

THE FUTURE OF COMPARATIVE AND INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION IN A GLOBALISED WORLD

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Abstract – This article examines the history and future prospects of comparative and international education with particular reference to the impact of globalisation and Information and Communications Technologies (ICTs). Connections and interactions between comparative educationists and the technologies of printing and electronic communications are examined in a historical context. The global nature of communications in comparative and international education is demonstrated both spatially and historically, using information from all regions of the world. The changing nature of technologies is noted to have broadened the audience for comparative insights. The development of textbooks, journals, conferences, international agencies, the Internet, web-based communications, and professional comparative education societies is related to the themes of communications and globalisation.

Zusammenfassung – In diesem Artikel werden die Geschichte und die künftigen Aussichten der vergleichenden und internationalen Bildung untersucht mit besonderem Augenmerk auf den Einfluss von Globalisierung und Informations- und Kommunikationstechnologien. Verbindungen und Interaktionen zwischen vergleichender Erziehung und Print- und Elektronikkommunikation werden in historischem Zusammenhang beleuchtet. Die globale Natur von Kommunikation in vergleichender und internationaler Bildung wird unter Nutzung von Informationen aus allen Weltregionen sowohl räumlich als auch historisch aufgezeigt. Es wird darauf hingedeutet, dass die sich ändernde Art der Technologien das Publikum für komparative Einsichten erweitert hat. Die Entwicklung von Textbüchern, Zeitschriften, Konferenzen, internationalen Agenturen, dem Internet, auf dem Netz basierender Kommunikation und professionellen Bildungsgesellschaften stehen in Bezug zu den Themen Kommunikation und Globalisierung.

Résumé – Cet article présente l'historique et les perspectives d'avenir de l'éducation internationale comparée, avec un accent sur les effets de la mondialisation et des technologies d'information et de communication. L'auteur approfondit dans le contexte historique les liens et interactions existant entre l'éducation comparée et les technologies imprimées et électroniques de communication. Il montre le caractère mondial de la communication en éducation internationale comparée tant au niveau spatial que temporel, en s'appuyant sur des données issues de toutes les grandes régions mondiales. Il signale en outre que la nature évolutive des technologies renforce l'intérêt pour les résultats en recherche comparée, et met en rapport la multiplication d'ouvrages, de revues, de conférences, d'organismes internationaux, d'Internet, de la communication via le réseau planétaire et des organisations professionnelles d'éducation comparée avec les thèmes de la communication et de la mondialisation.

Resumen – Este trabajo examina la historia y las perspectivas para el futuro de la educación comparativa e internacional, específicamente en cuanto a los impactos de la globalización y de las tecnologías de información y comunicación. En un contexto histórico, estudia las conexiones e interacciones que existen entre la educación com-



parativa y las tecnologías de comunicación impresa y electrónica. Está demostrada la naturaleza global de los modos de comunicación en la educación comparativa e internacional en términos de espacio e historia, puesto que usa informaciones desde todas las regiones del mundo. La naturaleza cambiante de las tecnologías evidentemente ha ampliado la audiencia para los descubrimientos comparativos. El desarrollo de libros de textos, revistas, conferencias, agencias internacionales, Internet, comunicación a través de la web y de sociedades profesionales en educación comparativa está relacionado con los temas de comunicación y globalización.

Резюме – В данной статье исследуется история и перспективы развития сравнительного и международного образования со ссылкой на влияние глобализации и информационных и коммуникационных технологий (ICTs). Связь и взаимодействие между сравнительным образованием и печатными и электронными коммуникационными технологиями рассматриваются в историческом контексте. Глобальная природа средств коммуникации в сравнительном и международном образовании показывается как пространственно, так и исторически с использованием информации со всех регионов мира. Отмечается, что постоянно меняющаяся природа технологий тем самым расширила круг участников процесса сравнительного понимания. Разработка учебников, журналов, проведение конференций, создание международных организаций, развитие Интернета, сетевых web-коммуникаций, а также создание профессиональных обществ по сравнительному образованию тесно связано с темами коммуникации и глобализации.

Although the term globalisation has come into increasing usage during the past few years, most writers neither define the term nor mention that globalisation is not a new phenomenon. One could assert that globalisation is as old as empires, and that both Imperial Rome and Genghis Khan manifested globalisation. One might also assert that comparative education may be the first global academic and practitioner-oriented field, or at least the second after geography. What is new, in my judgement, is the increased pace of change and pervasiveness of the phenomenon. It is also evident that more writers focus upon the negative aspects of globalisation than upon its positive aspects.

