

**Atlantic Metropolis Centre ~ Working Paper Series
Centre Métropolis Atlantique ~ Série de documents de recherche**

**INTERNATIONALLY EDUCATED TEACHERS AND
TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAMS IN CANADA:
CURRENT PRACTICES**

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2008

**Working Paper No. 18/2-08
Série de documents de recherche 18/2-08**



**Centre Métropolis Atlantique
Atlantic Metropolis Centre**

The Atlantic Metropolis Centre's Working Papers Series
Série de documents de recherche du Centre Métropolis Atlantique

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Internationally Educated Teachers and Teacher Education Programs in Canada: Current Practices

Susan Walsh and Susan Brigham

Abstract/Résumé:

Keywords/Mots-clefs:

INTRODUCTION

Current Canadian demographics indicate an increasingly aged population and a low birth rate;

immigration is a crucial source of current and future population and economic growth. The influx of people from countries worldwide is a rich source of linguistic, religious, ethnic, racial, and cultural diversity, and also a challenge to Canada's claims of being a welcoming multicultural society. While the student population in Canadian schools is increasingly diverse,¹ particularly in large urban centres, the overall Canadian teaching profession is relatively homogeneous in terms of race (White) and class (middle class). A largely untapped source of 'diverse' teachers is people who have immigrated to Canada and who have teaching qualifications from their countries of origin. Professionals who have immigrated to Canada, including those who were teachers, are on average more highly educated and skilled than ever before. Many times, however, they encounter numerous challenges as they seek work in Canada commensurate with their qualifications.

This research report, *Internationally educated teachers and teacher education programs in Canada: Current practices*, is phase two of a three-part research project.² The main purpose of phase two is to document current practices in Canadian teacher education programs that are relevant to internationally educated teachers. A major aspect of this phase of the research was to distribute a questionnaire to the director/chair/dean of 41 teacher education programs across Canada. Of 41 questionnaires sent, we received 27 responses. In this report, we describe our research method and present our major findings. We also provide a brief review of the literature, primarily in relation to immigration, changing demographics, and current research about internationally educated teachers in Canada. Finally, we present recommendations pertinent to teacher education.

The information and findings in this report will be of specific interest to faculty in teacher education programs and other stakeholders (such as government departments of education, teachers' associations/unions, provincial associations for internationally educated teachers) who are developing initiatives for internationally educated teachers. It

¹ The words "diverse" and "diversity" in educational literature include, but are not limited to, discussions about teachers and students in terms of race, ethnicity, culture, religion, sexuality, able-bodiedness, language, and intellectual, emotional, psychological and/or physical exceptionalities. Inevitably, words that stand for such a wide range of experiences become increasingly ineffectual. In this report, we focus primarily on issues of "diversity" that refer to race, ethnicity, culture, language, and sometimes religion because these are the primary issues that we have encountered thus far in our own research.

² Phase one of our research with internationally educated teachers (2005-2006) involved an arts-informed research inquiry entitled, *Re-symbolizing the experiences of immigrant women who have been involved with teaching*, funded by the Atlantic Metropolis Centre of Excellence (AMA) (Brigham & Walsh, in press; Walsh & Brigham, 2005, 2007a). We are currently working on phase three (2006-2009), the purpose of which is to further investigate the experiences of internationally educated female teachers. Phase three, funded by the Social Science and Humanities Research Council of Canada, is an arts-informed study entitled, *Experiences of female teachers who are immigrants to Atlantic Canada: Implications for Canadian teacher education programs* (Walsh & Brigham, 2007b).

will also be of interest more generally to policy-makers involved with the immigration, integration, and recertification of immigrants who were professionals in their countries of origin. We also believe that the report will be of significance to those concerned with issues of difference, diversity, and marginality in teacher education.

We recognize that practices relevant to internationally educated teachers will have developed/not developed in relation to the particular histories and contexts of specific teacher education programs. Clearly, practices that emerge in the future will also do so within specific contexts. This report is our attempt at providing an overview of the current national context.

We begin by clarifying terminology central to our research.

TERMINOLOGY

Internationally educated teachers

The term “internationally educated teachers” is used by organizations/institutions such as the British Columbia College of Teachers, the University of Manitoba, the Ontario Institute for the Study of Education/University of Toronto, the Ontario College of Teachers, and the Nova Scotia Association for Internationally Educated Teachers (NSAIET). In our research, we use the term “internationally educated teachers” (IETs) to refer to people who have immigrated to Canada, who have completed post secondary education outside of Canada and/or who have (had) teaching experience from elsewhere and/or in Canada. We assume that the internationally educated teachers seeking teacher certification in Canada are either Canadian citizens or have permanent resident status.

Our research about programs and practices relevant to internationally educated teachers in Canadian teacher education programs reveals that, in addition to “internationally educated teachers,” various other terms also appear in the literature and on teacher education and professional websites: for example, “internationally trained teachers” (see Queen’s University; York University; Association of Internationally Trained Teachers of Ontario), “foreign trained (immigrant) teachers” (see University of Calgary; Mawhinney & Xu, 1997; Zhang & Cheng, 2006), “foreign accredited teachers” (Phillion, 2003) and “immigrant teachers” (see Simon Fraser University; University of Calgary; Zhang & Cheng, 2005).

Internationally educated teachers in Canada are a heterogeneous group with respect to “markers” such as, race, ethnicity, culture, language, religion, and so on. We wish to underline such differences, even as we write a report about internationally educated teachers as a group. Some IETs are racially categorized as ‘non-White’; many do not claim English as their first language. Not surprisingly, in our overall research with female internationally educated teachers, we have learned that markers such as race and language, for example, *matter* in terms of the ease with which IETS are able to enter the teaching profession (see Brigham & Walsh, in press; Walsh & Brigham, 2007a, 2007b).

We elaborate further about the ways in which such markers matter at various points in this report.

Further differences among IETs include, but are not limited to, the immigration categories through which IETs arrive in Canada and also differences among qualifications and years of teaching experiences that they bring from their countries of origin.

Programs, Initiatives, Practices

The original title of our research was *A Study of Policies and Practices Affecting Internationally Educated Teachers in Canadian Teacher Education Programs*. In our questionnaire, we asked about “programs” and “initiatives” as well as policies. The term “initiatives” indicated our understanding that the need to develop specific ways of working with IETs is relatively new for many Canadian teacher education programs. We originally thought that the term “programs” was adequate for those institutions with well-established ways of working with IETs. After analyzing our data, we differentiated actual programs for IETs from admission categories and so on; we are thus now using the term “programs” to indicate *actual programs designed for IETs*. We now use the term “practices” in a general way to cover the wide range of possibilities for working with IETs that currently exist in Canadian teacher education programs (i.e. from informal means to admissions categories to specific programs)—hence the change in the title of our report. At times, we use the term “formalized practices” to include both admissions categories and specific programs.

RESEARCH TEAM

The research team consisted of two assistant professors and six graduate students from the Faculty of Education at Mount Saint Vincent University in Halifax, Nova Scotia.

