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Editorial

Welcome to Issue 10 of **SPARK**. In this issue, we bring together an excellent collection of work written by students across Education Studies and Early Childhood Studies Programmes. We hope you find these papers interesting and welcome any feedback you may have. If this issue of SPARK has inspired you to submit your own work to be published or if you would like to join the editing team, please feel free to contact us at: SPARK@ljmu.ac.uk.

Kirstie Mitchell and Fahima Saeed (Student editors)

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Staff editors

Carl Parletti
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Critically discuss the nature of 'policy borrowing' in education, making reference to recent developments in one area of educational policy in the UK.

Globalisation is a process which has engendered increasing amounts of interest and attention from educationalists, politicians and industrialists alike regarding the effect and influence it has had on the world (Bartlett and Burton 2012). Its impact is described by Forrester and Garratt (2012, p.140) as "the most significant challenge currently facing national education systems". However, even with the excessive amount of scrutiny surrounding the issue, Shields (2013) suggests that it is hard to give the term a definitive meaning as it has a multitude of interpretations. Forrester and Garratt (2012) agree with this and state that defining it is not an uncomplicated endeavour and one may even consider whether it exists, or if it is indeed a tangible process. Burbules (2000) on the other hand proposes that we can identify globalisation in the context of economics, politics, culture and education; within this, they argue that it is within the spheres of economics and politics that most debate has taken place regarding the need for educational reform. Olssen, Codd and O'Neill (2004) suggest that the political reform aspect of globalisation is the most powerful as it is the procedure in which the autonomy of a state is extensively decreased and its hegemony eroded. With this in mind, this paper will seek to critically discuss the nature of policy borrowing as a means to increase educational standards, it will outline what policy is, what policy borrowing is, how it has evolved, the process of it and will look at an example of it here in the UK.

Bates, Lewis and Pickard (2011) define education policy as a multitude of laws and initiatives which influences the education system at both a national and local level. Bartlett and Burton (2012) agree with this and suggest it is the coming together of a group of like-minded people who create the policy founded upon their ideology of how the society should be progressing. These policies are then advanced and refined during exchanges of views and discussions between the group before being implemented.

Forestier and Crossley (2014) suggest that in the period of western colonisation and economic supremacy, education was a movement that travelled from West to East. However, due to the rapidly increasing economic growth and development of eastern countries highlighted through studies such as the Programme for International student assessment (PISA), this paradigm has now shifted with Western countries having a growing interest in the Eastern countries scoring well. Forrester and Garratt (2012) agree and state that over the last three decades, more prominence has been placed on economic competitiveness as governments have endeavoured to improve efficiency and performance. Steiner-Khamsi, and Waldow (2012) suggest that to do this, governments have broadened their search beyond their own system with greater emphasis towards ideas and policy solutions from abroad. Takayama (2010) states that Cross-national comparisons of student achievement have become key within political discussions, with many studies exploring ways in which comparative data can be utilised in order commence policy ‘borrowing’ and ‘lending’ throughout the world. Morris (2012) agrees and states that Global competition to acquire both improvement within schools and system performance does not appear to be reducing. He suggests that policies are being borrowed as well as copied from countries whose educational systems have been successful in the hope of replicating the same outcomes.

Governments as well as education policy makers are being prompted to search for superior performance by looking at countries who achieve higher results whilst being cost effective (Tucker, 2011). Forestier and Crossley (2014) sum up the situation by stating that a pattern of reverse policy borrowing from East to West has ensued.

Phillps and Ochs (2003) identify a four stage model within the process of policy borrowing. They label these as cross national attraction, decision making, implementation and internalisation. Phillps and Ochs (2003) suggest that the cross national attraction stage is the first stage of policy borrowing and it is the general consensus that something is going wrong and that concern for the standards are being raised. The raising of issues can be due to a number of factors such as internal dissatisfaction from parents, inspectors and teachers, or even due to systematic collapse and negative external evaluation due to the interpretation of international results such as PISA. In the UK, examples such as in the new national curriculum in 2015 came into place emphasising how the school system had to keep up with other countries improving at a faster rate than ourselves (DfE, 2016). Phillips (2000) suggests that the issues highlighted also impact the motives behind the people involved in the political process, and states that these will vary. He proposes that some people will have a genuine concern surrounding the issues within education whereas some will have a more cynical approach.

The second stage in the policy borrowing process is decision making according to Phillps and Ochs (2003). This is the start of change and they suggest that it is based predominantly in four ways which are theoretical, phoney, realistic and quick fix. The theoretical descriptor according to Phillps and Ochs (2003) represents a theoretical stance such as the Labour government's 'Education, education, education' motto during the 1997 election (Bartlett and Burton 2012). The second descriptor in this stage is phoney, given this term due to

education ministers having an excess of ideas taken from other countries assumed to be attractive to the electorate, but without the likelihood of ever being implemented into the ‘home’ system according to Phillps and Ochs (2003). The realistic decisions are the next descriptor and here measures are highlighted that have been a success within a particular area without the contextual factors which would prevent them from being implemented elsewhere. Lastly is the quick fix decision descriptor in which Phillps and Ochs (2003) describe as hazardous as a result of the cross national attraction procedure. This is because of previous cases such as the former soviet bloc where the marketisation of education was advocated as a positive move away from state control, but instead has served to generate uncertainty, insecurity as well as substantial inequality (Phillps and Ochs, 2003).

The third stage in policy borrowing is the implementation phase where adaptations of models can be seen although these may take some time before they have an impact (Phillps and Ochs, 2003). They suggest that this impact is due to a significant number of players involved within the process such as education policy makers, economic policy makers, parents, teachers and Ofsted etc. They also suggest that this is a complex process stating it is difficult to judge its success and also that there may be a struggle to implement it as there could be opposing views. In the UK this has been seen through the opposition of teachers surrounding the implementation of free schools (Miller, 2011).

The final stage of the policy borrowing process is internalisation (Phillps and Ochs, 2003). Policy becomes embedded and changes the culture of education. It becomes synthesised into policy and practice and this links into the evaluation of the policy. From this, the policy can then be measured for success. Bell and Stevenson (2006) sum the four stages of policy borrowing up by suggesting it can be

put forward as the investigation of change, and how this change is managed.

Harris, Jones, and Adams (2016) have criticised policy borrowing as a means to increase school performance. They suggest that the debate surrounding ‘what works’ fails to notice and also disregards cultural differences. This critique can be exemplified by Tan and Chua (2014) who argue that interpretations of the PISA findings do not take into consideration sociocultural circumstances. Forestier and Crossley (2014) suggest that this is due to a multitude of factors including differences in parental expectations, beliefs and pressures such as those found in Hong Kong, stating that these cannot be easily transferred from one country to another. This coincides with Sadler (1964) who stated that we cannot just pick certain parts of other policies and educational systems in the hope that integrating them into our own system will yield the desired results.

Bartlett and Burton (2012) propose a different critique by suggesting that although there are advantages to policy borrowing and the comparative education that it brings, they put forward that there are many problems to be aware of such as adopting an attitude of cultural superiority. This is the underlying assumption of education that has been developed in the West being superior to that of foreign practices. Bartlett and Burton (2012) go on to suggest that developed countries who incorporate themselves within both the economy and education system of ‘underdeveloped’ countries so to speak, leave themselves open to strong claims of cultural imperialism.

Tan and Chua (2014) suggest that even though the observation and research of other countries has emphasised that not one particular education system has all the answers, it has not discouraged them from an obsession with the education systems who perform well. Alexander (2012) expands on this and states that it is not what we find that is the problem, it is how we interpret it and then translate it

into our own education system. Beauchamp (2002) also highlights context as an issue and states that solutions can only be highlighted when the source has been distinguished and understood correctly. He goes on to state that problems may mirror that of another country, but both the root and essence of it may vary. Beauchamp (2002) suggests that we need to understand the process in which these discrepancies are created for us to establish an educational policy that is feasible and not rushed. Crossley and Watson (2009) concur with these viewpoints concerning context then as they suggest that we can learn from other educational systems but it is the straight transplantation of so called ‘solutions’ from one country to another that is the problem.

In the UK, we have seen the process of policy borrowing such as the Swedish free school model that was transferred here and was for a period illustrated as an inspiration (Rönnberg, 2015). The approval of the free school expansion came from the former Secretary of State for Education Michael Gove as he gave a speech to the policy exchange suggesting that our schools were struggling (DfE, 2011). He suggested that school’s failing was a major threat to the UK’s international competiveness economically and highlighted that the free schools model as seen in Sweden had improved standards and more importantly there was underlying evidence that the model was transferrable. The free schools are government funded but have a lot more autonomy as they do not have to follow the national curriculum according to Kitchener (2016). Although it brings more autonomy, Kitchener (2016) has critiqued the implementation of free schools here in the UK and suggests that the 2010 academies act extended the states connection with free schools and has become a model which commemorates the neoliberal ideology. He suggests that the free schools model the government has proposed is socially divisive and further increases class structures and prejudice. He goes on to state that the system is not raising educational standards and that

the competitive market to increase education standards is a myth. Higham (2013) and Ball (2013) both coincide with Kitchener (2016) as they suggest that there is no underlying evidence free schools are combating the problem. Ball (2013) suggests that free schools supply more opportunity for the articulate and questions whether the notion of ‘choice’ is tangible. Ball (2013) questions this as it will be the people who have the most wealth who are able to exercise ‘choice’ for a selfish advantage. Kitchener (2016) does concede however that some of the free schools are indeed successful in promoting learning within children. He suggests that in any system that is proposed by the government there will always be dedicated, passionate professionals who will guarantee success. Also, Miller, Craven, and Tooley (2014) propose that we should acknowledge the borrowing of the free schools to be newly introduced and that it will come under scrutiny for its failures, of which some are inevitable.

