

Publish yet perish. On the pitfalls of philosophy of education in an age of impact factors¹

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Abstract

In many countries publications in Web of Knowledge journals are dominant in the evaluation of educational research. For various purposes comparisons are made between the output of philosophers of education in these journals and the publications of their colleagues in educational research generally, sometimes also including psychologists and/or social scientists. Taking its starting-point from Hayden's article in this journal (2012), this paper discusses the situation of educational research in three countries: The Netherlands, South Africa and Norway. In this paper an alternative for comparing research output is offered by invoking comparisons with colleagues at the international level from within the same sub-discipline. It is argued that if one would do so a different picture would emerge, even if one were to limit oneself to particular kinds of publications. The case is then made that if comparisons are regarded as a necessary part of the evaluation of an individual scholar (for appointment, promotion, tenure, and/or funding application purposes), it would be more fair to use a proxy system which is sub-discipline specific, or minimally contains some kind of correction factor in relation to the over-all quality assessment device. Debates about the relevance or irrelevance of philosophy of education in the context of educational sciences are now obscured, even poisoned by focusing almost exclusively on a particular kind of publication output. As the 'reward' system that is developed accordingly is possibly the most important driver of educational research, it puts the sub-discipline unduly under pressure to the extent that it possibly cannot survive.

*Listen very carefully, I shall say zis only once
(Michelle Dubois,
The French Resistance,
in the BBC's sitcom 'Allo, 'Allo!)*

Introduction

A lot has been written on the evaluation of research quality as measured in terms of scholarly output.² It goes without saying that it is understandable that when large amounts of taxpayers' money are put in academia for research and teaching, that a justification has to be given, as this is part of the normal functioning of a democracy. Higher education and research into the various fields are organized differently all over the world. There is much private funding and there are many private universities in the U.S., whereas in most European countries, and particularly in Western Europe, a lot of it is funded by the state. But even there one finds major differences between countries. Obviously, the various systems applied to measure the outcomes will differ accordingly—and this remains to be the case even after the Bologna declaration.³ In this paper we will not repeat the general pro's and con's of various systems of evaluation of research output, but want to make a plea that they are used in a correct and fair manner. The fact that the same kind of system is used in various contexts, may be an important reason for the fact that this is currently not the case. It is not that academics are against evaluation, but it is important, so it

seems to us, not to compare apples and oranges. And more often than not, this is exactly what is happening.

There have been warnings in the past from various authors about the dangers of the application of particular criteria (see for instance Bridges, 2011). Notwithstanding this, we are moving in some countries along a very dangerous road which in the end may suffocate areas which cannot live up to the demands put forward by those who seem to be doing quite well in an assessment that takes its lead from impact factors of journals and published articles in Thomson Reuters Web of Knowledge journals (also formerly known as ISI, Institute for Scientific Information, journals). There are indeed winners and losers. Journals that do not publish in English suffer or disappear (see for instance Smeyers & Levering, 1998 and also 2000; further Levering & Smeyers, 2009) and areas with a different research publication culture (where there are for example more references to books) do very badly. This is not just the case in the social sciences or in the arts and humanities more generally – such as for philosophy of education – but other areas, such as for example mathematics, struggle as well. In the Flemish part of Belgium philosophy of education for example had a place at Ghent University and at KU Leuven; in Ghent the sub-discipline is on the verge of disappearing, and though Leuven still has several people appointed in this area, pressures are rising there too. In the Flemish part of Belgium ‘more’ publication output is definitely considered to be better. And ‘better output’ is generally understood in terms of publications in particular journals (ranked in the Web of Knowledge), and/or books or chapters in edited collections published by particular publishers (for this lists have been developed too).

Can an argument be put forward against the dominant culture where almost exclusive importance is given to the number of publications in Web of Knowledge journals? And can an argument be developed that is more convincing than the ones that were developed in the past? To be honest, though we think that this can be done, the fact remains that ‘there will be winners and losers’ (if there isn’t more money available) and that therefore there will be a lot of resistance against a possible change. Yet it may be helpful to develop an argument where attention is drawn to one or other element that is difficult to deny by the ‘opponents’ and that may put the debate in a different perspective. This is what we will be doing below. To support the case we want to make, we will discuss the situation philosophers of education find themselves in three different countries: The Netherlands, South Africa, and Norway.⁴ But before we start we wish to make it absolutely clear that we will not deal with the particular metrics used (be they the h-index, the impact factor of a journal, or as Bridges, 2011 labels them, ‘extrinsic indication[s] of quality’). These may be alright on their own terms. The problem, however, lies in how they are being used—possibly varying from context to context—and for what purposes.

Hayden’s empirical study of philosophy of education

Matthew Hayden’s (2012) interesting article, which appeared in this journal, analyses the titles, abstracts, and keywords from every article published from 2000 to 2011 in four philosophy of education journals: *Educational Philosophy and Theory*, *Educational Theory*, *Journal of Philosophy of Education*, and *Studies in Philosophy of Education*. He sought to determine empirically what the field is saying about itself by virtue of its published scholarship in these journals. Hayden acknowledges that he considered other journals as well but eliminated these because they were either too general or too specialized. Obviously, further limitations are that he excluded books, chapters in edited collections, non-English publications, and conference proceedings, but to identify the general trends, we concur, that the analysis of these journals is, at

least at first sight, reliable. Incidentally, three out of four of these journals are ranked in the Web of Knowledge index.⁵

Our attention was drawn to Table 12 of Hayden's paper (2012, p. 20) where the number and percentage of articles is provided for author country for the top fifteen countries. The percentages are as follows: United States (32 %); United Kingdom (21%); Australia (8%); Canada (6%); Belgium (5%); New Zealand (3%); Germany (3%); Sweden (2%); the Netherlands (2%); Israel (2%); People's Republic of China (2%); Norway (2%); Republic of South Africa (1%); Cyprus (1%); Finland (1%). It will hardly be a surprise to find the US and the UK at place one and two (given that both are English speaking countries and moreover given the size of their population). Other results are more remarkable: 23 articles (in the dataset of 1572) are from Cyprus (with a population of only approximately 300,000 which is 1000 times smaller than the US (497 articles are identified for that country); and further, if one takes the population and the native language into account, for instance, Belgium (76 articles), Sweden (39), The Netherlands (37), Israel (29), Norway (24), and the Republic of South Africa (23). In the English speaking international context, these countries seem to be doing not bad at all, some of them even exceptionally well. One would therefore expect that scholars from these countries would also be very successful when applying for research funding, but such seems not to be the case. When funding for philosophy of education is at stake for example in Belgium (see Smeyers & Burbules, 2011), the publication output is compared to colleagues who publish in areas of empirical educational sciences. Moreover, as they often work in faculties of Psychology and Educational Sciences they have to 'fight' another battle as well, i.e., with colleagues from psychology. Again, for the Belgian context, compared to those colleagues philosophers of education have far fewer publications—this has to do with the research culture in their specific sub-discipline, but also with the publication culture (the majority of publications in the educational empirical research tradition are multi-authored); they are therefore in many cases not successful when applying for research projects (or for example not promoted nor tenured⁶).

