"It's Not Just Any Teaching Program": The New Professionalism, Educational Inequity, and Ako Mātātupu: Teach First New Zealand

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Abstract: In an effort to understand the impact of the international education network, Teach for All, this paper focuses on one Teach For All affiliate program, Ako Mātātupu/TFNZ (AM/TFNZ), to consider how Teach For All and its affiliates are reshaping notions of teacher expertise and professionalism as it defines itself in contrast to university-based teacher education.

By drawing on qualitative data, including semi-structured interviews, participant observation, and document analysis, we argue that AM/TFNZ develops a new kind of professional by shifting 1) the purpose of becoming educators 2) the content of teacher education, and 3) the role of teacher educators. Ultimately, AM/TFNZ develops their educators outside of the literature, expertise, or histories of teacher education with a focus on creating a network of innovators capable of disrupting the status quo.
Keywords: Teach For All; teacher education; new professionalism

"No es un programa de enseñanza cualquiera": El nuevo profesionalismo, la inequidad educativa y Ako Mātātupu: Teach First New Zealand

Resumen: En un esfuerzo por comprender el impacto de la red de educación internacional, Teach for All, este documento se centra en un programa afiliado de Teach for All, Ako Mātātupu/TFNZ (AM/TFNZ), para considerar cómo Teach for All y sus afiliados están remodelar las nociones de experiencia y profesionalismo docente tal como se define a sí mismo en contraste con la formación docente universitaria. Al basarnos en datos cualitativos, incluidas entrevistas semiestructuradas, observación participante y análisis de documentos, argumentamos que AM/TFNZ desarrolla un nuevo tipo de profesional al cambiar 1) el propósito de convertirse en educadores 2) el contenido de la formación docente y 3) el papel de los formadores de profesores. En última instancia, AM/TFNZ desarrolla a sus educadores fuera de la literatura, la experiencia o las historias de la formación docente con un enfoque en la creación de una red de innovadores capaces de alterar el statu quo.
Palabras-clave: Teach For All; formación del profesorado; nueva profesionalidad

"Não é qualquer programa de ensino": O novo profissionalismo, desigualdade educacional e Ako Mātātupu: Teach First New Zealand

Resumo: Em um esforço para entender o impacto da rede internacional de educação, Teach for All, este artigo se concentra em um programa de afiliados Teach for All, Ako Mātātupu/TFNZ (AM/TFNZ), para considerar como o Teach for All e seus afiliados estão remodelando as noções de especialização e profissionalismo do professor, uma vez que se define em contraste com a formação de professores baseada na universidade. Com base em dados qualitativos, incluindo entrevistas semiestruturadas, observação participante e análise de documentos, argumentamos que AM/TFNZ desenvolve um novo tipo de profissional ao deslocar 1) o propósito de se tornar educadores 2) o conteúdo da formação de professores e 3) o papel dos formadores de professores. Em última análise, AM/TFNZ desenvolve seus educadores fora da literatura, experiência ou histórias da formação de professores com foco na criação de uma rede de inovadores capazes de romper o status quo.
Palavras-chave: Teach For All; formação de professores; novo profissionalismo

"It's Not Just Any Teaching Program": The New Professionalism, Educational Inequity, and Ako Mātātupu: Teach First New Zealand

Teachers have long existed at the nexus of a troubling dichotomy as they are increasingly positioned as both the problem and solution to society's ills (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 2006). More recently, teacher education has fallen under similar scrutiny as programs are outsourced away from universities and towards private providers who tend to privilege practice-based approaches to teacher preparation and eschew an over-reliance on theory (Cochran-Smith et al, 2020). In short, teacher education has struggled to articulate its relevance as traditional notions of expertise are questioned, deconstructed, and reimagined in an era of neoliberal reform and populist politics. At the center of these endeavors is Teach For All (TFAll), a global education network that aims to address worldwide disparities by placing teachers in high-poverty schools for a two-year period and then developing their leadership capacities so that they can promote change across a range of societal sectors.

Teach For All is predicated on the idea that teaching can be learned on the job, mastered in two years' time, and used as a stepping stone to more prestigious, financially lucrative, and impactful careers (Teach For All, 2021). In an effort to unpack these assumptions, this paper focuses on one TFAll affiliate program, Ako Mātātupu/Teach First New Zealand (AM/TFNZ), to consider how Teach For All and its affiliates are reshaping notions of teacher expertise and professionalism as it defines itself *in contrast* to university-based teacher education. By drawing on qualitative data, including semi-structured interviews, participant observation, and document analysis collected on two separate occasions across a three-year period, we argue that AM/TFNZ develops a new kind of professional by shifting 1) the purpose of becoming educators, 2) the content of teacher education, and 3) the role of teacher educators. Ultimately, AM/TFNZ develops their educators outside of the literature, expertise, institutions, or histories of teacher education with a focus on creating a network of innovators capable of disrupting the status quo.

Teach For All: "Disrupting" Traditional Teacher Education

Founded in 2007 as part of the Clinton Global Initiative (CGI), TFAll and CGI shared a "social-mission-oriented, market-based 'win-win approach' to solving educational disparities that benefitted both the 'victims' (i.e. marginalized pupils) and the 'heroes' (i.e. TFAll teachers)" (Thomas et al., 2021, p. 37). With affiliates in 59 countries and support from local governments, NGOs, and private investors in contexts as diverse as Lebanon, Australia and Norway (Thomas et al., 2021), TFAll operates as a franchise by implanting its brand of educational reform across contexts while simultaneously trying to control quality and unity through its central office. Specifically, the organization has been cast as a "disrupter," by creating alternatives to traditional[1] pathways in teacher education (Crawford-Garrett & Thomas, 2018).

