CHAPTER

10

The teaching profession in context: issues for policy and practice around the world

This chapter should be cited as:

This chapter reviews current debates concerning teachers and the teaching profession from a global perspective. It draws on related research on teachers' professionalism and agency, as well as on the contribution of initial teacher education and in-service professional development to identity, motivation and the quality of teachers' work. The analysis also considers various political contexts and how these affect the enactment of teacher professionalism. Among the major issues identified is the impact of a widely prevalent and narrow emphasis on standards-based teacher accountability on teachers' lives, well-being and work. Also highlighted are the strenuous working conditions faced by teachers in countries as diverse as India, South Africa and England. Critiquing a widespread trend towards 'deprofessionalizing' teaching, the chapter stresses the importance to teachers of collaborative professionalism. Of immediate relevance to the context in which this report was drafted is the discussion of cross-cutting issues arising from the impact of COVID-19 on teachers' work and well-being. Special attention is given to the debates, intensified by the pandemic, surrounding the role of technology in teaching, and questions this raises concerning the resourcing of schools, equitable provision, preparation of teachers and our fundamental assumptions regarding the nature and purpose of teaching as a profession.

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10.1 Introduction

The centrality of teachers in education is as important today as it was in the past, despite much zig-zagging at the policy level about what precisely this means and how education systems should recognize and support teachers. The much-repeated mantra that 'teachers matter' has needed at various historical stages to be restated because in practice teachers' social recognition and working conditions have remained chronically poor across much of

the world. In 1966, two of the most important international organizations (the International Labour Organization (ILO) and UNESCO) joined forces to issue a detailed statement on teachers that covered professionalism, preparation, responsibilities, autonomy, rights and conditions of work, while indicating that teacher shortages should not justify the dilution of professional standards **(ILO/UNESCO, 2016)**. Those recommendations are as valid today as they were in 1966 but require periodic revisiting, drawing on policy studies and research, which in turn require dissemination, discussion and analysis. This chapter attempts to provide an update that focuses on three main areas: initial teacher education, in-service professional development and working conditions.

This analysis is obviously not comprehensive but is informed by recognition of teachers as professionals and of professionalism as the basis of their work and commitment to student education and learning.

The chapter draws on recently published academic research, supplemented by government policy studies or multilateral reports, and various other sources.

Part of the context for this analysis involves a fragmentation and diminution of teacher professionalism associated with claims concerning the promise of technology. Amounting to a turbocharged form of behaviourism, the salience of this trend varies considerably across national contexts, taking a particularly extreme form in societies (such as India) where powerful interests have long sought to limit or undermine teacher autonomy **(Kumar, 2017)**. Some of the enthusiasm regarding the allegedly transformative pedagogical potential of technology is associated with agendas, discussed in the previous chapter on assessment in context **(WG2-ch9)**, that seek to subject teaching and learning to ever more intrusive forms of 'outcomes'-focused monitoring in the name of 'accountability'.

Valuing autonomy, dignity and agency in our students entails valuing the same qualities in our teachers.

Why does this matter? Throughout the 'context' section of this report, we emphasize that assessing the performance of education systems must involve critical reflection on our assumptions concerning what education is for – assumptions that are in turn shaped in complex ways by history, politics and culture. The claim that educational efficiency can be achieved by diminishing the human factor in the pedagogical equation reflects a narrowly instrumental, mechanical vision of learning that not only devalues teachers, but also reduces students to mere receptacles for productivity-enhancing skills and knowledge. But if it is accepted that any education system should be characterized by certain core values and transformative goals, including inclusion, social justice and the promotion of human agency and dignity, then it follows that teachers play a vital role in enacting and modelling these values. Valuing autonomy, dignity and agency in our students entails valuing the same qualities in our teachers.

This chapter surveys the educational landscape from the perspective of teachers. The issues that emerge range from teachers' working conditions, status, training, access to pedagogical resources and challenges presented by student diversity, to questions of teacher agency and involvement in policy-making. The chapter also discusses the significance of technological developments, both for the practice of teaching, and for the conceptualization of teachers' roles. With consideration of the implications of technology rendered more pressing by COVID-19, the chapter also includes discussion of some specific challenges the pandemic has posed for teachers.

10.2 Teachers' roles and paradigms of teacher preparation

Three terms often used to describe the role of teachers – training, instruction and teaching – convey the historical trajectory of the development of teachers' work and their role in the life of children. The habit of seeing teaching simply in terms of mechanical forms of 'training' came under increasing criticism from the early twentieth century for its implicit denial of autonomy or agency. Dominant visions of the nature and purpose of teaching tended to deny or underplay the importance of teachers' independent judgement and agency. While undeniably an important component of education, training came to be seen as an inadequate paradigm by many educators, especially those influenced by progressivist thinkers such as John Dewey **(1923)**, Neil Postman **(1996)** and Paulo Freire **(2018; Gerhardt, 1993)**. Another term frequently used to describe teachers' work – 'instruction' – has also become inadequate for many, and for similar reasons, since the concept of 'instruction' focuses on the transmission of predetermined curricular content. Both teacher and learner recede in importance as content, its ordering and presentation, take centre stage. This distinction is important, since preconceptions concerning the

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purpose of teaching embedded in the use of terms such as 'training' or 'instruction' have long shaped structural arrangements governing teachers' work and professional lives.

Significant changes to the status of teachers and their working arrangements have been driven in many societies by interests keen to subject teachers to increasingly stringent top-down control, either because they see schools as failing to deliver economically relevant 'skills', or as undermining the established political order, or both. From North America to South Asia, a 'discourse of derision' directed at the teaching profession has been promoted by a coalition of forces portrayed by Michael Apple **(2001, p. 410)** as consisting of:

multiple fractions of capital who are committed to neo-liberal marketized solutions to educational problems, neo-conservative intellectuals who want a "return" to higher standards and a "common culture", authoritarian populist religious conservatives who are deeply worried about secularity and the preservation of their own traditions, and particular fractions of the professionally and managerially oriented new middle class who are committed to the ideology and techniques of accountability, measurement, and the "new managerialism".

While Apple writes from a North American perspective, the operation of a similarly constituted coalition is observable in other Anglophone societies, across South Asia **(Subramanian, 2019)**, and to varying extents elsewhere. In more overtly authoritarian societies, such as China, the impetus towards increasingly intrusive control over the teaching profession does not need to be cloaked in the language of choice or neoliberal efficiency **(Vickers and Zeng, 2017)**.

In contrast to notions of 'training' or 'instruction', the concept of 'teaching', taken in the round, encompasses the relationship between teachers and students, their shared interest in the learning process and, most importantly, an imaginative or creative sympathy

joining the minds of teacher and student. Teachers' work should be understood not simply as imparting subject content in accordance with mandated standards (though standards, in some form, have their place), but also engaging with the identities of their students. In more progressive understandings of education, the teacher is transformed from an authoritarian instructor (or Dickensian Gradgrind) into an enabler who understands the importance of emotional respect as a precondition for intellectual learning.

While a recent UNESCO report **(Singh and Duraiappah, 2020)** also articulated this essentially humanitarian perspective, it has been systematically enfeebled by pressure to prioritize measurement of 'outcomes' in terms of capital enhancement and productivity growth **(Schleicher, 2020)**. The exponents of this instrumentalist, human capital orientation have more recently adopted more humanistic rhetoric **(WG2-ch1, ch8)**, espousing the cause of 'social and emotional learning' **(WG2-ch8)** or 'twenty-first century competencies', but their

position remains rooted in the logic of human capital formation. For instance, in the McKinsey Global Institute's 2018 report on the future of work it is suggested that

20 to 40 percent of current teacher hours are spent on activities that could be automated using existing technology. That translates into approximately 13 hours per week that teachers could redirect toward activities that lead to higher student outcomes and higher teacher satisfaction. In short, our research suggests that existing technology can help teachers reallocate 20 to 40 percent of their time to activities that support student learning. (Bryant et al., 2020).