This article can be termed a prosopographic study, that is a study which identifies and relates a group of persons within a particular historical or literary context (Merriam Webster 1979: 918). The article draws on several prosopographic studies undertaken second half of the 1990s which have examined the growth and spread of comparative and international education from both historical and sociological perspectives. My previous studies focused upon comparative education and comparative educators (Wilson 2000a, 2000b, 2001a). A continuum will examine the evolution of our field, and will project discerned trends into the future.

The increasing use of the new Information and Communications Technologies (ICTs) is examined in terms of their impact upon the field. This

delineates the increasing global presence of comparative and international education and educators, which is important for the future of the field. ICTs are making the field of comparative and international education and its practitioners known to a much wider audience. Comparative and international education has a definite role to play in communicating research findings and insights from practical experience to academics, policy-makers and educators throughout the world. The new ICTs – in particular the Internet – make this a reality, and this in turn can only enhance and broaden the impact of the field.

Definitions

Many authors use terms like globalisation without bothering to define them, assuming that their readers share their understanding of the terms. I will not make that assumption, and share my preferred definition of globalisation, by Lubbers (1998: 1), who stated that globalisation is a process “that widens the extent and form of cross-border transactions among peoples’ assets, goods, and services, and that deepens the economic interdependence between and among globalizing entities, which may be private or public institutions or governments”.

Concerning ICTs, many definitions abound. Elsewhere (Wilson 2001b: 3) I have written that ICT is merely a delivery system for “content”, albeit a system with two-way interactivity. ICT consists of both hardware (delivery) mechanisms and software (usage) capabilities. What is new is the integration capability in ICT by which delivery tools and content are merged into a seamless system.

A third essential definition relates to the changing nature of technology. The so-called New Information Age has changed aspects of natural resources, manufacturing and even service industries. Menzies (1998: 4) highlighted Drucker’s prediction that the “knowledge society” would result in a “paradigmatic shift from an industrial economy to one shaped by knowledge, information and the [new] communication technologies”. Tjaden (1995: 14) asserted that the most important asset in an Information Age enterprise is knowledge rather than capital. While capital remains an important input, knowledge “can be used to obtain capital, or any other needed assets”. I doubt if I have to remind comparative and international educators that our business *is* knowledge.

I would be remiss if I did not also provide definitions for comparative and international education. I have always preferred the definition provided by Noah and Eckstein (1969: 127), who described comparative education as “an intersection of the social sciences, education and cross-national study [which] attempts to use cross-national data to test propositions about the relationship between education and society and between teaching practices and learning outcomes”. The operational definition that I prefer for international educa-

tion is the application of descriptions, analyses and insights learned in one or more nations to the problems of developing educational systems and institutions in other countries (Wilson 2000a: 116). I also note, along with Epstein (1994: 918), that international educators “use findings derived from comparative education to understand better the processes they examine, and thus, to enhance their ability to make policy”.

The convergence of globalisation, information and ICTs has accelerated the pace of change and is impacting upon every facet of our existence. In our sphere concerned with education, the demand for information about new practices and reform initiatives in education and training has broadened the scope of comparative and international education.

Two final definitions were used in my 1994 Comparative and International Education Society (CIES) presidential address, “Comparative and International Education: Fraternal or Siamese Twins? A Preliminary Genealogy of Our Twin Fields” (Wilson 1994: 452). I noted then that the melioristic trend in both fields concerns “the improvement of national educational systems by the addition of models, practices, innovations and the like, borrowed or transferred from other national educational systems”. The academic-practitioner, whom I characterised as unique to our twin fields, is one who alternates between academic milieux, where comparative studies reside, and field-based practitioner involvement, where the “fruits” of comparative studies are applied internationally to ameliorate national educational systems. I noted that “the apparent dividing line between international and comparative education is the distinction between *researchers* (either descriptive or analytic) and *practitioners* directly concerned with policy and practice” (Wilson 1994: 454).

Communications in comparative and international education: past and future

The primary modes of communication used by early practitioners of comparative and international education were correspondence with like-minded colleagues and publication of descriptions, analyses and theories about education and training in other countries. This correspondence was handwritten, and publication was initially by carving script on tablets, which progressed to calligraphy on paper, then to block printing, and then by means of moveable metal type to print on paper. Although writing began about 3500 BC with Sumerian Cuneiform, the earliest writing that concerns our field was the Greek alphabet that began about 750 BC and the 23-letter Roman alphabet, which modified the Greek and led to “modern” writing. The “audience” for early comparative treatises was limited to the small elites in the authors’ home countries, and constrained by the means of publication and the slow pace of communications.

