



# Development Studies and Comparative Education: context, content, comparison and contributors

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**ABSTRACT** *This article reviews Comparative Education over the past 20 years, explores the parallel literature of development studies, and identifies future directions and challenges for comparative education. Using Parkyn (1977) as a benchmark, an analysis of articles published between 1977 and 1998 suggests that only a small proportion appear to meet his criteria for comparative education. Parkyn's purpose for comparative education, to increase our understanding of the relationship between education and the development of human society, is shared by development studies. Educational writings within development studies have explored the meanings of development and underdevelopment and have raised important questions about the unit of analysis for comparative education. Several reasons are advanced to explain the separate development of these literatures. The contemporary challenge of globalisation presents fresh opportunities and challenges for both literatures. A shared commitment to understanding the role of education in the globalisation process and the reasoned response to it could form the heart of a shared effort in the future. Globalisation also highlights the need for more effective dialogue between comparative educators in different corners of the globe.*

## Introduction

The purpose of this article is three-fold: to provide a brief review of the journal over the past 20 years in terms of criteria it has set for itself; to identify concepts which have emerged from development studies over the past 20 years which can contribute to and enhance comparative education; and to conclude with suggestions about the future development of the field of comparative education.

## Review of the Journal

The benchmark for this review is Parkyn's (1977) contribution to the Special Number, entitled 'Comparative Education Research and Development Education' (Grant, 1977). Parkyn reflects on an issue which exercised a number of academics in the 1970s, the similarities and differences between comparative education and development education, and the potential contribution of the former to the latter. For Parkyn, the purpose of comparative education was:

... to increase our understanding of the relationship between education and the

development of human society by taking into account factors that cannot adequately be observed and understood within the limits of any particular society, culture, or system, but that transcend particular societies and have to be studied by comparative methods applied to societies, cultures and systems ... (p. 89)

Parkyn uses the term 'development' to refer to all societies that are undergoing change. He does not confine the use of the term 'development' to 'developing' countries. The purpose of development education [1], by contrast, was:

... education aimed at the modernisation of ... technological activities in order to provide better for their material and cultural needs, and at the adaptation of their political machinery and other societal institutions in such a way as to make possible the most effective use of this modernisation in the satisfying of those needs. (p. 89)

Despite the association in the minds of many of the term 'development education' with 'less developed' countries, Parkyn was at pains to point out that the fundamental distinction between comparative education and development education was not one of geography. The distinction was one of purpose. The purpose of comparative education was understanding and analysis, the purpose of development education was action and change. Comparative education could and should be undertaken in the countries of the North and the South. Wherever it is practised, development education should rest on a foundation of comparative education.

Wherever in the world it was undertaken, the purpose of comparison was to explore the influence of system-level factors on the interaction of within-system variables. This definition of intellectual purpose in turn led to Parkyn's critique of comparative education in the 1970s.

The inadequacy of many studies purporting to be comparative, and superficially appearing to be comparative, is, in the last analysis, to be found in the fact that those which concentrated on within system variables or cultural contexts have often lacked information on across-system variables, while those which have dealt with across-system variables have often failed to show their different interaction with within-system variables in different countries. (Parkyn, 1977, p. 90)

So how has the field, as represented by studies published by *Comparative Education*, fared over the past two decades? Does the journal include a good representation of so-called 'developing countries', in support of Parkyn's proposition that geography is not a defining characteristic of comparative education (context)? Does the journal include a good representation of articles addressing the fundamental question of comparative education, the relationship between education and the development of human society (content)? Does the journal demonstrate an understanding of the intellectual purpose of comparison (comparison)?

The review classifies the titles of articles published by *Comparative Education* between 1977 and 1998 (Volumes 13–34). A total of 472 articles were classified by country context (Table I), content (Table II) and comparison (Table III) by the author and Dr Felicity Rawlings, working independently. While acknowledging that a title is only an indicator of an article's content, a classification based on a full reading of all 472 articles fell beyond the scope of the present review.

### Context

Table I indicates the countries mentioned in the titles of articles. The authors of some 68% (320/472) of articles made explicit reference to one or more countries in the titles of their articles. Seventy-six countries were mentioned, just over one-third (34%) of the 224 countries listed in UNESCO's *Statistical Yearbook 1998*. A few countries have featured in the titles

of a large number of articles, for example the UK (43), China (31), Japan (28), Germany (21), the USA (20), France (20) and Australia (16). Some 34 countries warrant mention in the title of only one article in 20 years.

The number of countries that have at least one title published was compared with the total number of countries in the same region, as listed in UNESCO's *Statistical Yearbook 1998*. In Africa, some 17 countries appeared in the title of at least one article, compared with some 56 countries in the Africa region, or 30%. Asia, South America and Oceania achieved similar percentages. The countries of Europe achieved the highest representation of 56%, while those of North America were under-represented, at 16%. The apparent under-representation of titles from North America may be accounted for by the propensity of authors on North American education to contribute to our important sister journal, *Comparative Education Review*, based in North America. The similar levels of representation of countries in the other four continental blocs—Africa (30%), South America (36%), Asia (35%) and Oceania (30%)—is a significant achievement for a journal established in London and run from the UK, and publishing (currently) only in English.