Technology has a potentially valuable role to play in the learning process **(WG2-ch6)**, but there is a danger that such discourse propagates the notion of teachers as cogs in a pedagogical machine geared to delivering high test scores, rather than professionals who should be capable of engaging their own judgement in decisions over what should be taught, when and how.

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10.3 Teacher education and professional development

A considerable international literature underlines the importance for teachers of well-developed pre-service teacher education programmes combined with career-long opportunities for professional development **(Darling-Hammond, 1999; Day et al.,** **2007)**. However, a constant refrain of much of this commentary concerns the perceived inadequacies of teacher education in many societies, particularly but by no means only in the Global South.

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10.3.1

ESSENCE AND PLACE

The evolutionary path of teacher education between the early-nineteenth and mid-twentieth centuries, from lowly normal schools to a more elevated status in teachers' colleges and universities, has meant that although 15 per cent of education systems continue to prepare teachers at secondary level, most countries now do so at universities and other tertiary institutions **(Labaree, 2008; Ávalos and Razquin, 2017; Ávalos and Reyes, 2020)**. The basis for this progress has been increased understanding that teaching is a profession requiring solid knowledge and a practical base together with motivation and commitment.

Historically, many teacher education programs have fallen into one of two categories: undergraduate-level programs, combining subject-focused instruction with courses in pedagogical knowledge and practical teaching experience; or programs constituting a distinct stage of post-graduate professional preparation. More recently, however, two contrasting forms of teacher preparation have emerged. The first, considering teacher education as a matter for higher education institutions, is reflected, for example, in the decision adopted by countries associated with Europe's Bologna Process to upgrade teacher preparation to a two-year Master's-level programme involving professional study and practice. The second form, epitomized by England, reduces the role of university preparation by promoting school-based alternative paths into teaching. To acquire 'qualified teacher status' under the latter arrangements, university graduates may engage in teacher preparation at universities, in programmes managed by school consortia or through school-based salaried routes into teaching. This approach to teacher preparation has been criticized for relying on a diminished, technically oriented notion of what is required to

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become a teacher. It fails to acknowledge that learning to teach is a complex process involving research-based curricular, and philosophical, psychological and sociological learning that is well integrated with pedagogy and practical learning **(Furlong, 2013; Zeichner, 2014; McIntyre, Youens and Stevenson, 2019)**.

10.3 .1 .1

MOTIVATION, IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT AND PROFESSIONALISM

Debates and research associated with teacher education continue to examine traditional themes such as motivation for teaching, identity development and links between subject knowledge, pedagogy and practice in different teacher education formats. Newer areas of research attention encompass inclusion, as a challenge confronting prospective teachers, and the associated task of mastering content and pedagogical approaches needed to educate diverse student populations.

There is also a growing emphasis on the pedagogical use of digital technologies that has been intensified by the COVID-19 pandemic **(OECD, 2021;** see the section below on the impact of COVID-19).

Motivation to become a teacher, as an indicator of commitment to remain in teaching, has been a longstanding subject of research, examined through different lenses. Two studies, based on very different populations, offer insights into motives for teaching. The first, by Bruinsma and Jansen **(2010)**, explores motivation from the perspective of extrinsic and intrinsic factors and of reasons labelled as 'adaptive' or 'maladaptive' depending on their relevance to teaching as a profession. Results show an association, mainly among female candidates, between 'intrinsic adaptive' motives and positive self-efficacy perceptions together with positive views about their preparation program quality. Having 'intrinsic adaptive' motives is also related to future teacher intentions to remain

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in the profession, which were weaker among those exhibiting a 'maladaptive extrinsic' motivation for teaching. The second, and very different, study – in terms of the population surveyed – examines 'calling' to the profession **(Madero, 2021)**. In semi-structured interviews, teachers were asked to reflect on how they had discovered, lived and defined their decisions to teach. The study confirms the role of initial intrinsic motivation factors in decisions to remain in teaching. Taken together, the studies of Bruinsma and Jansen **(2010)** and Madero **(2021)** provide evidence about the diversity of concepts through which teacher motivation may be captured, as well as how teachers engage with their teacher education programmes and express their commitment to remain in the profession.

Motives for entering teaching contribute to initial professional identity perceptions, which then develop, strengthen and become particularized in the course of teacher preparation. Beltman et al. **(2015)** use drawings to elucidate

how future teachers express professional identity during their first year of preparation. These drawings, which feature teachers, students, pedagogical tools and combinations thereof, present forms of idealized teacher identity. These conceptualizations changed as new teachers gained experience of work in classrooms and schools, dealing with a diversity of students, and facing difficulties in their interaction with colleagues. Beltman et al. **(2015)** conclude by emphasizing the need for teacher educators to assist new teachers to interpret the challenges of teaching as these are encountered, guiding a process of identity formation that sustains their early enthusiasm for the profession.

Closely related to identity is the concept of professionalism, also an important goal of teacher education. The way in which new teachers understand and express their professionalism depends on how their teacher education program, through its taught curriculum and practical elements, situates the role of teachers in relation to the education system

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and its requirements. Based on this assumption, Dodillet, Lundin and Krüger **(2019)** conducted a comparatively small-scale survey to examine how future teachers in Swedish and German preparation programmes conceptualized professionalism. These groups of future teachers differed markedly in their views of who could be viewed as 'professional'. Swedish participants described professionals as persons who have 'faith in science, technology and standardisation' and responsibly comply with requirements established in official policy documents **(Dodillet, Lundin and Krüger, 2019, p. 211)**. German student teachers, on the other hand, viewed professionalism as a matter of personality and judgement, were less inclined to cite the importance of adhering to policy documents, and stressed the need for reflection in dealing with the education system's complexities.

While the authors of the above study do not draw conclusions about reasons for the transnational differences in how future teachers

describe professionalism, another study on Swedish teacher education provides a possible explanation **(Beach, 2019)**. The study analyses what it defines as an uncomfortable relation over time between Swedish teacher education and the social justice principles of the comprehensive school system established in 1946, and its neglect in consolidating a unified teacher education structure around a general professional component. Future Swedish teachers' views of professionalism in Dodillet, Lundin and Krüger's **(2019)** study might thus have been affected by insufficient preparation in the social inclusion orientations of the comprehensive school system as opposed to emphasis on subject mastery in a growing context of market policies affecting teacher education **(Beach, 2019)**. Swedish teachers' views of professionalism might also reflect tensions in the teacher education curriculum between extension and minimalism, between theoretical and practical pedagogy, and between primary and secondary teacher preparation **(Beach, 2019)**.

In the case of Israel, Smith and Lev-Ari **(2005)** compare subject-focused and general education courses, finding that almost all students rated experience gained through their teaching practicum as highly important. But almost equally important for their interpretation and handling of practical classroom situations was the theoretical base provided by courses in pedagogy and didactics, including knowledge about students with special needs.

These student teachers did not judge the quality of their teaching preparation curriculum through the prism of a crude theory–practice dichotomy. Rather, they valued the relevance of theory to their perceived work demands as student teachers or not yet fully practicing ones **(Smith and Lev-Ari, 2005).** These findings reinforce the importance of pedagogy as a field of enquiry as well as of action **(Alexander, 2008).**

BOX 1: COLONIAL LEGACIES, THE POLITICS OF CONTROL AND TEACHER DEPROFESSIONALIZATION: THE CASE OF INDIA

In India, as in much of the Global South, the status of teachers and arrangements for their pre-service training bear the mark of the legacies of colonial rule. These include historically low levels of overall investment in schooling, low status for teachers and – related to this – the prioritization by government of control over teachers' professional autonomy. These factors have contributed to the prevalence of a diminished, subordinated, deprofessionalized vision of the teaching profession.