From looking at the nature of policy borrowing and critically analysing it, it is clear to see how complex the topic of policy borrowing is. In this piece we defined what policy borrowing was and dissected the multiple stages of the policy borrowing process which highlighted that it is not as simplistic as it may seem. We have seen how the multitude of issues within education can spark the process of policy borrowing and how there can be a struggle to implement a policy as there can be a host of contradicting views surrounding the topic at hand. In terms of increasing educational standards, policy borrowing has been heavily critiqued within this piece. Although it was highlighted by some that comparative data can be very useful to highlight key issues within education and can have a crucial role to play in policy borrowing, it was accentuated by many that the context is of major importance and needs thorough analysis before the transplantation of a policy from one country to another. It was agreed upon that there may indeed be problems, but the government seem obsessed with comparative information such as PISA that the

interpretation and translation into our own education system of the proposed ‘solution’ is rushed as there is major emphasis placed on economic competitiveness linked to educational standards. This was emphasised by the transference of free schools from Sweden in which there has seen to be a further widening of class structures here in the UK. It is noted that the free schools are a relatively new model so it will be interesting to see the development of this borrowed policy over a longer period of time.

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Does the Labelling of Young Children with Difficulties Help to Support them Towards a Typical Developmental Pathway?

Labelling Theory dictates that when an individual is assigned a label, eventually it is how they will identify themselves (Lungu, 2016). Labels are used as a form of categorisation (Ho, 2004), and in relation to this, assumes a child may conform to what is socially and medically accepted as 'typical development'. This presents a contradictory debate surrounding the differentiation of the medical and social models of health as both terms have conflicting ideologies (Terza, 2005a). As it is intrinsic to human interaction to make generalisations and categorise based on the need to manage complex information (Lauchlan and Boyle, 2007), this article will consider the different models of health alongside the different perspectives of impairment and disability. It will offer a critical debate of the effects of labelling young children with arguable perceived difficulties, and reflect on how this contributes to a 'normal' developmental pathway.

To put atypical development into perspective, it is important to differentiate between disability and impairment (Terzi, 2005b). The definition of 'impairment' seems consistent across many perspectives, with both Disabled People's International (DPI) and the World Health Organisation (WHO) stating that it is the limitation within the individual caused by physical or mental functioning (DPI, 1994; Terzi, 2005b; WHO, 2017). However, defining disability is more conflicting. DPI (1994) defines disability as the loss or limitation of opportunities in community life due to physical and social barriers. Contrastingly, WHO (2017) defines disability as any restriction of ability resulting from impairment to perform an activity within the normal range of a human being. This is challenging as both

definitions create blame for the disability, with DPI emphasising the social aspects, and WHO emphasising the personal aspects. Furthermore, the definitions, labels, and measurements of impairment and disability are assuming disabled individuals are aiming to achieve a state of ‘normal’ (Oliver, 1996). These contrasting ideas reflect the ongoing medical versus social model debate (Gabriel, 2008).

The Department of Health (2010) defines the medical model as the prevention of illness and disease and the prolonging of life. This is driven by the belief that medical science has a duty to cure people, making health a measurable attribute (Community Development and Health Network, n.d.; Gabriel, 2008; Simmons, 1989). However, the criticisms of the medical model lie within its strong emphasis on the eradication of illness and disease as an indicator of good health, ignoring the power of other important influences such as culture and history, and inadequately explaining the experiences of individuals with difficulties (Community Development and Health Network, n.d; and Ho, 2004). Alternatively, the social model of health considers the idea that it is the social attitudes and stereotyping that disables individuals (Bickenbach et al., 1999; and Oliver, 2013). The social model considers the conditions in which people are born, grow, live, work and age, and how these circumstances can be shaped by the distribution of money, power, and resources at a transnational and local level (World Health Organisation, 2017). However, the tensions associated with the social model come from its tendency to overlook the complex dimensions of health, including associated pain, fatigue, and related illness, and the roles these play within the lives of atypically developing individuals (Terzi, 2005b). Oliver (1996) states that one of the most influential organisations in government policy on the models of health is the World Health Organisation, who he states view predominantly from the medical model. However, this paper was published in 1996 and, since then, the World Health

Organisation have redefined their view of health as a state of complete physical, mental, and social well-being, and not merely the absence of disease (Gabriel, 2008). This considers disability as a personal and social concern that is still measuring disability against a norm.

The concept of being able to measure a child against a norm is predominantly practiced within developmental psychology (Sroufe, 2009), and emerged from Piaget's stage theory of cognitive development (Grunewald et al., 1977). Piaget's stages assume that childhood is a linear sequence of measurable stages towards adulthood, and that children must attain these levels chronologically to achieve optimum cognitive development (Mascolo et al., 1998). Grunewald et al. (1977) suggests that intervention can support children to develop along a typical pathway, and promote a sense of normalisation. However, the discourse surrounding normalisation is very negative, as the opposite of normal is abnormal. This can have profound effects on the labelled individual's self-esteem (Herbert, 2003).

Furthermore, normalisation is a relative concept, yet we have a framework in place of what it means to be a normal child, allowing a basis to treat children with impairments and disability as sub-normal or developmentally delayed (Mascolo et al, 1998). Although Piaget's stages incorporated the idea of curricula, whereby learning should be child-centred and geared to the developmental level of the child (Herbert, 2003), the reality is that children who do not conform to typical norms of development are being distinguished as not being able to benefit or be included in learning at their own pace (Mascolo et al., 1998). This is problematic as it discredits individuality, and ignores that every child is unique, whether they conform to typical or atypical developmental patterns (Pykett, 2010). Actively considering children as different based on their stage of development ultimately creates a dilemma of difference; a contradiction between the

intention to treat all learners as the same or responding adequately to the needs arising from their individuality (Warnock, 2005). This raises questions about diagnosis, labelling and stigmatisation.

There is a plethora of research surrounding the labelling debate, with many different viewpoints. A prominent argument for pro-labelling is the eligibility that can be established for people who require resources, protection, and funding (Goldstein et al., 1975; Ho, 2004; Riddick, 2000; Terza, 2005a). It is argued that a full diagnosis can open doors to treatment and resources, and is required to access services (Goldstein et al., 1975; Ho, 2004). However, Lauchlan and Boyle (2007) suggest that, although labels may be indicative of atypical development, it does not necessarily mean the solution is of relevance. The labels themselves do not provide specific details regarding the solution. Furthermore, labels often backfire and provide an excuse for schools to adopt medical model approaches, and ignore other problems in the educational and societal systems that may contribute. Schools may be concerned that children who do not fit the typical model would hinder the credibility and performance of the school, and lead to homogenised teaching (Ho, 2004). With more value being placed on measurable outcomes for atypically developing children, the role of the SENCo in schools is changing dramatically. This places extra pressure and responsibilities on them through paperwork, rather than allowing them to put strategic interventions in place to optimise pupil inclusion (Mackenzie, 2007). This creates a tension between policy and practice; as the EYFS (2012) outlines the importance of the unique child and how each child should be catered to, and the 1993 and 1996 Education Acts provide a legal framework for meeting the individual needs of all disabled children (Ho, 2005). However, schools are segregating atypically developing children to withhold their academic positions (Pykett, 2010), whether this be through teaching assistants or SEN specific schools.

Labelling may also encourage children, parents, teachers, and other pupils to be more understanding of the condition, and enable them to realise their strengths and weaknesses in various areas. For example, a child with dyslexia may be considered lazy or uninterested but, with a diagnosis, the difficulty can be said to stem from a neurological condition (Ho, 2004). A study conducted by Urquhart and colleagues (2007) supports this notion. Within a sample of 120 children aged 11-12 who were presented with three vignettes (describing the behaviours of a gender-neutral same age peer with symptoms of ADHD), it was found that the children had very negative views and were not responding to the sample as a peer with ADHD, and instead were responding to the externalising behaviours. The study did not reveal to the children that the peer in the sample was diagnosed with ADHD which demonstrated that, without the formal diagnosis, pupils struggled to understand the behaviour. This suggests that a diagnosis would be helpful. However, Riddick and colleagues (1997) produced contrasting results in their qualitative interviews with affected students. They stated that when a student was asked if he had ever been ridiculed about his dyslexia, he replied that, since his formal diagnosis, he was being stigmatised because of his performance and automatically categorised by his teachers, doctors, and, to an extent, his parents. This response demonstrates that labels on their own may not necessarily lead to stigmatisation, but labels can encapsulate the stigma that already exists (Riddick, 2000). This is problematic, as the SEND Code of Practice states that all persons working to support the child must not discriminate based on the disability (2014). It is important to note that the first study conducted by Urquhart et al. (2007) had only three schools participating. There was no indication of inclusion rate or socio-economic positioning; therefore, the generalisability of this study needs to be cautious.

