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Early Work By Student Researchers

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Editorial

Welcome to Issue 4 of ***Spark***.

Spark *continues into its fourth edition where we would like to celebrate and acknowledge students' outstanding work in Education Studies and Early Childhood Studies. We welcome work put forward by students and are happy to answer any queries. Please contact any member of the editorial team or me at t.l.mills@2011.ljmu.ac.uk with queries or comments on this issue.*

Leanne Mills *(Student editor)*
Level 6 Education Studies and Early Years

We are delighted to see that students continue to be keen to publish in SPARK. This edition of SPARK includes submissions from Level 5 and Level 6 students. We would like to commend Leanne Mills and Lewis Parry for their contributions as student editors and encouragement to other students to consider publication in SPARK. If you would like to get involved as a student editor please contact any member of the editorial team or me at A.Daly@ljmu.ac.uk

Angie Daly *(Coordinating staff editor)*
Senior Lecturer

“The impact of Globalisation is probably the most significant challenge currently facing national education systems”. A critical evaluation of this statement.

Jakub Bramwell
Education Studies and Physical Education student

The term ‘globalisation’ is one that ascertains many different political and economic views within the world spectrum, so much so that Robin Shields finds it such a variable concept that in many senses it lacks a concrete meaning (2013). Despite this, many different definitions are littered throughout educational literature, with Stromquist and Monkman understanding globalisation as bringing forth numerous and profound changes in the economic, cultural and political life of nations (2000). In support of these views, Carnoy and Rhoten reiterate that globalisation is a force reorganizing the world’s economy, finding that the main resources for that economy are increasingly knowledge and information therefore, supporting the statement that “globalisation is the most significant challenge currently facing national education systems” (2002). Furthermore, drawing from the notion put forward by Garratt and Forrester that the world is becoming a ‘single social system’ through the significant power of globalisation, political viewpoints from different nations such as the UK and Nepal will be used throughout the following text in order to gain a broader understanding of the policies differing nations implement whilst competing on a global scale (2012). This will be achieved through: critically evaluating the decentralization and privatisation of global education, focussing on American charter schools and UK academies; addressing the loss of culture that developing countries suffer through globalisation, through case

studies from Nepal and Ladakh before finally highlighting the significant role technology has played in globalisation as well as the performative culture present through the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA).

“Nothing better illustrates the globalization of education than the ongoing trend towards the decentralization of education in many countries” (Bray, 1996). Decentralisation is defined by Joseph Zajda and David Gamage as being the process of delegating or devolving authority and responsibility concerning the distribution and use of resources by the central government to local schools (2009). Throughout the world, national governments are reducing their involvement in education and looking to local communities, the private sector and charitable organisations to play a greater role in the operation of schools (Rhoten, 2000). One example of this comes from the United States, where the decentralisation of education has been furthered through the establishment of charter schools, which are funded by the government but are autonomous from local educational governance and have greater control over staffing, curriculum and teaching practices (Carnoy et al, 2008). The justification for these charter schools is to challenge the supposed uniformity of the state system through providing diversity and parental choice (Sarason, 1998). However, opponents of the decentralisation of education argue that the American government is solely reducing their own accountability of educational success or failure (Murphy, Mufti & Kassem, 2009). Following on from the decentralisation of education through charter schools in the US, is the privatisation of academy schools in the UK. Undoubtedly, a country’s financial stability plays a significant role in globalisation. As a result of this, most governments are under pressure to reduce the growth of public spending on education and to find other sources of funding for the expected expansion of their education system (Carnoy & Rhoten, 2002). This ultimately resulted in the

implementation of academy schools in 2005 by Tony Blair's New Labour government. Through doing so, the government was able to fundamentally shift spending on education in part onto the private sector.

Another criticism, this time regarding the apparent domination of education policy by issues of economic competitiveness, again lies with the privatisation of UK academy schools. Stephen Ball, arguing from his book, *The Education Debate*, states, "...the social and economic purposes of education have been collapsed into a single, overriding emphasis on policy making for economic competitiveness and an increasing neglect or side-lining of the social purposes of education" (2008). A concern which is reiterated by Alan Sears, who worries that through the implementation, and increasing power of privatised companies, mainly from the business and enterprise specialisms, that education is being pruned to match industrial needs (2003). This apprehension is highlighted through Manchester's co-sponsored academies, each of which specialises in preparing pupils for employment in a specific industry or commercial activity. One of these co-sponsors, Manchester Airport, has openly stated that the principle purpose of its academy will be to provide employees for the airport, leaving many parents pondering the question of why they would send their child to school for five years, just to learn how to become a baggage handler? These public-private schemes were implemented during the Education and Inspection Act (2006), which effectively divided the academy school population into two halves from age 14 onwards; an academic or vocational track. The former, designed for the 'more able' students offers a broad and balanced curriculum which includes English, maths, science, a foreign language, history or geography, a design and technology subject, and one of the arts. The latter, pursuing a work related diploma, will receive a narrower and more functionalist version of the core subjects (English, maths and science) and have no entitlement to a

language, history or geography, design and technology or the arts (Kassem & Garratt, 2009). Sceptics of these vocational courses, including Titcombe, believe that the 'easy' A*-C GCSE mark gained through successful completion of a work related diploma is a fraudulent way of head teachers gaining misleading test results for their school, something which is essential for survival as a result of the performance culture apparent today as a result of the pressures caused through globalisation in the form of national and international league tables (2008).

The international league tables previously mentioned take the form of the Programme for International School Assessment (PISA). Established in 2000, the PISA examination is designed to assess the knowledge of key subjects taught in schools (English, maths and science). Something which is supported by Carnoy and Rhoten as they state, "Testing and standards are part of a broader effort to increase accountability by measuring knowledge production and using such measures to assess educational attainment of policies" (2002). Every three years, 15 year old pupils from randomly selected schools within the 70 countries who take part sit the 2 hour test, with the next one, due to take place in 2015, focussing on science. Ultimately, it is an ongoing triennial survey designed for countries to use to compare their students' performance in relation to the impact of their governments policy changes (OECD, 2014). As a result of the global performative culture provided by the printing of the test results, a comparative approach can be taken from governments amongst all competing countries; who then have the luxury of making changes to their schooling systems in the hope of improving results next time.

"Everyone has the right to education… Elementary education shall be compulsory" (United Nations, 1948). This shift towards a rights-based perspective on education and development culminated in the creation of Education for All (EFA), whose most notable recent work

is the Dakar Framework for Action, a document that renewed the pledge of universal primary education and extended the target date for EFA to the year 2015 (UNESCO, 2014). Despite the obviously positive target of providing primary aged children with a compulsory education (with an impressive 164 governments world-wide pledged to achieve EFA by 2015) there are some downfalls. Statistically speaking, the *Global Monitoring Report* points out that 67 million children do not attend primary school and estimates that if current trends continue to progress this will increase to 72 million out-of-school children by the 2015 deadline (UNESCO, 2011). However, as the following case studies on primary education in Nepal and Ladakh point out, there are in fact substantial negatives associated with the westernised model of education which has been thrust upon developing countries through the globalisation of education (Ramirez, 2003). This is a view supported by Carol Black, who proposes that, "The expansion of the formal education has created a global 'monoculture' that embraces consumerism, non-sustainable uses of resources, exploitation and excessive individualism" (2011). Conversely, despite the national government in Nepal realising that education was key in developing a cohesive nation, the fact that the country contained many different ethnic, linguistic and religious groups resulted in maintaining national unity a major challenge. Thus, a commission convened by the government to lay the foundations for a national educational system proclaimed, "Schools and educational systems exist solely for the purpose of helping the youth of a nation to become better integrated into the society" (Nepal Education Planning Commission, 1956). Despite the effort to build a single nation and education system being largely successful (within 50 years, primary school enrolment jumped from a mere 9,000 to over 3.6 million (World Bank, 2001) by doing so the government marginalised many linguistic and religious minorities. They achieved this by successfully promoting the idea that these minority groups were backwards or deficient, whilst Hindus who spoke the national

Nepali language were forward looking and progressive, something which eventually caused enough friction to start a Civil War (Shields, 2013).

Nepal's history shows not only that primary education can be rapidly expanded in just a few generations, but also that this expansion can marginalise many groups within a society; something which perfectly supports the provocative claim made during the documentary 'Schooling the World: The Whiteman's Last Burden' that, "If you wanted to change an ancient culture in a single generation… you would change the way it educates its children" (2011). The film examines schooling in Ladakh, a remote area in India's Himalayan Mountains. As Robin Shields points out, the expansion of formal education has systematically eroded and destroyed traditional cultural values and ways of life (2013). This was achieved through students having to move away from their family homes to urban centres, where all instruction is in English, therefore resulting in them rarely speaking their native Ladakhi language (which was banned in schools under threat of punishment) ultimately resulting in them understanding or preserving very little of their cultural heritage. Examples such as this contradict the EFA's pledge to contain commitments to meet the needs of linguistic minorities; something which needs urgently addressing considering research has shown that students who learn in their mother tongue first are able to learn to read in a second language more quickly than if they are first taught the second language (Mehrotra, 1998). With this in mind, it is no surprise that the Ladakhi children do poorly in national exams and struggle to find jobs despite the sacrifices they have made to receive an education. In relation to this, Brigit Brock-Utne points out that economic circumstances tend to promote the use of colonial languages at the expense of indigenous languages, as text book publishers (who operate as for-profit companies) are most likely to concentrate their work in dominant languages i.e. English, as this will

yield more sales (2001). Consequently, globalisation of education throughout the westernised world has brought about language and cultural losses in developing countries through the decentralisation and privatisation of education due to the fact that the profit motive will inevitably gravitate towards dominant languages.