Early publications had very little circulation, which likely explains why

Marc-Antoine Jullien's *Esquisse et vues préliminaires d'un étude d'éducation comparée* was reputedly "lost" for many years before being re-discovered by Pedro Roselló in 1943 (van Daele 1993: 52). Jullien was the first to use the term comparative education; but even Jullien's name for the field was deemed "lost" because Sandiford wrote in his 1918 book, *Comparative Education*, that "comparative education is a phrase recently invented in the United States" (Brickman 1960: 12).

The state of early communication in the field is also exemplified by the fact that the contemporary Western founders, César Auguste Basset (1808) and Marc-Antoine Jullien (1817) wrote in parallel in France but appear not to have met or even corresponded. These founders were also credited with the introduction of the scientific study of education from a comparative perspective (Epstein 1994: 918).

Prior to these generally-recognised founders of the field, writers since the beginning of recorded history have described aspects of education in countries they visited, with the notion that the educational structures and practices they examined might be useful for adoption and adaptation in their own countries. In this instance, communication was even more limited, with the exception of some classic works written by early Greek, Roman, Hebrew, Italian and Arab travellers. It is ironic that the audience for many classic works has grown over time. Such works include the philosophical and rhetorical treatises on education by Herodotus (484–425 BC), Thucydides (471–399 BC), Xenophon (430–355 BC), Plato (427–347 BC), Aristotle (384–322 BC), Cicero (106–43 BC), Scipio Africanus (185–129 AD), and Tacitus (70 AD) from ancient Greece and Rome; the descriptive and narrative accounts of Rabbi Benjamin of Tudela from pre-Inquisition Spain (1165–1173 AD), who voyaged as far as India; Niccolò and Maffeo Polo (the father and uncle of Marco Polo) writing about China (1254–1324 AD); and Abd al-Rahman Ibn Khaldun (1332–1406 AD) of Tunisia.

These travellers' tales marked a shift from classic treatises of a rhetorical and philosophical nature to studies documenting observations and describing educational practices and institutions. The use of comparative information later evolved from mere description towards the facilitation of borrowing and adaptation of those educational practices and structures. However, communication of these studies was still confined to correspondence and limited publication. The invention of moveable metal type, *jikji*, in Korea in 1377, and 78 years later by Gutenberg in Germany, began the revolution in communications that enabled publications to reach larger audiences. One can only wonder if the Korean invention of moveable metal type was communicated to Europe, resulting in its re-invention by Gutenberg. Such speculation is facilitated by the proximity to Korea of Kaifeng in China, which was the beginning of the Silk Road which facilitated trade with Europe.

Another shift in focus was the sponsorship of "missions" to study education in other countries. In Asia, such early missions included one sent by Prince Shotoku of Japan to China in AD 607, "which resulted in the estab-

lishment of Japan's first national system of education, modelled on the Chinese" (Kobayashi 1990: 200). A later Japanese mission was led by Prince Tomomi Iwakura, who studied European and US education in 1872, four years after the Meiji Restoration (Brickman 1960: 10)

During the 1800s in the Americas, Horace Mann, Calvin Stowe and Henry Barnard studied European education and adapted aspects for the US states of Massachusetts, Ohio and Connecticut respectively. Edgerton Ryerson (1868) was the founder of a non-denominational public school system in the Canadian Province of Ontario, which resulted from his studies of European and US education. Domingo Fausto Sarmiento studied education in France, Prussia, Holland and the USA and replicated elements in Argentina and Chile.

In Europe, Victor Cousin (1831) studied Prussian education and adapted aspects for French education. Russian Count Leo Tolstoy – known mainly as a novelist – studied education in Germany, France, Switzerland and England (1857–1861) and influenced the development of Russian Education. Sir Michael Sadler (1900) of Great Britain was an official of the Board of Education in London and studied and analysed trends in educational development all over Europe, while using sociological and historical data to explain the interaction of education and society (Noah and Eckstein 1969: 45).

Jullien, Cousin, Ryerson, Sarmiento and Sadler were all government officials, which was where comparative education "resided" during this period. They communicated their findings by correspondence, reports, and limited-circulation publication.