Another argument in the pro-label debate is the reduction in ambiguities when families, practitioners, and children are informed. Gillman et al (2000) suggests that labels provide families with comfort and reassurance when officially diagnosed and can relieve stress of the unknown. Furthermore, it can aid clear communication between professionals working with the child. Lungu (2016) states that it is the status of the person giving the label that has more of an effect on the child than that of someone who is not of significance. He continues that labels can be received more truthfully when they are appointed by a parent. This is reflective of Bowlby's theory of attachment, whereby he states that children require a close bond with their caregiver to attain a stable developmental process (Zilberstein, 2014). If this bond is strained by negative labelling, this can severely impact upon a child's self-esteem (Dweck, 2000). Another issue arising from labelling is categorisation. These concerns were identified from the Warnock Report which sought to abolish statutory categories such as physically handicapped, maladjusted, etc. and introduced the concept of a continuum of special educational needs. However, this has resulted in several diverse categories being replaced with two super-ordinate categories, namely special educational needs and non-special educational needs. This concept was designed so that each child would be identified and addressed based on their needs. This is problematic as, in practice, each child's needs cannot be identified without reference to a body of knowledge around an existing label. This is also based on the assumption that experienced and trained professionals have plenty of time to investigate individual issues (Riddick, 2000).

Professionals working with atypically developing children do not necessarily observe dysfunctional behaviour, but rather observe behaviour in which they label as dysfunctional on their own values to which they apply in a professional capacity (Goldstein et al., 1975).

This outlook tends to focus on the within-child deficit model at the expense of exploring environmental factors that could have aggravated the difficulty (Lauchlan and Boyle, 2007). This is where Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory would be useful as a tool to broaden the perspective from a within-child causation as it recognises the environmental influences on development and learning. With the child at the centre of the micro system, there is also recognition that the people and organisations in the wider systems can impact directly on the child (Bronfenbrenner, 1999). However, it is important to note that the ecological systems theory is not a complete account of child development as there are many other factors besides the environment that can impact on the child (Darling, 2007), as research suggests both nature and nurture play a pivotal role in child development (Sameroff, 2010).

Conclusively, there is no concrete research to suggest there is a normal pathway to development. There are, however, typical milestones that generally most children will reach between certain time frames (Pykett, 2010) but this cannot become an excuse to discredit individuality. Labelling is treated as a unitary construct that can simply be described as good or bad. However, when looked at in detail, it is evident that labelling or not labelling is a process that can inhabit both negative and positive consequences (Riddick, 2000). Nonetheless, there is more weight to the idea of an over-reliance of labels. Although labels may serve some limited functions and be a supporting resource for parents and children, there are many more negative impacts such as stigmatisation, bullying, self-esteem, and lowered expectations about what a labelled child can achieve (Lauchlan and Boyle, 2007). It is important to remember that each child is an individual and as such has an individual profile of needs and rights which will not be fully identified if they are assumed with a particular label (Riddick, 2000). To gain more insight into the effects

of labelling on differential developing children, it must be considered more than just a case of language and science and, as suggested by Oliver (1996), be considered as a matter of politics and legislation in order to move forward.

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International perspectives on the impact HIV/AIDS has on children and childhood

This research paper intends to critically examine international perspectives on the child and childhood regarding HIV/AIDS. Firstly, exploring the cause, effect and treatment of HIV/AIDS and the history behind the virus that has spread to countries around the world. Following this, a discussion on statistics and factors involved in women's health - leading onto pregnancy, HIV-positive children and children having to care for their HIV-positive parents. Whilst analysing and critically reflecting upon the cultural differences that encourage the risk of HIV/AIDS it will also critically examine the difficulties for government services and non-governmental organisations (NGO's) face as they attempt to educate those to prevent the further spread of HIV/AIDS. The United Nations Millennium Development Goals will be reviewed along with the more recent Sustainable Development Goals. Although this essay intends to comment on the global effects of HIV/AIDS, due to the virus being most severe in sub-Saharan Africa, most reports are based on research surrounding sub-Saharan Africa research.

HIV (Human Immunodeficiency Virus) is a virus that attacks the immune system, making the carrier vulnerable to infection and if untreated, HIV can lead to AIDS (Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome) (Aids, 2016). Evidence of HIV leading to AIDS is well known to many but can be found in Blattner, Gallo and Temin's (1988) article that studies clusters of individuals, concluding that AIDS only appears when HIV has been introduced. This is due to the

HIV virus damaging and destroying so many cells that the body can no longer fight infections (Aids, 2016). This is described as the late stages of HIV and this signals AIDS, which is the final stage (Aids, 2016). An individual cannot develop AIDS unless they have contracted HIV (Blattner, Gallo and Temin, 1988). Once HIV is contracted, it never leaves the body and there is currently no cure (NHS, 2016). When regarding children under the age of 15, there was a 58% global reduction in new HIV infections from 2002 until 2013 (Avert, 2016). Yet with only 34% of adolescents receiving treatment, AIDS is the leading cause of death amongst adolescents in Africa with 190,000 children dying from AIDS in 2013 (Avert, 2016). However, according to the Aids (2016) website, HIV can be controlled when individuals are provided with the correct treatment and medical care (Aids, 2016). Should the HIV develop into AIDS without treatment, the sufferer will die much more rapidly. A person diagnosed with AIDS will only survive for around three years without treatment, although in some cases, they may only survive a year (Aids, 2016). HIV is treated with antiretroviral therapy (ART) (NHS, 2016). It is a complicated regime of drugs that needs to be taken correctly every day. If this is achieved it can lead to those with HIV/AIDS living longer, keeping them healthy (NHS, 2016) and also reducing the risk of the passing on the virus to anyone else (Aids, 2016).

Public Health (2016) states it was in the 1970's that HIV started to infect individuals, although scientists were not aware of its existence. However, according to Avert (2016), the first HIV transmission was in the 1920's in the Democratic Republic of Congo, stating that it was only in the 1980's when the virus was recognised in America. Although, America is a developed country, in order to avoid discrimination, legislation had to be passed, to section HIV/AIDS under disability (Larson, 2015).

It is now possible to be tested in a variety of settings including health clinics, community centres and by purchasing home testing kits online (Aids, 2016). Although Aids (2016) state that nowadays, most people who contract HIV do not progress to AIDS, Avert's (2016) statistics show that less than half of those who were living with HIV all around the world in 2015, were being treated for the virus. According to Avert (2016), only 40% of those infected with HIV, know they are affected. The Guardian (2016) recently reports media representation of Prince Harry and singer Rhianna raising awareness as public figures in Barbados for others to be tested for HIV.

Aids (2016) reports that HIV is not easily spread, yet this is contradicted by the World Health Organisation (2016) that states sub-Saharan Africa contains 70% of the world's HIV-positive individuals where 1 in every 25 adults is affected. Aids (2016) states it can only be spread through specific actions, mostly through syringe misuse or sexual behaviour (Aids, 2016). However, it can also be transmitted from mother to baby during pregnancy (NHS, 2016). HIV is transmitted through certain bodily fluids by those who are HIV positive (Aids, 2016). Some of these fluids include; breast milk, blood, pre-seminal fluids, vaginal fluids and rectal fluids (Aids, 2016). However, HIV cannot be spread through water, saliva, sharing drinking glasses, shaking hands or mosquitos (Aids, 2016).

According to UNICEF (2006), children in particular are vulnerable to infection, whether they are at risk of infection whilst in their mother's womb or as a carer for the family. Blattner, Gallo and Temin (1988) state that there is a 50% chance that a child born from a HIV-positive mother will be infected with the virus and within six years, 95% of HIV-positive infants will develop AIDS. As a carer of a parent infected with HIV, they may also need to reduce their time in education which may result in discrimination from society, and without the parent receiving treatment, the child may become orphaned (UNICEF, 2006).

Since the beginning of the HIV epidemic, it is estimated that roughly 78 million people have become infected with HIV with just under half dying from an AIDS-related illness (Avert, 2016). HIV has continued to be a global public health issue according to Avert (2016), and in 2015, 36.7 million people were estimated to be living with HIV (which included 1.8 million children), whilst 1.1 million died. Most of those affected live in low and middle-income countries such as sub-Saharan Africa where 25.5 million HIV-infected people are estimated to live, and in 2015 a 46% increase was seen in eastern and southern Africa (Avert, 2016).

