This volume was commissioned by the World Council of Comparative Education Societies, in memory of their Past President, David N. Wilson, who died on December 8, 2006. Professor Wilson was also President of the Comparative and International Education Society of Canada, the Comparative and International Education Society (US) and the International Society for Educational Planning. A call for papers was sent out to his colleagues worldwide, and many of his colleagues, friends and former students contributed chapters to this book.

David N. Wilson was educated at Syracuse University as an educational planner, and he had a lifelong career at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education at the University of Toronto. His main interests are reflected in the five major themes in this book: Africa and Development, Technical and Vocational Education and Training, Cross-Cultural Issues, Policy Development, and Comparative Education. Each author places his or her work firmly within these areas of interest and explains how their work or life experiences were influenced by him. Several of his children also contributed to the Introduction, and Crain Soudien, the 2007-2010 President of the WCCES, wrote the Preface. Together, all of the chapters provide a fitting tribute to a man whose heart, in the words of his former student Suwanda Sugunasiri, was always “clamouring for a better world”.

This work was supported financially by the Comparative, International and Development Education Centre at OISE/University of Toronto and morally by his colleagues in every part of the world.
A Tribute to David N. Wilson
The World Council of Comparative Education Societies

The WCCES is an international organization of comparative education societies worldwide and is an NGO in Operational Relations with UNESCO. The WCCES was created in 1970 to advance the field of comparative education. Members usually meet every three years for a World Congress in which scholars, researchers and administrators interact with counterparts from around the globe on international issues of education.

The WCCES also promotes research programmes involving scholars in various countries. Currently, joint research programmes focus on: theory and methods in comparative education, gender discourses in education, teacher education, education for peace and justice, education in post-conflict countries, language of instruction issues, Education for All and other topics.

Besides organizing the World Congress, the WCCES issues a Bulletin in *Innovation*, the publication of the International Bureau of Education in Geneva, Switzerland, and in *CERCular* published by the Comparative Education Research Centre (University of Hong Kong), to keep individual societies and their members abreast of activities around the world. A web site is maintained, at http://www.wcces.net.

As a result of these efforts, comparativists have become better organized and identified, as well as more effective in viewing problems and applying skills from different perspectives. It is anticipated that we can advance education for international understanding in the interests of peace, intercultural cooperation, observance of human rights and mutual respect among peoples.

The WCCES Series

Series Editors: Suzanne Majhanovich and Allan Pitman

The WCCES Series is established to provide for the broader dissemination of discourses between its members. Representing as it does Societies and their members from all continents, the organization provides a special forum for the discussion of issues of interest and concern among comparativists and those working in international education.

This volume is the fifth of five, with their origins in the proceedings of the World Council of Comparative Education Societies XIII World Congress, which met in Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina, 3 – 7 September, 2007. The conference theme, *Living Together: Education and Intercultural Dialogue*, provides the frame linking the set. The books represent four major strands of the discussions at the congress, and a commemoration of the work of David N. Wilson, a major contributor to the field of comparative and international education and to the work of the World Council. Each chapter in this peer reviewed series has been developed from presentations at that meeting, as well as from contributions from former colleagues and students of David Wilson for that Tribute volume.

A Tribute to David N. Wilson

Clamouring for a Better World

Edited by

Vandra Masemann
University of Toronto, Canada

Suzanne Majhanovich
University of Western Ontario, Canada

Nhung Truong
University of Toronto, Canada

Kara Janigan
University of Toronto, Canada
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Preface................................................................................................................................. ix

*Crain Soudien, President,*
World Council of Comparative Education Societies

Acknowledgements ........................................................................................................... xi

The Unbeatable Beat (Poem) ..................................................................................... xiii

*Suwanda Sugunasiri*

Introduction ....................................................................................................................... xv

*Sharyn Outtrim, Dianne Wilson, Michael Wilson, Vandra Masemann, Suzanne Majhanovich, Nhungh Truong and Kara Janigan*

**Section I: Africa**

1. 50 Years of Educational Expansion and Reform in Post-Colonial Africa............................. 3

*Charl C. Wolhuter and M. Petronella Van Niekerk*

2. Reflecting on Polytechnics in Post-Conflict Sierra Leone............................................ 17

*Kingsley Banya*

**Section II: Technical and Vocational Education and Training**

3. TVET in Nigeria: Issues, Concerns and New Directions in the 21st Century......................... 33

*Macleans A. Geo-Jaja*

4. Technical and Vocational Education and Training Reform in Poland’s New Political and Economic Climate.................................................................................. 51

*Ewa Kowalski*

5. Issues and Developments in Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) in India........................................................................................................... 67

*Derek A. Uram*

**Section III: Cross-Cultural Issues**

6. The Multicultural Dilemma: Studies from Europe and the USA.................................... 87

*Elizabeth Sherman Swing*
TABLE OF CONTENTS

7. A Comparative Ethnographic Narrative Approach to Studying Teacher Acculturation ................................................................. 99
   Edward R. Howe

   Kelly Crowley-Thorogood

9. Managing Diversity through Intercultural Teaching and Learning: Acculturation of Youth in Israel ......................................................... 129
   Yaacov Iram, Nava Maslovaty and Eli Shitreet

Section IV: Policy

10. Education of the Bedouin of the Negev from 1977 to 2007 .................. 145
    Norma Tarrow

11. Education for Sustainable Development: Lessons from the Private Sector ................................................................. 163
    Rupert Maclean and John Fien

12. Policy and Practice: Retraining Initiatives for Displaced Workers in Economically Depressed Areas ......................................................... 177
    Melissa White

13. Australian Education in an Era of Markets and Managerialism: A Critical Perspective ................................................................. 191
    Anthony R. Welch

    Mina O’Dowd

15. Women’s Education in India at the Start of the Twenty-First Century: Implications of the National Knowledge Commission Reports ............... 221
    Ratna Ghosh and Paromita Chakravarti

Section V: Comparative Education

16. Neoliberal Globalization and Human Rights: Crises and Opportunities .................................................................................. 239
    Carlos Alberto Torres
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>The Role of Foreign Language Fluency in Comparative Education Research</td>
<td>247</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Louise Gormley</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>The Twin Fields of Comparative and International Education</td>
<td>261</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>David A. Turner</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Notes on the Contributors</td>
<td>271</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Index</td>
<td>281</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The circumstances of my meeting with David Wilson were slightly unusual. I met and came to know him in 1991 when he was the President of the Comparative and International Education Society (CIES). He and the society had chosen to hold the annual meeting of the society in Kingston, Jamaica in 1992. I was then a student at the State University of New York at Buffalo and was extremely keen to go. The only trouble was that I was (and indeed remain!) a South African. What was the trouble? South Africa at the time was governed by the apartheid government and a number of countries, like Jamaica, took extreme offence at its racist policies and refused to recognise it. My passport was, as a consequence, useless. Very interestingly the Jamaican government was prepared to issue a special travel document to me, as long as I could prove that my business in their country was legitimate. It was then that I turned to the President of CIES, David. David wrote a letter to the Jamaicans who then issued me with the papers that would make it possible for me to visit their country. And so began a special relationship between David and Southern Africa.

Southern Africans had been attending CIES meetings for many years prior to the nineties. Whether any had attended the Congresses of the WCCES is unclear. But it was with the establishment of the Southern African Comparative and History of Education Society (SACHES) that the possibility of the region becoming a member of the WCCES began to be formally discussed. The discussions in the WCCES were, predictably, difficult. South Africa remained outside of the United Nations and its structures, like UNESCO. Many questions were asked about South Africa and the role of “South African whites”—the beneficiaries of apartheid—in SACHES. What credibility did these people have and could they be trusted? It was during these discussions, first at Prague, then at Sydney, that David Wilson played an important leadership role in helping the WCCES come to understand the case of the Southern Africans.

Critical in David’s participation in these discussions of the acceptability of the Southern African application was helping the WCCES work through the incredibly difficult politics of race. How these politics surfaced and were dealt with is not without significance for understanding David himself. The extraordinary issue of SACHES’ members’ colour, and by inference, their politics (were they really anti-apartheid people?), had arisen in the WCCES meetings. Whether it was sotto voce or direct is unclear, but the question, for instance, had come up of whether Harold Herman was white or not. What did it matter?, people like David had asked. And of course, few were to know that David had himself been subjected to a similar interrogation. In the course of doing a consultancy in Botswana during the 1980s, he had to pass through Johannesburg en route to Gaborone. He was stopped at the
Johannesburg airport by South African immigration police who questioned the validity of his Canadian travel documents. They thought that he was an “Indian” trying to sneak into South Africa on false pretences. This cemented David’s friendship with a large number of South Africans and with SACHES. It was forged out of a real understanding and experience of how complex the South African situation was.

This relationship was to grow as SACHES made itself available to host the World Congress, initially in 1995 when it became impossible for the Chinese Comparative Education Society (CCES) to host the Congress. (It was then decided that the Australian and New Zealand Comparative and International Education Society [ANZCIES] would host the Congress in 1996). SACHES then offered again for 1998, when the Congress did take place.

David was enormously supportive of the SACHES bid to host the Congress. It took place in Cape Town during his presidency and allowed him to make a Presidential address which saw him expressing his full sense of internationalism. The Congress was a great success and yielded many fruits, both for SACHES and the WCCES. David successfully navigated a path forward for the two bodies to develop new approaches to hosting a large congress which have become standard features of how the WCCES currently operates.

In remembering David, I am personally grateful for his many acts of kindness, both large and small. I remember his thoughtfulness, his conscientiousness—remembering a simple gift—on the occasions of our gatherings. I see the twinkle in his eye behind his heavily framed glasses, a slight grin on his face as he quips about the state of the world. And so David brings you into his space.

But, organizationally, all of us in the WCCES ought to be even more grateful for the example he set for us all. In his personal demeanour, the way he carried himself, his bearing in meetings and in his interactions with all of us, not only was he unfailingly respectful but he showed us how to treat everybody equally. The WCCES is a complex organization. It has many venerable and truly important figures, many of whom are global leaders in their respective fields of scholarship, many of whom have made large contributions to the organizations they serve. It also has many young people who are making their way through the rules and idiosyncrasies of the comparative education community. In the midst of all of this social complexity David never lost his sense of correctness. He made sure that he would spend as much time with the young members of the WCCES as he would with his older colleagues. In so doing he was paying his respects to the “elders”, but, as one himself, he was also taking seriously his role as a mentor for those younger than himself. In these ways he was committed to making the WCCES an inclusive organization. For this, all of us are thankful and remember him with gratitude and respect. It is largely for this reason that the Executive Committee of the WCCES took the decision at its meeting in Malaysia in January 2007, just after his death, to commission a book in his memory and to record its debt to him. I hope that this book will be read in the future as a fitting tribute to David Wilson’s contributions.

Crain Soudien, WCCES President, November 2009
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This book grew out of the deep sense of loss that his colleagues felt on the death of David N. Wilson on December 8, 2006. This sense was compounded by the fact that his final illness was diagnosed only a scant three months before his death. Because his family had set up a website in September under the auspices of CaringBridge, his many colleagues and former students from around the world were able to express their gratitude and sentiments to him in a public forum while his life was coming to its end. His website had nearly 4,000 hits in those final three months as family, friends, colleagues, former students and admirers expressed their thanks, respect and love. We owe his family our collective thanks for opening up a place where we could all say good-bye. This book is the scholarly extension of that feeling. His family has continued to support this effort, and we are very grateful for all of their cooperation and involvement. We also greatly appreciate the contribution to the introductory chapter of the written pieces by three of his children and their supplying us with David’s bibliography.

The World Council of Comparative Education Societies (WCCES) met in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia in January 2007, a few weeks after his death. At that meeting, they expressed their sorrow on the death of David who had been their Past President. Suzanne Majhanovich, Chair of the WCCES Publications Committee, suggested that the WCCES produce a *Festschrift* in his memory, and her motion was agreed upon. This book is the result of that decision. We owe our thanks to Mark Bray and then Crain Soudien as President of the WCCES, and to its Executive Committee, for their continuing support for this project. Panels were organized at the WCCES conference in Sarajevo in September 2007 and at the CIES meetings in New York in March 2008 where the preliminary versions of these chapters were presented. Three of David’s children also attended the CIES panel in New York.

We also thank the Comparative, International and Development Education Centre at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, the University of Toronto, with Karen Mundy as Director, for their financial and administrative support. Two graduate assistants, Nhung Truong and Kara Janigan, were funded for a year each to assist with the very long editing job. They have also continued to work on this book after their assistantships were officially finished. We are very grateful to them for their untiring work.

