

Book Review



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*Reviewed by Rita Kerekes<sup>1</sup>*

As the key to society's future, the nurturing and teaching of the developing generation is under constant surveillance in both domestic and international terms.

I have chosen this book in accordance with my research subject and the intent of broadening my knowledge of international literature researching the educator profession. I have found this particular piece online. "*The Global Status of Teachers and the Teaching Profession*" is an international study focused on the status and profession of teaching, exploring its different aspects and dimensions. In the vein of collective cooperation, "Education International" (EI) was founded in 1993. It is currently the largest organization of professionals composed of 32.5 million members, 401 subsidiaries across 174 nations. Professional standards such as ethics, rights and obligations, necessary skills, and expertise are included in the Policy Paper on Education, so as to help improve teaching quality and solve problems and questions. Nelly P. Stromquist's study explores exactly 100 items. It addresses all the most typical and most critical aspects of the profession: status, work conditions, carrier, and accountability/quality control. Subjects discussed include public education and privatization as well as a chapter dedicated to higher education. The study elaborates on how communication with trade unions and strategies can affect education policy. The book addresses both international and personal aspects of education and then draws its conclusions. The goal of the study is to share its findings with the expert committees of UNESCO/ILO. Every 3 years, EI explores the state

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<sup>1</sup> Faculty of Arts, Institute of Educational Studies and Cultural Management, University of Debrecen, Egyetem ter 1. 4032, Debrecen, Hungary, Email address: [k.kerekesrita@gmail.com](mailto:k.kerekesrita@gmail.com), ORCID: [0000-0002-4084-0077](https://orcid.org/0000-0002-4084-0077)

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and conditions of teachers as well as the professional part of their occupation. The book was released in 2018.

A seemingly simple book apart from its acknowledgements, foreword, and introduction only consists of two parts.

1. The status and working conditions of teachers – this module sees the inner contexts of the field, the segments experienced by everyone.
2. The outer environment affecting the field of education – this one, in turn, focuses on the outward forces.

On page 25 of the first module, there is a chapter on the shortage of teachers entitled “*The teaching career and its appeal*,” which I wish to elaborate. The education system is known throughout the globe for either exaggerated or lackluster backing of teachers depending on the region. The latter being a far more common occurrence.

Most nations suffer from a lack of teachers. Between 50% and 57% of responding organizations claimed, their country is facing some kind of shortage. Most common of these (shortages) are:

- lack of early educations: 25%
- lack of technical educations: 23%
- lack of high-school education: 20%
- lack of primary-school education: 19%

The report/survey has found two conflicting trends:

1. 62% more people are seeking jobs in educations than there are available positions.
2. 69% the field of education is not enticing for the young.

For example, Korea has identified a decline in students within the field of education which, in turn, led to fewer positions and jobs. The interest in the position of primary-school teachers is significantly low due to work conditions.

The fact that young people are not interested in becoming educators leads to these positions being filled by the elderly, which may not mean any problems so long as they possess proper experiences and qualities. Teachers in New Zealand, for example, have to

take part in annual training. According to regional data, more people are seeking a career in education than there are positions available in roughly 40% of European nations. And yet this same career only appeals to young people in merely 17% of the EU nations, those being: Switzerland, Denmark, Cyprus, and Ireland.

The field of education usually is not appealing to young people in developing countries. Why Not?

Not popular in Africa because of:

- lack of infrastructure
- low income
- lack of stability and security

Reasoning in Asia also included classes with high attendance. These same reasons were submitted from Latin America but with the added element that the young of the middle class is especially not motivated to teach.

The lack of interest in the field of teaching is notably challenging in regions of major poverty. In many countries, the greatest appeal of the educator profession is the status and perks of being a civil servant, which goes along with it. These perks include:

- sick days
- pension
- study leave
- sublet support

Civil servants, however, are banned from striking in numerous countries. Trade unions have given puzzling answers when asked about this: the above perks are only afforded in cases of full-time jobs, and those employed for part-time labor may only enjoy half of these.