Takyi's (2003) research in Ghana, states men's power in relation to women, lack of contraception and women's lack of ability to practice safe sex provides the view of women being more at risk. This is supported by Higgins, Hoffman and Dworkin (2010) who say women are depicted as vulnerable in the majority of literature concerning HIV prevention. Women are supposedly more at risk of infection due to their body's biological make-up and men's sexual power and privilege in society (Higgins, Hoffman and Dworkin, 2010) – regarding a heterosexual relationship. Looking upon their relevant literature Higgins, Hoffman and Dworkin (2010) observe that it was expected for women to insist on condom use to protect themselves rather than it being the male's responsibility. During the 1990's women were not included in clinical trials even though around 20,000 had died from AIDS and there was knowledge surrounding women contracting HIV, including passing the virus on through pregnancy (Higgins, Hoffman and Dworkin, 2010). Takyi (2003) reports from statistics in Ghana that women who engage in premarital sex are more likely to contract AIDS than those who are from much more conservative religions. Religion can play a vital role in HIV infection as prevention such as condoms contradict religious beliefs (Takyi, 2003). However, Takyi (2003) contradicts himself stating that there is a lack of research on women's religious affiliation reflecting HIV

infection in Africa in general; whilst going on to say that medical anthropologists have observed a “link between religious beliefs and health-related behavior” (Takyi, 2003, p.1224). This religious versus health theory could therefore restrict the effect non-governmental organizations (NGO’s) have on reducing HIV in the area.

In 2015, around 150,000 children contracted HIV infections, the majority of children lived in sub-Saharan Africa - infected by their HIV-positive mothers with whilst breastfeeding or during pregnancy (Avert, 2016). Compared to the UK, only 315 children under the age of 15 were treated for HIV in 2015 (Nat, 2016). According to Nat (2016) from 2006 to 2015, a 73% increase has been seen for those receiving HIV treatment in the UK. Avert (2016) reports that although some countries have managed to decrease new HIV infections by 50% in the last decade, other countries have not seen much progress regarding percentage reduction, and others expect HIV infections to increases.

According to 2015 data from the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF) (UNICEF, 2016) roughly 13.4 million children around the world have lost one or both parents to AIDS, over 80% were from sub-Saharan Africa. Education can play a vital role in the protection and stability for children (UNICEF, 2016), many sub-Saharan countries are greatly improving on school attendance, although orphaned children are less likely to attend. Children affected by HIV and AIDS are a much higher risk for bad school attendance (UNICEF, 2016) and without education, children who are HIV-negative have a much higher risk of contracting HIV and AIDS. Harber (2014) notes that through research, it has been discovered that the longer the parents have stayed in education, relates to a lower child mortality rate and healthier children. This could be down to cultural differences as statistics from 2013 show that 31 million girls are not attending primary school, the worst countries being Nigeria, Pakistan and Ethiopia - supposedly 4 million

fewer girls attend school than boys (UNESCO, 2013). According to UNESCO's (2013) report, there would be a 15% decrease in child deaths if all women had a primary education. A correlation appears between these two sources around education and health - the more education there is, the healthier the children.

As Harber (2014) mentions education being key to reduce the spread of infection, Duflo et al (2007) report on the Kenyan government policy regarding HIV/AIDS education. As most Kenyan children attend primary school yet do not follow onto secondary, over the last two decades the Kenyan government introduced HIV/AIDS education into their national primary curriculum (Duflo et al, 2007). However, UNICEF was involved with the development of the national curriculum (Duflo et al, 2007). Whilst it could be argued that the West are enforcing their ideologies onto other countries, teachers are not trained to promote condoms and abstinence is regarded as the most effective way to not spread infections; therefore the Kenyan government are still enforcing their culture.

NGO's such as GiveWell (2016), promote condom use as a prevention method to prevent the spread of HIV/AIDS. However, Moreno (2007) studies into the factors embedded in the Latino culture, discovering that there is a stigma around condom use, women are expected to have a lack of sexual knowledge whilst males are encouraged to be more knowledgeable about sex and have multiple sexual partners. Latina's even admitted that due to their cultural normalities it makes NGO's objectives hard to complete (Moreno, 2007). Although, through the social response from mobile populations in Central America and Mexico, Bronfman et al (2002) did discover that mobile populations were more likely to approach NGO's rather than government services due to fear of deportation.

Gray and MacBlain (2015) state that Bronfenbrenner is a theorist who strongly believes that the child is at the epicentre and that they

are effected by the environment around them. By being effected by the environment around them, this shapes the child's developmental outcome whether it be positive or negative (Gray and MacBlain, 2015). Bronfenbrenner's theory demonstrates the importance education and family situations have on the child, which is vital when it concerns something as serious at HIV (Gray and MacBlain, 2015). Campbell et al (2012) give a visual representation of Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory from the child's perspective, using drawings for the children to describe the roles they have to take on due to their parents contracting HIV/AIDS.

The United Nations (2015) have set out sustainable development goals to reach by 2030 that contain targets such as ending the AIDS epidemic, ensuring access to sexual health to everyone and ensuring universal access to affordable, essential medicines. However, the UN (2016) Millennium Development Goals targeted to halt HIV/AIDS by 2015, and although new HIV infections fell, they have had to address the issue again over the next 15 years.

In conclusion, HIV is a virus that once contracted, never leaves the body and if untreated is terminal (Aids, 2016). Although a decrease in cases was seen from 2002 until 2013, not enough sufferers receive treatment (Avert, 2016). If the correct treatment is given for HIV, sufferers should live as long as those not infected with the virus (Aids, 2016). HIV does not only affect certain countries or individuals (Public Health, 2016), although certain areas are at a higher risk of spreading the virus (World Health Organisation, 2016). Women have a higher risk of contracting HIV not only because of their biological make-up but also due to how they are viewed in society in different cultures (Higgins, Hoffman and Dworkin, 2010). It has been noted that education reduces the risk of HIV (Harber, 2014) and governments have taken action to further reduce infection by introducing it into the curriculum (Duflo et al, 2007). Government services and NGO's do help other countries to educate individuals on

HIV and reduce the risk of spreading, although cultural beliefs do act as a barrier for help (Moreno, 2007). Looking at the evidence given throughout this essay surrounding education, family and governments it is clear to see Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory (Gray and MacBlain, 2015). This paper has analysed the correlation between the socio-cultural perspectives and factors in the environment and the effect it has on the child; whilst also critically examining international perspectives.

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Should educational policy-making always be evidence-based? A critical discussion

The notion of evidence-based research (EBR) in policymaking stemmed from evidence-based medicine in the early 1990s. EBR is based largely on empiricism and positivism, which emphasises the use of experience and evidence to derive knowledge. Since it was already widely used in medicine then, the prospect of using credible evidence to inform policy-making became hard to refute (Black, 2001). This essay attempts to deconstruct the relationship between EBR and policy by looking at its three main areas of influence - politics, practice and research.

Two underlying attitudes in policy-making that encourage the use of EBR are pragmatism and neo-liberalism. As Solesbury (2001) explains, research has taken a utilitarian turn within policy due to economic and social priorities as it offers insights into efficiencies and shortfalls of existing practices. A common aphorism, “knowledge is power”, encapsulates the tension that politicians face when developing new policies and justifies the prolific use of EBR. It is especially so in comparison to purely ideologically driven policies. An example would be the topic of academisation. Education Secretary Nicky Morgan received public backlash recently for proposing forced academisation on borderline schools despite the lack of evidence supporting the conversion (BBC, 2015; The Guardian, 2014a).

It is fairly straightforward to see why EBR is supported - it is systematic, valid, relevant, and translate into solutions (Davis, 1999). However, while the shift towards EBR is clear, it does not mean that ideologies are phased out. As Lomas’ (2000) shows, there is an explicit and unavoidable link between ideologies, beliefs and interests and political structures in policy making. When used with a political agenda, EBRs become ideological presuppositions that are almost impossible to argue with. As a result, it

stifles criticisms and public opinion on the basis that non-experts do not have the resources to argue what is presented and creates a false dichotomy of solution or non-solution (TLRP, 2008). People then become passive receivers, quality or argument decreases in favour of better evidence and ideology masked by evidence is not further debated, challenged or developed (Pile, 2011). It risks a bureaucratic and prescriptive system and hence, loss of public support and confidence.

EBR and ideology should never be mutually exclusive or used solely in policy-making, and for a good reason. Ideology is what crystallises identifiable societal values and helps specify political, social and economic ideals (Jost et al., 2009). On the other hand, good quality EBR brings about innovation and progress. However, it has to be understood that neither one should be used to vindicate the other but as Jost (2009 cited Converse 1964, pg. 206) cites, there should be a "functional interdependence" in which political knowledge and scientific expertise refine each other. Otherwise, it increases the risk of disregarding other equally important perceptions. For instance, in 2014 Ofsted found that low-level disruption was costing children about an hour's worth of learning in a day. Almost immediately, the blame was put on teachers' inability to manage disruptive behaviours (The Guardian, 2014b). The Secretary of State in the United Kingdom, Nicky Morgan, then enlists a behaviour expert seeking to rectify the problem by "developing better training" for teachers (DfE, 2015a). Knee-jerk solutions like this are common because of public accountability, but risks ignoring deeper underlying issues. Unions and teachers were quick to argue that the move "creates fear across the educational system" and demolishes teacher confidence (The Guardian, 2014b).

