CESHK Conference 2005

Abstracts of Opening Keynotes, Presentations, and Closing Plenary Session

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Opening Keynotes – 10.00-10.45 a.m.

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Comparing Values: Revisiting Methods and Approaches in Comparative Education

Prof. W.O. Lee
Head, Department of Educational Policy & Administration
Hong Kong Institute of Education
Former President of CESHK

Abstract
The field of comparative education experienced a peak of development in the first half of the 20th century, attracting significant attention from educationalists, researchers and policymakers. Major figures in the field such as Kandel, Bereday, King and Holmes were particularly known for their contributions to methodological discussions. The peak period was characterised by attempts to identify methodologies unique to comparative studies, and develop an academic identity in educational studies. With the growth of comparative elements in almost every aspect of educational studies, perhaps as a part of globalising trend, the relative significance of comparative education has been reduced, and the academic identity of comparative education has also been challenged. However, the new academic scenario has given rise to the significance of comparative education in a new format. While there may not be distinctive academics being regarded as "comparativists" comparable to Bereday and Kandel, with rise of international projects covering a wide spectrum of education, the number of comparativists has actually grown. All international projects have to make decisions on fundamental research questions, and whenever more than one country or education system is involved, questions related to what and how to compare arise. Indeed, the last few decades have witnessed a very rich discussion on comparative methodologies which may or may not refer to the conventional literature of comparative education, but they all have to arrive at certain parameters for the comparability of their studies. The growing significance of qualitative studies have also challenged and enriched the field of comparative education, as unlike conventional comparative studies which focused on the comparable, the rise of qualitative studies brings about the question of how to compare the non-comparable. This paper attempts to review recent discussions on comparative methodologies and approaches, using values studies as a context of discussion. There are two main reasons for choosing values studies as a context of discussion. First, this is an area in which the author has been involved for more than ten years. Second, this area always involves the development of scales and instruments which aim to compare the comparables and also qualitative studies which require the comparison of non-comparables.

Session 1A - Time: 11.00 – 12.30 p.m.

The Development of Hong Kong Student-teachers' Professional Beliefs
WONG Ping-ho, LAW Sin-yee, Angelina & YIP Sin-ching
The Hong Kong Institute of Education

Professionalism has been a focus of educational study in recent years, with researchers trying to find out if teachers demonstrate certain qualities, mainly external, of being a professional teacher. Instead of focusing on professionalism, this paper narrows its focus to the internal aspect of teacher professional development, examining the development of Hong Kong student-teachers' professional beliefs, about which the student-teachers hold strong opinion, and which affect their decision-making and are subject to change. This present paper is based on a pilot study involving a total of eight student-teachers. Qualitative research methods, including autobiographies and in-depth interviews, were used to conduct the research. This paper attempts to identify and describe the patterns of development of Hong Kong student-teachers' professional beliefs, to compare the differences between various patterns and to highlight some key factors influencing professional beliefs. Implications from the study would shed light on future research on the development of student-teachers' professional conviction.

Responding to Globalization: A Study of Teacher Decision-Making
Merry M. MERRYFIELD
The Hong Kong Institute of Education

Globalization is changing economic, political and environmental life on the planet. This study examined how teachers in United States are responding to globalization and its controversies. Over 250 social studies teachers in 17 states provided lesson plans and participated in online discussions of their instructional decision-making. Findings include insights into the contexts of teachers' thinking, their negotiation of curricular mandates and community norms, and the identification of four major methods employed in K-12 classrooms.

A Comparative Study of Profiles of Continuing Professional Development of School Principals in New South Wales, Australia and Hong Kong
Nicholas PANG
The Chinese University of Hong Kong

The recent implementation of school-based management both in New South Wales, Australia and Hong Kong has given principals more autonomy and flexibility in the deployment of resources, curriculum development, staff development and other professional managerial decisions, in return for greater accountability. The current education reform calls for changes in both teachers' teaching strategies and students' learning processes. The quality of school leadership is pivotal to bringing all these changes into reality. It is only through continuing professional development (CPD) that principals can strive to further enhance school leadership and professionalism.

