from 2003 (Fink; Harris; Roman), three from 2004 (Blackmore; Giroux and Schmidt; Stein et al.), and two from 2005 (Ainscow; Lodge). The issue inaugurating the period drew attention to the "contextual, spatial and geographical factors of the reform process" (Hargreaves 2002, p. 209), assembling works presented at a conference in Barcelona, Spain. One of the conference's objectives was to build an understanding of "how educational changes are developed and transformed across different contexts" (p. 209). In our analysis, this was a milestone issue, as it marked the beginning of a period in which the most influential articles were written from a 'critical stance' (i.e., challenging the *status quo*).

Most of this period's authors posed questions about equity in educational change, questioning the predominant managerial, top-down approaches to educational reform that were taking hold in this era, as well as challenging the 'assumed universality' evinced in the previous period of the *JEC*. However, this increased attention to context did not result in a departure from the Journal's reliance on articles representing the Anglosphere. In fact, all 12 works from this time frame were from this sphere. Unlike the previous period, however, authors did not tend to make universal claims about the applicability of their theories, yet the most important milestones considered by these articles remained related to the U.S.: the 1980s reform in New York City's District #2 and the federal *No Child Left Behind* (NCLB) act. Although the second round of PISA scores, released at the end of 2003, confirmed that the U.S. and the U.K. were not leading the pack in terms of international educational benchmarks, this was not mentioned by this period's reviewed literature. This second period in the history of the *JEC* was, therefore, paradoxical: it was both the most critical and the most Anglo-centric of all identified periods.

The largest group of articles from this time brought to the fore issues of equity and inclusion, criticizing the idea that market-based policies would make educational systems fairer. Giroux and Schmidt (2004) argued that NCLB's emphasis on high stakes testing perpetuated systemic marginalization of minority and low-income students by "undermin[ing] teacher autonomy, impos[ing] hard restrictions on academic labor, disabl[ing] critical approaches to teaching and promot[ing] pedagogical practices that largely function to 'measure' student progress while simultaneously reproducing a tracking system that parallels ... inequalities of the larger society" (p. 223). Similarly, Fink (2003) asserted that one of the consequences of top-down reforms was the marginalization of minority students, while Ainscow (2005) argued that a 'truly inclusive education' should extend beyond students with disabilities to recognize and remove all barriers that affect learning of marginalized or low-achieving students. Blackmore (2004) criticized neoliberal reforms that forced principals to behave as strategic managers within the competitive education-market created by school-choice. Along these lines, Rowan (2002) called attention to what he termed the *school improvement industry* (textbook companies, associations offering professional development, etc.) and offered a model for understanding this industry's influence on the U.S. educational system, which he believed was neglected in most educational change

analyses. Because of these dynamics, Roman (2003) emphasized the need to problematize neoliberal assumptions underlying discourses around global education, while Oakes and Lipton (2002) argued that tensions that arise with educational change seeking equity are better understood through the lens of grassroots organizing than through the mainstream educational change literature.

The second more recognizable topic in this second period was an emphasis on context in exploring transferability of reform, which emanated directly from the special issue on *Social Geographies of Change*. Opening that issue, Hargreaves (2002) called for increased attention to the geographical and socioeconomic dimension of educational change. Datnow (2002) exemplified this approach by studying schools that were implementing externally-developed reform models over four years and Stein et al. (2004) investigated the transfer of a successful reform from New York City to San Diego. Although these researchers took different approaches to answering the question of the transferability of change, their conclusions were similar: transplanting external reforms without accounting for context tends to be unsustainable.

Two articles from this period could be labeled as outliers, since they did not address the main topics of the time frame nor had the same critical tone. On the one hand, Lodge (2005) wrote the last reviewed article touching upon the role of students in educational change, which was a more central topic in the first period of the *JEC*. On the other hand, Harris (2003) indicated the need to study how organizational change affects pedagogical practices, anticipating later conversations about instructional change as the core of school reform (Owston 2007; Perry and Lewis 2009; Stoll 2009); although, this was not a central topic in the reviewed literature.

Overall, this period was critical of many aspects of the educational change field, some of which were present in the *JEC*'s first years, such as market-based approaches, assumed universality in bringing reform to scale, or lack of explicit attention to inequity. Interestingly, though, despite heavy criticism of policy orientations in the Anglosphere, no voices from other parts of the world that could bring different educational change experiences to the conversation had relevant citation counts. In this sense, it is ironic that the most cited articles from the special issue on *Social Geographies* after the conference in Spain were all from North America (Datnow 2002; Hargreaves 2002; Oakes and Lipton 2002; Rowan 2002). On top of the findings mentioned above, the low citation counts that characterized this period suggest limited utilization of the critical perspectives of this period in the following years of scholarly publications.

The rise of PISA and convergence of evidence (2006–2008)

The third period covered the years of 2006 through 2008. Its beginning was marked by two occurrences: the first mention of PISA in the Journal's historical core after the test completed its first cycle of assessments¹ (Sahlberg 2006) and a special issue

¹ PISA has a 6-year cycle of assessments, focusing alternatively on three areas. The 2006 test focused on science following the 2000 test on literacy and the 2003 test on mathematics.

from March 2006 on *Leadership and, for, and in Schools*. Robertson (2006), who assembled this special issue, stressed that “change in schools is a socio-cultural process...and that it is through the interactions between members of the learning community that the construction of new knowledge takes place” (p. 1). While none of the articles from this issue were included in the review, most articles from this period touched upon the themes highlighted by this issue: leadership, professional learning communities (PLCs), school networks, etc. suggesting an overall shift in the Journal’s emphasis toward collaboration and professionalism. Three articles were reviewed from 2006 (Fullan; Sahlberg; Stoll et al.), four from 2007 (Harris et al.; Louis; Owston; Schleicher), and two from 2008 (Day; Hipp et al.) for a total of nine articles.