Hammersley (2002) also put forward that searching for understanding rather than seeking solutions will radically change the relationship between research and policy. Within the education sector, shared conversations and mutual influence should be encouraged between educators, researchers and politicians. That way, external, yet equally important insights like educational principles, professional experience or philosophical work can be more widely examined and included (TLRP, 2008).

To facilitate the discussions necessary for EBR in policy-making, educators would too, have to acknowledge and understand the implications of EBR. Critical discussions about EBR are impeded because of possible misconceptions about its role in policy-making. Educators have to understand two things. Firstly, EBR should not be seen as a challenge to their professionalism and authority because it tells people what to do. On the contrary, it should empower educators by presenting itself as an opportunity for change in the form of good quality decisions given credible evidence, paving the way for greater professional independence (Goldacre, 2013). Secondly, EBR is often equivocal, non-linear and inadequate and relies on objective judgement and local knowledge and skill to be applicable in different situations (Hammersley, 2002). Possible reasons include multiple objectives and consequences in the construction of EBR. Where possible, educators should look at all alternative interpretations and search for information about the reliability of new information (Hammersley, 2002 cited Lindblom 1979).

Hargreaves (1996), who first coined the term “evidence-based education”, pointed out that it is a fallacy to assume that that EBR in medicine and education are similar. In medicine, actual practitioners in hospitals and practice make up majority of contributors to medical journals and research. In education however, research is undertaken by academics in universities involved in teacher education. It shows little gap between users and researchers in medicine, but a large one in education. Quality research is therefore not presented in a form that is easily accessible to educators (Coe, 1999). This highlights the problem of information dissemination in educational research due to different interpretative frameworks (Hargreaves, 1996), making it exponentially harder for educators to link theory to practice. If end users were not able to get on level ground with researchers and drive the research agenda, it would likely result in the misuse of EBR in policy-making due to passivity and ignorance.

Hargreaves (1996) stated that there is a lack of continuity and accumulation of good quality EBR in education, and academic journals are cluttered with unusable research that nobody reads. It may partly be due to the decreasing relative relevance of research and its applicability as time passes. While some may assert that his views are “narrowly utilitarian and

philistine to research and intellectual life" (Davis, 1999:110), it does to a certain extent cast doubt on the use of EBR in policy-making today. It is absolutely plausible that one-off research of inferior quality that are potentially biased or misguided are being used in policy-making. A new press release by the DfE (2015b) states that bullying rates have "plummeted" and an estimated 30,000 children face less bullying now than in 2005. These figures are then used to justify the government's efforts in reducing bullying. However, a closer look at the evidence showed that those rates were only applicable to two groups of Year 10 students, one in 2005 and another in 2015, and therefore should not be seen as reflective of the entire student population (DfE, 2015c). Hammersley (1997) accurately indicates that attention should be shifted from the way solutions are presented to the way research is constructed by stating "as long as it is recognised that not every problem needs research to find a solution, and that not every question can be answered by research" (pp 35). Instead, research, while cumulative, should work towards building a systematic body of knowledge that educators can use to inform their practical judgement and conducting EBR is critical to its viability (Eillot, 2001). The role in which EBR plays in policy-making can then be represented as supportive and not entirely representative.

It is important to note tangible and intangible factors surrounding EBR, for example the nature of the research itself. First, Ozga (2000) attempted to define the key differences between policy-controlled research and self-controlled research. As mentioned earlier in the essay, the biggest difference is the interplay of power and knowledge when working with a set agenda. It is primarily because the research itself is funded by an organisation, giving it a "symbolic, constitutive and investigative role" (Ozga, 2000 cited Marginson, 1993, pp17). The level of objectivity researchers have as they take on the assumptions and communication methods of policy-makers is questioned (Ozga, 2000 cited Marginson, 1993, pp17). To a certain extent, the concept of policy-controlled research may also limit research boundaries as researchers modify their agenda to secure funding. Black (2001) corroborates this by mentioning that the research is considered less of a problem solving and more a process to create debate or argument for a set agenda. Policy-controlled research is

fairly commonplace in the DfE, with several major researches started by the department itself, or an associated branch like Ofsted (DfE, 2015d; DfE, 2015c). There are, however, possible measures to take to minimise the impact of policy control. From a researcher's point of view, it includes explicitly stating reflexive research goals and sources of funding, having reciprocity between research and policy and ensuring continuity of independent research (Ozga, 2000). Funders, on the other hand, must understand the limited value of single researches and review their knowledge of how research affects policy.

Intangible factors affecting credibility is found primarily in the methodology of EBR. Research can be conducted through a multitude of methods like randomised controlled trials, case studies and analysed through ways like meta-analytic, correlation or descriptive-longitudinal. The problem is, any research considered "repeatable" are essentially valid scientifically (Shuttleworth, 2008). That leaves a wide grey area of doubt, especially for EBRs in policy-making, where validity and reliability are seldom questioned. Other potential impactful factors include the applicability of small-scale research to a larger population (Coe, 2013), or the preference of publication of positive results (loannidis, 2005), and common forms of bias like the Hawthorne, Pygmalion or Placebo effects (Draper, 2014). Specifically within the context of policy-making, time is one of the most important factors that affect credibility. Politicians' short tenures in the government means that they have to make great impact in the shortest time in order to exert maximum influence. Quality research, however, takes time to construct and produce results. By the time evidence is fit for presentation, it may not necessarily be useful anymore (Rutter, 2012). The diverse educational landscape and constantly changing dynamics of education also accounts for time sensitivity.

There will always be ethical considerations in research as long as selective action is taken to make a change in an individual's life. There is considerable research into the ethics of incorporating research into practice, research methodologies and analysis as well (Davis, 1999). The greatest difference between EBR in medicine and in education policy is perhaps the outcome. In medicine, it is discrete and measurable or in other words, quantitative - either survival or death. In education, the effects of

research are more qualitative and leave much more to be desired. While the goals of research remain the same for both fields, it can be said that in education, parents are more likely to deny an intervention into their child's only opportunity in the educational system, which is perfectly understandable (Rutter, 2012). However, this is a debate where a common consensus will never be reached. So while ethical considerations have to be taken into account, it is largely left to the how research methodologies acknowledge and take responsibility for them (Davis, 1999).

This paper has briefly talked about the three main elements involved in educational policy-making and a few observations and recommendations can be made. Firstly, ideologies are imperative to policy-making and should not be seen as an opposition to EBR. EBR, on the other hand, should not be considered an instrumental, comprehensive solution but viewed as a general guide with minimal influence on policy decision, which would allow other intellectual resources inform policy as well. Weiss (1970, cited by Black, 2001) proposes an 'enlightenment model' where research challenges conventionality and paves the decision-making terrain.

Secondly, a cumulative character needs to be built into EBR to make it a sustainable and reliable source of information for policy, driven by the end users themselves. Accessibility has to be widened as well. To cultivate a mind-set of openness and shared conversation for research, solid grounding has to be established in the form of theoretical research knowledge in educators, availability of support and encouragement of widespread understanding.

Thirdly, while there is an indispensable relationship between funding and research, rigour should be established through explicitness and acknowledgement of expectations, goals and political influences. A possible suggestion was to shift commissioning responsibility to end-users instead (Black, 2001). Where methodology is considered, there has to be a consensus between policy-makers, researchers and end-users on how evidence is presented fairly and completely (Slavin, 2002). While time cannot be controlled, research in view of time constraints should focus on the accumulation of progress over one-time breakthroughs to substantially improve practice over time.

In conclusion, to get the desired level of real democracy, the role and expectations between research and policy has to be more realistic. The current level of engagement and involvement of end users will also have to be looked at. Permeability, levels of discussions and understanding in relation to fairness and applicability have to be raised. EBR is indeed a useful source of reliable evidence for progress, warranted that these problems are properly laid out and discussed. In summary, yes, EBR should always be included in policy-making, but to use it as a primary influence would be foolish and unrealistic.

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A reflection on education policy and 'choice' in education

The education system has changed drastically over the last forty years and has begun to step away from local authority control to educational establishments having more autonomy over both finances and education. The marketisation of the education system was originally legislated under the Conservative government during the late 1980s. The New Right political ideology was enforced to enable parental choice for an educational establishment. The competition was driven by Ofsted (Office for Standard of Education) reports, as well as the publication of school's examination results. They provided a brief insight into the standard of education, teaching and pupil achievement, to support parents in their decision making. National newspapers published school examination results in ranking order, which created further competition to attract consumers. The purpose of 'naming and shaming' schools was to primarily raise standards and make schools accountable, however, it highlighted outstanding and failing schools and thus began to create social segregation within the system. When Labour came into power in 1997, Tony Blair, the then prime minister, stated that education would be at the top of the agenda. When the Third Way was implemented it was evident that they had adopted some of the more traditional right wing ideology (neo-liberalism) as it was so embedded within the education system. This article will discuss the political ideology, policies and legislations brought in by the Conservative government. It will further explore how the Labour government continued to work with this political ideology to develop their own policies known as the Third Way and how this has greatly influenced

my ability to be able choose the type of education I have selected for my daughter.