We thank David’s colleagues worldwide for their interest in and their support for this volume. In particular, we thank the colleagues who contributed so enthusiastically to this book and who did numerous revisions for us. Thanks are extended to all the external reviewers who were so punctilious in their work. We also thank the students and former students who submitted papers which, in some cases, they had originally written for David’s classes or for dissertations supervised by him. We invited all of the contributors to mention briefly what was their connection with David Wilson and his life and work.
Suwanda Sugunasiri, whose poem opens this book, was a student of David Wilson’s. He wrote his poem to express his admiration for the strength of David as he struggled back to life after his heart had stopped beating for 22 minutes—his heart which beat to the rhythms of many places and which “clamoured for a better world.” Dr. Sugunasiri read this poem to David’s family and friends during the shiva held at the Wilson residence in the days after his funeral.

Our appreciation also goes to Emily Mang at the Comparative Education Research Centre at the University of Hong Kong for her excellent Index for this volume. We also thank Peter DeLiefde and especially Michel Lokhorst at Sense Publishers for all of their assistance in the publishing of this book.

Lastly, our thanks go out to all of our colleagues in the Comparative and International Education Society of Canada, the Comparative and International Education Society (US), the World Council of Comparative Education Societies and on every continent who showed an interest in this tribute to David Wilson and who strongly supported this project. They were all of those who had met David at conferences, who had been advised, encouraged or interrogated by him, whose careers had been advanced by his support, who had chatted or argued with him, who had done research or consulting jobs with him, who had written or edited with him, who had dined with him in restaurants worldwide, or who had flown with him to or from the many countries he visited and worked in. This tribute is published here in the name of all of those who met David Wilson in his too brief but very full life’s journey. May we too continue to “clamour for a better world”.

The Unbeatable Beat

For Professor David Wilson

by Suwanda Sugunasiri

For 22 minutes
under the piercing glare
of the Emergency Room lights
you mocked
the Dragon
waiting
claws on the ready,
stopping your beat
giving your heart
a well-earned reprieve,
sucking in
the surround-energy
of a loving family.

A-plus
for valiant effort
though soon
in claw’s grip
of the inevitable,
bloodying
your heart’s resolve,

your beat zings
unallayed,
to varying rhythms
in distant Mozambique Botswana
tropical Sri Lanka
in neighbourly Latin America
in frigid Canada on the home-run,
your unbeatable beat
clamouring
through and through
for a better world.
INTRODUCTION

This introduction has come together through the efforts of David Wilson’s children and the editors of this Festschrift. Each vignette pays tribute to a different facet of his dynamic life and work, dedicated to comparative, international and development education, and also illuminates his personal engagement and relationships with all those whose life he touched.

DAVID N. WILSON: EARLY INFLUENCES
BY SHARYN OUTTRIM

What is your favorite place in the world? This was the most asked question of our father, David Wilson, who would always respond quickly: “Favorite for what? Most historical? Best Asian food? Culture? Spiciest Indian curry? Best countryside views? Most delicious barbeque? Finest architecture?” and so on… Our Dad loved the world and saw the best of everything in places most people have never heard of. He would get a glint in his eyes as his mind traveled far away as he recollected the thousands of pleasures our planet and our people had to offer.

David believed that education should be experienced instead of just learned; he always felt that he did his best work, when he lived, worked and learned in the developing countries he sought so hard to improve.

How did an average boy born in Syracuse, New York in 1939 become the well-travelled Renaissance man so many came to know? We are often asked this question and after much discussion and retrospection, we realize the answer is as ordinary as David was not.

Esther, David’s mother, came from an educated and accomplished family. Like many of the other women in her family, she was strong and determined. David’s mother was the pivotal influence in his early years as she instilled the philosophy that anything is possible and that by figuring it out yourself as you go, you will excel. She was an unassuming, capable and calm person, whose deep wisdom and determination allowed her to outshine other women in her community. She was president of many educational, community and religious organizations over the years.

David’s father Louis was a self-made man and the first in his family to get a university degree. He became a veterinarian by working to put himself through Cornell University. As a father, he challenged his boys to succeed educationally, and both of David’s parents believed that a key part of learning was living. Thus was the beginning of David’s adventurous life.
The oldest of three boys, David lived a typical middle class lifestyle, except for the annual adventures this family embarked on during the school year. His father would attend a veterinarian convention every year in different parts of the US and would pack up the family to drive the country for four to six weeks during the school year. Each boy was armed with his school work, but they learned history, geography and social studies by visiting all the places they read about in textbooks. Their parents brought their learning to life and thus created a hunger for exploration and adventure which was probably a key factor in David’s keen interest in geography and history and desire to receive an undergraduate degree in Political Science and a Master’s degree in Social Science and Education.

As a father, David carried on this untraditional family vacation with his own family. The big difference was that his horizon grew from North America to exotic places across the globe. He and Susan would pack up their growing family and often the dog to travel to his contracted jobs in Africa, Asia and Australia. They would take a month to get to each place and a month to go home. Yes, the children would be followed by Ontario correspondence courses no matter where they would end up.

So, the man that many came to know was molded in life early on by the richness of learning and living, by seeing and experiencing, by fulfilling the dream that anything is possible, not just for him but for all those that he touched.

DAD WILSON, A MAN BEFORE HIS TIME
BY DIANNE WILSON

David Wilson
A loyal member of the Audio Visual Club...a camper in the wide open spaces...photography fiend...fisher of the deep...a good word for all...true friend...conscientious worker...amiable

“Dave”

Yearbook, Nottingham High School, Class of 1956

To truly know and understand him was to love him. How poignant it is that I could not say I fully understood the many facets of Dad’s personality and life works until it was too late to be able to discuss them with him. By the time my sister created the Caringbridge website and we were able to read the countless stories of David and his adventures, it was too late to discuss them with him. His memory had been stolen away from us by the cancer. The proud educator, although fluent in at least five languages, was having a hard time communicating his thoughts in his mother tongue.

He was a man connected to the real world, and well ahead of his time in many respects. It wasn’t until my very “green” cousin came to visit me that I remembered how truly advanced a North American my Dad was. Eric, my cousin was showering in the guest bath. Upon thinking he was finished, I jumped into my master bath shower only to realize a minute later that Eric was merely shampooing his hair. My shower went ice cold as he turned the water back on to complete his morning routine. Bam, the memory came back to me about the time in the early 1980s, as I woke up early to obtain use of the shower in the number two slot instead of battling
for hot water in fifth or sixth place in our family. In our comfortable North York home, we were fortunate enough to have two showers, so my competition was limited to the four “children”. How many times was I steaming mad that I had prematurely jumped into the nice dry shower before any of my older and larger siblings only to have a few seconds to enjoy the hot shower. Dad, like Eric, was very conscious of preserving not only hot water, but all water. He would turn the shower on and off several times before he was finished bathing. When I would angrily announce to him later that morning at the breakfast table that I was once again frozen out of the shower, he calmly mentioned that he was being sensitive to our environment as well as the hot water tank. How many people did that in the 1980s? Yes, Dad was connected to the real world not only by caring about others but caring about our environment.

He saved everything for re-use. We even found old fuses in his workshop in 2009. Although they looked like foreign objects to me, Dad looked on them as possibly useful sometime or somewhere in the future. Moreover, he did not idle the car, and preferred the windows to air conditioning.

I came to realize how endearing my dear old Dad was to many of his longtime colleagues and students, and how many he angered by furiously sticking up for what he believed in. So many facets were revealed in the last months of his life and afterwards, so much knowledge that I am proud and amazed about.

Politically, he was ahead of his time. To grow up with the only home in the neighborhood who supported the New Democratic Party of Canada with a big huge yard sign on our corner lot, and realize he was not just eccentric but SO before his time was a huge revelation for me.

In matters of health, he was similarly progressive. I just saw him as silly ol’ Dad who refused to be fitted for contact lenses twenty years after the first lenses damaged the eyes of early patients. Or the Dad who suffered through his slipped disk pain because years earlier the surgery had not always had the best success rates. Silly Dad even refused to consume pharmaceuticals to lower his high cholesterol. He set his mind to it and lowered his levels the “natural” way by cutting cheeses, shrimp and other beloved food items out of his diet. His doctor had never seen someone naturally reduce their bad cholesterol levels so quickly and effectively as Dad had. Too bad Dad was not so conscious of cigar and pipe smoking. Lung cancer would stake its claim on him at far too young an age.

Why is it that a man who dedicated his life to advancing our world was taken so prematurely from us? How many more nations, let alone families, could have been positively impacted by his passion for developing education systems in third world countries? How many people actually have this impact on “our” world? I am so very proud of my dear Dad!

DAVID N. WILSON, Ph.D., DAD
BY MICHAEL I. WILSON

It gives me great personal pride to be given the opportunity to say a few words about my father from a son’s perspective. Most of my father’s colleagues remember him as a fellow academic and scholar, while my siblings and I remember him simply as
our father. The intersection of those two worlds came most often when he would travel for work and we would suddenly miss having him around. Growing up, I never understood exactly what he did for a living and even to this day, I’m not sure that I fully understand what he did. I am humbled to learn about the impact that he had on so many individual lives when it seems that the biggest impact he had was on our lives. He challenged us intellectually, pushed us to do beyond what we considered our best work in life and school, scolded and sometimes punished us for what seemed like arbitrary things. In hindsight, I think that he struggled to strike a balance between how he was raised and how he wanted to raise his own children and how things just turned out. As I grew and as he saw me building my career and family, my relationship with him matured, and it’s those memories and the stories of all the people’s lives that he touched that I cherish the most. He stood by me and propped me up as I went through a long and troubling divorce and child custody battle; he drove by himself from Toronto to Baltimore over a half dozen times in as many years to stand by my side in court. Several years ago, I flew to Germany to spend a week with him while he was on sabbatical in Bonn and we toured the countryside together and had some wonderful experiences. I feel fortunate that he was by my side again as I remarried and later when my wife and I had another son. I thought that once he passed away, the image of my father would be set and wouldn’t change; however, quite the opposite has happened. Memories and remembrances of my father have become enriched through opportunities to hear from his friends and colleagues and I find myself mixing and matching that new information in with my previous memories to create a new more complex image of my father. He was not the perfect father, he was my father and I miss him and wish that I could share more of my life with him. Thank you for writing this book in his honour.

THE CAREER OF DAVID N. WILSON
BY VANDRA MASEMANN

David N. Wilson was born in and grew up in Syracuse New York, USA. He attended the University of Syracuse for his entire undergraduate and graduate education. He obtained his B.A. in Political Science in 1961, his M.Sc. in Social Science and Education in 1963, a Diploma in Eastern African Studies in 1968 and his Ph.D. from the Centre of Development Education in 1969. His thesis advisor was Professor Don Adams, and his thesis was entitled “The improvement of basic data used in educational planning: a case study-Malawi,” available in the University of Syracuse Library. Professor Adams believes that David’s experiences as a graduate student, the university’s global commitment, and mostly, his international work and study and later international experiences all contributed to shaping his life’s commitments. His interest in Africa and technical education was evident early in his career, and he served as Assistant Co-ordinator for the United States Peace Corps Training Programme in Technical Studies from 1964 to 1965. From 1965 to 1967 he was an Educational Planning Officer with the Ministry of Education of the Government of Malawi, under secondment from the Ford Foundation through the Overseas Professional Service Fellowship Programme, administered by the University of New Mexico, USA.
In 1968 he arrived in Toronto with his wife Susan and growing family that would eventually include Sharyn, Michael, James and Dianne. He joined the faculty at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (OISE) and the Graduate Department of Educational Theory at the University of Toronto as an assistant professor in the Department of Educational Planning, chaired by Professor Cicely Watson. Also arriving in Toronto just before him was Professor Joseph Farrell, his long-time colleague in what was to become the Comparative and International Development Education Centre. David worked at OISE until his (mandatory but unwilling) retirement in 2005, in the departments of Adult Education and Curriculum, depending on where the programme in Comparative, International and Development Education was located.

He taught courses in Comparative Education, Educational Planning, Development Education, Development Planning, Research Methodology, Evaluation, Occupational Training Programmes, and Technological Education, and others that reflected his special interests during his career.

He supervised and served on the thesis committees of many graduate students during this period at the Master’s, Ph.D. and Ed.D. levels. Moreover, he met many students and junior colleagues from other universities at Canadian and international conferences and helped them establish themselves in their chosen areas of interest. Several of the authors in this book are among those students and colleagues.