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[1] While the term *traditional* may be interpreted in a variety of ways, we use it to refer to the most common practice of teacher preparation. In New Zealand, the traditional method of entry into teaching secondary education for individuals who already possess a bachelor's degree is through a university program. Therefore, for the purposes of this article, we will use the contrasting terms *traditional* versus *employment-based* to describe initial teacher education (ITE) programs. New Zealand's Ministry of Education clarifies the distinction: "Under employment-based ITE, teacher trainees are employed by schools as teachers while studying for their teaching qualification, instead of being based in universities" (Teach NZ, n.d.-b).

TFAll's theory of change involves recruiting promising local "leaders," preparing them as teachers through an abbreviated summer training program, and placing them in high-needs schools for a two-year period. Underpinning this approach is the expectation that these teacher-participants will eventually transition into leadership roles with the goal of impacting educational systems on a broader scale. TFAll operates on the assumption that once exposed to endemic educational disparities, participants will be galvanized to promote transformative change- either within education or without- by advancing policies that address issues of equity for historically-marginalized communities (Ahmann, 2015).

New Zealand was ripe for an alternative pathway to teaching like the one offered by TFAll. In a report from 2006, five years before the inception of AM/TFNZ, researchers polled teachers and principals and found "... widespread dissatisfaction with current initial teacher education across all sectors" (Kane & Mallon, 2006, p. 29). They noted, among other things, that "...student teachers spend insufficient time in school-based practicums; and that, with some notable exceptions, younger student teachers lack the professional attitudes and commitment required" (p. 29). The researchers summarize: "Teachers, principals and student teachers generally all questioned the quality of preservice teacher education and the sense of preparedness it fostered for beginning teachers." While AM/TFNZ arguably did not increase the amount of student teaching hours or clinical preparation required, it flipped the entire model by developing an employment-based program, recruiting top graduates willing to work with a mission-driven mindset, and focused intentionally on low-decile (high-poverty) schools that have historically been very difficult to staff with qualified teachers. AM/TFNZ used this approach to create a programmatic niche within the teacher education landscape of New Zealand, claiming that a focus on equity, low-decile schools, and employment-based training made them unique and thus uniquely positioned to transform education writ large.

Theoretical Framework

The global embrace of neoliberal reform efforts has led to shifts in the educational landscape. These reforms include high-stakes testing, market-based reforms, and the increasing role of the private sector in public education. As a result, teachers' work has been redefined according to the new professionalism - in essence, it has become more scripted, more controlled, and more technocratic (Anderson & Cohen, 2015). These market-driven reform efforts are intended to increase the efficiency of education by streamlining the profession, which means more rigidity and less individual flexibility as professional educators. As Teach For All and its affiliates broaden their scope of influence through implementing abbreviated preparation programs, bypassing teacher education programs entirely, and reducing the content of teacher education to a set of easily implementable tasks and strategies, it becomes necessary to consider the program within and against the framework of new professionalism to consider how the organization potentially undermines educational equity while simultaneously upending conceptions of teacher expertise and agency.

New professionalism, in education, is situated within the neoliberal model of economics that assumes free markets and privatization can both enhance quality and secure profits (Anderson & Cohen, 2015; Au, 2011). Critics of neoliberalism have argued that a shift has occurred within society, a shift away from caring about our neighbor to caring about the profit margins of big companies (Chomsky & Schivone, 2008). Within this paradigm, multinational companies have experienced unprecedented growth (Harvey, 2007). Yet most individuals do not receive the direct financial benefit from a huge corporation even as there is a widespread belief that society at large reaps rewards when one big company benefits (Lipsitz, 2011). This acceptance indexes a Gramscian shift

in power, one in which coercion and consent are employed to control the population and exert influence (Gramsci, 1992). The results for teachers in the classroom are: a loss of personal power, the usage of scripts, a narrowing of educational scope, and a technocratic approach that is controlled and above and outside the school (Anderson & Cohen, 2015; Evetts, 2011).

Formerly, teacher professionalism allowed for teachers to exercise discretion within the classroom based upon their internal decisions (Lortie, 2002). New professionalism is marked by "the importance of administrative management in contrast to professional discretion" (Evetts, 2012, p. 6) New professionalism embraces organizational professionalism characterized by a centralized framework in which management controls the power rather than the distinct, occupational professionalism, which resides within the abilities of a qualified educator (Evetts, 2011; Torres & Weiner, 2018).

In addition to this top-down approach, new professionalism is also marked by a narrowing of educational aims (Anderson & Cohen, 2015). The narrowing of education's scope, compromises the ability of each teacher to teach according to the students present in their classroom and address the culture that each student brings. For example, one teaching strategy that contrasts with this narrowing of the curriculum is student-centered instruction, in which the student has some control over the content and demonstrations of their learning. In New Zealand, efforts are underway to shift this flexible pedagogical model to a more rigid, core disciplinary knowledge as prescribed by the Ministry of Education (Lipson, 2020, p. 114). This is perhaps best exemplified by a report titled: *New Zealand's Education Delusion: How Bad Ideas Ruined a Once World-Leading School System,* published by The New Zealand Initiative, a "business-backed research organisation," (New Zealand Initiative, n.d., para. 6). The author summarizes the report with the following introductory sentence: "There is a rot at the core of schooling in New Zealand" (Lipson, 2020, p. 154). This perceived "rot" refers to progressive, student-centered teaching practices. According to the report, "child-centered ideas tell teachers to step aside and let their children lead…. Instead of passing on 'the best that has been thought and said,' the national curriculum in New Zealand is now focused on '21st-century' competencies" (Lipson, 2020, p. 36).

