

## Teacher and Student Attitudes to Affective Education: a European collaborative research project

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**ABSTRACT** *This article reports on the outcomes of a comparative research project examining teacher and student attitudes to affective education across Europe. Affective education is defined as the aspect of the educational process that is concerned with the feelings, values, beliefs, attitudes and emotional well-being of learners. The article begins with a consideration of some of the conceptual issues in affective education and its diversity across Europe as a basis for stressing the relevance of cross-cultural comparisons. It then offers a general picture of the findings of the present research project, draws a number of tentative conclusions from this and ends with a reference to issues requiring further research in comparative work on affective education.*

### Introduction

A significant dimension of teaching and the educational process is concerned with the feelings, beliefs, attitudes and emotions of students, with their emotional literacy, interpersonal relationships and social skills, i.e. with the non-cognitive aspects of students' development (Marland, 1980; Pring, 1984; Lang & Marland, 1985; Watkins *et al.*, 1991; Woods, 1994; Power, 1996; Halstead & Taylor, 1996; Lang *et al.*, 1998). This dimension generally involves a concern for students' moral, spiritual and values development. Teachers' moral and personal commitments to the education especially of young children seem to remain strong even in periods of curricular transformations; e.g. primary school teachers in England tend to be concerned about the children in their class in social, emotional and physical terms, as well as intellectually (Pollard *et al.*, 1994; Osborn *et al.*, 1997; Day, 2000). Recent policy initiatives in Europe have laid considerable stress on the significance of such issues for a rounded education; these have been labelled in a variety of ways: personal and social education, moral education, education in values, the education of the whole child, counselling and pastoral care amongst other things (Laeng, 1990; Fernandez & Mayordomo, 1993; Lang, 1995; Best *et al.*, 1995; Best, 1996, 1998; Evans *et al.*, 1997; Campos & Menezes, 1998; Crucillá, 1998; Katz, 1998).

The capacity to work in teams and in collaboration with others is often mentioned in educational texts dealing with the demands of future schools. In Caldwell's (2000) theoretical design for a school for a knowledge society, he claims the concept of 'pastoral care' of students to be as important as ever in schools using electronic networking and having literally no boundaries. A future student is not a loner with a laptop, but a member of several teams. A future teacher will in this vision work together with a wide range of professionals. Hargreaves (1994) points out that one of the emergent and most promising metaparadigms of the postmodern age is that of collaboration as an articulating and integrating principle of action, planning, culture, development, organisation and research. Within teacher cultures, he distinguishes collaborative culture, where sharing, trust, support and joint work are in use.

This article describes a comparative study of affective education across England, Finland, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Israel, Italy, the Netherlands, Northern Ireland, Portugal and Spain. The research grew out of an established collaboration between members of the European Affective Education Network (Lang, 1997). Our previous research has indicated that affective education developed in these countries in various ways (Lang *et al.*, 1998): in some cases, such as England, it has a history going back to the last century while in others, for example, Italy, Portugal and Spain, its development has been relatively recent; in some countries, affective education is the concern of a specific teacher or specialist (Denmark—class teacher, and Israel—educational counsellor); whereas in other countries it is a cross-curricular responsibility (England, Finland and Greece). In Spain, the new educational reforms advocate that ethical and moral education should enter every school subject on the curriculum and into the very 'climate' of the school, rather than being confined to one particular subject. However, it seems that the teaching staff in state schools are fairly unclear about the actual meaning of communal and civic values and that the teaching staff in private schools share the very ideology on which the schools were founded (Ossenbach-Sauter, 1996).

A major advantage of comparative research is that it allows for a deeper comprehension of one's own educational system by contrast with other national systems (Postlethwaite, 1988), and also permits us to 'identify and analyse similarities and differences in education systems, processes and outcomes with a view to assisting in the solution of identified problems and/or in the future development of educational policy and practice', and also 'help[s] us to better understand the nature of the relationships between education, and the broader social, political and economic sectors of society' (Crossley & Broadfoot, 1992, p. 106). Therefore, the main purpose of the project was to provide a European perspective on affective education, to identify similarities and differences between the views of teachers on the affective dimension of education and to explore the expectations of students in the area.

### **Affective Education Defined**

In this article, we use 'affective education' to refer to the process as well as the product, and this distinguishes the concept from the purely academic: for instance, emphasis on 'achievement' generally implies the predominance of the product. The 'affective education' of students depends on simultaneous attention being granted to the educational *process* (e.g. relations between students and between students and teachers, classroom and school climate) and to the *products* (e.g. students' skills, dispositions and behaviours). Therefore, affective education is not only the task of a specific teacher or school specialist, but must be seen as a cross-curricular concern of all school profession-

als: the transformation of the 'hidden curriculum' into an area for open and critical debate, and a discourse about the shared ethical principles of the school are key elements in affective education (Freire, 1972; Beane, 1990; Hargreaves, 1994).

From the teacher's perspective, the affective dimension of education imposes a range of different tasks and responsibilities, which involve both direct interaction with the students and indirect intervention at different levels (Pring *et al.*, 1987; Lang, 1997), namely:

- (a) attention to individual students, to their self-esteem, emotional literacy, social skills, and their life and career plans;
- (b) concern with the nature and quality of interactions within the groups in which students work and relate;
- (c) concern for the quality of the climate and ethos of the school or educational institution itself, the guidance and support it offers students, its care and concern in relation to their welfare.

Seen in these ways, affective education may be *actively* promoted by the school or constitute an *incidental* consequence of other initiatives taken by the school or its staff and students (Marland, 1980; Pring, 1984; Brandes & Ginnis, 1993). Educational research has suggested that where affective education is actively undertaken, it produces immediate and long-term effects, involving both affective and academic dimensions: for example, the development of good interpersonal relationships within student groups leads to the creation of a better learning environment (short term) (Lang, 1995; Best, 1996), whilst at the same time generating consequences for enhanced attainment on strict measures of academic outcomes and improved capacities for learners to engage with social groups (longer term) (Watkins *et al.*, 1991; Nixon *et al.*, 1996). Similarly, a positive school climate open to students' participation is argued to lead to greater motivation and decrease the likelihood of alienation (short term), whilst in the longer term it leads to the development of emotional maturity that is likely to improve the quality of the students' adult life (Ribbins 1985; Pring *et al.*, 1987; Bottery, 1990).