He also undertook multiple overseas consulting assignments during various periods of leave and sabbaticals from OISE. In 1972, he served as a Specialist in the Administration, Planning and Financing of Education with UNESCO as Education and Manpower Planning Advisor to the Rivers and South-eastern (later Cross-Rivers) State Ministries of Education in Nigeria, under the United Nations Development Programme. Several of the papers here reflect his great interest and commitment to education in Africa. In 1976–77, he was a Project Officer in Technological-Vocational Education with the Asian Development Bank in Manila, Philippines. His missions that year took him to Nepal, Bangladesh and Burma; and he also evaluated projects in Thailand, Singapore and the Philippines.

In 1980–81, he was Honorary Visiting Professor at the Centre for Comparative and International Studies in Education at La Trobe University in Melbourne, Australia. That visit kindled a lifelong interest in Australian education. While in Australia, he conducted a research project on occupational training in Singapore and Malaysia. Then in 1986, he served as an Expert in Technical Education with the International Labour Organization of the United Nations to undertake a pre-investment study of the higher technical schools (industrial) in the Sudan for the World Bank. In 2000–2001, he was a Visiting Professor at the UNESCO International Centre for Technical and Vocational Education and Training in Bonn, Germany, and he continued working actively to develop that organization until his death. In the last ten years of his career, his interests focused increasingly on technical, vocational education and training, as well as on the use of technology in education. Several of the papers in this book reflect that interest.

These are all David’s official projects during the period from 1970 to 2005. He also conducted a private consulting business which paralleled many of these interests. He conducted numerous evaluation studies of technical education and training
programmes in Africa, North America, South America, Europe, and Asia, and feasibility studies for projected new educational institutions such as technical and community colleges. His published reports are too numerous to include here. His consulting demonstrated the strong link that he believed in between theory and practice.

He was very active in the professional societies in his field. In addition to his involvement in the field of comparative education (see the Suzanne Majhanovich section of this chapter), he was also active in the International Society for Educational Planning, of which he was President in 1999–2001 when he organized their annual conference in Toronto. During that same period, he was serving his second term as President of the World Council of Comparative Education Societies. He was also active on numerous other committees and boards during his career.

His publications are too numerous to list in their entirety. His publications were to be crowned by his editorship of the *International Handbook of Education for the Changing World of Work: Bridging Academic and Vocational Learning* which has now been co-edited by Rupert Maclean and published by Springer. It was published in 2009 after his death with him listed as co-editor and is dedicated to his memory. His colleagues at OISE, Karen Mundy, Kathy Bickmore, Ruth Hayhoe, Meggan Madden, and Katherine Madjidi likewise dedicated to him their volume on *Comparative and International Education: Issues in Teacher Education* (Toronto: Canadian Scholars’ Press, and New York: Teachers College Press: 2008). The bibliography at the end of this chapter is a representative sample of his major academic works.

When the news came that David Wilson had died, it did not seem possible. How could such a vibrant active person not be there any more? He had continued a full schedule of research and consulting after his retirement, and shortly before his death was close to completing an edited volume on technical and vocational education, one of his main interests. As former President of the Comparative and International Education Society of Canada (CIESC), of the Comparative and International Education Society of the US (CIES), as well as of the World Council of Comparative Education Societies (WCCES) he remained active as elder statesman, contributing his services and advice whenever asked.

He faithfully attended CIESC, CIES and WCCES conferences for many years from the First World Congress of Comparative Education Societies in 1970 in Ottawa (a fact he was very proud of) to the CIES meeting in Honolulu just a few months before his death in 2006. Moreover, he always came to his students’ presentations to offer support and to start the discussion. In fact, it was at the CIESC conference in the early 1980s when I first met David Wilson. It was probably the first paper I had ever given at that conference, on immigrant women and their limited opportunities for jobs in Canada. The question David asked was a rather provocative one, and I was taken aback, even a bit offended. I wondered who this person was who was questioning my research. Later I realized that he was just being the consummate educator and challenging me to support my claims as any interested teacher would do.
Although David Wilson was never my professor, I learned a great deal from him about the many facets of comparative and international education from his presentations at conferences and his accounts of his experiences in the field. I greatly appreciate the concern David Wilson had for international graduate students in particular. Before our faculty had a doctoral programme, I often recommended promising students to David, hoping that he could find some way for them to continue their studies at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education. More often than not, even in times of budgetary restraint, David did find a way to have these future comparativists admitted to OISE.

Because of his vast experience in consulting and research around the world, his interests related to comparative and international education were extensive. His *curriculum vitae* listed as areas of involvement technical and vocational education, as well as policy, globalization, multiculturalism, African education, aboriginal education and several other topics. After David Wilson’s death, colleagues wanted to find a suitable way to honour his multitude of contributions to the field. As Chair of the Standing Committee for Publications of the World Council, I suggested that a collection of papers in his memory would be an appropriate way to commemorate David, and I asked his colleague and friend Vandra Masemann if she would consider editing such a collection with me. Fortunately Vandra accepted the challenge; and after securing approval from the WCCES Executive, we set out to publicize the project. We posted the list of areas in comparative and international education that David had been involved in and invited his colleagues and former students to submit abstracts of papers that might be included in the volume. The response was gratifying, with proposals for papers from many seasoned and esteemed academics and practitioners in the field around the world. Many former students also suggested papers. We were particularly pleased at the response from former students whose research and current careers had been influenced by David Wilson as their former professor and mentor or as someone they had met at academic conferences. Drafts of most papers were presented at sessions either of the 13th World Congress in Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina in 2007, or the 52nd annual Comparative and International Education Society (CIES) conference in New York in 2008. Authors received feedback and then submitted completed papers which were edited carefully by each member of our publication team consisting of Vandra Masemann, Nhun Truong and Kara Janigan, graduate research assistants kindly funded by the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, and myself. Authors addressed our initial comments and resubmitted their chapters which were then sent out for blind review. Further revisions were made until the chapters as they now appear were ready.

We, the editors of this volume, believe the collection of articles honours David Wilson’s longtime work in the comparative and international education field, and the areas to which he paid particular attention. We have enjoyed working on the project over the past three years, and I, for one, have learned a great deal about some of the many areas of endeavour that make up the field of Comparative and International Education that David Wilson was so actively engaged in over the
many years of his estimable career. We hope he would be pleased with the outcome of the project and wish he could have been here to offer his informed commentary on these papers dedicated to him.

OVERVIEW OF THE CHAPTERS
BY NHUNG TRUONG

Every paper in this volume recalls an area of international and comparative education to which David Wilson contributed. The poem by Suwanda Sugunasiri, which opens this collection, refers to David Wilson’s heart which beat to the “varying rhythms” of the places where he journeyed and which clamoured ceaselessly for a better world. From Africa to Asia to Latin America and throughout Canada, David Wilson left a mark, in resolve and dedication to making a difference in educational development.

We are pleased to include in the first two sections of the book many papers on African education and on technical and vocational education since David devoted so much of his career to those areas. In fact, his work has influenced many of the authors herein, one of whom spoke of a kind of epiphany he had after discussions with David on the importance of and need for vocational education in Africa, not just the usual post-colonial curriculum that did little to prepare people for the realities of their countries.

The first section is dedicated to his strong interest in Africa. The first chapter provides a broad overview of educational expansion and reform over fifty years since the end of colonialism in so many African countries. The authors note the parallel of this time period with David Wilson’s “marathon professional career in comparative education”, during which he also contributed to some of these reforms. Charl C. Wolhuter and M. Petronella Van Niekerk describe the shift from missionary and colonial education in the pre-independence period, to the impacts of the Addis Ababa declaration at the onset of independence as countries were seeking development, to the post-independence period with major efforts in expanding education across the continent. These reforms included the provision of education in conventional and unconventional ways including adult literacy programmes, distance education, Africanizing the curricula and emphasizing indigenous languages, and community-based initiatives. However, while some progress was made in the expansion of education over this period, many countries were also becoming indebted to donor countries and international funding agencies, with a resulting decline in public spending on education. Further, many issues of quality and equality in education remain. Despite progress, basic education is still beyond the reach of many, largely because of many social and economic problems, including the HIV/AIDS epidemic.

Looking more specifically at a country in Africa, Kingsley Banya reflects on polytechnic education in post-conflict Sierra Leone. In recent years, several African countries have emerged from conflicts which resulted in adverse effects on education, and have passed vocational and technical laws as part of the attempt to reconstruct and expand Education for All within the country. This chapter looks critically at recent laws in Sierra Leone, such as the Polytechnic Act and NCTVA of 2001, and the Education Act of 2004, to assess their implementation and impact on schooling in the country. The paper continues the tradition of
David Wilson’s thinking that effective education should involve good planning and strong vocational/technical education for those students who pursue these types of careers.

The second section focuses on Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET), an issue that deeply interested David Wilson. He was specifically interested in how TVET could be developed appropriately in different contexts, particularly to promote development. David Wilson’s contributions to the UNESCO International Centre for Technical and Vocational Education and Training (UNEVOC) were many. This set of chapters focuses on more in-depth issues in TVET in Nigeria, Poland and India.

Macleans A. Geo-JaJa looks at global factors and local trends affecting human resource development in the Niger Delta region of Nigeria in the 21st century. Education and training issues and challenges are discussed from the perspective of capacity building and poverty reduction, considering the poor education level and low skill level of the work force. The suggested solution is teaching and upgrading literacy and numeracy skills, in order to reach poorly educated citizens and those who have been excluded from primary and lower secondary school levels. The paper also notes the value of private-public partnerships to improve and expand continuing education and training in the region. It is considered, therefore, that reform should focus on content, delivery and resourcing. Further, the historical and political context should be taken into account, such as expanding technical, engineering and scientific manpower through promoting technical education and providing targeted scholarships.

The chapter by Ewa Kowalski describes reforms in the TVET system in the new political and economic climate of post-communist Poland. The post-1990 reform supported selectively-targeted training for graduates with a minimum secondary school education, while restricting such opportunities for graduates with basic vocational education. In consequence, the Polish labour market has failed to effectively utilize the skills of a considerable proportion of workers displaced from their jobs because of economic restructuring. The selectively-targeted training, compounded with the continued unemployment crisis and growing rate of migration of the Polish workforce to other European Union labour markets, demonstrates the critical need for a comprehensive, long-term approach to the planning and development of the Polish labour force, rather than one that fosters the use of short-term methods and solutions.

In the fifth chapter, Derek A. Uram paints a picture of TVET in India, highlighting major issues and developments since national independence in 1947. Various trends, especially related to globalization, have opened up new opportunities for employment, industry, communication, finance, and intellectual development in technology, innovation, and applied science. However, in spite of great economic gains in India, in which TVET has played a profound role, the constitutional goal of equality in India has not been met. Meeting this goal requires a comprehensive strategy and planning at all levels of education, also in conjunction with other public policy arenas, such as industrial, employment, commercial, and international policy. This chapter attempts to investigate the varying impacts of such developments on TVET in India, and relate them to the overall situation of development in the country.
The third section focuses on cross-cultural issues such as multiculturalism, teacher acculturation in international contexts, and aboriginal education policies. These issues are especially relevant today as people, ideas, and cultures continue to cross borders with increasing speed and magnitude, physically and virtually. David Wilson, who had studied anthropology, was always interested in the cultural context of institution building and educational development. Moreover, he was an inveterate crosser of borders.

Elizabeth Sherman Swing discusses the multicultural dilemma from the perspective of studies from Europe and the USA. In her chapter, she questions the concept of multiculturalism, which originally described the peaceful coexistence of groups with varying cultural, linguistic, intellectual, and religious norms. She looks at Ian Buruma’s thesis that the murder of Theo van Gogh signaled a limit to the tolerance that previously characterized modern life in the Netherlands. Another topic raised is Ayaan Hirsi Ali’s complaint that multiculturalism does not safeguard the rights of minorities, specifically Muslim women. Swing also examines Susan Okin’s concern that the policies of Western governments aimed at preserving group cultures are actually in conflict with constitutional principles of individual freedom and equality between men and women. The chapter looks at the relationship between these developments to multicultural initiatives in Europe and the United States in the late twentieth century, as well as the Dutch sociological construct called the “Dutch pillars”. Under consideration is the dichotomy between individual freedom and group rights, and the boundaries of protecting the group versus individuals within a group.