Since Winter 2005, Susan Walsh and Susan Brigham have been conducting research about women who have immigrated to Atlantic Canada and who were teachers in their countries of origin. This research report is the culmination of phase two of a three-part study.

From Spring 2006 to Summer 2007, six graduate students worked with us on this research project. Five of the graduate students are internationally educated teachers from Asia, Australia, and the Middle East. Teaching experience of the research assistants ranges from 2 years to seven years. Two of our research assistants, Selena Nemorin and Kangxian Zhao, were actively involved with the *Nova Scotia Association for Internationally Educated Teachers* (NSAIET).

Yina Wang and Kangxian Zhao helped to organize data from the questionnaire. Yina, Kangxian, and Selena Nemorin met with us regularly during the winter of 2007 to discuss readings and to share insights about research related to internationally educated teachers.

All three have also contributed to the writing of this report. Joann Doran distributed the questionnaires, sent out friendly reminders, and answered many questions from various people across the country during Fall 2006. In Spring 2006, Jia Zhu conducted an Internet search for Canadian teacher education programs, and Somaya El-Essawy researched certification pathways for professionals who have immigrated to Nova Scotia.

We would also like to acknowledge the assistance of Dr. Hong Wang who joined the faculty at Mount Saint Vincent University in July 2006. Dr. Wang consulted with us and shared insights and resources from her work as a research assistant at Queen's University in Kingston, Ontario with the *Alternative Teacher Accreditation Program for Teachers with International Experience* (ATAPTIE). Additionally, we thank Dr. Jamie Metsala (faculty member, Mount Saint Vincent University) for reviewing an early draft of this report and Erin Pritchard (research assistant, University of Alberta) for her able editorial work.

BACKGROUND

Demographics and immigration in Canada

In an overall context of low birth rates and an aging population, about two-thirds of Canada's population growth currently comes from net international migration. "The proportion of seniors in the Canadian population could nearly double in the next 25 years, while the proportion of children is expected to continue falling" (Statistics Canada, 2007a, para 3). By about 2030, net immigration may become the only source of population growth (Statistics Canada, 2007b). Immigration is thus also a crucial component of current and future economic growth and competitiveness in global markets. Labour market projections indicate approximately one million vacancies for skilled workers in the next twenty years, with medical practitioners and teachers as notably aging groups (Owen, 2005).

Some Canadian provinces are more successful at attracting and retaining immigrants than others. For example, of the immigrants who arrived from 1990 to 2004, more than 50% annually went to Ontario, 18% to British Columbia, 16% to Quebec, and fewer to each of the 4th, 5th, and 6th ranked provinces, Alberta, Manitoba and Nova Scotia, respectively (Harvey & Houle, 2006, pp. 16-17). Approximately 75% of all immigrants to Canada chose the urban centers of Toronto, Vancouver, and Montreal as their destination (Harvey & Houle, 2006; Statistics Canada, 2007c). The main source area for Canada's immigrants is Asia, while Africa and the Middle East are two increasing source areas. Different provinces attract immigrants from different source areas. For example:

In Quebec the highest proportion of new immigrants came from Latin America and the Caribbean. In the Atlantic provinces (without Nova Scotia)

the majority of immigrants came from Europe and the USA. More than 70% of British Columbia's new immigrants landed from Asia. In Nova Scotia, by contrast, 50% of newcomers originated in Africa and the Middle East. (Harvey & Houle, 2006, p. 24)

Canada's immigration policies, especially during the 1990's, became increasingly focused on attracting and retaining well-educated and skilled professionals (Hyndman, 1999; Man, 2004; Mojab, 1999; Preston & Man, 1999). Such policies reflect the transition to a postindustrial "knowledge-based economy" where flexible workers are said to be necessary (Mojab, p. 123; Man, p. 4) and where, simultaneously, the labor market itself has become much more precarious through globalization, economic restructuring, privatization, and deregulation (Man, 2004; Mojab, 1999). An understanding of the current Canadian labour market in the global context and the ways that immigrant professionals are "deskilled" in this scenario is crucial to understanding the ways that IETs are situated as they seek credential recognition and access to teacher education programs. Though it is beyond the scope of this report to elaborate in detail, we wish to comment that the work of Canadian women such as Ng (1990) and Mojab (1999) are instructive in this regard. Mojab (1999), for example, notes that

Much of the literature on contemporary capitalism argues that the transition from a production-based to a postindustrial economy requires upgrading in the technical skill levels of the labour force. Another trend of research emphasizes the deskilling requirements of the system and, even, its dependence on a state of un- and under-employment. There is, in other words, a situation of "education-job gap" which demands upgrading but imposes underemployment. It would be more accurate, therefore, to see advanced capitalism as a highly dynamic system of production, which simultaneously creates and destroys jobs, and requires both the skilling and deskilling of the labour force. (p. 126)

Canada's immigrants³ are more highly educated than ever before. Of the three categories of immigrants: family class, refugees, and independent immigrants, only the independent immigrants are assessed by a point system. Immigrants in both the family class and independent (economic) categories possess levels of educational attainment above the average of Canadian-born men and women (Lochhead & Mackenzie, 2005). Yet,

³ Included in the independent or economic class are skilled workers (and their dependents), business investors, and provincial nominees. The family class is made up of individuals who are closely related family members of those already established in Canada, and the refugee class is a humanitarian category. Canada uses a point system to assess all independent applicants. There are six categories under which applicants are awarded points. These include, education, languages (English and/or French), work experience, age, arranged employment in Canada and adaptability (including previous work or study in Canada, arranged employment, relative in Canada and partner's education) (Immigrate.net, 2006).

immigrants' credentials and work experience obtained outside Canada are valued less than credentials and experience of comparable Canadian-born people (Brigham, 1995, 1997; Brigham & Bernadino, 2003; Man, 2004; Phillion, 2003; Mojab, 1999), and their professional identities are undermined, a situation that can affect psychological and physical health. In addition, not all foreign credentials are assessed equally (Sweetman, 2003).

Further, immigrants who are members of visible minority groups experience greater economic disadvantage than non-visible minority immigrants and people born in Canada (Esses, Dietz, Bennett-Abuayyash, & Joshi, 2007; Harvey & Siu 2001; Hawthorne, 2007). Esses et al (2007) report that visible minority immigrants earn less than that of their Canadian and non-minority immigrant counterparts. Members of visible minorities from Africa, the Caribbean, and Latin America are likely to experience the greatest economic disadvantage (Ornstein, 2006). When taking gender into consideration, women immigrants⁴ make only slightly lower average earnings than Canadian-born women, although recently arrived foreign born women earn roughly 20% below the average earnings of all immigrant and Canadian born women (Lindsay & Almey, 2006). As is the case for other women in Canada, foreign born women earn about 70% of their male peers. Additionally, women who immigrate are more likely to be unemployed compared with Canadian born women and immigrant men (Lindsay & Almey, 2006). Various researchers note how highly educated female immigrants, because of a variety of structural barriers, are unable to find jobs, and that those who do find work usually find it in low paying jobs (such as in the service industry and as garment workers) (Mojab, 1999; Man, 2004; Preston & Man, 1999). Gender, then, is an important factor that along with language, race, ethnicity, class, and immigration status impacts significantly on immigration and integration experiences.