However, globalisation has the ability to counteract the issue of cultural loss in terms of predominantly English written text books through the form of technology with the EFA arguing that ICT offers alternatives that are more realistic, efficient and effective (UNESCO, 2011). Jeffery James wholeheartedly supports these beliefs, illustrating the main advantage of technology in globalised education being the ability of addressing the shortage of qualified teachers working within rural areas of developing countries, such as Ladakh (2003). This is because the interactive, project based activities on computers can allow for student-led, self-directed learning, where unqualified teachers can act as facilitators, guiding students through an ICT-based project or activity without having subject specific expertise themselves; a notion supported by Sugata Mitra's 'hole in the wall' experiment (2003). Conversely, it is argued by Anthony Edwards in particular, that the rapid spread of ICT in national education systems has created a 'digital divide' in reference to the large inequalities in access to ICT between the world's rich and poor (2012). It is anticipated that those with access to ICT will develop economically valuable skills and eventually go on to secure higher-paying jobs, while the world's poor will lack these opportunities and become even more 'left behind'. In an attempt to combat this, Nicholas Negropante created the One Laptop Per Child Association, whose mission is, 'to empower the children of developing countries to learn by providing one connected laptop to every school-age child' (OLPC, 2011). However, not everyone accepts that there is a 'digital divide' apparent between westernised and developing schools, with Robin Shields stating that throughout the world, schooling is still

implemented using more or less the same model where schools are built, teachers are trained and students enter classrooms that would look quite familiar to a European visitor (2013).

To conclude, the main challenge facing national education systems is further preventing the loss of culture, particularly linguistically within developing countries. Cases such as the educational policy changes brought about as a consequence of globalisation in Nepal and Ladakh highlight that more needs to be done by the EFA to ensure that vulnerable indigenous languages and cultures are able to survive and be celebrated within a modern world. Surprisingly, this can be achieved in part through the increased implementation of technology in developing countries. Furthermore, the privatisation of education should not result in schools from all around the world being limited to serving only economic goals and neglecting other educational aims such as a personal and cultural development and global citizenship, something which has in part occurred within the academy schools in the UK. One positive aspect which will long remain within the globalisation of education throughout the world is the implementation of the performance and comparative culture brought about through PISA. Finally, one omnipresent fact that has always and will always remain is that if any country is to maintain a world class economy, they need to have world class schools as education is undoubtedly linked to the creation of skills that enable a country to compete in the global economy.

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Every Child Matters: A Policy Analysis

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This report seeks to identify and analyse a sample of the issues that may be encountered when using 'Every Child Matters' as a framework for practice within 'Sure Start' local programmes. Consideration will be given to the limitations faced by professionals who work to promote a multi-agency work force within a service that is multidisciplinary in nature. In particular, a close examination will be given to the issues surrounding the use of the 'common assessment framework' (CAF) in ensuring that information is shared effectively between care-givers and professionals. Furthermore, the notion of 'hard-to-reach' will be discussed whilst also drawing upon the impact that hard-to-reach groups have upon the successes of implementing the Every Child Matters initiative.

Keywords: Every Child Matters; Sure Start; multi-agency work; common assessment framework; hard-to-reach groups; ethnic minority

Introduction

The belief that *every child matters* is one that has expanded and changed over a period of time following numerous political and social reforms within England and the United Kingdom. In particular, the preventable death of Victoria Climbie marked a catalyst for reformation to children's services and agencies working to protect and support children. Following the incident Parton (2006) highlights the outcomes that New Labour proposed through the implementation of the 2004 Children's Act and the Every Child Matters (DfES, 2003) policy agenda. The suggestions put forward by Lord Laming (2003)

have been fundamental in shaping many of the principles and objectives set out within the Every Child Matters initiative. Both the Laming Report and the Every Child Matters Green Paper make explicit the importance of early intervention, information sharing and supporting parents and carers in providing children with the best possible outcomes. However, it appears as though there are a number of discrepancies between policy and practice when implementing Every Child Matters strategies to ensure that every child *does* matter.

Research Methods

The main issues under debate in this report were researched and analysed using a number of government and academic publications. The ideas expressed are further informed by a reflective work based learning placement conducted over a month within a 'Sure Start' local programme (SSLP) in Liverpool. An ethnographic approach was adopted whilst at the SSLP using observations and written reflective diary entries. A number of informal 'interview' style conversations were also conducted in order to gain an in depth understanding of the lived experiences of professionals and practitioners working to implement Every Child Matters.

Due attention should be given to the recent consultations held by the City Council regarding the proposed reforms to Sure Start Local Programmes in Liverpool. This report draws upon the practices and strategies followed by children's services within the area of Liverpool. The issues considered do not necessarily reflect the service provision of the United Kingdom, therefore the research findings within this report may not be universally applicable.

Multi-agency Working and Information-Sharing

According to Anning (2005) multi-agency working is an important service that seeks to encompass and support the idea that children

and families exist in a multi-dimensional society. There are a number of factors that have the potential to impact upon child development and wellbeing, which may include aspects of health, education, welfare and family disposition. This concept is one that has been embedded in history, as supported by Bronfenbrenner (1979) and furthermore throughout key policy and government publications such as the Children's Act of 1989, Every Child Matters (2003) and the Munro Review (2011).

The Department for Children, Schools and Families (2010) and the Department for Education and Skills (2003) highlight that multi-agency working is vitally important for:

> *'Early intervention and effective protection' [of children]*
>
> *'Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children who may be particularly vulnerable'*
>
> *'Supporting parents and carers'*
> (DCSF, 2010; DfES, 2003)

With that stated however, the Laming Report (2003) presents a view that otherwise contrasts these proposals and many of the policies that are intended to support the practice of multi-agency working. Inquiries into the deaths of children like Victoria Climbie and Baby Peter demonstrate that critical errors continue to be made by agencies that are intended to work to safeguard and protect such vulnerable children (Haringey Local Safeguarding Child Board, 2009). One of the main findings highlighted within the Baby Peter case review concerns the lack of awareness given to communication and it's dynamics on individual participation (Goldthorpe, 2004). That is to say, that shared information may be deemed as significant to one professional, whilst not application to another (Straker and Foster, 2009).

As a standard information-sharing tool that is designed to facilitate communication between parents, practitioners and professionals, the Common Assessment Framework (CAF) can be a particularly problematic system of early intervention. One study by White *et al* (2009) identifies some of the boundaries faced in implementing CAF as a tool for assessment and information gathering. An interesting point to expand upon is the decontextualised portrait that the common assessment framework provides agencies with. White *et al* (2009) note that the implementation of CAF has altered previous records of "traditionally storied child welfare [professional] accounts" (2009, pp.1199) leaving little consideration for narrative and context of the child and his/her circumstances. This observation can be reflected in a review of a completed assessment framework, which illustrates minimal consideration for qualitative data but is heavily reliant upon evidence based and quantitative findings. The significance of this can often mean that parent-professional relationships may become impersonal and subject to interrogative style conversations - a consequence that opposes the philosophy of Every Child Matters. As the primary source of information, parents and carers form the core of multi-agency working within children's services. It is vitally important that professionals conducting CAF meetings remain accessible and trustworthy to parents in order to extract the necessary information needed to protect and support children and families.

Issues of trusting partnerships between parents and professionals are discussed by Walker (2008) and Williams (2004) who argue that trust is a quality and is built upon reliability and consistency in actions and words by both parties. However, it was observed at a Sure Start local programme that this was regularly a serious problem with some parent's continuously not attending CAF meetings, meaning that their children's needs were not being met. So how does policy meet

practice when many of the targeted ‘hard-to-reach’ families are those that are resistant to being met?

Sure Start and reaching the ‘hard-to-reach’

Rudge (2010) appropriately summarises the initial purpose of Sure Start as a service that was introduced to eliminate and prevent social exclusion amongst families and children living within some of the most deprived communities in England. Families populating these areas have been known as ‘hard-to-reach’ groups and may include:

- *Low socio-economic families*
- *Parents coping with illness or addiction*
- *Teenage parents*
- *Minority ethnic Groups*
- *Parents coping with disability*
- *Homeless families*
- *Refugee and asylum seekers*
- *Travelling or Roma families*
- *Single parent families*

Coe *et al* (2007)

It is apparent from observations made within a SSLP that practitioners working within Sure Start positively seek to reach out to the most disadvantaged families. This can be seen through the roles of Community Out-reach Workers and Family Liaison Workers. However, there still remains a wealth of research to suggest that vulnerable children and families are not being provided with the support and services that they may well urgently need. Research conducted for ‘The Effective Provision of Pre-School Education (EPPE) Project’ elaborates on these findings claiming that disadvantaged children attend pre-schools for shorter periods of time, as compared with children from more ‘advantaged’ backgrounds (Sylvia *et al*, 2004). Furthermore, Ofsted (2009) and

Baldock *et al* (2009) highlight that hard-to-reach groups are those that continue not to be offered the support provided through policies and initiatives such as Sure Start and Every Child Matters:

> *'Fathers, ethnic minority groups . . . families of children with disabilities and families with the highest level of needs were not yet having their needs met' (Baldock et al, 2009. pp. 45).*

The following statistics have been complied by Liverpool City Council as part of the reforms to Sure Start local programmes in Liverpool (see Figure 1.) The figures presented give a quantitative view on the issues surrounding hard-to-reach groups. The data shows that the area of Vauxhall is inhabited by a large proportion of families with low socio-economic status, however the number of children reached by Sure Start services is this area is considerably low.