In chapter seven, Edward R. Howe analyses teacher acculturation through the lens of a comparative ethnographic narrative approach. He studies some cases of teacher acculturation in Japan, and sets these experiences alongside an auto-reflection on his own initial teaching experiences in Canada. This chapter is based on narratives of teachers encountered during the author’s doctoral research, for which David Wilson was the supervisor. The “comparative ethnographic narrative lens” provides a potential framework for further comparative educational research, as an alternative to the more traditional nation-state unit of analysis. Through teacher-to-teacher cross-cultural conversations, stories were shared of experiences and challenges faced by beginning teachers, showing some transcultural commonalities. In Japan, the foundation for successful acculturation into the teaching profession is built on two pillars of education: kenshū (training or professional development) and shidō (guidance). His research showed that many novice teachers did not feel fully prepared for the transition from training to teaching on their own, and would have liked to have had stronger mentorship, although other more experienced teachers were helpful. Uram argues that since many phenomena in education are culturally embedded and tacit in nature, they are better understood through micro-level ethnomethodological studies.

Kelly Crowley-Thorogood also takes an historical comparative approach in her chapter to look at indigenous education policies in Mexico and Canada. In state societies, formal education takes on a key role in the process of national incorporation and state formation, although this process could also result in national isolation.
In exploring Indian-state relations and education in the two countries, the paper compares such issues as the differing demographic statistics of the native population in each context, the importance of indigenous participation in large-scale political movements, and the presence or absence of the ideological element of *indigenismo*. During the first half of the twentieth century, governments in both countries used state institutions to mould the identity of their indigenous peoples to match their objectives. However, the chapter also discusses how the process was not unidirectional, as indigenous peoples could sometimes manipulate educational institutions to pursue their own objectives as well.

The chapter by Yaacov Iram, Nava Maslovaty and Eli Shitreet poses some serious questions about the acculturation of migrant minority youth in Israel. The paper looks at the attitudes of host populations, which can vary from rejection through passive tolerance, to support and even positive encouragement of variety, diversity and pluralism. Also discussed in depth are Berry’s four possible acculturation strategies which immigrants can adopt: assimilation, integration, separation and marginalisation. Acculturation is a bidirectional process with interrelated changes occurring in both groups, although it could be argued that the attitudes of the host-majority members have the stronger impact on the acculturation preferences of the newcomer ethnic-minority groups. The authors propose a study in which the acculturation and adaptation processes of former Soviet Union and Ethiopian immigrants in Israel could be examined. The findings of such a study could assist in constructing varied acculturation models in diverse educational contexts to develop tolerance and social awareness by host and newcomer students. This chapter is also dedicated to one of its authors, Nava Maslovaty, who passed away before publication of this volume.

David Wilson was interested in questions of policy and aware of the potential of policy change for educational development. The next section focuses on policy concerns in various countries around the globe: Israel, Canada, Australia, Sweden, India and across the European Union nations.

In the tenth chapter, Norma Tarrow gives a historically comparative analysis of the impact and outcomes of policies and practices of education of the Bedouin of the Negev in two time periods thirty years apart. The review of socio-political factors, and realities and challenges identified in 1977 provide the background and basis of comparison for the 2007 field study, which included school observations, interviews with teachers, parents and administrators, and data from the Ministry of Education. The study examines such issues as attendance and drop-out rates, educational objectives, and budget and staffing, as well as the relationship of the “land issue” to the provision of education to children in government-planned, recognized and unrecognized sectors of the Bedouin society. The chapter concludes that there is now less danger of the Bedouin succumbing to government efforts to assimilate them into a totally western, urban lifestyle and more danger of an eruption of a formerly loyal society into active revolt against systemic discrimination in school and society.

The chapter by Rupert Maclean and John Fien suggests some lessons that can be learned from the private sector in the promotion of education for sustainable development. The topic is timely as we are now nearly at the end of the United
Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development. David Wilson had worked often with UNESCO and particularly its International Centre for Technical and Vocational Education and Training (UNEVOC), a hub for the network of organizations specializing in TVET worldwide. He had particular interest in TVET as contributing to sustainable social and economic development, and the role of public-private partnerships and the business sector in improving skills for employment. The authors examine cases of businesses and industry using education and training as part of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) policy and practice. Some examples include: corporate training programmes, partnering with local organizations and NGOs to provide community development and education programmes, and assisting education and training institutions with sustainability related teaching. This chapter is an invitation to learn from the private sector in recognizing motivations and overcoming barriers to take on the challenge of education and training for a sustainable future.

In the twelfth chapter, Melissa White, one of the final doctoral students of David Wilson, looks at issues of policy and practice in retraining initiatives for displaced workers in economically depressed areas. Specifically, the study looks at fisher workers in Atlantic Canada and Quebec who have been affected by the Canadian Federal Government moratorium on the Northern Cod industry. The Atlantic Groundfish Strategy was introduced by a government as a programme to restructure the fishery industry and provide re-training for those displaced by the closure. The chapter discusses why policy makers focused on education and training as a key ingredient for overcoming unemployment. The case study also illustrates why the problems of unemployment and goal of economic development cannot be achieved by focusing on a single policy issue. The problems that education and training are meant to overcome are far too complex for a single, short-term, often ad hoc approach.

The next chapter lends a critical perspective to higher education in Australia, another country of great interest to David Wilson as he took his family with him to work there, and his children attended school there. Anthony R. Welch looks at Australian education in an era of markets and managerialism, remarking on the increasing privatisation and commercialisation of higher education institutions, both old and new. Development plans include extending the numbers of private students, both national and international, and greater commercial exploitation of intellectual property. Universities contribute to this problem, making significant faculty redundancies, and over-enrolling students. In the face of this situation, student staff ratios have worsened appreciably over the past decade. The chapter examines such reforms, driven by an increasingly technicist, neo-liberal educational agenda, and assesses the extent to which marketisation has occurred. In addition, the use and abuse of performance indicators, and managerialist discourses and techniques of reform are assessed in arriving at an overall characterisation of contemporary educational reforms in Australia.

The chapter by Mina O’Dowd addresses another major policy issue today, the Bologna Process and its impacts on the re-structuring of higher education. The paper asks who will bear the brunt of unexpected outcomes of this re-structuring,
looking at faculty, staff, students and other stakeholders in higher education. The author uses Torsten Husén’s analysis of what constitutes the planning and implementation of successful educational reform, critically assessing the Bologna Process, in order to ascertain to what extent this Europe-wide initiative bears resemblance to the education reforms undertaken in Sweden over the last fifty years. The article concludes that none of the criteria posed by Husén as necessary for a successful education reform are found in the current Bologna Process. This conclusion gives rise to a number of vital questions, as to the nature of the Bologna Process and its consequences on universities and students in the future.

The issue of gender has been high on the international education agenda in recent years. In their chapter, Ratna Ghosh and Paromita Chakravarti look at implications of the National Knowledge Commission reports on women’s education in India, from the perspective of equality, or rather, inequality, of educational and thus work and life opportunities. Although the rapid development of India can be remarked upon, its corresponding distribution of opportunities throughout its society has not been level, as was also noted in Uram’s chapter. The National Knowledge Commission Reports cast the vision for education reform to bring the country further into the knowledge economy. The Structural Adjustment Programme in the country in the late 1980s led to cuts to educational expenditure at all levels of education. Changes in higher education included the growth in private colleges. Further, the National Commission Reports focus especially on science and technology, and English language skills. These priorities have serious negative implications for many female students, women and girls who are not largely represented in these fields of knowledge and who traditionally, and as argued by the authors, are still a most neglected segment in Indian society.

The three final papers are in a section designated simply as Comparative Education, and each one represents an area of particular importance to David Wilson. The effect of neo-liberal economic policies in a globalized world is an area that has consumed the interest of many comparative educators but none more so than David Wilson with his deep sense of equity and social justice. The development of the field of comparative education was always an abiding topic of interest to him.

In chapter sixteen, Carlos Alberto Torres writes about the crises and opportunities of neoliberal globalization and human rights. He identifies and addresses in particular five scenarios in modern society connected with more than 25 years of neoliberal globalization. Symptoms of a moral crisis include pervasive corruption in the public sector and lack of transparency in the business world. This conflict is also related to notions of tolerance in a diverse world, affecting how people of different backgrounds react to this conflict and to each other. The crisis of de-regulation sees the promotion of open markets and free trade on the one hand, and privatisation and decentralisation of education on the other. The resulting expansion of access to education does not necessarily guarantee an agenda of equity, equality and fairness in society, or the preservation of local languages and cultures, and in fact may be a mechanism that generates social exclusion. According to the author another crisis
is that of human rights, immigration and multiculturalism as the bedrock of citizenship. How these notions are approached in education is a major issue of debate in educational policies and practice. The planetary crisis looks to environmental issues and idea of education for sustainable development. Finally, the epistemology crisis has arisen with the crisis of positivism as normal and hegemonic science, confronting more humanistic, social and cultural approaches to society and life. The author asserts that all of these crises can in fact be seen as opportunities in the field of education, to continue in the search for truth, as David Wilson did throughout his lifetime.

David Wilson was something of a linguist and had picked up bits of many languages through his work around the world. When in the presence of those of other linguistic backgrounds, he honoured them by inserting at least a few phrases of their language where possible. Thus Louise Gormley’s paper on the role of foreign language fluency in the comparative education field recognizes his belief in the importance of knowing other languages when one works in international venues and contexts. Various comparative researchers are recalled, all of whom placed great importance on knowing multiple languages and living in other cultures. Isaac Kandel and William Brickman both emphasized the use of primary documents as sources of comparative research. George Bereday encouraged multilingualism in young scholars so that they could read about events or phenomena in different languages, and therefore understand different national perspectives. Harold Noah was also another notable polyglot comparative education researcher. Jürgen Schriewer compared Spanish, Russian and Chinese journals. Following the tradition of these scholars, the author relates experiences from her own field research in Mexico, where knowledge of the local language allowed deeper insight into the local realities of the people, and understanding of the nuances related to education in this context. She notes that having the comparison of Spanish with English also created interesting reflections on interpretations.

The final paper on the twin fields of comparative and international education addresses a long-standing debate within the field; namely, what comparative education is and does, and the role of international activities in the field. David Wilson, someone who was involved in both the theoretical and academic side of the field along with his hands-on activity in international situations, took up the challenge of the dichotomy in the field on the occasion of his presidential address to the CIES in 1994. In his judgment, the two facets were inextricably bound. In this last chapter, his longtime colleague on the World Council, David A. Turner revisits the question of whether the fields of comparative and international education could be conceptualized as Siamese or fraternal twins. The author notes the many developments in internationalisation and globalization since the year of David Wilson’s speech, and argues that the comparative and international “twins” are now relatively amicably united and much more closely than before. The threat to the joint field now comes from the outside, rather than from any internal strife. This paper provides further philosophical musings on the topic and is, we think, a fitting concluding chapter to the book.
INTRODUCTION

BY KARA JANIGAN

The following list of published articles, chapters, monographs, and books are a sample of David N. Wilson’s scholarly works. David’s most influential publications are noted below with asterisks. David also published numerous technical reports and papers which are not listed in this section.

REFERENCES

Africa


Wilson, D. N. (1969). The improvement of basic data used in educational planning: A case study - Malawi. Syracuse, New York: University of Syracuse.

Technical and Vocational Education and Training


Cross-Cultural and Comparative Studies


INTRODUCTION


The Field of Comparative Education


xxxi


SECTION I: AFRICA
1. 50 YEARS OF EDUCATIONAL EXPANSION AND REFORM IN POST-COLONIAL AFRICA

INTRODUCTION

David Wilson’s marathon professional career in Comparative Education coincided with one of the biggest projects of educational expansion witnessed in world history, namely the expansion and reform of education in Africa over the past fifty years. The year 1957 may be pinpointed as the beginning of this reform, with the independence of Ghana, the first colony in Sub-Saharan Africa to become independent. David Wilson made a notable contribution to these reforms, having been active in education in various African countries over many years. He was also President of the World Council of Comparative Education Societies (WCCES) at the time of the Tenth World Congress of Comparative Education Societies, held in Cape Town, South Africa, during July 1998. As a tribute to David Wilson, this chapter presents a survey of the educational expansion and reform in Africa over the past fifty years—a project which also bears his mark.

THE PRE-INDEPENDENCE PERIOD

Missionary Education

With the exception of initiation schools, traditional education in Sub-Saharan Africa prior to Western contact was informal and took place spontaneously as a part of everyday life (Fafunwa & Aisiku, 1982; Moumouni, 1968). Formal education was brought by missionaries from Europe who came to Sub-Saharan Africa during the nineteenth century. Since their primary objective was to convert the indigenous population of Africa to the Christian religion, education to promote literacy was very much a central part of their activities. The typical missionary station in Africa included a church, a hospital and a school. Generally, the missionaries offered elementary education only. Furthermore, this education was very academic. Only a very tiny fraction of the population was reached. Facilities were poor, as were standards.