The appeal of the field of education, career abandonment: leaving one's profession is a phenomenon quite often observed, in many different areas and regions. Among all the shortfalls of education, the shortage of teachers is easily the most evident phenomenon. Falling 71% short of their demand for teachers, African nations are the worst off. This shortage reaches 62% in Asia and 40% in Latin America.

Different levels of education see different levels of teacher shortages:

- 31% vocational schools
- 28% early child teacher
- and an immense 50% shortage among high schools and primary schools

The clearest reason for these is the fact that other jobs are far more lucrative, especially in the fields of industry. The appeal of the primary-school and high-school teacher professions needs to be amplified through political means. Industrializing countries influence career abandonment among teachers. According to a research conducted on 50,000 teachers in the USA in 2014, 41% of teachers will leave their jobs within 5 years. That rate is matched among policemen, but teachers are far more likely to leave their jobs as a nurse, college professor, a lawyer, or architect. Forty-five percent of those leaving their jobs complain about following work conditions:

- low salaries
- classroom equipment
- improvement possibilities
- student behavior
- low decision-making opportunities

Two third of the US teachers have specified low salaries, classroom sizes, stress, and a lack of mental support as reasons for quitting in another 2014 survey. As a result of this in 2017, over 100,000 classrooms in the US were filled with teachers without proper qualifications.

- lack of kindergarten teachers: Switzerland, Sweden, Great Britain, Slovakia, Spain, Oceania, and Asia (Japan, Sri Lanka, and Afghanistan)
- lack of primary-school teacher: Belgium
- lack of high-school teacher: Ireland, Great Britain, Holland, Algeria, Morocco, Kongo, Kenya, Togo, and Ivory Coast
- lack of primary- and high-school teachers: North America Africa (Kenya and Kamerun)

The teacher shortage is evident among different areas and different classes. An estimated 43%–48% of the shortage is aligned with the sciences, meaning both natural science and mathematics require more teachers. Among the areas of literature, reading, and languages, the shortage is considered moderate.

In summation, one third of European nations face a shortage of teachers. Every fifth nation has a lack of people to teach mathematics, irrelevant of any of countries' circumstances:

- Africa, Latin America (Chile and Brazil), Asia, New Zealand, and Afghanistan
- EU - more people are retiring and we are thus losing our reserves

Reasons for career abandonment, as reported from Africa, Asia, and Latin American nations, are low salaries, oversized classes, weak infrastructure, and the high number of special needs students.

All of this goes to show that maths and natural science teachers should be paid more appreciatively. Many among the leavers have shown impressive achievements. However, this profession is dropped mostly by the ill-prepared. Those people are more enticed by higher salaries. This proves especially true in centralized nations: Russia, China, and Cuba.

### **Study Conclusions**

1. Teacher union trades are complex organizations, also very diverse in terms of size, background, and ability to mobilize. Throughout their work, the experience they have earned carries insight into the education system and its challenges. The EI study exposed many critical elements that influence teachers' achievements. They have identified numerous trends concerning the topic that affects the field. They found:
  - the number of unqualified teachers throughout the globe on the rise;
  - the quality of education is on a decline because people just are not interested to pursue this career;
  - we are reaching a significant lack of educators, high schools especially;
  - the legal state of teachers is changing, they are switching from stable employment to part-time jobs and fixed-term contracts;
  - state education is losing support;

- the privatization of education is expanding.

These trends are observable throughout the world and will most likely bear negative effects on the quality of education. These trends have continued and even escalated, according to the 2015 study conducted on the state of teachers. These statements have affirmed educational forecasts, which suggest that by the year 2030, primary schools will require 2.3 million teachers and high schools will require 5.1 million. The reduction stated shows the rising trend of ill-prepared teachers and the decline of professional teachers. The 2016 study suggests a need of 69 million teachers, if we are to ensure quality education by 2030.