The two European articles within this period (Sahlberg 2006; Schleicher 2007) were directly related to the first half of this period’s moniker: ‘The Rise of PISA.’ These works drew on PISA scores to argue for increased focus on student learning and teacher professionalism in educational change. Schleicher (2007) asserted

[T]he competencies that PISA does assess are highly predictive for the future success of students. In addition, PISA provides policymakers and practitioners with useful tools to improve quality, equity and efficiency in education, by revealing some common characteristics of students, schools and education systems that do well. (p. 356)

Following this idea that PISA provides information about high-performing educational systems, Sahlberg (2006) critiqued Anglo-American reform methods of standardization, high-stakes testing, and competition, arguing that Finland’s chart-topping results stemmed from the opposite strategy: building a strong teaching profession, de-emphasizing testing, and encouraging system-wide collaboration. This first appearance of Pasi Sahlberg advocating for the Finnish model of educational change represented a marker in the Journal’s history, as arguments for the tenets represented by Finnish education became central for the *JEC* in the following periods.

The remaining seven articles of this period, from the U.S., Canada, and the U.K., echoed Sahlberg’s (2006) position: successful and sustainable change relies on teachers’ and principals’ professionalism and collaboration. In fact, these works represented a shift from considering individual educators as the main unit of change to analyzing communities of educators working and learning together. Stoll et al. (2006) and Hipp et al. (2008) investigated PLCs, finding them to be an effective means for sustainable change as they help educators to adapt their daily practices. Louis (2007) studied the impact of administrator-teacher trust on change and found that “relational trust rather than institutional trust appears to be at the core of teachers’ experience with change” (p. 17). Fullan (2006) argued that good principals are ‘system thinkers’ who build stronger leaders to take up the charge after them. Harris et al. (2007) demonstrated the conflicted nature of the research base on distributed leadership with some asserting its positive impact (empowers teachers, increases achievement, builds capacity) and others arguing against its implementation (inefficient, increases conflict, fosters competition). Owston (2007) investigated the sustainability of technology-based pedagogical innovation, finding

that administrative and teacher support were essential in sustaining such innovations. Lastly, Day (2008) researched teacher commitment and effectiveness (as measured by teacher retention and student test-scores) and found that effectiveness is linked to professional identity and teachers tend to maintain—but not necessarily improve—their effectiveness across their careers, which has key implications for quality-teacher retention. Implicit in all these articles was the idea that teachers and principals are drivers—not just passive receivers—of change.

Although there were two distinct groups of articles from this period—two PISA papers by Europeans and the seven articles from the Anglosphere focused on professionalism and systemic collaboration—all nine works pointed in a similar direction, which is the argument underlying the second half of this period's name: 'The Convergence of Evidence.' Day (2008) stated that "for the first time in many years, the needs and concerns of policymakers and classroom teachers are coinciding" (p. 258), summarizing the convergence of multiple sources of evidence during this period to argue that the most effective path for educational change lay in investment and trust in teacher/principal professionalism as opposed to punitive, external controls over schools. This evidence included both educator perspectives and the international evidence provided by the high-performing systems in PISA. In terms of citation counts, this period was the second highest in the *JEC*'s history, which was likely linked to the return of leading Anglo-American scholars in the field to the Journal (Fullan, Harris, Leithwood, and Day were the first authors aside from the founding editor to recur in the reviewed literature).

Reflection and Anglo-American pessimism (2009–2011)

The fourth period began in 2009 with the celebration of the *JEC*'s 10th anniversary and ran through the end of 2011. The anniversary was marked with a special issue in which authors reflected on the previous decade of the field. Two years later, Hargreaves stepped down from the editorship and was honored with a special issue put together by Shirley in which renowned educational change scholars acknowledged Hargreaves's contributions to the field. Fourteen articles from this period were included in the review: seven from 2009 (Cooper et al.; Day and Smethem; Fullan; Hargreaves; Perry and Lewis; Stoll; Supovitz), three from 2010 (Daly and Finnigan; Kardos and Johnson; Sahlberg), and four from 2011 (Datnow; Lee and Yin; Sahlberg; Shirley).

As prompted by the special 10th anniversary issue, one of the overarching trends of this time period was reflection on the state of the field at the end of the 2000s. Authors mused over a variety of topics such as the increasing importance of evidence for educational reform (Cooper et al. 2009; Datnow 2011), emphasizing future directions in which they hoped or anticipated the field would move in the 2010s. Common among these works was an underlying sense of pessimism regarding Anglo-American—primarily U.S.—reform practices. This pessimism was augmented by the fact that President Obama's initial educational policies did not disrupt the U.S. strategies of standardization, high-stakes testing, and accountability for school improvement, but instead strengthened them. However, this pessimism was not limited to authors from the Anglosphere. Sahlberg (2010) claimed that such

reform strategies, which he identified as part of the *Global Educational Reform Movement* (GERM), were gaining momentum around the world in conjunction with generalized expectations that schools should primarily function to further a nation's economic competitiveness. Thus, he contended that teachers and students were “caught in the middle of these ... forces,” feeling that any opposition to these trends seemed “difficult or meaningless” (p. 47). This overarching tone of pessimism at the end of the decade was well captured by Hargreaves's (2009) editorial for this period's inaugural issue, in which he stated that “we are at the end of a disastrous decade of large-scale delusions and disappointments” (p. 94).