Contemporary critical scholarly discourse harshly criticizes missionary education on two counts (Fafunwu & Aisiku, 1982). First, they condemn missionary education as being an agent of Westernization. Missionary education steered children away from their own culture into a new culture, and in that way taught them that African cultures were inferior. Second, missionary education has been accused of teaching
obedience (to God and to the church) and therefore promoting submissiveness to the prevailing socio-political disposition (colonialism) rather than equipping students with the tools necessary for free intellectual inquiry (Kallaway, 2007).

Colonial Education

During the last quarter of the nineteenth century, Africa was carved up and divided among England, France, Portugal and Germany as each staked their colonial claims in the “scramble for Africa” (Pakenham, 1991). Over the course of time, the colonial administrations also became involved in the provision of education. Originally, these colonial governments merely supported missionary education financially; later they established schools themselves. These schools served the indigenous population sparsely and were usually limited to elementary education. The essential aim of this education was to supply the subordinate personnel necessary for the effective functioning of the colonial administration, such as clerks and interpreters, employees in commerce, nurses and veterinary assistants, elementary and secondary school teachers, assistants to doctors, and workers in various fields (Moumoumi, 1968). In colonies with a substantial segment of the population of European descent (generally in Southern, Central and Eastern Africa), racially segregated school systems came into being. In contrast to the inferior schools provided for the indigenous population, those catering to the Whites were very good—on a par with schools found in Europe.

Surging Expectations

During the decades immediately following the Second World War, there was pressure in the international climate for weakened European powers to prepare their colonies for independence. In contrast to the motivations that the colonial powers may have had for education (as previously outlined), national leaders in the colonies as well as international aid providers and social scientists had other views on education. After the advent of theories such as human capital theory and development theory, education came to be seen not only as one (or the main) instrument for effecting economic growth and development, but as a panacea for every societal problem. In the context of newly independent African states, with borders arbitrarily drawn during the colonial era by European powers, education came to be seen as an instrument of moulding national unity, of producing a nascent civil service and of educating the populace to participate in the political process (Cowan, O’Connell & Scalon, 1965; Idenburg, 1975; Thompson, 1981). In 1960, on the eve of Africa’s independence, with an adult literacy rate of nine per cent and primary, secondary and tertiary enrolment ratios of 44 per cent, five per cent and one per cent respectively, the stage was set for a massive expansion of education.

THE EDUCATION DECLARATION OF ADDIS ABABA AND BEYOND

The majority of African countries gained independence circa 1960. Losing little time, the Ministers of Education of the 36 newly independent African countries met in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, from 15 to 25 May 1961, and drafted an Outline of a Plan...
for Educational Development in Africa (UNESCO, 1961). They stated the economic rationale for the immediate expansion of education in chapter two (dealing with economics and education), namely, that educational expansion would produce economic growth. Ambitious quantitative targets were set for the expansion of education: specifically, to achieve universal primary education, a 23 per cent secondary school enrolment ratio, and a two per cent tertiary education enrolment ratio, all by 1980 (UNESCO, 1961). A plea was also made that education be relevant to the current needs and situation in Africa. Curricula and textbooks were to be reformed to reflect the African environment and cultural heritage, and education had to be aligned to the economic needs of African countries. The objective was to provide more technical, vocational and agricultural education, and less academic content in education programmes. Attention was drawn to the fact that half of the teachers in Africa were unqualified, and therefore the expansion of teacher training had to be a priority.

The Addis Ababa conference was followed by conferences of the Ministers of Education of African States (MINEDAF) at regular intervals:

- MINEDAF II: Abidjan, Côte d’Ivoire, 17–24 March 1964;
- MINEDAF IV: Lagos, Nigeria, 27 January - 4 February 1976;
- MINEDAF V: Harare, Zimbabwe, 28 June - 3 July 1982;
- MINEDAF VI: Dakar, Senegal, 2–6 July 1991;
- MINEDAF VII: Durban, South Africa, 20–24 April 1998;

The main themes of the Addis Ababa conference were repeated at the subsequent meetings: the expansion of education provision and enrolments, adult literacy, Africanization of curricula, increasing teacher training capacity, and linking education with the economy and job market. Other themes were added in the course of time. At the Nairobi conference (Anonymous, 1969) and thereafter, the need to replace ex-colonial languages with indigenous languages as the medium of instruction was mooted. At the Lagos conference, colonial examination systems were criticized (UNESCO, 1977). The objection was that the inherited examination systems tended to test whether or not students were ready to proceed to the next level of education, rather than assessing the abilities of students to use their abilities to serve their communities. From the 1991 Dakar conference onwards, the deterioration of educational quality attracted attention. The economic decline of Africa in the 1980s and eventual cuts in governmental spending, forced by structural adjustment agreements signed with the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank by the late 1980s, necessarily led to drastic curtailments in educational spending. Coupled with a persistent enrolment explosion, a decline in educational quality materialized. Addressing this decline in relation to the amount of public funds available for education, calls were made to enlist community participation in the building of schools.

In the wake of the worldwide surge of the concept and promotion of lifelong learning, and in particular the Hamburg Declaration and the Agenda for the Future adopted by the Fifth Conference on Adult Education held in Hamburg in 1997, lifelong education entered into discussions at the Durban and Dar es Salaam conferences.
THE POST-INDEPENDENCE PERIOD

The Addis Ababa Declaration was followed by massive efforts in educational expansion. Education became the single biggest item on the public budgets of African countries, regularly claiming a quarter of the national budget (Hawes & Coombe, 1984) and sometimes more. For example, 45.8 per cent of Côte d’Ivoire’s 1988 national budget was allocated to education. Between 1960 and 1968, educational expenditure in Africa doubled (Kareklas, 1980). Throughout Africa, many kinds of strategies and endeavours were undertaken to raise the educational standard of the people and to adapt education to the African reality. A detailed account of these efforts follows.

**Linear Expansion**

The first strategy followed by independent African countries was the linear expansion of existing, inherited education systems, in a process that Coombs (1985) called “more of the same” (p. 3). The resulting enrolment growth during the first two post-independence decades is presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Enrolment growth in Africa, 1960–1980 (numbers of students in thousands)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>1960</th>
<th>1970</th>
<th>1980</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>19,312</td>
<td>33,372</td>
<td>61,284</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>1,885</td>
<td>5,353</td>
<td>13,738</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


**Expanding the Provision of Education in Unconventional Ways**

Multiple-shift schooling was introduced in areas of high population density as a way to overcome the shortage of school buildings and of qualified teachers. On the other end of the spectrum, multi-grade schools (that is, one teacher responsible for teaching several grades in one classroom) were introduced in the low population density areas of the Sahel countries (such as Burkina Faso, Guinea, Mali, Togo and Mauritania). In efforts to supply education to nomadic communities, Somalia tried a short-lived experiment with mobile teaching units in the 1960s.

**Eradicating Adult Illiteracy**

Most African countries at the time of independence attempted to reduce the high levels of adult illiteracy prevalent in their countries by various means. Bhola (1990) describes three literacy approaches used by African governments: the project approach, the programme approach, and the campaign approach. The literacy project approach is the most conservative of the three. These projects are small in scale—for example, the integrated literacy project in Mali since the 1960s (Turritin, 1989).
The literacy programme is a nationwide approach under bureaucratic control; an example is the Botswana National Literacy Program launched by the Ministry of Non-Formal Education in 1980. The campaign approach is big in scale and involves high political fervour and popular mobilization. Examples of the campaign approach are the Somali urban and rural literacy campaigns (1973 and 1974, respectively). The most comprehensive adult literacy campaign in Africa was that of Tanzania in the 1970s (Nyerere, 1985). According to Arnove (1982), in the worldwide history of literacy campaigns, there are three that stand out as the most remarkable: Cuba in 1961, Nicaragua in 1980, and Tanzania in the 1970s.

**Distance Education**

Faced with a dearth of school buildings and qualified teachers, many African countries have looked to distance education projects to increase participation in education. The financial constraints since the 1980s have given further reason to expand distance education.

**Africanization of Curricula**

Post-independence education reform in Africa has been characterized by attempts to change curricular content to reflect the natural and cultural heritage, cultures, world-views, ideals, attitudes and values of the erstwhile colonial powers to those of Africa (Merryfield & Tlou, 1995). Despite these efforts, schools in Sub-Saharan Africa still quite visibly carry the mark of their European origins as far as organization, curricula, textbooks, language of instruction and examinations are concerned. Rayfield (1994) writes of a case in Francophone West Africa, where a 1940s textbook, with few changes, was still being used in the 1980s. In Côte d’Ivoire since independence, three major attempts failed to dismantle the French-modelled education system (Assié-Lumumba & Lumumba-Kasongo, 1991). When a South African author writing on education in Côte d’Ivoire approached the cultural attaché of Côte d’Ivoire in Pretoria for information, the author was met with the answer, “notre système éducatif est exactement comme celui de la France” [“our education system is exactly like that of France”] (Wolhuter, 2000, p. 163).

**Developing Indigenous African Languages as the Media of Teaching**

At the 1964 Abidjan conference, the sentiment was still in favour of retaining the ex-colonial languages as the media of instruction in schools. However, in an about-turn at the 1968 Nairobi conference, calls were made for the replacement of ex-colonial languages with indigenous African languages (Anonymous, 1969). At the 1976 Lagos conference, these calls rose to passionate pleas. Apart from a few limited cases, the situation in Sub-Saharan Africa has remained unchanged: at some level in the primary school cycle, vernaculars are replaced by the ex-colonial language as the medium of instruction. In Anglophone Africa, 20–25 per cent of the adult population are proficient in English. Similarly, 10–15 per cent of the
adult population of Francophone Africa are proficient in French, and five per cent of adults in Lusophone Africa are proficient in Portuguese. On the other hand, it is accepted that a primary school pupil requires a vocabulary of at least 3,000 words in a given language to benefit from education offered through the medium of that language. Considering these factors together, the damaging effect of a continual employment of the ex-colonial language as a medium of instruction in schools can be appreciated (see Rubagumya, 1991, in the case of Tanzania).

Examination Reforms

At the Lagos conference examination systems were criticized as testing readiness for subsequent levels of schooling, rather than assessing the ability of the student to use his/her qualities in the service of the community to which he/she belonged. A related frequent criticism is that examinations tend to measure the ability of students to recall facts, with little attention given to higher order cognitive skills (Bray, Clarke & Stephens, 1986; Kellaghan & Greaney, 1992; Roy-Campbell, 1992). This process encourages rote memorization, rather than comprehension, information gathering and discovery learning (Frencken, 1988; Welle-Strand, 1996). Two countries in Africa that undertook reform initiatives to address these problems were Kenya and South Africa. Kenya reformed its primary school termination examinations in the mid-1970s. The examinations were revised to include a much broader spectrum of cognitive skills, as well as skills that could be applied in a wider range of contexts in and out of school (Kellaghan & Greaney, 1992; World Bank, 1988). The post-1994 South African government addressed this issue by changing its education system from a content-based system to an outcomes-based education system (Wohluter, 1999).

Aligning Education with the World of Work

Most African states have attempted to link the world of school with the world of work. Four major strategies have been used. First, most states introduced vocational subjects into the curriculum. Second, another type of initiative was the introduction of polytechnical education (whereby pupils spent part of the school day on farms or in workshops), as exemplified in Mali in 1962 or, on a more limited scale, the Business Education Partnership Agency in Zimbabwe (BEPAZ) project. Third, a more extreme form was the transforming of schools into production units, such as in Benin in 1971, the Education for Self-Reliance of Tanzania in 1967 (Roy-Campbell, 1992), or the Brigades, a private initiative in Botswana. Fourth, National Youth Community Service Schemes were introduced in countries such as Botswana, Ethiopia, Ghana, Malawi, and Nigeria. It should be added that these initiatives generally were not very successful and that the governments found many of them impossible to implement (for reasons, see Durt, 1992). A notable exception is the Brigades in Botswana, which has been hailed an unqualified success.
Teacher Training

Throughout this period of expansion, conventional teacher training institutions could not supply the quantity of trained teachers required by swelling enrolments fast enough, nor could they accommodate the training of the huge percentage of unqualified teachers inherited at independence. In order to address these problems, some ingenious methods of teacher training have been devised, two of which have attracted much attention and praise from comparative educationists. The first initiative was that of Tanzania which, in 1974, set for itself the aim of universal primary school enrolment within three years (Coombs, 1985; Nyerere, 1985; World Bank, 1988). The biggest obstacle to reaching this goal was the shortage of trained teachers. The conventional mode of training (a three-year full-time teacher training college course for secondary school graduates) would have been too time-consuming. It was then decided to train primary school graduates as primary school teachers, using an initial six week residential course followed by a combination of supervised (by qualified teachers) primary school teaching, a correspondence-cum-radio course, and a final examination after three years. Zimbabwe’s Integrated National Teacher Education (ZINTEC) scheme, a slight variation on the Tanzanian model (Dzvimbo, 1992) likewise was widely lauded by comparativists (Bray Clarke, & Stephens, 1986; Lockheed et al., 1991). Other countries that use modes of distance education for teacher training include Kenya, Lesotho, Nigeria, Swaziland and Zambia. Nigeria has established a Mobile Teachers Training Unit.