The deskilling of women and men who immigrate to Canada operates at the conflicted intersection of an immigration policy that aims to attract highly skilled and educated people to Canada while economic restructuring produces a labour market that has not welcomed them. Such issues are exacerbated along lines of race, ethnicity, class, and gender.

Teaching in Canada

Like other professionals, teachers who immigrate and wish to teach in Canada face challenges when they attempt to find employment in their field. The historical legacy of schooling and the current policies and practices in Canadian educational institutions have

⁴ Almost half of the foreign born women in Canada are a member of a visible minority group.

Of immigrant women living in Canada in 2001, 49% were considered to be a visible minority... Recent arrivals in Canada are far more likely to be a part of a visible minority than those who have been in the country for longer periods. Indeed, almost three quarters (74%) who arrived in Canada between 1991 and 2001 are visible minorities whereas this is the case for only 19% of those who arrived here in the 1960s and just 3% of those who arrived in Canada before 1961. (Lindsay & Almey, 2006, p. 217)

an effect on immigrants' experiences as they attempt to re-enter the Canadian teaching profession.

In the first half of the nineteenth century, Canada (what was then Upper and Lower Canada), experienced social change, which included conflict between the French and English as well as pressures posed by an increasing number of immigrants (Kach, 1987). These social changes resulted in social, economic and political stresses along with the subsequent perceived need to 'Canadianize' immigrants. A free compulsory public schooling system was envisioned as a mechanism of social control to help address stresses and maintain the status quo (Lazerson, 1978). The evolution of public schooling was influenced by Methodist minister, Egerton Ryerson, who felt that public schooling would instill Protestant Christian values and promote loyalty to the British crown and to the British political tradition (McDonald, 1978).

As schooling became publicly funded, the demand for teachers increased, and women were seen as a yet untapped cheap supply of labour. By the end of the nineteenth century women predominated in teaching, particularly in early grades. Teaching was perceived as an extension of women's traditional roles of informal teaching and caring for children. From the time they came into the profession until the 1960s, female teachers experienced significant inequities compared with men (e.g. lower salaries and limited opportunities for advancement within the profession). Female teachers' public behaviours were also carefully regulated (Khayatt, 1992). The history of education in Canada is very much White, middle class, and gendered.

In current times, the need for a more racially, linguistically, culturally, and ethnically diverse teaching profession has been reasonably well-documented, if not well-implemented in terms of policy and programming for teacher education and professional development (see Bascia, 1996a, 1996b; Beynon, Ilieva, & Dichupa, 2004; BLAC, 1994; Hirji, 1998; Hirji & Beynon, 2000; Lewis, 1992; Phillion, 2003). Ladson-Billings (1994) suggests that directly or indirectly minority teachers, in addition to being role models, serve as mentors, cultural translators, advocates, and surrogate parents for minority students. Foster (1993) suggests that minority (e.g. African-Americans) teachers' abilities to reflect on their "cultural comprehensive knowledge" (that is, one's cultural and gendered understanding of their life experiences and how this affects their world-view) influence their teaching, so that they provide more effective instruction to minority students. Dee (2001) implies that same-race teachers may influence student achievement. Ehrenberg, Goldhaber & Brewer (1994) attribute this positive influence on student achievement to teachers' empathy and support of same-race students. A more diverse teaching population has the potential to provide different perspectives and role models as well as educative possibilities for all students, staff, and community members in terms of antiracist and multicultural education.

Despite the need for a teaching force that at least matches the student population in terms of racial, linguistic, cultural, and ethnic differences, teacher education programs in Canada and in other countries in the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) (such as Australia, Britain and the United States) have been slow

in responding to this need. Research with preservice and in-service teachers who are immigrants, many of whom are also members of ethnic, racial and linguistic minority groups in Canada, indicates that these highly educated and skilled people are an important but as yet untapped group that would help address the need for a more diverse teaching population. Research with IETs has been done in countries such as Israel (Court, 1999; Elbaz-Luwisch, 2004), Australia (Cruickshank, 2004), Britain (Carrington & Tomlin, 2000), and the United States (Harklau, 1999; Quiocho & Rios, 2000; Root, Rudawski, Taylor, & Rochon, 2003; Sheets & Chew, 2002) as well as in Canada.

Over the course of at least a decade, the barriers and challenges faced by IETs in the Canadian context have been well-documented (Bascia, 1996; Beynon, Ilieva, & Dichupa, 2004; Brigham & Walsh, in press; Cheng, Myles, & Wang, 2004; Gagné, 2006, 2007; Hirji & Beynon, 2000; Mawhinney & Xu, 1997; Myles, Cheng, & Wang, 2006; Phillion, 2003; Ramanathan, 2002; Schmidt, 2007; Schmidt, Young, & Mandzuk, , 2006; Thiessen, Bascia & Goodson, 1996; Walsh & Brigham, 2007a, 2007b; Zhang & Cheng, 2006).

We have categorized the findings of the researchers/writers listed above as follows:

Language

- issues of English language proficiency and concerns about accents (on the part of the IETS and others)
- differing (cultural) communication styles and understandings about context specific language

Issues related to obtaining Canadian credentials

- difficulty accessing correct information about certification processes
- lack of knowledge about the Canadian education system
- difficulty in gaining Canadian teaching experience
- lack of recognition of prior education and teaching experience, both officially (through credential assessment) and also informally (i.e. by mentor teachers, administrators)
- differing educational expectations (e.g. pedagogical approaches, teaching philosophies, and classroom management strategies)
- lack of financial support

Challenges (during and after credentialing process, during teacher education, and/or after being hired)

- preconceived views of IETs as linguistically and culturally deficient by colleagues, administrators, parents, students, mentor teachers, and others
- lack of preparation for mentor teachers and supervisors in teacher education programs in terms of anti-racist and multicultural education
- discriminatory hiring and workplace practices (eg. difficulty in finding regular contracts as opposed to daily substituting contracts)
- discrimination in the school and community at large

- professional isolation that can be construed as a by-product of systemic racism; lack of supportive professional networks
- (when hired) being perceived as ‘tokens’ (i.e. hired as a member of a specific minority group to demonstrate a school’s commitment to diversity)
- (when hired) being ‘pigeon-holed’ as *the one* on staff to deal with problems faced by minority and/or immigrant students, rather than the school community taking on a shared responsibility for such students
- (when hired) lack of acknowledgement and validation for IETs’ work as translators, mentors, counsellors, and mediators in schools, with families, and in communities