The articles of this period largely focused on three topics: Anglo-American reform, networks and organization, and accountability and testing. Unlike the Journal's first periods, articles addressing Anglo-American reform within this period more explicitly acknowledged their contexts and applicability. They also supported Hargreaves's (2009) assertion that change had become “bigger, tighter, harder, and flatter” (p. 90). *Bigger* indicated a focus on large-scale reform, rather than school- or classroom-level reform, which according to Fullan (2009) had become professionalized. *Tighter* meant more top-down control. *Harder* implied an emphasis on evidence over experience, which was a topic of interest for several works of this period (Cooper et al. 2009; Datnow 2011; Stoll 2009). Finally, *flatter* described the preeminence of narrow goals, such as focusing solely on literacy and numeracy, and short timelines for delivery of outcomes. Fullan (2009) and Perry and Lewis (2009) argued against these timelines, pointing out that effective reform takes time to implement, while Sahlberg (2011) insisted reforms characterized by the factors previously mentioned reduce competitiveness instead of increasing it.

In addition to Anglo-American reform, many authors in this time period discussed teachers' networks and organization. Perry and Lewis (2009) studied a U.S. implementation of ‘lesson study,’ which is a collaborative practice for designing and assessing lesson plans that originated in Japan, and found that this practice led to improvements in teacher planning and pedagogy while at the same time increasing leadership and collaboration skills. Similarly, Datnow (2011) focused on data teams, which she found to be an effective form of collaboration. She noted, “[F]or many teachers, what began as contrived meetings to discuss data evolved into spaces for more genuine collaboration activity wherein teachers challenged each other, raised questions, and shared ideas for teaching” (p. 156). In contrast, Kardos and Johnson (2010) found the implementation of teacher induction through mentoring ineffective as teachers were not often well matched with their mentors and failed to regularly engage with them about classroom practices. More broadly, Stoll (2009) and Daly and Finnigan (2010) suggested that understanding and utilizing teacher and school networks facilitated educational reform.

The final topic receiving considerable attention during this period was accountability and testing, a topic around which the pessimistic tone of the period resounded. In general, authors claimed that current accountability systems diminished teacher morale and professionalism (Day and Smethem 2009), occluded creative capacity (Stoll 2009), and led to superficial changes in teaching practices (Supovitz 2009). Sahlberg (2010) and Hargreaves (2009) concurred, arguing that there was little evidence for test-based accountability leading to improved student

outcomes. Supovitz (2009) contended that the primary problem with high-stakes testing was that it was thought of as a reform strategy in and of itself. He stated, “The over-riding lesson ... is that change in the testing system itself cannot resolve the deeper problems of the educational system. Reform itself has become confused with the instrument used to measure it” (p. 222).

One outlier in this period fit neither with the broad trends nor the specific topics prevalent during this time. Lee and Yin (2011) investigated how teachers’ emotions and identities influenced the implementation of a Chinese curriculum reform. This study was smaller in scale and of narrower focus than others in this period. However, as with some of the previous outliers, it foreshadowed the trend toward internationalization in the following period.

In sum, these 14 articles denoted an underlying crisis in the field, centered in an Anglo-American sense of helplessness regarding large-scale educational reform. This general pattern stood in contrast with the main characteristic of the previous period, which was the convergence of evidence around teacher/principal professionalism as the most effective path for educational change (as opposed to external accountability over schools). In this sense, the contrast between the Finnish and the Anglo-American way, repeatedly pointed out by Sahlberg (2010, 2011), was at the heart of this period of the *JEC*’s history. It seemed as if the leading scholars in the field felt overwhelmed and baffled by the direction of educational policy in the U.S. and the U.K.

Emergent internationalization and empiricism (2012–2014)

Datnow served as editor of the *JEC* from mid-2011 to 2014, which comprised the last period analyzed in this review. While there were no special issues of the *JEC* during this time frame, the field of education saw 33 U.S. states receive waivers from NCLB requirements (Sass 2016) and the 2012 PISA results revealed a surge in performance for Asia but continued mediocrity for the U.S.—a continuation of trends from the previous era that also extends to the most recent 2015 PISA results. Six articles from 2012 to 2014 were reviewed, with two representing each year (Ainscow 2012; Pyhältö et al. 2012; Saunders 2013; Wells and Feun 2013; Pyhältö et al. 2014; Thuneberg et al. 2014).

Likely due to the proximity of this period to present times, none of these articles had 50 or more citations by January 25th of 2016, which certainly was a limitation for studying this time frame. Nonetheless, the examined sample of works indicated an increase of relevant articles from outside of the Anglosphere. Only 50% of the reviewed articles were from the U.S. (Wells and Feun 2013), the U.K. (Ainscow 2012), or Australia (Saunders 2013); the remaining three works were from Finland (Pyhältö et al. 2012, 2014; Thuneberg et al. 2014). This increase in the Finnish representation demonstrates how profoundly both PISA scores and the *Finnish Way* discourse (Sahlberg 2011, 2015) have influenced the *JEC*’s conversations.