Community Initiatives

A community school is a community based, owned, financed, and managed learning institution that meets the basic/primary education needs of students who, for various reasons, cannot enter government schools (Muyeba, 2007). An early example of community schools in Africa was the Harambee school movement in Kenya. Following a call by Kenyatta shortly after independence, community members built hundreds of Harambee or self-help schools. These schools serve more than half of Kenya’s secondary school population (Mwiria, 1990). At the 1964 Abidjan conference, delegates from Rwanda and Sudan reported that self-help schemes for setting up schools functioned in their countries. Community initiatives have contributed significantly to the expansion of education in other countries, such as Botswana, Ghana, Guinea-Bissau, Malawi, Mali, Nigeria, Swaziland, Tanzania, Zambia, and Zimbabwe.

Lifelong Education

Lifelong education was discussed at the MINEDAF conferences held in Durban (UNESCO, 1998) and Dar es Salaam (UNESCO, 2002); however, no significant initiatives have been taken up to now.
Desegregation of School

In African countries with significant numbers of inhabitants of European descent, such as Kenya, Namibia, South Africa, Tanzania, and Zimbabwe, pre-independence racially segregated school systems were desegregated after independence in the interest of equity considerations (the “White schools” were invariably better endowed, equipped and staffed than the “Black schools”) (Atkinson, 1982; Wolhuter, 2005).

ANALYSIS AND EVALUATION OF PROGRESS

Quantitative Progress

Adult literacy. In 1960, the adult literacy rate in Africa was nine per cent. Likewise, this figure for Sub-Saharan Africa was nine per cent. Aggregate figures on Africa’s progress with the alphabetization of its adult population are not readily available, especially for the period since 1980. As far as Sub-Saharan Africa is concerned, while the percentage of illiterate adults is constantly declining, projections indicate that, even by 2015, universal adult literacy will still be a distant ideal. In 2000, adult literacy rates varied from 85.2 per cent in the case of South Africa to 16.0 per cent in Niger (UNESCO, 2003, p. 310). In six Sub-Saharan countries, adult literacy rates are below 40 per cent (UNESCO, 2002).

School enrolments. During the 1970s and 1980s, Sub-Saharan Africa was hit by a series of economic crises: the first oil crisis of 1973, the ensuing global recession, and the second oil crisis of 1979. Africa’s total (foreign) debt rose from US$ 14 billion in 1973 to US$ 125 billion in 1987 (Kennedy, 1993). By the mid-1980s, payments on loans consumed about half of Africa’s export earnings. The causes of Africa’s economic decline since the 1970s, besides those enumerated above, were as follows: rising foreign debt, poor governance (e.g. political instability and governments being hostile to the business community), the population explosion, environmental degradation and the consequential deterioration of agriculture (Africa South of the Sahara 1997, 1997, p. 15).

With the Third World becoming increasingly more indebted, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank gradually evolved as the lenders of last resort for the Third World, arranging to reschedule debts and make structural adjustment loans conditional upon the adoption of a standardized range of policies. These policies encompassed the reduction of governmental expenditure, the privatization of state corporations, the liberalization of the economy, the encouragement of the private sector, the controlling of the money supply to contain inflation, and currency devaluation. The latter redresses the balance of payments to make imports more expensive and exports cheaper, thus at the same time stimulating exports and domestic industry for import substitution. On the basis of the belief that the growth of state bureaucracy has led to corruption, waste and inefficiency, the IMF and World Bank require debtor countries to reduce the role and staffing of the state. By 1988, over 28 African countries had embarked upon such structural adjustment programmes.
The above depicted economic predicament meant less money for education as debt in Sub-Saharan Africa rose. In Sub-Saharan Africa, public spending on education (in 1983 US$ terms) rose from US$ 3.8 billion in 1970 to US$ 10 billion in 1980, only to decrease to US$ 8.9 billion in 1983 (World Bank, 1988). Under these circumstances, the enrolment boom in the early years of independence could not be sustained. As stated above, at independence in 1960, the gross primary education enrolment ratio in Africa stood at 44 per cent. For Sub-Saharan Africa, the figure came to a paltry 36 per cent. The gross primary education enrolment ratio surged from 36 per cent in 1960, to 53 per cent in 1970, to a peak of 80 per cent in 1980, whence it declined year after year to a low of 73 per cent in 1982. After 1993, it rose year after year, to reach 82 per cent in 2000. The 2000 gross enrolment ratio was below 50 per cent in two countries: 36 per cent in Niger and 44 per cent in Burkina Faso. In Equatorial Guinea, it was less than 60 per cent.

As previously stated, Africa’s gross secondary school enrolment ratio stood at 5 per cent in 1960. In 1970, the aggregate gross secondary school enrolment ratio for Sub-Saharan Africa grew to 7 per cent, whence it more than doubled in the next decade, reaching 18 per cent in 1970 (UNESCO, 1999, pp. 11–19). In the 1980s, amidst the economic decline, the rate of increase decelerated, and in 1990 the figure was 22 per cent (UNESCO, 2003).

Tertiary enrolments have also grown miraculously. From 1960 to 1970 to 1980, higher education enrolment numbers in Africa increased from 22 million to 39 million to 76 million, respectively (Coombs, 1985).

Quality and Equity

“Quality” of education is a concept that defies a short and simple definition. A more meaningful exercise is to enumerate the components of quality. Bergmann (1996) identifies four components of quality in education: (a) input quality (human resources, material resources), (b) time-process quality (teaching-learning interactions in classrooms), (c) curricula-output quality (student achievement) and (d) value quality (the degree to which the objectives and output of an education system correspond to the value system of society).

Given the poverty in most African societies, it is not surprising that all indicators point to an alarmingly low and probably declining quality of education in Africa. These materially poor governments find themselves in the vice between the economic squeeze since the early 1970s on the one hand and, on the other, rapid population growth and pressures of educational expansion.

The picture still does not look good for input quality, such as human resources, in spite of the tremendous efforts made to increase teacher training, as discussed above. Training levels required of teachers are low. Only Namibia, South Africa and Zimbabwe require teachers to have university degrees (Smith & Motivans, 2007)—a common requirement not only in developed countries, but also in many developing countries in other parts of the world. Moreover, large percentages of teachers do not meet the already low minimum training levels. For example, Congo and Mozambique require a training level equal to lower secondary school completion.
for primary school teachers, yet only 57 per cent and 60 per cent respectively of primary school teachers in these two countries meet those requirements (Smith & Motivans, 2007).

The universal dimensions of educational inequality—gender, socio-economic origin, rural-urban and regional (especially the core-periphery gradient) (Wolhuter, 1993)—are all present in Africa, and steeply so. Surveying university enrolments in Sub-Saharan Africa, Teferra (2006) writes that “major enrolment disparities by gender, economic status, regional setting (rural-urban), ethnicity and race abound” (p. 558). In studying the results of grade six reading tests from 14 Southern and Eastern African countries, Zhang (2007) found that on a standardized score scale (mean = 500; standard deviation = 100), the average difference in the 14 countries between rural and urban students was 50 points.

**External Objectives**

Published research on the attainment of nation building and other political goals by post-independent African education does not exist. It is, however, cause for concern that the first 50 years of independent Africa was characterized by severe socio-political turmoil (Meredith, 2005).

Likewise, research measuring the relation between education and economic growth in Africa does not exist. However, one glaring inconsistency is evident. During periods of the biggest educational expansion such as in the 1970s, the economies of most African countries faltered. In times when policies of economic austerity dictated the curtailment of educational expansion such as since the early 1990s, the economies of most African countries registered some of their most spectacular growth figures. In the 1990s, the average annual growth of the gross domestic product of Sub-Saharan Africa was 2.5 per cent, while for the period 2000–2003 the average annual growth of gross domestic product was 3.9 per cent (World Bank, 2006).

**PROGRESS, PROBLEMS AND PROSPECTS**

During the past fifty years, progress in the expansion of education in Africa was phenomenal. Nonetheless, great as the strides were, even basic education is still beyond the reach of many. Quality-wise, progress has not been as impressive; indeed there is cause for concern about low and declining quality.

Four obvious problems hamper educational progress in Africa: population growth, the economic crisis, socio-economic deprivation, and the AIDS pandemic. Despite a heartening decrease in recent years, the average population growth in Africa is still high. In Sub-Saharan Africa, the aggregate annual population growth rate stands at 2.5 per cent—the highest of all world regions (World Bank, 2004). The effect of the economic crisis—structural adjustment agreements translated into less state expenditure and therefore less money for education—has been explained above. Africa is a poverty-stricken continent. Many children live in conditions of extreme socio-economic deprivation, which negatively affects their ability to perform well in schools, and which in many cases may even prevent them from
enrolling in educational institutions. Africa is also the continent with the highest incidence of HIV/AIDS in the world. In Botswana, the country with the highest infection rate in the world, 38.8 per cent of adults are infected with AIDS (UNESCO, 2003).

The present decline in population growth rates, combined with impressive economic growth rates in recent years, creates a context wherein ever more available resources can be allocated to improve education systems which in turn will be better able to accommodate swelling population numbers.

Such efforts to improve education in Africa will come to their best fruition when guided and underpinned by research. The excellent pockets of indigenous research on education in Africa should be supported, strengthened and expanded. Then the work of David Wilson in Africa which culminated in strengthening the Comparative Education research capacity in Africa—the incorporation of the Southern African Comparative and History of Education Society (SACHES) into the World Council of Comparative Education Societies (WCCES) in 1994, and the hosting of the Tenth World Congress of Comparative Education Societies in Cape Town, South Africa, in 1998, when Wilson was WCCES president—would form an enduring basis for the continual advancement of education in Africa.

REFERENCES


---

**Prof. C. C. Wolhuter**  
North-West University  
Potchefstroom Campus

**Dr. M. Petronella Van Niekerk**  
School of Education  
University of South Africa
KINGSLEY BANYA

2. REFLECTING ON POLYTECHNICs IN POST-CONFLICT SIERRA LEONE

David Wilson spent most of his early professional career promoting educational planning and vocational education in several countries in sub-Saharan Africa. It is thus appropriate, as a tribute to David’s foresight in this area, to analyze a recent decision by the post-conflict government of Sierra Leone to upgrade teacher training institutions to polytechnics. During the 1990s, Sierra Leone experienced a vicious rebel war that practically destroyed most social structures, including education. Throughout this time, with an economy on “life support” from donor agencies and governments and with millions of internally displaced citizens, as well as thousands who fled to every part of the world, the country barely functioned as a nation. The advent of sustainable peace in 2001 brought in a stable, elected civilian government that sought to rehabilitate and change all social sectors of the country. This paper examines the government’s efforts to improve the education system with particular reference to polytechnic education.

This discussion is divided into four parts: a brief history of vocational education in Africa; an account of the establishment of polytechnics in Sierra Leone; an assessment of the current situation; and recommendations for the future of these polytechnics.

HISTORY OF VOCATIONAL EDUCATION IN AFRICA

Various commissions on the establishment of higher education in the twelve states which were formerly British colonies in Africa have made attempts to include vocational education as part of the curricula. While both the Elliot and the Asquith commissions, formed in 1943 with reports completed in 1945, were concerned with creating universities overseas, the Elliot Commission also recommended that three technical institutions be set up in West Africa (Ashby, 1996; Banya & Elu, 1997; Sherman, 1990). The Elliot Commission’s report included a passage succinctly introducing the issues of vocational education on the continent.