The narrowing of educational aims is occurring while educational scholars such as O'Connor (2019) are advocating for a "wide angle view" (p. 470). Educational "innovators," in an effort to create scalable, scripted curriculum and activities, want to simplify culture to the singular. It is much harder to balance nuances and keep the broad playing field of culture open. Agar (2006) reminds us that:

> Anytime we use the concept [cultures] with reference to a specific source and target "languaculture," we have to understand that it will work only in part, some of the time, in any specific situation or for any particular person when we try and apply it. (p. 7)

New professionalism in education results in an oversimplification of the process and goals of education to the detriment of students and teachers rather than an increase in quality or equity.

Methodology

The data presented in this paper is culled from a larger, phenomenological qualitative study conducted in two phases over a three-year period. Phenomenological research focuses on the lived realities of a specific phenomenon (Van Manen, 1990), with an emphasis on pursuing reality, rather than truth. In this sense, phenomenological research aims to present subjective experience with a particular phenomenon (Qutoshi, 2018). Both phases of the study were designed with the goal of

understanding how participants and stakeholders in AM/TFNZ understand the process of becoming a teacher and confronting systemic inequities through the organization.

Research Context

Ako Mātātupu/Teach First New Zealand was founded in 2011 with a focus on naming and rectifying persistent achievement gaps between Māori and Pasifika students and their Pākehā (White, European) peers. Originally the organization focused on two communities- South Auckland and Northland, New Zealand, both of which have high concentrations of Māori and Pasifika students. At the time of this writing, their website boasts that they "have worked in partnership with over 60 English and Māori-medium secondary schools serving low-income communities from Kaitaia to Invercargill," which effectively covers the scope of the country (Teach First NZ, n.d.-a). Similar to other Teach For All models, AM/TFNZ privileges an employment-based model in which emphasis is placed on "on-the-job" training, rather than extensive university-based preparation that occurs prior to entering the classroom. The current model, for example, consists of approximately nine weeks of summer preparation (some of it completed through online modules) and a summer school teaching experience. Participants then interview for jobs at low-decile (high-poverty) schools and are hired to serve as the teacher of record for a two-year period and receive a full salary as designated for untrained teachers as well as reimbursement for tuition costs as they complete their certification coursework (Teach NZ., n.d.-b). According to New Zealand's Secondary Teachers' Collective Agreement, the base salary for the lowest paid untrained teacher effective July 1, 2021 is $43,381 (New Zealand Post-Primary Teachers' Association, n.d.). Participants also receive a reduced course load and dedicated mentorship from an experienced faculty member who can support their learning.

Most significantly, the organization has recently engaged in the process of re-branding by changing its name from Teach First New Zealand to Ako Mātātupu in an effort to center language reflective of indigenous epistemologies and perspectives and to emphasize the role of re-indigenization in fostering educational equity and access in New Zealand (Crawford-Garrett et al., under review). Prior to this reinvention, the organization was critiqued for perpetuating overly-simplistic representations of inequality (Crawford-Garrett, 2017), the participants' reliance on deficit discourses to explain the academic underachievement of Māori and Pasifika youth (Crawford-Garrett, 2018; Oldham & Crawford-Garrett, 2019), and placing inexperienced teachers in front of the most vulnerable students and ignoring the importance of rigorous teacher education (Oldham, 2017; 2018), to name but a few. Integral to the reinvention has also been a distancing from university-based institutions of teacher education to deliver the certification portion of the program. While initially AM/TFNZ collaborated with the University of Auckland, one of the most prestigious teacher education entities in the country, they then switched to MindLab, a technical college with no history of offering teacher education programming (Education Counts, 2016). This partnership was ultimately short-lived and, at the writing of this article, AM/TFNZ has received approval from the government to become its own certification provider. Thus, AM/TFNZ no longer has to collaborate with any outside entities or formal universities in order to offer a teaching credential. With these changes in place, it remains to be seen whether a radical refocusing of the mission towards valuing indigeneity will mitigate the scrutiny the organization has faced.

Researcher Positionality

Zack, Helen, and Jackie are doctoral students at the institution where Katy works and were invited to participate in data analysis on this project after Katy returned from a second round of data collection in New Zealand in November, 2019. Zack is a White male teacher educator whose research and teaching practices center around innovative 21st-century pedagogies and advancing

educational equity. Helen is a White, female educator who found her Eurocentric perspectives challenged by her immersion in a diverse southwestern community. Jackie is a White, female secondary education teacher with background experience teaching in high-poverty U.S. Southwest schools that serve youth from other historically-marginalized communities, including Indigenous students and English Language Learners.

Katy is a White, middle-class, female American university professor who spent six months in New Zealand in 2016 on a research fellowship to study AM/TFNZ. She returned to New Zealand in 2019 to gather a second round of data and to consider how the organization had evolved over the intervening years. As a researcher who had previously studied and published work on Teach For America and a former urban public school teacher herself, Katy worked diligently to connect with AM/TFNZ participants and to share experiences about the opportunities and challenges inherent in teaching in high-poverty schools with minimal preparation. These connections helped Katy during the second phase of the study (2019) as some of the participants from her previous study had since moved into staff roles with AM/TFNZ. However, time also proved an obstacle to the research as Katy had published several articles between 2017-19 that were critical of AM/TFNZ. Thus, she was also regarded, in some cases, with reticence or suspicion.

Recognizing our outsider status as Americans and our identities as White researchers as possible impediments to the research, we were careful to have the contents of this paper checked by New Zealand colleagues familiar with the context and discussed theoretical framing with Indigenous colleagues. Even with these deliberate efforts, we take full responsibility for any blind spots or cultural misinterpretations present in this paper.