The results from Hayden's research, which show that the total publication output from colleagues in a number of countries is relatively high, prompted us to investigate this further. One question it raises is whether this is the case because there are relatively more people active in these countries, which would explain of course a relative higher proportion of publications. As all countries have their own history of the way in which their higher education system developed, answering that question requires taking into account the many particularities of the organisation of research and teaching of a specific country. Clearly, building up such a complex picture demands many technical decisions (conceptual and methodical) before comparisons can be made. We have therefore looked for another way: instead of comparing the total output we will focus on the output of individuals. There is a further advantage to this, as it allows comparing philosophers of education with peers in other countries. We will therefore start from the output of all individual scholars who have published in the journals mentioned and identify the number of publications for each of them. Let us point out that there are many limitations to what we are doing as well, for instance we will only be looking at publications in the journals mentioned (and we accept that for the field of philosophy of education edited collections and books may be more important than journal output) and only look at an 11 year window. We think that for our particular purpose this approach is fair; moreover, it can hardly be denied that the four journals are important outlets for philosophy of education. Before going into this, we will provide some more detailed vignettes of the present climate for philosophy of education in The Netherlands, South Africa, and Norway.

The Netherlands

As mentioned above, philosophy of education in the Netherlands is no longer a thriving branch of education. Although the demise of the field can be contributed to various factors that are less relevant to the thrust of this article, the main reason for the current state of affairs, which is characteristic of Belgium too, can be found in the locus of philosophy of education within the behavioural and social sciences and its concomitant specific demands on quantity both with regard to research output (number of publications, particularly in top journals) and research input (successful grant applications). These two quantity components are used in the evaluation of both individual researchers and research programs, more so than the quality of the publications—although one might argue that publishing in top journals gives an indication of quality. Before we will enter into a brief discussion about the comparison of philosophers of education with other behavioural and social scientists with regard to production levels and the question what can be regarded as top journals, we will give a concise overview of the situation in the Netherlands.

Since the middle of the eighties research at Dutch universities is organized in research programs that need to have coherence and a communal focus. In the past decades, the structure of these research programs has changed several times. They began as relatively small and disciplinary intra-university programs with their own criteria for numbers of publications—successful grant applications were not an important issue at that time. Most universities (six to be exact) had their philosophy of education research program, often combined with history of education. From the middle of the nineties until around 2010 research programs of most universities were brought under the umbrella of interuniversity research institutes (philosophy of education was part of the Institute of Studies in Education and Development, ISED). Being a member of such an institute was important, because the faculty was obligated to pay for research time (0.4 full time equivalent) of the members of these interuniversity research institutes and thus one's research time was guaranteed. These institutes obviously set their standards and these increased over time. In case of ISED one was required to publish at least two articles per year in the top journals of philosophy of education or other educational journals. Obtaining research funding was not a criterion of one's membership. Currently the research programs are part of multidisciplinary intra-university research institutes.

Although membership should guarantee individual researcher's research time, another factor also plays a role, viz. the research assessment of the research program. The program one is member of also needs to receive high evaluations, for a university may decide to end the program on the basis of a mediocre assessment. The research programs are evaluated every six years in a Research Assessment Exercise. The committee consists of colleagues from abroad and evaluates the research programs present within the Netherlands. The education research programs include theoretically and empirically oriented programs as well as research into upbringing and family guidance and school education. While about ten years ago, there were several theoretical or philosophical research programs, in 2013 this was reduced to two (there was no philosopher of education on the review panel). In the research assessment four aspects of the programs are being evaluated, viz., quality, productivity, relevance and viability. However, the number of publications as well as their impact, measured both in terms of the impact factor of the journal and in terms of the number of citations of the particular article in later years, are considered to be important indicators of the quality of research programs. Furthermore, not every publication is deemed to be valuable. For instance, for the research assessment of the domain of Education for the years 2006-2011, research programs were requested to provide a list of articles with the

highest citation scores published in those years, using Harzing's Publish or Perish (which uses Google Scholar). The use of citation scores from Publish or Perish is more amenable to philosophers of education, because it does not only calculate citations of articles in Web of Knowledge journals, but also in other journals, as well as books. Moreover, citations do not have to be in Web of Knowledge journals. If an article or book is cited in another book, these are calculated too. However, the use of Publish or Perish is only a true advantage if those other types of publications are indeed valued equally. And this is not the case: articles in Web of Knowledge journals with a high impact factor are regarded as more important than book chapters or journals outside this system.

Thus, researchers in the Netherlands are evaluated as a group and thereby indirectly as individual scholars (with respect to their contribution to the program), but in order to become member of a research program and for promotion, one's individual output and input plays a role. Here the number of publications, the h-factor and the amount of grant money obtained are important criteria. While there is nothing wrong with using such quantitative criteria, it depends on which they are. As said in the beginning, philosophy of education is positioned within faculties of behavioural and social sciences and these set the criteria used for promotion. For instance, at VU University Amsterdam (Faculty of Psychology and Education), for promotion to Associate Professor level 1, it is expected that one has published 35 articles of which 25% are in the top journals of the field, which are normally the Web of Knowledge journals with the highest impact of the respective disciplines (although concerning philosophy of education the case can be made for journals that are outside this system but regarded as having high quality and importance within the discipline such as *Educational Theory* and *Theory, Research and Education*⁷). These standards are, however different from those of the Humanities, where significantly fewer articles are expected for similar positions and book publications are valued too. Thus we are faced with two questions: with whom should philosophers of education be compared? Which are our top 25% journals?

We value the location of philosophy of education within the behavioural and social sciences, as we see it primarily as a branch of the educational sciences. However, it is a branch because of its similar focus or (research) theme, not because of its research methods or tradition. A major difference between philosophers of education and empirical researchers is their publication as well as citation culture. There single-authored articles are almost absent; articles are most often written by three or (many) more authors. Thus, the number of publications of these colleagues tends to be much higher than those of philosophers of education. This is also boosted by another trend. It has become standard that PhD students within education obtain their doctorate by submitted or published articles that are collated into a dissertation. These articles are co-published with their supervisors, as has been the tradition in medicine and the sciences for years.⁸ This is where our plea in this article for intra-disciplinary comparison becomes relevant. We suggest that in assessments (both of the research program, as well as of individual academics) philosophers of education should be compared to their colleagues in the international community, particularly the UK, US, Germany and Belgium, where the research traditions are most comparable to the Netherlands, rather than other academics in educational sciences, which include psychologists and sociologists as well. The educational sciences are too diverse for a single standard of evaluation.