Fig.1

Centre Name	Child Poverty	No. of Children Reached
Everton	54.9	860
Fazakerley	24.3	1161
Vauxhall	60.45	678
Wavertree	25.1	1315

(Liverpool City Council, 2012)

Coe (2007) and Chand (2008) present a number of explanations that may be accountable for poor attendance amongst 'hard-to-reach' groups within SSLPs. Some of these reasons involve feelings of anxiety when meeting new people, particularly amongst ethnic minority groups who may also face issues with language barriers and cultural differences. Chand (2008) makes suggestions that service provisions and practitioners ought to be more culturally informed in order to make sensitive judgements that produce positive outcomes for *all* children. However, this can be difficult as effectively Sure Start was founded upon values sought by English politicians for citizens

living in England. The point being that Sure Start services and policy decision making in the United Kingdom are predominately to serve its citizens, which can sometimes result in minority groups feeling marginalised. The arguments put forward by researchers such as Coe and Chard are alarming when compared with the issues put forward by Phung (2008) who illustrates the tyranny of ethnic minorities living in the United Kingdom. Phung's report on ethnicity and child poverty highlights the socio-economic circumstances of ethnic minorities, who are more likely to be unemployed and poorly paid in comparison with their white counterparts. Despite the fact that families and children of all ethnicities may at some point require support, the research findings strongly suggest that the Every Child Matters agenda has not so far been wholly successful in addressing the concerns that have emerged within a culturally diverse society.

Conclusion: Does Every Child Matter?

The series of events that have led to the implementation of the Every Child Matters agenda illustrate quite clearly that public services and the government share a statutory duty of care for the wellbeing and development of all children, parents and families. However, it appears that the strategies aimed at achieving this end are heavily bureaucratic and impractical in nature. For the effects of social isolation to be overcome, progress is needed to be made before child protection services become universal and effective for all professionals and parents involved in the field of early years and child welfare.

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“Primary teaching is not what it used to be.” A critical evaluation of the changing nature of primary teachers and leaders work, identity and professionalism

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In 1967 there was enthusiasm and optimism in the teaching profession. The Plowden Report (1967) stated that “At the heart of the educational process lies the child”. This view was not shared by the Department of Education and Science (1981) where the view was “the school curriculum is at the heart of education”. These two differing views show that there has been a shift in what is at the heart of the education system and a change in the teaching profession. This essay is going to critically analyse the statement “Primary teaching is not what it used to be”. Various issues will be analysed including the introduction of the National Curriculum and the performative culture which now exists in the teaching profession. The essay will look at Alexander’s (2010) four phases of education which starts in 1967, around the time of the Plowden report up until 2009. Alexander’s four phases are 1967-1976 where primary education is largely unchallenged, the challenged phase 1976-1987, the regulated phase 1987-1997 and the dominated phase 1997-2009.

In the largely unchallenged era of 1967-1976, also referred to as the ‘age of excitement’ by Richards (2001), a teacher had autonomy and was free to choose their pedagogical approach in lessons. There was no pressure to teach in a certain style and primary schools had the freedom of devising their own curriculum, working on the guidelines provided by the local education authorities. There was very little

government policy or intervention during this era. There was trust shown in the teaching professionals of this time. In this ‘age of excitement’ a review of primary education was conducted and the Plowden Report was made. This introduced a child centred learning approach and was described as “a product of the optimism and belief in social engineering of its time.” (Kogan, 1987: p.13).There was enthusiasm from teachers of the time because schools were being freed of the pressures of achieving good test results due to the abolition of the eleven plus (although some schools chose to continue with this testing). Sorting classes on ability or intelligence was also being scrapped and a teacher led curriculum was being encouraged (Gillard, 2004). This golden age of teaching came to an end from 1976 onwards when the government started to challenge the autonomy of teachers.

The challenged era 1976-1987 began when the government started to become concerned about school curriculums and teaching styles (Alexander, 2010). Ball (1990: p.8) states that from 1976 onwards, school and Local Education Authority (LEA) autonomy was replaced by “the assertion of greater centralised controls”, this was described by Campbell (2001: 31 cited in Phillips and Furlong, 2001) as the “colonisation of the primary curriculum.” This increased central control and deskilling of the teachers showed a lack of confidence in the schools and teachers to come up with a suitable curriculum and also in how they taught it. The reason that the government started to play a more active role in education policy was because they blamed ineffective teachers for the decline in industry and also the high levels of youth unemployment (Coulby, 1989 cited in Bash and Coulby, 1989). This shows that the government might see that the main aim of education is to get the country somewhere as opposed to developing the children.

One of the key events in the regulated phase of education 1987-1997 was the 1988 Education Reform Act (ERA) by Margaret Thatcher's Conservative Government. This marked the centralisation of education, with the Secretary of State for Education gaining more power (Pollard, 1990). The ERA introduced a National Curriculum, with central government setting the framework for this curriculum. The ERA also reintroduced mandatory testing in primary schools at the ages of 7 and 11, and also the publication of the test results. As part of the Act, schools were also expected to behave more like a business by managing their own finances and resources (Bates, Lewis and Pickard, 2011).This managerialism in schools meant that the role of the head teacher changed as they were now in charge of managing a schools finance and staff. Neo-liberal philosophies were also evident in the act as it promoted the marketisation of education. This marketisation promotes the competition between schools, the providers of education, to gain more customers, which are the parents and pupils. Each pupil will bring more funding to a school which is what they are competing for (Bates, Lewis & Pickard, 2011). This marketisation is a massive change as it gives parents more choice over where they can send their children, as opposed to LEAs allocating children to a school in their catchment area. In this regulated era the Office for Standards in Education (OFSTED) was formed in 1992. OFSTED is a system of school inspection undertaken by trained inspectors (Alexander, 1997). The formation of OFSTED ushered into schools a new age of surveillance. Alexander (2010, p.33) describes the inspections by OFSTED as a way of "regulating the system by 'policing' primary schools' compliance with national directives." This monitoring by OFSTED and the government puts extra stress on teachers, as they are being assessed on the quality of their work and standards of the primary school.

The fourth phase is the domination of primary education from 1997-2009. The beginning of this phase saw the New Labour Government

under Tony Blair come to power. There was much optimism amongst teachers when New Labour came to power, they had the slogan ‘education, education, education’, and there would be more investment in the education system (DFEE, 1998). New Labour also said they would replace the previous government’s policy of ‘high challenge and low support’ with ‘high challenge, high support’ (Alexander, 2010). However this optimism was short lived and Gilbert (2009) claims that “Labour ripped the heart out of education” through work intensification by increasing the bureaucratisation in education and by creating ‘robot teachers’ through their policies which had teachers drilling pupils for tests without enthusiasm for the tasks. The Labour Government then also introduced daily literacy and numeracy hours. These took away the last bit of teacher autonomy as they told the teachers how they should teach the lessons.

There has been a lot of change to the work that is carried out by primary teachers. In the largely unchallenged era of primary teaching, also known as the ‘golden age’ of teaching, the main task of the teacher was to create a curriculum for the class and to educate the pupils. This has now changed due to the increased workloads of primary teachers. A reason for this is due to the lack of curriculum time for some of the creative subjects like music and art; lunchtime and after-school clubs have had to be put on to cover these subjects (Galton et al., 2002). Galton et al. (2002) also argue that there is a lot more bureaucracy that teachers have to get through, including marking, planning and preparing lessons. This increase in paperwork means that teachers have to spend a lot more of their time at home completing this work, leading to dissatisfaction with the job and higher levels of stress.

In an attempt to assist teachers with their levels of work the Labour Government aimed to increase the numbers of support staff working in the primary school. This was part of the workforce reform and the

number of support staff in nurseries and primary schools increased between 1997 and 2008, from 75,700 up to 172,600 (Alexander, 2010). This increased number of support in the classrooms may give teachers the extra time they need to get through some of the paperwork they have and enables the teacher to work with smaller groups for children who struggle with work. However more of the teacher's time may be taken up with explaining the lesson plans to the support staff and providing instruction. These changes support the claim that primary teaching is not what it used to be, the evidence shows that much of a teachers work is now to comply rather than to create.

The professionalism of teachers is certainly not what it used to be and has changed drastically since the time of time of the Plowden Report. Bates, Lewis and Pickard (2011, p.139) state that "the fact that teachers do not determine their own pay nor do they have autonomy over their working practices, together with the lack of trust invested in them, actually denies them true professional status." Up until the mid-1970s primary school teachers had the responsibility of creating a curriculum to teach, and the freedom to teach this using whichever pedagogical approach they preferred. The deskilling of teachers began though when central government started to get more involved in education. This started when Labour Prime Minister James Callaghan claimed in his Great Debate speech (1976) that there needed to be a broad agreement on a framework for a curriculum. This speech ultimately led to the introduction of the national curriculum by the Conservative Government, where what was taught in schools was taken fully out of the hands of teachers and decided by central government. The Labour Government continued to de-professionalise teachers when they took away the last bit of teacher autonomy by setting out how lessons should be taught in the literacy and numeracy hours. This contemporary professional setting is resented by many teachers, an example from

The Guardian (2013) states how a teacher's day is decided by 'anonymous educationalists' from what and how to teach down to what books the class should read. This shows how demoralised some teachers feel about their professional status currently and how they feel there is a lack of trust shown in teachers.

There is now though a new professionalism for teachers. It is one that "places greater emphasis on the attainment of learning outcomes as the main pedagogical aim and on the effectiveness, accountability and skilfulness of teachers." (Mausethagen and Granlund, 2012). Teachers now have a lot more accountability due to the publication of more information, for example exam results. Performance tables are also released that show how well schools are doing. This new idea of teacher professionalism has led to a performativity culture in schools. Performance related pay has been introduced into schools (Burns, 2013), so a teacher who 'performs' well may be rewarded financially. The teacher's performance is measured by the test scores and exam results their pupils achieve. A problem with a performativity culture, described by Ball (2003: p.49) as a "system of terror", is that it may put the emphasis on teaching to the test in classrooms, with a lack of creative engagement with pupils.