Data Collection

This study occurred in two phases: one in Spring 2016 and the other in Fall 2019 in the greater Auckland region. Phase 1 occurred over a six-month period and involved extensive interviews with differently-positioned stakeholders including participants, principals, staff members and faculty from the University of Auckland, a focus group, and document analysis. Phase 2 consisted of a one-month period of data collection focused primarily on participant observation of the AM/TFNZ Summer Intensive and was supplemented with interview and focus group data as well as additional document analysis that included materials disseminated by AM/TFNZ during the Summer Intensive (Yin, 2003). Interviews occurred with four AM/TFNZ staff members and were approximately an hour in length. Participants also responded to an anonymous survey (N=7) and ten teacher candidates participated in a focus group session that lasted approximately one hour. In addition, Katy observed as many sessions of the Summer Intensive as possible and had informal conversations with staff and participants throughout. She took copious fieldnotes and used these observations to shape interview and focus group questions as a means of conducting member checks. She also collected all documents distributed during her field work including the participant handbook.

Data Analysis

Data from the second phase of the research was de-identified and coded individually by Katy, Zack, Helen and Jackie to identify relevant themes and create categories (Janesick, 2000). Drawing on the traditions within qualitative research, we aimed to identify themes emic to the data (Grant, 1999), rather than imposing our own ideas or perspectives. Once several themes emerged, we coded the data a second time with attention to whether and how the categories were representative of a variety of data sources so that we could triangulate data sources and ensure

validity. One dominant theme that emerged from the data related to teacher education, specifically the ways in which AM/TFNZ was depicted as divergent from traditional teacher education.

Findings

Findings from this study suggest that AM/TFNZ intentionally defines itself in contrast to traditional, university-based teacher education. First, AM/TFNZ shifts the purpose of becoming educators by preparing its participants for temporary careers in the classroom with the goal of becoming "change agents" who segue from classroom spaces into leadership positions after a two-year period. AM/TFNZ also reimagines the content of teacher education by eschewing the theoretical readings commonly associated with university-based programs in favor of tips, strategies, and anecdotes that are delivered in their abbreviated summer training program. Lastly, while AM/TFNZ once relied on teacher educators at the University of Auckland to deliver significant portions of their program, they have cut ties with university-based teacher educators and created their own teaching credential as they expand the role of network alumni in delivering most facets of the program. In this sense, professionalism and expertise are shifted away from the research base of teacher education and in-depth teaching experience and towards an entrepreneurial, technical, and practice-based approach to preparing "leaders," not teachers.

The Purpose of Becoming Educators

Primary messaging during the Summer Intensive focused on the purpose of becoming educators with an emphasis on the idea of "being change agents." The AM/TFNZ staff members all conveyed to participants that becoming change agents was a goal separate from, and more important than, becoming teachers. For example, in the introduction to the Summer Intensive, a male staff member said, "We can't solve the problem by pumping more teachers into the system- more people doing the same thing will just exacerbate it. There are thousands of amazing people in the system already." While he recognizes the assets of current teachers working within the system, he also implies that systemic change will likely not stem from teachers themselves – or at least from the teachers already working on these endeavors. Indeed, later in his introduction to the program, he reinforces these notions by stating "It's not just any teaching program. We are focused on making change." The underlying implication is that true systemic change will require a different set of tools or, perhaps, a different kind of person, namely someone with the leadership qualities that the AM/TFNZ participants are said to possess. Similarly, a staff member who works on recruitment told Katy, "There is a lack of quality teachers in New Zealand. We don't need more teachers in the system...if we had quality teachers this whole time, this situation wouldn't exist." In this example, the staff member pins the current educational crisis squarely on educators. In yet another instance that occurred in the initial week of training, a presenter sharing about the challenges faced by Pasifika populations in New Zealand, noted, "If you are here to just be a teacher, get out. You are here to help change the world." This theme was echoed throughout by staff members, guest presenters, and AM/TFNZ personnel who repeatedly noted that "it's not just a program…." and "this is a calling…."

The notion that AM/TFNZ is somehow uniquely poised to change education for the better seems to have been internalized by at least one participant who shared their reason for participating in the program: "It's not just about becoming a teacher and becoming a solid teacher. We're actually trying to change a system. That was the big draw for me was the social aspect." Thus, the work of the participants was consistently constructed as different from, and morally superior to, the work of

regular educators. Moreover, change was consistently constructed as happening outside of and separate from established societal systems.

These institutional discourses were quickly adopted and voiced by program participants in subsequent sessions. For example, one participant shared in a small group setting: "I'm more interested in being a change agent than in teaching." Another participant noted: "I'm interested in changing students' lives." In another example, a participant in a small group session asked the presenter, "Do you mean breaking the rules that govern education?" And the presenter responded by saying, "Yes, I encourage you to be brave. You are brave to do this. Who else would take this much time from their lives to change the world?" This is yet another example of the ways in which participants are lauded as superior to and braver than typical educators, who often work as teachers for many more years and accrue much less social capital in the process (Crawford-Garrett, 2020). These exchanges also suggest that participants did not necessarily equate teaching with being a change agent. Instead, changing students' lives or altering the educational system were seen as endeavors distinctly separate from the daily work of teachers. Perhaps the intensive focus on the organizational mission was meant to mitigate organizational fears. As one staff member shared, "We are afraid people are just here for the qualification and not wanting to push towards our bigger vision." The program does offer an enticing set of financial incentives as participants receive a free teaching qualification and a teacher's salary, benefits that a regular teacher education program can hardly compete with.

Indeed, AM/TFNZ worked tirelessly to differentiate their program, mission and broader organization from traditional institutions of teacher education. In one session focused on examining the New Zealand Ministry of Education's code for working with Māori learners, a participant stated: "As a person of color I agree with everything written here, but we are in an echo chamber. This is not how all people think. We all have the same values. We are all here to change society." Again, there is an underlying implication that traditional institutions of teacher education do not focus on equity, social justice or addressing longstanding educational disparities between Indigenous and Pākehā youth. A staff member who worked on programming furthered this notion by stating, "We are making sure we've got good people going into our schools that aren't just the typical idea of what a good teacher is." Ironically, "good teacher" is never defined by the organization in explicit ways even as AM/TFNZ consistently works to construct a narrative that sets it apart from university-based teacher education as it creates a programmatic niche in New Zealand focused on changing the system and increasing access and opportunity for historically-marginalized youth.