Concern with the affective dimension is a common characteristic of the education systems of Europe and beyond (Beairisto, 1994; Pring 1996; Power, 1996; Marland & Rogers, 1997; Lang *et al.*, 1998; Bajunid, 2000). However, the extent of this concern and the manner in which it is articulated appear to vary significantly, both between educational systems and within institutions in the same educational system. Not only the terminology used to identify it varies from one country to another (Heimlich, 1988; Lang, 1995), but also the policy priority attached to it varies both across and within systems (Lang *et al.*, 1998). On the one hand, it is acknowledged that a rounded comprehension of the educational process depends on acknowledging the significance of the affective dimension. On the other, there is a relative paucity of analytical frameworks, common terminology and empirical data with which to specify either the nature of the affective dimension within and across educational systems or the nature of the relationship between affective education and other elements in the educational process in different systems. When teachers and researchers in different settings refer to affective education or to personal and social education or to tutorial work, it is simply unclear whether they mean the same things. When administrators or teachers refer to the caring responsibilities of the teacher or the school, it is unclear whether there is a joint understanding of what the boundaries, the logic and limits of such responsibilities might be. Besides, cross-cultural differences further exacerbate these differences in understanding.

## Methodology

### *General Design*

Because of the issues mentioned earlier, decisions on the design of the research, the choice of data collection methods and the development of the research instrument were made after thorough discussions. Several threats to the validity and reliability of the findings were identified and dealt with before the main phase of the research began. Since we wanted to explore whether affective education was generally conceived as a significant responsibility of teachers in the various countries, we decided to analyse teachers' and students' views on this issue on a scale large enough for statistical analysis.

Although a number of the research team came from a qualitative background (e.g. Husbands & Lang, 2000), they agreed that the only practical way of collecting data from the range of countries involved in the study was to adopt a questionnaire approach, despite their reservations about its validity. All methods in educational research have their limitations, or, as King (1987, p. 243) remarks, 'There is no best method in the sociology of education, only suitable and feasible methods'. Indeed, qualitative scholars Denzin & Lincoln (1998, p. 218) conclude that the metaphor of the 'paradigm war' is undoubtedly overdrawn, and continuing dialogue among paradigm proponents will 'afford the best avenue for moving toward a responsive and congenial relationship'. The research team decided to proceed with a series of research meetings and open discussion during all stages of the research project, ending with a joint research report.

### *Research Tasks*

Following our definition of affective education as referring both to the educational process and products, the research addressed the following questions.

- To what extent do teachers conceive their educational tasks as including affective dimensions?
- To what extent do students conceive the tasks of their teachers as including affective dimensions?
- To what extent do teachers conceive affective outcomes as a relevant result of the educational process?
- To what extent do students conceive affective outcomes as a relevant result of the educational process?

Obviously, a major aim was to explore not only the differences between students and teachers, but also to analyse differences across cultures.

### *Sample*

Members of the research team selected purposive samples in their countries of approximately 125 teachers and about 180 students. The age range of students was limited to 11–12 years (elementary/primary schools) and 15–16 years (secondary schools), accepting the fact that any class which is mainly of those two specific age groups might also include some slightly older and younger students. As far as feasible, male and female numbers were to be equal. Teachers were selected from among those teaching the two age groups of students selected. The samples were drawn from several primary and secondary schools in each country in what could generally be described as urban settings. The complexity of cross-national and cross-cultural comparisons suggested the

need for some homogeneity of setting at this stage of the research: urban schools were chosen as being the predominant type in most countries. Within this general framework, two more criteria were applied: first, that all participant schools would be co-educational and represent the main type/types of school found in a particular country, and second, that neither school should be exceptional in terms of socio-economic intake, examination results, or other key variables.

Although, for instance, schools which captured particular national characteristics (for example, remote rural schools) might clarify differences between countries, in an era of mobility in Europe they would not be those which migrants from one country to another would be likely to encounter. The 'typical' schools of a given country are more important in educational terms than the 'atypical', especially for a study which aimed to make comparisons in an area where there was little existing knowledge base. For the purpose of comparing attitudes across Europe, we therefore decided to study the typical.

The total sample consisted of 1507 teachers and 2230 students from England, Finland, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Israel, Italy, the Netherlands, Northern Ireland, Portugal and Spain (German student data was not received). Each of the researchers in the team made the final choice of schools in their own country, after screening those available that met the criteria outlined earlier. They also tried to choose the most appropriate period in the school year to administer the questionnaires, bearing in mind other demands on schools' time. The constraints were discussed by the research team to ensure that data were collected only under conditions which would not interfere with the external validity of the study.

### *Instrument*

The instrument that was eventually used was developed in a series of research team meetings, where a pool of Likert-type statements was created, drawing on relevant literature as well as the team members' experience and expertise; the items finally incorporated in the questionnaire were selected according either to their general suitability or particular relevance to educational practice in each country. A detailed examination of each statement led to the elimination of items that were overlapping, confusing or too general. The final questionnaire also included a section on biographical information.

The items were based on the following four themes that emerged from our analysis of affective education in the participating countries:

- promotion of students' personal and social development (e.g. 'teachers should encourage students to respect themselves and others' or 'to be concerned about the environment' or 'to express their feelings');
- prevention of students' problems (e.g. 'teachers should do something if they suspect a child is being abused');
- encouragement of parental involvement in the school (e.g. 'parents should be involved in the work of the classroom');
- promotion of a whole-school positive climate (e.g. 'teachers should promote a caring atmosphere in the school' or 'a sense of belonging').

Additionally, some items reflected traditional teaching tasks, either academic ('inform students about their academic progress') or discipline related ('teachers should promote positive classroom behaviour'). The teacher questionnaire was devised first, and the

language modified where necessary in the pupil questionnaire to make it easier to understand where teacher and pupil questions were matched.