One area of primary teaching that does not seem to have changed much is the identity of a teacher. Primary teaching is still a female dominated profession with only 12% of the primary workforce being male (Paton, 2013). This may be the case because the stereotypical view on the identity of a primary teacher also remains the same. This is the view that primary teaching is a feminine job and the role of the teacher would suit a caring mother figure which for many women is seen as a natural activity (Forrester, 2005). BBC News (2011) explains how the current Education Secretary Michael Gove has tried to increase the number of males in primary teaching. An example of

an initiative aimed at doing this is the troops to teachers program. This program offered former military personnel bursaries for teacher training. This aim to increase the male presence in primary education may mean that the current government are not happy with the current identity of primary teachers and want to move away from this identity. In this respect primary teaching is very similar to what it has been for many years and has not changed much.

There have been many changes to the primary teaching profession over the years and the statement ‘primary teaching is not what it used to be’ is true for many areas of teaching including the work and professionalism of a teacher. These changes have become more frequent since central government started to get more involved, with increasing amounts of education policy being introduced. There will continue to be changes in the future to primary teaching as whoever is in political power has their own ideology of what primary education should be like and will try to make this vision a reality through new policies and initiatives. However the statement about primary teaching not being what it used to be is incorrect when it comes to the identity of a teacher. Primary teaching is a female dominated profession and will most likely continue to be for as long as the role continues to be seen as women’s work with an emphasis on caring and nurturing.

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Plan an outdoor area considering all of the characteristics of learning and how different countries have utilised and used effectively the outdoor space.

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In 2012 the revised framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) was introduced after the Tickell review advised that it needed to be slimmed down so that it was easier to follow and understand, as a result the 69 learning goals were reduced to just 17 (DfE, 2011). There was a new focus on three prime learning areas which are personal, social and emotional development, communication and language development and physical development, the emphasis is now on the process of how children learn and not the end result (DfE, 2011; Hutchin, 2012). Practitioners must observe the child continuously to understand their interests as planning should be made to fit each individual child and their holistic needs. As the child's interest and developmental needs change, the practitioner should facilitate these changes through their observations and planning (Hutchin, 2012). The child's voice is at the centre of all early years care and it is imperative that they are heard and that they are treated as individuals as stipulated in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) (Garrick, 2004). Garrick (2004) explains that there is a strong contemporary case for the value of the outdoor environment which was once almost forgotten. The EYFS (DfE, 2012) now reinforces the importance of the outside environment for a child's development and well-being. As the outdoor environment is vital to a child's holistic development it is important that practitioners use the outdoor environment effectively. There are

many activities that can be utilised to make the outdoors a complete learning environment, one activity is a camp fire. This writing will discuss a camp fire activity and explain how it can be undertaken effectively with young children whilst outlining how children learn through said experiences, whilst linking pedagogy to relevant theories and pioneers who advocate the outdoor learning environment.

Garrick (2004) explains how effective practitioners incorporate inspirations from traditional pioneers to develop a high quality outdoor learning environment. Maynard and Waters (2007) explain how the work of early pioneers such as Rousseau and Froebel have recently caused a resurgence of interest in the outdoor environment in relation to how the outdoors can support a child's learning. Froebel emphasised the importance of the garden and the educational value that the outdoors could bring to the learning development of young children (Tovey, 2007). Many other pioneers such as Montessori, McMillan, Steiner and Isaacs all advocated that the outdoors is an essential part of a child's learning and development (ibid). Reggio Emilia classifies the environment as the 'third teacher' and stipulates that the outdoor environment has equal value if not more than the indoor environment (Garrick, 2004). Frohm (Joyce, 2012) made contributions to the importance of the outdoor environment by influencing the teachings of ecological concepts to children. Maynard and Waters (2007) credit the Forest School approach with having a significant influence on how the outdoor environment is used in the United Kingdom (UK). Steiner (Clouder and Rawson, 2003) and the Forest School (Eustice and Heald, 1995) approach advocate the use of fire and building a camp fire as being a whole body and multi-sensory learning experience. It is not just fire but the natural outdoor environment in general that can give the child a whole body multi-sensory experience through meaningful context (Tovey, 2007). McMillan believed that there was no need for artificial apparatus to

stimulate a child's senses as first-hand experience in natural surroundings is a much richer learning experience for the child and fire is a natural experience that children should become accustomed to (ibid).

Stephenson (2002, cited in Tovey, 2007) explains that children need rich experiences to encounter 'scary' situations so that it builds the child's confidence. Building a camp fire could seem a scary or risky task for some children and maybe even for some practitioners, feelings of anxiousness may arise from the fear of undertaking a new experience (White, 2011). Austin (2007) expresses the importance of the practitioner not allowing their own fears to reflect on the child, explaining that children need to be allowed to risk assess for themselves. Children need to be given the opportunities to engage in risky play so that they can overcome fears and learn their limits whilst trying something new (Tovey, 2007). This is the consensus of the Forest School literature where the children are encouraged to respect the environment, nature and danger (ibid). Claxton (N.D, cited in Tovey, 2013) explains that risk tasking is a part of a child's 'tool kit' of effective learning. Practitioners need to be aware of the child's current state and understand the child's level of ability and interest in such tasks and facilitate the child's needs to overcome tasks or issues that they cannot fully achieve yet, they do this through effective planning and observation (Tovey, 2007). Vygotsky (N.D, cited in Pound, 2006) developed his 'Zone of Proximal Development', which is where adults help facilitate the child to fill the gaps in-between what they can and cannot do, helping the child's development of knowledge and expanding their abilities. Practitioners need to create a security and safety framework so that the children feel as though they are in a secure and safe environment which is necessary for a child's development (ibid). White (2008) explains how the outdoors may seem full of risk but it can actually be safer than indoors if the practitioner has planned the activity accordingly

and enabled a secure environment, this can be achieved by carrying out the appropriate risk assessments as stated in the EYFS and ensuring there is the correct adult to child ratio for the given activity (DfE, 2012). It is important that practitioners share their enjoyment of the outdoors with the child, if a child is told that the natural environment is messy, dirty and dangerous it restricts their development and instils negative values upon the child of the outdoor environment (Waite, 2011).

Randall (2013) discussed the benefits of what a camp fire could bring to a child's development, explaining that it consists of practical hands on experience which is how children learn most effectively. Piaget (Bradley, 2005) believed that children should be facilitated by providing activities that engage the learner which is important for cognitive development, tasks with first-hand experiences such as building a camp fire is an effective way to incorporate Piaget's theory into practice. Tovey (2007 and 2013) also advocates the significance that the first-hand experience of building a camp fire can bring to a child. Children get to collect the wood for the fire, Callaway (2005) describes how this can help a child's visual awareness as they are usually told what type of wood that needs collecting. The children can also be asked to collect a certain amount of wood or twigs and a certain size which is encouraging their mathematical ability (ibid). The children will also be developing physically by using their hand muscles to snap the twigs to the desired size (Callaway, 2005). Whilst collecting the wood or twigs for the fire the children will be listening to the sounds of the wood snapping to establish whether the wood is dead or alive, the children will also be using their listening skills to follow instructions from the practitioner (Calloway, 2005 and Tovey, 2007). The wood collected is not only used to build the fire but can be used to cook food on, the children will be shown how to whittle the ends of the wood safely by an adult as stated in Froebel's

‘Apprenticeship’ model where children model behaviour alongside a skilled adult (Tovey, 2007 and 2013).

Building a fire can be a captivating and exciting sensory experience for children; all of the child’s senses are in use as fire provides smells, sounds and the changing colours of the flames for the child to experience (Tovey, 2007). The sound of the fire changes as it burns and the colour of the wood in the fire also changes in its different stages of burning (Calloway, 2005). Children can use the wood they have whittled to cook dough or marshmallows, whilst the food is cooking the children witness it changing colour and learn that it is the heat off the fire that is cooking the food (Calloway, 2005 and Tovey, 2007). The children can blow on the fire to make it burn more effectively, learning that blowing on a fire makes it hotter but when they blow on their marshmallow or dough it cools it down (Calloway, 2005). In a Steiner setting water is put on the fire to put it out followed by mud to ensure that it is out safely (Randall, 2013). When the fire is being put out the children learn about the transformation of smoke into steam and the impact that water has on fire (Calloway, 2005, Tovey, 2007 and Randall, 2013).

Throughout the process of the camp fire activity the children are taught to respect fire and realise the dangers of fire which they can relate to in their home environment (Tovey, 2007). They are shown the skills needed to be safe in the presence of fire, being taught how to approach fire safely, for example they are told that they should never turn their back to an open fire (ibid). Callaway (2005) asserts that it is the practitioner’s role to facilitate a stress free environment for a potentially hazardous task which will ensure the activity is successful with good learning experiences for the children.

From the camp fire activity the children are developing the prime areas of learning as stated in the EYFS which are needed to develop

a child holistically (Hutchin, 2012). Personal, social and emotional development is achieved as the camp fire activity helps to build the child's confidence by trying new activities. Katz (1995, cited in Tovey, 2007) believes that a child's willingness to attempt new activities is an important learning disposition in itself. Bilton (1999) states that children interact more with one another when they are outdoors which helps build positive relationships. Vygotsky (1978, cited in Bilton, 1999), Wells (1987, cited in Bilton, 1999) and Trevarthen (1994, cited in Bilton, 1999) all agree that social interactions are central to a child's development, with more interactions occurring outdoors. Wesson (2010) eludes that when children do not encounter sufficient active social interactions the brain does not wire properly in the emotional centres with the end result being the child having negative cognitive development. Interactions with their peers and with the practitioners also helps build the child's communication and language development which is another prime area of learning for young children (Hutchin, 2012). Austin (2007) explains that a child's physical development is encouraged whilst in the outdoors and motor skills are increased, this is shown by the children breaking the wood, developing their hand muscles and motor skills in the process. Children have better concentration when they are outdoors as they have more fresh air which means they will be capable of more imaginative play (ibid). In addition O'Hare (2012) found that children who spent more time outdoors received more vitamin-D which meant that they were less likely to have psychological issues as an adult.