Textbooks and university courses

It has generally been recognised that the "modern" and "scientific" period of comparative education in Western nations dates from Sir Michael Sadler (1900). The first Western textbook, edited by Peter Sandiford of the University of Toronto in Canada, was entitled *Comparative Education* and was published in London in 1918. Another milestone was the publication of Isaac Kandel's *Studies in Comparative Education* in 1933. Hayhoe (2001: 6) indicates that four different books entitled *Comparative Education* were published by Chinese scholars in Chinese between 1929 and 1934 (see also Bray and Gui 2001: 454). Western readers are only now learning that communications in other languages also comprises our heritage in comparative and international education.

Personal communications were revolutionised by the invention of the typewriter in Europe and its development in the USA by Remington and L.C. Smith in 1864. By the early 20th century, printing had progressed to machine-set moveable type, and facsimile transmission was coming into use by newspapers. In addition, Philo T. Farnsworth invented a prototype television in 1923. Communications also began to enter the "modern" era.

Another shift in how information in the field was communicated was the

establishment of the first regular university course in comparative education. This course was initiated by James Russell in 1899 at Teachers College, Columbia University, USA. This makes the field over a century old in academic milieux. The programme at Teachers College, particularly its research publications and the *Educational Yearbook* edited by Isaac Kandel between 1925 and 1944, had a wide impact in comparative and international education (Brickman 1966: 4), and marked a shift in communications in the field from occasional publications to regularised compendia. Also significant were the Yearbooks of Education published between 1932 and 1940 by the University of London Institute of Education, and the *Annuaire International de l'Éducation et de l'Enseignement* issued by the IBE (Brickman 1966: 4).

Conferences and international organisations

The grand tradition of expositions and conferences that were prominent from the latter part of the 19th century also influenced how information concerning comparative and international education was communicated. Elsewhere (Wilson 1994: 455) I have referred to the propagation of task analysis in technical curriculum design by Victor de la Vos of the Moscow Imperial Technical Institute at the 1889 Philadelphia Exposition. Van Daele (1993: 78) has written that the birth of international collaboration was traceable to numerous conferences held between 1885 and 1920, which led to the establishment of the International Bureau of Education (IBE).

The IBE was the first international organisation in the education sector and, under the direction of Pedro Roselló, continued the development and dissemination of information about educational systems and practices. The IBE therefore raised communication about education to an international and inter-governmental level. In effect, the IBE realised the dream of Jullien for such an international organisation. The IBE became part of UNESCO in 1948.

Brickman (1973: 10) wrote that annual meetings of those interested in comparative education began in the US in 1935. These meetings were convened by an Advisory Committee on Comparative Education of the US Office of Education. Such meetings marked the beginning of a new communication phase.

Professional societies

The growth of professional societies of comparative and international educators dates from the establishment in the USA of the Comparative Education Society (CES) in 1956. The parallel motivation for the formation of the CES, according to Brickman (1966: 7), was Gerald Read's discovery that "travel expenses for an organization were substantially lower than for an unorganized group". Thus, the educational tour continued the communications media of

the travellers' tales and sponsored missions periods in the evolution of the field.

As a graduate student in the mid-1960s, I attended several CES conferences at the University of Chicago, where the participants usually numbered about 60 persons. Both professional societies and conferences constituted additional mechanisms for communicating information about the field. One difference was that communication took place among members of these new comparative and international education societies, as well as between societies.

Although the first analogue electronic computers were invented by the British and Americans to "crack" German and Japanese codes during World War II, the computer age is recognised to date from the development of ENIAC (Electronic Numerical Integrator and Computer) in 1946. The development of two-letter binary code at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in 1951 paved the way for future computer communications. However, such large mainframe installations did not affect communications until the development of word-processing machines in 1960.

The Comparative Education Society in Europe (CESE) was established in 1963 as the first regional society. Several national bodies in Europe have developed from CESE, such as the Sezione Italiana della CESE (SICESE). The Association Francophone d'Éducation Comparée (AFEC) was founded in 1973 as the first language-based society. The second language-based society was the Kommission für Vergleichende Erziehungswissenschaft in der Deutschen Gesellschaft für Erziehungswissenschaft (KVEDGE), which is a commission of the German Pedagogical Society. The Dutch-Speaking Society of Comparative Education, *Nederlandstalig Genootschap voor Vergelijkende Studie van Opvoeding en Onderwijs* (NGVO), is another European language-based society. The British section of CESE was founded in 1966 and in due course became the British Comparative and International Education Society (BCIES) and then the British Association of International and Comparative Education (BAICE).