The questionnaire was translated into the national languages, after intense discussions ensured that the concepts behind the questions were presented identically in all languages. There were two problems here. Firstly, languages differ in the concepts which they can readily communicate. Secondly, cultures vary in their emphases, and, where a concept is foreign to a culture, it will require more careful definition than where it is familiar. For example, it was found that the concept of 'fairness' in English would require fuller definition in other languages if the identical meaning was to be transmitted. In each country, the original English questionnaire and the translated version were analysed by bilingual experts who checked the validity of the translation; additionally, a number of teachers and students in each country were asked about the acceptability and checks were made for reliability, and transferability.

On the completion of the pilot phase, the research team met to eliminate items which the piloting process deemed ambiguous, inappropriate or unnecessary, and to develop a final version of both questionnaires. The teacher questionnaire consisted of nine questions asking for biographical and school-related information (section one), 45 items investigating the affective responsibilities of teachers and others in the school environment (section two), 26 items exploring satisfaction and dissatisfaction associated with the schooling experience (section three), and 20 items looking at values and qualities (section four). The student questionnaire consisted of three questions asking for biographical information (section one), 42 items investigating students' affective expectations from their teachers (section two), two items asking how much students enjoy school (section three), and 20 items looking at values and qualities (section four). In all sections but the first, both teachers and students were asked to indicate on a Likert scale how much they agreed or disagreed with each statement; 7 was the highest value point and corresponded with fully agree, 1 was the lowest value point and denoted total disagreement, while four served as a point of neutrality.

### *Procedure*

Questionnaires were administered to students in a classroom situation, and were given to teachers individually during school time.

The analysis of the results was carried out in the University of Warwick Institute of Education by the Warwick team with on-line support from and consultation with the other members of the research group. The data were analysed using SPSS for Windows 6.1. After a thorough exploratory data analysis, which included descriptive statistics and graphical output, sections on teachers' responsibilities and affective outcomes were submitted to factor analysis, where missing variables were deleted pairwise and the primary extraction used the principal components method with the limit for eigenvalues set at 1 and the number of factors set to 3. The effect of these steps was to use as much of the data as possible—respondents were not omitted because they had failed to answer one question—and to give primary factor groupings which were comprehensive (the analysis was forced to group answers into three factors rather than producing a large number of factors relating to specific countries or questions) and distinctive (questions which did not fit a factor closely were excluded). Kaiser's varimax rotation was used and only loadings above 0.30 were retained. The effect of the rotation was to further sharpen the groupings and accentuate their distinctiveness. The reliability of the factor groupings was checked by Cronbach's alpha with a criterion for acceptance of 0.75 or above. The

average ratings for the items on each factor were calculated for teachers and students in each country and are displayed in Figs 1–4; in these figures, the horizontal axis is set at the same value for teachers and students to facilitate comparisons.

### Major Findings: a framework for affective education in Europe?

A number of patterns emerged from the analysis. A general trend was identified, which indicates that teachers across the study countries do not consider teaching to reside solely in the delivery of the academic curriculum, and also that students expect their teachers to be concerned with their affective development as well as their intellectual growth.

Secondly, notwithstanding variations between countries, genders and subgroups, the general tendency across Europe appears to be that teachers see affective education as part of *their* role. This is especially true for aspects such as the promotion of effective communication skills, the preparation of students for responsible citizenship in a democracy and the raising of awareness with regard to environmental, cultural and equality issues.

Thirdly, there is a tendency for teachers and, to a lesser degree, students from different countries to maintain a consistent rating pattern. That is, some countries (Greece is the extreme example) tend to rate items at a consistently higher level, whereas other countries tend to rate items at a consistently lower level (Hungary is the extreme example). This optimistic versus pessimistic tendency might be related to cultural differences, since Mediterranean countries tend to be on the positive pole, and north and central European countries tend to fall on the negative pole, but is also probably connected to specific social phenomena: at the time of testing, Greek teachers had just received a significant rise in their salaries, whereas Hungarian teachers were expressing major discontent with their professional and socio-economic-political situation (Falus & Kotschy, 1999). Finally, it should be noted that teachers invariably rate items higher than students, which is a known phenomenon in educational research (Raviv *et al.*, 1990). This means that students tend to be more critical of most aspects of formal education than teachers, who represent the adult, more conservative and professional attitudes towards education.

#### *Teacher's Responsibilities*

For the teachers' sample, three reliable, interpretable factors emerged: the first was conceptualised as *positive classroom climate*, the second as *prevention and support* and the third as *parental involvement* (see Table I).

In all countries, teachers consider maintaining a positive classroom climate to be their most relevant responsibility, followed by prevention and support and parental involvement (Fig. 1). By placing these three factors on the same baseline, Fig. 1 shows both that there is general agreement between countries on their relative importance, and differences between countries regarding the relative importance especially of the last two factors. Greeks gave both of them higher ratings than any other national group, and Israeli, Italian and English teachers scored relatively higher than the Northern Irish, Irish, Dutch and Spanish teachers. Hungarians gave both factors the lowest ratings in the sample—though without reaching the point of rating them unimportant. The tendency for teachers to place a low value on parental involvement could be an indication of caution towards parents and scepticism regarding the implications that their involvement can have.