Which journals are the most important for our field is not altogether clear. Here we do not mean that outsiders might be less convinced by the journals that are not included in the Web of Knowledge, but what we should regard as the top journals of our field. Are these the four that

Hayden has analysed and journals whose aim is primarily related to philosophical or theoretical research (such as *Theory and Research in Education*)? Journals in which philosophers of education publish are not confined to philosophy of education journals. There seem two good reasons for them to publish in journals like the *Journal of Moral Education*, *The British Journal of Educational Studies*, or *Teachers and Teaching. Theory and Practice* or philosophy journals such as *Journal of Applied Philosophy* as well—some of these are included in the Web of Knowledge and others are not. Firstly and quite mundane: in order to publish a sufficient number of articles each year, it is impossible to limit oneself to philosophy of education journals. Secondly, philosophers of education should not only talk to or write for each other, but for the wider educational field (see for instance Biesta, 2010). Philosophers of education also need to publish in journals such as the ones just mentioned in order to inform a wider audience about their work. Although academics from other fields do have access to the philosophy of education journals, it is less likely that they will browse through those journals than that they will read an article of a philosopher of education in ‘their’ journal. This is of course a somewhat traditional view, as it might be well possible that people no longer read (printed) issues of journals from cover to cover, but browse data bases with keywords and might then more easily come across the work of philosophers of education as well.⁹ However, returning to journals it is interesting that if one looks at for instance the citations from the *Journal of Moral Education*, articles by philosophers of education are cited by others at a level that is comparable to the number of citations from articles of the four journals Hayden has analysed. Moreover, these citations are not only made by fellow philosophers of education, but also by empirical researchers, although it should be noted that the number of empirical articles that are cited is higher.

Thus, publishing in journals outside philosophy of education is necessary. There are simply too few journals within our sub-discipline for all the articles that philosophers of education need to publish and secondly such journals are read by an audience philosophers of education want to inform as well. However, it remains to be important to draw a circle around the journals regarded as a natural home for philosophy of education output. The fact that articles can be found in high impact psychology journals may be good for the position of the individual academic, but does not necessarily make it a top journal for our field, even though it is a top journal in terms of its high position in the Web of Knowledge list of educational or general psychology journals. If we would widen the ‘target journals’ too much, we would shoot ourselves in the foot. For then the justification of comparing philosophers of education with each other loses its strength—it could as easily be argued that they should be compared to the other authors in those journals. Moreover, other philosophers of education are the important peers who form the academic community required to further and improve the discipline. Intra-disciplinary debates via philosophy of education journals are important for the thriving of the discipline.

The best thing that can happen to philosophers of education in the Netherlands is abandoning the focus on quantity and returning to quality of publications, which is evaluated by one’s peers. This might actually happen before too long. Debates amongst academics and unfortunate scandals are turning the tides. The director of the Organization of Dutch Universities (VSNU) recently suggested to remove productivity as a criterion for the next research assessment exercise altogether, which is precisely what we are arguing for in this article.

South Africa

Educational Research in South Africa bears the mark of a more general decade of decline that characterizes the Humanities. In 2011 the Academy of Science of South Africa (ASSAf)

published a *Consensus study on the state of the humanities in South Africa: Status, prospects and strategies* that highlights the precarious decline of the humanities (including education) in the country (ASSAf, 2011, p. 1). According to ASSAf, the humanities in comparison with science, engineering, technology and mathematics (SETM), are not achieving the high levels of scholarship associated with disciplines in the STEM field, primarily because of low levels of doctoral student throughputs, low levels of research publications in internationally recognised peer reviewed journals, low numbers of academic staff who hold a doctorate, and the fact that below 20% of research outputs (excluding education) are produced by a black academic cohort (ASSAf, 2011, p. 4). In addition, the report entitled *Audit and interpretive analysis of education research in South Africa: What have we learnt?* (Deacon, Osman and Buchler, 2009) submitted to the National Research Foundation (NRF) captures the status of educational research in the country for more than a decade (between 1995 and 2006). Some of the findings are very relevant to an analysis of educational research over the past 11 years (2000-2010). Of the 10,315 texts in their database, 45% are journal articles, 25% are conference papers and proceedings, 14% are reports, 7% are chapters in books, 6% are theses, and 3% are books. Of the journal articles, approximately 49% were published in one of ten South Africa-based journals of education, 24% in one other South Africa-based journal¹⁰ and 27% in one other non-South Africa based journal—that is, it can be assumed that 27% of articles were published in international journals¹¹ that include Web of Knowledge journals (Deacon, Osman and Buchler, 2009, p. 3). It was found that 33% of all articles is concentrated in four disciplinary areas: educational theory (12%)—here most of the articles could be attributed to contributions in philosophy of education; education management (9%); education policy (6%); and higher education studies (6%) (Deacon, Osman and Buchler, 2009, p. 4). A further 20% of education research is clustered in the disciplinary areas of teacher education (5%), language studies (5%), educational psychology (5%) and, academic development (5%) (Deacon, Osman and Buchler, 2009, p. 4). For this section of the article, the focus is on the approximately 12% of the articles that are published in the discipline of educational theory or philosophy of education.

Who constitutes the philosophy of education community in South Africa? The professional activities such as analysis, reflection, evaluation and the seeking of clarity of educational matters associated with the philosophy of education community in South Africa can best be traced with reference to three major educational associations—the Kenton Education Association of South Africa (Kenton), the Education Association of South Africa (EASA) and the now defunct South African Association for Research and Development in Higher Education (SAARDHE). To begin with, there is no homogenous philosophy of education community in South Africa (PECSA). There are only a few individuals based at research-oriented universities who comprise PECSA. Firstly, Kentonites associated with PECSA mostly comprise a few English speaking individuals affiliated to the University of the Witwatersrand (WITS), University of Kwazulu-Natal (UKZN), University of Cape Town (UCT), University of the Western Cape (UWC), Rhodes University, and most recently the University of Fort Hare (FH) and Stellenbosch University (SU)—the latter institution has previously been associated with PECSA comprising only of EASA members. PECSA-Kenton mostly pursued analytical discourses in philosophy of education heavily influenced by the philosophy of education tradition emanating from the London Institute of Education. Over the past 11 years at least eight PECSA-Kenton members presented their work at annual conferences organised by the philosophy of education Society of Great Britain (PESGB) and the Philosophy of Education Society of North America (PES), the biennial conferences organised by the International Network of Philosophers of Education

(INPE), and the World Conference on Philosophy (Philosophy of Education Section) organised every five years. In South Africa PECSA-Kenton members mostly publish their work in *Journal of Education* and *Perspectives in Education*¹² in the fields of social justice, deliberative democracy and citizenship education vis-à-vis teaching and learning in schools and universities. The annual Kenton Education Association of South Africa conference has for many years been perceived as the academically most rigorous and critical education conference in the country partially as a result of the analytical contributions of PECSA-Kenton individuals.

