3. Towards a global response to teacher preparation, recruitment and migration

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Abstract

This exploratory paper relates the background to the emergence of the desire for a framework to regulate teacher preparation, mobility, recruitment and migration. It assesses the instruments created by major international organisations, especially UNESCO, OECD, ILO and the Commonwealth Secretariat, to confront the challenges of teacher training, recruitment and retention. It draws out the unique experiences from the approaches used by these organisations, and compares the different instruments developed such as declarations, guidelines and protocols. The paper reviews the strategies and modalities of the instruments, and discusses the uniqueness of the Commonwealth Teacher Recruitment Protocol (CTRP). Finally it identifies the major obstacles facing the effective implementation of the goals and objectives of the CTRP and how the problems can be addressed at the local, national and international levels. It concludes by exploring ways in which the broad principles of the CTRP can be applied beyond Commonwealth countries and made globally operational, a legally enforceable deal, covering all countries.

Key words
Teacher Training, Recruitment, Global, Negotiation, Consensus, Social Justice

3.1 Introduction[1]

This exploratory study seeks to draw attention to how the global community has tried to address the topical subject of how education systems are undermined by a lack of adequate professional development of teachers, the international recruitment and migration of trained teachers, and the subsequent exploitation of migrant teachers. It will also provide a background to the emergence of new governmental instruments related to the welfare of teachers, and will seek to explore how some key international organisations have responded to these issues.

The core purpose of this paper is to focus on the creative contribution of the Commonwealth Secretariat through the Commonwealth Teacher Recruitment Protocol (CTRP), which has been adopted by Commonwealth ministers of education. The CTRP aims:

> to balance the rights of teachers to migrate internationally, on a temporary or permanent basis, against the need to protect the integrity of national education systems, and to prevent the exploitation of the scarce human resources of poor countries (Commonwealth Secretariat, 2004: 7).

The paper will highlight strategies and methods that characterise the resultant instruments, and discuss the uniqueness of the CTRP. It will also undertake an exploration of how the initiative has been adopted globally and how it has become an international platform for the development of teachers' interests and value. The paper will then identify the major obstacles faced in implementing the laudable goals and objectives of the CTRP effectively, and suggest ways in which these problems can be addressed at local, national and international levels. It will explore the principal similarities as well as the unique experiences found in the differing approaches of the organisations involved, and compare the instruments developed consequentially. The paper concludes by

exploring ways in which the broad principles of the CTRP could be adopted in countries beyond those of the Commonwealth.

3.2 Topical questions

Teacher qualifications and training, professional development, recruitment and mobility are intertwined with concerns about the development of nations, social justice and equity. Several questions derived from the subject have continued to engage the attention of some of the world's key players in the educational domain. These relate to quality assurance and the recognition of qualifications, the development of the professional status of teachers, and teacher migration and mobility.

Teacher preparation, recruitment, retention, welfare and professionalism have an important impact on developing countries. They are also relevant to more developed countries through the role of the teacher in cultivating the potential of individuals and wider communities. This relevance has grown following the increased vulnerability of, and the demand for, teachers locally and internationally, thus compelling local and international institutions and organisations to study the subject.[2]

Studies by scholars such as Hawthorne (2006, 2008), Degazon-Johnson (2010; Ochs, 2011), Joseph (Degazon-Johnson, 2010; Ochs, 2011), Manik (Degazon-Johnson, 2010; Ochs, 2011), and Ochs (2003) have made an impressive contribution, producing definitive studies on the subject in their authors' localities. In general, most studies have suggested that the migration of personnel may have grave social and political consequences, restricting the advancement of developing countries in particular (IDRC, 2005).

We should also note that the subject of personnel movement across borders has become globally significant. Labelled 'brain drain', or 'brain gain', depending on the viewpoint, it is not limited to a single profession and extends beyond the traditional examples of teachers and nurses. For example, professions such as banking have recently reported 'the unprecedented brain drain of talented executives, especially to Asia, mostly from New York and London' (City AM, 2011: 3). The Future University (FU) of Japan has been at the forefront of studies on cross-border education. Malcolm Field of the FU is convinced that 'across-border education is inevitable' and that 'the opportunities and benefits are too numerous to ignore' (Field, 2009: 17).