One way in which AM/TFNZ envisions itself changing the system is through policy. On "The need" section of their website, they claim:

> Over 80% of those who have completed our programme have continued to teach, many now with over 5 years of experience in the profession, and over 25% in a school leadership position. Of those who are no longer teaching, many are now studying or working for change through policy and other means. (TFNZ, n.d.-b)

One of these alumni, from the class of 2013, who now works in the policy arena, was featured in the *2020 Participant Handbook* as an example of a model Kairapu, the Māori word AM/TFNZ uses to describe members of their alumni network (Teach First NZ, 2020, p. 57).

The Content of Teacher Education

In addition to shifting the purpose of becoming educators, AM/TFNZ has also shifted the content of teacher education. With less reliance on theory and more attention to tips, strategies and anecdotes, the preparation that participants receive focuses more on relationship building and less

on the traditional components of a university-based teacher education program. During Katy's observation of the Summer Intensive, little emphasis was initially placed on traditional content of teacher education including discussions of learning theory, empirical research, or even critical reflection on practices and pedagogies. In workshops or sessions, for example, that did focus on teaching practices and approaches, discussion was abstract or emotional and little attention was paid to teaching strategies or critical conversations about content. For example, in a session that Katy observed, the discussion focused on validating students who come to school with specific needs or challenges. Katy raised the issue about how to adequately validate students' needs and experiences alongside the pressures of teaching. The question was quickly dismissed and the opportunity to focus on *how* to do the work was, again, ignored.

In a survey that participants completed anonymously in which they were asked to name elements of the Summer Intensive that resonated with them, many of them named emotional and relational elements as being particularly impactful. One participant noted:

> The stories I have heard from the young people who have come in…have been really interesting and I know will stick with me for a while. Creating safe and positive spaces are so important for growth, and developing meaningful relationships is important, too.

While these are undeniably important factors in becoming a successful teacher, there was little time or attention given to *how* educators might create these spaces or relationships or asking the students to share more specifically what teachers did to make the learning impactful or transformative.

In a separate example, one participant noted the emotional impact of a spoken word performance about the plight of Māori and Pasifika youth in New Zealand by writing, "It was filled with words that resonated with me, and I felt her passion to the point where I cried." The poem was, indeed, profound and discussed issues of systemic racism in schools as well as the often untapped academic potential of Black and Brown youth. Yet, Katy did not observe an opportunity to unpack the ways in which systemic racism is operationalized in school policies or classroom practices or to concretize any of the key elements of the poem that might help novice teachers engage with the complexity of working towards equity in school contexts, which is undoubtedly difficult. Thus, the poem remained at an emotional and abstract level for the participants who might remain unsure how to translate the poem's tenets into tangible action or to consider how the spoken word medium might be utilized as a pedagogical tool. This cursory exposure to a different culture without deep engagement is potentially detrimental. For example, Zygmunt and Clark (2016), who work with preservice teachers in a community-based program in the United States in which their candidates engage with students in a low-decile context for an 18th month period, caution that a cursory and superficial exposure to minority cultures without depth can result in reinforcing minority stereotypes rather than exploring and eliminating them.

In addition to the emotional tenor of the Summer Intensive, the overall content focused on tips and anecdotes that participants could glean and later apply in their own classrooms. On the survey, for example, one participant said, "I've picked up a few practical things that I can take with me in the classroom (e.g. not to mirror a voice rising in tone as it may exacerbate/further provoke someone in distress)." Another participant noted:

> I have learnt a variety of ice breaking and teambuilding games that killed two birds with one stone…On the one hand, they helped consolidate friendships within our cohort of trainee teachers; on the other hand they could be adapted to a classroom context to nurture a supportive and dynamic social environment.

While these are examples of clearly practical approaches that participants gained in the Summer Intensive, they seem to exist in isolation, without attachment to theory or research that could help participants understand these approaches beyond their perceived practicality.

This divergence from the traditional work of teacher education is wholly intentional on the part of AM/TFNZ as the organization consistently highlights its efforts to differentiate itself from mainstream teacher education. For example, in describing the certification component of the program, the Participant Handbook (2020) states the following: "Come to us with an open mind as it is likely that the style of learning that you will encounter over the course of this Programme will be different to your previous academic experiences" (p. 27). It goes on to note: "Because the program is an immersive experience, there are no traditional face-to-face classes. [We] will send you a weekly email to share info and instructions on how to complete the qualification successfully" (p. 29). Participants are thus advised early on to expect a significant departure from traditional types of academic learning. In addition to divesting from traditional, university-based forms of teacher education, AM/TFNZ notes the ways in which their philosophy and approach is increasingly distinct from Teach For All. For example, one AM/TFNZ staff member noted, "You have a kind of clean slate... some of those things were developed in very different contexts and a very long time ago. We are in a different space now." Essentially, this staff member is referring to the shift in organizational priorities as they seek to center Indigenous worldviews and epistemologies by enacting an educational program uniquely their own.

The Role of Teacher Educators

As teacher education increasingly shifts away from universities and towards outside providers, the notion of who qualifies as a teacher educator is reconceptualized as well. Within AM/TFNZ, scholars and researchers are not the sole providers of teacher education or the leaders in expertise for and about teaching. Rather, teacher education is distributed among the AM/TFNZ staff (many of whom are former participants who taught for two years), the Kairapu (alumni) network, the school-based mentor teachers, and fellow AM/TFNZ participants. Little credibility is granted to traditional institutions of teacher education or the supposed expertise that lies within.