Family and personal concerns

- lack of financial support for (re)credentialing process, further education
- issues of childcare and frustration with own children becoming “too Canadian”
- marital difficulties associated with immigration and integration
- health concerns
- psychological aspects of being unable to earn a professional salary and of losing identity as a professional upon immigrating and also of having to reconstruct a different (often less desirable) identity in the Canadian context

RESEARCH METHOD

Our research involved three main parts: a questionnaire sent to representatives of Canadian teacher education programs, Internet searches of websites for Canadian teacher education programs, and the interpretive work done by a research group that met weekly to discuss the findings from the questionnaire and also readings related to internationally educated teachers.

a. Questionnaire

We conducted an initial Internet search of all teacher education degree programs offered across Canada. We limited our list of teacher education programs to English language degree programs and those offered through universities and university colleges. During the 2006-2007 academic year, we contacted the dean or director of teacher education (or equivalent) in 41 teacher education programs by email to ask if s/he was willing to respond to a questionnaire on behalf of her/his institution. In some cases, the dean/director asked someone else to complete the questionnaire. Thus, in addition to deans/directors, respondents included assistant and associate deans, chairs of departments, administrative assistants (e.g. executive assistants to the dean), and coordinators/managers of special programs. With our emails, we included a detailed information letter that outlined the research and the respondent's possible involvement in it. Reminders over a period of 3-5 months included telephone calls and emails that included the questionnaire as an attachment. Completed questionnaire forms were returned by email.

We distributed a questionnaire because we agreed that this was an efficient means of gathering factual information (Best & Kahn, 2006). As we designed items for the questionnaire, we consulted together about the wording of questions and about what questions would best yield information about specific programs and also about less formal practices relevant to internationally educated teachers in Canadian teacher education programs. We also drew on findings from our previous research with internationally educated teachers to guide the development of the questions (see Walsh & Brigham, 2007; Brigham & Walsh, in press). At the time of designing the questionnaire, we had found little in the scholarly literature about specific initiatives related to internationally educated teachers in the context of Canadian teacher education programs, so we worded our questions generally so as to "cast a wide net." We endeavored to keep the questionnaire as short as possible so as to encourage people to participate in the study. The University Research Ethics Board at Mount Saint Vincent University granted approval for this research project.

We chose email as a primary means of distributing and receiving questionnaires because we agreed that email was a user-friendly and time efficient means for respondents to complete and return it. Practically, for us as researchers, email was also time and cost efficient and required less paper consumption. We created a separate email account for this research project so that we (Walsh, Brigham, and our research assistants) could access information from a shared account and keep track of returned questionnaires and related communications.

Our initial analysis of the data from the returned questionnaires revealed that 7 Canadian teacher education programs currently have formalized practices specifically designed for internationally educated teachers and that others have informal means of working with IETs. We created a template to structure our findings about the 7 formalized practices,

wrote a detailed description for each, and returned the descriptions to the respondents for verification. Further revisions included comments/suggestions from the respondents.

b. Internet Search

We conducted an Internet search of all 41 of the teacher education programs that were on our initial list of programs in order to ensure the accuracy of the information we were collating. For example, in some instances, we required further detail to supplement the information we received on the questionnaire. Further, we hoped to ensure that we had accessed information about significant initiatives at teacher education programs whose representatives did not respond to the questionnaire.

Our research assistants searched the terms “internationally educated teachers,” “internationally trained teachers,” “foreign trained teachers,” and “immigrant teachers” on the websites of the 41 programs on our initial list.

c. Research Group

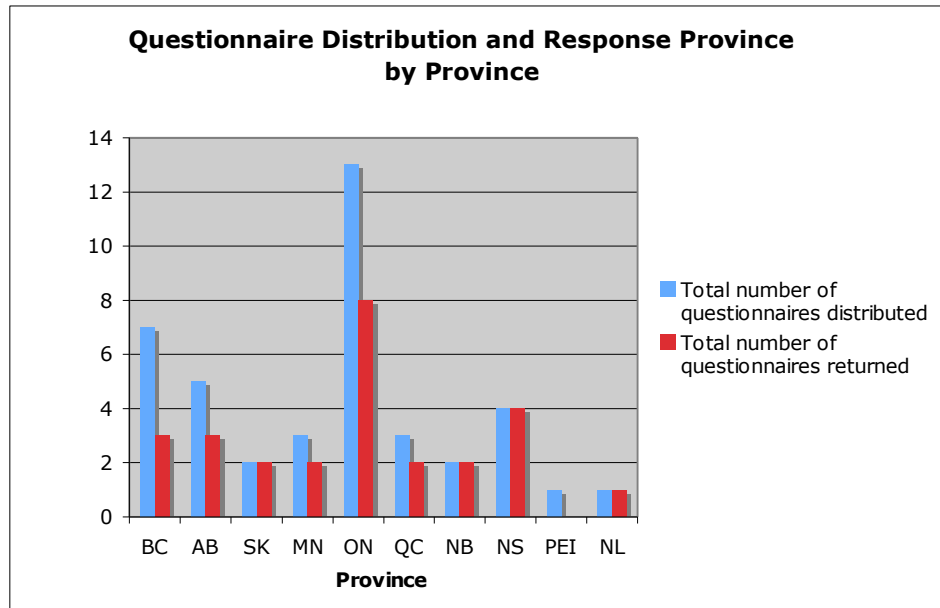
We (Walsh & Brigham) met regularly during Winter/Spring 2007 with three graduate research assistants: Yina Wang, Kangxian, Zhao, and Selena Nemorin—all of whom are internationally educated teachers. We divided the articles located through a review of the literature amongst the five of us, and then shared our findings and insights with one another. Our analysis of the questionnaire results and Internet searches are contextualized within the work of this group.

Response to Questionnaire

Of 41 questionnaires distributed to representatives of teacher education programs across Canada, 27 were returned—an overall percentage of 65.9. Responses came from 9 of 10 provinces.

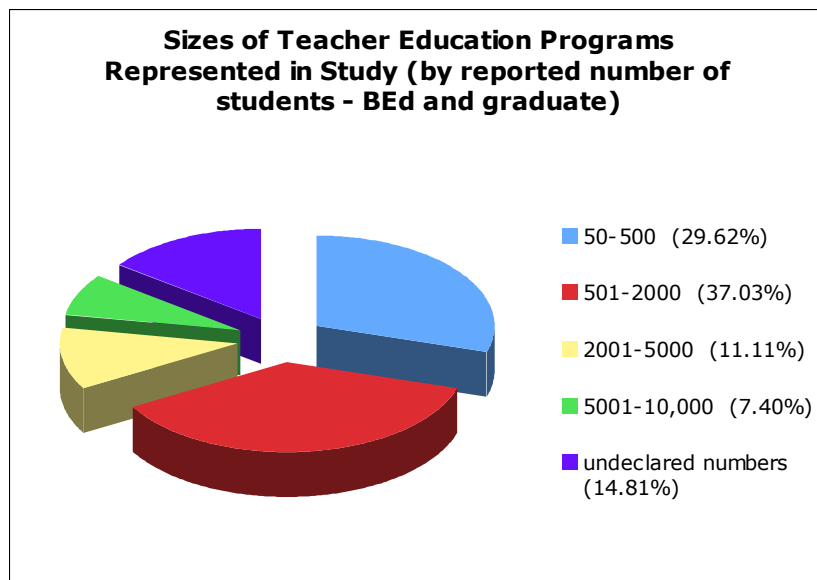
We did not include teacher education programs in the three territories in the distribution of our questionnaire because the programs there are housed in colleges, and we had limited the distribution of our questionnaire to representatives from universities and university colleges. Further, the teacher education programs in the territories are offered through partnerships between colleges in the North and universities in Saskatchewan and Quebec (Aurora College in the Northwest Territories and the University of Saskatchewan; Nunavut Arctic College in Nunavut and McGill University; Yukon College in the Yukon and the University of Regina). The university partners were included in the distribution of the questionnaire.