Besides consolidating Finland’s place in the pool of influential countries represented in the *JEC*, a second characteristic of this last period was the prevalence of empirical studies. In fact, five out of the six papers detailed empirical research. As examples, Wells and Feun (2013) conducted a comparative case study of two districts that differed in the success of establishing PLCs in their schools. Also,

Thuneberg et al. (2014) analyzed policy documents from Finnish municipalities to determine if and how they were aligned with the concepts proposed by the nationwide special education reform. This shift toward publishing mainly empirical studies, which will be analyzed more thoroughly in the Discussion section, stands in contrast with the history of the Journal in which more conceptual pieces stood at the forefront.

Only one topic was addressed by multiple articles in this section: teachers. Similar to Lee and Yin (2011), the outlier from the previous period that prefigured this one, Saunders (2013) studied the emotions of teachers participating in a professional development program over four years. She found that teacher emotions vary immensely when attempting to connect professional development learning to classroom practice. Pyhältö et al. (2012, 2014) investigated teacher agency under a large-scale reform to determine if a correlation existed between teachers' perceived role in the reform process and their feelings toward the reform itself. In both studies, they found that teachers who considered themselves to have a more active role in the change process had more positive and comprehensive views of the reform.

Like other periods, the sample of recent years had an outlier: Ainscow's (2012) article describing strategies for achieving equity within educational systems based upon the results of reform in Manchester, U.K. This work was neither focused primarily on empirical data nor on teachers. Rather, Ainscow suggested strategies for networking dissimilar schools in order to share expertise and foster equity. He contended that, "under appropriate conditions, greater collaboration within schools is a means for fostering improvements ... and that collaboration between differently-performing schools can produce polarization within educational systems, to the particular benefit of learners who are performing relatively poorly" (p. 296).

Given the low citation counts of the articles from this period and their proximity to present times, it was difficult to assess these years of the *JEC* as comprehensively as was possible for the previous periods. As years pass, citation counts for these articles will surely vary, so we may see that works from the Anglosphere again take the lead as in other time frames. Nonetheless, if the outlier from the previous period is included (Lee and Yin 2011), the most cited articles by January 2016 suggested some departures from the Journal's history before 2011: works from high-performing countries on PISA such as Finland and Hong-Kong gained relevance, and there was a growing focus on empirical evidence at the expense of theorizing. Along with these shifts, almost none of the leading educational change scholars who were represented in this review prior to 2011 published articles in the *JEC* during this last period, which could be interpreted as a sign of an emerging generational change occurring in the Journal as well as the field.

Discussion

Waves of change cutting across the historical periods

The stated objective of this paper was to explore educational change trends as reflected in the *JEC* from 2000 to 2014, and the review of this literature indicated

that there has been a clear evolution throughout these years. As indicated in the beginning of the Findings section, we identified waves of change at the heart of this transformation, ebbing and flowing across periods.² What follows is a discussion of these waves underlying the Journal's historical evolution.

A first wave cutting across periods has been a process of de-centering of Anglo-American perspectives, which were initially generalized to the rest of the world. In this sense, the periods' descriptions indicate that the Journal has begun to evolve in its understanding that not all conclusions from the Anglosphere can be applied to every context and that there is much to learn from educational change at other latitudes. There have been forces pushing for this process that are both internal and external to the Anglosphere. Internally, the history of the Journal points to increasing despondency among leading U.S. and U.K. scholars due to the distance between the accumulated evidence around the need for professionalization and collaboration, and policymakers' insistence on fostering school competition and imposing punitive accountability measures. Externally, PISA has provided systematic evidence that educational systems using strategies that run counter to those adopted by the U.S. and the U.K. have achieved better student learning outcomes, pushing Finnish and East-Asian experiences of educational change to the forefront of the field's discussions.

However, the aforementioned process of de-Anglo-Americanization has been slow. Citation numbers indicate that, although there has been movement, it remains true that voices from outside of the Anglosphere remain peripheral to conversations in the field. As Table 2 shows, only 9 out of the 52 reviewed articles originated outside of the Anglosphere (i.e., 17.3%), 6 of which were from Finland, 3 of them written by Sahlberg (2006, 2010, 2011). Similarly, even though the network of educational change researchers has been changing recently, Table 3 indicates that the historical core-group of scholars has been a relatively stable crowd, expanded to include some Finnish authors.

A second wave underlying the *JEC*'s evolution is demonstrated by an analysis of the literature by genre. This analysis showed that the historical core of the Journal contained a balanced mix of conceptual and empirical pieces. Table 4 indicates that the bulk of the articles were either *evidence-based conceptual pieces*, the preferred genre of the most cited authors in the Journal (Ainscow 2012; Day and Smethem 2009; Fullan 2000, 2009; Sahlberg 2010, 2011) and the genre of 'canonical works in educational change' such as *The New Meaning of Educational Change* (Fullan 2007) or *The Fourth Way* (Hargreaves and Shirley 2009), or *primarily empirical works*. However, if one excludes the special issue celebrating the 10th anniversary of the *JEC* that added six conceptual pieces to the fourth period, there is a clear trend in the history of the Journal toward giving more importance to empirical articles that goes beyond what was said for the *JEC*'s last years. This tendency coincides with the increasing importance of PISA since 2006 and with Hargreaves's (2009) claim that the field was becoming harder (i.e., emphasizing evidence over

² These waves are independent of Hargreaves and Goodson's (2006) *reform waves*, just like the *JEC*'s five-period evolution has no direct relation with their three periods of educational change in Canada and the U.S. between 1970 and 2000.