Ancient and medieval Indian societies regarded teaching as a specialized and relatively high-status activity **(Shahidullah, 1987)**, but it was only in the mid-nineteenth century that systematic programs of teacher training introduced by the colonial government introduced notions of a teaching 'profession' **(Kumar, 2014)**. Then, teacher training took the form of highly didactic programs following uniform guidelines handed down by the colonial government; there was little pretence in valuing or promoting professional autonomy. Today, in the early twenty-first century, official Indian government documents continue to reflect the enduring legacy of this model. The National Curriculum Framework of 2005 states that 'the basic features of these programs as well as the theoretical premises have not altered significantly. Although newer concerns, surfacing from time to time, have been taken cognisance of, these have not influenced in any major way the mainstream teacher education' **(GoI, 2006, p. 3)**. Successive official commissions established by colonial and post-independence governments with the declared aim of improving the quality of teachers' professional

preparation have done little to alter the fundamentally colonial character of Pearson Test of English (PTE) programmes. As Kumar **(2008)** observes, 'a whole century has gone by without the instrumental character of teacher training being challenged or reformed' **(p. 38)**.

The approach to professional teacher education in India is shot through with assumptions of hierarchy. Secondary school teachers are trained in universities, whereas elementary and kindergarten teachers are trained in diploma-granting institutions with non-university status. A secondary school teacher is required to have a bachelor's degree in arts or sciences as well as a professional qualification, namely a Bachelor of Education. An elementary school teacher requires a senior secondary school graduation certificate and a professional qualification, namely the Diploma in Elementary Education.[1]

The dominant vision of the teacher is that of a community developer and low-level government functionary rather than an autonomous professional tasked with educating young children and adolescents. As a result, there is generally little attempt to implement training programmes that articulate 'theoretical reflection' with effective educational practice **(Batra, 2009)**. Teachers are seen merely as agents for the delivery of the textual material supplied in officially prescribed textbooks. Struggles witnessed in countries such as the United Kingdom (UK) or the United States (USA) over the best way for university teacher-training programs to balance the concept of method with different forms of knowledge, namely liberal, propositional and moral **(Kumaravadivelu, 2001; Furlong, 2013)**, have been largely absent in the Indian context. Kumar **(2017, p. 1)** argues that

[1]With the exception of an integrated program offered by Delhi University, professional education for elementary teachers remains outside the purview of universities.

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'the growth of educational studies in India as a whole has been sluggish and the overall body of knowledge generated so far is neither balanced nor adequately contemporary'. Raina and Raina **(1971)** conducted a study to assess the characteristics teacher-educators encourage in their trainees. The top six were: industriousness, consideration of others, receptiveness to others, obedience, courteousness and timely completion of tasks. They assigned little importance to curiosity, independent thinking and critical scrutiny of evidence **(p. 305)**.

This outlook, which reflects radical deprofessionalization verging on infantilization of teachers, remains dominant today. A teacher is expected to be obedient and industrious rather than professionally independent and capable of making informed choices on their own authority. Teacher training programmes in India produce teachers who are conditioned to adjust themselves to the prevailing system with minimal fuss, while paying lip-service to goals such as enabling teachers to contribute constructively to efforts at school reform **(Gupta, 2017)**. Restrictions on public investment since the 1990s combined with a push to expand educational access have further exacerbated such problems, producing even weaker (and cheaper) alternative forms of teacher education based on marketized or privatized models. Large-scale appointments of ill-trained or quasi-trained teachers to positions in the publicly funded schooling system have proceeded in the context of a prevalent attitude of cynical resignation regarding the quality of teacher education programmes. The result has been a further dilution of the professional identity of the teacher, and considerable erosion of faith in teacher agency **(NCERT, 2007)**. Such a teacher, trained to think and act as an automaton, easily becomes a 'meek dictator' who abides strictly by convention, immerses themself in clerical work and submits unquestioningly to the diktat

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of their bureaucratic overlords **(Kumar, 2014)**. The conception of the Indian school teacher's role, as reflected in and reinforced through arrangements for teacher training, thus manifests fundamental continuity with the colonial era, even though the market now functions alongside bureaucratic oversight as an auxiliary mechanism of control.

10.3 .2

BREADTH OF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES

While teacher professional development continues to involve formal and less formal activities designed to improve teachers' knowledge and practice, especially in countries with lower education achievement levels, increasingly it takes on more sophisticated meanings and forms. Gorzoni and Davis **(2017)** refer to changes after 2006 in how 'professional development' is studied in the research literature. The term 'professional' became increasingly applied to a holistic conception of teacher–student interaction, encompassing identity building, social and personal integration, competency development, personal and communitarian responsibility as well as ethical and political commitment. In different locations around the world, these conceptual changes also emerged from a review of published studies on teacher professional development conducted between 2000 and 2010 **(Ávalos, 2011)**. These studies brought out the importance of professional learning and reflection as mediated by teacher co-learning and its impact on cognition, beliefs and practices.

Teacher professional development occurs in situations that are intertwined with and marked by political debates, school contexts, curricular change and collaboration with teaching colleagues.

The trend towards a broader conceptualization of teacher professional development is highlighted in Sancar, Atal and Deryakulu's **(2021)** review of related literature, informing their distinction between 'traditional' perspectives and 'newer' approaches. Traditional approaches, often described as 'in-service training' **(Ávalos, 2011)**, comprise courses or activities designed to improve teaching practice, where the role of the 'trainee' is typically conceived in rather passive terms (see the discussion above of teacher preparation paradigms). Newer approaches accentuate teacher personal learning in situated contexts which involve collaborative, inquiring and self-directed actions. Seeking to capture its essence, the authors **(Sancar, Atal and Deryakulu, 2021)** describe teacher professional development as a dynamic, ongoing activity in which teachers' personal characteristics interact with what they teach, how they teach and with student learning. Teacher professional development occurs in situations that are intertwined with and marked by political debates, school contexts, curricular change and collaboration with teaching colleagues.

10.3	.2	.1

COLLABORATIVE PROFESSIONALISM

Moving beyond managerialist notions of occupational professionalism, Whitty **(2008)** emphasizes the status of teachers' collaborative professionalism as central to their work. This collaborative professionalism might be guided by broader concerns for social equity or inclusivity as well as by the pursuit of effective learning. Collaboration, Whitty contends, should be democratic, and include teaching assistants, parents and others in the community, as well as the voices of pupils, especially those from marginalized backgrounds.

Hargreaves and O'Connor **(2017, 2018)** further distinguish between

'professional collaboration' and 'collaborative professionalism'. The concept of professional collaboration, typically found in more managerialist literature, tends to denote a relatively narrow focus on the collaborative pursuit of measurable 'outcomes'. Collaborative professionalism, on the other hand, typically refers to broader practices of engagement in school communities through sharing of teaching activities oriented to student learning. It involves dialogue, constructive feedback and continuous collaborative inquiry **(Hargreaves and O'Connor, 2017)**. Hargreaves and O'Connor **(2017)** provide specific examples of the building of school-based collaborative professionalism, such as enactment of the well-known Japanese practice of Lesson Study in Hong Kong and teacher collaboration in innovative pedagogy through the Escuela Nueva program, a large rural school network in Colombia **(Hargreaves and O'Connor, 2017)**.

Teacher collaboration may involve participation in what are broadly known as 'communities of practice' **(Lave and Wenger, 1991)** and their diverse forms **(Ávalos, 2011)**. Beyond just 'sharing', communities of practice stimulate mutual learning through relevant activities, including production of teaching materials directed to the analysis and improvement of teaching **(Spillane, Alverson and Diamond, 2001)**.

Teacher professional learning networks also illustrate forms of teacher collaboration guided by diverse educational purposes. Like other professional development activities, networks benefit from research that analyses their positive impact as well as their limitations. Pérsico et al. **(2020)** studied two teacher networks in Italy and Spain in the field of technology enhanced learning, otherwise known as self-regulated learning. They surveyed 238 teachers regarding their beliefs and self-reported sharing behaviours. Teachers were questioned about four possible actions in which they might have engaged individually when designing learning activities: consuming or using existing knowledge and resources; creating

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or generating new knowledge; connecting with others to share information sources; and contributing created knowledge to network members. Results showed that while teachers professed a belief in the importance of all the 'Cs', they were less open to 'connecting' and 'contributing'. They seemed to resist disclosing their personal 'learning designs' as well as reusing those of others. While such resistance might be related to teachers not yet feeling comfortable with the quality of their designs or plans, Pérsico et al. **(2020)** suggest that it might reflect insufficient development of participatory cultures within schools, as well as motivational and emotional barriers that hinder 'altruistic behaviours' among teachers.