Secondly, the Education Association of South Africa has a Philosophy of Education Interest Group (EASA-PEIG) which for many years advocated a Fundamental Pedagogics (FP) strand of philosophy of education. FP was seen to provide the philosophical framework for apartheid education in the form of the system of Christian National Education (CNE). As such, FP was regarded as a crucial element in the hegemony of apartheid education as it revealed itself in the system of CNE. FP discourses in philosophy of education were mostly located in Afrikaans-speaking universities, teacher training colleges and schools and in those institutions defined by their racial and ethnic identities—the institutions of ‘Bantu’ education. Given the struggles against apartheid in the 1970s and 1980s and the 1994 election of a democratic government led by the African National Congress, the analytical discourses increased their influence mostly in relation to education policy developments,¹³ while the FP discourses rapidly dissipated without support from the apartheid regime. The few EASA-PEIG members are mostly affiliated to institutions such as the University of Pretoria (UP), University of South Africa (UNISA), North-West University (formerly Potchefstroom University for Christian National Education), University of Free State, Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University (formerly the University of Port Elizabeth or UPE), Johannesburg University (formerly the Rand Afrikaans University or RAU) and to a lesser extent Stellenbosch University (SU). Currently, most of the work of EASA-PEIG members is of an empirical nature and relates to the democratisation of education in South Africa as is evident from past annual EASA conferences and publications in the *South African Journal of Education*.

Thirdly, a few philosophers of education and those whose work is of a philosophical nature were previously affiliated to the South African Association for Research and Development in Higher Education (SAARDHE). PECSA-SAARDHE has for many years been dominated by UNISA academics. A new trend of philosophy of education has emerged mostly spearheaded by SAARDHE-PECSA members at Walter Sisulu University (formerly the University of Transkei), University of Limpopo (formerly University of the North), and University of Zululand—a trend which constitutes an emerging understanding of what constitutes an African philosophy of education discourse. The role of this philosophical corpus is seen by many previous PECSA-SAARDHE members as creating a new foundation and social fabric with the capacity to harness an ethos and intellectual production among African people as agents of their own humanity and collective progress. These ideas on the Africanisation of education are reflected in previous issues of the *South African Journal of Higher Education*, as well as in conference proceedings compiled biennially by SAARDHE in the past. Notwithstanding the prominence of these ideas of African philosophy of education, the new discourse has also been severely criticised by Kai Horsthemke (2004) in an article in *Journal of Philosophy of Education*. Despite the call for an African philosophical discourse, the analytical voice in philosophy of education still features prominently in the philosophy of education community—a voice directed by a liberal intent concerned with issues of democracy in education, citizenship and cosmopolitanism. However, only a handful of philosophers of education continue to carry this torch of rigorous analytical

inquiry in internationally refereed education theory journals despite the fact that article outputs in these journals are not overwhelming for the humanities (including education) and social sciences in South Africa.¹⁴ Considering that the four journals that publish work on / in philosophy of education that are part of Hayden's study are not listed by both the NRF report and ASSAf's *Consensus study*, we have found that the following number of articles have been published by South Africans who do work in philosophy of education between 2000 and 2010: *Educational Theory* (1), *Educational Philosophy and Theory* (6), *Studies in Philosophy and Education* (6), and *Journal of Philosophy of Education* (8).

An additional factor concerns the fact that the government's funding formula for higher institutional support is biased towards accrediting articles published in Web of Knowledge journals, IBSS (International Bibliography of the Social Sciences) and selected journals on the Department of Education's (DOE) list. Articles published in these journals are peer reviewed, accredited and subsequently subsidised—that is, the government funds institutions on the basis of their research publications, generated students enrolled and student throughputs (pass rates) per annum. And considering that in South Africa only *Perspectives in Education* (Web of Knowledge), *South African Journal of Education* (Web of Knowledge), *African Education Review* (Web of Knowledge), *Education as Change* (DOE), *Journal of Education* (DOE) and *South African Journal of Higher Education* (IBSS) are accredited by the government, and they are by far the most prominent education journals that seem to be biased towards publishing empirical work, philosophers of education are not given enough national academic opportunity to publish their work. The upshot is, that the humanities, and hence education, will continue to be prejudiced because of the overwhelmingly productive strengths of the STEM field. Likewise, the NRF, an independent government agency that promotes and supports (and funds) research in all fields of knowledge categorises South African academics on the basis of these academics' productivity and quality of research publications. Funding for philosophers of education will also be adversely affected if they have not produced 'enough' Web of Knowledge, IBSS and DOE publications that will ensure that they enjoy a high rating with the NRF. A Web of Knowledge and IBSS publication is often used as a yardstick to determine an academic's international standing in the field in which (s)he works.¹⁵ Established through the National Research Foundation Act (Act No 23 of 1998), the NRF emerged as the single entity that incorporated the functions of the research funding agencies that were previously servicing various sections of the research community, namely the former Centre for Science Development (CSD) of the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) and the former Foundation for Research Development (FRD). It seems as if the NRF's annual funding allocation mostly biases the STEM field whose academics have acquired enormous standing due to a rating system that is being implemented for the last thirty years—a bandwagon educationists only jumped on about a decade ago. That is, funding is allocated to academics on the basis of their standing as rated researchers, whether A (world leader), B (internationally recognised researcher), C (established researcher), P (young researcher with the potential to become a world leader and younger than 35 years of age) and Y (promising young researcher below 40 years of age) and, by implication their publications in accredited Web of Knowledge and IBSS journals. Usually, at South African universities, having published 'productively' in Web of Knowledge and IBSS journals and being in possession of an A, B or C NRF rating, seem to favour appointments and promotions to the level of associate professor and full professor (considered as tenured positions).¹⁶ Now considering that the few philosophers of education in South Africa are reasonably productive, one would expect their support for NRF funding would be well-supported. However, considering (so it seems) that

philosophy of education is conceived of not producing educational research for the transformation of society, funding is somewhat restricted to support more ‘evidence-based’ case study research not necessarily associated with philosophy of education. This is so, despite the high acclaim some philosophers of education enjoy in the academic community due to their reasonable publication outputs in prestigious journals. Finally, the fact that there are not many philosophy of education journals, philosophers of education have to look for other non-subject specific journals that are not always receptive to educational philosophy and theory. In this way, philosophers of education seem to be disadvantaged and their opportunities for the enhancement of their professional careers might also be constrained.