Table 2 Reviewed articles from the Anglosphere in each period of the *JEC*

Period	Assumed universality in scaling educational change	Emphasizing equity and context	The rise of PISA and convergence of evidence	Reflection and Anglo-American pessimism	Emergent internationalization and empiricism	Total
Articles from the Anglosphere	10/11 90.9%	12/12 100%	7/9 77.8%	11/14 78.6%	3/6 50%	43/52 82.7%
Other regions represented	Portugal	–	Finland and the OECD	Finland (2) and Hong-Kong	Finland (3)	Finland (6), Hong-Kong, the OECD, and Portugal

Table 3 Scholars who authored (or co-authored) more than one article within the reviewed body of literature

	2 articles	3 articles
Authors (and articles)	Ainscow (2005, 2012) Datnow (2002, 2011) Harris (2003) + Harris et al. (2007) Leithwood et al. (2002) + 2nd author in Harris et al. (2007) Levin (2000) + 2nd author in Copper et al. (2009) Pyhältö et al. (2012, 2014) Stoll (2006, 2009)	Fullan (2000, 2006, 2009) Day (2008), Day and Smethem (2009) + 3rd author in Harris et al. (2007) Hargreaves (2000, 2002, 2009) Sahlberg (2006, 2010, 2011)

Table 4 Genre of the reviewed articles by period of the JEC

Period	Assumed Universality in Scaling Educational Change		Emphasizing Equity and Context		The Rise of PISA and Convergence of Evidence		Reflection and Anglo-American Pessimism		Emergent Internationalization and Empiricism		Total
	1/11 9.1%	7/11 63.6%	2/12 16.7%	6/12 50%	2/9 22.2%	3/9 33.3%	3/14 21.4%	9/14 64.3%	0/6 0.0%	1/6 16.7%	
Conceptual (purely)*	1/11 9.1%	7/11 63.6%	2/12 16.7%	6/12 50%	2/9 22.2%	3/9 33.3%	3/14 21.4%	9/14 64.3%	0/6 0.0%	1/6 16.7%	8/52 15.4%
Conceptual (evidence-based)*	6/11 54.5%	7/11 63.6%	4/12 33.3%	6/12 50%	1/9 11.1%	3/9 33.3%	6/14 42.9%	9/14 64.3%	1/6 16.7%	1/6 16.7%	18/52 34.6%
Empirical (secondary)*	2/11 18.2%	4/11 36.4%	3/12 25.0%	6/12 50%	2/9 22.2%	6/9 66.7%	1/14 7.1%	5/14 35.7%	0/6 0.0%	5/6 83.3%	8/52 15.4%
Empirical (primary)*	2/11 18.2%	4/11 36.4%	3/12 25.0%	6/12 50%	4/9 44.4%	6/9 66.7%	4/14 28.6%	5/14 35.7%	5/6 83.3%	5/6 83.3%	18/52 34.6%

* *Purely conceptual works* remained at the level of theory without discussing concrete data, *evidence-based conceptual pieces* used data only to exemplify what was theorized, *primary empirical articles* presented results out of fresh data detailing thoroughly the methodology used to analyze it, and *secondary empirical articles* drew their conclusions from the data, yet they did not use fresh data but data already published elsewhere or previously analyzed by others (e.g., the two literature reviews in the examined sample)

experience). The fact that the leading educational change scholars wrote mainly conceptual works while the newer generation of researchers published mainly empirical pieces is another dimension of this second movement cutting across periods.

This shift from publishing more broad conceptual works toward more data-focused empirical articles has important implications for the future of the JEC, particularly as this trend seems to correlate with an emerging generational shift in

the field. On the one hand, this may indicate a shift in new scholars' approach toward educational change (and research in general). On the other hand, it may be a sign of the change that has occurred in the requirements for research funding and publication at large (e.g., a demand for more sound research methodologies, an increased interest in evidence for effectiveness over conceptual considerations, etc.) In any case, more importantly than the emerging internationalization that is still occurring at a slow pace, this second wave of change may augur major shifts for the Journal as the new generation of scholars progressively takes the field's lead.

Underlying concept(s) of educational change

A common factor to all but one of the historical periods was the focus on educators, teachers and administrators, as key actors in educational reform. Table 5 shows that 36.5% of the reviewed articles touched upon educational change and educators (or educators' professionalism). Moreover, we believe that this may, in fact, be the *JEC*'s most important contribution to educational research at large. From the Journal's beginnings, Fullan (2000) argued that sustainable change needs educators' buy-in with Goodson (2001) adding that teachers' beliefs and motivations must be considered for reforms to be sustainable. The 2006–2008 'Convergence of Evidence' was mainly about investing in (and trusting) educators' professionalism as the most effective path for sustainable educational change. On top of this, the last period saw a surge of articles studying teachers' emotions in the face of reform, which showed that teachers who feel that they have an active role in the reforms are more likely to view those reforms more positively. This emphasis on—and advocacy for—educators' role in sustainable educational change points to a predominant underlying concept of educational change in the *JEC*'s historical core.