Each institution should at least be partly residential, since many of the students will come from a distance; and library and recreational facilities should be provided. Technical, commercial, and perhaps art courses should be as broad as possible. It is essential for the educational basis of the institutions that close contact should be established and maintained with the subsequent employers of the students, and that representatives of the technical department of the government and of private enterprise in commerce and industry, and of workers’ organizations, should be closely associated with the management of the institutions. (Pedler, 1992, p. 266)
Despite such recommendations, there have been numerous expressions of regret that the universities have been insufficiently integrated into the life of the communities in which they are situated (P’Bitek, 1973). The problem was that vocational education was always considered inferior to a university degree, and the reward system was skewed against its graduates. The link between the vocational schools and the universities in these countries was never strong. For example, for several years the doyen of the African university, Fourah Bay College in Sierra Leone, emphasized theology and the classical languages. It was much later that the university prepared students for the Durham Bachelor of Arts (Economics) degree. Like other universities of that time, Fourah Bay was affiliated with an English university, the University of Durham. The history and evolution of Fourah Bay College as the first British university on the continent has been widely written about (Banya & Elu, 1997; Harris & Sawyerr, 1968; Sumner, 1960). Except for those specifically established to train vocational experts (for example, Achimota in the Gold Coast-Ghana, 1931; The University College at Makerere in Uganda, 1939; Yaba in Nigeria, 1930; and the Nigerian College of Arts, Science and Technology, 1949), universities provided degree courses in the arts subjects: language, literature, music, history, economics, and sociology. These were subjects often unrelated to the lives of the bulk of the population in the country. It should be noted that secondary school education was a prerequisite for technical and commercial courses. At that time, there were very few people so qualified as secondary schools were scarce. Thus, recruitment for vocational education came from the same secondary school source as the universities, a circumstance that had a profound effect on the future development of technical education.

In English-speaking Africa between 1955 and 1962 all colleges of arts, science, and technology started to offer courses leading to university degrees. The colleges concentrated on degree courses to the exclusion, or near exclusion, of the teaching of technical skills which had been envisaged as their main business, directed towards the ancillary skills, such as plumbing, electrical skills, and the like. In some instances, there was not enough space to simultaneously teach university level courses and technical skills at the same institution, nor enough qualified staff (Senior Lecturer at Freetown Teachers College, personal communication, December 7, 2005). Moreover, there were never enough students with the educational prerequisites to fill courses of both kinds. For reasons of prestige, career opportunities, as well as salary considerations, most students wanted to get a university degree. The fact that technical schools were considered “second tier”/periphery institutions, and that on the eve of independence no influential political leader had such a background, rapidly led to their demise.

The issue was whether a university is the best place to teach students ancillary skills. While it was generally agreed that there had been over-investment in university development while technical-professional training had been neglected comparatively to other fields, there was no agreement on the best remedy. Some believed that training technicians within the university environment would increase their prestige and might in consequence increase the flow of trainees at a level vital to the economy (Harris & Sawyerr, 1968). Others considered that the best university
contribution might be the encouragement of, and cooperation with, existing technical institutions, to work collaboratively on mutual issues such as staff training and student qualifications (Head of Technical Education at the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, personal communication, December 20, 2005). In the end, a binary system of tertiary education became the norm in sub-Saharan Africa as all the technical institutions became the nuclei of new universities.

THE ESTABLISHMENT OF POLYTECHNICS IN SIERRA LEONE

The term polytechnic comes from the Greek polú or polý, meaning “many”, and tekhnikós meaning “arts”. Prior to 1989–2001, and more so after the rebel war, the government of Sierra Leone realized that the education system inherited from past administrations was extremely inadequate to meet the needs of an emerging self-governing state requiring rapid economic expansion. A need was felt for an education system that would adapt and respond to the changing economic, scientific and technological environment. The changes brought about by globalization and by the liberalization of economies have also brought change in workplace dynamics. Accordingly, the needs of industry and employers are also changing. Like other parts of Africa, Sierra Leone hopes that these changes will improve its standard of living and enable much needed development. The government maintains that globalization and liberalization of markets and economies should benefit the poor as well as the rich. These forces should be better harnessed to help the poor and improve living standards of the less developed countries, with help from the more developed countries.

The new millennium is characterized by rapid technological and other changes that aim to improve the welfare of humanity. Technology all over the world has progressively become part of everyday life, being integrated in all areas of human activity, in homes, offices, and industry, urban as well as rural areas; for example, cell phones and money transfers are used in all parts of the developing world. Technical education unquestionably makes a contribution towards socio-economic development in developed and developing countries. It is recognized that sustainable development and economic growth cannot be achieved without mastery of technology.

However, the imbalances between the developed and developing world are still many. According to the United Nations Development Programme Report (2002), 20 per cent of poor countries worldwide, the majority of which are in Africa, share a miserable fraction of 1.1 per cent of the global income, which is inadequate to stimulate meaningful development. According to the same index, Sierra Leone was listed as second to last in terms of development (UNDP, 2006). The country’s gross domestic product (GDP) per capita was US$ 121. One of the many reasons given for the conflict in the country was the high level of poverty, with implications for rural-urban drift and youth unemployment. After the war (2001), the government understood education to be a major means to alleviate poverty. According to the Deputy Minister of the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (Ministry Official II, personal communication, December 18, 2005),
Professional and technical institutions can play an important role, direct and indirectly, in formulating and implementing viable poverty reduction strategies, and should become more closely involved. Vocational education should take on this strategy through acting as entrepreneurs in skills development helping to supplement the skills acquired by vocational education graduates in areas of specialization, empowering them to take on developmental projects, create jobs, and contribute to economic growth and development. The unemployment rate is already high and on the increase. The only sure way to be employed is through self-employment, a route adopted by many vocational education graduates with entrepreneurial skills.

According to the Deputy Chair at Bunumbu Polytechnic (personal communication, December 20, 2005),

One among many strategies which should be undertaken to contribute to sustainable development by some polytechnic institutions is to extend some of the technical students’ practical experience beyond workshops and industrial attachments to rural communities, where poverty levels are at the highest. This will provide help in the setting up of appropriate technologies to assist with such community services as sanitation, safe drinking water. In addition value is added to their agricultural products. It will also help to harness cheap sources of energy, set up cottage industries and small-scale enterprises, and construct low cost houses.

A persistent problem in Africa is that the rural poor, despite promises by governments to reverse the pro-urban migration, continue to bear major costs associated with poverty. The main economic activity of most African countries is agriculture. It is very difficult for a country to raise living standards and significantly reduce poverty on the basis of agricultural production alone, especially when it is predominantly for subsistence as it is in most of Africa. Due to the poor conditions of service and working conditions in schools for teachers, young qualified and trained teachers are always leaving the profession. There has been a low turnout of high quality primary and secondary school teachers. Currently, it is estimated that 65 per cent of teachers are untrained and unqualified. A gap exists in the teaching expertise in key subjects and skills needed to be taught in the 6-3-3-4 system; six years of primary, three years of junior secondary, three years of senior secondary, and four years of tertiary education. Consequently, there is an acute shortage of teachers of Sierra Leonean languages, French, and most of the technical and vocational subjects. Moreover, the infrastructure and equipment required to make the technical and vocational subjects practically oriented are not readily available (Deputy Minister of the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, personal communication, December 17, 2005).

Meanwhile, the effect of the rebel war continues to affect the education system because of the decade-long destruction and vandalism of several educational institutions. In addition, pressure continues to be put on “safe regions” such that the double shift continues to operate especially in western area schools.
Nevertheless, there is a growing awareness that education holds the key to overall national, social, economic, cultural and technological development. Sierra Leoneans are now more concerned about what happens in education. Almost all of the development sectors, including the political system, depend on the efficacy of the educational instruments for their effective growth and development. The Education Act of 2004 has made ample provisions for educational improvement which, if realized, will ensure a just, united and prosperous Sierra Leone.

As part of the educational reform movement, the Polytechnic Reform Act of 2001 called for the establishment of five polytechnic institutions to be located throughout the country with corresponding Polytechnic Councils to make provisions for the management and supervision of each institution. At present, three polytechnics have been established and are operational, integrating existing technical-vocational institutions for wider course options. The three institutions are The Milton Margai College of Education and Technology (MMCE), Eastern Polytechnic (EP), and Northern Polytechnic (NP). It should be noted that Freetown Teachers’ College and Port Loko Teachers’ College have not yet received polytechnic status. Their offerings are limited to Teacher Elementary Certificate (TEC) and Higher Teacher Certificate (HTC). According to the Polytechnics Act (Ministry of Education Science and Technology, 2001), the aims of the new institutions are

- to develop self-reliance and self-actualization in individuals as well as the progressive development of society and the economy of the country through technical and vocational training in all areas of urgent need especially the agricultural, industrial and commercial sectors. (p. 12)

The objectives of the Act (Ministry of Education Science and Technology, 2001) are

1. To fill the gap in technical and vocational manpower needs of Sierra Leone by substantially increasing the number of indigenous skilled lower middle level “blue collar” workers;
2. To produce a more literate, numerate and enterprising lower middle level technical and vocational workforce and thus speed up national development;
3. To encourage women and girls to participate in national development through the acquisition of technical and vocational skills;
4. To correct the present geographical imbalance in distribution of technical and vocational resources;
5. To develop appreciation and understanding of the increasing complexity of science and technology;
6. To create an enabling environment for the development of appropriate indigenous technology;
7. To provide training for technical and vocational instructors, teachers, and lecturers;
8. To develop an appreciation of cultural and aesthetic values in productive work. (p. 13)

A provision was made for the establishment of polytechnic councils which have control and supervision of the general policy and property of the polytechnic institutions. Each council consists of a chairperson and ten others appointed from
various parts of society, including the local area in which each institution is established. The objective of the council is “to administer the polytechnic institution as a teaching, learning and research institution” (Ministry of Education Science and Technology, 2001, p. 14). Responsibilities of the council are to

a) provide instruction in such branches of learning as it may think fit and make provision for research and for advancement and documentation of knowledge;

b) grant diplomas and certificates through the National Council of Technical, Vocational and other Academic Awards;

c) preserve academic freedom and prevent discrimination in teaching and research, in the admission of students and the appointment of staff;

d) preserve, enrich and contribute to the development of the cultural heritage, economy and welfare of the Republic of Sierra Leone in particular and humanity in general, holding out the benefits to all persons without discrimination;

e) establish principal lectureship, senior lectureship and any other such posts as it may approve;

f) establish administrative offices and posts as may be required by the polytechnic institution and appoint persons thereto;

g) cooperate with other polytechnic institutions or educational authorities on such matters and for such purposes as may be determined from time to time by the Council;

h) admit students for courses of study in the polytechnic institution;

i) provide for the printing and publication of research and other works which may be used by the students for courses of study in the polytechnic institution; and

j) act as trustee of any property, endowment or gift for the purposes of education or research or otherwise in the furtherance of the work or welfare of the polytechnic institution and invest any funds representing the same in accordance with the terms of this Act. (Ministry of Education Science and Technology, 2001, p. 18)

Provision was also made to establish an academic board with, among other responsibilities, the functions to

a) determine the minimum matriculation requirements for admission of students into various courses in the polytechnic institution;

b) present candidates for awards to the National Council for Technical, Vocational and other Academic Awards;

c) discuss any matter relating to the objects and powers of the council and to report its findings on the academic implications of such matters to the council;

d) determine what facilities and courses of study should be instituted and where they are to be located and make recommendations thereon to the council (p. 21).

A campus management committee was instituted with the following membership:

a) the Principal who shall be chairman,
b) the Dean of Campus,
c) the Registrar who shall be secretary,
d) the estate officer,
e) academic heads,
f) Deans of Faculties,
g) One student representative, and 
h) One senior staff representative. (Ministry of Education Science and Technology, 2001, p. 22)

Funding for polytechnics was to come from

a) monies appropriated by parliament for the purposes of the polytechnic institution;
b) fees charged for the services of the polytechnic institution, including tuition and examination fees;
c) gifts or donations from any person or organization, whether local or external; and
d) any monies otherwise accruing to the polytechnic institution in the course of its activities. (p. 22)

In summary, the main focus of the 2001 Polytechnics Act was to advance and promote the teaching of vocational skills by specifically addressing issues pertaining to the quality and improvement of technical education, equity, promotion of appropriate technology development and transfer, good governance through institutional leadership and management, capacity building including research and development, and sharing of information, experiences and views.

The next section reviews the successes and drawbacks to this “new” orientation.