A comparison of the number of articles whose titles refer to one or more countries, by continent, presents a different picture. The total number of countries referred to in titles is 362. Just over half of this total refers to countries in Europe or North America (Europe 40.1%; North America 10.5%). A further 29.6% refer to Asia. Articles focusing on countries in Africa, South America and Oceania account for 11.3%, 1.9% and 6.6% respectively. If one excludes Australia and New Zealand from the Oceania bloc, the percentage falls to 1.6%.

A classification by 'developed' and 'developing' country, using the 1998 UNESCO classification, presents an even sharper picture. UNESCO's *Statistical Yearbook 1998* classifies 53 (24%) countries as 'developed' and the remaining 171 (76%) as 'developing'. Some 224 (62%) of our articles refer to 'developed' countries, and 138 (38%) to 'developing countries'.

To the extent that a large number of developed and developing countries attract the attention of authors, Parkyn's proposition that geography is not the essential characteristic of comparative education appears to be borne out. At the same time, it is clear that over the past decades comparative educators have attended disproportionately on educational issues in the countries of Europe, North America and, to a degree, Asia.

### Content

Table II presents the content of articles, as indicated by title, using the classification of journal aims published in 1978.

The relationship between education and the development of human society, education and development for short, appears to lie behind 44 of the articles, or 13% of the articles classified by the 1978 scheme. Titles here include, for example, Blinco on 'Persistence and Education: a formula for Japan's economic success' (Blinco, 1993) and Morris on 'Asia's Four Little Tigers: a comparison of the role of education in their development' (Morris, 1996). These titles appear to address one aspect of Parkyn's definition of comparative education purpose, the relationship between education and the development of human society. Whether, simultaneously, they account for 'factors that cannot adequately be observed and understood within the limits of any particular society' (Parkyn, 1977, p. 89) requires a more careful reading of the text than has been possible in this brief review.

A further 17.6% of articles address educational reform, including the internal problems of reform and the influence of societal development on the reform of education. The latter may be viewed as the inverse of the category noted above, the relationship between education and the development of human society. Titles here include Gu Mingyuan (1984) on 'The

TABLE I. Articles by country context noted in title and region 1977-1998

<p><b>Africa</b></p> <p>Botswana 1      No. countries published = 17</p> <p>Burkina Faso 1</p> <p>Comoros 1      No. titles = 41</p> <p>Ghana 1</p> <p>Kenya 4      No. countries in Africa = 56</p> <p>Mali 1</p> <p>Nigeria 9      % countries in Africa</p> <p>Sierra Leone 1      published by CE = 30%</p> <p>Somalia 1</p> <p>South Africa 7</p> <p>Tanzania 4</p> <p>Togo 1</p> <p>Tunisia 1</p> <p>Uganda 1</p> <p>Zaire 1</p> <p>Zambia 3</p> <p>Zimbabwe 3</p>	<p><b>Asia</b></p> <p>Bangladesh 1      No. countries published = 19</p> <p>Cambodia 1</p> <p>China 31      No. titles = 107</p> <p>Hong Kong 9</p> <p>India 7      No. countries in Asia = 52</p> <p>Indonesia 2</p> <p>Iran 1      % countries in Asia</p> <p>Israel 5      published by CE = 35%</p> <p>Japan 28</p> <p>Macau 1</p> <p>Malaysia 3</p> <p>Nepal 1</p> <p>Pakistan 2</p> <p>Philippines 2</p> <p>Saudi Arabia 2</p> <p>Singapore 4</p> <p>Sri Lanka 3</p> <p>Taiwan 1</p> <p>Thailand 3</p>
<p><b>North America</b></p> <p>Canada 9      No. countries = 6</p> <p>Greenland 1</p> <p>Grenada 1      No. titles = 38</p> <p>Mexico 5</p> <p>Nicaragua 2      No. countries in North</p> <p>United States 20      America = 37</p> <p>                                 % countries in North</p> <p>                                 America published by CE = 16%</p>	<p><b>Europe</b></p> <p>Austria 2      No. countries = 22</p> <p>Belgium 1</p> <p>Bulgaria 1      No. titles = 145</p> <p>United Kingdom 43</p> <p>Cyprus 1      No. countries in Europe = 43</p> <p>Denmark 2</p> <p>Eire 1</p> <p>Finland 2      % countries in Europe</p> <p>France 20      published by CE = 56%</p> <p>Germany 21</p> <p>Greece 2</p> <p>Hungary 5</p> <p>Italy 4</p> <p>Malta 1</p> <p>Netherlands 5</p> <p>Norway 6</p> <p>Poland 2</p> <p>Spain 9</p> <p>Sweden 7</p> <p>Switzerland 1</p> <p>USSR 8</p> <p>Yugoslavia 1</p>
<p><b>South America</b></p> <p>Argentina 1      No. countries = 6</p> <p>Brazil 2</p> <p>Chile 1      No. titles = 7</p> <p>Colombia 1</p> <p>Ecuador 1      No. countries in South</p> <p>Venezuela 1      America = 14</p> <p>                                 % countries in South</p> <p>                                 America published by CE = 36%</p>	<p><b>Oceania</b></p> <p>Australia 16      No. countries = 6</p> <p>Cook Islands 1</p> <p>New Zealand 2      No. titles = 24</p> <p>Papua New Guinea 3</p> <p>Solomon Islands 1      No. countries in Oceania = 20</p> <p>Vanuatu 1</p> <p>                                 % countries in Oceania</p> <p>                                 published by CE = 30%</p>

