

The Symposium – Day Two

Main Address

Making it Happen: Challenges of Transforming Education Policy into Practice – the Role of Research

Maxine Henry-Wilson, former Minister of Education, Youth and Culture, Jamaica, and Education Consultant and Lecturer in Public Policy, University of the West Indies



Mrs Maxine Henry-Wilson

The second day of the Symposium opened with a main address from Mrs Maxine Henry-Wilson, former Minister of Education, Youth and Culture of Jamaica and Education Consultant and Lecturer in Public Policy at the University of the West Indies. The chair of the session, Dr Caroline Pontefract, Director, Social Transformation Programmes Division, Commonwealth Secretariat, introduced the former minister.

Mrs Henry-Wilson provided insight into her tenure as education minister when she led a

consultation process on the education system throughout the island of Jamaica. She invited 1,000 people to obtain the views of the public, as they had good information about the local circumstances and what they thought would make a difference in improving the education system. Students were also consulted and they provided their feedback early and insisted that they be a part of the process of deciding how the education system could move forward. The need for a committed, qualified, competent and effective teaching cadre became apparent and was deemed essential for national progress.

Mrs Henry-Wilson found that she became concerned about how the findings of the consultative/ participatory research were being interpreted, as there were a variety of different stakeholders. With some difficulty, effort and the use of case studies in good practice, her team of researchers came to the decisions about what were the critical factors in making the education system world class.

The findings about teachers was revealing and it was determined that current practices in the training of teachers in Jamaica had to change. The Joint Board of Teacher Education, which regulates the training and certification of teachers, had repeatedly expressed its displeasure at current standards of training. Mrs Henry-Wilson advised that many teachers do go to teacher colleges and obtain teaching diplomas. However:

- ◆ There were 22,800 teachers in the teaching service, of whom 27 per cent are men;
- ◆ Seventy-five per cent of all of the students at the University of the West Indies are female;
- ◆ Eighty per cent of teachers have only a teaching diploma, not a degree;

- ◆ Of an entry cohort of 200 student teachers, only one had opted for pursuing a teaching degree.

From the beginning of her term as Education Minister, Mrs Henry-Wilson tried to develop a good relationship with teachers. A large number of teachers had left the classroom for the private sector – in fact, she said, school classrooms had been ‘raided’, and these employers were of the view that former teachers were among their more disciplined employees. Unhappily, teaching is no longer a preferred profession and there has been a decline in the status of teachers. The attempt to fill that gap was an unintended cause, in that entry requirements were lowered and the period of training was shortened.

Jamaican teachers had been trained and had benefited from the education system, yet their conditions of work were poor and they have migrated to greener pastures. Jamaica was underperforming in education from a regional

standpoint and had slipped to 131st position in the United Nations Human Development Index. The government feared that they would lose more of their better trained citizens when the CARICOM free market came about, and that teachers would be among these. Negotiations for a salary increase had broken down and there was a teacher strike leading to a conflict between society and the teachers. Against this background, the government was impelled to develop and transform the education system.

Mrs Henry-Wilson stated that the reform process which emerged from the research had to be delicately managed, as some stakeholders felt that teachers needed to be ‘disciplined’. However, a report commissioned from KPMG Peat Marwick showed that teachers were being amply compensated. Research showed that at the entry level of teaching, other professionals were at the same level in the education system. The government realised that they also needed to recruit more and better teachers.

Session 4. Focus: Teachers for EFA: The Way Forward in a Time of Crisis

Introducing all four presenters, the Chair of this session, Professor Mary Hatwood-Futrell, founding president of Education International and currently Dean of the College of Education, George Washington University, opened the session by presenting a number of her own remarks on the importance of the focus of the research symposium and the value that such research on international teachers can have on the teaching and education system in the USA, given current challenges in obtaining quality teachers. Noting that there is a greater emphasis on accountability, she addressed concerns about attrition, high retention and teacher preparation. She proposed the need to look at the teachers who are already in the profession, as well as the modernising of the curriculum for teachers. She expressed the view that teacher training had to be ‘revamped’, as teachers must know how to use technologies to improve the quality of what they provide. She concluded by proposing that we share our experiences and learn from each other, do collaborative research and learn from experiences of others around the world.

Teacher Training in Sub-Saharan Africa: Reflections on an EI Study and Initiative

Dennis Sinyolo, Education International

Mr Dennis Sinyolo of Education International presented the preliminary findings of a study commissioned by EI which involved Liberia, Mali, Peru and Uganda. As the world’s largest

umbrella teacher organisation, encompassing teacher organisations across the globe in its membership, EI has expressed growing concerns about the employment of non-professional teachers, which has led to the casualisation and deprofessionalisation of the teaching profession internationally. In response, in conjunction with OXFAM, EI commissioned Europe External Policy Advisors



Mr Dennis Sinyolo

(EEPA), together with local consultants, desk and feasibility studies in Afghanistan, Burkina Faso, Liberia, Mali, Niger, Peru and Uganda to:

- ◆ Determine the level of the teacher gap in each individual country;
- ◆ Determine the availability (or non-availability) of a competency profile and a skills-based curriculum in each individual country;
- ◆ Assess the readiness of stakeholders to implement a Quality in Education project.