One way this lack of credence for traditional pathways into teaching manifested itself early on was related to hiring teacher candidates from AM/TFNZ without posting the positions publicly. This oversight led to legal action. In 2014, the Post Primary Teachers Association (PPTA), a teacher's union in NZ which had been working to address employment listing inequality between AM/TFNZ, their initial teacher education provider the University of Auckland, and the Ministry of Education, pursued legal action to rectify the issue of AM/TFNZ's candidates being hired without advertising the teaching positions (New Zealand Post Primary Teachers Association, 2019). The court found in favor of the PPTA and ruled that, with the exception of short-term positions, all teaching positions must be advertised openly and fairly with equal opportunity for employment. As a result, AM/TFNZ agreed that it's teacher candidates would "apply and be considered for jobs in schools alongside other teachers" ("Agreement on future employment processes involving Teach First NZ," 2016). In spite of this legal resolution, Katy observed AM/TFNZ personnel writing resumes for participants and sending them to schools on their behalf, interventions that likely aided their ability to secure positions and advantages that were not offered to university-prepared educators.

The first overt indication of AM/TFNZ's divergence from traditional modes of teacher education occurred in 2016 when AM/TFNZ parted ways with the University of Auckland, their first institutional partner. During this time, faculty at the University of Auckland were pushing for a deeper commitment to teacher education, including a longer and more robust school-based

preparation experience for participants. Instead, AM/TFNZ severed ties and initiated a collaboration with Mind Lab, a tertiary institution in New Zealand that had no previous experience in delivering teacher education programs, thus allowing AM/TFNZ to have substantial input into the curriculum as the bulk of the instruction was moved online. As of the writing of this article, AM/TFNZ has since parted ways with Mind Lab and has received permission from the New Zealand Ministry of Education to provide its own qualification, though the details remain opaque. With this decisive move away from university-based teacher education, AM/TFNZ increasingly relied on the network and its members to serve as providers for teacher education.

　　　　One example of this change is the way in which the leadership of AM/TFNZ has re-branded their staff as "Kaihāpai," a Māori term that means the 'ones who cradle.' According to the *2020 Participant Handbook*, "This term refers to the Ako Mātātupu staff members who are responsible for supporting your understanding of and connection with the vision of Ako Mātātupu and to guide you in your journey to becoming an excellent teacher and Kairapu (alumnus)" (p. 64). Through this structure, alumni, which have themselves been re-branded with the Māori word *Kairapu*, are quickly incorporated into prominent roles within the organization (sometimes after as little as two years of teaching) and retain close ties and bonds with other former participants who have segued into leadership positions in outside organizations. For example, the previously mentioned class of 2013 graduate who now works in the policy sector, was employed by AM/TFNZ as a Graduate Recruitment Advisor for 10 months in 2017 after the individual left teaching and before they started working for the Ministry of Education (Ruby Knight [Hale], n.d.). By working actively to maintain these connections and consistently promoting from within, AM/TFNZ is creating a network that will solidify their presence in New Zealand's educational landscape for the foreseeable future.

　　　　Another example of dispersing teacher education throughout the network is the reliance on mentor teachers who are based in the school sites and are paid a stipend and given release time from teaching in order to provide targeted support to the participants as they learn to teach. In describing the work of the mentor teachers, a staff member noted the following, "...what we've learned as well in the last few years is that making those supports work really well has as much to do with making the participant able to work effectively with their mentor as anything else." Yet, even as more responsibility for teacher preparation is outsourced to the mentor teacher, the Participant Handbook (2020) describes the relationship as follows: "The big difference usually being that they [the mentor] have more understanding of the school context than you do, which will often make them wiser, but usually more worn out" (p. 42). Even as participants, then, are encouraged to rely on the mentor teacher as a key source of learning and development, the mentor teacher is simultaneously depicted as "worn out," a paradox that likely proves perplexing for participants. Additionally, during a session of the Summer Intensive, a leader within AM/TFNZ proclaimed to the cohort: "We only take 7% of applicants; you are here because these kids deserve the best," a statement that implies that universities have not adequately prepared teachers to address the systemic inequities minority students face in New Zealand's public school system. Ironically, AM/TFNZ relies heavily on mentor teachers who have presumably been trained by these failing teacher preparatory institutions to support and train their recruits. Indeed, a report produced by an independent organization, The NZ Initiative, New Zealand's primary think-tank, found that when it comes to alternative pathways into teaching like AM/TFNZ, "...the value added from a mentoring and induction system is only as good the mentor teacher" (Morris & Patterson, 2013, p. 57). While the mentor's expertise is seen as useful in understanding school politics and contexts, AM/TFNZ is clearly not depicting teachers as transformational or as leaders of lasting change.

Lastly, fellow participants are also positioned as teacher educators and the importance of learning from each other is emphasized throughout the Summer Intensive. Participants internalized organizational messages that emphasized the role of not only supporting one another but also utilizing each other's perspectives and knowledge to glean practical tools for teaching. For example, in an online participant survey, one participant noted the following: "I am hoping to have formed lasting friendships with many members of my cohort that are deep enough for us to be able to rely on each other for emotional and practical support during what will be a very challenging two years." In a different session, the presenter noted that AM/TFNZ "creates a village...in a regular teaching program you would be together for a year and then go out and be isolated. This is your village." Whether or not this rendering of university-based teacher education programs is accurate, it furthered participants' ideas that they were unique and thus uniquely positioned to transform education. It also concretized notions that participants can and should provide tools, support and other kinds of expertise to one another given their shared commitments and unique positioning to foster educational change.