However, there is limited information on the profiles of and perspectives on professional development of school leaders. This paper presents profiles of and perspectives on continuous professional development (CPD), including pre-service and in-service training programs for school

principals. This study was conducted in 2000-2003 among 103 Australian and 194 Hong Kong principals. Both quantitative and qualitative data were collected through empirical surveys, discussions and documentary analyses. The research findings show that both Australian and Hong Kong principals face similar challenges posed by ever-changing school environments and have quite similar perspectives on their CPD needs. Based on this study, implications for changes to university-level CPD programs and the selection and training of school principals both for Australia and Hong Kong are suggested.

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Session 1B - Time: 11.00 – 12.30 p.m.
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A Comparison of Socially Important Priorities of Top Research Universities in China and Russia

Andrey URODA, Oriental Institute, Far-Eastern State Technical University (FESTU), Russia
Roman LEVSHA, TSE Company, Zhejiang, China

This simple research is based on a series of seminars which took place in the FESTU with graduating students and lecturers in 2000 and 2003. A lot of empirical material on the development of national systems of education was summarized, taking into consideration a certain degree of presumable "similarity" between higher education reforms in Russia and China.

The group slightly modified Postiglione's (1998) "Table of Highest Priorities in Higher Education in the Future," considering some cultural differences, and ranked eight basic priorities connecting higher educational systems with national development. The results for Russia and China were compared for 2000, 2003, and currently summarized for the year 2004.

We found that such priorities as *"free intellectual inquiry"* and *"helping to solve basic social problems, and increasing quality of life"* were among the top ones both for China and Russia. Additionally *"educating for leadership"* was noted as important for the Russian system. Also, the role of human capital prevailed over technologies per se, and this means a rather clear understanding of the mission of higher education in both societies. Also, it is possible to conclude that China has reached the point of valuing education in the way it is in developed countries, and its priorities match worldwide trends. At the same time, Russian thinking has stagnated with technological and leadership priorities, rather weakly following globalization trends.

Isomorphism or Diversity?: The Case Of Zhejiang Shu Ren University

WANG Weiping
Hong Kong International School

My research on Zhejiang Shu Ren University, one of the most important private higher education institutions in China, indicates that Levy's theory of isomorphism is applicable to private higher education. Based on the work of DiMaggio and Powell, Levy (1999, p. 19) states that there are three kinds of isomorphism: coercive, mimetic, and normative. Coercive isomorphism is "largely imposed by actors or forces from outside the organization (university, college, etc.)." Mimetic isomorphism arises where higher education organizations, otherwise unclear about what to do, decide to copy organizations they regard as successful. Normative isomorphism arises where professionals (e.g., professors, administrators) or others feel clear about what to do but imitate because of their prior socialization and dominant norms. Shu Ren's consolidation is an example of isomorphism. Its consolidation with four public schools, following the momentous consolidation movement in public higher education, has revealed substantial state involvement. There is an obvious trace of mimetic isomorphism, with Chinese

private higher education copying the public sector. Shu Ren has retained some of its original uniqueness but bears isomorphic effects.

A Comparison of Library Instruction between Hong Kong and U.S. Academic Libraries
John HICKOK
California State University–Fullerton, USA

Each year, students from all parts of Asia—including Hong Kong—study abroad to the USA. While there, they encounter U.S. libraries and research expectations that might be different than what they are used to in their own country. This prompts several questions: what similarities and differences are there in library instruction (i.e. research training) offered in U.S. libraries compared to libraries in Asian countries? Do students learn library organization/classification the same? Are online & database search strategies taught similarly? How are research skills taught, comparatively? This presentation will discuss the presenter's research in this regard. Library instruction methods and programs at academic libraries—in both the U.S. and throughout Asia—are being chronicled and analyzed by the presenter. Trends, strategies, differences, and commonalities are all being evaluated. Preliminary results are already available between U.S. and Hong Kong libraries, and are quite illuminating. They show both similarities—such as training in online catalog searching—as well as differences, such as student research strategies. These results are exciting to discover, especially in light of increased resource sharing and electronic connections between U.S. and Asian libraries. This presentation will be of great interest to all educators concerned with student research skills.