The graph below indicates the total number of questionnaires distributed and returned province by province.



Thus, the questionnaire return rate from the Western provinces (BC, AB, SK, MN) was 67.4%, from the Central provinces (ON, QC) 64.1%, and from the Atlantic provinces (NB, NS, PEI, NL) 75%.

The teacher education programs represented in our findings range in size as well as geographical location. The size of programs—based on reported numbers of students (both BEd and graduate)—ranges from 60 students to approximately 9700 students. The graph below indicates the varied sizes of teacher education programs and percentage of respondents for each.



In addition to a range of sizes and geographical locations, the teacher education programs represented in our findings offer a range of education programs—from a Bachelor of Arts in Education to combined and concurrent Bachelor of Education programs through to Master of Arts, Master of Education, and doctoral programs. The 27 responding institutions reported the following programs: Bachelor of Arts-1; Bachelor of Education-10, Bachelor of Education, Consecutive-17; Bachelor of Education, Concurrent-8; Master of Education-16; Master of Arts-6; Doctor of Education (EdD)-4; Doctor of Philosophy-12; Various certificates, diplomas, additional qualifications-4.

All respondents indicated that their teacher education programs satisfy provincial requirements for teacher certification, with the exception of Ryerson University's School of Early Childhood Education, which is currently working to do so.

The response to our questionnaire thus represents a range of Education programs offered, sizes of institutions, and geographical locations. All of these, in the context of the overall questionnaire return rate of 65.9%, provide reasonable representation about current practices related to internationally educated teachers in Canada. In addition, we searched Internet sites of all of the 41 teacher education programs originally contacted to ensure that we had not omitted any pertinent practices (see above, Internet Search).

Limitations

We acknowledge that our research is limited in a number of ways. The following is undoubtedly a partial list.

1. Our questionnaire focused on teacher education programs relevant to internationally educated teachers. We recognize that a large group of IETs have decided not to upgrade their credentials or redo programs (for a number of different reasons) and that some have gone on to do graduate work in education (which does not necessarily help them to gain Canadian teaching credentials).
2. We limited the distribution of our questionnaire to teacher education programs housed in universities and university colleges, based on the names of the institutions. We recognize that the criteria for assignment of university/college status likely varies from province to province. However, we surmised that practices related to internationally educated teachers in small universities, university colleges, and colleges would mainly be informal (a surmise later borne out in our findings). We thus drew the distribution line at colleges and decided to exclude them.
3. Distribution of the surveys was limited to English language teacher education programs.
4. We used websites to gather some information, and such information changes frequently; the information noted in this report is accurate as of the date of the report's release.

5. Our review of the literature focuses mainly on Canadian content but also includes some writers from the US, the UK, Israel, and Australia. We acknowledge that there is further literature from other countries that would be valuable to explore.

RESEARCH FINDINGS

In all provinces, in order to initiate the process of credential recognition for the purpose of entering the Canadian teaching profession, internationally educated teachers must apply to the appropriate provincial certification/qualifications authority to have their education and teaching experience assessed; the criteria for obtaining teacher certification varies from province to province. The assessment provided by the provincial authority provides specific information about any necessary certification requirements including additional courses and /or practica. The letter of assessment (among other supporting documents) is required by all Canadian teacher education programs.

We discuss our findings in relation to two broad areas:

- current practices in Canadian teacher education programs relevant to internationally educated teachers
- specific policies and/or initiatives intended to recruit and retain “marginalized groups” that could include internationally educated teachers

Current practices in Canadian teacher education programs relevant to internationally educated teachers

In analyzing the data from the 27 returned questionnaires and from our Internet search, we determined 8 categories of current practices (or lack thereof) relevant to internationally educated teachers in teacher education programs across Canada. (Percentages noted in these 8 categories are determined by particular number of teacher education programs in the category in relation to the total number of *returned questionnaires*, not the total number of teacher education programs surveyed.)

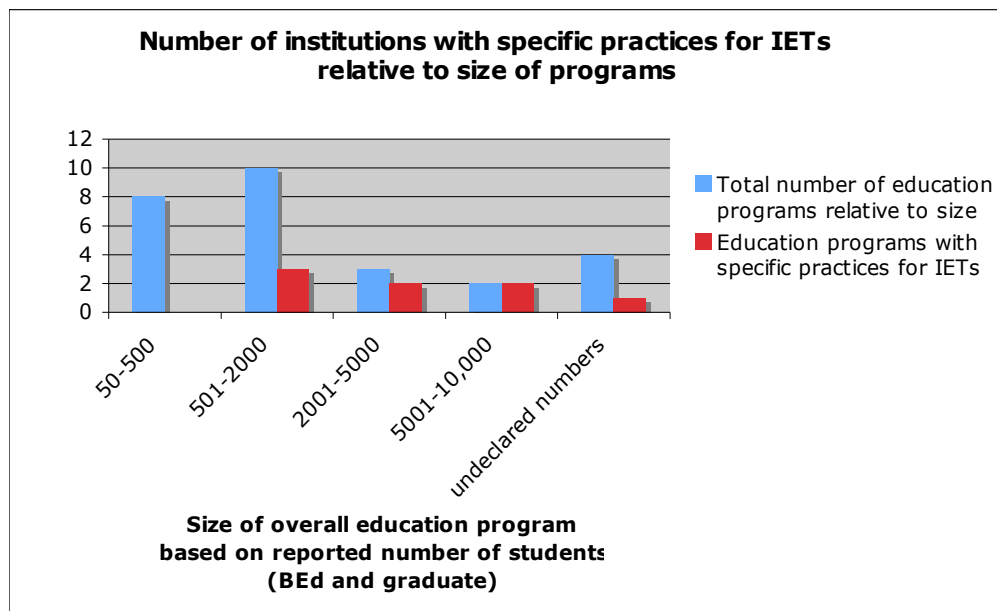
The eight categories of current practices in Canadian teacher education programs include:

1. Programs specifically designed for internationally educated teachers (2 institutions—
Simon Fraser University, University of Manitoba; 7.4% of total)
2. Teacher recertification programs that include internationally educated teachers (1 institution—University of British Columbia; 3.7% of total)
3. Specified number of places within the BEd program (internationally educated teachers as an admissions category) (4 institutions—OISE/University of Toronto, Queen’s University, University of Ottawa, York University; 14.8% of total)
4. Specific initiatives currently under consideration (1 institution—
University of Calgary, 3.7% of total)
5. Those who state that they are beginning to discuss initiatives (2 institutions—
Mount Saint Vincent University, University of Alberta; 7.4% of total). (These two overlap with either category 7 or 8.)
6. Formalized practices no longer in existence (3 institutions—Queen’s University, University of Calgary, University of Ottawa; 11.1% of total). (All of these overlap with either category 3 or 4).