TABLE I. Factors of items on teacher responsibility. Teachers' responses,  $n = 1507$ . (Factor loadings, principal components, varimax rotation)

Indicative items	Factor I	Factor II	Factor III
Help pupils develop responsibility for their own learning	0.65		
Encourage pupils' self-confidence	0.61		
Monitor and give feedback on student academic progress	0.60		
Promote pupils' academic achievement	0.60		
Foster the talents of each pupil	0.56		
Encourage pupils to develop appropriate study skills	0.52		
Promote positive communication within the class	0.52		
Promote positive classroom behaviour	0.51		
Promote equal opportunities for all	0.50		
Promote respect for self and others	0.49		
Teach in a way that allows all pupils to experience success	0.46		
Encourage pupils' self-awareness	0.45		
Find time to listen to pupils	0.45		
Encourage knowledge of and respect for other cultures	0.44		
Encourage the development of pupils' communication skills	0.44		
Prepare students for responsible citizenship in a democracy	0.42		
Promote a caring atmosphere in the school	0.42		
Recognise signs of abuse (sexual, physical) and taking action		0.73	
Recognise signs of abuse (drugs, alcohol) and taking action		0.73	
Offer pupils the opportunity to express feelings		0.62	
Support students with family problems		0.62	
Promote activities for prevention of abuse		0.56	
Offer support to a pupil who has a personal problem		0.51	
Help pupils to develop the skills of personal and interpersonal problem-solving		0.51	
Promote the development of pupils' social skills		0.51	
Promote the personal development of pupils		0.48	
Work with colleagues and/or other specialists to try to solve pupil problems		0.44	
Involve parents in the school's academic life			0.68
Involve parents in the school's social life			0.67
Promote parental collaboration in the classroom			0.65
Encourage parental involvement in students' homework			0.57
Establish good communication with parents			0.57
Having knowledge of pupils' home background and social environment			0.46
Mediate in issues that arise between pupils and other teachers			0.44
Discuss individual pupils' progress with parents			0.40

The factor structure of the students' responses in this section agreed closely with those of teachers and the three emerging factors were again named as *positive classroom climate*, *prevention and support* and *parental involvement* (see Table II).

The pattern described for the teachers was repeated, that is, students gave very high ratings to the positive classroom climate factor, with prevention and support following while parental involvement was seen as a relatively low priority (Fig. 2). The baseline used is the same as that for the teachers in Fig. 1, making clear both that students had a similar order of priorities to their teachers, and that they scored less enthusiastically than their teachers, but with a similar order of priorities. In accordance with their teachers, Hungarian students scored in the positive classroom climate and parental



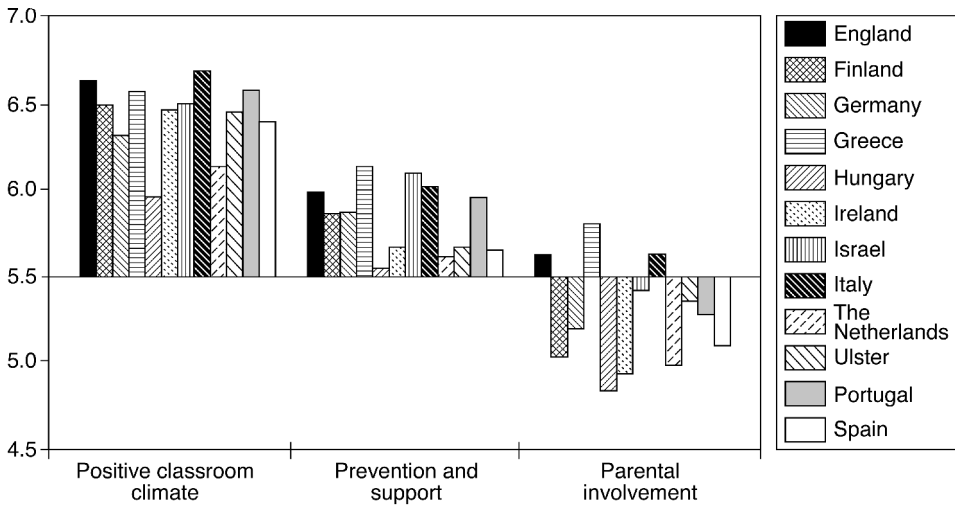


Fig. 1. Means by country of scores on teacher responsibilities factors. Ratings of teachers,  $n = 1507$ . Scale from 7 = most positive to 1 = least positive.

involvement factors lower than any other group, but their ratings in the prevention and support factor were significantly higher than those of their teachers. Interestingly, the Portuguese students gave the highest ratings for both positive classroom climate and prevention and support, while Greeks scored higher than any other group in the parental involvement factor. In several countries, students stressed the prevention and support factor more than their teachers, the indication being that students expect more from their teachers in this area than they currently receive.

### *Educational Outcomes*

Teacher responses in the fourth section, which examined what personal and social characteristics respondents felt students should develop in school, produced three factors. The first covered *social characteristics*, the second *autonomy* and the third *personal development* (see Table III).

In most countries, social values were given top priority, with the autonomy factor following closely, and the promotion of personal characteristics coming third (Fig. 3). As in Fig. 1, all countries are placed on the same baseline to allow comparison between factors, and between teachers and students. In Hungary, personal development was valued above autonomy, and in Greece, autonomy was considered the most important factor. However, the differences reported here are very small; mean factor scores are quite high, which indicates that the general feeling across Europe is that affective goals are an intrinsic part of education.

In the analysis of the student responses, only two factors met the alpha criterion of reliability. These two factors were conceptualised as *social characteristics* and *personal development*; it should be noted that several items from the autonomy factor in the analysis of the teachers' responses were included in the social factor in the student analysis (see Table IV).

The common axis makes clear that students rated values much lower than their

TABLE II. Factors of items on teacher responsibility. Students' responses,  $n = 2230$ . (Factor loadings, principal components, varimax rotation)