Discussion

From its inception, AM/TFNZ has sought to set itself apart from other teacher education programs by claiming that its deliberate focus on equity makes it unique among teaching programs. Underlying these claims is an implication that traditional teacher education programs do not focus with enough intentionality on issues of justice as they seek to prepare educators to work with and for historically-marginalized communities. Despite this proclamation, many teaching programs in New Zealand do have missions and programmatic emphases focused on topics like equity, justice and transformation. For example, Cochran-Smith et al. (2016) document an innovative, equity-centered teacher education program at the University of Auckland. In analyzing the MTchg Program, which is a one-year post-baccalaureate program, the authors note specific programmatic features that demonstrate a commitment to embedding and addressing issues of equity, including:

> ...the use of *patterns of practice for equity* as a central organizing framework; inquiry as a pervasive and ongoing approach to learning to teach; building on the knowledge traditions of cultural communities and making strong links between the university, schools and cultural communities; and, combining traditionally separate disciplines in innovative courses that distribute responsibility for conveying key ideas related to equity across faculty and school partners. (p. 73)

Cochran-Smith et al. (2016) were able to distill these principles by conducting an in-depth analysis of educational research and discerning factors that contribute to minority-student success. Despite this robust data, AM/TFNZ gives little credence to other programs in New Zealand that operate from critical, multicultural and justice-oriented perspectives.

In fact, all teacher preparation programs in Aotearoa/New Zealand are technically required to place equity at the center of their initiatives. For example, the national *Our Code, Our Standards* publication provides guidance for teacher education programs as they work to align their curriculum to the Ministry of Education's efforts to promote equitable educational outcomes for its diverse student population (Education Council, 2017). One notable standard is the "Te Tiriti o Waitangi partnership" (p. 18). This standard relates to the 1840 *Treaty of Waitangi*, a document to which all teacher preparation programs in New Zealand must adhere. This particular standard references a foundational treaty for Aotearoa/New Zealand that outlines the partnership between Pākehā and Māori peoples, a partnership that foregrounds educational equity.

Drawing on these standards, university-based teacher preparation institutions in New Zealand routinely base their courses around the Treaty of Waitangi and broader issues of equity. For example, the University of Canterbury's Masters in Teaching and Learning degree program requires students to take "Professional Learning and Inquiry 1" in which future teachers engage with the professional standards of teaching as outlined by the Ministry of Education, learn about "the nature of biculturalism in Aotearoa New Zealand, and its relevance to their area of study and/or their degree," as well as "complete a Treaty of Waitangi workshop" (University of Canterbury, n.d.).

In short, AM/TFNZ suggests that traditional universities are not creating critically-conscious teachers, capable of addressing endemic disparities. Instead, AM/TFNZ implies that university-prepared teachers are perpetuating inequities and deficit thinking regarding minority students. Over the course of the organization's development, for example, it has increasingly distanced itself from universities – first moving away from the University of Auckland, then partnering with a technical institution, and ultimately designing its own program separate from any formal teacher education entities. This pattern closely mirrors the ways in which Teach For America has similarly distanced itself from university-based collaborations in favor of partnerships with the Relay Graduate School of Education (Cochran-Smith et al., 2020) and other outside providers. Collaborating with outside providers, allows Teach For All affiliate programs to maintain tight control over their program and diminishes the need to reconcile or negotiate competing demands or priorities. For example, when the relationship with the University of Auckland fell apart, it was partly because the university was pushing for more intensive student teaching and a longer and more robust preparation period which was in stark contrast with the organization's goals and desires. Moreover, separating from formal entities of teacher education allows the organization to continually assert that "it's not just any teaching program" and to claim that it possesses a unique set of priorities and practices within the broader New Zealand educational landscape. AM/TFNZ overtly demonstrates this mindset by divorcing themselves from any affiliation with an established tertiary education provider. According to their website, the charity will begin operating as an independent, degree-granting institution in January of 2022 (Teach First NZ, n.d.-b).

In addition to its emphasis on equity, the focus on leadership development is another element that sets the organization apart from university-based educational programs. Multiple participants mentioned that they were more eager to apply to a leadership development program rather than a teaching program and many readily refer to themselves as leaders. An underlying message is that if a participant can teach for the two-year period, there will be managerial rewards within the AM/TFNZ organization (or beyond) in the future. While these programmatic features undoubtedly benefit participants and enhance their career trajectories, an unintended consequence of this practice is that it works "against building system capacity" (Anderson & Cohen, 2015, p. 6). As teachers segue into other sectors and roles, a dearth of quality educators remain.

Moreover, as AM/TFNZ continues to distance itself from universities and Teach For All continues to expand its role as a global education reform entity that generally operates outside of and apart from other educational entities and movements, it concretizes aspects of the new professionalism and undermines professional autonomy. As Anderson and Cohen (2015) argue, "This shift suggests a decrease in professional autonomy and in control over one's profession through the exercise of professional judgment and through professional associations, and an increase in control by managers in work organizations" (p. 4). In this sense, AM/TFNZ takes on increased influence in shaping the professional identity of its participants in ways that encourage them to align with the organization rather than with the teaching profession writ large.

This reshaping of initial teacher education is supported by New Zealand's Ministry of Education as well as other influential entities operating in the country. The current Education

Minister Chris Hipkins (2019) has explicitly stated, "TeachFirst NZ is the only employment-based initial teacher education programme currently available to trainees. While it's an extremely popular and successful programme, we want to develop other new and innovative programmes to give teacher trainees more options" (para. 9). This push for a more practice-centric approach to teacher education has also been supported by the nation's most influential think tank: The New Zealand Initiative. In 2014, The NZ Initiative published policy recommendations as the third part of a three-part research endeavor to evaluate New Zealand's initial teacher preparation situation. In their recommendations, they advocate for the expansion of employment-based teacher preparation programs like Teach First, arguing that, "Increasing school-based training routes would allow people to move in and out of the profession with greater ease, and increase the number and quality of people who might consider teaching for a few years" (Morris & Patterson, 2014, p. 17).