TABLE II. Content themes 1978, by the number and percentage of articles, 1977-98

	No articles	%
Educational reform and problems of implementation	58	17.6
Education and socio-economic or political development	44	13.3
Relationships between education and a working life	24	7.3
Post-compulsory and 'young adult' education	24	7.3
Part-time, recurrent, or alternating education/training	6	1.8
New structures/operational patterns in higher education	26	7.9
The 'management' of educational systems and of the learning process	25	7.6
Teacher preparation and reorientation	35	10.6
Questions of access to education and of its diffusion	13	3.9
Curricular content, and the learner's experience	20	6.1
Innovation in educational and community interaction	4	1.2
Significant aspects of comparative research	35	10.6
Implications of international co-operation/experimentation	16	4.8
TOTAL	330	100%

*Other:* exams/selection 6, colonial schools/education 9, girls and women 11, diversity/cultural pluralism 12, pedagogic and philosophical theory 11, minorities 11, international organisations 8, language policies 5

Development and Reform of Higher Education in China', La Belle & Ward (1990) on 'Education Reform When Nations Undergo Radical Political and Social Transformation', and Mitter (1992) on 'Educational Adjustments and Perspectives in a United Germany'.

Around 10% of articles may be classified under the heading 'significant aspects of comparative research'. This has been interpreted to include discussions of (i) comparative method; (ii) comparative theory; and/or (iii) comparisons drawn across a set of individual country papers. More than 100 articles could not easily be classified under the 1978 headings. Of these, 12 addressed cultural diversity and pluralism, 11 pedagogic and philosophical theory, 11 the education of minorities and 5 language policy.

### Comparison

Table III presents the geographic scope of comparisons made. It distinguishes titles that refer to single countries, two or more countries, regional groups, the 'world', and those from which such reference is absent. This classification does not enable us to judge whether studies have identified the interaction between system-level and within system level factors, Parkyn's intellectual purpose of comparison. However, the very large number of studies, some 248 (58%), that focus on single countries, would suggest that Parkyn's criterion has not been met in more than half the cases. A smaller number, some 72 (15%), explicitly make comparisons

TABLE III. Articles by nature of comparisons, 1977-1998

Geographic scope of comparison.	No.	%
<b>Single country</b>	248	53
North	120	
North (Soviet)	25	
South	103	
<b>Across specified countries</b>	72	15
Across 2 countries	62	
North-North	42	
North-South	8	
South-South	12	
Across 3 countries	4	
All North	2	
All South		
South and North	2	
Across 4 countries	3	
All North	3	
All South		
South and North		
Across 5 countries	3	
All North	3	
All South		
South and North		
<b>Regional</b>	56	11
'Developing' countries	13	
'Industrialised' countries	1	
Europe	17	
Latin America	3	
English speaking world	1	
OECD	1	
Nordic	1	
Asian tigers	1	
Pacific	9	
Africa	4	
Southern Africa	1	
South East Asia	1	
British Colonial Dependencies	1	
Gulf states	1	
Europe and North America	1	
<b>Global /World</b>	16	3
<b>Not specified</b>	84	18
<b>Total</b>	472	100

across two, and less often, three, four or five countries. A further 11% indicate in their titles that the study draws on/makes reference to countries within a particular region (e.g. 'developing' countries, 'Europe', the Pacific, Africa). A very small number, some 3%, focus on globalising or internationalising trends, or on agencies (e.g. the World Bank) which have a global remit. Some 18% of titles omit reference to country focus.

Among those which focus explicitly on a single country, some 145 (58%) focus on 'developed' countries and 103 (42%) on developing. Of the titles that indicate comparison across one or more countries, the majority involves two-country comparisons. Of these, 42 (68%) are comparisons between two developed countries, 12 (19%) are comparisons be

tween two developing countries, and the remaining eight (13%) make comparisons between developed and developing countries. The fairly sizeable percentage of articles that omit a reference to country (18%), are of many types. They include articles of the kind included in this Special Number, reviewing generally the state of the field and/or raising theoretical or methodological questions. Or they may focus on a particular country, but do not consider this focus to be sufficiently important to mention in the title.

Among those that draw explicit comparisons across countries, the majority do so across developed countries. The majority of studies drawing comparisons across two countries, and all those across three and four, focus on developed countries. Those that draw comparisons across five countries include four developed countries and Singapore. The studies whose titles make a regional or global reference are difficult to classify further without detailed analysis of the content of the articles.