## 2. Financing and support system

State funding for education is limited: primary schools receive most of the funds followed by high schools leaving higher education with what little remains. But the financial problem is not about division, but the fact that the overall sum afforded to education is much too low. This insufficient state backing has led to the birth of private universities. The privatization of education has accelerated and although the salaries of teachers in the private sector are not established in law, trade unions suspect an upcoming positive trend, and the state will monitor the qualification of teachers in this sector. Let it be said, the negative effect similar to those in education is evident in many other social sectors.

Teachers are the keys to quality education. If they are to meet the high expectations of our modern days, they will need a supportive environment including proper work conditions, constant professional improvements along with training, and enough time to prepare. Educators within higher learning are negatively affected by the changes within the labor market. There are several parallel processes, such as low-quality education, the declining numbers of civil servant teachers, and the increasing numbers of fixed-term contracts. These trends are far more evident in industrial countries. The ill-qualified are growing in numbers and are not being paid salaries high enough to attract anyone of greater talent to their positions. According to trade unions, there is a significant distance between state rhetoric and what is actually being done to fix the education system, given the low salaries one would expect training to be free of charge. There have of course been some proactive and optimistic changes: trade unions have taken numerous steps, many of which aim to induce political change, others to innovate the trades themselves.

Some effective steps recommended by the EI:

1. Starting a conversation between the employing associations, the state, and the workers in the following subjects:

- the rising number of untrained teachers is a serious issue
  - the state needs to take action for the sake of quality education
  - collect, create, and publish the statistic regarding the number of teachers who do not fit the minimum qualifications required. This would help realize what the necessary actions are: what training courses are teachers in need of. This would help improve the efforts made for the education system, raise the number of teachers, ensure employment of the ideal person, which in turn guarantees quality.
2. Another problem is the legal state of teachers. The declining number of full-time educators opposed to the increment of those working part-time or with fixed-term contracts that show a growing trend across the globe. The same applies to higher education.
  3. The EI study affirms that teacher shortage is the most concerning problem, despite numbers varying among regions. This scarcity leads to oversized classes. There are two reasons for the lack of experience: teacher-training programs have decelerated when compared to their evident need. Numerous governments show little to no effort to try and change that. This needs an answer right now. Improving the general quality of the education market is the government's responsibility, which should be providing complete support for the sake of constant improvement. This has been established prior within UNESCO suggestions of 1966 and 1997. The trade union has to keep pressuring the ministries as well as launching their own programs wherever resources are available to set an example for the state.
  4. Education quality is at a critical low in every nation, actions need to be taken if we are to maintain high quality. According to trade unions, the state of teachers needs improvement as well as broadening their independence. Raising their salary also needs consideration.
  5. Rising private education: the trend of cheap private schools is expanding in developing countries; there is also such a thing as virtual schools. Privatization comes with many threats, one being their magnitude, as these schools single-handedly alter the education system; they also have better publicity than state-funded schools. The state is keen to ignore its obligation of free education. It often passes that responsibility to the private sector. The state ought to monitor such businesses, despite them being profit-oriented, and should maintain people's right for free education.

6. Trade union actions: statistics for teacher qualifications. A highly advisable study: what factors lead to an educator's success? Teachers too carry the burden of protecting their profession, ensure its independence, a moral code is needed as well as the use of appropriate standards. UNESCO 1966 suggests filling this role within organizations. These standards could help improve the state of the teaching profession. Many trade unions have developed such standards. EI and UNESCO are currently at work on such shared to standards, which in turn will help all nations develop their own unique standards. Trade unions need to continue to expand the role of women in education authorities. They need to realize that most teachers are women and should thus serve more leading roles within these unions. They should also conduct qualitative studies, with which they can affect decision-making and education. The supportive and collaborative relations between organizations and the state would also be worth examining. For example, what conflict occurred between two organizations? How often do they meet? Key phrases: the status of the civil servant, profession, and successful union trade actions.