7. Informal supports for internationally educated teachers; no links or mention on the website (9 institutions, 33.3% of total)
8. No practices (informal or otherwise) reported (10 institutions, 37.0% of total)

Categories 1-4 indicate that across Canada there are currently seven teacher education institutions that have specific formalized practices relevant to internationally educated teachers and one that is in the process of developing one. Of the eight, four are in Ontario, two are in British Columbia, one is in Manitoba, and one is in Alberta. We discuss each of these formalized practices briefly below (see full version of this report for further detail).

Not surprisingly, institutions with larger numbers of students in education programs overall are more likely to have formalized practices for IETs than smaller institutions.



Further, there is a high correlation between the number of overall immigrants to a province and the number of teacher education programs that have specific practices relevant to internationally educated teachers. For example, Statistics Canada (2007c) notes that half of the Canadian population lives in southern Ontario (the “Greater Golden Horseshoe”) and in the metropolitan areas of Montréal and Vancouver, areas where population growth is attributed to immigration. Six of the seven current practices for internationally educated teachers are located in Vancouver (2) and in Ontario (4).

Summary of categories 1 to 8

1. Programs specifically designed for internationally educated teachers

Simon Fraser University and the University of Manitoba are the two institutions with programs specific to internationally educated teachers.

Simon Fraser University offers the *Professional Qualification Program (PQP)* in collaboration with the British Columbia College of Teachers. The PQP, in existence since 2001, is a twelve-month full time program available to 20-24 students per year; it is designed “to orient new Canadians or teachers requiring updating to the cultural, social and political contexts of British Columbia schools through a combination of seminars and in-school experiences” (Simon Fraser University, 2007, p. 1). Teachers who were educated outside of Canada and who are currently working in BC schools have had input into the curriculum of the program (p. 2).

The University of Manitoba’s pilot program, entitled the *Academic and Professional Bridging Program for Internationally Educated Teachers*, began in January 2006 and will continue until at least 2008. A maximum of 12 spaces per year are offered to IETs who require additional coursework to be certified to teach in Manitoba. “The IET Pilot Program is the first provincial initiative to offer comprehensive support at the university level. Key elements include additional university coursework required for Manitoba curriculum, in-school placements, mentoring by experienced teachers in Winnipeg schools, employment search skills, and language development” (University of Manitoba, 2007, p. 1). The *Academic and Professional Bridging Program for Internationally Educated Teachers* is supported financially by the U of M Strategic Program Development Fund, the U of M Equity Incentive Fund, and Manitoba Labour & Immigration.

2. Teacher recertification programs that include internationally educated teachers

The teacher recertification program at the University of British Columbia has existed for fifty years (questionnaire). The program serves all persons who have teaching credentials/experience from outside of British Columbia (i.e. from other provinces and from countries other than Canada) as well as those from within the province who need to update their credentials. The duration of the program is variable, according to requirements as assessed by the British Columbia College of Teachers (BCCT); students in the recertification program take selected courses within the regular Bachelor of Education programs. In overall terms, however, the recertification program involves a brief pre-practicum experience, an academic term of curriculum and instruction courses, and a 6 to 13 week practicum.

3. Specified number of places within the B.Ed. program (internationally educated teachers as an admissions category)

Four teacher education programs protect a particular number of places for internationally educated teachers within their regular Bachelor of Education programs: OISE/University of Toronto, Queen's University, University of Ottawa, and York University. The number of protected places at OISE/UT is 15 and at the University of Ottawa is 20. To our knowledge, the specific number of protected places for IETs at York University and at Queen's University are unspecified.

4. Specific initiatives currently under consideration

The University of Calgary has indicated specific direction toward a formalized practice relevant to IETs. The initiative is associated with the Alberta government's second language learning and is a collaborative effort between the Division of Teacher Preparation and the Graduate Division of Educational Research. The particular shape of U of C's initiative is not yet clear.

5. Those who state that they are beginning to discuss initiatives

To our knowledge, two institutions are currently in the discussion phase of developing initiatives for IETs. Representatives from the University of Alberta in Edmonton, Alberta are working with the registrar of Alberta Education in considering "a diploma program for teachers new to Canada/Alberta that would support certification and count toward salary" (Questionnaire). Mount Saint Vincent University in Halifax, Nova Scotia has been involved with stakeholder meetings to discuss a bridging program for internationally educated teachers. Stakeholders, in addition to MSVU, include Nova Scotia Immigration, the Nova Scotia Teachers' Union, the Metropolitan Immigrant Settlement Association (MISA), Halifax Immigrant Learning Centre (HILC), the Nova Scotia Association for Internationally Educated Teachers (NSAIET), and the Halifax Regional School Board.

6. Formalized practices no longer in existence

With regard to this category, we have identified three programs that are no longer in existence: those associated with Queen's University, with the University of Ottawa, and with the University of Calgary.

Over ten years ago, the University of Calgary offered professional development courses for IETs; such courses have since been eradicated with faculty changes and budget cuts (Questionnaire).

From September 1993 to April 1994, the University of Ottawa housed the *Upgrading Pilot Program* for internationally educated teachers. Mawhinney & Xu (1997) note that this program consisted of a "13 week, largely on-site practicum plus a weekly reflective seminar, an integrated Canadian educational foundations/pedagogy course, and an ESL course" (p. 632).

Queen's University in Ontario offered the *Alternative Teacher Accreditation Program for Teachers with International Experience* (ATAPTIE) from 2002-2005. The program was funded for three years by the Ontario Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities (MTCU). Other partners in this venture included the Ottawa-Carleton School District and LASI (Local Agencies Serving Immigrants) World Skills, a non-governmental organization (Cheng & Wang, 2006, p. 6). Each year, one cohort of approximately 27 students entered the program (2002-2003, 2003-2004, 2004-2005). The one-year program consisted of 8 academic courses and 70 days of practicum that began in the summer and ended the following summer. One block of summer courses (seven weeks in duration) was followed by practica in both primary and junior placements, and then by a second block of summer courses (also seven weeks).

Assessment of the program was conducted internally by the Assessment and Evaluation Group (AEG) at Queen's University (Cheng & Wang, 2006) and also externally by the Berkeley Consulting Group, "evaluators hired by the MTCU to judge the outcomes and impact of the nine MTCU-funded bridging programs to accredit foreign-trained professionals in many professions" (Cheng & Wang, 2006, p. 9).