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Session 1C - Time: 11.00 – 12.30 p.m.
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Comparing Places
Maria MANZON
The University of Hong Kong

This paper discusses theoretical and methodological issues in using geographic entities as the unit of analysis in comparative education research. Taking the Bray and Thomas cube (1995) as its starting point, the discussion will explore other units (such as cities and villages) which are not specifically identified in the cube. Some major journals in Comparative Education were examined for the period from 1996 to 2004 to select illustrative examples of studies that use places as units of comparison after the publication of the Bray and Thomas article in 1995. Aside from some English-medium journals, a Spanish and a Chinese journal were reviewed to enrich the discourse.

Development and Factors Influencing Educating Students with Disabilities
in Hong Kong and Mainland China
CHEN Shihui, Hong Kong Institute of Education, Hong Kong
ZHANG Jiabei, Western Michigan University, USA
JIN Mei, Tianjin Institute of Physical Education, China

The purpose of this study was to analyze the development of special education and the factors influencing the education of students with disabilities in Hong Kong (HK) and Mainland China. Results indicated that HK and mainland China are closely following the international trend to integrate students

with disabilities into regular school settings through whole school approach and inclusion. Meanwhile, the development of a separate special educational setting also continues to gain momentum to cater for students' special needs in separate settings, and the rate of this development is even faster and more important than the integration mode in both HK and mainland China. Results of this study indicate that while special education program in HK and mainland China are moving toward including students with disabilities into regular school settings, three modes of special education currently operating in HK are appropriate to meet parents' right to determine their children's education. The study argues that administrators must carefully select an appropriate mode based on their school's situations to educate students with disabilities in regular settings. For those schools that are currently promoting an integrated or inclusion program, the learning environment must be well prepared before including students with disabilities into the setting. Without well prepared support services students with disabilities will not benefit from these educational environments.

Assessment for Learning: The Consolidated Assessment Tips (CAT) Approach

Alexander Seeshing YEUNG & Elizabeth Shiu-Kwan POW
The Hong Kong Institute of Education

In an experiment, students in an associate degree program were divided into 3 groups each using a different approach to preparing for their assessments in a compulsory module of study (N = 73). Using a counter-balanced design, the students attempted a series of three short tests in the following modes: (a) in group 1, students took the test in a conventional way without any assistance, (b) in group 2, students were allowed to bring in any materials to refer to, and (c) in group 3, students were allowed to prepare an A4 size sheet on which they could write any consolidated assessment tips (CAT) to be used in answering the questions. In essence, the CAT was a cheat sheet that could assist students to retrieve information for answering the test questions. Analysis of variance results showed that apparently there was no significant difference among the three groups after the three test attempts ($\underline{M}$s = 3.66, 3.48, 3.73, respectively). However, those students who had made full use of the CAT performed significantly better in the CAT mode than in the other two modes ($\underline{M}$s = 3.65, 3.60, 4.28, respectively); whereas those who did not make use of the CAT did not do better than in the other modes (Ms = 3.68, 3.24, 2.66, respectively). In considering possible benefits of assessment for learning purposes, the use of CAT as a strategy to promote students' self-construction of knowledge may be useful but only when the students do make use of the strategy to gain good assessment results.