James Callaghan, the then Labour leader. It was during his time in office that the country was suffering from economic difficulties and the belief that the recession and education could be linked (Abbott et al, 2013). Callaghan, who was the first prime minister to give a speech on education was concerned with levels of education taught in Comprehensive schools and for the first time educational professionals were being questioned about their ability to teach the curriculum. It was famously known as the ‘Great Debate’ and was held at Ruskin College in 1976. He announced that the education system was failing children. He raised concerns over the curriculum that it was too creative (Ward and Eden, 2009) and some students were leaving school without the basic skills, whilst the brighter children were not being encouraged to embark on courses that would lead to a potential career in industry. Most significantly, it was not meeting the demands of industry which was consequently impacting on the economy (Bartlett and Burton, 2012). Callaghan felt that a curriculum needed to be developed that would provide pupils with the basic knowledge they needed but that would enable business and parental involvement (Ward and Eden, 2009).

Just three years following Callaghan’s speech, the Conservative party came into power and made significant changes to the education system. The party had mixed views on how they believed that it should be controlled, however the strong leadership of Margaret Thatcher enabled the opposing views to work alongside one another. Over the course of eighteen years New Right, the political ideology, encompassed neo-liberalism and neo-conservatism, which worked collaboratively to theoretically enable parental choice for their child’s education through a competitive market. Neo-liberals believed that the state should have less control over the education system, enabling ‘a free-market economy’ through

which competition provides more choice for consumers (Bartlett and Burton, 2012, p139) whereby the schools are the producers and the consumers are the parents.

Neo-conservatives believed in state control, tradition, upholding standards, morals and values (Bartlett and Burton, 2012). As a result, the National Curriculum was implemented, it encompassed more traditional teaching methods and subjects, with end of key stage tests and examinations which could closely monitor student progress. Many of these changes were implemented through the Education Reform Act (1988), subsequently followed by the Office for Standards of Education (OFSTED) in the Education Act (1992). It was introduced as a way of monitoring curriculum delivery, teaching standards and leadership throughout the school. Reports, which graded the school from 'outstanding' to 'requires improvement', were then publicised for parents and schools to view. A combination of Ofsted reports and publicised league tables of G.C.S.E. and A-level examination results provided a comparative view of schools, highlighting schools which were achieving, whilst identifying failing schools (Garratt and Forrester, 2012). For the first time schools were now beginning to compete against each other to attract their consumers.

When Labour came into power in 1997, under the direction of Tony Blair, he was quoted in the manifesto as saying that at the top of the agenda would be 'Education, education, education!' (Blair, 1997). Many had hoped that a new change in government would alter the educational provision of the country and return to progressive education, however that was not the case. When New Labour introduced the Third Way it had adopted many of the Conservative policies, in particular neo-liberalism (Chitty, 2014: Power and Whitty, 1999). It maintained the marketisation of the education system which largely went against the beliefs of the traditional Labour party as it began to move away from state control and adopted Conservative

privatisation (Garratt and Forrester, 2012). New initiatives, which were of a social democracy nature were introduced to improve the lives of those who were from areas of socio-economic disadvantage, to enable them equality, inclusion and better access to education. They also introduced changes to the curriculum to help raise standards, thus improve pupil attainment (Garratt and Forrester, 2012). However, these contradictory initiatives created inequalities within the system (Brehony, 1997) and led to some working class children not being able to receive the same quality of education as their affluent peers.

I was educated in my local primary and comprehensive school during the 1980s and 1990s. It was the expectation at the time that you attended your catchment school and parents had little choice where their child could be educated. My choices were further restricted owing to the fact that I was raised by my mother on social benefits with no means of transportation other than public transport. Although I had achieved relatively well in my G.C.S.E. examinations I had a lack of drive and focus so I did not successfully further my education until my late twenties. My mother however, had always instilled good work ethics, including achieving well in education, which became apparent when I became a mother and realised that successful careers are largely based upon our ability to achieve well in education. This is particularly so for higher education which opens doors to many opportunities. Upon reflection this has impacted on the decisions I have made for my own children as I want to ensure they attend an outstanding school.

My youngest daughter, was born in December 1999 and was then the youngest of three children. At the time the Labour government had been in power for two years, so by this point the Third Way was established within the education system. As a single parent of three children, living on social benefits, no transportation or potential career, I found myself knowing very little about the education system

with only my personal experience as a comparison. When the time came for them to begin their education, including my daughter, they attended our catchment primary school. It is often the case that working class families' have little knowledge of how the system works. Their beliefs on parental choice suggest they are more likely to select their catchment school which may not necessarily be the most suitable nor provide the best quality of education for their child and, combined with geographical proximity, they are more likely to be at a disadvantage to affluent middle class families (Exley, 2014).

Prior to my daughter beginning her formal education I returned to college and trained as a nursery nurse. A few years later I began working as a teaching assistant. It was during this time that I began to learn more about the educational system and how parents had significantly more choice where to send their children than when I was at school. Nevertheless, it became apparent that whilst the government had legislated parental choice by the marketisation of the education system, in reality, this was not always taking place. It had become market-like, otherwise known as a 'quasi-market' which enabled parents a prescribed choice by selecting several schools in ranking order. Geographical proximity, often used as a criterion by oversubscribed schools, sometimes resulted in their first choice being declined (Burgess et al, 2011) and having to opt for a school that was less popular or undersubscribed (Woods et al, 1998). This political ideology also assumes that parents are well informed, have means of transporting their child to their choice school, have the time and resources to fund additional costs and if necessary relocate (Garratt and Forrester, 2012). However, not all families have the means to make this possible, and consequently children from poor socio-economic backgrounds will go to their nearest school. Furthermore, schools have been known to 'cherry pick' more affluent pupils whose parents are well educated. This has been more apparent since the publication of league tables as schools are under

increasing pressure to raise standards and pupil attainment (Coldron et al, 2010: Whitty and Power, 2001). Inevitably the quasi market has created a system of inequality and social segregation (Harris, 2012) as middle-class, well-educated parents understand what is necessary to obtain a place at their chosen school (Exley, 2005: Ball et al, 1996).

When the opportunity arose to move house when my daughter was seven years old, I specifically chose an area where the local high school was oversubscribed, had a good reputation, excellent examination results and an outstanding Estyn report (Wales' equivalent of Ofsted). Anticipating that would be attending high school in a few years' time I felt that this would be in her best interest. However, I was aware that the local primary school did not have a particularly good reputation nor had it fared well on the last inspection. I reviewed the Estyn report for an alternative school, which was a twenty-minute walk from our home. Having received an outstanding report following their recent inspection, I enquired if they had any vacancies and my daughter was fortunately offered a place. It was also the feeder school for the local high school where I intended my daughter to be educated, consequently she was automatically offered a place as it was also our catchment secondary school. My daughter thrived in her new school environment and she was well prepared for entering into high school. I am certain that had we remained at our previous home, my daughter (and her siblings) would not have gained a place at the high school.

As a parent, I have been able to use the Estyn reports to my advantage as I understood the grading criteria and spent the time to read the lengthy documents. Both Ofsted and Estyn were established following the Education Act (1992). Inspectors are requested to inspect all state funded schools, generally every four years, although this may be more frequent if the school requires improvement. The purpose is to ensure pupils are receiving a good standard of

education, which enables them to make adequate progress and achievement for their age. Furthermore, they observe the non-academic development in pupils such as ‘spiritual, moral, social and culture development.’ They also review the school’s finances and ensure they are being distributed and managed effectively (Education Act, 1992, p2). The reports, not only provide an overview for parents, but can support schools to develop their strengths and identify their weaknesses in order to further improve the quality of education. Nevertheless, it has intensified the pressure for teachers to ensure that students are taught the prescribed curriculum and it has also reduced teachers’ autonomy on what they are able to teach and thus reduces opportunities for creativity (Bartlett and Burton, 2012; Galton and Macbeath, 2008) and spontaneity. Research also suggests that Ofsted inspections can impact on students’ performance during their exams, albeit minor, it is nonetheless an important consideration (Rosenthal, 2004). However, in order to enable the marketisation of the education system, competition must be pursued. Ofsted and Estyn therefore provide a way to ensure this takes place as schools begin to compete against each other to provide a better standard of education, thus attracting more consumers. The marketisation of education has now become a trend since its introduction in the 1980s. It has continued to be enforced by the government to this current day and is likely to continue for many years to come.

In spite of the numerous changes in schools, my daugher adapted well, and I feel that this was partly due to the consistency in the curriculum as the National Curriculum was taught throughout each of the schools. Although the standard of teaching differed, the subjects taught remained consistent. The National Curriculum which is taught in all maintained schools is a continuing trend dating back to the 19th century when the 3R’s (reading, writing and arithmetic) were introduced as part of the basic curriculum for working class children

(Bartlett and Burton, 2012). It has remained the main focus in the curriculum and continues to the current day. It consists of ‘three core subjects (English, mathematics and science) and seven foundation subjects (history, geography, technology, music, art, physical education and, at secondary level, a modern foreign language)’ (Bartlett and Burton, 2012, p104).