The recommendation did not fall on deaf ears. In 2017, in a budget release article, then Education Minister, Nikki Kaye, provided a glowing endorsement for AM/TFNZ alumni in which she provided a glimpse at the on-the-ground influence of these teachers:

> To date, 42 percent of Teach First NZ graduates teach maths, science or technology, and all of them teach in schools with some of the biggest achievement challenges. They have directly served 14,000 New Zealand students, including 4,000 Māori and Pasifika. (Kaye, 2017)

Ms. Kaye ends her budget release article, in which she announced a commitment of $5.2 million dollars for AM/TFNZ, by explaining in her "Notes to the Editors" section:

> Instead of being based in universities, with some in-school experience, students participating in employment-based ITE have their study moulded around time spent in the classroom. This increases the within-school experiences and responsibilities of participants compared to other ITE programmes.

In 2019, AM/TFNZ received even more government support, to the tune of $16.2 million. Interestingly, the enthusiasm for AM/TFNZ seems to have spilled over. Just under $12 million was allocated to develop additional employment-based teacher preparation programs for secondary education (Kirk & Cooke, 2019).

The advent of employment-based initial teacher education in New Zealand has already influenced national policies and prompted changes to laws regarding teacher certification. In 2016, legislators added a new amendment to the Education Act of 1989 that created a provision for the hiring of an employment-based teacher trainee. During the time leading up to the law's passing, there were some who worried about the ramifications. In a press release from July 9, 2016, the New Zealand Educational Institute (NZEI Te Riu Roa), the country's largest union for educators, published a press release in which they responded to the law's potential passing: "Serious concerns about plans to put unqualified trainee teachers in sole charge of classes have been completely ignored…" (New Zealand Educational Institute, 2016). When the Education Act of 1989 was replaced by the Education and Training Act of 2020, the provision remained. According to Fitzgerald and Knipe (2019), in New Zealand, "the policy environment is now one in which the rhetoric of choice, competition and accountability dominates. What has gradually evaporated is professional consensus around teacher education and training, and a distinct lack of trust in teachers has emerged" (p. 158). While university-based teacher preparation programs around the world struggle to market themselves in the light of new professionalism, emerging neoliberal, employment-based teacher training programs, like AM/TFNZ, are positioned to promote their programs as the antithesis of cumbersome, university-based teacher preparation.

Recommendations

We recognize that there are positive aspects to AM/TFNZ's approach to teacher education, and applaud them for their attempts to re-indigenize education in their context. In the spirit of international collaboration to improve teacher preparation practices, we wish to make some modest recommendations for AM/TFNZ to consider. The first recommendation is to more deliberately synthesize the Summer Intensive activities and collaborative events with content/subject-related pedagogical practices that the teacher candidates can adapt and transfer into their classrooms to better provide them with a pedagogical foundation. Linda Darling Hammond (2010) cautions that novice teachers who are ill-prepared to enter a classroom "often wind up resenting and stereotyping students whom they do not understand, especially when these teachers' lack of skills render them less successful" (p. 208). Even with all of AM/TFNZ's careful attention to social justice and equity regarding Māori and Pasifika students, the best intentions of their teaching candidates may be undermined by their lack of pedagogical skills and knowledge. While ensuring that teacher candidates are aware of educational inequities is a crucial part of teacher preparation, knowledge regarding instructional planning and classroom management allow teachers to focus on designing and facilitating activities for their specific students that lead to higher order thinking skills (Darling-Hammond, 2010).

We further recommend that the Summer Intensive be used as a springboard for pedagogical practice by more closely tying the collaborative skits, discussions, and other activities directly to flexible instructional strategies that will transfer to secondary classrooms. Based on focus group comments and interview data, AM/TFNZ appears to be successful regarding its ability to foster strong bonds among their candidates. We feel this strength could be improved upon by making the practices transparent to their candidates and framing them as community-building activities that candidates can transfer into their emerging pedagogical practice. This may require making adjustments to the nature of the skits and other activities to center more robust engagement with diversity and to practice ongoing reflection.

We also recommend that research be conducted related to AM/TFNZ teachers and educational equity. As mentioned previously, the organization's website currently boasts: "Over 80% of those who have completed our programme have continued to teach, many now with over 5 years of experience in the profession, and over 25% in a school leadership position" (Teach First NZ, n.d.-b). We suggest conducting a study in New Zealand to determine whether or not there are differences in teacher/leader effectiveness, especially related to equity, based on the type of teacher preparation program in which the teacher was involved. This would allow the organization to substantiate its tacit assertion that their program better prepares its teachers to improve educational equity compared to university-based programs. We also feel recurring research of this nature could shed light on the progress of the new AM/TFNZ degree program. Educational inequity is a complex problem, and solving it will require local, national, and global entities and individuals working together to change systems at every level (Cochran-Smith et al., 2016). If the AM/TFNZ model is indeed effective at reducing educational inequity in their alumni's classrooms, those findings, as well as the teacher preparation practices, would be worth sharing with the global community. However, conducting research aimed at examining equity is predicated on the organization's ability and willingness to open their practices to qualitative and quantitative researchers, even with the risk that the research might expose organizational weakness. Without open access to the organization's practices, documents, staff and participants, insights into its overall efficacy will remain elusive.

Conclusion

Despite Teach For All's expansion across the globe and the commensurate investment of philanthropists and government entities in its model, there continues to be a dearth of research on *how* Teach For All and its affiliates are shaping and re-shaping notions of teaching, learning and teacher education on a broader scale. Specifically, as the organization continues to define itself in contrast to traditional forms of teacher education, it becomes imperative that scholars explore these ramifications as notions like expertise and professionalism are radically reconfigured. These tensions are especially pressing as the organizations like AM/TFNZ make claims about equity that imply that traditional teacher education does not prioritize equity perspectives. Lacking the resources possessed by Teach For All and its affiliates, traditional teacher education will need to consider how to respond in order to maintain its relevance in a rapidly shifting field.

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