It would appear then that only a small percentage of articles published by *Comparative Education* since 1977 have adopted an explicitly comparative approach. The majority of articles focus on single countries. Authors are contributing to a body of educational knowledge drawn from diverse educational settings. This is not to imply that the studies lack a comparative 'dimension'. Many authors locate their studies in relation to the more general comparative education literature, and indeed are encouraged to do so by the journal. However, the primary focus of the study is a single country context.

### *Context, Content and Comparison*

The above analysis indicates that the articles published in *Comparative Education* cover a very broad range of context, content and comparison. Parkyn's criteria are met by only a small proportion of articles. Geography is clearly not the defining characteristic of comparative education, although the representation of articles on countries in the 'South' is not yet as high as it should be. The breadth of content areas covered goes well beyond Parkyn's prescription. And the 'comparative' approach adopted by authors varies considerably.

Breadth has the considerable advantage of bringing together readers with different and shared foci. Several of the Special Numbers of *Comparative Education* take a single country as their theme. Within this shared focus, authors address the specific issues of curriculum, teachers, management and employment. Other Special Numbers focus on a single topic, for example, post-compulsory education (Williams, 1994). Authors address this issue from a range of countries. Both of these approaches are valid, and encourage a two-stage approach to comparative education knowledge. In the first stage, country or topic specialists presented contextualised knowledge. In the second stage, comparative specialists synthesised and located context. The guest editor of the Special Number usually executes this second stage. In principle, if not always in practice, the guest editor can identify the interaction between system and within system factors, thus meeting Parkyn's definition of 'comparative' purpose. Indeed, Parkyn's criterion of comparative purpose may be best handled through this two-stage approach. Well-contextualised knowledge about education is a necessary, and complex, first step in the process of comparison. Much comparison neglects context and renders itself superficial and meaningless.

However, breadth of context, content and comparison has the disadvantage of dilution and a loss of focus for a field of study. In view of the number of articles that can be published each year, and the invitation for contributions from several disciplines, the potential for a loss of overall focus for the field of study increases greatly.

## Development Studies

I turn now to the field of development studies and explore the impact it has had on comparative education. Development studies emerged in the 1950s and 1960s, in the wake of the processes of reconstruction and de-colonisation after World War II. Key questions for development studies include: What does it mean to say that a society is developing or developed? What is the role of societal processes and institutions (such as education) in the process of development? What are the social and economic conditions that facilitate or impede the development of society? Thus, the fundamental questions of development studies with respect to education and those of comparative education, following Parkyn's definition, converge.

### *Modernisation*

Theories of economic and social modernisation became central frameworks for the analysis of economic growth and societal development, and became influential also in determining national economic and social policy and policy implementation, as countries asserted their economic and political independence. Education was a central pillar of post-colonial social policy as countries sought to 'modernise' and to replace expatriate highly skilled labour. Theories of development in developing countries, formulated largely by social scientists from the developed countries (although often working in developing countries), emerged alongside policies for development. From the outset economic goals formed the essential character of the 'development project'.

Education played an important part in development theory. The theory of 'modernisation' presented an optimistic model for development of those societies that were not yet modern and industrialised. Modernisation theory attracted the attention of researchers from several social science disciplines. Economists focused attention on the application of technology to produce growth in economic production per unit of input. Sociologists focused on the process of social differentiation that characterise societies which use technology to promote economic growth. Demographers focused on patterns of settlement that accompany urbanisation, the impact of modernisation on population size, growth and density. Political scientists focused on nation-building, on the bases for power and how power is shared, how nation-states achieve legitimacy and the extent and depth of national identity.

Research on the relationship between education and the modernisation of society was also pitched at the level of the individual. For example, McClelland (1961) focused on the values held by the majority of people in a society and the implications of these for economic and technological growth. The value attached to and the motivation for achievement, were central to McClelland's explanation of modernising societies. Where Max Weber (1930) had focused attention on the role of ideas and religion in setting the conditions for the rise of capitalism, McClelland focused on early socialisation and child rearing practices. Inkeles & Smith (1974) drew from both sets of ideas. They accepted the logic of modern values leading to modern behaviour, modern society, and economic development. In contrast to McClelland, however, they stressed the role of modern institutions such as the formal school and the factory in the formation of modern values and attitudes.

### *Human Capital*

Education was also a central part of theories of development that focused on the economic imperatives and conditions for development. In one of the most influential writings on the



role of education in development in the 20th century, Theodore W. Schultz explored the idea of education as a form of capital and introduced the notion of education as a form of human capital (Schultz, 1961). The propositions of 'human capital' theory were that the skills and knowledge which people acquire are a form of capital. This capital was a product of deliberate investment and had grown in Western societies at a rate faster than 'conventional' (non-human) capital. Its growth has been the most distinctive feature of the economic system of the mid-20th century. Human capital theory formed an important part of the development studies discourse about the relationship of education to the development of countries in the South from the mid-1960s. It emerged much later, from the late 1970s, as part of the discourse about education in the countries of the North.