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Session 2A - Time: 2.00 – 3.30 p.m.
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Recent Developments in Chinese Citizenship Education Policy

Greg FAIRBROTHER
The University of Hong Kong

This presentation focuses on the development of Chinese citizenship education policy since the 1994 *Outline on the Implementation of Patriotic Education*. Over the last decade, several new policy documents on have been issued by various bodies of the central government, including the *Outline on Implementing the Construction of Civic Morality* (2001), the *Plan for Rectifying the Content of the Senior Secondary Ideology and Politics Curriculum* (2003), the *Opinion on Strengthening and Improving Moral Education Work in Schools* (2003), and the *Opinions on Further Strengthening and Improving the Construction of Ideology and Morals among Young People* (2004). The analysis of these

documents highlights the background and justifications for their issuance, changes in the social and political context as described in the texts, and adaptations in the terminology related to morals, patriotism, politics, and citizenship.

Understanding for Development, Understanding for Harmony: Education for International Understanding in Contemporary China

JIANG Kai

The University of Hong Kong

Since the open door policy initiated in China in the late 1970s, more and more Chinese people have paid attention to Education for International Understanding (EIU). Yet, the idea of education for international understanding is not merely an imported idea. The core values of Chinese culture and philosophy, such as "harmony" and "manner," coincide with its intrinsic spirit. In contemporary China, EIU exists not only in people's minds but is also a kind of practice. EIU practices are becoming much more abundant and diversified than ever before. EIU will become an integrated part of civic and moral education, as China seeks an appropriate balance between patriotic education and education for international understanding. In the global age, both the national identity and the world outlook of the new generation will be strengthened.

Student Attitudes to Minority Groups in Twenty Eight Countries: What Does it Mean to be Tolerant?

Kerry J KENNEDY

The Hong Kong Institute of Education

The world is now characterized by increasing levels of violence, conflict and war. Democratic nation-states have also looked inwards to increase their surveillance of citizens and non-citizens alike. Very often, particular groups in the community have been singled out for attention by authorities simply because of their ethnic or religious affiliation. Both national and global contexts, therefore, lead to a questioning of what it means to be tolerant in these new and uncertain times.

A secondary analysis of data from the IEA Civic Education was undertaken as one way to better understand how future citizens regard tolerance as a value. The focus was on student attitudes towards community groups—women, ethnic minorities, and immigrants, and anti-democratic groups (i.e. groups with an anti-democratic bias). In general, 90,000 students from twenty eight countries had positive attitudes towards women, ethnic minorities and immigrants but negative attitudes towards anti-democratic groups. There were also significant gender differences in student attitudes to women, ethnic minorities and immigrants, showing that girls were more tolerant than boys. While there were also gender differences in attitudes to anti-democratic groups they were in a different direction—boys were more tolerant of anti-democratic groups than girls.

This paper will discuss these results and their implications for the development of tolerant and just societies in these uncertain times.

Political Blogs as an Alternative Educational Tool in a Pluralistic Society: A Consideration for Malaysian Classrooms

Irene TAN, Michelle GUNASELAN, ONG Yi Khai, Sarah CHAN, Regina LEE

Taylor's College, Petaling Jaya, Malaysia

The rapid expansion of information technology has enabled information to permeate a borderless audience. Voluminous information is shared over continents within a very short period of time. Ideas and opinions about various issues are usually shared via the internet quite freely. The usage of web blogs as a source of information is increasingly on the rise. Blogging has become a very attractive and interactive way of providing news and comments about political issues to viewers. Many young Malaysians with access to the internet are seeking political information and sharing their views regarding the development of the nation through political blogs. Malaysian students are increasingly seeking to express their political opinions via blogs because political issues are seldom discussed in the Malaysian classrooms. This study attempts to discover from students and educators the value of political blogs as an alternative educational tool for Malaysian education.

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Session 2B - Time: 2.00 – 3.30 p.m.
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External Mobility and Social Class: Mainland Chinese Students in Hong Kong and Macau Universities

LI Mei
The University of Hong Kong

Since the beginning of China's reform and opening up in the late 1970s, the social class structure has changed dramatically. A strong middle class has emerged, while the working class has been further marginalized. Resources have been unevenly distributed among upper, middle, and lower classes during processes of privatization and marketization. Higher education in general, and external higher education in particular, play a crucial role in social stratification. External higher education has duality both as a means of fulfilling social class mobility and as a symbol of cultural capital in itself.