Other societies were formed in the 1960s and 1970s. The Japan Comparative Education Society (JCES) [*Nihon Hikaku Kyoiku Gakkai*] began in 1964; and the Comparative and International Education Society of Canada/*Société canadienne d'éducation comparée et internationale* (CIESC/SCECI) was founded in 1967 as the first bilingual society. The Korean Comparative Education Society (KCES) – the 11th World Congress hosts – was established in 1968; the Australia and New Zealand Comparative and International Education Society (ANZCIES) was founded in 1972; the Chinese Comparative Education Society-Taipei (CCES-T) was founded in 1974; and the Comparative Education Society of India (CESI) and the China Comparative Education Society (CCES) were established in 1979.

Other societies were also formed in the 1980s and 1990s. The Comparative Education Society of Hong Kong (CESHK) was established in 1989. The second regional society, the Southern African Comparative and History of Education Society (SACHES), was established in 1991; and the third regional

society, the Comparative Education Society of Asia (CESA), was founded in 1995.

Other national societies existing at the end of the century included the Sociedad Española de Educación Comparada (SEEC), Sociedade Brasileira de Educação Comparada (SBEC), Greek Comparative Education Society (GCES), Israel Comparative Education Society (ICES), Hungarian Pedagogical Society (HPS), Russian Council for Comparative Education (RCCE), Polish Comparative Education Society (PCES), Bulgarian Comparative Education Society (BCES), Ukrainian Comparative Education Society (UCES), Czech Pedagogical Society (Comparative Education Section), and Nordic Comparative and International Education Society (NOCIES).

Societies which have existed in the past but are now dormant or dead include the Egyptian Comparative Education Society (ECES), London Association of Comparative Education (LACE), Nigerian Comparative Education Society (NCES), Sociedad Argentina de Educación Comparada (SAEC), Sociedad Colombiana de Educación Comparada (SCEC), and Sociedade Portuguesa de Educação Comparada (PCES).

However, new societies are also being formed. For example, a new society developed in Argentina in 2001 to replace the dormant SAEC. Other countries in which comparative and international education societies are in various stages of development include Venezuela; and a third regional society for Africa has shown signs of activity, the Panafrican Association of Comparative Education, based in Côte d'Ivoire. In addition, new societies comprising younger academics are being formed in France and Germany.

In 2001, the World Council of Comparative Education Societies (WCCES), founded at the First World Congress of Comparative Education in Canada in 1970, had 29 member societies world-wide. As a beginning academic, I attended the First World Congress. The 11 World Congresses to date have added yet another communications medium to the "traditional" media used to communicate information about the field.

The impact of ICT and globalisation

Although writers in other fields have examined the impact of ICT and globalisation, the impact on comparative and international education does not seem to have been explored in depth. Searches on ERIC (Educational Resources Information Center) yielded very few publications on these topics. Two of these publications concerned comparative studies of language and linguistics at the Universities of Cambridge (Adams and Tulasiewicz 1998) and Exeter (Poulet 1996) in the UK, one BAICE conference paper by Rosemary Preston (1998), and one Swedish conference paper by Odero (2001) on the World Bank African Virtual University in Sub-Saharan Africa.

In this light, one must turn to newer fields, such as comparative policy analysis, for guidance. Deleon and Resnick-Terry (1999) assert that ICT has

virtually eliminated physical distances and realised McLuhan's (1964: 5) "global village". They declare (p. 13) that "the ideological barriers that once stood between many of the world's nations have dissolved, to be replaced by an apparent economic imperative towards an internationalized economy". They also assert (p. 13) that "these movements are accelerated by breathtaking advances in telecommunications, such as electronic mail". However, they acknowledge (p. 13) that "being global is not a one-way street, a latter-day imperialism".

Deleon and Resnick-Terry also suggest that "new conceptual theories" have evolved to explain the impact of ICT and globalisation. They focus upon the new institutionalism perspective to study comparative sectoral policies by operating "on the axiom that institutions make a difference and that analogous institutions may be found 'making a difference' in nations throughout the world" (Deleon and Resnick-Terry 1999: 14). They cite the Bill and Hilary Clinton focus on improving US health care financing and delivery policy as an example of the increasing willingness of nations "to compare and even 'borrow' innovations and ideas". I am struck by the resemblance to comparative studies in the education sector, which has been undertaken for a considerably longer period than studies in comparative policy analysis.

ICT and comparative and international education

The 20th century witnessed a virtual explosion in publication of books, monographs and articles in the twin fields of comparative and international education. A similar explosion in academic journals devoted to aspects of the fields took place between the 1950s and the turn of the century. The advent of desktop publishing by means of personal computers has contributed to the proliferation of new journals. Furthermore, a flood of technical reports prepared by practitioners of international education characterised the past half century of educational development and transformation. The current transformation includes the adoption of ICT by members of the WCCES for communications, publicity and publication.