The role of education in modernisation was the subject of several well-known collections. For example, the collection on 'Education and Economic Development', edited by Anderson & Bowman (1965), drew together historians, economists, sociologists, educators and geographers. It explored the role of education in economic development in Russia, India, America, Ghana, Chile, England and Japan. Another, edited in the same year by Coleman, entitled 'Education and Political Development' (1965), focused on the political dimension of modernisation. Drawing on cases from the 'developing areas' (former French Africa, Indonesia, Nigeria, Tunisia, Egypt and Brazil) and from countries where educational development has been 'polity-directed' (Soviet Union, Japan, the Philippines), the book addresses the questions: What part can and does education play in the process of modernisation? What is the real (sic) relationship between political policy and the educational process?

### *Dependency*

By the late 1960s and early 1970s the conceptual frameworks of both modernisation and human capital theory were coming to be challenged by a set of ideas which came to form the school of 'dependency'. Marxist ideas on exploitation of the proletariat by the bourgeoisie, and Lenin's writings on imperialism, were developed by Andre Gunder Frank (e.g. 1967) and Galtung (e.g. 1971). Dependency theory addressed the extent to which poor countries were dependent on rich countries and the mechanisms through which economic dependency was maintained.

The dependency perspective focused on under-development rather than development, viewing it as a necessary outcome of systematic exploitation and manipulation of peripheral economies by central economies (Frank, 1967; Cardoso, 1972; Dos Santos, 1973). Poor countries are conditioned by their economic relationships with rich economies to occupy a subordinate and dependent role that inhibits development by expropriating investible surplus. Indigenous élites, firmly wedded to the international capitalist system and rewarded handsomely by it, have no interest in giving up these rewards. Dependency theory accords overriding importance to the historical conditions that provide a context for development and to the international system of 'global exploitation' managed by developed capitalist countries. Wallerstein (1974) presented an early formulation of a globalised economic system structured by world capitalism. The 'dependency' perspective encouraged economists, political economists and sociologists to abandon the national economy, nation-state and national society as their central unit of analysis and to focus instead on the nature of relations between economies, states and societies.

Dependency was conceived as a cultural phenomenon also. The structure of dependent economic relations was asserted to create a 'cultural alienation' in which values, norms, technology, concepts and art forms were inspired externally rather than internally (Carnoy, 1974). Formal schooling in dependent economies played a key role in the furtherance of a

cultural and economic dependency of peripheral upon central economies. Carnoy's thesis focused largely on schooling in the 'Third World'

Western formal education came to most countries as part of imperialist domination. It was consistent with the goals of imperialism: the economic and political control of the people in one country by the dominant class in the other. The imperial powers attempted, through schooling, to train the colonised for the roles that suited the coloniser (Carnoy, 1974, p. 3).

The dependency school altered the discourse on education and development in a number of ways. It drew attention not only to the post-colonial or neo-colonial relations between countries which persisted long after so-called political independence, but it also focused attention on the analysis of the constraints on development, on stasis and decline in economy and society. It focused on the role of education for domination rather than for development. It provided answers to the question: How does education impede the process of development? It focused on the 'negatives' of development. These included increasing disparities of income between social groups and countries, the continuing and increasing role of multi-national economic interests, the formation and co-option of transnational élite social groups, the divergence of values of different social groups, the creation and maintenance of underclass countries and groups. Education played a role in this through many social and cultural processes. These included the legitimation of élite social and economic status, through qualification systems, through curriculum and learning materials developed through international publishing projects, and through cross-national and inter-national professional networks (e.g. Mazrui, 1975; Altbach & Kelly, 1978; Watson, 1984; Lewin & Little, 1984; McClean, 1984).

For those in the North, the dependency perspective was as challenging as it was uncomfortable. While it bore an intellectual relationship with emerging analyses of the role of education in the development of the US capitalist economy (e.g. Bowles & Gintis, 1976), it resonated most with those intellectual interests that lay in the colonised countries of the South or in the internally-colonised communities resident in countries in the North. As a set of ideas it bore closer links with the broader school of economic dependency than it did with the discourse of comparative education dominant at that time. It was substantially influenced by writers who appealed to notions of social equity in the perspectives they took on the processes of education and development. Thus, Carnoy acknowledges his particular intellectual debt to Raskin and Memmi, who wrote on colonialism and to Illich who promoted de-schooling in the developing countries and in the impoverished areas of developed countries.

### **Comparative Education and Development Studies Compared**

Whereas the dependency perspective emerged as an intellectual response to modernisation theory and the questions it posed about the role of education in development (defined as modernisation), debates in comparative education in the late 1960s and 1970s concerned the methodology of comparative education. Questions included: What is the purpose of comparison? What types of question and evidence provide a legitimate basis for comparison? What is the appropriate focus for comparisons, as between systems and classrooms? What is the relative role of theory and practice in the generation of research questions? How is the comparative education method different from that of comparative sociology, comparative politics, comparative religion and philosophy, economic and social history, cross-cultural psychology?

While much of this debate was conducted with considerable vigour and intellectual sophistication, it had the unintended effect of distracting attention away from the content

questions that could usefully be addressed by using the method(s) of comparative education. Method is valuable to the extent that its application provides new insights into a problem. What new insight could the comparative education method offer which comparative sociology, comparative social history, comparative politics or comparative social psychology could/did not?