The *Alternative Teacher Accreditation Program for Teachers with International Experience* is the most published-about Canadian program (past or present) relevant to IETs (see Cheng, Myles, & Wang, 2004; Cheng & Wang, 2006; Myles, Cheng, & Wang, 2006; Queen's News Centre, 2002; Zhang & Cheng, 2005). Valuable findings with respect to the program itself and also with respect to the experiences of the internationally educated teachers/candidates and associate teachers are evident in the publications.

7. Categories 7 & 8 (Informal supports for internationally educated teachers, but no links or mention on the website; No practices, informal or more formal, reported).

Categories 7 (Informal supports for internationally educated teachers, but no links or mention on the website) and 8 (No practices, informal or more formal, reported) comprise a full 70% of the total respondents to the questionnaire. Those in category 7 (33.3% of total respondents) note that faculty and/or staff members work with IETs in informal ways. A number of the institutions represented in categories 1-4 also report informal practices. Informal practices reported on the questionnaire include:

- providing access to an advisor with whom the IET can meet
- working with each student individually to assign transfer credit, plan courses, assess English language proficiency
- examining transcripts (registrar) with feedback to the education department
- offering support (support not specified)
- offering access to courses (as advised by the appropriate provincial credentialing authority)
- providing support during practica

Significantly, all of the informal practices reported are services and supports available to all students in teacher education programs.

Specific policies and/or initiatives intended to recruit and retain “marginalized groups” that could include internationally educated teachers

The second broad area of our findings is related to policies that are intended to recruit and/or retain ‘marginalized groups,’ which might include IETs. In addition to collating and reviewing the responses to questions 8, 9, and 10 of the questionnaire, we also checked the websites of the responding institutions in order to better understand and, in some cases, to supplement the information provided on the questionnaire.

The findings below relate to policies and/or initiatives intended to recruit and retain “marginalized groups” (Faculty/Department and/or University wide policies).

- Five of the questionnaires did not include any response to the questions 8-10 or included a response that indicated a misunderstanding of question 8.
- Five of the respondents answered No or N/A to questions about policies or initiatives intended to recruit and retain “marginalized groups.”
- Five respondents specifically mentioned Aboriginal (including both First Nations and, in two cases, also African Nova Scotian) students in terms of policies/initiatives related to “marginalized groups” in answer to question 8.
- None of policies or statements about diversity in affirmative action policies or initiatives relevant to marginalized groups in teacher education programs in Canada specifically name internationally educated teachers (or “internationally trained teachers,” “foreign trained immigrant teachers” “foreign-trained teacher candidates,” “foreign accredited teachers” or “immigrant teachers”).

Summary of Findings

In Canada at the present time, there are 7 teacher education programs with formalized practices for internationally educated teachers. Four of the 7 programs are located in Ontario, two are in British Columbia, and one is in Manitoba. There is a high correlation between the location of teacher education programs that offer formalized practices and the geographical areas that attract and retain the highest numbers of immigrants to Canada. The programs that currently have formalized practices are housed in teacher education programs that range from approximately 850 to 9700 students.

Formalized practices relevant to IETs include: specific programs designed for the needs of IETs (SFU, U of M), IETs as part of a recertification program (UBC), and protected spaces for IETs as an admissions category (OISE/UT, Queen’s U, U of O, York U).

Seventy percent of teacher education programs either report that they have no practices relevant to IETs or report working with IETs in informal ways. Importantly, informal practices delineated in responses to the questionnaire are services that are available to all students.

Where formalized practices are not available to an IET, s/he may be asked to apply to the BEd program as a regular student, or be asked register in open studies (or the equivalent) to complete required courses. One of the respondents to the questionnaire noted that IETs who “[take] courses on an ad hoc basis [are left] ‘outside’ of the mainstream” and “in an awkward space.”

The University of Calgary is currently considering a formalized practice for IETs, and two others (the University of Alberta in Alberta and Mount Saint Vincent University in Nova Scotia) indicate that they have begun to discuss such possibilities.

In two provinces, government funds have supported pilot programs (University of Manitoba’s *Academic and Professional Bridging Program for Internationally Educated Teachers* in Manitoba and Queen’s University’s former *Alternative Teacher Accreditation Program for Teachers with International Experience* (ATAPTIE) program in Ontario). The latter is no longer an active program.

While some institutions, for many years, have had specific policies that seek to increase the representation of marginalized groups in their programs, others have not yet recognized such a need. Our findings indicate that none of the equity policies at Canadian teacher education institutions specifically name internationally educated teachers.

DISCUSSION

The political will to include internationally educated teachers within Canadian teacher education programs must be comprehensive, systematic, and long-term, with clearly articulated goals developed within an understanding of related research and literature about the wider social and economic context that positions them. As noted earlier in this report, IETs are situated at the complex interstices of immigration policies that seek to attract highly educated and skilled newcomers at the same time as global trends in the postindustrial labour market dictate that some workers are deskilled, particularly those from vulnerable segments of the population. As one woman notes, “I think Canada needs laborers, but not professionals... Now they use professional people to do menial labor. How do you expect us to function well psychologically?” (Man, 2004, p. 145). Current economic trends then often work against the opportunity for newcomers to find work commensurate with their education and experience, at the same time as Canada—with its declining birth rates and aging population—clearly needs immigrants. More in-depth analyses of the ways that IETs have been shaped and positioned in Canada is necessary

for the development of socially just and responsible programs and policies in teacher education programs.

The broader national picture with regard to ‘foreign’ credential recognition is an area related to economics and the labour market and also an area that is crucial to discussions about and planning for the integration of IETs into the Canadian teaching profession. A recent issue of *Canadian Issues/Thèmes Canadiens* (Spring 2007) centres on issues of credential recognition; a number of articles report the barriers encountered by internationally educated professionals such as physicians, engineers, nurses, pharmacists, and so on, barriers that are strikingly similar to the well-documented barriers encountered by IETs (as listed at the end of the **Background** section of this report) (with regard to other professions, see, for example, Baldacchino, Candrasekere, & Saunders, 2007; Crandall & Mohr, 2007; Crutcher & Man, 2007). Guo’s (2007) discussion of credential recognition points at several important underlying issues. He notes that in Canada, differences that challenge the norm are seen to be “deficient, deviant, pathological, or otherwise divisive” (p. 37). He draws too on Henry, Tator, Mattis, and Rees (2006) concept of “democratic racism” to describe the Canadian context whereby democratic ideals of fairness, justice, and equality exist side by side with racist attitudes toward and treatment of immigrants—a complex and contradictory situation. He also questions standardized (universal) credentialing practices and notes that “claimed neutral assessment and measuring usually disguises itself under the cloak of professional standard, quality and excellence, without questioning whose standard is put in place, and whose interests the standard represents” (p. 37). In what ways do the practices of credentialing authorities and of educational institutions such as teacher education programs operate as gate-keeping mechanisms for the retention of the status quo and for the control of difference? In what ways are the normalizing functions of teaching and of teacher education at odds with policies for equity and inclusion of those who are “different,” such as internationally educated teachers (see Beynon, Ilieva, & Dichupa, 2004; also Counternormativity Discourse Group, 2005 re: normalizing discourses in teacher education). Given the fact that members of minority groups are generally absent from organizational structures, to what extent do institutions treat IETs who are members of visible and/or linguistic minorities less favourably? How are different needs identified and quantified? To what extent have such needs been adequately considered and provided for? And, to what extent have existing resources been redirected in favour of people who are members of minority groups as part of a commitment to equity?