When the Labour government was in power during my daughter’s primary education they focused heavily on literacy and numeracy in a bid to raise standards. In England, they implemented the ‘literacy hour’ and ‘numeracy hour’ but this impacted on the more creative subjects and consequently the quality of education declined as children were no longer receiving a ‘broad and balanced’ curriculum (Chitty, 2008). The government also introduced standardised testing at the end of key stage one, two and three known as Standard Assessment Tests (SAT’s) to assess the children’s knowledge, as well as identify their progress. It was a reflective tool for teachers to evaluate their own teaching, whilst at the same time holding schools accountable. It undoubtedly put a huge strain on teacher’s workload as well as unnecessary pressure on the children (Bartlett and Burton, 2012). Although SAT’s were introduced in Wales, they had been abolished by the time my daughter reached this stage in her education, much to my relief. She did however, sit less formal statutory tests at the end of key stage two and three which were used to place her in the appropriate ability streaming within the school. Assessments in education was a pattern that was first established with the Education Act (1944), otherwise known as the Butler Act, which introduced free secondary education for all. The type of education received was determined by the 11+, an examination which placed a child in one of three schools within the tripartite system, namely grammar, technical or secondary modern. There were many criticisms of this form of education. According to Bartlett and Burton (2012), the testing methods were unfair and inaccurate,

which resulted in huge social inequalities and, consequently, the tripartite system was phased out as comprehensive schools were developed. This resulted in the 11+ being abolished. Those schools which remained a grammar school, however, maintained the examination as an entry requirement into the establishment, which is still present today.

The publication of the G.C.S.E. and A-level results in league tables enabled me to observe how well the students were achieving in specific schools, which influenced my choice as to where I wanted my daughter to be educated. Nevertheless, I was aware that, whilst league tables provided me with an insight into the overall achievements of the educational establishment, the results were not necessarily a true reflection. It also indicates current performance, which can alter over time and largely depends on the cohort of students. Hoyle and Robinson (2003) suggests that rather than a yearly league table of results, it should be based upon results from four years. This would provide a more rounded view of the results. However, Leckie and Goldstein (2010, p833) provided a conflicting argument as their research suggests that even with several years' performance it still provides 'unreliable and misleading guides for school choice'.

My daughter is now sixteen and nearing the end of her statutory education. She has completed some of her G.C.S.E. examinations and will sit the remainder in the months to follow. She has begun contemplating her future and what it may entail. She has considered continuing her education at her school's sixth form but has also viewed numerous further education colleges across North Wales and North West England. However, the course which my daughter wishes to pursue is not local, we have looked at college websites and been to their open days, we have also viewed their Ofsted reports and been informed of their position on the league tables. This has enabled us to select the college which we felt would provide my

daughter with the best education and opportunities for her future. In spite of living out of the catchment area by sixty miles, my daughter has successfully gained a place at an oversubscribed outstanding beacon college. As a result of this we will be relocating in a few months' time. Whilst this may seem a little extreme to some people, I want to provide the best possible educational opportunities for my children in the hope that they can be successful in their future careers.

Whilst our financial status is not middle class I have learnt over the years what I have needed to do in order to provide my children with good quality education. Middle class parents will often ensure that their home is within close proximity to a good school and if not, some families would consider relocation. Some parents are willing to go to great lengths to ensure their child is accepted into the preferred school, including giving a false address, temporarily moving into rented accommodation or attending the local church for entrance into the church school (Coldron et al, 2010).

Whilst the current government has maintained the marketisation of the education system by means of competition between schools, it is evident that it lacks equity. Ofsted reports provide an overview into the day to day running of a school, the leadership, the quality of education and pupil development. League tables, however, provide a detailed list of ranked schools' examination results across key stages four and five. These documents provide parents with information to decide on a suitable educational establishment for their child. Middle class parents, who have a good level of education, often use the information for their child's benefit to ensure they can access the most appropriate school. Conversely, working class parents are less likely to know and understand the system and are more inclined to send their child to the local catchment school which may not be the most suitable, undersubscribed and potentially underperforming. Some parents may have the capacity for social mobility to enable

their child to access a specific school but not all families have that option. As a result, children from some socio-economic backgrounds are not necessarily able to access the outstanding schools due to geographical proximity which may lead to inequality and discrimination in the education system. In this instance, working class children are placed at a disadvantage to their more affluent peers. It may also result in social segregation if working class children are unable to access outstanding schools. Whilst social segregation has come a long way since the nineteenth century, it still exists within today's education system and evidently more needs to be done to close the gap further to ensure equality for all children.

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Delivering the curriculum and being graded outstanding are central to being an effective primary school teacher.

The aim of this paper is to critically discuss the above statement with reference to key literature and texts. The paper will aim to discuss effective pedagogy, including considerations of the government's expectations of teachers and teaching. Throughout this paper key documents will be discussed, compared and contrasted, whilst exploring international ideas and practice.

According to Skinner (2010) 'pedagogy' and 'pedagogue' are terms commonly used around the ideology of educational debate and policy, in order to influence practice. Skinner (2010) argues that pedagogy could also be described as a term for methods of teaching or approaches. However, Alexander (2009) would argue that it is more than that, and that the word pedagogy is a word that has been taken for granted in many countries, but in England it goes almost unheard of. Alexander (2009) argues that pedagogy is not just the methods of teaching, but it's the "what, how and why" of teaching, influencing teachers to question their practice in order to deliver their lessons to a high standard, and to inspire children to want to learn and further their knowledge (Alexander, 2009, p28). Moreover, Alexander (2009) argues that the government in England 'dictate' what is taught in classrooms and there is no room for teachers to have professional freedom in what they teach, to enable to fit their lessons according to the individuals they are teaching. In contrast, in countries like Finland, this is not the case. According to Lopez (2012) Finnish head teachers and teachers have freedom and independence when delivering the curriculum, and the Finnish

curriculum is far less academic than the curriculum in England. Lopez (2012) also suggests that Finland is the only country in the developed world where pupils attend the least number of hours per week, but still get better grades in the long term. Thus, in Finland, children do not partake in compulsory exams until they are aged seventeen to nineteen, and although the children's progress is still monitored, this is done in a formative manner, with no results being compared, graded or scored (Lopez, 2012).

Sir Jim Rose recognised the importance of pedagogy, and in 2008 when the Labour Government were in power, Rose introduced a proposal to reform curriculum for primary schools in England (DCSF, 2009). The aim of this review was to 'make it easier for teachers', giving them the freedom to teach in ways according to their own judgements (Bartlett and Burton, 2012). This review was to capture the importance of the primary phase, recognising the importance of development throughout childhood, and gave primary school teachers a pathway to inspire children's learning (DCSF, 2009). Throughout the Rose review (DCSF, 2009), Jim Rose identifies the importance of the curriculum being based on the whole child, and suggests that the curriculum should be suited to children's development to enrich their learning experiences and individual needs. Furthermore, Rose (DCSF, 2009) also highlights the importance of areas of development throughout this report, and illustrates that a carefully designed curriculum can enable children to learn "physically, intellectually, emotionally, socially, culturally, morally and spiritually" (DCSF, 2009, p9). To consider these areas in a government proposal is absolutely critical, as it demonstrates the understanding of child development, and the theory behind the practice. Theorists such as Piaget (1962), Vygotsky (1978) and Bruner (1986) also advocate these areas for learning and development (Gray and MacBlain, 2012). This proves that when

writing his review, Rose has considered a child centred approach, with pedagogy and theories of learning at the very heart of it.

According to Gray and MacBlain (2012) Jean Piaget advocated that children learn in ages and stages, and learn through cognitive development. Piaget identified that children needed to be active learners and learn through discovering things for themselves. This is an essential part of learning, as it could be argued that children in the UK, are not 'finding themselves' or having enough time before they start school to truly find what they like doing or what they are interested in (Coughlan, 2008). Coughlan (2008) argues that while children as young as four are starting school in England and "ploughing through a fixed curriculum", children in countries such as Sweden, Denmark and Finland are still "ploughing up the kindergarten sandpit" (Coughlan, 2008, p1).

This shows that on a global scale, countries around the world are recognising the importance of play in the early stages of a child's life, and how teachers can further a child's knowledge through play. England fail to recognise this, and still send children to school at the age of four, when other countries such as Sweden, Denmark or Finland, send their children to school at age seven. Lopez (2012) argues the children from such countries are higher achievers than those in England.