Indicative items	Factor I	Factor II	Factor III
Teachers should teach in a way that allows all students to experience success	0.58		
Teachers should check and give information to students about their academic progress	0.57		
Teachers should promote positive classroom behaviour	0.54		
Teachers should help pupils who are not working well	0.54		
Teachers should encourage pupils to learn how to study	0.53		
Teachers should promote positive communication within the class	0.53		
Teachers should make sure that all pupils get a fair chance	0.52		
Teachers should promote a caring atmosphere in the school	0.52		
Teachers should build good relationships between themselves and their pupils	0.50		
Teachers should promote a sense of belonging in the school	0.49		
Teachers should offer support for pupils with family problems		0.67	
Teachers should offer you support if you have a personal problem		0.56	
Teachers should do something if they suspect a child is being abused		0.53	
Teachers should teach children how to protect themselves from abuse		0.48	
Your class teacher should support you if you have problems with other teachers		0.47	
Teachers should work with other teachers to try to solve pupil problems		0.46	
Teachers should encourage you in the things you are really good at		0.45	
Teachers should help students to learn how to solve their problems		0.43	
Parents should be involved in social activities at school			0.71
Parents should be involved in the work of the classroom			0.64
Teachers should have good contacts with your parents			0.62
Teachers should discuss individual students' progress with parents			0.62
Teachers should encourage your parents to take an interest in your homework			0.56
Your school should have information on your home situation			0.47

teachers, the first sign of a divergence which runs through this section (Fig. 4). Like teachers, students tended to stress the promotion of social characteristics more than personal development, the only exception being the Portuguese students, who placed more emphasis on the personal factor (Fig. 4). Beyond this convergence, there is little connection within countries between teacher and student ratings in this section, a finding that might reflect differences in developmental status, a cultural gap between the two generations or even divergent conceptions on the role of the school in promoting these affective education outcomes.

Discussion

The main result of the study is that both teachers and students saw the educational responsibilities of teachers as consisting of three main groups of tasks: (1) creating a positive classroom climate and promoting equal learning opportunities for all, (2) recognising signs of abuse and supporting students with problems, and (3) involving parents in the school's life. For the theoretical development of affective education, three basic and distinctive areas can be seen: the classroom and school climate, the individual student and the parents/home. The general understanding of the functions of school was

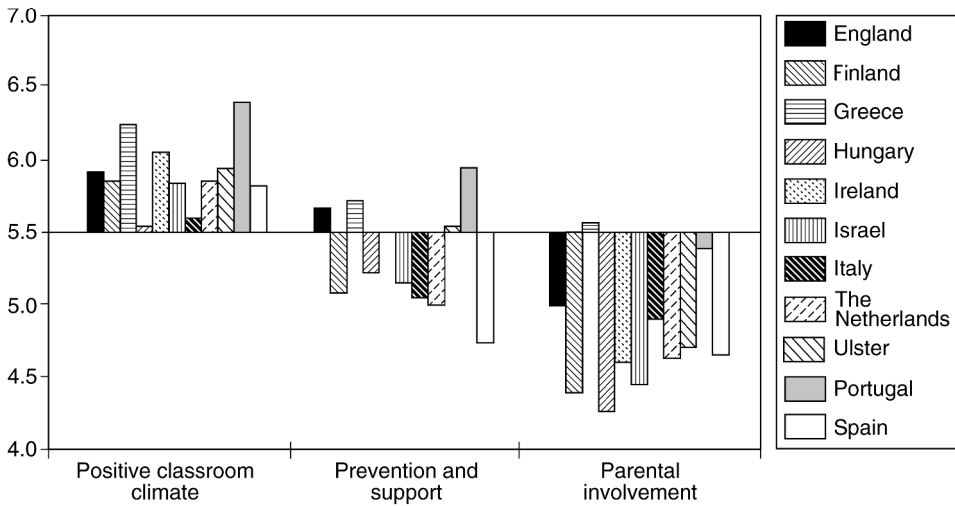


Fig. 2. Means by country of scores on student responsibilities factors. Ratings of students,  $n = 2230$ . Scale from 7 = most positive to 1 = least positive.

not purely academic but reflecting a broad view on education. The kind of affective education that aims at finding active responses to crucial problems of students' life was seen as an important element of school education across the 12 European countries of the study, although there were variations between countries as to the importance that was put on these issues.

Furthermore, students and teachers shared similar views about the student characteristics that schools should promote. They rated social and moral characteristics like honesty, fairness and respect for others as more important than personal characteristics like motivation for life, openness, flexibility and creativity. Also, a third dimension appeared from the answers of teachers: they valued highly aims like promoting critical thinking, personal autonomy, democratic citizenship and responsibility.

Affective education, as here defined, covers the educational responsibilities and tasks

TABLE III. Factors of values and qualities items. Teachers' responses,  $n = 1507$ . (Factor loadings, principal components, varimax rotation)

Indicative items	Factor I	Factor II	Factor III
Honesty	0.79		
Moral values	0.71		
Fairness	0.61		
Respect for others	0.58		
Motivation for life		0.67	
Openness		0.64	
Flexibility		0.64	
Creativity		0.62	
Critical thinking			0.76
Personal autonomy			0.68
Democratic citizenship			0.67
Responsibility			0.53

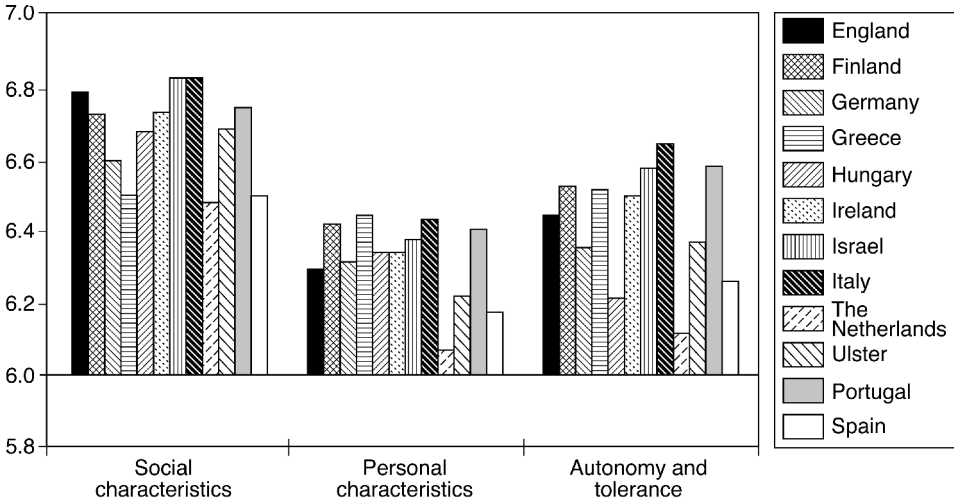


FIG. 3. Means by country of scores on personal and social characteristics factors. Ratings of teachers,  $n = 1507$ . Scale from 7 = most positive to 1 = least positive.