Reporting the findings for Liberia, Mali, Peru and Uganda only, Mr Sinyolo said that the research methodology employed also used field visits and interviews by local consultants to complement validation workshops which involved government ministries, universities, teacher training colleges/institutes and NGO and civil society organisations, among others.

In relation to the non-Commonwealth members, such as **Liberia, Peru and Mali**, the following emerged:

- ◆ **Liberia**, a post-conflict country facing many challenges, has a total of 22,253 primary school teachers, only 40 per cent of whom are trained and only 12 per cent of whom are female. Teachers' salaries are very low (they range between US\$70 and

US\$81 per month) and there are two operating teacher training institutes, where formerly there were three, with a combined enrolment of 656 students. Recently, the period of teacher training has been reduced from three years to one. The Ministry of Education has developed a professional standards manual with a competency profile, but it has not yet been implemented. Nor has the new teacher training curriculum been implemented, as it awaits piloting. Textbooks donated by the US Government are also not in line with the (new) curriculum.

- ◆ In **Mali**, 44 per cent of the 44,014 primary school teachers are unqualified and of the entire teaching complement, women comprise 22 per cent of the teaching staff. The majority of teachers in community schools have no training at all and their education level is low, not exceeding nine years in most instances. Most teachers in public schools are trained for 90 days, of which half is theory and the other 50 per cent is teaching practice. The pupil-teacher ratio is 54:1. The country has a skills-based curriculum, but teachers have not been trained to implement it.
- ◆ **Peru** has a large number of qualified teachers, of whom three-quarters are graduates of higher institutes of pedagogy, while the rest are university graduates. There is an over-supply of teachers with a diploma in pedagogy. However, Peru has a serious shortage of teachers who can implement bilingual and intercultural education catering for the needs of indigenous Peruvians and it does not have a standard teacher competency profile.

Finally, Mr Sinyolo revealed that data obtained on the only Commonwealth country, **Uganda**, showed that 14 per cent of teachers are unqualified with a particularly high pupil-teacher ratio of 90:1 in the north of the country. Uganda has a high number of unemployed and qualified teachers, as well as a skills-based curriculum. However some schools are without sufficient teachers and some teachers are without schools.

Teacher Attrition and Retention in the USA: A Meta-Analytic and Narrative Review of the Research

Judith McQuaide, NEA Research Division

Ms Judith McQuaide of the Research Division of the NEA based her presentation on research which had been presented to the 2006 NEA research conference held in Nevada, USA. The researchers reviewed and highlighted the findings of existing studies, using meta-analysis to select and synthesise the results of 34 studies about or relating to the subject. The study by Constanzo and Wolman⁵ reflected that in the USA, teachers are leaving the profession at a greater rate than is desirable and that attrition is a particular problem among teachers in the first five years of their careers. This attrition has serious financial implications for school systems, as new hiring is costly, and when teachers leave the profession, their training and experience go with them. The cost of attrition in US public schools in 2000 was more than US\$2 billion. Ms McQuaide identified the following key factors which the research had determined influenced the rates of attrition. These included:

- ◆ Teacher demographic characteristics, such as race, ethnicity and age;
- ◆ Teacher qualifications, such as specialty areas, qualifications, training and achievement;
- ◆ School organisation and physical characteristics, such as location, size, and the presence of induction and support programmes for teachers;
- ◆ Characteristics of the student body, such as socio-economic status and achievement levels;
- ◆ School resources, such as instructional material and teacher salaries.

Of particular interest was the finding relating to teacher qualifications and the fact that attrition among graduates with specialised science or maths degrees was higher than among teachers who were only certified. Further,



Ms Judith McQuaide

teachers with maths and science degrees were about twice as likely to leave as were teachers with other undergraduate degrees. The attrition rates of teachers with five or six years of teaching experience was greatest.

Observations and conclusions of the study encompassed the following assertions:

- ◆ Current levels of teacher attrition in the USA cannot be considered 'healthy' and policy-makers should consider initiatives to train, recruit and motivate the most qualified teachers to remain in the profession.
- ◆ Teachers' working conditions are an important predictor of high attrition, together with salaries, instructional resources and even the characteristics of the school's student body.
- ◆ Programmes to improve working conditions and compensation of teachers should significantly improve teacher retention and student achievement.
- ◆ There is a need for stronger mentoring and induction programmes for teachers and for the targeting of schools and districts which experience high rates of attrition for improved interventions.

5 Constanzo, R and Wolman, P, Why Do Teachers Quit Teaching and What Can We Do About It?, NEA, November 2006.

An ILO Commissioned Study of International Teacher Recruitment

William Ratterree, Education Sector Specialist, ILO

William Ratterree, Education Sector Specialist at the ILO, opened his presentation by providing a global perspective on the shortage of qualified teachers and the need for many developing countries, in particular, to address this shortage if they are to improve the situation by 2015. Noting that sub-Saharan Africa will need to double its rate of recruitment of qualified teachers, if assumptions on pupil–teacher ratios are adhered to, he presented data which showed that estimates in countries such as **Burkina Faso, Chad, Congo and Mali** suggest there is a need to raise annual teacher recruitment rates by over 10 per cent, and in the case of Ethiopia by 50 per cent, in order to double the size of the current teaching force .