Norway

That it is not all doom and gloom for philosophy of education worldwide proves the case of Norway. Here educational research is funded by and legitimized through the geo-political ambitions of a social-democratic welfare regime to foster the nation (to find its place in a global economy and competition) and its citizens. This is now clearly outlined in Norwegian politics, where the government is aiming at promoting Norway as a ‘leading knowledge based economy’ (Ministry of Education and Research, 2013). Consequently, the aims and mission of Norwegian educational research alter along with national policies and the cycles of a global knowledge economy. This in turn seems to affect the ways in which the work of Norwegian philosophers of education is valued (Strand & Kvernbekk, 2009; Kvernbekk, 2011; Strand, 2012). But to what degree, and in what ways, do national and international policies affect the activities and status of the field of philosophy of education¹⁷ in Norway?

In 2004, the Norwegian Research Council (NRC) published an evaluation to assess “the quality of the educational research that is done at selected educational research institutions” and to identify factors that will enhance the quality of educational research (NRC, 2004, p. 9, our translation). The report concluded that the conditions for doing high quality research greatly vary both between and within the 8 universities and 20 university colleges in Norway. Moreover, the report pointed to the fact that the discipline of education at that time was in a state of change, since the traditional discipline-oriented structure was gradually being replaced by a topic-oriented structure: The traditional tendency among educational researchers to derive their research questions and framework of understanding from the sub-disciplines of education - such as sociology, psychology, history or anthropology - was now gradually being replaced by a multi-disciplinary approach in which the research questions come to the fore.¹⁸

In addition, the report questioned the assertion that “a considerable pressure is exerted on educational researchers to produce research that is *useful* in public debates and within the school system; which again forces the researchers to employ relevance criteria rather than scientific quality criteria in their assessments of academic texts” (NRC, 2004, p. 9, our italics and translation). The evaluation committee thus recommended establishing strong research groups, strengthening the research management, and the funding of long-term and basic research projects. Moreover, the evaluation committee recommended an “explicit meta-reflection” on the visions, missions and quality criteria of educational research (NRC, 2004, p. 135). The committee recognized philosophy of education as a discipline that carries the potential to contribute with such meta-reflections.¹⁹ So, according to the Evaluation Committee, a vital mission of philosophy of education was now to perform meta-studies, and thereby ‘save’ the quality of Norwegian educational research. Shortly after the publication of this report, a research group of philosophers of education was established at the Department of Educational Research at the University of

Oslo. Moreover, the Research Council funded a National Research School within philosophy of education, led by this group.²⁰

The 2004-evaluation was followed by a second report questioning the fact that “Norwegian educational research has moved too far towards a benefit-oriented and user-driven orientation” (NRC, 2006, p. 5, our translation). The Follow-Up Committee stated that educational research “shall contribute to a renewal of and improvement of the quality of educational research through professional meta-reflection and through dynamic interactions with societal change” (NRC, 2006, p. 11). Again, the report recommended firming up the research management. But the Follow-Up Committee also recommended strengthening national and Nordic research communities and collaborative programs. Consequently, Nordic collaborative programs were introduced, the activities of the Nordic Society of Philosophers of Education strengthened, and a Nordic Open Access Journal of Philosophy of Education initiated.²¹ The activities of the National Research School within philosophy of education were also strengthened.

Today, philosophy of education in Norway comes forward as diverse and many-faceted and has numerous engagements with issues and problems concerning both the fields of philosophy and education (Løvlie, 2003; Strand, 2012; Strand, 2014). There are now philosophers of education affiliated with most Norwegian universities and university colleges. These scholars publish widely in a broad spectre of academic journals and books. However, their activities seem to be caught between the academic disciplines of philosophy and of education, which may both strengthen and weaken the field: On the one hand, philosophy of education is a daughter of philosophy, drawing from the traditional fields, approaches and methods of its parent discipline. On the other hand, the issues studied concern processes, purposes and ideals of educational theories, policies and practice. For example, what constitutes upbringing and education; what values and norms are revealed through educational policies and practices; what are the conditions, possibilities, legitimacies, and limits of education as an academic discipline; and how to understand the relation between educational theory and practice. It seems that the main ambition is not to contribute to the field of philosophy, but rather to contribute to the field of educational theory, policy and practice (Strand, 2014).

This strong commitment to various aspects of education, and also the tendency to dedicate their work to the practical discipline of education, shapes the course, topics, approaches, methods and dissemination of the work of Norwegian philosophers of education. Norwegian philosophers of education seem to frequently use tangible educational situations as points of departure in their philosophical investigations (NRC, 2004, p. 110). They also tend to draw on their background as educational researchers or former teaching experience in their work. This tendency goes well with the fact that most philosophers of education are affiliated with the departments of teacher education at the University Colleges. Moreover, the tendency seems to be a continuation of the strong tradition of the Norwegian school of ‘philosophers of praxis’ that publishes most of its work in Norwegian while also addressing educational issues (i.e. Hellesnes, 1969; Skjervheim, 1969). The Norwegian philosophers of education’s strong commitments to education are also seen in the fact that their work first and foremost is published in journals on educational theory, research and practice, not in philosophy journals. Moreover, a quick search in Norwegian and international databases reveal that most of their work is published in Norwegian books and journals: The national library database BIBSYS reveals that there are as many as 110 books on philosophy of education published in Norwegian in the years 2001 to 2012. The Norwegian database IDUNN shows that there are 101 articles and review articles published in Norwegian and Nordic journals within that period, while Web of Knowledge only shows 25 articles

published by Norwegian philosophers of education within the same period. But how should we interpret these figures? And what do they say about the quality and status of philosophy of education as a branch of educational research activities in Norway?

In Norway, philosophy of education does not seem to operate in the same hostile climate as in other European countries. The main reason is the system of government funded higher education and research institutions, which means that philosophers of education do not need ‘to earn their own salary’. The great majority of Norwegian philosophers of education has a tenured position (except for PhD students, who are employed as research fellows for a period of four years), which implies that their salaries are safely secured by the State’s basic funding of the Norwegian Universities and University Colleges. Nevertheless, their institution may receive some extra funding through research grants or publications in one of the listed journals.²² The extra money is mostly used to strengthen the research activities at the institutional level, such as to fund visiting scholars, participation at international conferences or research seminars.

However, as a fair amount of the publications are still in the Norwegian language and address teachers and student teachers, it may be pertinent to ask to what degree the Norwegian field of philosophy of education is now under pressure. With the stated ambition of promoting Norway as a ‘leading knowledge based economy’, goes the expectation of more international publications in journals listed in Web of Knowledge. This is confirmed by a fresh white paper, which states that “international cooperation must become an integral part of the average workday of more Norwegian researchers” (Meld. St. 18, 2012 -2013). To increase international collaborations and publications,²³ various incentives are already offered by the local institutions - such as small grants to stimulate international networking, presentations at international conferences, writing groups or language editing. These incentives help to increase the amount of international publications. However, it remains to be seen whether current research policies strongly affect the activities and status of the Norwegian field of philosophy of education, which continues to reveal a strong commitment towards various aspects of educational policies, theories and practices.