The methodological debates of the 1970s passed many people by and had little lasting impact, with a handful of exceptions. While a number of articles in *Comparative Education* adopted an explicitly comparative approach, few justified or explained their comparative approach in relation to those set out in the earlier debates. Interchange with comparative educators from many countries suggests that these debates have had little impact on the understanding or use of the so-called *Comparative Education* research method. A similar view was reached recently and independently by Rust *et al.*, (1999) who reviewed almost 2000 articles appearing in *Comparative Education* (1964/95), *Comparative Education Review* (1957/95) and the *International Journal of Educational Development* (1981/95).

The fundamental question of comparative education, according to Parkyn (1977), is the relationship between education and 'development'. This question was fundamental also to those who wrote about modernisation and dependency. However, questions of method and country context distinguished the two literatures. Those who engaged most actively in the modernisation and dependency debates largely ignored the methodological debates in comparative education. Those who engaged most actively in the comparative methodological debates, drew their knowledge of educational context largely, although not exclusively, from the education systems of the North. Even those who designed the early IEA studies and drew inspiration from Noah & Eckstein's (1969) approach to comparative education addressed education mainly in the 'developed countries'. In the first round of the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA) studies of 21 countries, only four, Chile, India, Iran and Thailand were, at that time, classified as 'developing countries'. The driving question and problem behind the massive IEA research endeavour must be seen in the context of the Cold War and the race for supremacy in space. 'Development' in this sense meant progress and world supremacy. It did not mean what it means for many of the 'developing' countries—catch up, staying in the game, and basic survival. In short, the literatures addressing the fundamental question of the relationship between education and the development of human society have not been as integrated as they might have been. Two reasons for this less than optimal integration, suggested above, were the pre-occupation of comparative education, through much of the 1970s and 1980s, with debates about method, and the tendency for contributors to the field to focus their intellectual efforts on particular groups of countries. Three further reasons for the parallel rather than integrated development of the literatures of comparative education and development studies include differences in (i) the scope of analysis; (ii) the practice of development; and (iii) the emphasis on economic and cultural goals of society and development.

### *Scope of Analysis*

The dependency approach suggested that national systems of education did not necessarily provide the most appropriate point of comparison for comparative studies. The scope of analysis needed to include contemporary and historical relations (of domination and dependency) between countries. This was especially so in the case of the former colonies. In principle then comparisons between countries needed to include their contemporary and historical relations of influence with other countries. Although the call for an historical approach in comparative education is familiar, it did not resonate with those who, at that

time, were stressing comparisons of a contemporary nature. Nor did it resonate with those who sought comparisons across nations. The national system, economy and society remained for most comparative educationists the focus or unit of analysis. The notion of a national system of education sitting within a national economy and national society provided a clear focus for research that was within grasp. The implication of dependency theory—to include an analysis of education within international economic and political relations—was largely ignored by those whose knowledge of educational contexts drew largely from ‘developed’ countries whose education systems, with some notable exceptions (e.g. see Phillips in this issue), had been largely immune from external influence.

### *Practice*

The emergence of the education and development ‘business’ contributed further to the parallel development of literature. Much of the early work on modernisation and its economic parallel, human capital theory, was used by development agencies and international banks to justify financial investments in education in developing countries. Schultz’s (1961) work was especially influential in the 1960s and 1970s among those who allocated money to development programmes and those who promoted the growth of formal education world-wide. Significantly, many of these actors and agencies were external to the emerging states of the countries to be ‘assisted’ or ‘aided’. The production of an educated labour force was perceived by both economists and development planners as a means to the end of the growth of the national economy, and hence, development.

Not only did these ideas and writings bring the concepts and theories of economics to the centre stage of thinking about the relationship between education and development, but they did so in a way which smoothed (and sometimes ignored) the intellectual transition from analysis to advocacy, from description to prescription, from single cases to universal trends. Thus, many wrote of the relationship between education and development and ignored the multiplicity of possible relationships conditioned by variations in economic, cultural, social and political contexts and histories. These writings were oriented towards policy recommendations for the present and the future. In other words the writings were guided as much by the need to generate advocacies for education, as by the need to generate an understanding of why and how education was related to development in specific settings. The project of development, buttressed by financial resources and controlled by agencies external to the ‘developing’ countries, encouraged a definition of development as economic growth and a discussion of the role of education in achieving that end. It encouraged a concern with immediate policies and practices and a tendency to seek policy recommendations of a ‘one size fits all’ nature.

### *Economic and Cultural Goals of/for Development*

The relative emphasis on economic and cultural definitions and explanations of development also distinguished the literatures. Human capital theory promoted the idea of education as a form of economic capital in the quest for development, defined as economic growth. It rendered subordinate supplementary and alternative ideas about the goals of learning and education—education as empowerment, education as citizenship, education as enculturation, education as liberation.

The emphasis on economic development was accompanied by the notion that culture was separate from economy and impeded economic development. Culture was often invoked as an explanation of past failure rather than success, of present problems rather than achievements and of likely future difficulties rather than possibilities. Culture was treated

frequently as a fixed and enduring endowment responsible for continuities and inhibiting change. This view was at odds with much that had been written on education and change in the ‘developed’ countries of the North, where cultural analysis was more prominent.