Clearly, the complex and contradictory ways that IETs are positioned must be considered as administrators and faculty in teacher education programs plan and revise practices relevant to internationally educated teachers. Further, such representatives of teacher education programs must work collaboratively—and likely in an educative role—with stakeholders such as settlement agencies, provincial and federal immigration officials, provincial education ministries, teachers’ unions/associations, and teacher qualifications/credentialing authorities. Long term, comprehensive commitments for action are necessary as is solid government financial support. Programs and policies relevant to IETs in government departments of education, school systems, teacher unions/associations, and teacher education programs not be “added on” or developed in

isolation, rather they must be considered in relation to existing structures and systemic inequities.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Access to Information

- Information about teacher education for IETs at universities must be accessible and clearly stated. For example, faculty/department/school of education's websites must be easy to navigate. Information for IETs (e.g. about the recertification process, course requirements, specialized programs for IETs, information sessions, relevant website links to, for instance, the provincial teacher certification/credentialing authorities and teachers' associations/unions, etc.) must be clear and easy to find.
- Where universities do not currently have specific practices in place for IETs, links must be provided to any available information within and beyond the universities.
- At universities, specific faculty members and staff must be identified as contact persons so that IETs can directly contact those who are knowledgeable and able to provide direction and guidance as well as networking possibilities.
- Provincial governments (i.e. ministries of education) must provide clear information for IETs that addresses how IETs can become teachers in the province, information that will help IETs to understand the organization of the provincial school system and the role of teachers⁵ (Phillion, 2003). Provincial governments must also provide links to teacher education programs in the provinces as well as IET associations⁶ and immigrant settlement organizations that have programs for IETs.⁷

Provision of Support for IETs

- Provincial governments and teacher education programs (as well as other stakeholders) must provide systematic and systemic support to IETs at various stages of the recertification process (e.g. beginning the credentialing process and study

⁵ The Ontario Public system's website *Teach in Ontario: Help for Internationally Educated Teachers* is an example. Go to: <http://www.teachinontario.ca/en/become.htm>. The British Columbia College of Teacher provides information for those whose teacher education was completed outside of BC as well as links relevant to IETs. Go to http://www.bcct.ca/certification/cdn_int_applicants.aspx

⁶ For example, in Nova Scotia, there is an association called the Nova Scotia Association for Internationally Educated Teachers (NSAIET). Go to http://www.misa.ns.ca/iep_teacher.php and/or http://www.iexp-ns.ca/association_teach.html

⁷ For example, in Nova Scotia, the Halifax Immigrant Learning Center (HILC) provides a series of orientation workshops for IETs.

within a teacher education program as well as during the process of entering the teaching profession). At all times, IETs' previous teaching experiences, both in Canada and in their countries of origin must be acknowledged. Further, the *differences* among IETs in terms of experience and education must be acknowledged in considering the further education required to enter the Canadian teaching profession.

- Possible forms of support might include:
 - orientation to their province's public school system (including the cultural and language diversity of students, current curricula and pedagogy) at the IETs' beginning stages of certification/credentialing;
 - strong collegial contact/networking during coursework (including before, during and after practicum experiences) (Cheng, Myles, & Wang, 2004; Myles, Cheng, & Wang, 2005; Root, Rudawski, Taylor, & Rochon, 2003);
 - assistance in employment search, including substitute teaching contracts;
 - assistance in establishing networks including links with schools in order to be recommended for substitute teaching, on-going professional development once certified and/or hired to teach in schools;
 - financial support (see, for example, the University of Manitoba program; Root, Rudawski, Taylor, & Rochon, 2003).

- Mentor teachers and practicum supervisors as well as instructors in teacher education programs must be better prepared/ trained to work with IETs (i.e. to address misperceptions based on IETs' accents, cultures, and experiences of racial discrimination) (Cheng, Myles, & Wang, 2004; Mawhinney & Xu, 1997; Myles, Cheng, & Wang, 2004; Root, Rudawski, Taylor, & Rochon, 2003; Zhang & Cheng, 2005).

Learn from other “bridging” programs

- Leaders in teacher education programs should take into consideration the “bridging” programs in other professions to find out what has worked in assisting professionals' transition back into their fields (see Crandall and Mohr, 2007 for an example from pharmacy).

Recruitment and Retention

- Internationally educated teachers (named as such) must be included in current initiatives/policies for recruiting and retaining marginalized groups in teacher education programs.

- Teacher education programs must be flexible in terms of organization, curriculum, and ‘delivery’ of practices for IETs. Further, specific considerations must be made for more mature students, those with family responsibilities, and those who work several jobs while studying (Carrington & Tomlin, 2000; Cruickshank, 2004; Root, Rudawski, Taylor, & Rochon, 2003).
- Teacher education programs must incorporate equity provisions and an inclusive anti-racist curriculum (including compulsory courses on “diversity”) and pedagogy (Cruickshank, 2004; Quicho & Rios, 2000).
- Language assessment as well as programming must be integral to teacher education programs (a, 1996b, 1996; Court, 1999; Cruickshank, 2004; Mawhinney & Xu, 1997).
- Where IETs are ‘added on’ to existing programs/courses, they must not be made to wait until registration for ‘regular’ students is complete. Such practices position IETs in particular ways and also result in some IET candidates being excluded from requisite courses.
- IETs must be acknowledged as valuable resources with specific skills, experience and knowledge that can benefit other teacher education candidates, instructors, etc. in teacher education programs. IETs also have much to share with colleagues (teachers already in the school systems), school students, and communities at large (Quicho & Rios, 2000; Beynon, Ilieva, & Dichupa, 2004). Their skills, experience and knowledge can be included in specific (and increasingly systematic) ways such as guest speaking, workshops/discussion groups and/or ‘performance/workshops’ (for example, see Walsh & Brigham, 2007a; C.O.R.E, 2006).

Policy Implications

- All teacher education programs must take responsibility to ensure IETs are informed, recruited, and supported—not just those teacher education programs that are located in urban areas that currently receive the highest numbers of immigrants.
- Representatives from teacher education programs, provincial teacher certification/credentialing authorities, teachers’ associations/unions, and immigrant settlement groups as well as other stakeholders must work together to develop clear policies on ways to ensure that IETs are individually assessed and informed of requirements for certification/ credentialing.

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