Academic journals

Publication of journals in comparative and international education in China dates from 1901 with *Education in the World* (Bray and Gui 2001: 454) and in Europe from 1931, when Friedrich Schneider founded the *Internationale Zeitschrift für Erziehungswissenschaft*, continued after World War II in 1954 as the *International Review of Education* and edited at the UNESCO Institute of Education in Hamburg (Holmes 1990: 71). In 1992 the title of the Chinese-language CCES journal *Foreign Education Conditions* was changed to *Comparative Education Review* (Bray and Gui 2001: 457).

Other journals are operated by comparative education societies. The US-based CES commenced publication of the *Comparative Education Review* in 1957. Although the Comparative Education Society changed its name in 1969 to become the Comparative and International Education Society, the *Comparative Education Review* never added the word International to its title. In Great Britain, *Comparative Education*, is linked to CESE and *Compare* is the journal of BAICE. *Canadian and International Education/Éducation Canadienne et internationale* commenced publication in 1973 as the bilingual journal of the CIESC. AFEC publishes *Education comparée* and *Politiques d'éducation et de formation: Analyses et comparaisons*; the SEEC publishes the *Revista Española de Educación Comparada*; SACHES publishes the *Southern African Review of Education*; the JCES publishes a Japanese-language journal entitled *Comparative Education*; the CCES-T publishes the *Journal of Comparative Education* in Chinese; and the Panafrican Association of Comparative Education publishes the second English-French bilingual journal, *Journal of Comparative Education and International Relations in Africa/Revue d'éducation comparée et des relations internationales en Afrique*, which will become a trilingual journal with publication of articles in Portuguese. Journals not produced by comparative education societies include *Prospects: Quarterly Review of Comparative Education*, published by the UNESCO International Bureau of Education in Geneva in a multi-lingual format, and the *International Journal of Educational Development* published by Pergamon Press in the UK. Finally, *Oxford Studies in Comparative Education* is a serial edited at the University of Oxford in the UK.

Internet publication

The first instance of Internet publication in comparative education that I encountered while undertaking an ERIC search in the mid-1990s was an article by Golnar Mehran (1996), a comparative educator in the Islamic Republic of Iran. Her access to normal international discourse was limited, and her early use of ICT enabled her to globalise her presence in the field and maintain her international contacts. Since that time, another explosion in volume of publication, this time electronic, has taken place. Web and ERIC searches generate a vast number of websites and articles on comparative and international education. In this respect, ICT has transformed the way scholars commence literature reviews for research.

Publication in international and comparative education has also been transformed by ICT from printed to electronic, on-line, journals. One striking example is *Current Issues in Comparative Education*, published by Teachers College, Columbia University, USA. Similarly, the Centre for Research in International Education in Australia publishes the *International Education Electronic Journal* on line. Also, several journals have on-line indices of their articles, including the *Comparative Education Review* and *Compare*. The *International Review of Education* and *Comparative Education* are

available on-line to paid subscribers. In addition, book “publication” has been transformed by the pioneer web-based dissemination of Noah and Eckstein’s *Doing Comparative Education: Three Decades of Collaboration* in both downloadable-on-line and print-based formats by the Comparative Education Research Centre of the University of Hong Kong in 1998.

However, undoubtedly the most significant transformation of our twin fields has been the increasing usage of both e-mail and web pages to communicate between and among comparativists and about the fields of comparative and international education. A majority of the WCCES member societies have either a web page or e-mail contact addresses. In addition, several newly-formed societies, or societies in formation, e.g. those in Philippines, Cuba and Venezuela, have e-mail contact addresses. In mid-2001, 14 WCCES member societies had both web pages and e-mail contact addresses. A further 12 societies had e-mail addresses, and only three societies had neither a listed e-mail contact address nor a web page (though individual members had e-mail addresses).

The use of computer listservers dedicated to comparative and international education began (as far as I know) with the Comparative, International and Development Education Centre’s CIDEDEC-list at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (OISE) in 1994. It was initially designed for internal communication, and was later expanded for wider use. This early listserver was augmented by the establishment of the ComparEd listserver, developed by the Comparative Education Research Centre at the University of Hong Kong in 1995. Both listservers have enhanced communication and information exchange. ComparEd also contains archived postings and a listing of the contents of the CIES and WCCES Archives at Kent State University, USA.