Along with the emphasis on educators, most of the reviewed articles studied school networks, school districts, or larger educational systems (Ainscow 2005, 2012; Datnow 2002; Daly and Finnigan 2010; Fullan 2000, 2006, 2009; Kardos and Johnson 2010; Leithwood et al. 2002; Stein et al. 2004). This fact indicated another aspect of the predominant concept of educational change in the *JEC*'s historical core: it assumes a large-scale perspective, linked to organizational and managerial considerations. Leithwood et al. (2002) summarized well this point by stating that

Large-scale reform is one of several approaches to improving the quality of education ... Grass roots efforts driven solely by local school professionals and communities, and one-school-at-a-time adoption of externally designed "whole school reforms" ... are examples of other approaches. But the problem with alternatives to large-scale reform ... is that they are hugely misaligned with the urgency expressed by many governments, and the impatience evident among many members of the public, for schools that will help most children, at minimum, adequately cope with a radically more complex future. (pp. 27–28)

Taking an opposing stance, Oakes and Lipton (2002) argued that educational change will be neither sustainable nor equitable unless marginalized communities are

Table 5 Articles on educators and educators' professionalism from each period of the *JEC*

Period	Assumed universality in scaling educational change	Emphasizing equity and context	The rise of PISA and convergence of evidence	Reflection and Anglo-American pessimism	Emergent internationalization and empiricism	Total
Articles on educators	4/11 36.4%	1/12 8.3%	5/9 55.6%	5/14 35.7%	4/6 66.7%	19/52 36.5%
General topics	Teacher agency/collaboration, teacher stress, teacher friendship/conflict, and teacher beliefs	Leadership practices	PLCs, distributed leadership, teacher–principal trust, and teacher effectiveness	Effects of reform on teachers, new teachers' mentoring, teacher emotions, and teacher collaboration	Teacher agency, PLCs, and teacher emotions	

permitted to articulate their interests and play key roles in driving educational change—considerations that are less emphasized within the mainstream educational change approaches such as Leithwood et al.'s. Few among the reviewed articles shared Oakes and Lipton's perspective, though, and the second period—of which Oakes and Lipton were a part—had the lowest citation counts in the *JEC*'s history, which may signal alignment with the more mainstream orientations among those drawing upon the Journal in their scholarly work.

In summary, what was the concept of educational change underlying the Journal's historical core? As shown through the differences between Leithwood et al. (2002) and Oakes and Lipton (2002), there was no common idea of educational change shared by all reviewed articles. Nonetheless, there was an overarching conception that could be termed the '*JEC* core's concept of educational change.' This widespread understanding was that *educational change is large-scale, sustainable school transformation through educators' professionalism*. This conception assumed a certain identification of education and schooling that equated educational change with sustainable school reform. The assumed narrative that went along with this concept of educational change was that the improvement of teaching and school administration emerged as research foci in the U.S. around the 1960s, and now it has become a global concern due to the economic push for more skilled labor to sustain each nation's competitiveness (Sahlberg 2006).

Due to the emphasis on educators' professionalism, however, this overarching concept of educational change may overlook the other side of the coin: student learning. In fact, the vast majority of the reviewed articles did not directly touch upon student learning until Harris (2003) asked how organizational change affected pedagogical practices and Lodge (2005) advocated for students participating more actively in their own learning. By 2006–2008, the 'Rise of PISA' put student learning outcomes at the center of the stage (Owston 2007; Sahlberg 2006; Schleicher 2007). Hence, another major effect of PISA, aside from de-centering Anglo-American discourses through evidence of high-performing systems outside of that sphere, has been moving the focus of educational change from teaching toward what youth need to learn for participating in the emerging technological and globalized society. Nevertheless, this review indicated that the Journal has not been a source scholars have been drawing upon for reflections on student learning and that student learning has not been central to the *JEC* core's concept of educational change, despite voices in the field advocating for deep learning as the center of school reform (Fullan and Langworthy 2013; Rincón-Gallardo and Elmore 2012).

Major silences

In relation to the *JEC*'s lack of emphasis on issues of learning in educational change, one must ask if the topics that the Journal has emphasized are the topics that will drive the next century of educational change. According to Google Scholar, the most cited journals in education presently focus on (a) the learning sciences, (b) STEM education, (c) technology, (d) teacher preparation, and (e) educational psychology. Almost none of these key topics have had a central place in reviewed articles, however. Undoubtedly, teacher professionalism is at the center of school

reform. Nonetheless, one must ask why the *JEC* has become a privileged venue for discussing PLCs and teacher emotions if there are other specialized journals for this, such as *Teaching and Teacher Education*, which was the educational journal with the highest 2015–2016 *h5-index* worldwide.³ The silence around the learning sciences, STEM education, issues of technology [although Owston (2007) touched indirectly upon this], teacher preparation, and educational psychology, indicate that the *JEC*'s historical core has not theorized the educational innovations and new models of schooling that are most emphatically changing education today.