The second study by Anderson et al. **(2019)** analyses teacher professional learning networks operating in Mombasa, Kenya since 2010, with support from the Aga Khan Foundation. The study examines these networks' overall functioning, teacher interactions and learning, and their impact on teaching and school

improvement. Throughout two years of fieldwork, the researchers studied documents, conducted focus group interviews, observed meetings and classroom teaching, and conducted 83 individual interviews with network participants, leaders, trainers and education officials. They observed a clear positive effect of network activities on individual teachers' sense of professional identity and commitment to teaching, as well growth in professional efficacy and increased collaboration with colleagues. Teachers also implemented some changes to their teaching practices informed by their peers' feedback, although their capacity for dealing with any challenges or difficulties arising from these changes was found to be somewhat lacking. Follow-up support and an element of peer accountability seemed to help teachers transfer and fully adopt new teaching methods in their classrooms, although some evidence emerged of differences between younger and older teachers. Despite these positive effects, impact on school improvement

appeared weak, possibly due to insufficient reflective interaction by teachers with their school communities, and to a lack of integration with the overall structures and organization of the education system **(Anderson et al., 2019)**. In other words, failure to institutionalize, support and sustain a culture of collaborative professionalism among teachers meant that any benefits from such pilot programmes were liable to prove fragile or short-lived.

The long-term effects of professional development are difficult to capture in single studies. Seeking to overcome this difficulty, Hernández-Hernández and Sancho-Gil **(2019)** worked intensively over several months with teachers in a school in Spain who engaged in the drawing of 'cartographies'. These are visual expressions or maps of each participant's learning trajectory, comprising physical, emotional and intellectual elements. By sharing and talking through these visual expressions as a group, the participant teachers were able to single out the

sites, moments and content of their learning trajectories. The process involved the personal ways in which teachers expressed the contribution to their professional practice, experiences of professional development, workplace learning as well as reflections on self-learning. The authors conclude that professional learning is a continuous process, not associated with single formative experiences, but a mesh of many influences that leave a mark in each teacher's biography **(Hernández-Hernández and Sancho-Gil, 2019)**.

10.4 Professional agency, working conditions, attrition and shortage

Building a culture of collaborative professionalism requires that teachers possess significant agency and autonomy. But whether in a system such as India's, where legacies of colonialism meet neoliberal managerialism, or in authoritarian China, or in Anglophone 'liberal democracies' such as the USA and the UK, teacher autonomy and agency have eroded in recent decades. The 2013–14 **Education for All Global Monitoring Report (UNESCO, 2014)** argues that investing wisely in teachers, along with other reforms aimed at strengthening equitable learning, could transform the long-term prospects of people and societies. Meanwhile, ideas borne out of progressive educational movements, such as

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'activity-based', 'learner-centred' or 'culturally sensitive' pedagogy have tended to become hollowed-out slogans, while governments pursue policies designed to render teachers more narrowly accountable and less capable of realizing such ideals in practice.

Learner-centred pedagogy has been criticized as flying in the face of the reality of both teachers and students in certain societies, due to a combination of cultural and structural factors **(Chisholm and Leyendecker, 2008; Verspoor, 2008; Schweisfurth, 2011).** It has often been implemented in a top-down manner evincing little sensitivity for the beliefs of practicing teachers, or the practical challenges they face **(UNESCO, 2004; Ampadu, 2012; Ovute, Alamina and Kulu-Uche, 2015).** Crucial aspects of the socio-political context ignored by such initiatives (often voiced by academics and donors) include endemic tardiness and absenteeism on the part of teachers **(Verspoor, 2008);** incomprehension of, or resistance to, new ideas such as inquiry-based teaching and learning **(Rogan and Aldous, 2005; Chisholm and Leyendecker, 2008;**

Nsengimana, Habimana and Mutarutinya, 2017); inadequate resourcing, and limited teacher capacity and experience **(Schweisfurth, 2011);** and stark contradictions between the new ideas and the rigidly didactic ethos of pre-service and in-service teacher preparation programmes **(Audet and Jordan, 2003).**

In many societies, teaching is increasingly seen as a stressful occupation, due to administrative burdens, long hours, classroom management difficulties and lack of autonomy. Maphalala **(2014)** investigated the sources of occupational stress amongst primary school teachers in KwaZulu-Natal Province, South Africa. The study found that major causes of teacher stress included constant curriculum changes, workload pressures, job insecurity, poor relationships with colleagues, poor rewards and recognition, discipline problems among students, poor rapport with management and role ambiguity. The areas that teachers viewed as most stressful were policy changes, workload pressures and classroom discipline.

Similar results emerged from a 2019 study conducted by the National Foundation for Educational Research in England **(Worth and Brande, 2019)**. The study found that teachers on average experience greater stress than other professionals. With a constant rise in the number of students and an increasing proportion of teachers leaving the profession, the report found that one in five (roughly 20 per cent) felt stressed about their job most or all the time, compared with 13 per cent of those in similar professional occupations. Two out of five teachers (41 per cent) were dissatisfied with their amount of leisure time, compared to 32 per cent of similar professionals. 'Teaching's traditional "recession-proof" advantage over other professions has eroded over time due to a relatively strong graduate labour market' **(Worth and Brande, 2019, p. 5)**. Higher job security for graduates outside of teaching makes it harder to attract them into teaching and retain them.

Earlier this century, Halperin and Ratteree **(2003, p. 133)**

drew attention to 'the swiftly accelerating shortage of teachers worldwide who are qualified and available to teach present and future generations of children', calling it a 'silent crisis'. The authors based their claim on the findings of a 2002 survey conducted by the International Labour Organization (ILO) and UNESCO, which showed that teacher attrition was making a chronic situation worse in many developing countries. Halperin and Ratteree **(2003)** identify four reasons for the crisis of missing teachers in both rich and poor countries: (1) the persistence of popular myths that just about anyone can teach, promoting casual or dismissive public perceptions of teachers' work; (2) the teaching profession's growing loss of prestige in many societies due to failure to compete with more highly salaried occupations requiring similar qualifications; (3) teachers' increasing struggles in dealing adequately not only with conventional pedagogical tasks, but also with increasingly complex social problems faced by students, their parents and carers,

> ... teachers on average experience greater stress than other professionals.

Two out of five teachers (41 per cent) were dissatisfied with their amount of leisure time, compared to 32 per cent of similar professionals.

and the local community; and (4) ingrained habits and beliefs concerning the 'right' way to teach that teachers have found difficult to revise or adapt. In relation to this last point, Halperin and Ratteree **(2003)** found that when confronted with learners and classrooms operating in a rapidly changing social, economic and technological context, teachers often feel helpless and exhausted – a problem frequently compounded by the absence of appropriate in-service training, or a collegial culture of collaborative professionalism.

More recently, UNESCO **(2016)** reported that out of the 24.4 million teachers needed to deliver universal primary education, 21 million were required simply to replace teachers who had left the workforce. The remaining 3.4 million were needed to expand access and provide quality education. The need for additional teachers was found to be even greater at the secondary level, with a total of 44.4 million needed by 2030, 27.6 million of whom were to replace those who had left the

profession. Together, sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia accounted for over 76 per cent (14.6 million) of the new teachers needed in developing countries to achieve universal primary and secondary education by 2030. The remaining 24 per cent (4.6 million) were shared across other developing regions, with South-East Asia and Western Asia accounting for one million each. The most pronounced shortages were in sub-Saharan Africa, where a total of about 17 million teachers are required in order to achieve universal primary and secondary education by 2030 **(UNESCO, 2016)**.