Laevers (2000, cited in Garrick, 2004) surmises the effective components of learning as emotional health, curiosity and the exploratory drive, expression and communication skills, imagination and creativity, competence of self-organisation and understanding the world around us, which are in line with the EYFS' characteristics of effective learning (Hutchin, 2012). The three characteristics of effective learning as outlined in the EYFS describe the process of

how children learn and develop. Shirley and Hammond (N.D, cited in Austin, 2007) explain how the outdoor environment provides the child with enriching experiences in play and creative expression which is key to the first characteristic, playing and exploring. The Forest School approach encourages children to explore the natural phenomena of the outdoors and natural learning experiences; building a camp fire is a natural experience for a child to be involved with. Tovey (2007) explains how the outdoor environment 'frees up' a child's body and mind as the outdoor environment changes daily which encourages imaginative and exploratory play. Active learning is accomplished whilst building a camp fire as it is a task that involves all senses of the body and it is successful in engaging the child for long periods of time (Walsh and Gardner, 2005). Baldock (2001, cited in Garrick, 2004) explains how being outdoors and trying new activities gives children a sense of achievement as they are more independent which is a component of active learning. Practitioners facilitate active learning by encouraging the children to work to the edge of their ability, helping them to achieve as much as they can (White, 2011). Creating and thinking critically is where children make sense of their own experiences (Hutchin, 2012). The EYFS (DfE, 2012) explains that children need the opportunity to experience new activities which helps them make connections with the outside world and a better understanding of the world around them. Garrick (2004) suggests that giving children the opportunity to engage in the natural world has significant implications on the child's cognitive development and understanding of the outside world. By building a camp fire the children are incorporating these new experiences into further knowledge of the outside world, such as the smoke transforming into steam and that fire produces light but it also produces heat (Calloway, 2005 and Tovey, 2007).

In conclusion the camp fire activity is an effective learning experience for a child which covers the whole range of developmental areas

(Clouder and Rawson, 2003). The Key Elements of Effective Practice (KEEP) (DfES, 2005) states that quality effective practitioners must draw on their own knowledge and reflect on the given experiences to establish effective practice. Schon (1983, cited in Smith, 2001) asserts that an effective practitioner needs to reflect critically on their actions. Practitioners need to 'reflect-in-action' for the development of reflective practice and learning systems, but also 'reflect-on-action' where the practitioner reflects on their experiences, feelings and the theories that they have incorporated (ibid). Upon reflection there are further tasks which could be added to help give the child a wider learning experience, for example the children could prepare the dough that is being used for cooking on the fire. Randall (2013) also suggests that the remnants of the fire, the charcoal, can be used for drawing activities which then shows the children that every part of the fire has a use. Warden (2010) suggests that sitting around a camp fire could be an opportunity to sit in silence and take in the world around, silence gives the brain time to process, reflect, consider and take in new ideas and surroundings. Abbott and Nutbrown (2011) recommend that reading can take place around the camp fire or the use of books before the activity commences can engage the children with the task which they will carrying out. Medina (2008, cited in White, 2011) explains that the outdoor experience is a whole body multi-sensory, active learning approach which is how young children learn best. White (2011) explains that the child's perspective is critical for the practitioner to incorporate a holistic view of child development. As the environment is key to every aspect of a child's development it is essential that children spend sufficient time outdoors which is a whole learning experience in itself, it helps the child to learn new skills and establishes vital attitudes and dispositions of the surrounding environment (Abbott and Nutbrown, 2011). White (2011) states that the outdoor environment feeds into all senses giving a whole body experience so it is important that

practitioners want to be outside facilitating meaningful and interesting tasks for the child's holistic development.

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Diabetes

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This paper is going to address diabetes; how it affects the lives of individuals, the two different types and how it is managed.

Diabetes is a condition that can occur when an individual's blood sugar is too high as a result of the body being unable to metabolise glucose properly (Kumar et al, 2003). This is due to an organ called the pancreas not being able to produce any, or enough, insulin (NHS, 2012). Insulin is a hormone which the body uses to metabolise glucose in order for it to be used by cells for energy. This allows the individual to carry out day to day activities (Diabetes, 2012). Insulin is important because without it blood sugars will rise and this can become life threatening as the blood sugars could become too high (Diabetes, 2012). Diabetes affects approximately 2.9 million people across the UK and around 850,000 are not aware they have the condition (NHS, 2012).

It is important to note that there are two main types of diabetes which have different symptoms, although they can be similar in terms of diagnosis and medication (World health organization, 1999). Type one diabetes, is predominantly caused by an insulin deficiency (Meetoo, 2004) which develops either before birth or in early childhood and affects approximately 1 in 300 people within the UK (Tidy, 2013). An insulin deficiency is usually caused when the immune system fights cells in the pancreas which are used to produce insulin; this is because they are mistaken as bad bacteria (Diabetes, 2012). Type 1 diabetes has been shown to be less

common in people over the age of 35, as a result can be left undiagnosed within this age group (Holmes, 2013).
Some symptoms of type one diabetes may include; unexplained weight or muscle bulk loss, heaving breathing and/or vomiting after eating or drinking. This is normally a sign of the late stages of diabetes and requires immediate medical attention (Couillard, 2013). It is important to note that type one diabetes cannot be cured or reversed however it can be monitored, (Rosenthal, 2005). Most type one diabetics are treated with insulin, but also have to carefully control their lifestyle in terms of food and exercise. The insulin injections help to control glucose levels (Meetoo et al, 2007).

Type two diabetes, similar to type one, is usually caused by a fault in the body which results in the pancreas not producing enough or any insulin, producing a build-up of glucose (NHS, 2012). However, type two diabetes is reversible. A link has been made between the incidence of type two diabetes, unhealthy lifestyle choices, human behaviour and the environment (Diabetes, 2012). There has been a large rise in obesity levels within the UK and people being diagnosed with diabetes, this suggests a strong link between the two, a name used by people for this link is ‘diabesity’ (Astrup and Finer, 2000).

Symptoms that type two diabetics may experience, can include; itchiness around the genital areas, blurred vision, cramps in various parts of the body, constipation and skin infections (NHS, 2012). It is important to note that type two diabetes cannot be cured, however it is possible to reverse it (Rosenthal, 2005).

Some diabetic's symptoms can be controlled by a change in lifestyle. Careful control of diet and exercise are all that is required to reverse the symptoms (Zimmet, 1995). However, others need to control blood sugar levels through lifestyle changes in addition to support from oral tablets or insulin injections (Diabetes, 2012).

Many of the symptoms and implications of the two types of diabetes are very similar. Some of these symptoms may include feeling thirsty a lot, needing to urinate more frequently during the night and feeling very tired (NHS, 2012).

Initial diagnosis will be done by a General Practitioner (GP) when presented with a patient experiencing these symptoms. The GP will take a urine sample (Rosenthal, 2012). If the sample contains glucose this is usually a sign of someone having diabetes, as the body has too much glucose and is unable to use it, resulting in it overflowing through the kidneys and into the urine (Rosenthal, 2012). If this test is positive the GP will then refer the patient to a hospital or a diabetic nurse specialist for blood tests, which are also known as a glucose tolerance tests. This will give a clearer view of whether the body is having difficulty processing glucose (NHS, 2012). The glucose tolerance test usually requires the patient to not have any food for 8-12 hours prior to the test. A blood test will then be taken before drinking a glucose drink. Blood is then taken again about 1-2 hours after having the drink. This is repeated multiple times to monitor how the body is reacting to the glucose intake (Diabetes, 2012). The doctor will then compare the blood sugar levels before and after the test giving the definitive diagnosis of diabetes (Naser et al, 2013).

The implications that an individual may face with diabetes often vary depending on the severity and how the body reacts to the condition (Rosenthal, 2005). However some common implications include, a lack of sleep (Pannian, et al, 2012), the blood vessels around the body often having an increase of pressure from the glucose causing them to become stiff and unable to relax increasing the chance of a heart attack or stroke (McAllister, 2012).Kidney damage can occur resulting from the body being unable to filter water properly and

remove any remaining toxins (Mc Allister, 2012). Blood vessels behind the eye becoming damaged affecting eye sight (Porta, 2001). Increases in foot infections are due to nerve endings being damaged resulting in a lack of feeling in the extremities. If they suffer injury or any large amounts of pressure applied to the area, this could result in amputation (Gleeson et al, 1995).There is also an increase in the potential to develop mental illness or depression (Mc Allister, 2012). These implications can affect both people with type one diabetes and type two diabetes.

It is also important to note that people who treat diabetes with some form of medication could also run the risk of their blood sugar levels becoming too low, resulting in the brain not being able to function as it normally would, which could then potentially lead onto hypoglycaemia (Brands, 2009). This could cause confusion, lack of concentration or even losing consciousness, having a great effect on the person's ability to work (Mc Allister, 2012).

Statistics have shown that men are more likely to develop the condition than women, as around 2.4% of men age 35-44 have the condition in comparison to 1.2% of women (Diabetes UK, 2009). This is higher between the ages of 45-54 where 6% of males have the condition where only 3.6% of females have the condition (Diabetes, 2009). However, it has been shown that women are 50% more likely to have diabetes as a cause of death (Diabetes UK, 2009). Those who are borderline for having diabetes have been told that if they carry out daily exercise and eat healthily then they can reduce their chances of developing it by 64% and by losing weight can reduce it by 58% (Diabetes UK, 2012). It has also been suggested that there is a strong genetic link for diabetes (Holmes, 2013). People from an Asian or South African background are a lot more prone to developing the condition in comparison to those from a white background (Rull, 2011).