Comparing individual output from philosophers of education with their peers

The contextualization that is offered suggests that the situation may possibly be different in every country. Yet it has also become clear that philosophers of education are not primarily compared to their peers (at an international or English speaking worldwide level) but to all doing research within the area of education; further that Web of Knowledge journals play an important role in some countries, and that sub-discipline specific criteria are hardly given a place. How would the situation look if one would invoke such criteria? To give an initial answer to this question we created a data set using publications included in *The Philosopher’s Index* concerning the four journals mentioned over the period 2000-2010.²⁴ We were interested in the productivity of authors as a basis for comparison, for the simple reason that it is a particular scholar who applies for promotion, tenure, research funding and it is her record that is taken into account, in other words we were trying to answer the simple question: ‘How does this particular colleague compare with his/her peers in an international context?’ in terms of productivity in the journals mentioned. As there are evidently more kinds of output that should be taken into account if one were to formulate a well-balanced ‘verdict’, we think it may suffice for our purposes. Let us underscore that we are not interested in rankings themselves—we do not think that philosophy of education should embrace that sense of competition (though we will present material that could

be used in that way); we are only interested in answering the question that if one were to compare scholars in philosophy of education on the basis outlined here, how would people do?.

On the basis of the ISSN-numbers of the four journals, and limiting ourselves to journal articles (thus excluding other publication output such as editorials, book reviews etc.), 1396 records were identified. Based on the name of the *first author* there were 823 different names of authors. Most of the articles (n=1221) were single authored; 175 have more than one author (including the very small number of articles that has 3 or more authors). Incidentally, this is in itself an interesting result as it is significantly different from the pattern in educational research more generally, and even more so in psychology. A total of 87% of the authors have one or two publications. There are 45 authors who published 5 articles or more (a subcategory of the latter are the 11 authors who have 10 articles or more).

On the basis of the list of names of first author, we then subsequently identified those publications to which they contributed as co-authors. Taking then into account authored and co-authored journal articles we calculated how many authors have published 5 articles or more (and moreover, respectively 10 or more) either as single author or as co-author. This adds up to 51 authors who published 5 articles or more—including the next category of 10 or more—which is 6% of all the authors identified on the basis of the first author list) and 11 authors who published 10 articles or more (1.5 % of all the authors identified on the basis of the first author list). Table 1 gives a detailed overview by country.

Table 1

Number of authors who have 5 or more respectively 10 or more publications²⁵ (authored and co-authored) by country in one of the following journals *Educational Theory*, *Journal of Philosophy of Education*, *Studies in Philosophy and Education*, *Educational Philosophy and Theory*, over the period 2000-2010 (included), based on data from the *Philosopher's Index*.

	Five or more	Ten or more
Australia	2	
Belgium	5	3
Canada	2	
China (Hong Kong)	1	
Cyprus	2	2
Finland	1	
Iceland	1	
Ireland	1	
Israel	2	
Japan	1	
Malta	1	
New Zealand	4	2
The Netherlands	4	
South Africa	2	
United Kingdom	17	5
United States	5	1

For those who are familiar with the field this list is hardly a surprise. Amongst the authors included one finds Chairs/Vice-chairs/Presidents (past and present) of the Philosophy of Education Societies of the U.S.A., of Great Britain, of Australasia, of the International Network for Philosophers of Education; further Editors (past and present) of several philosophy of education journals and members of the executives of the mentioned societies and/or of the editorial boards of the philosophy of education journals (not limited to the ones which we focus on in this study). It is tempting to deal with the list as a general top fifty of most productive authors (it happens to be the case that there are 51 out of 823 identified authors who have published 5 or more articles in this particular period in these particular journals). That, however, is not our aim, neither should this list be used for such purposes—not only is it necessarily incomplete as it takes only particular output into account, but we do not want to embrace such a worldwide ranking system at all. Nevertheless, to be published in these journals is an achievement and indicates to some extent the quality of the work one is doing, *a fortiori* if one has several publications in these journals. Amongst those who published 5 or more articles one finds several colleagues from the Netherlands, Belgium—9 in total for these two countries— and for example from Cyprus and New Zealand. And please do recall that this subset is only about the 6% of the authors who published 5 or more articles in the mentioned period. Further, if limited to those who published 10 articles or more, we can identify 13 authors (which is around 1.5% of all the authors); amongst them one finds one colleague from the U.S., two from New Zealand, two from Cyprus, three from Belgium, and five from the U.K. What if anything follows from this? Possibly only a (granted) limited point: if one compares the output of individual scholars with peers of their sub-discipline, a different picture emerges than is offered by comparisons with the output of all colleagues from the educational research field. In other words, although the output of an individual scholar may not look impressive when compared to colleagues doing empirical educational research, it may nevertheless be distinctive when it is compared to the output of her peers within philosophy of education.

If a proxy of quality assessment is used, it has to be sub-discipline specific

Such a comparison with peers working in the same sub-discipline may be a much welcomed addition to and is possibly more fair than comparisons within a discipline or, even worse, including more disciplines at the same time. This is not to argue that the latter (for other purposes perhaps) cannot or should not be conducted, but in as far as promotion, tenure and applications for funding do consider output, a sub-discipline-based comparison seems to us doing more justice than ignoring the specific context. It goes without saying that there is no real substitute for reading publications when assessing the quality of the output, i.e., those who evaluate should go through the submitted material themselves; but as this is clearly not always possible (neither in terms of expertise, nor in terms of the time it requires or the cost this generates)²⁶, our argument would be that if a proxy has to be used, it should be a sub-discipline specific proxy. In other words, if a proxy system for quality assessment is used that predominantly is based on journal publication in journals included in the Web of Knowledge, then it would in our opinion be more fair to compare the output with one's peers in philosophy of education or at least use one or other corrective to achieve a fairer judgment. And let us repeat: such a system (where predominantly only publications in journals with impact factors are taken into account) is used in many places, particularly in small countries where English is not the native language.