The assumption that 'anyone can teach' tends to reinforce perceptions of teaching as a low-status profession. It is also reflected in various schemes aimed at drafting 'elite' graduates and others into teaching, bypassing the standard training and qualification route. 'Teach for America', 'Teach First' (UK) and various spin-off programmes such as 'Teach for India' (TFI) have opened up a route into teaching for fresh graduates (without teaching

> This embodies a profound contradiction: on the one hand, policy discourse demands ever greater rigour from teacher education programmes; but the Teach First model inducts untrained graduates into the classroom after a brief crash course.

qualifications) and mature adults transferring from other career backgrounds. This embodies a profound contradiction: on the one hand, policy discourse demands ever greater rigour from teacher education programmes; but the Teach First model inducts untrained graduates into the classroom after a brief crash course. Talukdar and Sharma **(2015)** describe how the six-week training module offered to TFI teachers reduces teaching to a technical skill. Packaged as corporate-sponsored philanthropy aimed at reducing educational disparities, the Teach First phenomenon thus exacerbates the deprofessionalization of teachers, further eroding morale amongst regular teachers.

10.4 .1

TEACHER WORKING CONDITIONS

Teachers' professional status and agency thus have a significant bearing on recruitment, morale and retention rates, but more mundane considerations of remuneration and job security are also important. A foundational definition of appropriate working conditions for teachers is contained in the 1966 ILO/ UNESCO recommendations concerning the status of teachers **(ILO/UNESCO, 2016)**. These refer to aspects such as salaries, incentives and working hours, class sizes and contractual situations. Compliance with these conditions is monitored every three years by an international ILO/UNESCO-appointed group, which also evaluates opportunities for and quality of initial teacher education and professional development around the world. In turn, Education International (EI), an organization representing teachers' unions around the world, also conducts periodic worldwide surveys on teachers and their working conditions. Two such surveys took place in 2012 and 2015, with responses from Africa, Asia–Pacific, Europe, Latin America and North America/Caribbean **(Symeonidis**

and Stromquist, 2020). A third, more recent survey refers to the impact of COVID-19 on teachers and their work (Thompson, 2021). Other information on teachers' working conditions is gathered for its member countries by the OECD in the yearly **Education at a Glance** reorts and the TALIS teacher surveys, the most recent of which was conducted in 2018 (OECD, 2019).

| 10.4 | .1 | .1 |

TEACHERS' CONTRACTUAL CONDITIONS AND WORKLOAD

The global EI surveys of teaching union leaders in 2012 and 2015 **(Symeonidis and Stromquist, 2020)** highlight several problematic issues. Although salaries, according to around half of respondents, were better in 2015 than in 2012, responses pointed to a decline in overall working conditions. Specific reference was made to lack of regularity in the payment of salaries in some African countries, varying by type of school, qualification and gender.

For example, in Punjab, Pakistan, there is a high salary gap between teachers employed in different types of schools (public and public/partnership schools) and between contract and permanent teachers, with higher salaries paid to those on non-permanent contracts (the reverse of the situation in many other contexts) **(Ansari, 2020)**.

In OECD countries **(OECD, 2020)**, between 2005 and 2018, the average salaries of teachers with fifteen years of experience fell by around 2 per cent at primary level and 7 per cent at secondary level. Student–teacher ratios varied by type of institution, and were somewhat higher in private institutions (lower and upper secondary) as well as in secondary vocational programmes **(OECD, 2020)**. Class sizes exceeded the OECD mean of 21 students in Chile with an average of 30, followed by Israel, Japan and the UK **(OECD, 2020)**.

An important indicator of teacher well-being is workload, which is formally expressed as annual

...the Teach First phenomenon thus exacerbates the deprofessionalization of teachers, further eroding morale amongst regular teachers.

number of teaching hours. For OECD countries, the average is 993 hours per year at pre-primary, 778 at primary, 712 at lower secondary and 680 at upper secondary levels **(OECD, 2020)**. Countries that exceed these averages are Costa Rica, Chile and Lithuania **(OECD, 2020)**. In England, as examined by Allen, Jerrim and Sims **(2020)**, over the last twenty years teachers have experienced an excessive workload with up to 60 hours per week of work, in addition to having to work extra hours at home. Working conditions also possibly affect large teacher attrition numbers in Africa (71 per cent) and Latin America (57 per cent).

10.4 **.1** **.2**

PROFESSIONAL STATUS, MARKETS AND ACCOUNTABILITY POLICIES

Recognition and support for teacher status and professionalism have been affected over time. More than two thirds of teachers who responded to the EI surveys **(Symeonidis and Stromquist, 2020)**

considered that teaching was not an attractive profession for young people, a situation that possibly impacts on reported teacher shortages in Africa, Europe, Latin America and the USA **(García and Weiss, 2019)**.

Although market-oriented policies in educational systems take on different forms **(WG2-ch3)**, they generally involve quality assurance or 'accountability' measures combined with competitive incentives. These policies affect the management style of schools as well as perceptions and enactment of teacher professionalism **(Mathis and Welner, 2015)**. Charter schools, representing a form of semi-privatization (private management with public funding), tend to be associated with the introduction of an ethos of competitiveness, with implications for teachers' professional status and working conditions. While charter schools or their equivalent (e.g. 'academies' in the UK) have mainly grown in industrialized countries (such as the USA and Europe) they form a substantial component of the Chilean schooling system **(Ávalos**
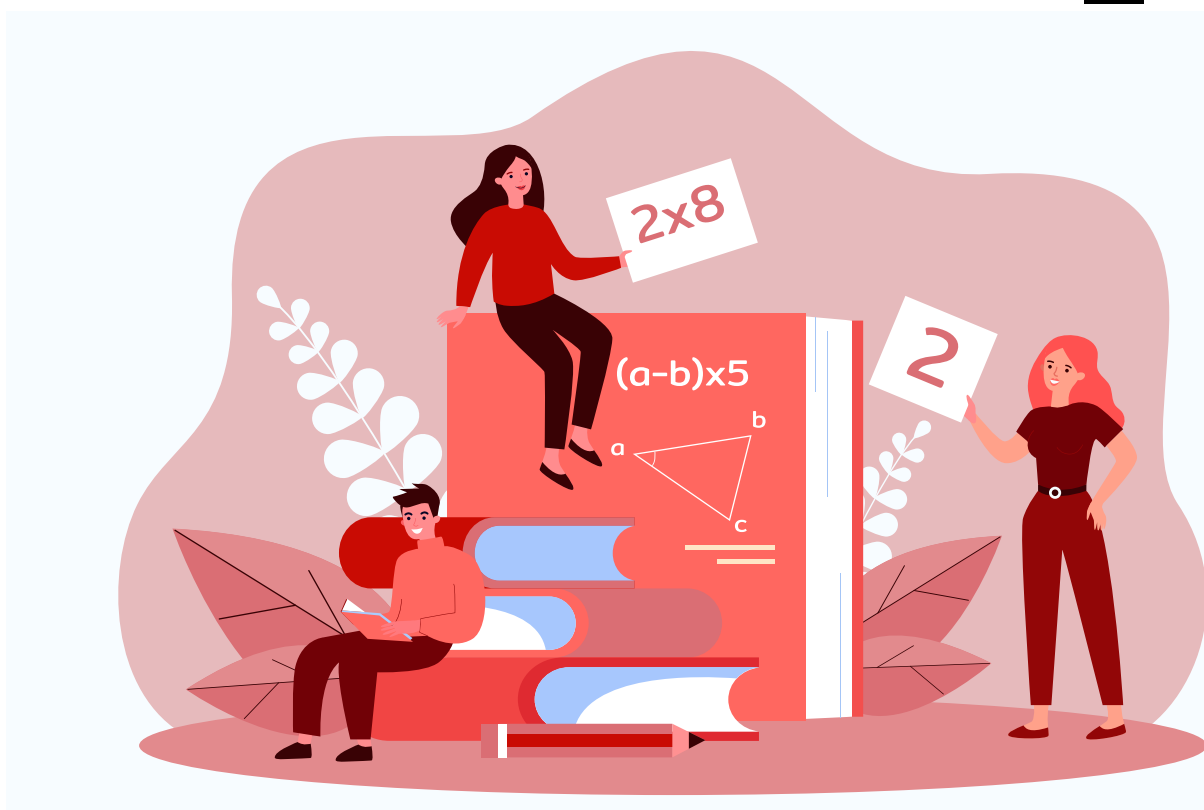
and Bellei, 2019) and of others across Latin America. A study of charter schools in Bogotá, Colombia **(Edwards Jr and Hall, 2018)** found that compared to public schools, the managerial flexibility of these schools facilitated the use of questionable employment practices: hiring of non-unionized teachers, short-term contracts and lower salaries, despite comparatively lengthy working hours and heavy teaching loads.