There are many agencies who are involved with diabetes these are mostly accessible through the NHS (NHS, 2013) A main practitioner who is involved with the care of diabetes is a GP with the initial diagnosis. Once diagnosed agencies who are involved can include dieticians, eyes specialist, feet specialists, National Health Service (NHS) diabetes and support groups (RCN, 2014). These are available to everyone who has diabetes and can continue to support and look after those prior to and after diagnosis (Diabetes, 2005).

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Critically discuss the influence of the OECD on comparative education and policy making nationally and internationally

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The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) evolved from the Organisation for European Economic Cooperation (OEEC) as an apparent response to globalisation (Sellar and Lingard, 2013), spreading it's work across a widened range of economic and social issues. Described by Meyer (2013) as an unelected world ministry of education gives a hint of the influence this organisation has on education systems and policy making on a global scale. It is this which will be critically analysed throughout this paper, along with the potential disadvantages of having such an organisation to which member countries look to for guidance on improving their education systems.

Within an increasingly globalised world, it is understandable that it is not just economy that is touched by the ever reaching hand of globalisation. In its simplest term, it is described as an increasing interconnectedness and integration of the world (Held et al., 1999) and this may sufficiently describe why, when worlds begin to be linked together, there is a natural curiosity to compare oneself with another. Understanding what works, what could work better and how to improve by comparing to other countries not only applies to the economy but a natural evolution is to then make comparisons in education. As education systems then produce the next generation work-force, under increasing globalisation, need to be more and more competitive. This is where organisations such as the OECD find their niche. The OECD is primarily concerned with economy

(Grek, 2009) and provides a platform for member countries to share, compare and identify good practice (Martens, 2007) and so the reach into education may seem unusual and because the OECD does not have any legal power to actively promote policy making unlike the World Bank for instance, one may wonder why the OECD is so powerful within education. The answer may lie in the OECD's Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) tests which evaluate education worldwide by testing 15-year-olds on literacy, mathematics and science. The tests occur every three years and have gained increasing influence on a global scale, overriding the European boundaries of the OECD (Grek, 2009).

Comparative systems such as PISA make gaining information to compare education systems much easier and the information is widely disseminated therefore the influence such an international comparative test would have on a globalised society aiming to increase standards, becomes great. According to Kamens (2013) PISA has become a leading practitioner in comparative education systems which is backed up by Lockhead (2013) who claims that it is now overtaking Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) which dominated the 1980's and 1990's. It should be noted here however, that the work edited by Meyer and Benevot which includes Kamens and Lockhead, has been reviewed by Takayama (2013), who critiqued their use of secondary data throughout. Despite this, other research implies that the leading position of PISA could be due to a number of factors. Firstly the OECD position the results of PISA to be visible to economists, they access greater media coverage and frequent articles which may be more likely to be read by policy-makers which gives it more influence (Grek, 2009, Lockhead, 2013). This does not mean that the PISA test is better than TIMSS, but marketing the results in a favourable position within media means that is has a better chance of being used as evidence for potential policy changes which governments,

globally, may make. As Porter and Webb (2004) suggest, policy makers now accept the word of the OECD as just, without needing to see beyond the scores and use this as justification to push forward particular policy initiatives (Grek, 2009). Some critics argue invalidates PISA as a boost for policy dialogue and to better understand cause and effect in education systems (Adams, 2012). This, along with much of the extensive research which comes with the results being ignored, appears to support this claim.

The OECD's influence through PISA is evident also in the growing number of participants. The test began with member countries, however, at this time, increasing numbers of non-member countries are seen to want involvement in the PISA test which highlights the significance given to the test (Grek, 2009). However, Mortimore (2009) was commissioned by the Education Institute to evaluate the PISA tests and found several limitations. Although not the first of its kind, Mortimore suggested that a main challenge is the ability to assess fairly due to the cultural differences of the participating countries. The PISA test is written to utilise information learnt and apply it in 'real life' scenarios. However, a seemingly obvious problem with this is that 'real life' is vastly different for children across the 62 participating countries. This limitation is also noted by Adams (2012) who highlights that cultural and translation issues are a challenge to the test as they may be interpreted differently, therefore potentially influencing the outcome of the test score. This is something Mortimore extended on suggesting that the scoring does not take into account that some students may be immigrants and therefore sitting a test which is not written in their native language may negatively influence the outcome. Meyer and Benavot (2013) also question the validity of a culturally neutral education testing system due to countries having such vastly different social and cultural backgrounds. This however, is somewhat of a no win situation. While it seems quite impossible to test internationally using the same test

and expect fair comparisons, it is also a worry that it may be used as a platform to generate a culturally neutral education system. Although culture is categorised as a limitation by some research, the alternative would mean foregoing individual cultures in education which means losing high standard education systems which are embedded in culturally rich countries such as Finland.

Along with the above educational factors, there are also non-educational factors which may influence the outcome of the PISA test scores. Non-educational factors such as the aspirations and expectations of families across various countries, economic resources and cultural beliefs are beyond the realms of government action (Meyer and Schiller, 2013). The point made here is that there are wider contexts that the PISA test cannot account for when using quantitative data, yet this propels the OECD into an influential position with many developing countries looking to it as a measure of high standard education. As Morris (2012) describes, this shocks governments of average or low performing countries to look to high performers education policy to review what works and how. There are some positives of enabling comparatives as they encourage policy-makers to engage in improving own education systems and widen knowledge and understanding. It also may lead to policy-borrowing and due to the PISA test making comparisons easy to view; the OECD retains a central role on comparative education and policy-borrowing. However, as Morris (2012) argues, the analysis of the information gathered on ‘what works’, is open to interpretation and therefore should be handled with caution. Also, a knee-jerk reaction to low PISA scores can result in attempting to implement a policy or set of policies without being concerned about the wider context. Meyer and Benavot (2013) suggest that governments globally assume that a school in one country is the same as a school elsewhere and disregard that the data gained from PISA is quantitative and not qualitative, therefore does not observe the wider

context in which a ‘good’ education system thrives. A longitudinal study may fix this problem however it is not viable due to the cost (Froese-Germain, 2010).

Disregarding the wider context is something which has become evident in attempting to borrow educational policies from Finland. Due to PISA rankings, Finland has become somewhat of a ‘poster’ country for good education and therefore policy borrowing, because of its sustained high scores on the PISA tables. Although it is worth noting that more recently, Finland has slipped further down the table, however, it still remains the highest ranking European country (Coughlan, 2013) and because of this, many countries have ventured to Finland to view what makes a successful education system, including England. Conversely, Finland is the country that mostly deviates from the OECD guidelines and yet has performed well in the PISA tests despite ignoring specific guidance (Sahlberg, 2007). In knowing this, questions must be raised about how Finland achieves and maintains high scores in an OECD funded test, despite snubbing the OECD guidance. In this instance, it appears that its success may lie more with the culture that Finland’s education system is embedded in rather than reforms encouraged by the OECD, although this is something which PISA officials deny (Kamens, 2013).

There are many differences between Finland’s and England’s cultures and consequently their respective education systems. Firstly, Finland does not rely on high stakes testing methods because teachers are regarded as highly skilled professionals who are able to assess and provide the correct pedagogical approach to meet the needs of their class (Froese-Germain, 2010). In short, they are trusted, autonomous professionals which is the polar opposite of the education system which reigns in England. Teachers work in a low trust environment upon which a prescriptive curriculum is assigned in order to ensure that children are ready for testing at regular intervals

(Garratt and Forrester, 2012). It therefore may be understandable to assume that replicating policies from Finland will aid the production of a better education system in England. For instance, England's government have increased the minimum degree classification needed to gain entry to a postgraduate teaching qualification to ensure that high quality graduates join the teaching profession, which mirrors Finland's teaching profession where a Master's qualification is needed. However, picking out certain policies in an attempt strengthen an education system again ignores the wider context which, as Garratt and Forrester (2012) highlight, policy borrowing is not as straight forward as simply picking a policy and implementing. There are greater cultural contexts to consider.

In the spirit of making comparisons, it is important to view the culture in which Finland's education system is embedded as this is what can be described as the wider context. According to Lewis (2005) traditional values such as trust in authority and patriotic spirit, and the ability to diversify during an economic decline in the 1990's has led Finland to being ranked as having a high level of human capital. The theory of human capital, according to Garrett and Forrester (2012) can be linked directly to global competition due to the economic performances of OECD countries. The driving force behind the need to invest in human capital has therefore stemmed from the increased knowledge and comparisons gained from organisations such as the OECD due to globalisation. Sellar and Lingard (2013) also suggest that PISA measures the flow of human capital into the economy which gives some weight to how influential it is to governments, globally. There are however disputes that greater qualifications equate to greater skills and Wolf (2002) argues that there is little evidence which supports this theory. Despite this, it could be argued that greater human capital is one of the reasons why Finland does so well in the PISA tests. As Williams (2009) implies, economic prosperity relies on the knowledge of the workforce and so suggests

that it is critical that education has a role in improving human capital. This appears to be the case in Finland where the education system goes full circle in creating an able workforce, including future teachers, who are autonomous and trusted educators who then deliver pedagogy where developing lifelong skills are ranked higher than teaching to the test, which then creates a skilled workforce and so on.

This is speculation however because if it were the formula to producing high scoring PISA results then England would also be amongst the highest scorers according to England's history. Looking back at the governing history, from the 1990's onwards; each government has invested in human capital and focusing on mastering core subjects. However, England remains distinctly average in the PISA ranking, overall (Adams, 2013) despite increased investment which may trigger yet another review of what is missing from the education policy or systems, implemented since the last PISA results.