### The Way Forward

Aspects of the context of education and development in the so-called developed and developing countries have changed in ways which would have been unrecognisable to those who contributed to and read the 1977 Special Number of *Comparative Education* (Grant, 1977). These changes in turn present us with a fresh opportunity to reconstruct comparative education in ways that integrate rather than separate knowledge about education and development among the richest and the poorest social groups and countries.

Already, there are signals that many of the old divisions apparent in the literatures could be breaking down. In developed countries the discourse on education, modernisation and economic competitiveness chimes uncannily with the discourse on human capital theory and modernisation in developing countries two or three decades ago. The ‘business’ of development is arguably also influencing the discussion of education and development in the North as the work of universities becomes more commercialised and more driven by the needs of short-term policies and practices. The interest in ‘lessons from abroad’ on the part of education policy-makers in developed countries increased markedly in the 1990s as the East Asian Tiger economies of the 1990s, themselves developing countries of the 1960s and 1970s, demonstrated enviable rates of economic growth [2]. There is a growing awareness that many of the jobs which educated young people in ‘developed’ countries have done in the past will, in the future, be taken over by educated young people in ‘developing’ countries. The marginalisation of large numbers of future generations—‘social exclusion’—is a growing problem on the doorstep. Poverty is not confined to ‘developing’ countries.

### Globalisation

Underlying these signs is an economic and technological process we term ‘globalisation’. As Giddens notes:

The term may not be a particularly attractive or elegant one. But absolutely no-one who wants to understand our prospects and possibilities at century’s end can ignore it (Giddens, 1999a, p. 1)

Writers in *Comparative Education* are already addressing it and many comparative education conferences have adopted it recently as a central theme (e.g. *Comparative Education Web Page* [www.carfax.co.uk/ced-ad.htm](http://www.carfax.co.uk/ced-ad.htm), Watson, 1996; Cowen, 1996; Little, 2000a). The literature attracts ‘sceptics’ and ‘radicals’.

The sceptics dispute the whole thing ... Whatever its benefits, its trials and tribulations, the global economy isn’t especially different from that which existed at previous periods. The world carries on much the same as it has done for many years ... (the radicals, by contrast argue) ... that not only is globalisation very real, but that its consequences can be felt everywhere. The global marketplace, they say, is much more developed than even two or three decades ago, and is indifferent to national borders. (Giddens, 1999, p. 1)

For the radicals, the manifestations of so-called globalisation are economic, political or cultural. The economic include stateless financial markets, a massive expansion of world

capital and finance flows, a rising proportion of global trade and investment in developing countries accounted for by transnational companies; the domination of international technology flows by transnational corporations (Wood, 1994; Stewart, 1996). The political manifestations of globalisation include a decline in state sovereignty (Ohmae, 1990); the reduced control of national governments over money supply and regulation of exchange rates; an increase in the power of global, sometimes stateless, organisations over national organisations; a definition of local issues in relation to the global as well as the local; and an increase in the ability of national and local issues to be played out on a world-stage. In the cultural arena the manifestations include a convergence of lifestyle and consumer aspirations among the better off, and the widespread distribution of images, information and values (Waters, 1995). The educational manifestations include the phenomenal growth in the flows of educational goods and services, in the revolution in modes of delivery of educational services, and in the definition of policy goals and curricula for education in developed and developing countries.

The manifestations of globalisation are not the same as its underlying causes. For some (e.g. Wood, 1994) a major reduction of obstacles to international economic transactions constitutes the essential definition of globalisation. Hitherto, these obstacles have included transport and transaction costs, trade barriers, financial regulation, and speed of communication. Their reduction, a function of both economic policy and technological advance, has led to a major increase in the volume of international financial transactions. At the same time, the technological advances that have increased the speed of communication have facilitated connections not only between financial markets world-wide, but also between people world-wide. This is why the manifestations of globalisation are not simply economic; they are also political, social and cultural. They are personal as well as impersonal; they are 'in here' as well as 'out there' (Giddens 1999, p. 12).

However, among those who acknowledge the phenomenon and consequences of globalisation, are the 'optimists' and the 'pessimists'. The optimists, like the development modernisers before them, concentrate on the positive consequences. The 'pessimists', like the dependency theorists and the Marxists before them, concentrate on the negative.

### *Development Studies*

For Grindle & Hilderbrand (1999) the heart of the mission of development studies has two aspects. Firstly, *an understanding of the impact of globalisation*, and secondly, *a response to this understanding in ways that advance the positive and ameliorate the negative consequences of globalisation*. Some of the current and projected 'positives' and 'negatives' of globalisation between and within developed and developing countries are presented in Table IV.