Studies have shown that teachers are constantly being exploited both at the state of origin and abroad. In many countries, teachers' pay is often considered to be inadequate and some teachers have objected that their take home pay cannot, in fact, take them home (Aladeselu, 2010: 16). Teachers also experience frustration that their colleagues and classmates who chose other professions continue to be better rewarded. It is imperative that research be focused on addressing the 'push' factor that has compelled teachers to offer their services outside their home of origin. There is an urgent need to examine the quest by teachers for the 'greener pasture': why they leave their native countries in search of better conditions of service, wages and salaries, recognition, respect and the promise of a better future. What also are the motives of enhancing international relations and intercultural understanding and promoting social justice, for example, with education professionals volunteering in developing countries? How are their home countries able to respond to these questions?

How have the countries involved responded to the subject of utilising trained teachers effectively? There are some countries that make provision through legislation, budget and policy for their teachers trained abroad. There are provisions for return passage, welfare and appointment on return to their home countries. Other countries, however, are indifferent to any issue of development that does not affect them directly. Indeed, some are known to have been glad to get rid of the more articulate and vocal members of society, who could challenge them on their return and thus disturb the peace. In response, teachers consider it wise to stay behind in the countries that trained them. For those that stay behind there remain larger issues such as dealing with the differences in working

conditions, learning environment and general economic gains. And they are compelled to consider their level of access to healthcare, the education of their children, pensions, security and being able to take care of family members, as demanded by their culture.

This development should draw attention to the subsequent vulnerability of teachers from the developing world, especially those escaping emergency situations, and the consequences involved when they are forced to choose between remaining abroad or facing the challenge of returning home as a dissident.

Perhaps one should first briefly discuss how an international organisation, the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), has intervened in the subject.

3.3 The UNESCO initiative

UNESCO has taken a leading role in generating awareness of the importance of protecting, promoting and developing the teaching profession. As the specialised agency of the United Nations entrusted with the global development of education, scientific and cultural issues, UNESCO has recognised its responsibility to teachers and the teaching profession. To this end it has specialised institutes, one in Paris for educational planning and management (the International Institute for Educational Planning), one in Geneva for curriculum development (the International Bureau of Education) and another one in Addis Ababa for teacher development (the International Institute for Capacity Building in Africa).

Furthermore, through the networks developed from its establishment, UNESCO has sought to influence advancements in the broad field of education through the exchange and sharing of knowledge and information on the 'best practices' in the field (Omolewa, 2007). Thus from its very foundation, the first Director-General of the organisation, Dr Julian Huxley (representing UNESCO at the Sixth Commonwealth Universities Congress, held in Oxford in July 1948), reported that the Congress on World Universities (convened by UNESCO in Utrecht from 2 to 13 August 1948) would consider the subject of 'standardizing degrees' (Association of Universities of the British Commonwealth, 1951: 39). UNESCO recognised the value of bringing order to the issue of qualification awards across world frontiers.

UNESCO, recognising the importance of working with the International Labour Organization (ILO) on this matter, established a partnership to promote labour issues, including the conditions of service for workers, remuneration and training. Together, the two organisations reviewed the working conditions of teachers, who are in some cases under-prepared and/or under-paid. This resulted in the ILO/UNESCO Recommendation Concerning the Status of Teachers (1966) and the UNESCO Recommendation Concerning the Status of Higher-Education Teaching Personnel (1997).

Both UNESCO and the ILO have taken the lead in ensuring that teaching personnel are able to work in an atmosphere conducive to their profession. This includes training and continued retraining. Today's knowledge will be inadequate to meet the challenges of tomorrow, so it is expected that teachers should maintain a standard of training so that their skills remain relevant. Other issues raised by ILO/UNESCO have included the stability of teaching jobs, appropriate remuneration, salaries and wages, and the rewards of service in the form of promotion.

There has also been the question of responsibility of teaching personnel with regard to their own discipline and duties. UNESCO has developed relationships with non-governmental organisations (NGOs) active in the field of teacher education. Through the NGO Committee of its Executive Board, UNESCO reviews its relationships periodically with NGOs, following reports of their continued relevance and contribution.

In a similar way, UNESCO worked with the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) to establish the UNESCO/OECD Guidelines for Quality Assurance in Cross-border Higher Education. Developed in response to the increase in

education being offered across country borders, these non-legally binding guidelines promote transparency, security and information about the types and quality of education offered to students, while respecting the national sovereignty of countries.