This paper examines the impact and role of higher education for students from mainland China in universities in Hong Kong and Macau. It shows how children of different social classes have chosen to come to institutions of different types. It takes data from two public universities in Hong Kong and from one public and one private university in Macau. The paper also compares postgraduate and undergraduate education, and presents data on different age groups and subject specializations.

Some mainland Chinese students in the two territories receive scholarships, but others pay full fees. Scholarship students typically come from a range of social classes, but fee–paying students are only from relatively prosperous classes. The analysis suggests that higher education in Hong Kong and Macau operates as a mechanism for increasing social stratification.

Knowledge building and sharing of e-learning resources in inter-school learning communities in Hong Kong: Methodological reflections on micro-studies in comparative education

Chris TAN, University of South Australia, Australia
Percy KWOK, Chinese University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong

This paper reports on Primary (Grade) 5 students' knowledge building and sharing of e-learning resources in a recent project, involving an inter-school learning community of four prestigious Roman Catholic primary schools in Hong Kong. By using an interactive web-based learning platform called Knowledge Community (KC) and adopting a learning communities approach of advancing both individual and communal knowledge through knowledge building discourse (Collins & Bielaczyc, 1997), the project helped gather groups of students from two of the four schools, forming 72 communities to generate thematic discussion on environmental protection over a period of 7 months.

Empirical data showed that students exercised higher-order thinking skills through interdisciplinary project learning in the Bloom taxonomy of new knowledge (7.77%), comprehension (30.68%), application (25.15%), analysis (9.08%), synthesis (3.52%) and evaluation (23.79%). As a whole, the project has exemplified an inter-school learning community model in East Asia, with stresses on e-leadership in schools' collaborative learning cultures, parental involvement in student learning, students' scaffold supports in computer-mediated communication environment and reflections on the methodological apparatus of micro-studies in comparative education.

Building Alliances: Schools, Parents and Communities in Hong Kong & Singapore
Maria MANZON
The University of Hong Kong

As policy transplantation is increasingly becoming a source of policy innovation in education, the importance given by Comparative Education to context acquires perennial relevance. This paper examines the policies on home-school-community partnership in Hong Kong and Singapore, and the local and global forces that have shaped them. It focuses on the work of two government advisory bodies established to spearhead partnership advocacy: the *Committee on Home-School Co-operation* (CHSC) in Hong Kong, and *Community and Parents in Support of Schools* (COMPASS) in Singapore. Employing a combination of Bereday's Comparative Method (1964) and Fägerlind and Saha's dialectical framework (1989), the study supports the Sadlerian precept that *the things outside the schools matter even more than the things inside schools, and govern and interpret the things inside* (1900, p. 310).

This study has been published in full by the Comparative Education Research Centre (2004) as *Building Alliances: Schools, Parents And Communities In Hong Kong & Singapore.*

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Session 2C - Time: 2.00 – 3.30 p.m.
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Closing Plenary Session
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**Perspectives on the History
of the Comparative Education Society of Hong Kong (CESHK)**

Book Project Roundtable

Mark BRAY, The University of Hong Kong
WONG Suk-Ying, Chinese University of Hong Kong
Greg FAIRBROTHER, The University of Hong Kong
Gerry POSTIGLIONE, The University of Hong Kong (?)

In a comparison of comparisons, a project is underway to chronicle the histories of member societies of the World Council of Comparative Education Societies (WCCES). As part of this project, this Roundtable has invited past and present leaders and members of the Comparative Education Society of Hong Kong (CESHK) to share their experiences and insights on questions of the organizational history of the society, characteristics of the society, and contributions of the society to the field of comparative education. Speakers will introduce the project and share their own reflections on CESHK's progress in order to facilitate active discussion from the floor. The interactive discussion will be an important input into the compiling of CESHK's history, and will itself provide insight into how the Society can serve better the needs of both professionals and academics in the field of comparative education in Hong Kong.