Further, Mr Ratterree proposed that current projections may not reflect future trends, as many factors are at play, especially in developing countries. For example, pupil–teacher ratios recommended by the Fast Track Initiative as a minimum of 40:1 are not likely to be met, as the pupil–teacher ratio differs widely, with levels in some countries as high as 100:1. Estimates of teacher attrition rates also vary greatly (from less than 4 per cent to more than 10 per cent) and ‘contract and unqualified’ teachers are now being counted along with the fully qualified. In some regions, HIV/AIDS continues to wreak havoc on the teaching force and the gender gap in teacher recruitment is of particular note. For example, it is evident that the five countries that have the greatest shortage of teachers are those in which female teacher representation in the teaching force is very low.

Mr Ratterree noted that one of the greatest concerns in some countries is the urban/rural divide. In a significant number of countries it is becoming increasingly difficult to recruit qualified teachers for rural and disadvantaged areas. This factor also has implications for the gender issue, as female teachers are neither willing – nor sometimes permitted – to



Mr William Ratterree

Table 3: Primary teacher recruitment trends

| Region | Average annual growth rate (%) | |
|------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------|
| | 1996-2000 | 2000-2004 |
| Arab States | 1.3 | 1.8 |
| Gen. and E.Er/Cen.Asia | -1.4 | -1.7 |
| East Asia & Pacific | -3.8 | -2.6 |
| Latin America/Carib | - | 1.8 |
| N.America/West Europe | 1.5 | 0.4 |
| South and West Asia | 5.0 | 4.0 |
| Sub-Saharan Africa | 3.2 | 3.0 |
| World | 1.9 | 0.2 |

Source: UIS, 2006

undertake assignments in remote regions where their personal security may be under threat. In this respect, Mr Ratterree stated that a great number of unqualified or less qualified teachers may be found in rural and remote areas. For example:

- ◆ In Namibia 92 per cent of all teachers in the capital are qualified, while only 40 per cent of those in the rural north are qualified;
- ◆ In Uganda 66.6 per cent of teachers in urban areas are qualified, but only 50 per cent in rural areas.

Table 4: Recent recruitment performance and annual growth rate needed to achieve UPE, selected countries

| Country | Annual growth needed 2004-15 | Average annual growth 2000-4 |
|--------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Saudi Arabia | 4.8 | 1.8 |
| Bangladesh | 3.0 | 1.4 |
| Pakistan | 3.1 | 0.5 |
| Malawi | 4.8 | 1.3 |
| Eritrea | 9.5 | 6.6 |
| Burkina Faso | 11.4 | 7.6 |
| Congo | 12.7 | 0.5 |
| Chad | 12.8 | 5.1 |

Some Latin American countries, including **Bolivia, Chile, Cuba, Ecuador, El Salvador, Honduras, Panama, Peru and Venezuela**, provide salary bonuses and benefits for teachers who work in rural areas. Targeted recruitment and incentive policies can also help, as can establishing quotas for teacher training by recruitment of ethnic minorities and castes under affirmative action programmes. Mr Ratterree also noted the paradox that teachers cost too much to train, yet earn so little. In some countries, teachers' salaries account for 90 per cent of recurrent education expenditure. Yet in many poor countries their salaries are often at poverty level.

The benchmarks of the Fast Track Initiative focus on gross domestic product (GDP) per capita rather than comparative salaries in other occupations requiring similar kinds of qualifications and skills. UNESCO's EFA *Global Monitoring Report* has demonstrated that the

share of the national purse spent on education declined in 40 of the 105 countries covered during the period 1999–2006. In sub-Saharan Africa, half of the countries spend less than 4 per cent of their national expenditure on education, and in South Asian countries spend less than 3 per cent of GDP. Mr Ratterree concluded his presentation with ten recommendations for the development of a global teacher policy framework:

- 1. Defend and promote professionalism in teaching.**
- 2. Finance education at levels that ensure quality and sustainability.**
- 3. Strengthen teacher governance and management.**
- 4. Establish and maintain high teacher qualification and relicensing standards.**
- 5. Develop and maintain continuing professional development programmes for all teachers.**
- 6. Create transparent, diversified career structures for teacher retention and motivation.**
- 7. Set remuneration levels consistent with attracting and retaining the best qualified, most capable individuals.**
- 8. Identify and apply targeted material and professional incentives for rural and remote areas.**
- 9. Establish and protect optimal teaching and learning conditions.**
- 10. Make the teachers' voice count – teachers are best represented by their organisations.**

Session 5: Presentation of Recommendations and Agreement of Statement

Moderated by Ms Jill Christianson of the NEA International Relations Division, this session involved open discussion by all participants and presenters in response to a draft which a small group had developed, based on the presentations of the Symposium. The final statement was not in fact agreed by all until a later date. The contents of the final statement are reflected at the front of this report as The Washington Statement on Teachers.