In many countries, evaluating teacher performance has generally been the responsibility of school management and local education authorities. However, in the context of market and performativity policies, teacher evaluation tends to be outsourced to external bodies, while standardized student tests are used to evaluate teachers' performance (and sometimes, in systems such as China, are linked to teachers' pay). In the USA, external teacher evaluation has contributed to validating alternative paths to teacher licensing **(Mathis and Welner, 2015)**, and in Mexico, to harsh 'consequences' for teachers with lower evaluations, such as change of class or school or straightforward dismissal **(Echavari and Peraza, 2017)**.
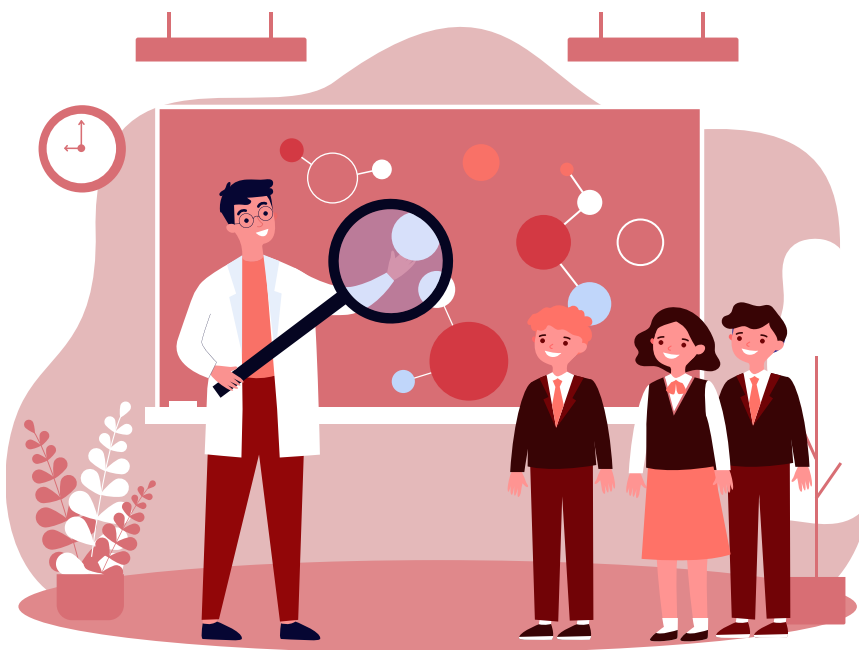
10.5 Cross-cutting issues

A wide range of socio-political forces, including colonial legacies, political ideology, discourses of excellence and norms, commercialization, teachers' beliefs about children and their abilities, disciplinary knowledge, etc. influence policy and practice, it remains the case that teachers are more often treated as passive objects of study than as active partners in the research enterprise. Attempts to promote 'action research' undertaken by teachers themselves have, so far, in most societies, done little to alter this. According to Day **(2012, p. 8)**,

the work and lives of teachers have always been subject to external influence … but it *is arguable that what is new over the last two decades is the pace, complexity, and intensity of change as governments have responded to the shrinking world of economic competitiveness and social migration by measuring progress against their position in international league tables.*

In the early twenty-first century, international funding agencies, large corporations and market-oriented consultancies have increasingly encroached upon an educational research domain previously dominated by universities and national agencies. The emergence of the OECD and institutions such as McKinsey as dominant

voices in the educational debate testifies to this phenomenon. The themes of research conducted by such agencies include: teacher expectations, teachers' perceptions about how children learn (with a great emphasis on reading, writing and numeracy), teachers' understanding of language as it relates to issues of identity and nationalism, and issues of gender and marginalization. In relation to these issues, there is substantial research based knowledge to which in recent years work in educational neuroscience has also contributed **(WG2-ch7, WG3)**. We discuss some of these themes below.

10.5 .1

THE POLITICS OF LANGUAGE AND IMPLICATIONS FOR TEACHERS

Language is often a key focus of debate over educational practice or 'performance', whether in relation to the teaching of literacy or grammar, or to the importance of literature as a carrier of (national) culture and identity. But this does not imply that language is relevant to educational practices only when it is the explicit object of instruction in the curriculum or the classroom. The importance of language to education is far more subtle and pervasive. The language used in the classroom and in the curriculum has been shaped by histories of social, economic and political dominance, suppression and exclusion. Students' own experiences with and histories of language use become relevant when they come to school. The way a student looks, holds themself, and, of course, speaks bears on how they are treated. Language in educational contexts plays a major role in representations of who belongs in the classroom (and in which type of school) and who does not, as well as in who is valued in a society and who is not.

The histories of languages in diverse, postcolonial societies like India are especially important in understanding classroom interaction, the institutional

In India, for example, many scholars have bemoaned the exclusion of Indigenous or Adivasi languages from schools just as many educational reform efforts have focused on them.

infrastructure of schooling and the curriculum, as well as educational policy **(Kumar, 2017)**. For example, whether a language has a standardized variety – a written version with legal recognition including rights of use connected to institutions of power – can depend on its pre-independence evolution and relationship with state structures. In the case of India (and many other ex-colonies such as Malaysia or Sri Lanka), the independent nation has its own complex history of efforts to claim and attain recognition and legitimacy for languages or change the ways in which languages are recognized as legitimate for use and included in educational institutions. In India, for example, many scholars have bemoaned the exclusion of Indigenous or Adivasi languages from schools just as many educational reform efforts have focused on them.

Across the nations of South Asia, including Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka, historical and globalizing forces have converged toward the production of a rather pervasive distinction in the language 'medium' of a school **(LaDousa and Davis, 2022)**. English has grown in popularity as a medium because the language captures the social and economic aspirations of people of various social classes, and so a massive increase in English-medium schooling across the region has responded to and further fuelled dreams of mobility and advancement. The alternative is manifested in the vernacular-medium school which has emerged from national and regional histories of state formation and popular culture. In a Hindi-medium school, for example, there are many different language varieties already known to students and many ways of understanding what one's mother tongue is: one's first language, one's parents' language or the language of the local community **(LaDousa, 2014)**. While schools have always played a part in the (re)production of social class difference, there is ample evidence that, in the South Asian context, the growth in English-medium schooling is itself beginning to play a part in the way people judge the kind of English spoken

> **... the colonial and postcolonial order of schooling has fostered a situation whereby textbooks and exams have rendered the teacher relatively powerless to encourage the exploration of life outside the curriculum's imagination of it.**

and written, while students make separate judgements about their peers' use of vernacular languages. For example, in a college hostel setting in Tamil Nadu, students – outside of the classroom – avoid the use of a Tamil that is too pure, but also the use of an English that might signal superiority or pretentiousness **(Nakassis, 2016)**. Such guiding assumptions are key to understanding why people use language in the way they do – in which circumstances, for what ends or with what kinds of people – but which are almost never part of any official curriculum or adequately accounted for by the designated medium of instruction. If anything, the colonial and postcolonial order of schooling has fostered a situation whereby textbooks and exams have rendered the teacher relatively powerless to encourage the exploration of life outside the curriculum's imagination of it, including critical examination of the role that languages play in students' lives and the

construction of their identities.

Teachers are implicated in especially complicated ways in education and language. In South Asia and many other postcolonial societies, they have already experienced the increasing importance and status of English as they advanced through their schooling, especially after their college years. Many teachers have had to adopt strategies for teaching in a language they may seldom use outside of school.[2] Such strategies are oriented to the ways in which the curriculum and the examination infrastructure have been designed, demanding of students a relatively formulaic deployment of language divorced from its use in other contexts of life. This is not necessarily true of the most elite schools where teachers might be encouraged to foster the use of English (or the dominant language) for wider communicative purposes and might encourage their students to do the same. While teachers of

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[2]Similar conditions exist for teachers from 'minority' or Indigenous communities in societies such as China or Latin America, with respect to Mandarin or Spanish/Portuguese.