UNESCO has also been receptive to the contribution of other major international organisations and agencies that have expressed a concern about aspects of teacher preparation, qualification, retention and migration. For example, the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) had addressed the subject on several occasions. Its Deputy Executive Secretary, Dr Lalla Ben Barka, who is currently an Assistant Director-General of the Africa Department of UNESCO, but who was formerly Deputy Secretary-General of the ECA, expressed concern about the exodus of human capital from Africa (IDRC, 2005).

The ECA has in turn worked with the International Organization for Migration (IOM) on the vast subject of the brain drain, with special focus on Africa. Additionally, the IOM has partnered with both the International Development Research Centre (IDRC), as well as the Association for Higher Education and Development (AHEAD), which shares an interest in human capital movement across borders.

3.4 The Commonwealth initiative

Activities to support the implementation of the CTRP remain important to the Commonwealth Secretariat, as the paper by Kimberley Ochs in this collection suggests. This is in part due to its provenance, which should be understood in its historical context. Sanders (1990) suggests that there is continuity evident in the ways in which British expertise and support were shared following the collapse of the British Empire. Moreover, the role of British colonial-era missionaries in the provision of education in other countries during this time was important (Ajayi, 1965). Given this perspective, it is important to note the collective nature of the response to demands by individual countries for a solution to the issue of the teachers of certain countries being the subject of targeted and organised recruitment by other countries. The CTRP is a tool backed by consensual ministerial mandate and formal adoption, in both cases by Commonwealth ministers of education. We may note that many Commonwealth countries were concerned by the brain drain phenomenon and targeted recruitment, which have adversely affected the labour market and human capital of small states.

Many partners of the Commonwealth have also committed themselves to working collaboratively to explore the issues surrounding teacher recruitment and migration. For example, the United Kingdom (UK) Department for International Development (DFID) commissioned a study on these issues from the University of Nottingham (see Morgan, Sives and Appleton, 2006). Building on this, the Commonwealth Secretariat compiled a report on the status of teachers, and the impact of the 'poaching' of teachers from the poorer parts of the world by more advanced countries.

Defining, or at best describing, the Commonwealth is likely to be a complicated matter. Here is a body that is not guided by a constitution but by precedents and declarations emanating usually from meetings and informal agreements. Lord David Howell, who presided over the House of Commons enquiry into the role of the Commonwealth, described the organisation as 'an informal global network' (2011). Another observer, Chadwick has explored what he calls the 'unofficial Commonwealth' (1982). Yet another insider has described the Commonwealth as 'the product of colonial relationships which were subsequently transformed to partnerships of equality, characterised by interdependence and challenges of political, social and economic development' (Srinivasan, 1998: 2). It is seen by one of its proponents as a partnership 'of equals rather than a family of children and grandchildren in regular touch with the parental home' (Zajda, 2008: 37).

Described as a diverse group, celebrating cultural differences, the Commonwealth is nonetheless united by core values that are shared and actively promoted. The fundamental basis for these values includes a demand for equity, fairness, integrity, social justice and

transparency. The Commonwealth has been considerably influenced by the decisions and outcomes of the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meetings (CHOGMs).

An explanation of the Commonwealth's interest in the area of teachers' rights can be found in the nature of its traditional commitments. Unique as an assembly of smaller, less powerful countries, but sharing a common heritage and similar values with some of the most powerful nations of the world, the Commonwealth views itself as a family (Srinivasan, 1998). Confronting the issues that affect the poorer and weaker members of society was therefore in some ways considered to be an ethical matter. The Commonwealth also perceived the issues surrounding teacher training, qualification, retention, mobility and migration as the results of accelerating globalisation. As Sánchez Sorondo, Malinvaud and Léna observe, globalisation is associated with 'exacerbating social inequality' (2007: xix).

Commonwealth education ministers responded swiftly and efficiently to reports of the disadvantages experienced by teachers who had transferred their services across borders, and to the petitions about the effects of the recruitment of teaching personnel from member countries. Ministers of education in the Caribbean were the first to express grave concerns about this at a retreat in July 2002. The *Savannah Accord*, which followed the meeting, requested that the matter be explored further. The Commonwealth Secretariat thereafter took up the issue and commissioned Kimberley Ochs to prepare an evidence-based report on the status of the international migration of teachers. Ochs' report, which among other things documented the experiences of overseas teachers working in the UK, was published in September 2003.

At the 15th Conference of Commonwealth Education Ministers a request was considered for the establishment of a Commonwealth working group, which met a number of times and developed a draft protocol on teaching recruitment. The protocol was then accepted and adopted on 1 September 2004.