The extension of these themes to education is inviting. The following questions, among others, emerge. How will different forms of education, especially those supported by new information technologies, attain legitimacy and contribute to the improvement of living standards? How will education contribute to a heightened awareness of the need to provide economic, political and social opportunities for women and marginalised minorities? How will education contribute to democratic decision-making at national and local levels? How will education contribute to the functioning of international movements to improve institutions of governance, to counter corruption in public life and to adopt environmentally sound practices? How will differential access to education provision and quality contribute to the further marginalisation of young people? How will sanctions for countries that fail to adapt economic policies affect educational provision, especially for the poorest? How will different forms of education serve to legitimate and reproduce social and economic

TABLE IV. Positive and negative consequences of globalisation

**Consequences judged as positive**

- Improved living standards of large numbers of the world's people through increased numbers of jobs and incomes
- Spread of ideas about ways to improve access to education, health and information
- Heightened awareness of the need to provide economic, political and social opportunities for women and minorities
- Spread of democratic decision-making at national and local levels
- International movements to improve institutions of governance, to counter corruption in public life and to adopt environmentally sound practices

**Consequences judged as negative**

- The further marginalisation of those who do not, currently, have access to or benefit from an increased flow of goods, services, capital and information (especially the world's current (1999) estimate of 1.3 billion people)
- Sanctions for countries that ignore or avoid adapting economic policies and regulatory regimes to new international standards, with the consequent distress for their citizens
- Greater financial vulnerability because of increasing interdependence and spread of financial flows
- Increased exploitation of poor workers and of children and women
- Increased threats of environmental damage, disease, cross-border conflict, migration, political instability and crime
- More conflict between those who benefit from globalisation and those who do not
- Heightening of ethnic, religious and cultural differences

Source: Adapted from Grindle & Hilderbrand (1999).

stratification? What will be the balance between local, national, international and global forces for educational decision-making?

But to these should also be added a number of questions that emerge from conditions only weakly connected with globalisation, or from contexts where its particular effects are strongest. In many situations local and national influences will continue to be the most powerful in determining educational curriculum, control, resources, provision and outcomes. This requires sensitivity to and understanding of local and national contexts, and reinforces the earlier point about the need for comparative education to be grounded in an understanding of particular contexts. Such understanding will also generate issues common to regions and sub-regions. For example, at a recent Sub-Saharan Conference on Education for All, educators and researchers identified a number of priorities for research and action common to the Africa region and sub-region. These included the contribution of education to the alleviation of poverty, the impact of the HIV/AIDS pandemic on education and of education on its slow down, the provision of education in the context of emergency and post-conflict, and the contribution of education to the reduction of gender inequity and cultures of peace (Johannesburg Declaration, 1999).

Development studies captures the twin objectives of understanding and action, of analysis and advocacy, of policy analysis and policy prescription. It embraces the divide between 'thinkers' and 'do-ers'. It places on those who reflect, analyse, theorise about and study a responsibility to act, to advocate, and to prescribe. Simultaneously it places on those who act, do, advocate, and prescribe a responsibility to think about and question their own actions and the advice they give to others, *especially in situations where power relations are unequal*, within a broad scheme of global, national and local influence. Understanding and action are both important and valuable. Each requires overlapping but separate skills. While each benefits from the other, neither can be reduced to the other (Little, 2000b).

The understanding of the role of education in the globalisation process within the framework presented in Table IV and the reasoned response to it could form the heart of the both the development studies and comparative education effort over the next few decades in both the developed and the developing countries.

### The Challenges

Marginalisation, communication and access to information are key themes in the globalisation discourse. As editors of *Comparative Education* we frequently discuss how to encourage contributors and contributions from a larger number and wider range of 'developing countries'. If we are to encourage a better understanding of the relationship between education and 'development', both in terms of national and international development, then we need to find more effective means of promoting dialogue between comparative educators in different corners of the globe.

At the beginning of this article I provided a review of context, content and type of comparison employed in *Comparative Education* articles published between 1977 and 1998. A review of the authors' 'address for correspondence' provides an indication of the communication and information challenge ahead. It also provides the final theme of the subtitle of this article. While 'address for correspondence' is a perfect proxy for neither nationality nor country of residence or domicile, it does indicate authors' current location in non-virtual space. Some 609 authors contributed to 472 published articles. While the total number of countries mentioned explicitly in the title of articles was 76, the number of countries in which contributors were based was 50. Some 85% of the contributors were based in developed countries. Only 15% were based in developing countries. In other words, the country base of authors is more concentrated than the countries they study, and the under-representation of authors based in developing countries is even more marked than the under-representation of articles based on them.

Those of us who wish to inhabit a truly global and comparative field of study which can, in turn, make its own modest contribution to the cause of human progress, must create virtual and non-virtual space to encourage the participation of and exchange between educators from a much greater diversity of educational culture than hitherto. We must be sensitive to the diversity of educational and other contexts world-wide, achieve consensus on the fundamental questions of comparative education, and embrace in our comparisons local, national, regional, international and global spheres of influence. This is our collective challenge.

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### NOTES

- [1] It should be noted that Parkyn's use of the term 'development education' reflected common usage in the USA at that time. In England the term 'development education' usually referred to the curricula of teaching courses, largely at school level, which aimed to increase school-children's knowledge and understanding of the problems of poverty in the countries of the South. In the 1970s the equivalent of Parkyn's usage in England might have been the practice (as distinct from the study) of education in developing countries.
- [2] The waning of interest in the wake of the end of the century crisis in those same economies illustrated the perils of cherry-picking and the importance of serious comparative analysis.



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