==… there is a balance to be struck between promotion of a shared identity and understanding of and respect for cultural or linguistic pluralism.==

English face specific complexities, teachers using other languages must also confront students' frequent unfamiliarity with the standardized form of a language they consider their own. Teachers' frequent criticism or humiliation of students for speaking 'dialect' rather than the 'correct', standardized version of the national language is central to the arguments of Bernstein **(1977)** and others in the 1970s regarding the role of schooling in legitimating or 'reproducing' social class divides. At the same time, neglecting the importance of command of the standardized language risks endangering students' life chances and intellectual development **(Honey, 1997)**. There is a delicate balance to be struck here.

10.5 .2

INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

Intimately related to questions of language are issues of diversity, and the capacity and willingness of teachers to deal with these in their daily practice. Here, too, there is a balance to be struck between promotion of a shared identity and understanding of and respect for cultural or linguistic pluralism **(WG2-ch4, WG2-ch8)**. Preparation for inclusion, particularly social and racial, is a seriously neglected area around the world. Based on research conducted for the **2020 Global Education Monitoring Report (UNESCO, 2020)**, Kubacka and D'Addio **(2020)** examined literature on how teachers are prepared and able to deal with inclusion. Citing evidence from the **Profiles Enhancing Education Review** on inclusion and education, Kubacka and D'Addio **(2020)** state that while 61 per cent of a total of 168 countries provide teacher education for inclusion, most such preparation is for students with disabilities. More specifically, a review conducted in April 2019 in 59 countries of pre- and in-service teacher education **(Kubacka and D'Addio, 2020)** reports inadequate preparation for inclusion, with emphasis given to conceptual knowledge rather than practical pedagogy. Especially inadequate is preparation to teach

in multicultural settings and to work with immigrant students whose language is different from that of their host country. As for practicing teachers, only 59 per cent of teachers responding the TALIS 2018 survey covering 48 countries **(OECD, 2019)** considered themselves sufficiently able to adapt their forms of teaching to the cultural diversity of their students.

10.5 .3

DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY

Another area in which teachers frequently lack confidence concerns their capacity to engage with digital technology – an issue that has assumed heightened urgency in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic (see following section). Digital technology is defined as 'the ability to use information and communication technologies to find, understand, evaluate, create and communicate digital information, an ability that requires both cognitive and

technical skills' **(Office for Information Technology Policy, 2013, cited in Jang and Weller, 2018, p. 3) (WG2-ch6)**. Expanded deployment of this technology has often not been accompanied by sufficient teacher preparation for its pedagogic use. Evidence collected as part of the 2018 PISA survey **(OECD, 2021)** showed a large variation among teachers in participating countries in the degree to which they felt they possessed the technical and pedagogical skills necessary to using digital technologies in their teaching. In both Chile and Uruguay, computers were introduced into schools relatively early, with Uruguay providing a computer to every student since 2007. However, as shown in a recent study, teacher preparation for the use of digital technology has been more informative than pedagogical in the case of Chile, and in both countries, the quality of training available in this field depends very much on the individual teacher educator's interest and competence **(Silva, Usart and Lázaro-Cantabrana, 2019)**.

... 61 per cent of a total of 168 countries provide teacher education for inclusion, most such preparation is for students with disabilities.

10.6

COVID-19 and its implications for teachers

The disruptive effects of the COVID-19 outbreak have

impacted schools, teachers and children all over the world to a

Teachers worldwide suddenly had to experiment with what were, for most, entirely novel pedagogical techniques, in what amounted to 'emergency remote teaching'.

previously unimaginable extent. On the one hand, the crisis has stimulated unprecedented innovation within the education sector, promoting newfound appreciation for the role of teachers and educators. On the other hand, the pandemic has highlighted the severe educational implications of extreme economic and social inequality. It has brought to attention the need for better training for teachers in new methods of educational delivery, while also underlining the limitations of remote-learning technology.

The most immediate impact of COVID-19 on the lives of teachers was the sudden shift for many to online teaching. Teachers worldwide suddenly had to experiment with what were, for most, entirely novel pedagogical techniques, in what amounted to 'emergency remote teaching' **(Marshall, Shannon and Love, 2020).** In certain contexts, teachers were also required by governments to perform non-teaching duties to ensure their students' well-being.

The contexts in which teachers were forced to experiment with online delivery also varied widely. The experience of those employed by elite Indian private schools catering to children from wealthy homes was little different from that of their counterparts in many Western societies, where many teachers also approached the crisis with at least a basic knowledge of computing and internet use. However, teachers in rural South or South-East Asia or sub-Saharan Africa teaching children from more impoverished backgrounds struggled to ensure even a modicum of learning. Many were unable to switch over to screen-based learning, and for those who could, the screen was usually only twelve to fifteen centimetres wide. Meanwhile, all teachers, but especially those with inadequate facilities, limited technical expertise, and highly diverse and impoverished student populations, faced immense challenges in lesson preparation and assessment of student progress, not to mention the more pastoral elements of their role. Numerous surveys have documented these

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> Studies of how teachers in different parts of the world have faced the challenges of online teaching provide evidence of very similar experiences.

experiences in Chile and Portugal **(Ávalos and Flores, forthcoming)**, the eastern Caribbean **(Leacock and Warrican, 2020)**, Indonesia **(Lie et al., 2020)**, Brazil **(Fundação Chagas et al., 2020)** and India **(Hassan, Mirza and Hussain, 2020)**.

In South Asia, disruption of schooling and children's lives – often owing to the uprooting of families – was especially widespread and prolonged, with severe consequences for rural children, migrants living in urban slums and girls. The United Nations (UN) reported that 147 million South Asian children were unable to access any form of remote learning **(Menon, 2020)**. Across India, many schools were turned into hunger relief centres, and teachers were asked to undertake duties such as 'issuing fines to the public for disobeying the mask mandate, facilitating the screening of incoming passengers at Delhi international airport and conducting door-to-door surveys to help identify Covid-19 cases' **(Sangal, 2021)**. In 2020, at least 28,000 teachers were deployed to public health roles in Delhi.

The pandemic thus illustrated in stark form the status of Indian public school teachers as general-purpose, low-level government functionaries.

10.6 .1

CHANGED FORMS OF WORK

Studies of how teachers in different parts of the world have faced the challenges of online teaching provide evidence of very similar experiences: 'the first month we remained in a state of suspension …'; 'plunged into a different world'; 'had to think of how to move from pen and paper assessments' **(Hordatt Gentles and Leask, 2021)**. A survey of 1,730 rural teachers during the first COVID-19 year in Chile indicated that online teaching was not an option for 34 per cent of those surveyed. This meant that schools and teachers had to arrange for face-to-face delivery of printed materials on the school premises or directly to students in

their homes **(Fundação Chagas et al., 2020)**. In Brazil, opportunities to interact online with students were impacted not only by rural/urban locations but also by region, and these were lower in the north-east and centre-west regions **(Fundação Chagas et al., 2020)**.

At the same time, resorting to online instruction as a response to the pandemic was not always and everywhere inevitable. In Japan, as in many other contexts, teachers generally relied on the distribution of printed worksheets when schools were closed. However, as noted in **WG2-ch1**, Japan's schools were closed for only twenty-four days, reflecting a widely shared conviction that school-level education could not be delivered adequately online. This has much to do with a strong emphasis in Japan on the socializing function of schooling. But the Japanese experience also calls into question the readiness of governments in so many other societies to resort so readily to school closure as a means of curbing a pandemic that posed a relatively low health risk to children.

Teachers around the world, however, are realizing that the post COVID-19 educational world is unlikely to revert to the status quo ante. Those from many countries interviewed for the ICET/MESHGuides study **(Hordatt Gentles and Leask, 2021)** spoke about continuing to use a blended approach even after their schools reopened. They also expressed a desire to capitalize on having overcome previous resistance to the use of technology and to move beyond the 'comfort zone' of traditional practices.