The Commonwealth felt compelled to confront two distinct issues: (i) the unregulated exploitation of teacher stocks of small developing countries by recruitment agencies; and (ii) lack of protection for recruited migrant teachers in more developed countries. The protocol is unique in many ways. For example, it goes beyond the level of traditional declarations and guidelines. Although not legally binding, and not a legal instrument or convention, it has the potential of stirring up the conscience of member states and professionals involved at the stages of training, qualification recognition and staff recruitment, so that they might take a fresh look at the issues. From this perspective, the protocol may be described as the beginning of the process of addressing an issue of social justice. Its value lies in its moral authority, rather than its legal weight.

The Commonwealth has thus through its several networks and platforms given considerable visibility to the issues of social justice. Ministers of education have more frequently included the subject in their periodic conferences. Following the adoption of the CTRP, an annual symposium has been instituted to focus attention on the subject of teacher recruitment, and there have since been five such symposia. There have also been publications of proceedings and special research findings, one of the more recent being the 2010 publication by James Keevy and Jonathan Jansen titled *Fair Trade for Teachers: Transferability of Teacher Qualifications in the Commonwealth*.

The Commonwealth attempts to address the concerns of the poorest, smallest and perhaps most voiceless peoples spread across sometimes very tiny islands throughout the world. One of the mechanisms used is to mobilise support, first among the developing countries themselves, and then among the developed countries. The Commonwealth is keen to extend its frontiers of interest and to encourage its member states to think 'outside the box'. Thus it has sought to establish a platform for greater participation and consensus building. Some progress has already been made in expanding the membership of the Commonwealth beyond the traditional family of those with historical ties to the British Empire. Thus Francophone Cameroon and Rwanda, and Lusophone Mozambique have become active members.

At a professional level, the United States of America (USA) has been involved as the National Education Association (NEA) in the United States hosted the Fourth Commonwealth Teachers' Research Symposium in 2009. During the symposium, case studies in the exploitation of migrant teachers were considered. The American Federation of Teachers has also continued its participation in discussions of the subject. This is a crucial development considering the role the USA plays in world events.

Teacher unions have played a key role in promoting the CTRP, with, for example, the UK National Union of Teachers (NUT) supporting the annual meetings of the Commonwealth Advisory Council for Teacher Mobility, Recruitment and Migration. This council works towards raising awareness of, and enhancing the implementation of, the CTRP, and currently includes representatives from the Commonwealth Consortium for Education, the Commonwealth Secretariat, Education International (EI), ILO, NUT, Commonwealth ministries of education and a former UNESCO representative, indicating the wide appeal of the CTRP. Similarly, representatives from teacher unions have attended the Teacher Research Symposia, which aim to provide a platform for research on issues relating to the CTRP and which have been supported by organisations including the NUT and Commonwealth Teachers' Group; the NEA; EI; the South African Qualifications Authority and the University of the Free State; and the UNESCO Institute for Capacity Building in Africa. The UK National Association of Schoolmasters Union of Women Teachers has also recognised the value of the CTRP (McNamara, Lewis and Howson, 2005).

3.5 Negotiated consensus

Like UNESCO, OECD and ILO, the Commonwealth through its CTRP is concerned about standards, quality and equity in education. For this shared vision of training and retention of teachers, these organisations have emerged with texts that have been variously called declarations, guidelines, decisions, resolutions, instruments or protocols. However, they have not reached the status of conventions and are not legally binding. Their enforcement thus becomes difficult, as the organisations rely on the willingness of countries to respect their commitments and the negotiated consensus-based pronouncements.

The agreements reached by these international organisations share other common characteristics. The first is that they are all a manifestation of the commitment to engage countries in a discourse on finding ways to improve the performance of teaching personnel. To this end, there have been various assumptions and expectations about the way forward. Specifically, all the organisations have sought to confront the challenges of teacher training, recruitment and retention.

Another feature to be found in the evolution of these texts is that they attempt to find a consensus, allowing all the various shades of opinion to be accommodated and encouraging all parties to have an input. Sometimes the discussions begin at the level of committees or expert groups, sometimes as recommendations from professional organisations. But in all of these, the organisations have consistently used the familiar tools of discussion, negotiation and debate. Sometimes, however, people and governments finally give support, not necessarily because they are completely convinced or converted, but because of practical or tactical reasons not to block the majority from moving forward. It will be noticed that many of the players have not developed the same level of awareness of the issues being discussed and canvassed as others, and that the level of implementation of these instruments varies considerably among countries.