The issue however, in having international tests triennially, means that governments eagerly await results and then look for short term fixes from other countries by policy-borrowing rather than focusing on how to improve their own education system which fits well and comfortably within their own culture. It seems obvious that a constant scramble to find a policy from a different country and therefore a different culture does not appear to be working and this is something which Meyer and Benavot (2013) agree with. Grek (2009) also draws attention to the results of such testing which may be the creation of a mechanism allowing never-ending, continuous testing and reforming. It has been suggested that short cuts and short term fixes from elsewhere leave societies with a 'horse race' mentality (Kamens, 2013) and therefore an inevitable sense of loss when the next round of testing could potentially show no improvement. To fix this problem,

time needs to be invested in finding what policies specifically suits their needs and address the wider context of culture also, rather than picking and mixing policies.

This is something discussed by Morris (2012) who evaluated the Coalition government's 2010 white paper on whole-school reform in order to achieve a world class education system. In this Morris highlights the reliance on organisations such as the OECD to produce global comparative league tables in order to borrow policies from those who are ranked as best performers. In Morris' evaluation of the white paper, he cites that it is not based on 'wholly objective and neutral investigation of the evidence' (p.104) which emphasizes a practice often used by governments, in which the comparative system and name of the OECD is used to justify the borrowing or implementation of a particular policy. This appears to a more frequent use of PISA than using it as an opportunity to open up the forum and create solutions that fit into the culture and society of the country. However, conflicting information from Grek (2009) suggests that England appears to pay less attention, taking a more relaxed approach in the response to PISA and suggests that it does not play a large part in policy-making. However, noting the dates in which each paper was written, Grek's and Morris' perspectives may differ due to the change in governments from New Labour (1997-2010) to the Conservative party (2010 onwards) and therefore differing views and perspectives on the issues.

What is interesting to note is that the detailed analysis of Finland's education systems and consequently it's recognition as a leader in education, is down to the OECD and its PISA assessment (Sellar and Lingard, 2013). Sellar and Lingard (2013) also suggest that part of the success and influence that the OECD has has partly been down to timing. The 1990's onwards saw a period of unification of education and economic policy and the OECD aided understanding

of education systems on a global scale. National governments have found great use in this collective information and have been able to sustain and increase productivity and economic growth due to the information produced by the OECD. In producing this information and a further reach into education via PISA, the OECD has a hold on advising policy both economically and educationally.

There are critics of the OECD who share concern over a non-education organisation assuming such a large global role in making recommendations towards standards in education (Meyer and Benavot, 2013). There are also those who feel that there are some fundamental doubts about the validity and reliability of PISA, as described above (Prais, 2003). The research by Prais however was undermined in a review by Adams (2003) who suggested that Prais' criticisms stem from a lack of understanding and knowledge of the methodological practices used in international studies such as PISA. However other concerns come from the worry that the PISA test provides a uniformity of international testing that may strip away the diversity, culture and beliefs of the participating countries. It is clear that the OECD has gained great influence in global education by funding the comparative study, PISA. Although the PISA test continues to gain authority, the evidence presented draws attention to how in many instances, achievement in the PISA test does not indicate fully what children have learnt due to the dismissal of other non-core subjects which may influence human capital, which as discussed, is important to economical progression. The comparative test also overlooks the wider context due to the use of qualitative data which may better explain a countries performance. Despite this evidence, policy-makers still eagerly anticipate the triennial results as a marker of the performance of education systems which reveals the power and influence of the OECD in policy-making and comparative education.

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Critically evaluate the impact of globalisation on national education systems.

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This essay will begin by defining globalisation using current academic definitions. Consideration will be given to the complexity of the concept and its multifarious impacts within education, society and politics. Key elements will be explored that contribute to globalisation with a main focus on political and economic factors. The essay will discuss neoliberal ideology that underpins globalisation, analysing how this has led to a process of normalisation (Wolfensberger, 1972) and can create negative implications for developing and less wealthy nations. There will be a focus on how globalisation is manifest in education reforms and policy in the United Kingdom (UK) and this will be utilised to illustrate how globalisation is arguably the most significant challenge for education in developed countries. A small comparison of education policy in polarised countries, namely, the UK and India will be utilised in order to critically evaluate whether globalisation is the most significant challenge currently facing national education systems in both developed and developing nations. Education policy in Kerela and Maslow's (1943) Hierarchy of Need will be used to exemplify how defining globalisation as the most significant challenge for education in developing countries may oversimplify the human needs of those living there.

There are a wealth of scholars (Litz, 2011; Weiss, 1997; Spybey, 1996 and Woods, 1996) that describe globalisation as an evolving and complex concept that is difficult to classify due to the abundance of definitions and theoretical interpretations which are used in relation to this phenomenon. However, there is general consensus, (Litz,

2011; Weiss, 1997; Lubbers, 1997; Spybey, 1996; Robertson, 1992 and Hirst and Thompson, 1992) that globalisation is a multidimensional, ideological and political process that involves cycles of economic, social, technological, military, cultural and political change. This in turn impacts upon investment funds, ideas, goods and services, people and businesses by removing domestic and national boundaries and creating a larger international realm. Globalisation arguably increases interdependence and interconnectedness between people, cultures, ethnic groups, governments, and organisations from different locations in a wider global arena. McLuhan and Fiore (1968) describe this notion as a "Global Village".

Held et al. (1999: 69) offer a description that is useful in elucidating the complex system of globalisation as "A process…which embodies a transformation in the spatial organisation of social relations and transactions…generating transcontinental…flows and networks of activity" which, they suggest, affects both "interaction, and the exercise of power".

Within the context of this essay it is also necessary to define the term 'education'. In this perspective education is regarded as social learning which takes place in formal settings such as schools and universities. Coombs (1985) suggests 'education' is also prevalent in informal settings such as home and kinship groups. Globalisation may therefore arguably result in local educational subcultures being displaced by a 'universal education culture' which whilst delivering the economic benefits of world-wide standardisation and efficiency may destroy vital local and unique educational practices.

Though globalisation is often represented and described as the pinnacle of economic acumen (Lipietz, 1997), globalisation has also been portrayed negatively. Critics, (Nikiforuk, 2007 and Giddens,

1990) identify that the contemporary form of globalisation, driven by economic power, undoubtedly endorses the hegemony of Western culture and corporations which can put jobs and local communities at risk. Furthermore, Holm and Sorensen, (1995) highlight the potentially problematic irregularity of globalisation both in its effects and practices. Critics such as Nikiforuk (2007) and Ball (1998) also argue that the neoliberal ideology that underpins globalisation serves to 'normalise' the process despite its lack of cohesion with many cultures and communities. Thus, as Ritchie (1996) states, while it is clearly in the particular interest of large multinational and global corporations to be free in the most profitable markets, the ideology of globalisation seeks to promote the belief that the interests of all of humanity and the planet will also be best served by this process.

A trend highlighted by Robertson (1992); Robertson et al. (2002) and Dale and Robertson (2002) is that of the change of educational governance both within developed and developing countries. This shift followed the 1970 economic crisis and the emergence of neoliberalism as the dominant ideology influencing economic, educational and social reform. Peck and Tickell (2005) state that although the application, variety and pace of these reforms differed, this new political project resulted in a shift away from, a patriotic and demand-managed economy and education system to what Cerny (1997) referred to as the competition state. Peck and Tickell (2005) note that some of the key features of this new system were reduced levels of state control leading to increased levels of privatisation within education. These processes underpinned a partial denationalising of the states (Sassen, 2005). For example, in the UK, these developments were given significant impetus with the introduction of the Public Finance Initiative that prioritised the establishment of Public-Private Partnerships as the resource for delivering educational services. Mahony et al. (2004) identify the private workers in education, particularly under the Excellence in

Cities programme, (DfEs 2005) which oversaw the Education Action Zones, which introduced performance management for teachers and the introduction of private firms that began to provide curriculum materials and training. As Brown & Lauder (1996) state that national education and economic development within the relations of globalisation are arguably hinged upon changes in the rules of eligibility, engagement and profit.

Additionally, Ball (1998) espouses that even the most allegedly influential Governments, have experienced a decline in their ability to control or supervise the actions of Multi-National Corporations (MNCs) and maintain the integrity of their economic borders. Ball (1998) argues that this results in the loss of Keynesian capacity (Keynes, 1935). This arguably further highlights the challenge of education within a globalised business model.

Lingard and Ozga (2007) and Ball (2003) suggest that changes in the education sector have transformed the social relations of schooling. This demonstrates that social contexts both within and beyond formal educational institutions have enabling or constraining effects on individual learning and outcome. This is a notion that is arguably lost within major structural influences in an ever increasing globalised system. Moreover, the modern world potentially values short-term performance in the drive for economic competitiveness and efficiency, and implicitly undermines other concerns for quality of life and social justice. Pollard et al (2001) cautions that within educational discourse, such issues raise fundamental questions about the most appropriate conceptualisation of learning, teaching and education for modern societies.