of a teacher concerning the general well-being of students and to his/her class. These responsibilities contain both product (the student characteristics and values that schools should promote) and process factors of teaching (teachers' tasks in school), and can be seen as shared educational tasks of all teachers and other staff in a school. Attention is given to students' self-esteem, social skills, and to the nature and quality of interactions within the groups in which students work and relate, and to concern for the quality of the climate and ethos of the school or educational institution. As a philosophical response to the new British curriculum, White (1990) used value aims which were surprisingly similar to the three dimensions of the student characteristics of our study: (1) personal well-being or personal flourishing, (2) moral and altruistic concern, and (3) personal autonomy. He states that these categories should form the basis for all teaching and also for defining targets of individual subjects, and, furthermore:

The challenge comes in trying to bind together these categories despite their reluctance to be more closely interconnected. My response to the challenge is

TABLE IV. Factors of values and qualities items. Students' responses,  $n = 1507$ . (Factor loadings, principal components, varimax rotation)

Indicative items	Factor I	Factor II
Honesty	0.79	
Effective social skills	0.71	
Responsibility	0.61	
Personal autonomy	0.58	
Motivation for life		0.69
Perseverance		0.63
Flexibility		0.61
Openness		0.58
Creativity		0.54

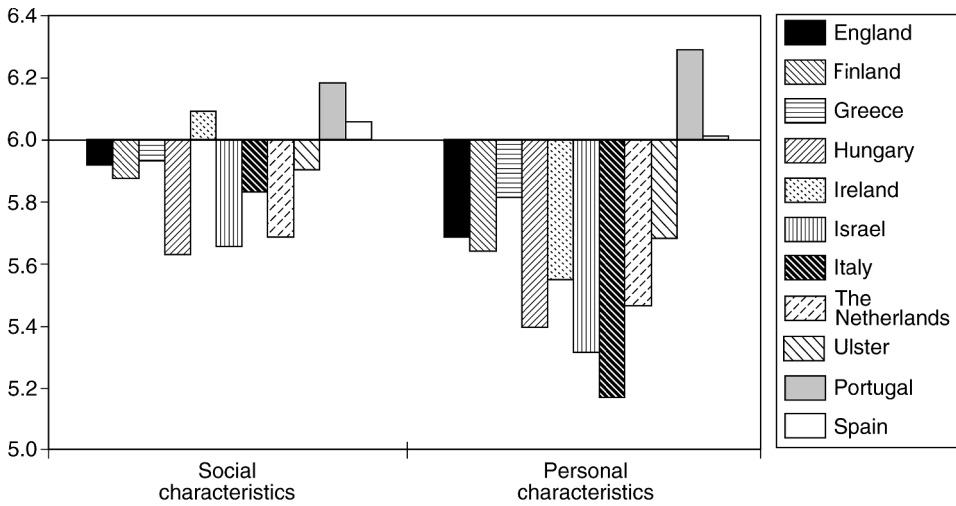


FIG. 4. Means by country of scores on personal and social characteristics factors. Ratings of students,  $n = 2230$ . Scale from 7 = most positive to 1 = least positive.

to argue that *from the contemporary educator's point of view*, but not necessary from any other, it makes good sense to think of the child's well-being both as embracing a concern for others' flourishing and as premised on a self-determined life. (1990, p. 9)

The results of our study demonstrate that teachers and students think that there should be a clear element of social behaviour within moral—or to use the same concept as White—altruistic concerns. However, the order of importance of the value categories is different: the respondents placed more value on the promotion of social and moral characteristics than on personal ones, an order of priorities which is consistent with present scholarly discussion and views on the tasks of future teachers. Beare (2001) describes a visionary, although disputable, view of future education where schools are no longer physical entities, but services, and teachers no more 'multifunctional, omni-capable, "mother-hens"' (p. 190). Despite this, the school continues to be concerned about students' personal development, about their beliefs and values and their social interactions and skills. Beare maintains that even in a future society of knowledge-based work, education involves learning to become responsible citizens: '[Each student] is communally responsible and morally compromised, simultaneously' (2001, p. 20). The three-dimensional task of promoting the development of young people towards autonomous individuals who can act as responsible members of groups, communities, and within wider social contexts remains also in future at the heart of the teaching profession.

The discussion about social and moral education, the responsibilities of public education and the tasks of teachers takes various forms and seems to be expanding both at theoretical and empirical levels in many countries. From the theoretical viewpoint, Breitborde & Swiniarski (1999) from the USA discuss the tension in public education between the goals of enlightening individuals and improving society—in other words, (individual) constructivism vs. (social) reconstructivism—their conclusion is to break down the dichotomy and link individual consciousness to social cohesion; Shields (2000) from Canada uses the notion of communities of difference in order to theorise the importance of social aspects of education; Chronaki (1999) sees in mathematics

education and research from an international perspective a shift towards 'social' orientation, which includes the use of pedagogical methods such as collaborative work and peer interaction but also the problematising of broader issues such as multiculturalism, technology and pupils' socialisation in mathematics classrooms. Likewise, Olson *et al.* (1999) present an overview on projects of science, mathematics and technology education in 13 Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) countries and conclude that the professional role of subject teachers as experts is changing towards a student-centred approach, and in addition to the new pedagogical orientation, the curriculum must contain more economic, ethical and social contents.

Among recent empirical studies of the field, Ban & Cummings (1999) compare moral orientations and pedagogical practices in the USA and Japan and start by pointing out that in both countries there has been a noticeable revival of interest in moral and character education: one of their findings was that Japanese teachers were reluctant to stress abstract virtues like 'respect others' or to be 'honest with others'—things that were seen to be most important by both teachers and students in our research. European reports by Morais & Rocha (1999) and by Ogden (2000) serve as examples of growing pedagogical research interest on aspects of affective education: Morais & Rocha studied teachers' practice as related to the development of children's socio-affective competences in Portugal, and Ogden continues the UK discussion of teacher-centred and mainly individual group work and reports a study on children's developing capacity on reciprocal interaction and their ability to collaborate. In Finland, the broad social and moral aims needed in the future education of responsible and autonomous citizens are emphasised by several researchers (Niemi, 1999a; Hytönen, 1999; Tirri, 1999).