In a similar sense, profoundly disruptive changes associated with private educational enterprises have impacted school systems worldwide in the last decades. For instance, for-profit education providers are booming in the U.S., operating charter schools, which are also expanding rapidly in the Global South—Africa, Latin America, and South Asia (Spring 2015). Bridge International Academies (BIA), for example, which initiated a model for low-cost, highly-standardized private schools in Nairobi, Kenya in 2008, rapidly grew to be the largest 'private-school chain' in Africa by 2015 with 414 schools and continues to expand today (BIA 2016). The most influential work in the *JEC* has remained silent on, or broadly dismissive of, these issues without an analysis of what accounts for these forces having often garnered broad public appeal. This neoliberal privatizing model of educational change must be grappled with as it significantly influences schooling and international education systems. If the Journal aims to position itself as a central hub for the most dynamic, relevant conversations in global educational change, it should not focus only on tweaks in traditional public educational models while discounting the disruptions that are most forcefully transforming global education at its core.

Another important silence in the reviewed literature was the relationship between educational change and power, which connects directly with the work of Oakes and Lipton (2002). In general, little attention was given to this 'hidden force' of educational change, with the exception of Rowan's (2002) analysis of the influence of the *school improvement industry*. Several articles during the second period of the Journal explicitly advocated for equity and criticized marginalization, but they seem to have relatively little impact within the field, as indicated by low citation counts and a quick return to large-scale, managerial perspectives in the subsequent periods.

The previous silence and the predominant concept of educational change relate to another issue largely absent in the reviewed body of literature: the purpose and meaning of education and, more importantly, of change in education. There was a recurring, implicit assumption that educational change is about improvement. Yet, questions of what should be improved, which direction of change constitutes an improvement, and why a change should be considered an improvement were largely neglected. This speaks to Smith's (2016) critique that the *JEC* is particularly prescriptive in its conception of change rather than considering change with depth.

³ The *h-index* is the largest number, *h*, such that at least *h* articles have been cited at least *h* times each. The *h5-index* is the *h-index* if we consider the last five years, i.e., it is the number of articles published during the last 5 years that have been cited at least *h* times.

Finally, in light of the fact that the most relevant articles came from the Anglosphere and Finland, a major silence was the noticeable absence of voices from Asia—other than Lee and Yin (2011)—and the Global South. Given the large populations of Asian nations, along with their high-ranking positions on international achievement tests such as PISA, the lack of voices representing Asia in the *JEC*'s conversations was concerning. Additionally, to the extent we were critical about the preponderance of Anglo-centric perspectives and we applauded the inclusion of Finnish works, our concern with issues of equity led us to think that there has to be more consideration of what can be gained from ideas and experiences from the Global South, particularly as these nations will likely be the epicenter of a number of dynamic, innovative educational changes in the coming decades (Aguerrondo and Vaillant 2015).

Limitations of building the review upon citations

Although the decision to select the sample of articles to be reviewed largely based on citations was considered carefully, there were nonetheless limitations to this approach. While citations may be a readily-discernable indication of impact, they are also a biased indicator in that they focus on the impact that articles have on academicians even though the intended audience for the Journal is broader. Heavily-downloaded but minimally-cited works may be influencing the practice of teachers and administrators or may provide food for thought as course readings assigned to up-and-coming professionals and scholars.

Furthermore, frequently-cited articles may not necessarily be fully representative of the Journal's history. Even though the sample accounted for around 61% of the *JEC*'s citations, it only included about one-ninth of the articles actually published between 2000 and 2014. We have attempted to exercise caution, as should the reader, to recognize that findings are representative—and discussions are applicable—to the reviewed sample of articles but not necessarily to the Journal as a whole. This point is particularly true regarding the discussion of silences, as grounded claims about what was ignored or not given enough importance should result from comprehensive analyses of all publications, which was not the case. Consequently, readers should understand the aforesaid silences as issues on which the *JEC* has not published highly-cited work, not necessarily as topics on which the Journal has not published or has not attempted to have an impact. This last caveat is especially true for comments regarding a lack of voices from Asia and the Global South because the Journal has published several articles by authors from these regions but they have not been widely cited. This also highlights an important implication for the broader field of educational change in terms of the perspectives scholars tend to draw upon as they theorize and research educational change at large.

Finally, it should be recognized that citations are not only an outcome of the impact of a journal and its articles, they also influence the potential impact of a journal as it moves forward. Questions about niche, appropriate venue for topics, increasing representation of underrepresented topics, and the like are not queries that can be answered and forced onto the future of the *JEC*. Young academicians are

expected to publish in high-impact journals, which means that journals with a lower impact may not receive the articles they seek.

The interplay between the Journal and the field of educational change

A final key point for discussion is that, although the *JEC* may be the field of educational change's eponymous Journal, to what extent does the present literature review say something about the broader field of educational change? Leading scholars in the field, such as Fullan and Sahlberg, have utilized the *JEC* for their publications over other journals, but it is still not their primary venue for sharing their work. Rather, these scholars largely publish their work as books, which are far more cited than their journal articles (Fullan 2007; Sahlberg 2015). While much of the work of the new generation of scholars would also be appropriate and desirable for the *JEC*, it is also being submitted, and often published, elsewhere. Structural factors such as indexing, editorial choice, and English as the language of publication also influence which authors and topics are featured in the *JEC* and which make their way to another outlet. In sum, the voices, both well-established and on-the-rise, speaking to the field of educational change are coming from a variety of venues.