A further common element in this dialogue and consultation is that the negotiating partners are often of uneven capacity of knowledge or of negotiating skill. Although there is an acceptance of the equality of each member country, and the assumption that the size of the negotiating partner is not an issue because they are all sovereign states, in reality and practice this is by no means true. However, the first Commonwealth Secretary-General, the Canadian former civil servant Arnold Smith, observed that 'the shafts of light

that illuminated the thinking and subsequent actions of Commonwealth countries have come as often from the leaders of the smaller and newer states, as from the older and larger countries' (Smith, 1981: 282). Often, the most successful actions have also involved the myriad civil society organisations of varying sizes and capacities, as governments cannot undertake all development initiatives and enterprises for their people.

3.6 Conclusion

This paper observes that there has been an important global response to the questions raised in tackling the issues of teacher preparation, qualification, recruitment, retention and mobility. It is also noted that all the global bodies have concentrated on governmental instruments that could influence action in the field of practice. They have worked on adopting a set of principles that would make for greater effectiveness, efficiency and relevance, through advocacy and good leadership. However, there is a limitation: the documents produced – declarations, guidelines and recommendations – have failed to be legally binding. Indeed, some countries have noted that they were not compelled to put into operation the items that had been collectively endorsed.

If the world becomes a global village, then it is vital that every member of that village accepts some responsibility for the welfare of the community as a whole. A good beginning would seem to be establishing the principles of the CTRP globally, hopefully operating up to the level of the United Nations. To achieve this objective, the protocol will need to be augmented by studies, advocacy and lobbying, and translated into other languages. It may be useful to appreciate the parts played by civil society groups, national parliaments and the media in generating sufficient awareness. After all, these were some of the methods used effectively by the movement for the abolition of the slave trade. Thus the partnership of Christian and other faith groups, members of parliaments, politicians and the media, which has proved useful in the past, may be further exploited in the expansion of the CTRP principles.

Given their importance, each country will have to face the issues of teacher retention, recruitment, mobility and migration. Leaders must show commitment to identifying strategies that will address the challenges posed by these issues. Relevant institutions, including teachers' unions, civil society organisations and international partners, may be called upon to generate awareness of the issues.

Countries should be encouraged to focus some attention on this important matter, and it is the responsibility of all governments to make duty of care issues central to their work. This means that governments should be encouraged to develop plans that are credible and measurable to tackle the issues. There should be a mechanism in place to compel all governments to be made accountable. Perhaps the adoption of a UN convention on teacher mobility, recruitment and migration would be a first step in that direction.

By the nature of the social, economic and political implications involved in the effort to address teacher preparation and recruitment, leaders certainly have a great deal of discussion, debate and negotiation ahead of them. The emerging instrument should therefore constitute a legal document that must be binding, and thus approved by parliaments.

One way to do this is to encourage regional institutions, such as the European Union and the African Union, to adapt the CTRP into a working instrument. The United Nations may also be encouraged to convene a meeting for the consideration of a possible agreement that would be legally enforceable, and ultimately legally binding. In this way, teachers' rights will become recognised and respected and the pioneering role of the CTRP complemented and further advanced.

Notes

1 I am grateful to the staff of the British Library and the Library of the Institute of Education, London University, and Nick Mulhern, the Librarian of the Association of Commonwealth Universities, for assistance with access to the rich collection on Commonwealth values and history; John Morgan for

inviting me to serve on the advisory committee on his 'Teacher Mobility, "Brain Drain", Labour Markets and Education Resources in the Commonwealth' Project; UNESCO for supporting my travel to the negotiating meeting in Tokyo, Japan, on cross-border higher education; colleagues on the Commonwealth Advisory Council on Teacher Mobility, Recruitment and Migration for constantly stimulating my thoughts; Roli Degazon-Johnson, former Education Adviser at the Commonwealth Secretariat, who kindled my interest in teacher migration in the Commonwealth; Jonathan Penson, the new Education Adviser; and the anonymous reviewers of the earlier draft of this paper, whose incisive and helpful comments were most useful.

2 Study has been done at different levels and has involved a variety of bodies such as the Association of African Universities, the National Union of Teachers in the UK and the Nigeria Union of Teachers.

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