This brief literature review seems to indicate the same as our research findings: the heavy push of market values and competitive individualism into school education during the 1990s is weakening at the turn of the millennium. 'Value drift' from inclusive comprehensive ideals towards a competitive market ideology (Ball, 1997) may have been reversed, but to make this generalisation may be an oversimplification without further study. Alternative explanations are obvious: perhaps the educational, scholarly discussion about 'value drift' has never actually entered into classroom reality; perhaps main discussants of the field have represented countries where the phenomenon has been more evident than in some other societies; perhaps the 'value drift' from market values to comprehensive values and back is more evident at secondary level than in primary schools. Comparative research that combines macro-level sociological analysis with micro-level pedagogical research about the practices in schools will cast more light on these questions.

Affective education as operationalised in our study relates strongly to research on teachers' practical knowledge and pedagogical thinking. This research tradition might also benefit from comparative analysis between countries. In the Netherlands, Beijgaard *et al.* (1999) have carried out empirical research using a three-dimensional model of teachers' identity (subject matter, didactic concerns and pedagogical dimensions). Pedagogical aspects contained knowledge and skills to support students' social, emotional and moral development. The conclusion from their qualitative data was that secondary school teachers start with subject matter and didactic concerns, but most teachers in their data saw their professional style as a combination of all three aspects of teaching, thus giving support to our study.

Kansanen *et al.* (2000) develop a model of teachers' pedagogical thinking that is based on the idea of teaching as a normative and moral profession. Despite differing empirical methods, their findings evidence two interesting cultural differences in the belief systems

concerning the role of a teacher: first, Finnish student teachers and supervisors produced an 'Affective emphasis factor', which the German data lacked and second, German student teachers and supervisors produced a factor of 'Personal views' describing the teacher's political and religious views. The personal views factor was missing from the Finnish data. These findings cast some doubt on the validity of our results, but may be caused by different types of respondents (in our case, teachers in real schools; in their case, student teachers and their lecturers). However, the most important role factor of Kansanen's study was 'Motivating and supporting students', which resembles our findings. The differences that were found in their study relate to cultural traditions in teacher education and the tasks of teachers—differences like this cannot easily be understood without more detailed information about the educational systems. In the German school system, the teacher's function is mainly that of instructor; tasks such as teaching and assessment are emphasised, while others such as education, advising and innovating are of minor importance (Kron, 2000). However, as in many other countries, primary school teachers see themselves predominantly as educators in the German system.

In our analysis, we have treated teachers as a group, which minimises the differences of opinions between subject and class teachers. Previous research evidence shows that primary teachers tend to be more nurturant, whilst secondary-level teachers tend to be more subject-centred (Hargreaves, 1994, pp. 145–147; Nias, 1999). Further analysis will provide interesting aspects to the theoretical understanding of affective education—something that relates to the ethic of care, but not being synonymous with it. What is the actual meaning of 'teaching' in contemporary discourses and practices of education, which so often tend to be 'overly rationalistic, scientific, corporatist, managerial and narrowly results-based', as van Manen (2000, p. 215) argues in his phenomenological treatise of the notion of 'care'? The distinction between various traditions of teaching is clear and culminates in his metaphors of a teacher and a student: 'teacher as business person' is related to considering the student as a customer; 'teacher as leader' is related to the student as a worker; 'teacher as service provider' is related to the student as a customer; 'teacher as enactive (cognitivist and constructivist tradition)' is related to the student as a shaper of personal meaning (van Manen 1999a). Van Manen's philosophical stand defines teachers as moral agents and students as moral persons (Van Manen, 1999b, 2000) and he defends the notion and discipline of pedagogy (1999a). The key postulate of his discussion is that care is and should be the key concept of the teaching profession *at all levels of education*.

Our findings indicate that values that are accepted by teachers and students alike have a major impact on the educational process—at least on the evidence of questionnaires. Teachers feel that positive classroom processes, which load on the first factor of the analysis of teacher responsibilities, are those which contribute most to the nurturing and education of the citizen of the future; in this they agree with their students. Despite criticism from political quarters that teachers are not effectively teaching their students the 'basics' necessary for their integration into work and society, it is apparent from our results that both teachers and students agree that the academic side of education is a first priority; it has not been compromised by their second priority, the prevention and support factor, which covers the more caring aspects of affective education. Other issues, loading on the third factor in the analysis of responsibilities, such as parental involvement and out-of-school activities, are regarded as of lower importance, and the importance assigned to them varies considerably between nations.

Indeed, if there is a concern about the current aims of education, it should be about

the links between education and the wider community, both socially and environmentally. Teachers are unsure about how they can make connections with their wider community; while they feel it is important, in some countries they lack the training to do so effectively (Webb & Vuilliamy, 1996; Niemi, 1996, 1999b; Crozier, 2000). In the Australian context, Grundy & Bonser (2000) even report schools as 'semi-autonomous educational units', confident in their understandings of purpose, practice and product, drawing strength and inspiration from among their own ranks (staff), and not from other stakeholders (parents, students, community). Also, parental involvement is more problematic at secondary level when students are developing their independence and do not want teachers and parents to make contact, remarks Crozier (2000) when studying the new home-school agreements in England and Wales. An interesting development from the 'collaborative parent' of the 1970s to the 'parent as partner' of the 1980s and 1990s during the period of consolidation of Portuguese mass education is described by Stoer & Cortesão (1999). The issues of ethnic minorities, diversity, children at risk and exclusion are relevant to more teachers than ever before in the history of Europe. They need continuing training and positive experiences as to how to handle these tasks together with families and social workers.