While the *JEC* may not fully represent all players in the field of educational change, though, the findings of this review have evident parallels in the broader field. Pessimism within the Anglo-American world is juxtaposed with scarce attention of English-speaking authors to what happens beyond their sphere, despite PISA and other international benchmarks. There are also gaps between educational change scholars and researchers in other leading educational fields. Deep theorizing about educational change—vital as it is—is not keeping pace with the growing importance of empirical evidence and the rapid growth of alternative education providers such as for-profit education networks. Furthermore, the central topic of *The Fourth Way* (Hargreaves and Shirley 2009) and *Professional Capital* (Hargreaves and Fullan 2012) is precisely the role of educators' collaboration and professionalism in sustainable change, probably the Journal's most important contribution to educational research so far. These points indicate that, although more trends have been central to the field than those reflected in the *JEC*, this literature review has captured key tendencies, themes, and limitations present in both the Journal and the field.

Conclusion: future directions of educational change

This review began by summarizing the *JEC*'s history and citing Datnow (2012), who argued that the Journal's most important contributions were related to its international focus, which had helped the field to “move beyond a myopic view of reform in the U.S.” (p. 3) and its publication of largely qualitative research, which allowed for a better sense of educational change “as lived through the daily experiences of educators” (p. 3). The review has shown that her perceptions were indeed justified in that the focus on educators' daily experiences certainly has been an important contribution of the Journal, as pointed out repeatedly throughout the

paper. However, despite the Journal's efforts to foster a global conversation, internationalization is still a major challenge.

We also indicated that opinions about the *JEC*'s accomplishments are divided, with some considering it a key forum for debating research on educational reform, such as Sahlberg (2015), and others judging it as fashionable, even superficial, such as Smith (2016). Weighing in on this debate, we hope to have achieved the stated goal of showing that the truth lies somewhere in between Sahlberg's and Smith's positions. At a time of rapid educational innovation, it is no exaggeration to say that a lack of theorization around meaningful conceptualizations of educational change constitutes a crisis in the field. Educational change is indeed in danger of becoming a 'buzzword' in some circles—devoid of meaning. Nonetheless, within the *JEC* there has been a predominant, relatively cohesive concept of educational change as large-scale, sustainable school transformation through educators' professionalism. As we have pointed out, this conceptualization is not without its limits and problems, but it would be unfair to deny that the Journal has served to give educators' role in school reform an emphasis overlooked (or instrumentalized) by overly-managerial approaches to school reform. Hence, the truth is that the *JEC* is neither a forum for superficial publications, nor the ultimate venue for discussing research on educational innovation. It is a young journal that, after an initial decade of Anglo-American emphasis, is now in the process of defining more precisely its particular niche in order to offer more focused contributions in the years to come, as it aims to become a truly global forum for scholarship.

At the center of this process of maturity and openness lies the challenge of increasing both citation counts and the relevance of non-Anglo-American publications in order to foster impactful educational change dialogues across cultures and contexts. This challenge is highly complex because, as our findings have shown, *JEC* publications from beyond the Anglosphere are cited less often. Devising creative ways to address this trade-off will be a major challenge for the Journal as it aims for increased international inclusivity. For instance, the August and November 2016 issues foregrounded several countries outside of the Anglosphere, including China, India, Kenya, Lebanon, Mexico, Singapore, South Africa, and Turkey (Rincón-Gallardo and Fleisch 2016; Shirley 2016). Time will indicate, however, if the field receives and cites these works, or if they will suffer the same fate as similar publications from previous periods.⁴

As reviewers of the *JEC*, we claimed to belong to a different generation than those who began the Journal and have led the field during the last decades, having enough distance to consider the contributions and make the necessary constructive critiques. We hope that this distance has served the purpose of the review. As members of the emerging generation of scholars, though, we also feel responsible for educational change's future and would like to stand on our predecessors' shoulders to look farther. Therefore, we also hope that this review sparks dialogues within the field about how the challenges of educational change will be ushered

⁴ Something similar can be said about some of the other major silences mentioned in this review. For example, the May 2016 issue featured articles about technology and the learning sciences (Shirley and Noble 2016).

along to a new cohort. Besides the challenges around forging truly international dialogues, issues of how the new generation will deal with the field's era of pessimism or the consequences of the shift toward empirical scholarship at the expense of theorizing will need to be discussed. As the tides of history continue to reshape the landscape of a new century, the predominant concept of educational change also will need analysis and careful debate. In any case, the future of educational change will depend upon the collaboration between current leaders in the field and new generations of scholars through the ensuing transitions.

This paper began by questioning what educators in the twenty-second century will see when they consider education in hindsight. We suggested that this largely depends on their lens, with some looking well into the distance at the subtle swell of events from centuries ago and others focusing on more recent waves of change that break, spread, and recede. The present literature review captures part of this cycle. With each historical period in the *JEC*, new topics emerged, permeated the discourse, and then faded from focus. At the same time, certain forces were constantly at play across this evolution, pushing and pulling the conversation in familiar directions. Some topics covered in the *JEC* noticeably shaped the field, while others merely lapped at the shoreline, present but without a strong impact. Through it all, however, the process does not stop: whether ebbing or flowing, carving cliffs or shuffling sand, there is always change.

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