Comparing, more specifically counting, the publications (limited to those included in the Web of Knowledge) of philosophers of education with those of all educational researchers (or

with everyone else in the Faculty be it Psychology or Social Sciences as is the case for example in Belgium) is comparing apples and oranges. As argued at the beginning of this paper, such procedure ignores the substantially different research publication culture concerning philosophy of education (where for example much more references are found to books and even more to 'classical' texts than to journal articles). It puts the sub-discipline of education unduly under pressure, as it tends to conclude that the absence of huge numbers of publications in Web of Knowledge journals reflects the poor quality of the sub-discipline. It goes without saying that the debate about the place of philosophy of education in university curricula or and/or research has to be conducted. Obviously, one has to make decisions concerning the number of people to be appointed in that area and the amount of money that can be allocated for research. But such debate should not be poisoned by determining the relevance of a sub-discipline on the basis of the application of the same bibliometrics for all (sub-)disciplines. It should be part of a much more wider debate about funding opportunities and creating a place at the university for Arts or Humanities and Social (or Human) Sciences *vis-à-vis* the so-called Positive Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine.

We concur with what has been argued by Hardy, Heimans, and Lingard (2011) and by many others, which is that performativity has "the potential to substantively influence the nature of educational research undertaken by individual academics and consequently, the relative acclaim between different disciplines and sub-disciplines" (Hardy, Heimans & Lingard 2011, p. 14). Obviously, that a paper has been accepted for publication in a journal that is recognised as being high status can be very important for its author. Yet, though the place of publication may be a proxy of quality, what matters is the intrinsic quality of the paper (wherever it is published). Many universities in the U.S. and the U.K. do not give a lot of weight to such a proxy of quality; many other countries, however, have adopted this approach. The least one could argue for concerning philosophy of education, is that a fair comparison is made with peers all over the world instead of using comparisons with colleagues from the broader educational discipline or including even those from many more disciplines. Bridges (2011, p. 31) claims that it is "one of the few truths about education that approximates to the laws of physics: that assessment systems trump almost any other feature of educational policy or practice when it comes to driving behaviour, in particular when this assessment is linked to powerful rewards and punishments", and following Goodheart and Strathern he repeats "when something shifts from being a *measure* to a *target*, then it ceases to be a measure" (ibid., p. 33).

Unfortunately, like Michelle Dubois of the French Resistance in the BBC's sitcom 'Allo, 'Allo!, we have to continue repeating what may have escaped the dominant rationale and that threatens the very existence of philosophy of education.²⁷

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Endnotes

¹ This is a rejoinder to Matthew Hayden's (2012) recently published article in this journal. It mainly takes up the issue of number and author country of publications in the journals *Educational Philosophy and Theory*, *Educational Theory*, *Journal of Philosophy of Education*, and *Studies in Philosophy and Education* that is addressed by Hayden and links this with recent debates about the use of journal rankings for various purposes in academia.

² See for instance the special issue 'The power of journal rankings' published in 2011 by *Power and Education*, 3(1). In his editorial Michael Watts warns the reader that a hyperreality may be generated "... in which the real is substituted by its signs, which means that our understandings of reality become generalised from a model which seems more real than reality itself" (Watts, 2011, p. 2). In that same issue Hardy, Heimans, & Lingard (2011) too identify "... a new technology of governance within neo-liberal political frameworks" (p. 5) and following Rose they repeat that numbers are central here, they have unmistakable political power. They deal in particular with the situation in Australia. For a very insightful study concerning the U.K. see Bridges (2011) in that same issue.

Another interesting publication is the special issue by *Inter-Research. Ethics in science and environmental politics* (volume 8, number 1) on the use and misuse of bibliometric indices in evaluating scholarly performance edited by Howard I. Browman and Konstantinos I. Stergiou published almost a decade ago (2003). They write:

"Quantifying the relative performance of individual scholars, groups of scholars, departments, institutions, provinces/states/regions and countries has become an integral part of decision-making over research policy, funding allocations, awarding of grants, faculty hirings, and claims for promotion and tenure. Bibliometric indices (based mainly upon citation counts), such as the h-index and the journal impact factor, are heavily relied upon in such assessments. There is a growing consensus, and a deep concern, that these indices—more-and-more often used as a replacement for the informed judgement of peers—are misunderstood and are, therefore, often misinterpreted and misused. The articles in this ESEP Theme Section present a range of perspectives on these issues. Alternative approaches, tools and metrics that will hopefully lead to a more balanced role for these instruments are presented." The title of their introduction is telling: "Factors and indices are one thing, deciding who is scholarly, why they are scholarly, and the relative value of their scholarship is something else entirely". More references of general articles concerning these issues are given in Smeyers & Burbules, 2011.

³ Signed by 29 countries (1999, see <http://ec.europa.eu/education/policies/educ/bologna/bologna.pdf>), it identifies a set of specified objectives: the adoption of a common framework of readable and comparable degrees; the introduction of undergraduate and postgraduate levels in all countries, with first degrees no shorter than 3 years and relevant to the labour market; ECTS-compatible credit systems also covering lifelong learning activities; a European dimension in quality assurance, with comparable criteria and methods; the elimination of remaining obstacles to the free mobility of students (as well as trainees and graduates) and teachers (as well as researchers and higher education administrators).

⁴ As another recent paper of one of the co-authors of the present study is focused on Belgium (Smeyers & Burbules, 2011) the constraints one finds there will be left out in this study. Incidentally, one of the anomalies of the very differentiated system used at Ghent University (Belgium), where different weights are given relative to the position in the ranking of the Web of Knowledge journals in the respective categories of Thomson Reuters (for instance, belonging to the highest 10 % of journal impact factors, to quartile 1 etc.), is the fact that it is possible that a particular sub-discipline simply does not have a journal in for example quartile 1 (this is the case for Philosophy of Education). That these colleagues are therefore necessarily disadvantaged, is ignored.

⁵ For countries where French, German, Spanish, Portuguese, and Italian is spoken, it may well be the case that many scholars publish primarily in journals that use these languages. And that is probably also the case for academics working in Russia, China, and Japan. Although Thomson Reuters predominantly includes journals which publish articles in English, it includes a few non-English journals as well.

⁶ For details about a particular university approach in Belgium, i.e., Ghent, Faculty of Psychology and Educational Sciences, see Smeyers & Burbules, 2011.

⁷ What makes promotion particularly challenging in the Netherlands is the criterion regarding grant applications. For instance, in the Faculty of Psychology and Education of VU University, Associate professors level 2 are expected to have accumulated €370.000 and Associate professors level 1 €55.000 (for promotion to professor, one need to have earned more than a million euros). However, there is some leniency if publications in top journals are many more than expected (25 for AP1 and 35 for AP2) and if one's teaching receives high evaluations. It might be suggested that given the difficulty in obtaining grants, the best strategy for philosophers of education who seek

promotion is to publish. Incidentally, this may be one of the reasons why academics from the Netherlands publish a relatively high number of articles in the top 25% of the journals in our field and therefore are relatively well represented amongst the authors who have published 5 or more articles in Hayden's analysis.

⁸ This trend is currently entering into philosophy of education as well—because students who want to pursue an academic career need publications in international peer reviewed journals to get a postdoc position.