My OISE colleague, Joseph Farrell was also instrumental in assisting colleagues in Latin America in the 1980s with the establishment of REDUC (Red de Educación), the Latin American version of ERIC that facilitates electronic searches of educational articles and books in Spanish and Portuguese. Canadian participation in the REDUC project received assistance from the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA). Projects of this nature have helped Latin America to reduce the hegemony of English on the Internet.

In addition, three World Congresses of Comparative Education – the 9th in Australia, the 10th in South Africa and the 11th in South Korea – had web pages to disseminate information, facilitate registration, and publish both abstracts and papers. Many of the WCCES member societies with web pages also advertise their annual conferences through this medium.

The melioristic function of comparative and international education

Policy-makers in an increasing number of countries are becoming aware of developments in education and training necessary to meet the challenges posed

by globalisation. Comparative and international educators are able to provide the information needed by these policy-makers to assist them in their quest for educational practices and innovations necessary to meet the challenges. This service function extends the traditional melioristic function of comparative and international education and presages an important aspect of the future of the field.

The interchange between comparative and international educators over the Internet is undocumented (and likely un-documentable); yet the contributions to scholarship are phenomenal. Like many others, I receive many enquiries from faculty, students, administrators and classroom educators all over the world. I find that I am serving as a clearing house for information by putting those with enquiries in touch with those I believe may have the answers to their questions. The WCCES and its member societies should perhaps consider some formal knowledge management project to service this demand for information about educational methods, practices and systems. Knowledge management is defined as a “tool to efficiently connect those who know with those who need to know” (Kronner 2001: 2).

The attainment by the WCCES of Operational Relations status with UNESCO in 1999 provided yet another forum for our twin fields to manifest the meliorative function. Operational Relations status facilitates the provision of advice to UNESCO on educational policies, programmes and practices. The opportunities provided to communicate directly with UNESCO and with other Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) affiliated with UNESCO – increasingly by e-mail – have opened a new chapter in our global presence.

A related ICT development has been the proliferation of web pages of international organisations and agencies concerned with aspects of comparative and international education. These include the World Bank, UNESCO and its various centres, the International Labour Organisation (ILO), the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), and nearly every bilateral aid agency. The policy shift initiated by World Bank President, James Wolfensohn, deserves particular mention since many once-restricted reports and documents have been made accessible on the World Bank’s web pages. It would be desirable for other agencies to follow this lead and make similar “fugitive literature” accessible to larger audiences.

With regard to this fugitive literature, many comparative and international educators function as consultants to both bilateral and multilateral aid agencies. In this capacity they serve as academic-practitioners. Most of their reports have been uncirculated and unavailable to the public. In earlier prosopographic studies, I identified John Dewey as the first “modern” international educator of the 20th century due to his advisory work in China, Turkey, Mexico and the Soviet Union. In 2000, one of my students unearthed a fugitive report written by Isaac Kandel, who had chaired a Committee of Enquiry into Jamaican education in 1943. The Committee made recommendations to the British Colonial Office that were only implemented after Jamaica attained

political independence in 1962 (Wilson 2000b: 123). I can only wonder how many other early comparative and international educators wrote such reports which have never been widely circulated.

Distance teaching and learning

The globalisation of available information about comparative and international education can also fulfil another function – upgrading academic content at isolated universities. I first noticed the potential impact of distance learning when undertaking my first comparative study of open universities (Wilson 1990). The multiplier effects of correspondence studies in Indonesia and Thailand serendipitously improved the quality of instruction at remote universities. This was because faculty at these institutions were themselves students at Universitas Terbuka and used their course materials in lieu of textbooks unavailable in Bahasa Indonesia. Both Universitas Terbuka in Indonesia and Sukothai Thammatirat Open University in Thailand also enabled classroom teachers who were unable to attend in-service teacher upgrading courses to improve their academic content and teaching methods. The innovation also provided the teachers with professional contacts outside their limited circles. The Internet can expand upon such contacts and facilitate learning.

To date, the only correspondence courses in comparative and international education that I am aware of are those delivered by the University of South Africa (UNISA), the Queensland University of Technology in Australia (Bergh 1999: 9), and the University of Minnesota in the USA. However, a Google meta-search of web sites yielded many vague and inconclusive references to the distance delivery of comparative and international education courses. Among the interesting findings was that a course in comparative education was among the core requirements for a Masters degree in Distance Education at the University of Louisville, USA. It appears that the field has “arrived” in terms of its relationship with ICT and its impact upon education globally.