10.6 .2

POLICY ISSUES

The long-term effects of school closures on teachers' social, emotional and intellectual development have aroused significant international concern. Two related UNESCO recommendations include protecting the physical and social space provided by schools as well as valuing the importance

> Teachers around the world, however, are realizing that the post COVID-19 educational world is unlikely to revert to the status quo ante.

Education systems that are better prepared both in terms of equipment and teachers' technological know-how to resort to distance teaching and learning should be one widespread outcome of the COVID experience.

of teachers and the teaching profession **(UNESCO, 2020)**. For its part, and with similar vagueness, the UN recommended 'reimagining education and accelerating change in teaching and learning' through strategies such as 'support for the teaching profession and teachers' readiness … meeting students at their level and … implementing the accelerated curricula and differentiated learning strategies likely to emerge on the return to school' **(UN, 2020)**.

Despite the presumptuous notion that the COVID-19 pandemic has yielded (or is about to yield) a radical 'reimagining' of teaching, the future is likely to involve neither a technologically revolutionized 'Brave New World' nor a simple reversion to pre-COVID forms. Differences in this respect will reflect socio-economic, cultural and political divergence within and between countries, affecting both the capability and willingness of teachers and students to 'reinvent' teaching and learning in ways informed or enabled by new technology.

With reference to Singapore, Ng **(2020)** writes of 'timely change' and 'timeless constants' that mark how countries and teachers will face the future of teaching. Education systems that are better prepared both in terms of equipment and teachers' technological know-how to resort to distance teaching and learning should be one widespread outcome of the COVID experience. Giovanella, Pasarelli and Pérsico **(2020)**, based on their survey of Italian teachers, offer the perhaps unsurprising conclusion that the state of preparedness there for moving to online provision was significantly better in 2020 than would have been the case just a few years earlier. But they also point to the importance of an underlying consciousness of teacher professionalism, autonomy and confidence that helped teachers to overcome many unforeseen and unforeseeable difficulties.

10.7 Conclusions

This chapter has reviewed recent research addressing several well-rehearsed themes concerning teachers and the teaching profession, encompassing teaching quality, teacher and student well-being and learning, as well as teacher education, professional development and working conditions. Concerns about teacher scarcity in developed world contexts **(García and Weiss, 2019)**, as in many sub-Saharan African countries **(USAID, 2015)**, bring to the fore the importance of motivation and agency for the quality of teaching and for recruitment and retention of staff. While

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... the quality of preparation programs is key to transforming an initial, often naïve, enthusiasm into a professional identity founded upon assured handling of learning needs and student diversity.

material working conditions are important, and remain inadequate in many societies, valuation of teaching as a profession is also critical in affecting motivation to remain in schools. Policies that embody an excessive emphasis on the quantitative measurement of teacher performance, based on student test scores or otherwise, are widely perceived as degrading the status of the teaching profession, and seriously demotivate or demoralize teachers.

Decisions to enter the teaching profession may be influenced by intrinsic or extrinsic factors, but the quality of preparation programmes is key to transforming an initial, often naïve, enthusiasm into a professional identity founded upon assured handling of learning needs and student diversity. What future teachers get from their preparation programmes depends largely on how well their structure and content are geared to the actual contexts in which they will have to work, as differences between Swedish and German programs illustrate **(Dodillet, Lundin**

and Krüger, 2019). Whether delivered at undergraduate or postgraduate level, the effectiveness of teacher preparation programmes depends on striking an adequate balance between practical experience and pedagogical theory **(Smith and Lev-Ari, 2005)**. If theory, or academic grounding in the foundational disciplines of education, is neglected, as is threatened by the swing in England towards almost entirely school-based training, then both the status of the profession and the capacity of teachers to exercise autonomous agency will be undermined **(Furlong, 2013; McIntyre, Youens and Stevenson, 2019)**.

As well as various contentious themes in global debates over the teaching profession and teacher education, there are also several areas of clear deficiency. Early childhood educators are not being prepared in sufficient numbers and quality to staff nurseries and schools, a situation with serious long-term implications, as well as more immediate consequences for children's readiness to learn in the aftermath of the pandemic.

> **Early childhood educators are not being prepared in sufficient numbers and quality to staff nurseries and schools, a situation with serious long-term implications.**

Diversity and inclusiveness remain problematic, due both to increases in migration and socio-economic inequities **(Kubacka and D'Addio, 2020)**. These issues require greater attention in teacher education programmes and related policies. Approaches to monitoring the quality of teacher education, as well as the performance of practicing teachers, rely excessively on quantitative metrics managed externally to teacher education institutions and teachers' own professional associations **(Mayer and Mills, 2020)**, to the detriment of professional agency and autonomy.

Professional development, once limited to formal courses tasked with upgrading teachers' content knowledge or the enhancement of practical skills, has in many societies moved in the direction of collaborative learning and networking around professional needs **(Gorzoni and Davis, 2017; Anderson et al., 2019; Pérsico et al., 2020; Sancar, Atar and Deryakulu, 2021)**. In its most ambitious and elaborate forms, collaborative teacher development extends to 'action research' whereby teachers investigate and reflect upon their enactment of new learning approaches and verify their effectiveness **(Juuti et al., 2021)**. While the effects of professional identity development and learning continue to be studied through surveys and conventional qualitative approaches, more recent forms include graphic representations of growth and change in teachers' professional trajectories **(Beltman et al., 2015; Hernández-Hernández and Sancho-Gil, 2019)**.

The COVID-19 pandemic has been portrayed by some as ushering in an almost Copernican revolution in teaching **(OECD, 2021)**. While this talk is exaggerated, critical engagement with the very real potential of technology is a challenge that teachers and education systems will need to confront. In the context of the pandemic, teachers in many countries lacked not only the skills needed to integrate digital technologies in the classroom **(OECD, 2021)**, but also basic access to these tools. Some teachers have embraced experiments in 'flipped

classroom' teaching **(Bergman and Sams, 2012)** or other techniques, but many more have been left out in the digital cold. In this respect, the pandemic has starkly dramatized and exacerbated the inequities that disfigure our education systems and the societies in which they are embedded.

In the midst of the pandemic, the UNESCO Futures of Education Commission noted how teachers are coming to grips with the notion that their practice does not have to be centred on communicating information, but that it can be enriched through reflexive interaction with students, granting them enhanced

> Narrow accountability measures, or quantitative tests of student performance or school competitiveness, will diminish and undermine, rather than promote, a true professionalism centred around the importance of teacher autonomy and agency.

opportunities to participate as active creators and designers who determine their own educational paths **(UNESCO, 2020)**. But mastering such approaches, as well as forming professional judgements over when and to what extent digital tools can or should be deployed, will require massive additional investment in teacher education – in-service and pre-service. As indicated in a global survey administered at the end of the first year of the pandemic, no more than 30 per cent of countries had provided preparation in distance learning to more than 75 per cent of their teachers **(OECD, 2021)**. If teachers lack knowledge and understanding of the potential and limitations of new technology, and the authority to decide when and how to use it, the danger is that they will increasingly be bypassed by state and corporate actors, and demoted to the status of auxiliary technicians. Besides specific preparation in the use of technology for learning, teachers will require an open mind, solid content knowledge and innovative pedagogic practices, as well as a professional identity and ethos

anchored in scientific questioning, empathy and social justice **(Rivas, 2019)**.

Finally, the quality of teacher performance, teaching and teacher education rests on improving not only working conditions in those countries and locations where these are inadequate, but on policies of trust in their work and support where it is needed. That trust and support extends to a reassessment of the burden of expectation that policy-makers and the public often place on the teaching profession. Teachers cannot be expected to operate independently of their social reality, let alone single-handedly transform it, although public discourse on education often appears to expect or require this of them **(WG2-ch1)**. Narrow accountability measures, or quantitative tests of student performance or school competitiveness, will diminish and undermine, rather than promote, a true professionalism centred around the importance of teacher autonomy and agency.

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