It could be suggested that the government in England need to introduce an approach that is completely child-centred, as a later school starting age will have a positive impact on the economy long term. However, Sharp (2002) argues that an early start in education, benefits children from disadvantaged backgrounds in England, in order to further their academic skills, and some parents would rather send their children to school earlier, to enable them to go to work (Sharp, 2002). Sharp (2002) also argues that the school starting age in England has been the same since the 1870 Education Act and this

was put in place at these times to save children from exploitation, and from unhealthy conditions on the streets. This also meant that historically, children could start school earlier with the intentions of leaving school earlier, so that they could go to work. However, currently, this is not the case as children have to stay in education until the age of eighteen in England (Gov.uk, 2015). Furthermore, Ellyat (2013) argues that an early school starting age could potentially damage a child's learning for life, and suggests that an early school starting age can damage a child's well-being and attainment. Ellyat (2013) identifies that children need an environment rich in creativity, and play, in order to develop happily and healthily. This evidence shows that there are wider issues that would constitute towards being an effective teacher. Simply being graded as outstanding by Ofsted only fulfils specific target areas defined by Ofsted. These target areas do not consider children's individual strengths and a 'one size fits all' approach does not work, as children learn in a variety of different ways. Weale (2016) agrees with this and suggests that Ofsted need a more 'inclusive approach' to education.

In 2010, when the coalition government came into power, they released a White Paper called 'The Importance of Teaching' (DfE, 2010). A 'White Paper' is completed when the government release proposed future legislation for the country. This document called for "radical reform" (DfE, 2010:4) within the education system in England, in terms of how teaching is delivered to children. The purpose of its release was that the government recognised that the education system in England had flaws and the aim of the white paper was to change the way teachers delivered their teaching. The document highlights change for the following areas: teaching and leadership, pupil behaviour, curriculum, assessment and qualifications, school control, accountability, school improvement and school funding. However, Waterman (2010) suggests that this paper has been the most radical reform since the Education Reform Act of

1988, and that the white paper is very old fashioned with a “1960’s feel” to it (Waterman, 2010:10). However, Garratt and Forrester (2012) would argue that education policy is ever changing, and that the many different factors of education depend on the different levels of prominence. Fullan (1994) suggests that the government try to utilise ‘top down’ approaches when considering education reform, however, research shows top down approaches tend to have a poor history for educational improvement (Fullan, 1994). Furthermore, the government still remain to use top down approaches for educational reform, and are still continuing to introduce reforms such as The Importance of Teaching White Paper (DfE, 2010) utilising a ‘top down’ approach (Fullan, 1994). The White Paper (DfE, 2010) enables the government to take control over how teaching is delivered in England, with the aim of the education system being delivered to children according to their ideology of a high quality education. Michael Gove (the conservative education secretary in 2010) unveiled the White Paper to the House of Commons in 2010 stating that the white paper takes the best ideas from other countries and applies them to the English education system (Vasagar, 2010). However, it could be argued that the purpose of this white paper is to emphasise the focus on children’s attainment in academic subjects, and sets out guidance to make it easier for head teachers to remove “incompetent teachers” (Vasagar, 2010, p1). Therefore, it could be argued that the government are blaming the flawed English education system on the teachers in the country, and not themselves and their reforms.

According to the Ofsted Annual Report (2011) the government’s The importance of teaching White Paper (2010) aims to ‘close the gap’ between specific groups of students, and the report (2010) identifies key themes reflected throughout it. Ofsted (2011) argues that the quality of teaching is too variable, with a variety of teaching throughout England being “no better than satisfactory” (Ofsted, 2011,

p40). Furthermore, Ofsted continue to suggest that the education system in England is facing a considerable amount of challenges. Therefore it could be argued that there is an enormous amount of pressure on teachers, to be able to comply to this rigorous criteria to fulfil the government's expectations of teachers. According to Dix (2013), to be graded 'outstanding' by Ofsted, teachers need to deliver a form of "approved pedagogy" and enthral the audience. Furthermore, Dix (2013) goes on to suggest that an Ofsted inspector will make their decision of a teacher within the first five minutes of a lesson inspection, and that an important aspect of teaching is self-evaluation.

Mujis et al. (2011) agrees that self-evaluation is paramount, however suggests that it is not the only aspect of effective teaching. Mujis et al. (2011) identifies that there are many contributors to be an effective teacher, and effectiveness is measured by a child's achievement and opportunities provided for a child's learning. Mujis et al. (2011) identifies contributors to effective learning and suggests factors that contribute to effective classroom management. For example, lesson planning, starting lessons on time, arranging appropriate seating arrangements, dealing with any behaviour issues or classroom disruptions, talking to the class in an appropriate language, and delivering the curriculum to a high standard, explaining specific aims and objectives, and the purpose behind what they are learning. For example Wyse et al (2013) suggests that if children are taking part in a handwriting task, the purpose of the task should be thoroughly explained by the teacher. For example a teacher could be teaching a literacy lesson about punctuation, and the task could be for the class to introduce punctuation into a piece of writing. The teacher would then have to explain the purpose of the punctuation i.e, punctuation makes it easier for readers to read a piece of writing, and it also furthers the child's knowledge about punctuation. Therefore, an effective teacher would be providing a

child with the opportunity for learning, but with a correct explanation of purpose. Wyse et al (2013) also suggests that an effective teacher gives a child constructive feedback on how to further their knowledge, and that the greatest form of feedback is when a teacher sits next to a child and engages in conversation about how to raise the standard of their work. Nutbrown (1999) would agree with this, and suggest that the most effective form of teaching, is when a child and teacher engage in a two-way process.

It could also be suggested that good teachers can provide incentives to enable children to learn by providing them with learning tasks that are fun, and rewarding them for good work, with stickers, merits etc. B.F Skinner (b1904-d1990) argues that behaviourist approaches are vital in teaching, and that incentives are an essential part of operant conditioning, for example, providing a child with a sticker if they have produced an excellent piece of work, to enable the child to continue to perform to a high standard. Skinner believed that positive reinforcers and negative reinforcers were the best way of handing behaviour within the classroom (Gray and MacBlain, 2012). He identified that children should have praise (positive reinforcers) for positive behaviour, and punishments (negative reinforcers) for negative behaviour. However, there is a particular weakness with Skinner's theory. Some children may crave attention, whether it is positive or negative, and this can be a difficult task for teachers to deal with when trying to deliver their lesson to the highest standard (Mellor, 2001) Furthermore, 'The Importance of Teaching' White Paper (2010) plans to address behaviour, by increasing authority and emphasising discipline in schools. However, it could be argued that 'bad behaviour' is just children being disruptive in the classroom, for example, talking when the teacher is trying to teach a lesson. Thus, Alexander (2008) argues that talking and developing social skills is a vital factor of development, so teachers must allow children time for talking. Furthermore, Alexander (2008) suggests that language

enables children to further their thinking, and unfortunately, in a classroom setting, teachers do more talking than children. Socio-Constructivist, Lev Vygotsky (1978) believes that language is a vital aspect of development, and that a child's learning environment is an essential contributor to learning (Gray and MacBlain, 2012). Vygotsky valued the teacher, and the role of the adult, and suggested that children need a teacher figure in order to progress their thinking, placing emphasis on how the teacher could help a child to move forward and develop their ideas. The Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) is Vygotsky's model for development, however, he saw learning as a process that results in development (Gray and MacBlain, 2012). Greatly influenced by Vygotsky, Jerome Bruner adapted the ZPD and introduced the term 'scaffolding' in that the knowledgeable adult acts as a support to guide the child through to the next stage of the ZPD, and by doing this children have extended their knowledge, and been able to do it for themselves the time after (Bruce, 2011).

Overall, it could be argued that there is no one true 'recipe' when it comes to education. As Alexander (2009) argues "work towards a pedagogy of repertoire, rather than recipe, and of principle, rather than prescription." (Alexander, 2009, p28). By this statement, Alexander is suggesting that teachers need to use their own judgements, alongside the curriculum and policy to deliver teaching effectively. On reviewing the evidence, it appears that there is no specific formula for being an effective teacher, as there are many different perspectives that constitute effective teaching. However, teachers have to follow the dominant discourse, which is influenced by the government, and the policies they provide. An 'outstanding' teacher could show a great deal of innovative ability and be extremely effective in their role, for example, thinking out of the box, allowing lessons to be fun, enjoyable and informative, thereby maximising a pupils potential for learning. However, this might not

strictly fit the government's rigorous criteria. It could be argued that there are many other factors central to a child's learning. For example, being in a happy, nurturing and secure environment to enable them to learn and fulfil their potential. However, the government appear to have a very narrow minded, restricted view of an effective teacher. The word pedagogy and its application to teaching and learning is not discussed within 'The Importance of Teaching' White Paper (DfE, 2010) yet this is an absolutely essential and important aspect of teaching. The government appear to be drawing on ideas from countries such as Singapore, in order to maximise the future potential economy. However in reality, the ideas from Finland, Denmark and Sweden prove that many of the government's ideas appear to be wrong. In England, the government's focus is purely on summative assessments and testing children to fit into the criteria expected for the country. By contrast, in Finland, formative assessments are utilised with a variety of techniques allowing the teacher's and head teacher's freedom to set their own goals. Teachers are able to plan around the individuals in their class, and it is a more child-centred, personal way of teaching children. It could be argued, that although the government look to Finland as a means of mirroring their standards, this has not been actioned. The government still put a considerable amount of focus on standardised testing which places unnecessary pressures on both teachers and children. In conclusion, it could be argued that the government need to look towards the Scandinavian countries as a model for improving teaching and learning in the UK.

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