Conclusion

This examination of the roots of the twin fields of comparative and international education may lead to speculation on the impact which the convergence of globalisation and ICTs is having and will continue to have on the field. The increasingly global presence of the field and its practitioners is important for the future because ICTs are making comparative and international educators known to a much wider audience, including academic colleagues, other educators, and policy-makers throughout the world. In this context, the WCCES might consider a formal knowledge management project to service global demand for information about educational reform, methods, practices, and systems from a comparative perspective. In this paper I have situated such

action within the melioristic trend common to both comparative and international education.

In this article, the evolution of modes of communications about comparative and international education has been examined historically. Communication was noted to have been limited for nearly a millennium to correspondence between like-minded colleagues and limited-circulation publications. As printing technology evolved, the dissemination of such work broadened. The content of these publications evolved from rhetorical to philosophical to descriptive, and, finally, to analytical studies of education in other countries.

Changes in the focus of these early comparativists began when “missions” were sent to study education in other countries. The earliest such mission was noted by Kobayashi (1990: 200) to have been from Japan in AD 607, but such missions became popular only in the 19th century in Europe, the Americas and Japan.

The “modern” period of comparative education was noted to date from Sir Michael Sadler in 1900 with the introduction of a scientific and sociological dimension to the field. A shift in how information in our field was communicated began with the establishment of the first university course at Teachers College, Columbia University in 1899. A few years later, Monroe and Hans co-edited the first *International Handbook of Education*; in 1917 Yu published in Chinese a comparative study of four countries; and in 1918 Sandiford published in English a study of six countries. In 1929 a general textbook by Zuang was published in China; and in 1933 Kandel published a parallel book in the USA.

Another shift in the communication of information in the field was the establishment of the IBE in 1925, resulting from numerous conferences between 1885 and 1920. The Advisory Committee on Comparative Education was formed in the USA in 1935; and three decades later the CES was formed in the USA, building on study tours led by Gerald Read from Kent State University in Ohio, USA. The tradition in Europe was similar, since CESE also was founded after a number of conferences had been held.

Following the proliferation of national, regional and language-based comparative and international education societies in the 1960s, Leo Fernig of the IBE in Switzerland, Gerald Read of the CES, Joe Katz, founder of the CIESC from the University of British Columbia, Andreas Kazamias from the University of Wisconsin and others founded the WCCES in 1970. The WCCES then took the lead in encouraging and nurturing the establishment of additional member societies.

The publication of journals in comparative education was stated to have commenced in China in 1901 and in Germany in 1931 with the precursor of the *International Review of Education*. The publication of journals by national societies commenced in 1958 with the *Comparative Education Review*. At the present time, at least 10 dedicated journals are published in comparative and international education, and another two dozen journals focus on educational

development, economics of education, educational planning, anthropology and education, and other fields related to comparative and international education.

The 20th century was noted to have witnessed an explosion in the publication of books, monographs and journal articles on topics in the twin fields of comparative and international education. This was accompanied by a proliferation of technical reports prepared by international education practitioners for both bilateral and multilateral agencies involved in the development of national educational systems from the 1950s onward.

Those of us who began electronic communications with Bitnet, and web searches with Mosaic, have witnessed another explosion in communications that has affected the field. Again, after a slow start, the past decade has witnessed the global transformation of communications, information dissemination and publication via the Internet and worldwide web. The advent of web pages at international organisations and national statistical services has revolutionised how basic research is undertaken in our field. The development of Internet search engines a decade ago and meta-search engines five years ago has also transformed our research capabilities.

Trends in the communication of our insights, research and expertise have evolved from correspondence with like-minded colleagues, to publications of a philosophical, rhetorical, descriptive and then analytical nature, to the sponsorship of missions to study education, to presentations at exhibitions, to the staging of conferences and then World Congresses, to organised study tours, to the formation of professional societies and then the WCCES, to formal university courses and programmes, to the publication of textbooks and then journals, to the development of the Internet and then web pages and on-line publication of comparative and international education articles and books. This historical journey has brought us to the present and generates the question "Where do we go from here?".

In my 1994 CIES presidential address I posed another "perplexing question" about "when comparative and international education will achieve recognition as something more than an 'amorphous' field" (Wilson 1994: 485). I believe that the answer is that globalisation has given comparative and international education increased recognition, and that ICTs have provided the communications tools to reach wider audiences. I urge all comparative and international educators to use this recognition wisely by doing their utmost to communicate effectively the results of the academic and field-based research and insights to policy-makers, educational reformers and practitioners.

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