⁹ Personal websites with easily downloadable articles would for this reason be advisable too.

¹⁰ The publications in South Africa-based journals are as follows: 691 in *South African Journal of Higher Education*; 566 in *South African Journal of Education*; 336 in *Perspectives in Education (Web of Knowledge)*; 167 in *Africa Education Review/Educare*; 144 in *Journal of Education*; 124 in *Pythagoras*; 115 in *Education as Change*; 62 in *Per Linguam*; 54 in *African Journal of Research in Mathematics, Science and Technology Education*; and 52 in *Southern African Review of Education*.

¹¹ *Cambridge Journal of Education, Comparative Education, Compare, Early Child Development and Care, Gifted Education International, Higher Education, International Journal of Educational Development, International Journal of Learning, International Journal of Science Education, International Journal of Special Education, International Review of Education, Journal of Education Policy, Journal of Educational Studies, Journal of Negro Education, Language and Education, Quality in Higher Education, and School Psychology International*. Significantly absent from this list are journals that publish work in the field of philosophy of education, namely, *Educational Theory, Studies in Philosophy and Education, Educational Philosophy and Theory, and Journal of Philosophy of Education*.

¹² Although *Perspectives in Education (PIE)* was founded at WITS it is now under the editorship of a prominent EASA member based at the University of Pretoria (UP). This has also resulted in PIE shifting its focus away from work associated predominantly with analytical discourses in education.

¹³ Some PECSA-Kentonites became influential in policy-making through major policy initiatives of the early 1990s: The National Education Policy Investigation, The National Skills Development Strategy, The Policy Framework for Education and Training, and the National Commission on Higher Education which all spelt out the initial visions of a post-apartheid education system. The emerging influence of the analytical discourses in philosophy of education was due to the global weakening of Marxism and the increasing dominance of aggressive capitalism which saw liberalism emerge as the most influential of the analytical discourses. This can be seen in the emphasis on human rights in the National Education Policy Act of 1996 and in the commitment to devolving state power and encouraging community participation in decision-making in school governing bodies in the South African Schools Act of 1996.

¹⁴ It should be pointed out that in South Africa the humanities (which includes education) have stagnated inside 'a localised publication culture'. The humanities contribute only 4% of total article output to Web of Knowledge-indexed journals, and the social sciences 11%; for comparison, the natural and agricultural Sciences contribute 53% of total South African article output in Web of Knowledge journals (ASSAf, 2011, p. 128).

¹⁵ At Stellenbosch University, South Africa, one would expect a professor of education to produce an Web of Knowledge or IBSS article every three years. Incidentally, the Department of Education allocates about Rand 120,000 per accredited (that is Web of Knowledge or IBSS) article whether published in a national or international journal.

¹⁶ At South African universities appointments are made from junior lecturer to lecturer, followed by senior lecturer to associate professor and full professor. All these positions are in fact tenured because academics, after having been placed on probation for a two year period in a specific position can gain a full time appointment after a satisfactory work performance. The highest position is full professor and here one requires at least 25 journal articles of which 10 should be Web of Knowledge in the education field at Stellenbosch University.

¹⁷ In the Norwegian context 'philosophy of education' is used as a broad term referring to systematic humanities-oriented educational research exploring issues concerning educational policies, theories, research and practices. In general, 'philosophy of education' is seen as systematic meta-studies informed by philosophical perspectives on ethics, aesthetics, philosophies of science, epistemology, semantics or logic. A report from 2004 states that the research work of Norwegian philosophers of education is based on a variety of traditions, such as the Anglo-Saxon school of analytic philosophy, German tradition of philosophy of Bildung, French post-structuralism and American pragmatism. Moreover, that the Norwegian school of 'philosophers of praxis' has a strong influence on the work of Norwegian philosophers of education (see NRC, 2004, p. 110).

¹⁸ This observation is parallel to the observation made by Gibbons et al. (1994). They characterised this transition—from a discipline-oriented to a topic-oriented mode of research—as a transition from a ‘Mode I’ to a ‘Mode II’ production of knowledge.

¹⁹ To cite the report (in Norwegian): “En eksplisitt metarefleksjon rundt trekkene ved pedagogisk forskning slik det kommer til uttrykk i denne evalueringen kan etter komiteens mening bidra til fagutvikling ... den pedagogiske filosofien vil potensielt kunne bidra til en slik metarefleksjon” (UHR, 2004, p. 135). [An explicit meta-reflection on the characteristics of educational research as expressed in this evaluation will, according to this committee, contribute to professional development ... philosophy of education could potentially contribute to such a meta-reflection. Our translation.]

²⁰ Professor Lars Løvlie initiated, and was the head of, this research school, which existed from 2007 to 2011. There were a total of 15 research fellows—from the University of Oslo, NTNU, Oslo University College, Akershus University College, Telemark University College and the University of Agder—attending the school. The overall goal was to increase the interest in philosophy of education as a research discipline and to contribute to high quality research within the field.

²¹ Studier i Pædagogisk Filosofi - <http://ojs.statsbiblioteket.dk/index.php/spf>

²² In Norway, academic publications are graded into two levels: Level 1 refers to all reviewed publications (Norwegian, Nordic and international). Level 2 refers to the internationally cutting edge publications at a level of excellence. The amount of Level 2 publications contains less than five percent of the total amount of the publications within the research domain (UHR, 2004). Books on level 2 are monographs and anthologies published at renowned international publishing houses (such as Routledge or LIT Verlag). Examples of journals at Level 2 are *Studies in Philosophy and Education* and *Journal of Philosophy of Education*.

²³ ‘International networking’ here denotes both Nordic collaborations and collaboration with any other non-Norwegian countries. ‘International publications’ are publications within international peer reviewed journals.

²⁴ The reason why use is made of this bibliographical source instead of using the Thomson Reuters *Social Sciences Citation Index* is simply that two of the mentioned journals (*Studies in Philosophy and Education* and *Educational Philosophy and Theory*) were only very recently included in Thomson Reuters (the *Journal of Philosophy of Education* on the other hand is indexed already for a very long time). *Educational Theory* is not listed in the mentioned period neither is it included at present, i.e., in January 2014.

²⁵ The category 10 or more is included in the category 5 or more.

²⁶ Such an approach, i.e., reading texts and making a judgement, is exactly the system that is being used for example in the UK (since the early 1990s). This evaluation is qualitative and not quantitative. Such a situation is fundamentally different as criteria of quality of research seem to be far less biased towards particular sub-disciplines, paradigms or methodologies. (Philosophy of education work tends to score quite high in the UK system.)

²⁷ We are grateful to Matthew Haydon and in particular to Gert Biesta for comments and suggestions on a previous version of this paper.