Another key aspect of how globalisation has potentially become education's most significant challenge in the UK is that jobs requiring routine manual or cognitive tasks are rapidly being taken over by

computers and lower-paid workers in other countries, while jobs that necessitate high levels of education are in high demand and short supply (OECD, 1994). Thus it is possible to argue that for the UK's education system to rise to the challenge of globalisation, adjustments must be made to intended outcomes for students. Ball (1994 and 2003) concurs with this and states that education is now a major factor in the world economy, both as a basis for national economic competitiveness, particularly in the development of 'high skills' labour. Thus arguably these new economic consequences and shifts in the job market are fundamentally changing what is needed from the education system. In order to compete within this competitive market people are required to have a greater knowledge of foreign languages and cultures in order to market products to customers globally. For example, in the UK a vast amount of revenue is made from foreign students studying higher education. Ball (2003; 1990 and 1994) argues that education is becoming progressively subject to complex processes of commodification, commercialisation and privatisation as a result of economic pressures and reforms intended to modernise public services. Robertson et al. (2002) identify that these are given impetus at the transnational level by the attempts at trade liberalisation implemented by agencies like the World Trade Organisation (WTO) through the General Agreement on Trade and Services (GATS). Ball (2007) expands, stating that this process arguably intends to convert social capital to financial capital subsequently encouraging the role of the private sector in education. According to Burbules and Torres (2000), this neoliberal version of globalisation drives forward the business model in education which affects evaluation, financing, assessment, standards, teacher training, and curriculums with an intent to achieved standardised norms throughout.

The process of standardisation arguably supports the growth of Western oriented norms of learning at all levels. In school based

education this can be evidenced by the introduction of the PISA League Tables in 2000. These tables are utilised to provide a comparative measure of academic success and performance across the world. However, there is much dispute as to how effective a measure this is due to disparity between socio-cultural norms and expectations (Pereyra et al., 2011 and Wiseman, 2010). Further to this the tables arguably de-contextualise the experiences of education in developed and developing nations by failing to reflect the impact of divergent socio-economic and socio-cultural norms. This demonstrates the significant challenge posed to those involved with providing, standardising, assessing and disseminating education within a global arena. Carney, (2003) concurs that the challenge in education can arise from the dichotomy between contemporary school policies that are underpinned by globalisation and local cultures.

Further exploring contemporary educational discourse evidences, (Pereyra et al., 2011) that most governments adopt similar educational agendas that comprise of investing in education in order to develop human capital, improve workforces and thereby promote economic growth, (DfES, 2005). Arguably this is underpinned by neoliberal ideology that dates back to Friedman (1982). This notion suggests that schools become defined as commodities and subsequently become subject to privatisation, separation from state control and in some cases the provision of education in return for profit. These policies arguably encouraged the marketisation of education in which, parents and students are recognised as consumers and individual institutions compete for their business. However, the relinquishment of centrally controlled standards and curriculums was not fully sanctioned and consequently, maintained significant government control through curriculum standards and testing (Spring, 2005 and Apple, 2000). Since 2010, Gove has strengthened central government control over local education,

curtailing its independence and authority arguably in a manner reminiscent of the way in which world-wide globalisation has impacted on national education systems.

Apple (2006) further highlights the link between neoliberalism and globalisation, suggesting that students are now viewed as a form of human capital. By contrast many critics of neoliberalism have been associated with the anti-globalisation movement (Lechner, 2009). This arguably is manifest in the suggestion that neoliberalism is an ideology designed to ensure that prosperous nations and people retain their wealth and power in a globalised economy. Spring, (2005), Apple, (2006 and 2000) and Ball (2007), claim that the application of neoliberal policies within educational discourse potentially results in social exclusion and cyclical inequalities.

Globalisation as a multifaceted social phenomenon is impacting very differently on the lives of individuals all over the world, due to diverse cultural and socio-economic norms. Globalisation is not a process solely related to economic and financial systems but as discussed works through movement of goods and services, cultural forms, ideas and labour. Current research evidences that as a service, commodity and 'idea' education must therefore be vulnerable to the effects and demands that result from this process and subsequently globalisation poses a significant challenge in this arena. It is possible to suggest that this is causing education to be subsumed with the needs of economic competition and the knowledge economy. Tuschling and Engeman (2006) use Bourdieu's (1984) theory to illustrate how social hierarchies change and knowledge becomes a 'symbolic capital' (Bourdieu, 1984). Further to this within current paradigms 'knowledge workers' hold particularly high value as producers of economic and social capital and are thus afforded the highest social status of all producers of capital. Marginson and

Considine (2000) cautions that the resultant phenomenon in globalised education may be creating a paradoxical situation in which, rather than improving life chances, education in fact serves to further deepen inequalities. This is arguably manifest in UK education policy through the expansion of free schools and academies. Spring (2013) suggests that rather than affording children greater access to higher standards of education and parent's greater choice as consumers, free schools potentially encourage segregation and exclusion at the point of entry, increasing the vulnerability of marginalised groups.

There is scant evidence to suggest that globalisation is not the most significant challenge facing education (Wildavsky, 2010). However, it is crucial to explore minority groups and communities that are required to prioritise extremely different factors in education. This includes socially disadvantaged groups from developing countries particularly those dependent on rural income and those made up of indigenous communities. This is evidenced by the fact that four out of five children who do not go to school live in rural regions (UNESCO, 2000). In this circumstance Maslow's (1943) Hierarchy of Need can be used to elucidate why globalisation is not the most significant challenge facing all national education systems. When applying Maslow's (1943) theory it is possible to argue that education or employment cannot be achieved, nor considered a priority, until physiological needs are met. Food, water, shelter and equality have to be obtained before literacy and numeracy education can be considered. Giullari and Shaw (2005) suggest that the issue is actually with our perceptions of achievement. They propose that the value we place on education, employment and training detracts from the triumphs of many children and young people on a day to day basis.

Education policy evidenced by Kerala provides a salient example of a system in which physiological needs are prioritised over globalised ideals. In this region particular concerns were raised about the vulnerability of females in accessing education and equality of life outcomes. This was recognised to be closely indexed to overpopulation. The solution that was adopted rejected large-scale outside corporate investment in favour of grassroots solutions. The local government instead prioritised provision of public human services to its population combined with the active participation of women's groups and community councils who make decisions on a local level. Therefore, a social arrangement was formed. This indisputably evidences that local, instead of global, trends can often be more significant challenges to meet through education than globalisation and in addressing these factors as a priority better meets the needs of local communities.

According to Parayil (2002), Kerala has utilised rational local planning to reduce the poverty, illiteracy, short life spans and general insecurity and vulnerability that drives the local people to have large numbers of children, impacting on educational achievement and employment. Even if these children are viewed as human capital, local solutions are sought before considering the challenge of how this capital can be exploited in a globalised world. Vernon (2001) concurs that having strong structures of local control can keep the government accountable and make sure that its policies are actually responsive to the community's needs. As a result, Kerala has managed to build a network of schools, health clinics, public housing units and other services that while not eliminating poverty have managed to reduce extreme poverty that prevents any form of social-mobility.

Vernon (2001) additionally suggests that Kerala could be used as a model for other developing nations, as the material conditions in that

part of India are not markedly different from other developing countries. Kerala stands out starkly because so many other methods of sustainable development in the developing countries, such as those rooted in communistic, dictatorial or liberal state policies, have failed to achieve the sort of educational and social progress as Kerala.

However Kerala's rejection of globalisation as the key driving force behind current educational policy and ideology is in contrast with a broad range of evidence to suggest the opposite. A rediscovery of the economic importance of education has been fundamental to understanding the new global knowledge economy (Papadopoulos 1994, cited in Ball et al, 2007). The Organisation for Economic and Cultural Development (OECD) and the World Bank (2000) have stressed the significance of education and training as keys to participation in the new global knowledge economy for the development of 'human resources'; for up-skilling and increasing the competencies of workers; and for the production of research and scientific knowledge. This provides strong evidence for the argument that globalisation is the most significant challenge facing education systems. Robinson (2011: 244) concurs that the key challenge facing education systems is the maintenance of cultural identity and economic development with a framework of globalisation and states that this is evidence by the fact that "every country in the world is involved in a state of reform".

The impact of globalisation on social, cultural, economic, and political change has been used to explore and elucidate the concept. Evidence suggests that globalisation within educational discourse has emerged as an economic phenomenon. Critics argue that globalisation has become an over-normalised process which paradoxically serves only a minority through its neoliberal ideology and capitalist hegemony within an education system that is

increasingly viewed as a service and commodity (Robinson, 2011; Cerny, 1997; Carter et al., 1995 and Wolfensberger, 1972). The cumulative link between financial gain and human capital, which is driven by the process of globalisation, has impacted upon national education systems. Therefore, arguably this has created significant challenge within education. Ball (2007) concurs and uses standardisation as evidence to demonstrate the impact of globalisation on education, stating that its aim is to create a more unrestricted, cohesive community of globalised education within which liberal and Westernised values prevail.

There is a substantial body of evidence to support the notion that globalisation is probably the most significant challenge facing education systems within developed countries. However this is arguably not the case in developing nations. This has been exemplified by exploration of education policy in Kerela which, as Parayil (2002) states, prioritises and utilises local solutions over corporate investment, capital gain and global directives. Within non-Westernised culture to suggest that their most significant challenge is the globalisation of education arguably fails to acknowledge the additional basic human needs that are not met within this paradigm.

On reflection, the advantages of increasing globalisation are to a great extent accompanied with disadvantages for many, subsequently creating a significant challenge for those responsible for and involved in education. This can be attributed to the disproportionate motivation in globalisation to expand market economies, accumulate wealth and maximise capital rather than improve individual educational outcomes. Current mechanisms of globalisation arguably provide opportunities to achieve technical progress, increase opportunities to access democratic, political and social rights through education and open possibilities for the freedom of information. This may in turn create opportunities for social

progress that have previously been inaccessible to many nations. However, the process is also evidenced to create injustices and inequalities in the distribution of standards of education across societies. The gravest effect of this process on human life is potentially its role in widening the gap between the poor and the rich, not only at a global level, but also at local and national levels. Therefore, injustices and inequalities associated with this process within education, and its various consequences on societies and cultures could undermine the proposed political prospects of global solidarity. In conclusion it is possible to suggest that managing the dichotomy created by globalisation and the progress of individual human welfare may pose the greatest challenge within contemporary education.

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