It is also apparent that affective education makes a contribution to the psycho- and socio-pedagogical discourse concerned with the development of the 'whole child' or 'person' as opposed to the 'pupil' (Best, 1998; Osborn, 1999). Our findings relate both to humanistic and phenomenological traditions which emphasise the importance of the psycho-pedagogical inputs in education, and to cultural psychology in education, which aims at creating participatory, collaborative, proactive, communal learning situations; a new 'school culture' (Bruner, 1996).

The aim of this article was to present the general picture emerging from the statistical analysis of the data, with a particular emphasis on the cross-cultural similarities and differences between teachers and students in the participating countries. The influence of biographical variables such as gender, professional experience, subject speciality and job satisfaction will be considered in forthcoming articles (Neill, 2000a; Puurula, 2000)—the issue of subject teachers, especially arts teaching, has also been reported in a separate analysis in Finnish (Puurula, 1999); differences between teachers' and students' attitudes in the Israeli data have been analysed in a article by Katz & Romi (1999). Continuing, more sophisticated analysis of the differences and similarities between geographical and cultural regions has been described in further articles drawing on the European Affective Education data (Katz *et al.*, 2000; Neill 2000b, 2000c).

## Conclusions

This article is a report on exploratory work in an area which we consider to be of some educational importance and it is also a contribution to the rapidly developing literature of comparative educational research. Our report is an attempt to generate cross-national and cross-cultural discourse on a significant dimension of the educational process and teaching, namely affective education. The findings reported here are comparable in scope and assumptions to recent studies of teacher perceptions of the goals of teaching (Broadfoot & Osborn, 1993), or parental attitudes to health education across Europe (Saunders, 1997). Osborn (1999) reports extensive research about the relationships between the national context and national educational goals to pupil experience of schooling and teaching in France, Denmark and England, and asserts that although there



was continuing evidence of the influence of national context on pupil perceptions of schooling, there were also clear suggestions of the globalisation of many concerns.

The major aim of our study was to move from the discovery that there was general verbal agreement on the nature of affective education among European researchers in the area, to investigate whether there were shared attitudes to and understanding of its aims among practitioners and their students. In order to do this, we had to investigate the practicality of cross-national cooperation for broad-ranging research on affective education. Our results indicate, despite considerable apparent differences at national level, broad agreement at practitioner level, but that certain areas of affective education continue to need development. However, such development may become more difficult with other current pressures on education.

In the first place, our experience shows the relevance of a cross-national, continuously collaborating team for developing cross-cultural research. It suggests that a carefully designed and piloted questionnaire can make a contribution to understanding systemic variations in educational practices provided that the research team has a series of shared understandings, which can only emerge from detailed negotiation of the underlying research issues (Crossley & Broadfoot, 1992). In this case, the critical element appears to have been the identification of a shared research agenda by a cross-national network which had already begun to articulate a discourse on affective education, and the adoption of a research design which respected national differences. We consider the current report can be placed at the third level of Broadfoot's (1999) five-level hierarchy of types of comparative research—'comparative empirical studies'. Further articles will address regional differences between countries at a more theoretical level, aiming thus towards the fourth and fifth levels of comparative educational research.

The second conclusion indicates that it is possible to generate a reliable, valid and transferable cross-cultural research instrument. As a group of researchers, we represent diverse methodological and theoretical positions ranging from a bias towards quantitative and psychometric paradigms to a preference for working within ethnographic and qualitative frameworks. Comparative educational research programmes are potentially expensive and risk generating findings which, rather than comparative, are at best a collection of occasionally diverting case studies in different settings. In this programme, the systematic approach to the development of the research instrument and the scrutiny by all collaborating researchers of every stage of the research process went a considerable way towards minimising this problem.

The third conclusion is the discovery that in the definition and operationalisation of the concept of affective education across different educational systems, the research team found it possible to develop a dialogue about the practices and scope of the affective domain. The results suggest that teachers across Europe conceive the affective dimension as a central component of their own professional responsibilities, whilst students in the participating countries perceive their teachers' commitment to affective education as an intrinsic ingredient of the educational process. Whilst the research programme initially set out to explore differences between views on and perceptions of affective education in the study countries, the most telling finding was the high degree of consensus that emerged. Though not reported here, the factor structure and the content of teachers' responsibilities' factors remained generally similar in each country involved in the study. Theoretically, the area of affective education has been mapped in a new way which can be applied in later studies aiming both towards deeper understanding at regional level and towards theory development concerning teachers' responsibilities, teachers' thinking and professionalism.

Finally, our results suggest that there may be real similarities in teacher concerns and commitments within apparently different systems. Such similarities may result from similarities in children's affective needs across cultures, from the commitments and professional identities of teachers or from the fact that educational policies since the 1980s clearly stress these goals. More research on all these factors is needed.

This study was not a study of policy, as many of the contributors have already published an edited volume which addresses the policy implications of affective education (Lang *et al.*, 1998). This previous work showed that there were clear national differences both in the policies laid down for affective education (e.g. Spain, in Pampliega & Marroquin [1998] and Portugal, in Campos & Menezes [1998]), and indeed on whether it had been addressed at a policy level at all (e.g. Greece, in Kondoyianni *et al.* [1998] and Germany, in Fess [1998]). This previous research left open whether at a classroom level these differences in national policy were reflected in correspondingly large differences in classroom practice. However, from the results of this research, we can suggest policy initiatives which address issues in classroom practice, from the aspect of the effective academic curriculum. In some cases, there was an unfelt need by students for support and the prevention of harm and abuse, compared to the apparently satisfied response by their teachers. In these cases the need for further training and education, both initial and in-service, for teachers to meet these needs is apparent.

With the current emphasis on standards and competencies, there is a risk that, unless the affective needs of students are given a higher profile, stress and burnout may become an increasingly serious problem for students. Despite the current emphasis on the requirement for schools to report to parents in some countries, work with parents and links to the wider community are currently areas which get little support from either teachers or students. Here again, there is a need for schools to develop genuine links to become involved with their surrounding community. The present tendency by both governments and international agencies to create national and international league tables of educational performance and outcomes on the 'basics' militates against the development of other areas of education, especially affective education, the results of which are, almost by definition, more difficult to quantify.

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