PROGRESS ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE POLYTECHNICS

A word of caution is necessary. The reorganization and change of nomenclature of vocational institutions is only eight years old, too early to make a definite judgment on the polytechnics. However, a base-line has been established that requires assessment in order to further strengthen the polytechnics.

Polytechnics are seen as a source of national development and engines of economic growth. As noted by the Senior Education Officer, “the most developed nations of the world were those that used their human resources most efficiently and gave most financial support to vocationally oriented education” (personal communication, January 14, 2006). Such an education would adapt and respond to the changing economic, scientific, and technological environment.

To implement the various changes envisaged in the Vocational Education Act of 2001 and adapt to other educational changes, the government has progressively increased financial allocation to the education sector. Currently, 23 per cent of the national budget is allocated to the education sector, up from 18 per cent in 1996/1997. In the 1996/1997 academic year, the government grant to tertiary education was approximately USD$ 1.6 million. Of this, the University of Sierra Leone (USL) received 60 per cent; Milton Margai College of Education (MMCE) received
nine per cent, while the other five teachers colleges (Bo Teacher’s College, Freetown Teachers’ College, Makeni Teachers’ College, Bunumbu Teachers’ College and Port Loko Teachers’ College) received about six per cent each. Salaries and emoluments accounted for 66 per cent of that year’s actual expenditure on education (Ministry of Education, 2000).

More than 90 per cent of the funds for tertiary education come from the government. The rest comes from school fees and donations from donor agencies. The government also provides grants-in-aid and study leave with pay to students and teachers in tertiary level institutions. About 45 per cent of students in these institutions benefit from either the grants-in-aid or study leave or both. Teachers and other lecturers are also supported for further post-graduate studies to service the local polytechnic institutions (The polytechnic institutions are: Milton Margai College of Education (MMCE), Northern Polytechnic (NP), and Eastern Polytechnic (EP). Two Teachers’ Colleges—Freetown Teachers’ College (FTC) and Port Loko Teachers’ College (PLTC)—have not yet received polytechnic status.

Table 1 below shows government support for students over a period of eight years at various higher education institutions before the full implementation of the Polytechnics Act.

Table 1. Number of tertiary level award of government grants-in-aid per institution, 1997/98 to 2004/05

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MMCE</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>114</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>168</td>
<td>175</td>
<td>183</td>
<td>183</td>
<td>557</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FTC</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>310</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PLTC</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>136</td>
<td>139</td>
<td>139</td>
<td>392</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MTC</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>158</td>
<td>162</td>
<td>162</td>
<td>294</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BuTC</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>106</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>149</td>
<td>156</td>
<td>156</td>
<td>306</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BoTC</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>158</td>
<td>162</td>
<td>162</td>
<td>294</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FBC</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>224</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>357</td>
<td>370</td>
<td>397</td>
<td>397</td>
<td>594</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NUC</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>170</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>185</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>254</td>
<td>254</td>
<td>502</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COMAHS</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IPAM</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>112</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Law</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>829</td>
<td>1267</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1,486</td>
<td>1,598</td>
<td>1,736</td>
<td>1,736</td>
<td>3,509</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* MMCE = Milton Margai College of Education; FTC = Freetown Teachers’ College; PLTC = Port Loko Teachers’ College; MTC = Makeni Teachers’ College; BuTC = Bunumbu Teachers’ College; BoTC = Bo Teachers’ College; FBC = Fourah Bay College; NUC = Njala University College; COMAHS = College of Medicine and Applied Health Sciences; IPAM = Institute of Public Administration and Management.

Makeni Teachers’ College is now Northern Polytechnic; Bunumbu Teachers’ College is now Eastern Polytechnic.

** During the year 2000 the rebels entered Freetown, the capital, and the government went into exile.

As a result of generous government financial support, 3,003 students are enrolled at the University of Sierra Leone, and an estimated 10,000 students are currently enrolled at the ten technical and vocational institutions. These numbers are, however, low for a country with a population of 5.4 million (Sierra Leone Higher Education Profile, UNESCO 2007).

The government has solicited external resources and expatriate services for the education sector. For example, in 2002, the government allocated US $9 million to be expended on various programmes and activities by the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology. This amount was 25 per cent of the total Highly Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) funds available to Sierra Leone. This funding was used to rehabilitate/reconstruct 83 institutions from primary, secondary and technical-vocational, two teachers’ colleges, and five district inspectorate offices. A total of 5,500 sets of school furniture and beds were supplied to schools. The Ministry, in collaboration with UNICEF, Plan Sierra Leone, the Norwegian Refugee Council, and a host of other organizations undertakes various programmes in the development of education in Sierra Leone. For example, the African Development Bank assisted in procuring science equipment, materials and chemicals and technical/vocation subject equipment for schools and in rehabilitating school laboratories. UNICEF is implementing the three-year Non-Formal Primary Education Program (NFPEP) and the Complementary Rapid Education Programme Schemes (CREPS). UNESCO supported the development of a national science and technology policy in Sierra Leone, while the United Kingdom-based NGO project known as Knowledge Aid Sierra Leone has introduced Internet service to schools and colleges in the country (Ministry of Education, Government of Sierra Leone, Annual Science and Technology Report, 2003, p. 53).

Despite the above mentioned financial and organizational efforts, there are serious drawbacks to the full implementation of the Polytechnics Act of 2001. Some of the difficulties are highlighted below.

**Lack of Fundamental Changes**

The 2001 Act is simply a result of efforts to upgrade vocational education from the original and historical role as intermediate technical education and teacher training institutions to polytechnics. It seems that the polytechnics have emerged solely through an administrative change of statutes, including a name change; for example, Bunumbu Teachers’ College has become Eastern Polytechnic, and Makeni Teacher’s College is now Northern Polytechnic. The cachet of a degree in technical studies does not necessarily make them quality academic studies. There is still a lack of specialized intermediate technical professionals which results in the shortage of skilled workers in many fields. Evidence has also shown a decline in the general quality of teaching and graduates’ preparation for the workplace because of the fast-paced conversion of technical institutions to more advanced higher level institutions (Senior Education Officer, Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, personal communication, January 14, 2006). The upgrading of the teaching staff has been slow and spasmodic. Many of the lecturers have only bachelor degrees...
and only a handful have Master’s or doctoral degrees. The teaching staff must endure poor working conditions and earn lower salaries than their university counterparts. Furthermore, although the polytechnics are set up to attract students into vocational careers, student demand and lack of appropriate equipment have pushed the polytechnics toward teaching the social sciences and humanities, resulting in graduates who still seek government employment. Few graduates of the polytechnics have established businesses of their own. The vast majority have become teachers who depend on the government for employment.

Funding

After 11 years of a particularly vicious war, the economic difficulties currently experienced by Sierra Leone inevitably lead to inadequate funding for polytechnics. Polytechnics are seriously and constantly under-funded when compared with the University of Sierra Leone. Operational costs of Polytechnics are expensive, especially considering the type of equipment and trained staff needed. Although the government secured initial funding to equip some of the institutions, providing funding for the continuous maintenance of the equipment is a real challenge. With a GDP of only US$ 121 million, the country depends heavily on outside donor agencies. This can sometimes lead to outsider priorities dictating educational policies, especially in the case of the polytechnics, where government efforts in the past were minimal at best. It should be pointed out that forces both within and outside the country undermine government efforts. For example, until 2007, the debt burden of the country amounted to five times the value of its annual exports (Ministry of Finance, 2005). The country was spending more on paying interest on its debts than on health, education and other social services combined. In addition, there is the problem of poor governance, sometimes associated with corruption which contributes to nepotism in appointments. Hence, there is poor implementation of well-intended ideas. Added to this mix are diseases that have become endemic, such as HIV/AIDS, malaria, and tuberculosis which negatively affect development efforts and worsen poverty. The total collapse of the country’s infrastructure during the war has added to the difficulties of implementing any radical changes in education.

Collaboration with Industries

Despite the provision of a governing council that allows for the membership of some industries, there is a general lack of active participation of industries. A high degree of employer participation is essential to the healthy functioning of a polytechnic. A substantial proportion of the governing body should be drawn from trade associations, nationalized corporations, and private companies. Such cooperation frequently leads to the provision of courses that are custom-built by the polytechnic for local industries and services, both private and public. The most successful polytechnics and technical institutes are those which completely integrate with local industry. Rather than a student who attends full-time on a student grant,
REFLECTING ON POLYTECHNICS IN POST-CONFLICT

the ideal student would be one who comes on day-release or block-release, or for
sandwich courses, and who is supported by wages paid by an employer on
standard rates. Thus, job insecurity would be eliminated. Sadly, there are hardly
any private sector industries or enterprises that can employ many of the graduates
of polytechnic institutions. Unemployment, especially among the youth, continues
to skyrocket.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE FUTURE

Emphasis on Rural Enterprise

It is generally recognized that for development to occur, the country’s higher
education institutions should devote more effective attention to the problems of
rural areas. Although the University of Sierra Leone constituent College at Njala
has developed facilities for agriculture and veterinary science which provide for
students to learn skills relevant for the countryside, there is little complementary
development in the polytechnics. The five polytechnics are situated in “urban”
areas that have little or no connection with the rural areas where the bulk of the
population resides. For example, Bunumbu Teachers’ College used to be in a rural
part of eastern Sierra Leone; today, because of the war, it is still in Kenema, the
regional center of the east, away from its rural setting.

Close Collaboration between Schools and Polytechnics

There is a need for a high degree of cooperation between the polytechnics and
secondary schools. Polytechnics should provide technical teaching staff for secondary
schools. The incorporation of technical subjects in the secondary curriculum is
desirable even though it may be an expensive undertaking. Although technical
subjects are much more expensive to equip and staff than traditional school subjects,
in a technological age this may be a worthy expenditure. Similarly, it is reasonable
to suggest that polytechnics collaborate with the university, in a process where the
polytechnics provide subject-content courses for teachers while the university
provides pedagogical courses (World Bank, 2000).

Funding

The government should provide sufficient funding for the polytechnics with the
objective of ensuring educational quality. It should also ensure that any cost-saving
income generated by the institutions is retained as a supplement, not a substitute, to
public spending. In this regard, both local and international funding agencies must
be encouraged to play an important role in the revitalization of the polytechnics
and bring dynamism in technological initiatives and innovations. Their involvement
may lead to replacing obsolete equipment and technology and venturing into new
lines of creativity which rapidly enhance technology, productivity and prosperity.
The previous experience of constant government intervention must be curtailed.
The government’s role should be strictly limited to oversight responsibilities. Polytechnic councils must be given the power and authority to be autonomous in management and in taking initiatives. The councils must be continuously encouraged to set annual performance goals that are measurable and to publicly report their achievements and maintain transparency.

**Staffing**

As noted, the bulk of the faculty and staff at the polytechnics were originally employed because of their pedagogical skills and training. With a new disposition, there is a need to upgrade their knowledge base in order to effectively carry out their new mandate. Unfortunately, the knowledge and skills that are needed are not locally available, as the University of Sierra Leone is not equipped to undertake such an enterprise. The only alternative is an overseas training course provided by an institution situated either in another African country or outside of the continent. Whatever the case, it is an expensive proposition and one for which the government does not have funds. By necessity, the government will have to rely on donor agencies or other governments to train the staff. This dependence on outside agencies makes it extremely difficult to predict whether such training will ever occur, given the size of both the teaching and administrative staff.

**CONCLUSION**

Despite the terrible upheaval that Sierra Leone experienced for over ten years, the government has embarked on an ambitious programme to rehabilitate the education system, hence the economy. To bring the country into the technological age and help speed up development, the 2001 Polytechnics Act was passed. The implementation of the Act has been fraught with difficulties, partly because of the poor state of the economy and partly because of the lack of skilled human resources to teach many of the necessary technical skills. While the government should be commended for its forward thinking, the realities are that many of the ambitious programmes cannot be implemented in the current economic situation. Heavy dependence on donor agencies will not be enough to sustain the long-term development of the country. A reorientation by the polytechnics toward rural development should help in sustainable growth. Unfortunately, the current efforts as seen by the implementation of the Polytechnics Act of 2001 are rather inadequate due to various reasons outlined above. However, innovation and change in tertiary education in Sierra Leone are inevitable for institutional renewal and transformation, as well as nation building. There is a great awareness in the country that all the development sectors, including the social, economic, cultural and technological sectors, as well as the political system depend on the efficacy of the education system. The polytechnics are one such instrument for effective growth and development, an idea that David espoused throughout his life’s work in developing countries.
REFERENCES


Kingsley Banya
College of Education
*Florida International University*