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Review

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The Professional Teacher Educator—Roles, Behaviour and Professional Development of Teacher Educators by Mieke Lunenberg, Jurrien Dengerink, and Fred Korthhagen. Rotterdam: Sense Publishers, 2014. 166 pp. \$99.00. ISBN 9789462095175.

The main part of this book is in essence a review of published literature on the topic of teacher educators. The final part of the book discusses the topic in particular relation to the Netherlands, drawing on research studies carried out by the authors and some of their colleagues. In this review, I will discuss these two elements in turn.

Some years ago, working with colleagues across the United Kingdom in a research group known as TEG—the Teacher Education Group—we reviewed published literature in UK teacher education research.³ One of our major conclusions was that there was a great paucity of work that actually looked at teacher educators themselves, who they are, what kinds of skills they may have or may need, and how their professional identities develop. These are exactly the kinds of questions that this book now addresses so I believe this is a sorely needed contribution that I hope will inspire others to continue to research the field.

The authors initially identified a total of 1,260 items for review, using three search engines (perhaps raising questions for us in TEG as to whether the shortage of such work is a peculiarly British phenomenon). Short chapters then set out the purpose, conceptual framework, and methodology for the study. The method is clearly defined and draws on an eight-step approach developed by J. Randolph:⁴

1. Create an audit trail.
2. Define the focus of the review.
3. Search for relevant literature.
4. Classify the documents.
5. Create summary databases.
6. Identify constructs and hypothesized causal linkages.
7. Search for contrary findings and rival interpretations.
8. Use colleagues or informants to corroborate findings.

This is a suitably collaborative and rigorous procedure that enables us to have a good degree of confidence about the relevance and “authenticity” of the outcomes. It also makes an interesting comparison with the “best evidence synthesis” approach that a Glasgow-based team took in their review of teacher education literature for the Donaldson Report in Scotland. The initial 1,260 items were narrowed down using two simple criteria, one concerning where the piece was published, the other concerning the substantive focus of the article, to a total of 405 that were formally reviewed. Out of this review, 130 pieces fed into the eventual report because they

³ J. Murray, A. Campbell, I. Hextall, M. Hulme, M. Jones, P. Mahony, I. Menter, R. Procter, and K. Wall, “Research and Teacher Education in the UK: Building Capacity,” *Teaching and Teacher Education* 25, no. 7 (2009): 944–50.

⁴ See J. Randolph, “A Guide to Writing the Dissertation Literature Review,” *Practical Assessment, Research and Evaluation* 14 (2009): 1–13.

were found to be “useful in answering our leading questions.”⁵ The analysis of these 130 articles is presented in a table, which is a substantive appendix to the report, constituting 54 pages in total.

The analysis leads to the identification of six distinctive “characteristics” of the profession of teacher educator. These are:

- teacher of teachers;
- researcher;
- coach;
- curriculum developer;
- gatekeeper;
- broker.

What is clear from this work is why it is that for many teacher educators there are real challenges in establishing their professional identity and sense of professional direction. Some of these six roles are much better understood than others, and of course their relative significance may vary greatly, both according to the stage of a teacher educator’s career that has been reached and according to the context in which they are working. Furthermore, the increasing blurring of lines between school-based and university-based teacher educators that is happening in several countries at present (including parts of the United States and England) adds further to the complexity.

However, it is my view that this sixfold typology will make a very useful reference point for tracking some of these changes as they occur in various contexts over the years ahead. Again, in the English context at present, we do see great challenges to the notion of teacher educator as curriculum developer, although those of us of a certain age can remember when this was a key element in the work—indeed it was much more important than research! The typology also enables us to recognize and begin to understand the tensions experienced by many teacher educators—as revealed at teacher education conferences around the world on a regular basis. The global recognition of the importance of the quality of teaching and therefore of the significance of teacher education and further professional development have only exacerbated these tensions.

As we see in the final chapter of the book, the Netherlands is one setting where these matters have been taken seriously and there has been a considered response. The chapter draws on three projects carried out by the authors, giving an account of the creation of standards for teacher educators. There are two particular aspects that make this Dutch case so powerful, at least from the somewhat embattled perspective of a contemporary English teacher educator! First is the way in which these developments are being led from within the profession itself, rather than being imposed by ideologically driven politicians. Second is the way in which the developments are based on insights gained from research. We all have much to learn from the Dutch case, and this final chapter makes a useful “extra” to the volume.

⁵ See I. Menter, M. Hulme, D. Elliot, and J. Lewin, *Literature Review on Teacher Education in the 21st Century* (Edinburgh: Scottish Government, 2010), 12.

Because of concerns about the “deprofessionalization” of teacher education in England especially, the British Educational Research Association has recently undertaken an inquiry into the relationship between research and teacher education.⁶ One of the papers commissioned for this inquiry looks at research-informed clinical practice in initial teacher education and concludes that while such an approach cannot guarantee quality in its outcomes, it nevertheless provides a stronger basis than other approaches for maximizing the likelihood of creating highly skilled professionals.⁷ In the light of the final chapter of this book, it is unsurprising that the Netherlands is cited by Burn and Mutton as one system-wide approach of this kind.

To summarize then, this book provides two very useful perspectives—an international review of research work concerning the professional work of teacher educators and an account of how the support and development of teacher educators in one country has led to a mature discussion about the qualities, knowledge, and skills that are suited to contemporary “advanced” democratic societies. There are many other nations that could learn much from both sets of insights.

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Gendered Paradoxes: Educating Jordanian Women in Nation, Faith and Progress by Fida Adely. Chicago: University of Chicago Press: 2012. 228 pp. \$22.81 (paper). ISBN-13: 978-0-226-00691-8.

The gendered paradox that author Fida Adely addresses in her ethnographic case study, *Gendered Paradoxes: Educating Jordanian Women in Nation, Faith and Progress*, brilliantly challenges mainstream conceptualizations of development and progress for women in the Middle East. The impetus for the ethnography was based on the 2005 World Bank gender assessment report,⁸ which categorized the developmental progression of women in Jordan as paradoxical, “despite equal access to education for women at all levels, high rates of fertility persist, and female labor participation is relatively low” (11). Adely openly challenges the global narrative of education for development and women’s empowerment by highlighting the “unexpected ways in which education has transformed basic conceptualizations of successful personhood, morality and progress” (134).

Adely focuses her ethnographic observations on a group of young teenage girls from al-Khatwa Secondary School for Girls in Bawadi al Naseem who she describes

⁶ BERA/RSA, *Research and the Teaching Profession—Building the Capacity for a Self-Improving System*. Final report of the BERA-RSA Inquiry into the role of research in teacher education, 2014. Available at <http://www.bera.ac.uk>.

⁷ K. Burn and T. Mutton, “Review of ‘Research-Informed Clinical Practice’ in Initial Teacher Education.” Available at <http://www.bera.ac.uk>.

⁸ World Bank, *The Economic Advancement of Women in Jordan: A Country Gender Assessment* (Washington, DC: Social and Economic Development Group, Middle East and North Africa Region, World Bank: 2005).